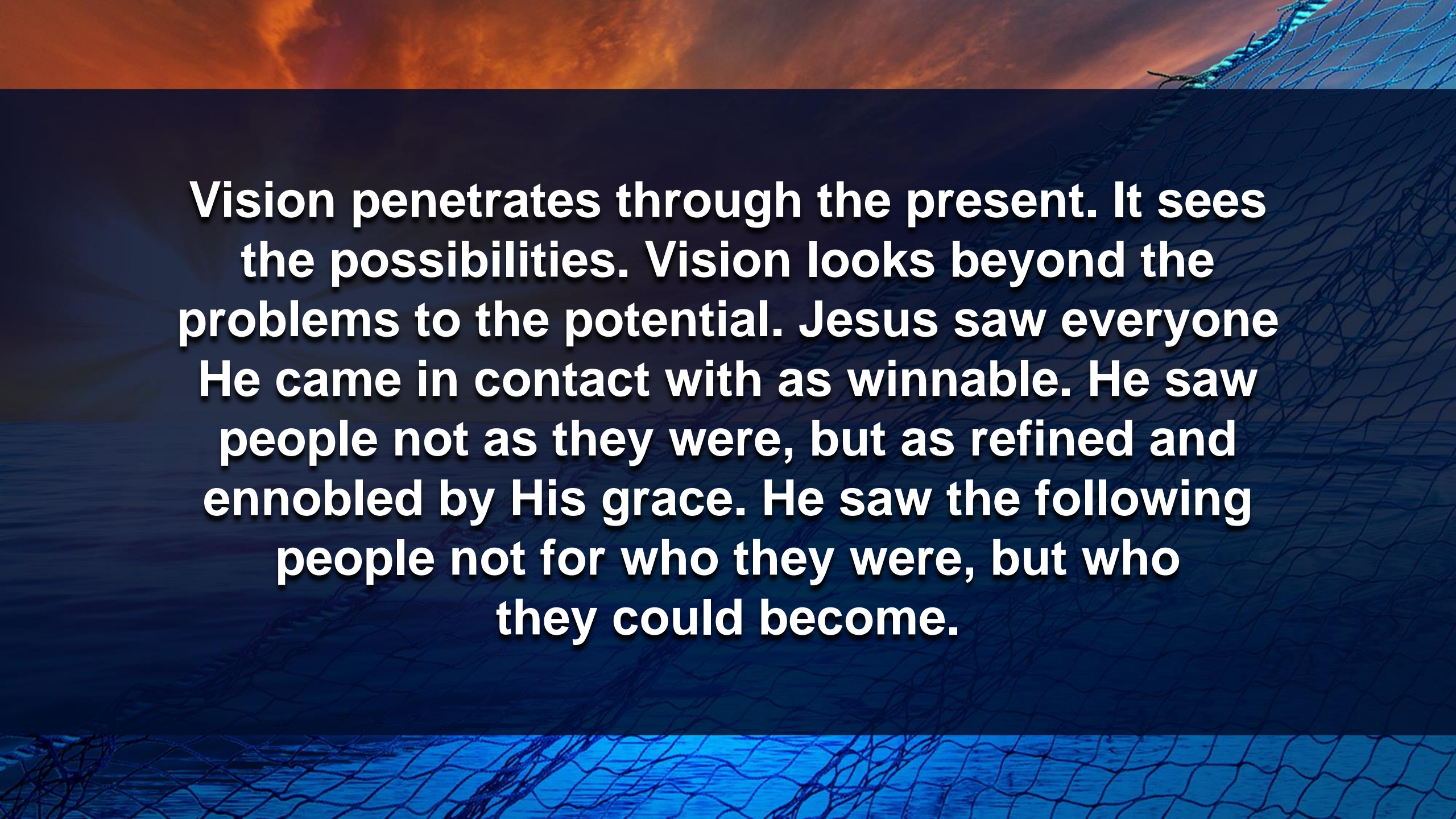


Reclaiming Missing Members

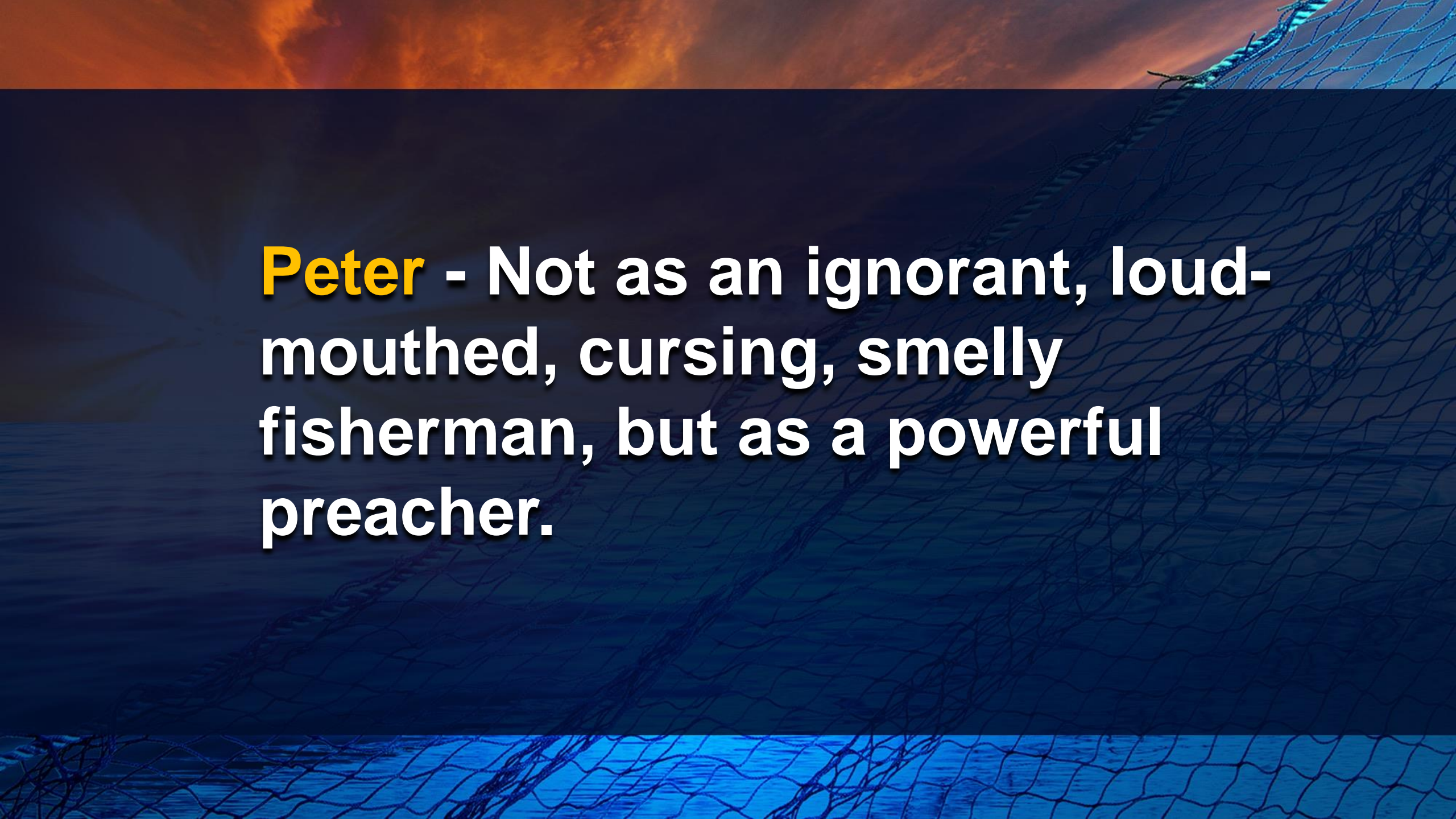




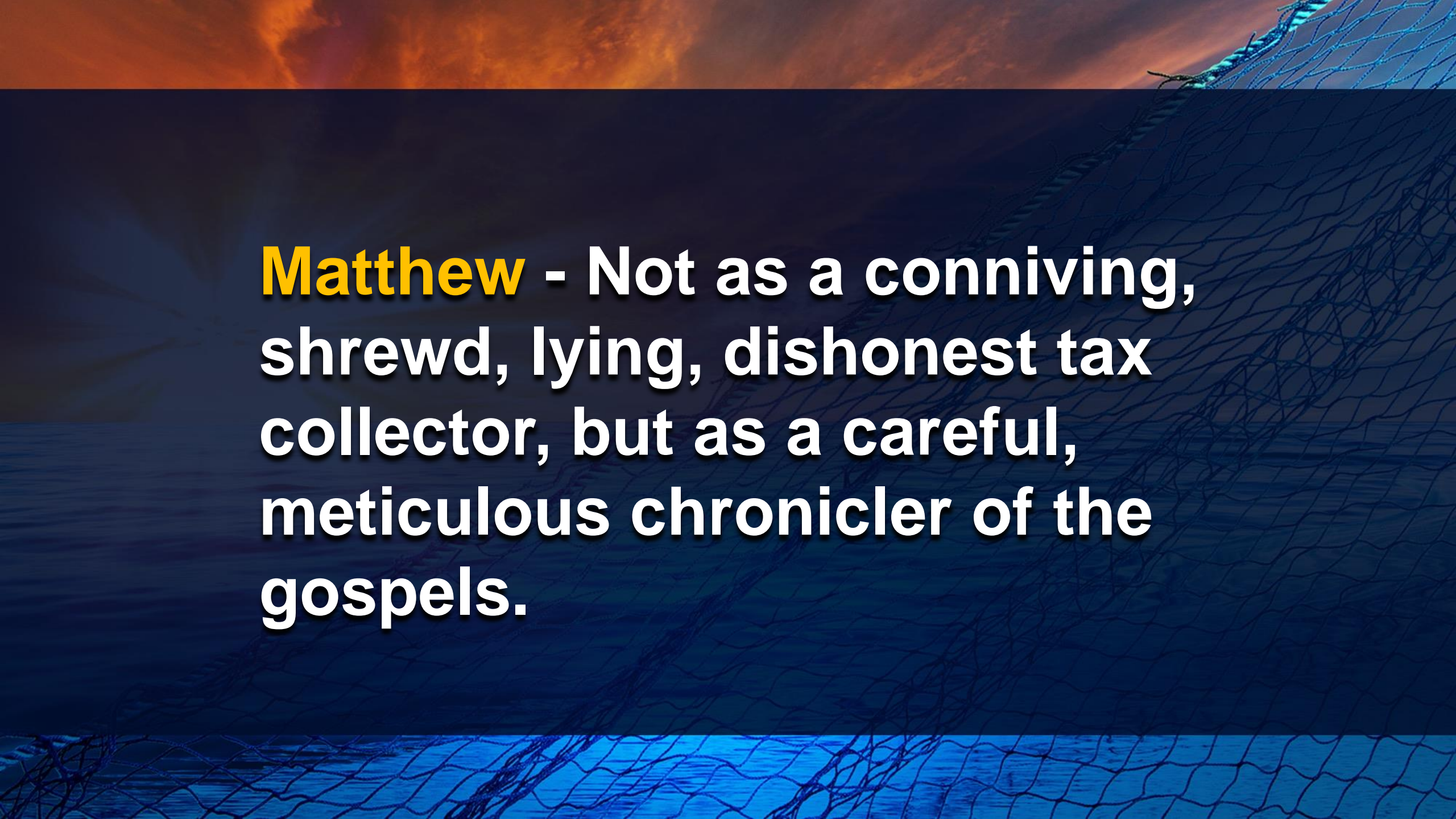


Vision penetrates through the present. It sees the possibilities. Vision looks beyond the problems to the potential. Jesus saw everyone He came in contact with as winnable. He saw people not as they were, but as refined and ennobled by His grace. He saw the following people not for who they were, but who they could become.

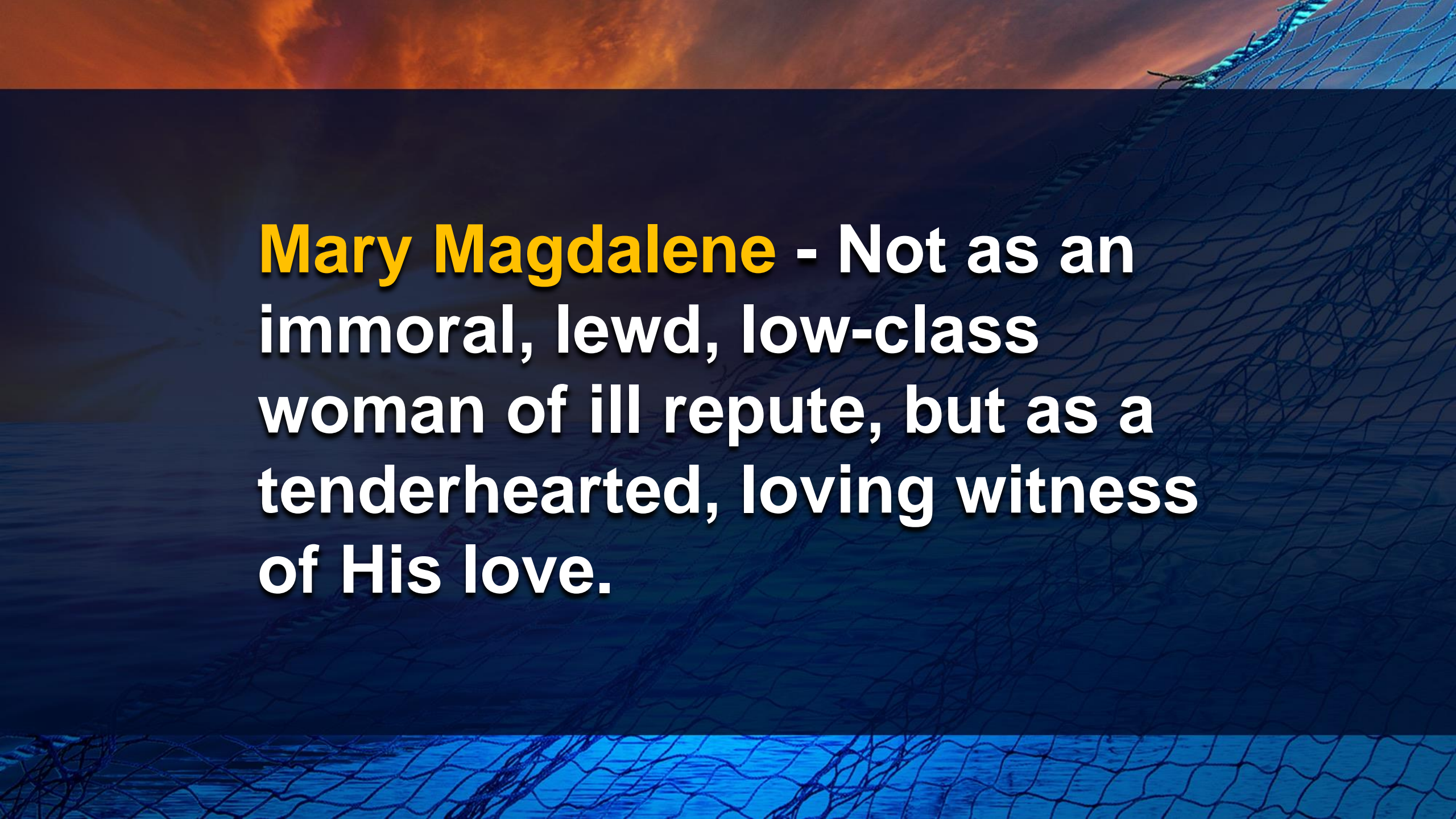




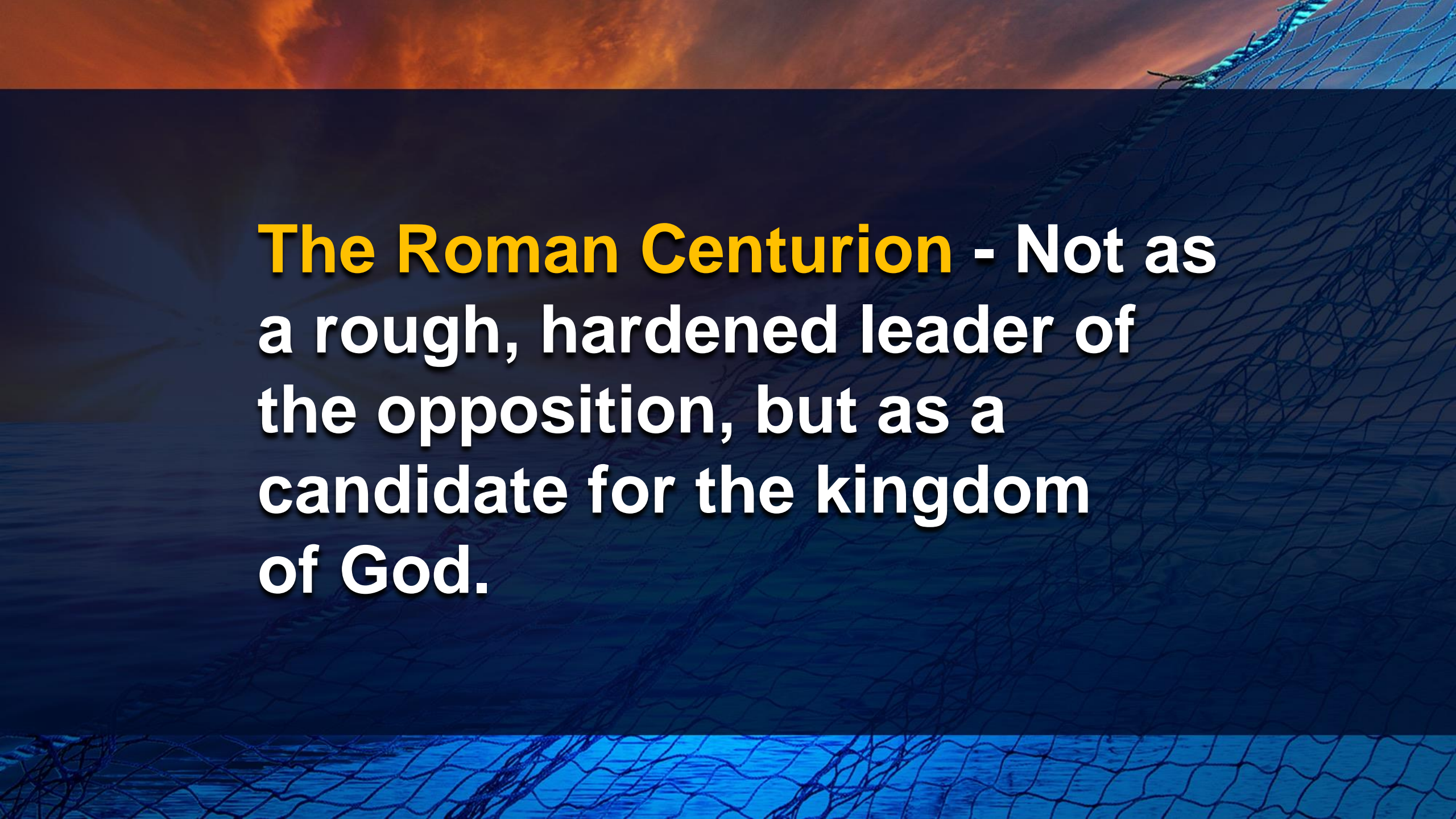
Peter - Not as an ignorant, loud-mouthed, cursing, smelly fisherman, but as a powerful preacher.



Matthew - Not as a conniving, shrewd, lying, dishonest tax collector, but as a careful, meticulous chronicler of the gospels.



Mary Magdalene - Not as an immoral, lewd, low-class woman of ill repute, but as a tenderhearted, loving witness of His love.



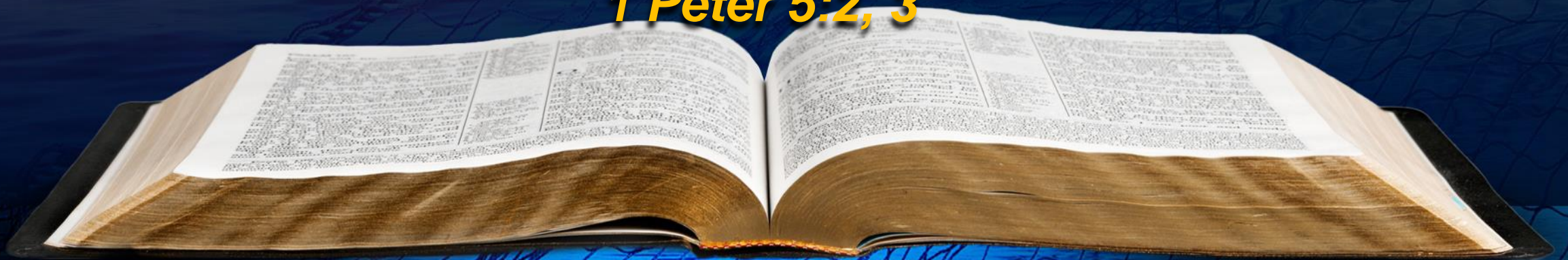
The Roman Centurion - Not as
a rough, hardened leader of
the opposition, but as a
candidate for the kingdom
of God.



Nicodemus - Not as a legalistic, argumentative, opinionated Pharisee, but as a sincere seeker after truth.

“Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.”

1 Peter 5:2, 3



“But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” *1 Corinthians 12:20, 21*



**1. To believe life
is meaningful.**



**2. To have a sense of
community and
deeper relationships.**



3. To be appreciated
and respected.



**4. To be listened to
and heard.**



5. To feel that one is
growing in the faith.



6. To have practical help in developing a mature faith.





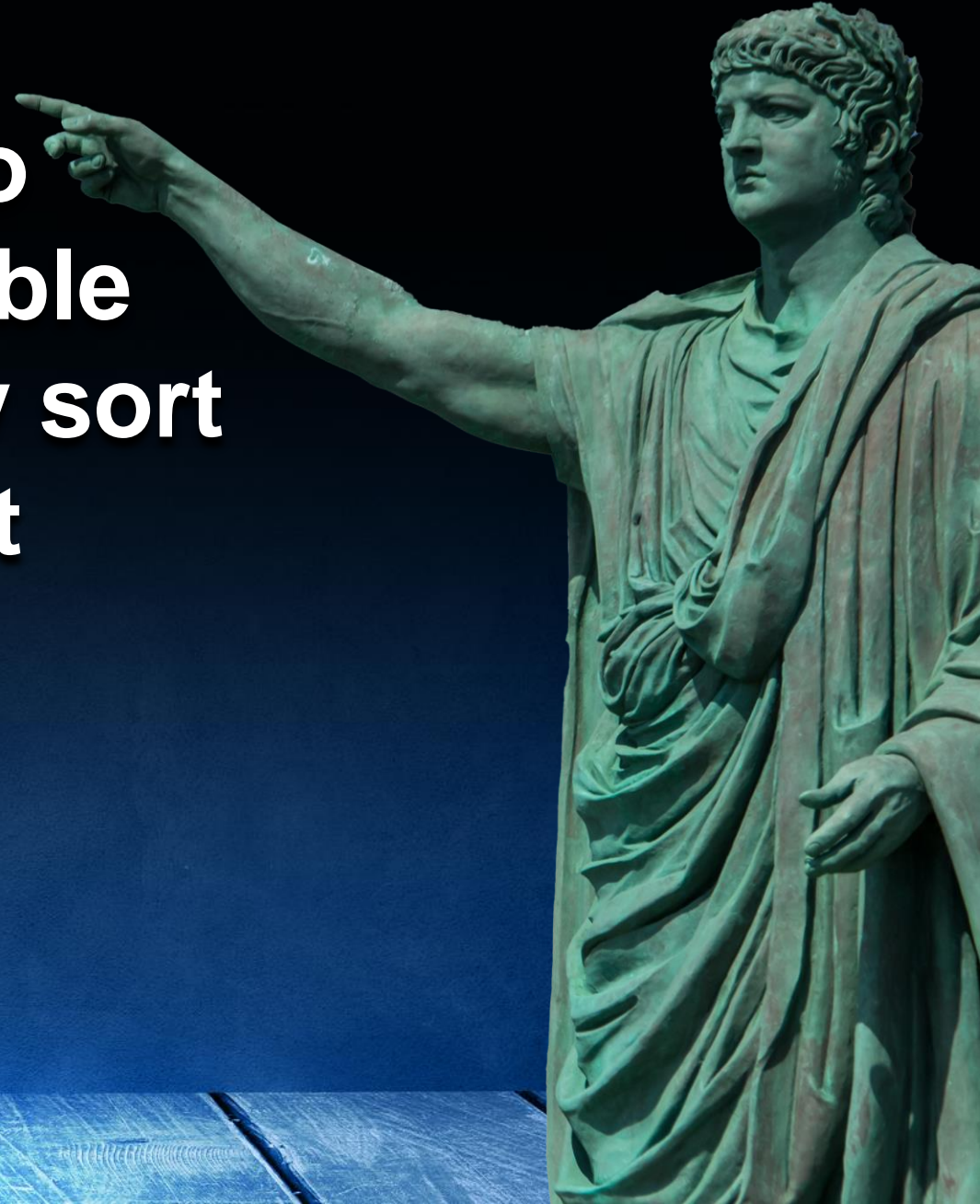
“I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.”

Psalm 142:4

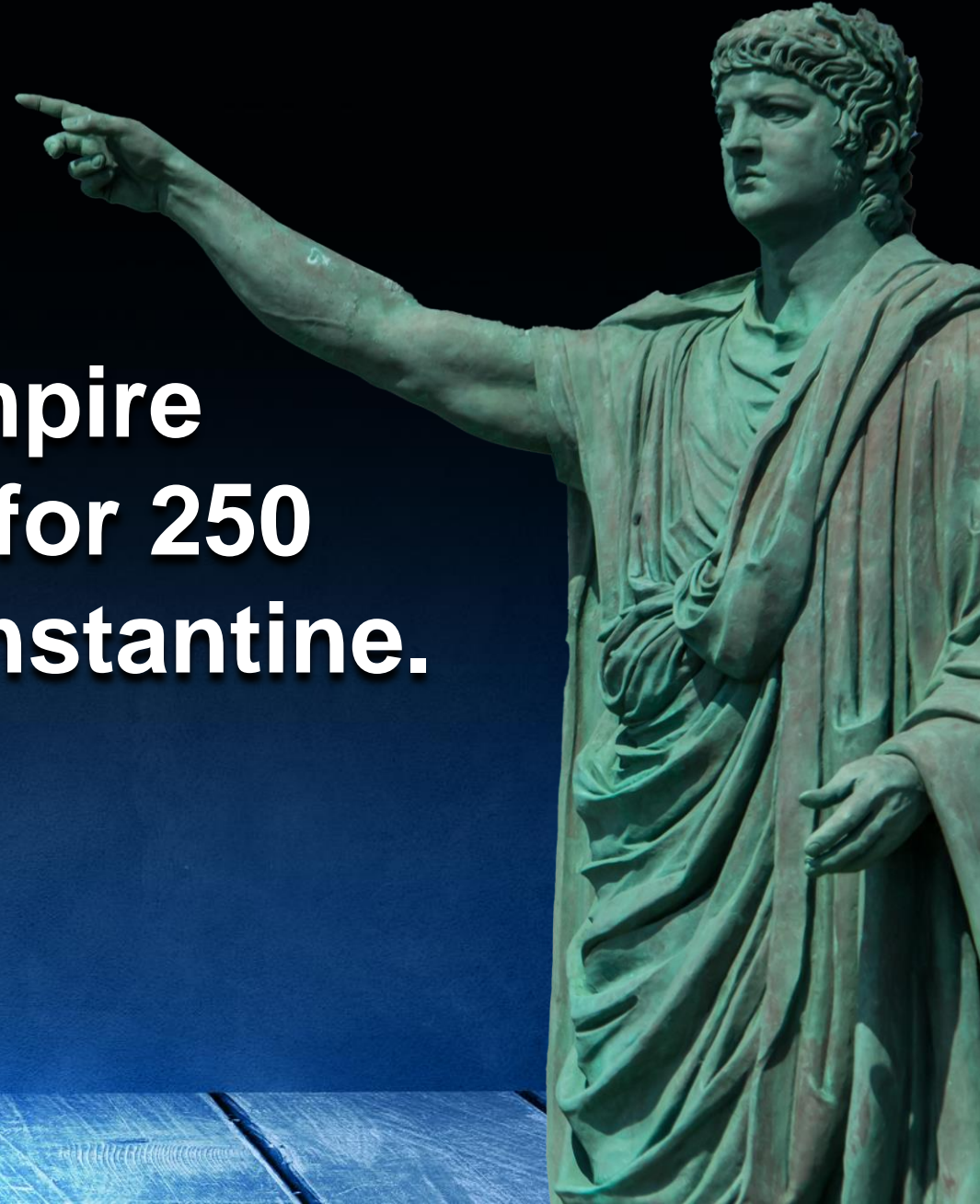




Nero's decree against Christianity in A.D. 64 also meant that it was impossible for Christians to build any sort of meeting place we might call a church.

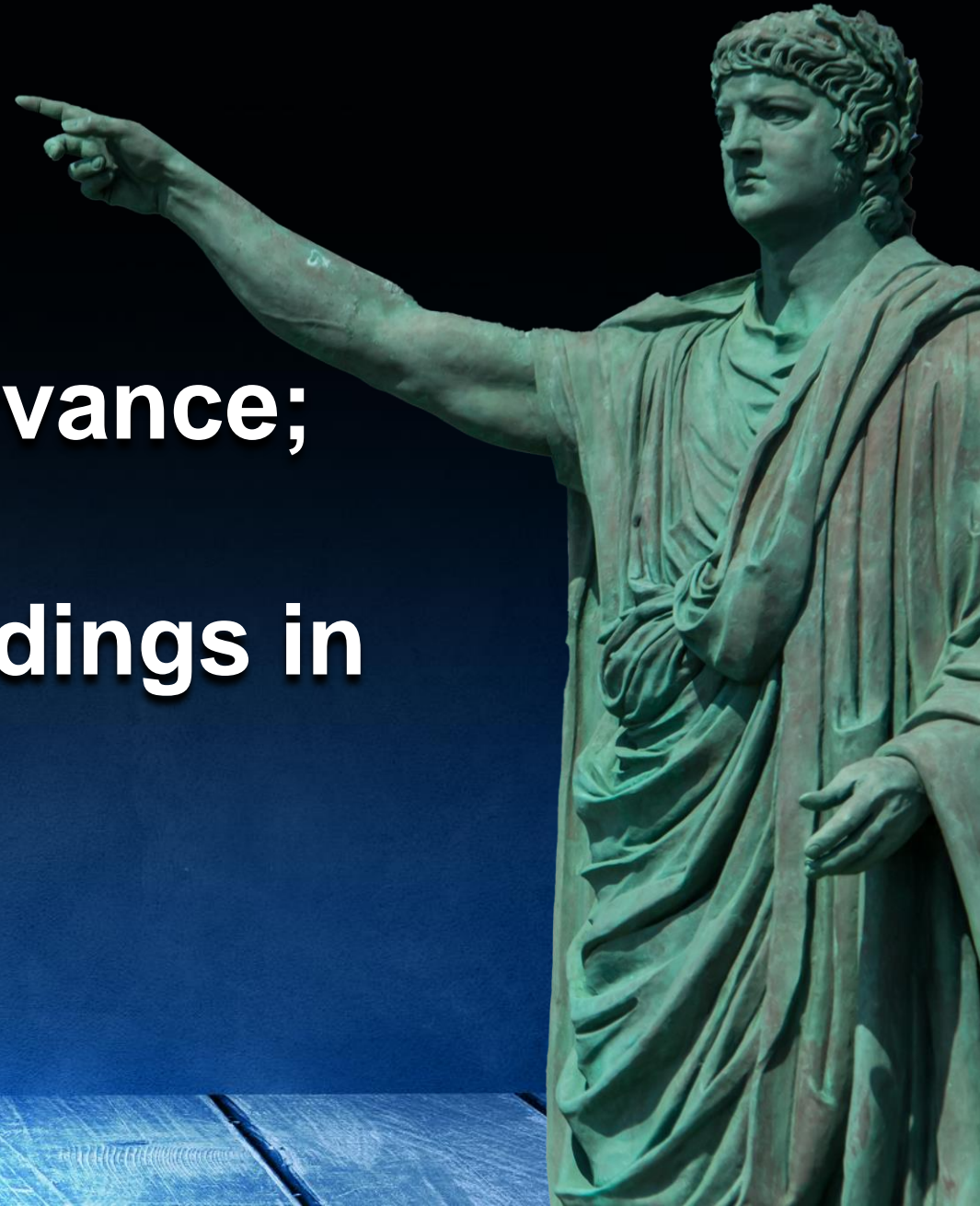


Christian assembly was illegal. Yet the church not only survived, but thrived throughout the Roman empire without church buildings for 250 years until the time of Constantine.

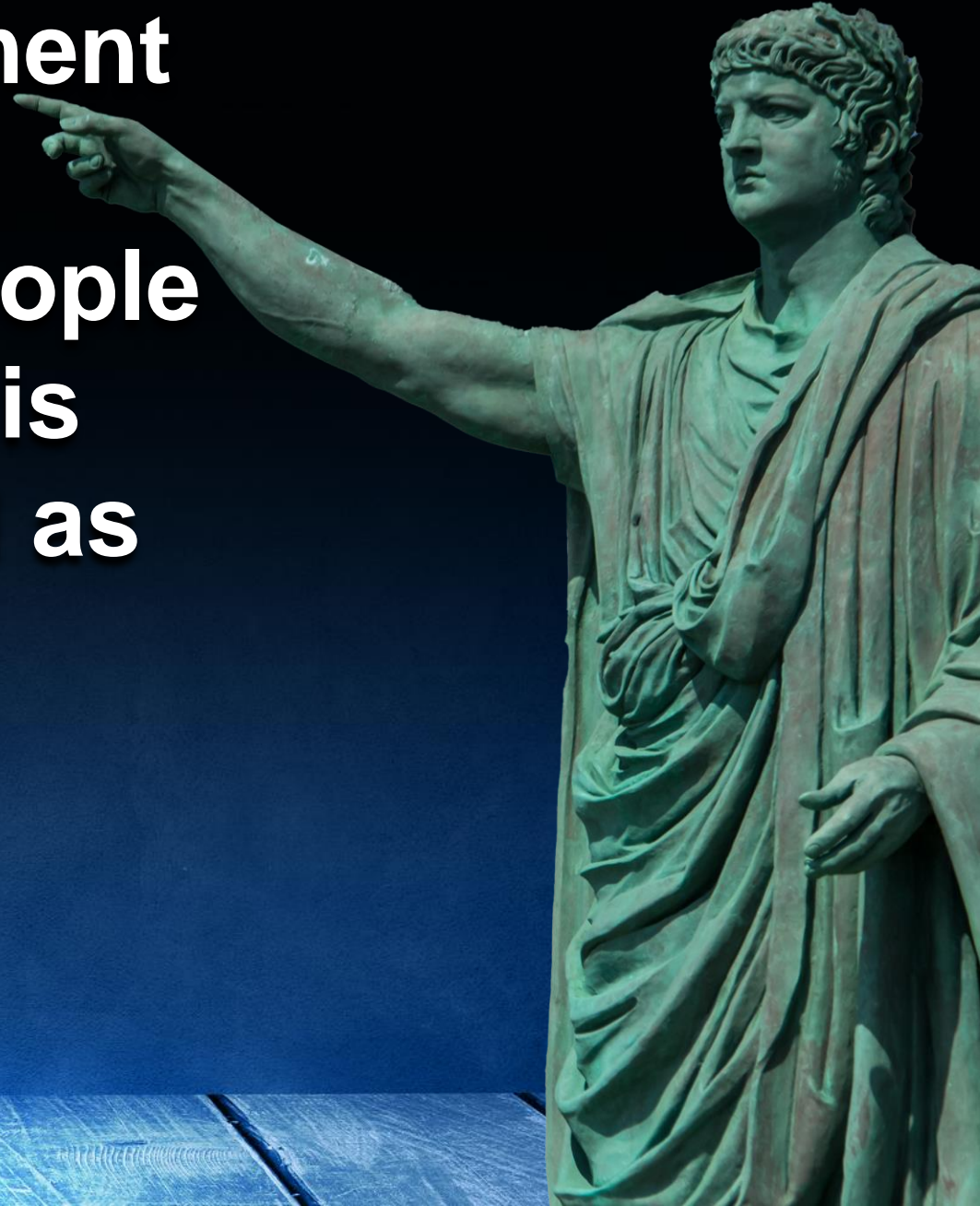




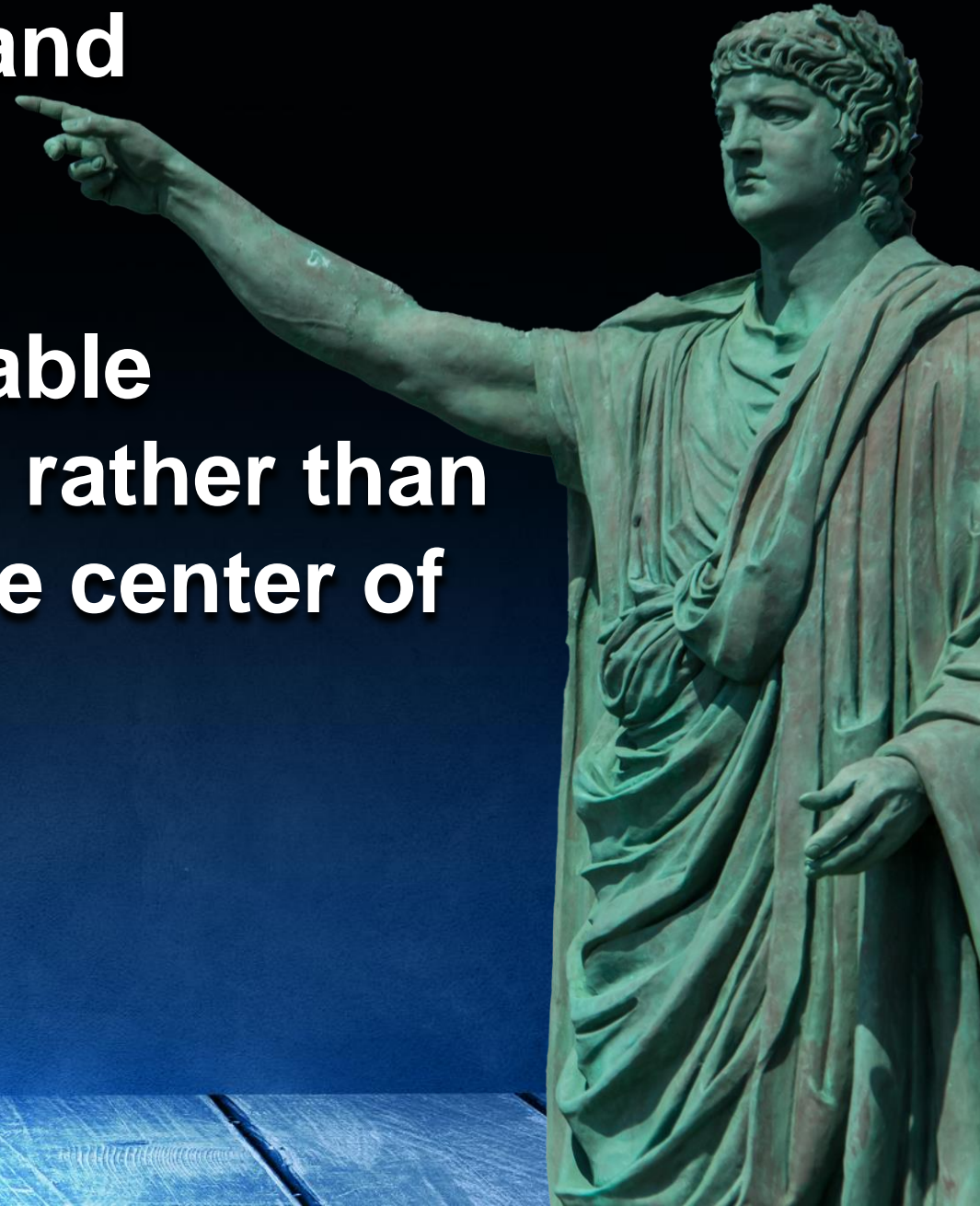
The emperor Constantine was responsible not only for the first civil law concerning Sunday observance; he also erected several of the earliest church buildings in the Roman Empire.



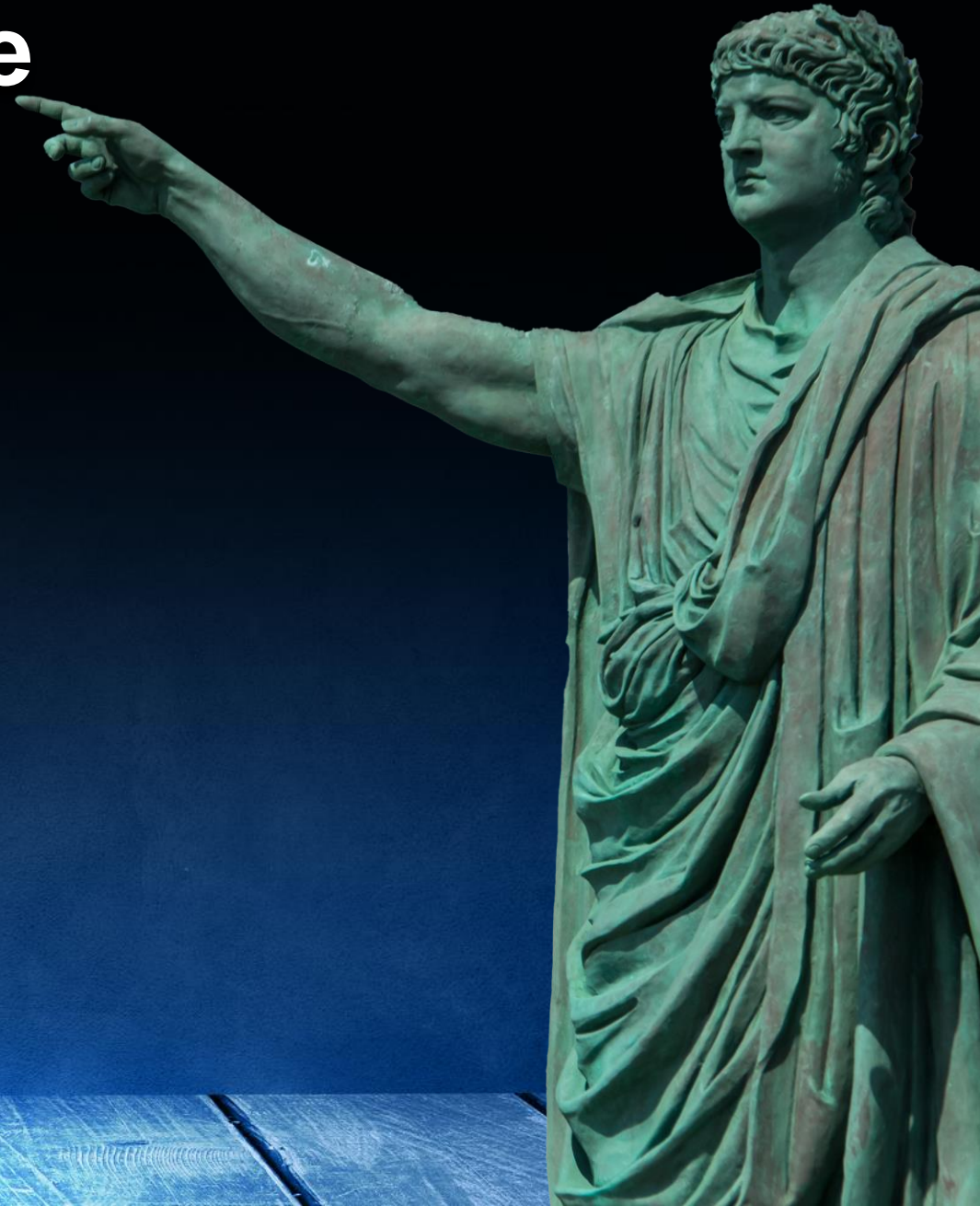
In spite of the New Testament teaching that God now lives in and among His people rather than in buildings, his basilicas were designated as sacred places to be used



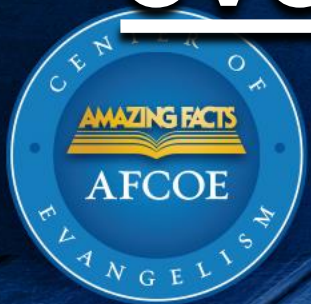
only for religious purposes and clergy were appointed to serve in them. Thus began a trend which led to the inevitable consequence that buildings, rather than homes, gradually became the center of church life.



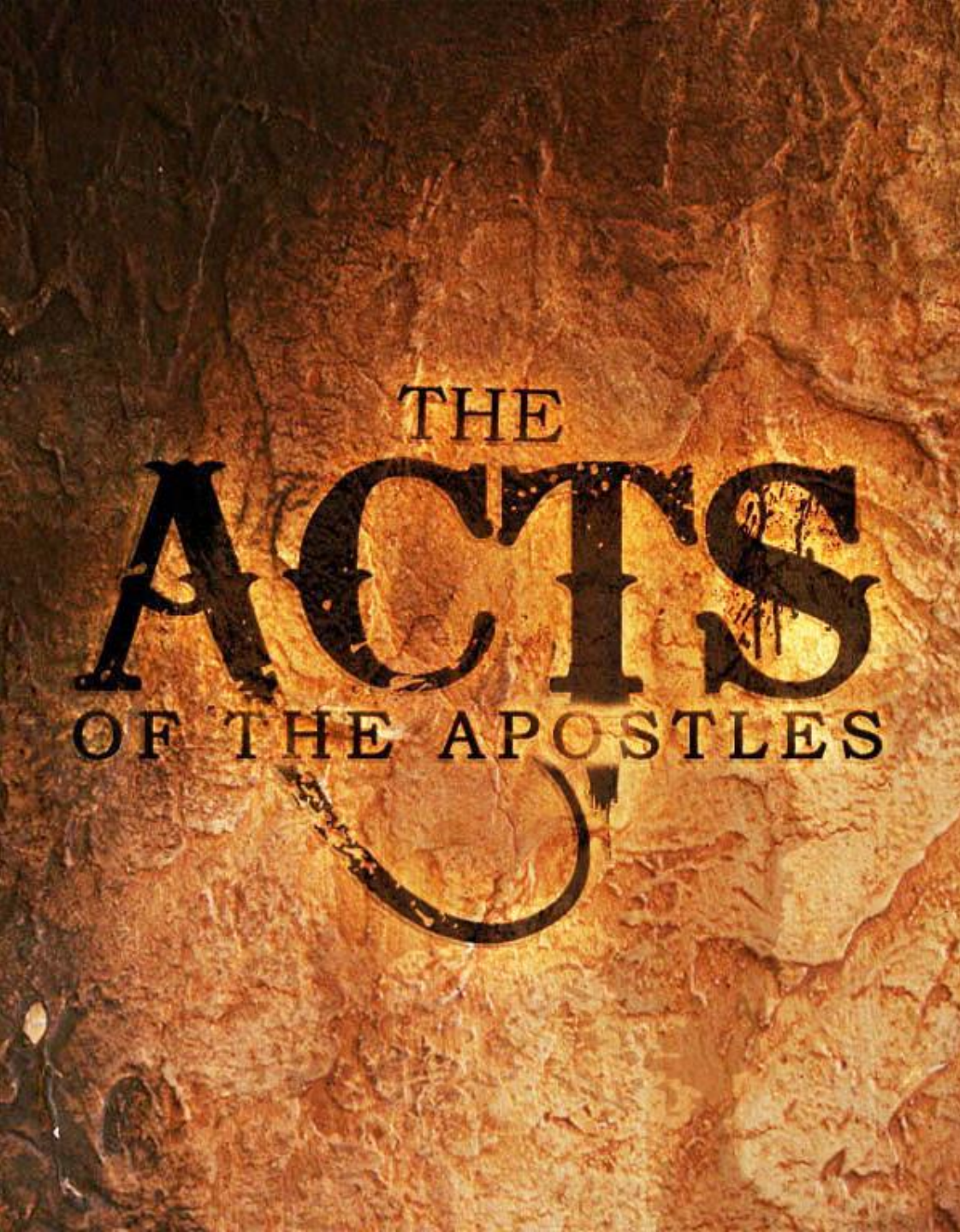
It also helped to create the unscriptural distinction between clergy and laity which remains with us to this day.



Since then, church life has revolved largely **around buildings** instead of **people**, and ministry has been seen as the **responsibility of priests and pastors** instead of every Christian.

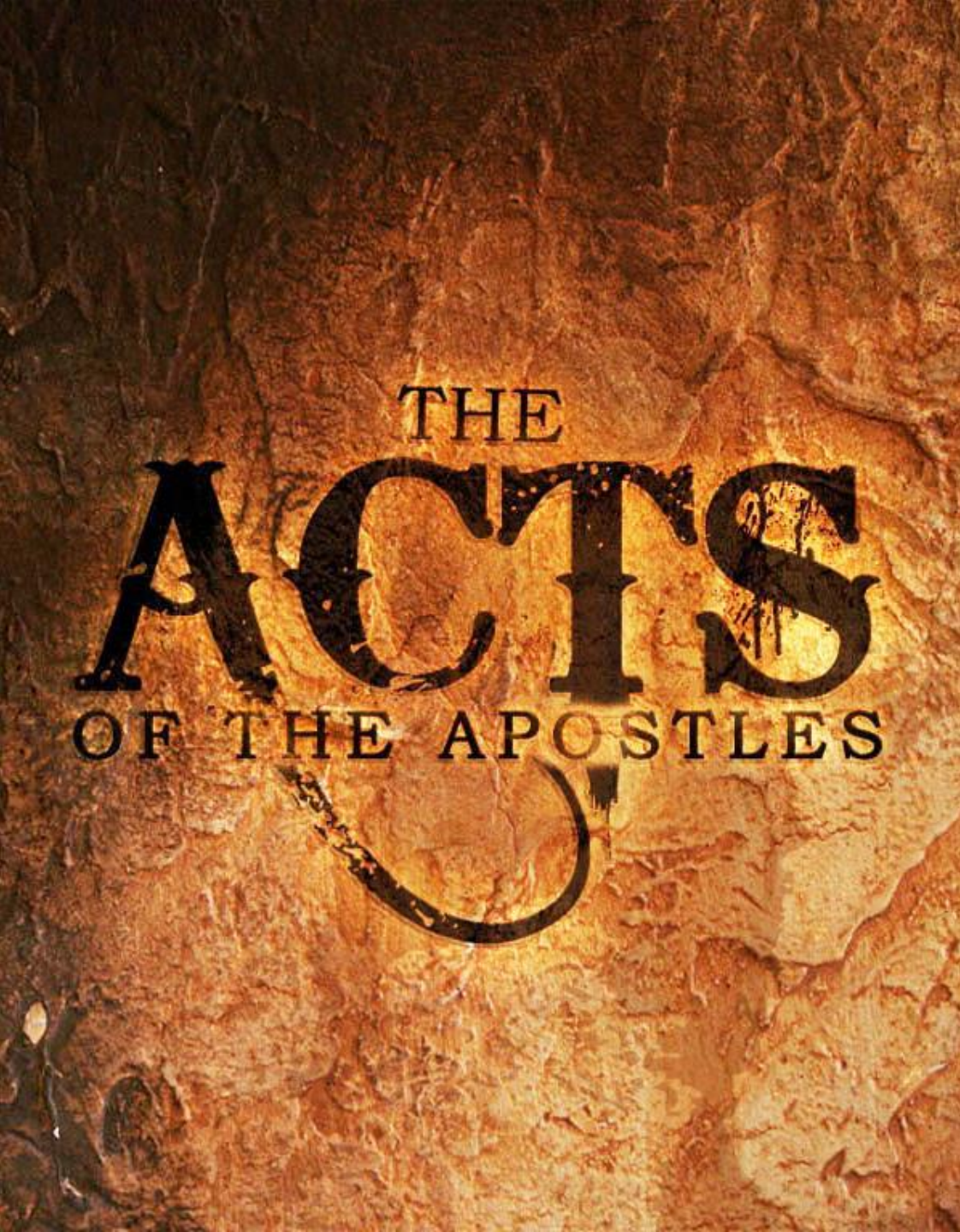


THE
ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES



THE
ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES

“And they,
continuing daily with
one accord in the
temple, and breaking
bread from **house to
house**, did eat their
meat with gladness
and singleness of
heart.” ***Acts 2:46***



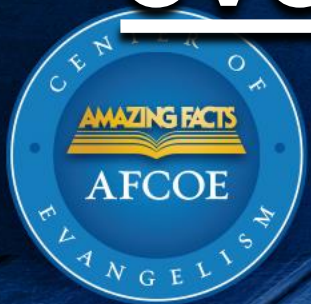
THE
ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES

“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

Acts 5:42



Since then, church life has revolved largely **around buildings** instead of **people**, and ministry has been seen as the **responsibility of priests and pastors** instead of every Christian.



“Be devoted to one another” (Romans 12:10)

“Honor one another” (Romans 12:10)

“Accept one another” (Romans 15:7)

“Instruct one another” (Romans 15:14)

“Serve one another” (Galatians 5:13)

“Carry each other’s burden” (Galatians 6:2)

**“Be patient, bearing with one another in love”
(Ephesians 4:2)**



“Be kind and compassionate to one another”

(Ephesians 4:32)

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ”

(Ephesians 5:21)

“Teach one another” (Colossians 3:16)

“Admonish one another” (Colossians 3:16)



“Encourage each other” (I Thessalonians 4:18)

“Build each other up” (I Thessalonians 5:11)

“Confess your sins to each other” (James 5:16)

“Pray for one another” (James 5:16)



Steps to Christ

Bible Study Series



God's Love for Man

1 - 16



Steps to Christ

Bible Study Series



God's Love for Man

1 - 16



(1) HOW DOES GOD SHOW HIS LOVE TO ALL HIS CREATURES?

Psalms 145:15, 16

Related Texts: Philippians 4:19; Psalms 104:21, 27; 136:25; Matthew 6:26; Joel 2:22; Ephesians 3:20; Genesis 1:30

Nature and revelation alike testify of God's love. Our Father in heaven is the source of life, of wisdom, and of joy. Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvelous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of man, but of all living creatures. The sunshine and the rain, that gladden and refresh the earth, the hills and seas and plains, all speak to us of the Creator's love. It is God who supplies the daily needs of all His creatures.

(2) IN WHAT MANNER DOES THE BIBLE DESCRIBE GOD?

1 John 4:16

Related Texts: Lamentations 3:22, 23; Romans 8:38, 39; Psalm 36:7-9; 1 John 4:8, 12, 13; 3:1

God made man perfectly holy and happy; and the fair earth, as it came from the Creator's hand, bore no blight of decay or shadow of the curse. It is transgression of God's law—the law of love—that has brought woe and death. Yet even amid the suffering that results from sin, God's love is revealed. It is written that God cursed the ground for man's sake. Genesis 3:17. The thorn and the thistle—the difficulties and trials that make his life one of toil and care—were appointed for his good as a part of the training needful in God's plan for his uplifting from the ruin and degradation that sin has wrought. The world, though fallen, is not all sorrow and misery. In nature itself are messages of hope and comfort. There are flowers upon the thistles, and the thorns are covered with roses.

"God is love" is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfum-

(1) HOW DOES GOD SHOW HIS LOVE TO ALL HIS CREATURES?

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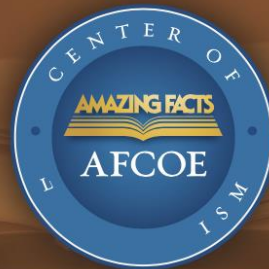


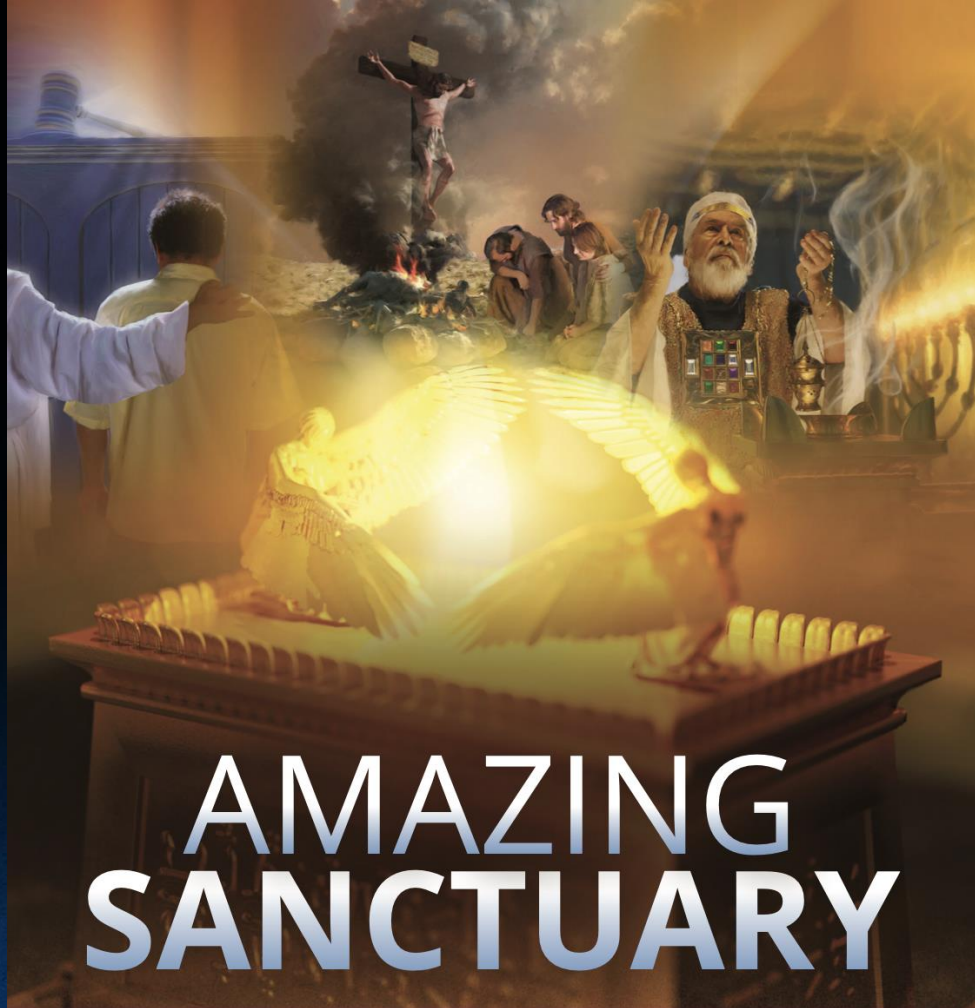
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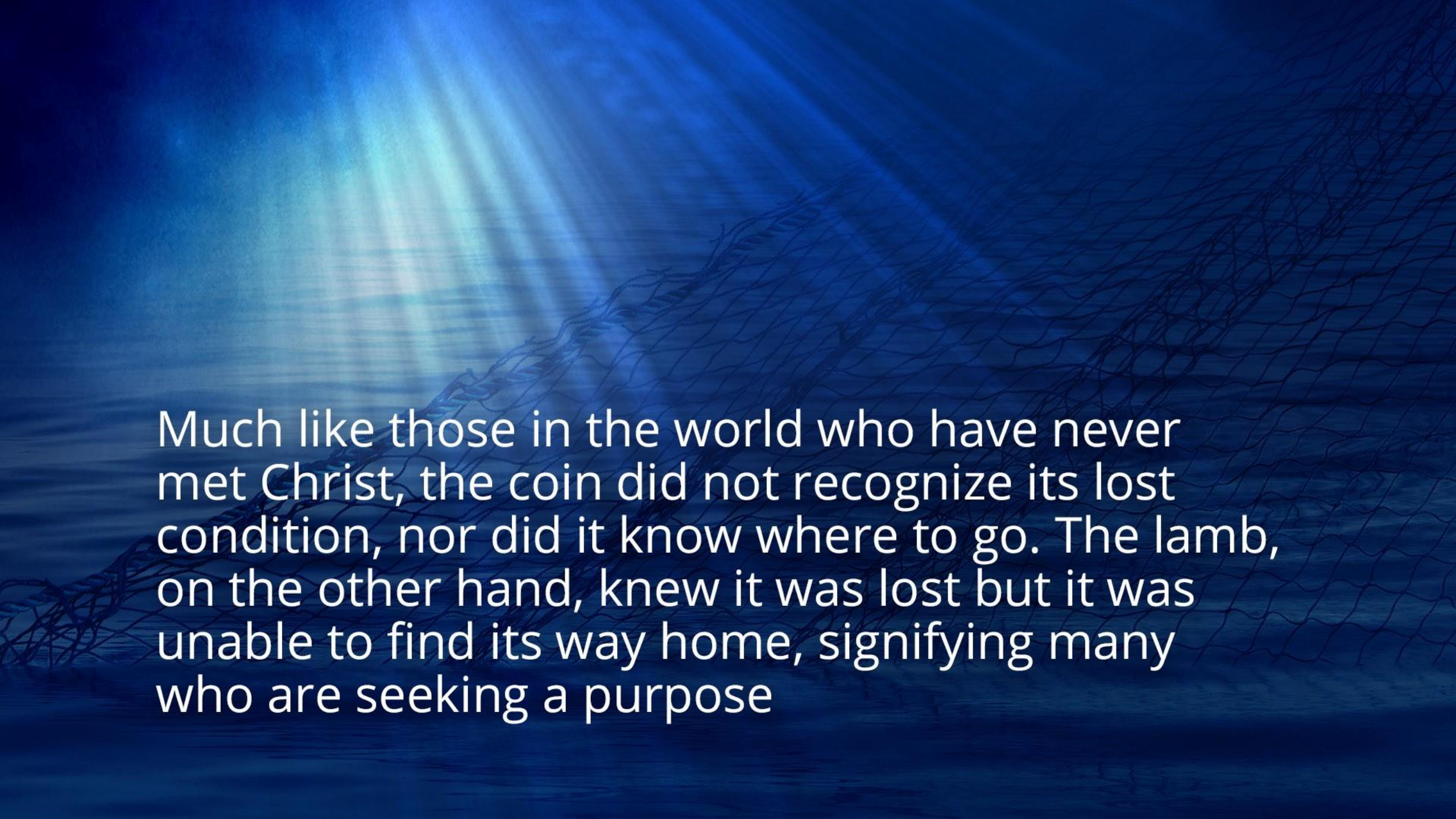


Genesis 3:9

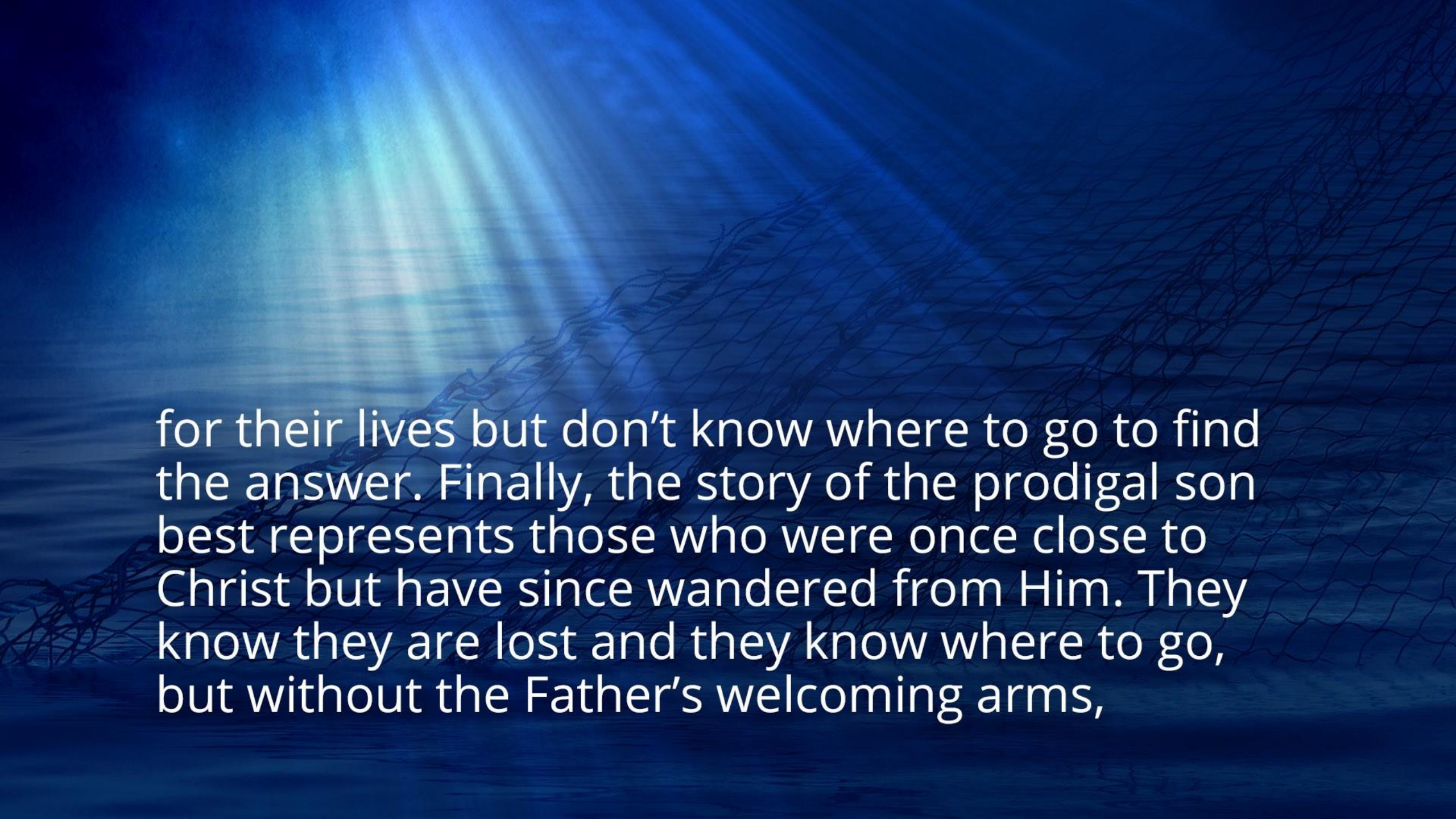
THREE TYPES OF LOSS

Luke 15



The background of the image is a deep blue, underwater scene. A fishing net is visible, draped across the middle of the frame. From the upper left, several bright, ethereal light rays or sunbeams penetrate the water, creating a shimmering effect. The overall mood is serene yet mysterious, with a focus on light and texture.

Much like those in the world who have never met Christ, the coin did not recognize its lost condition, nor did it know where to go. The lamb, on the other hand, knew it was lost but it was unable to find its way home, signifying many who are seeking a purpose

The background is a deep blue, underwater scene. A fishing net is draped across the middle ground, its mesh catching some light. From the upper left, several bright, ethereal light rays beam down through the water, creating a sense of depth and hope. The overall mood is contemplative and spiritual.

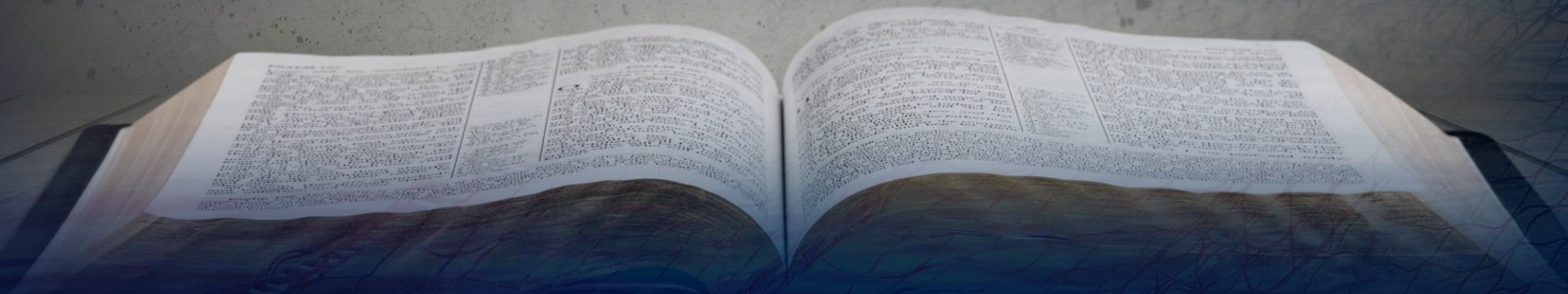
for their lives but don't know where to go to find the answer. Finally, the story of the prodigal son best represents those who were once close to Christ but have since wandered from Him. They know they are lost and they know where to go, but without the Father's welcoming arms,

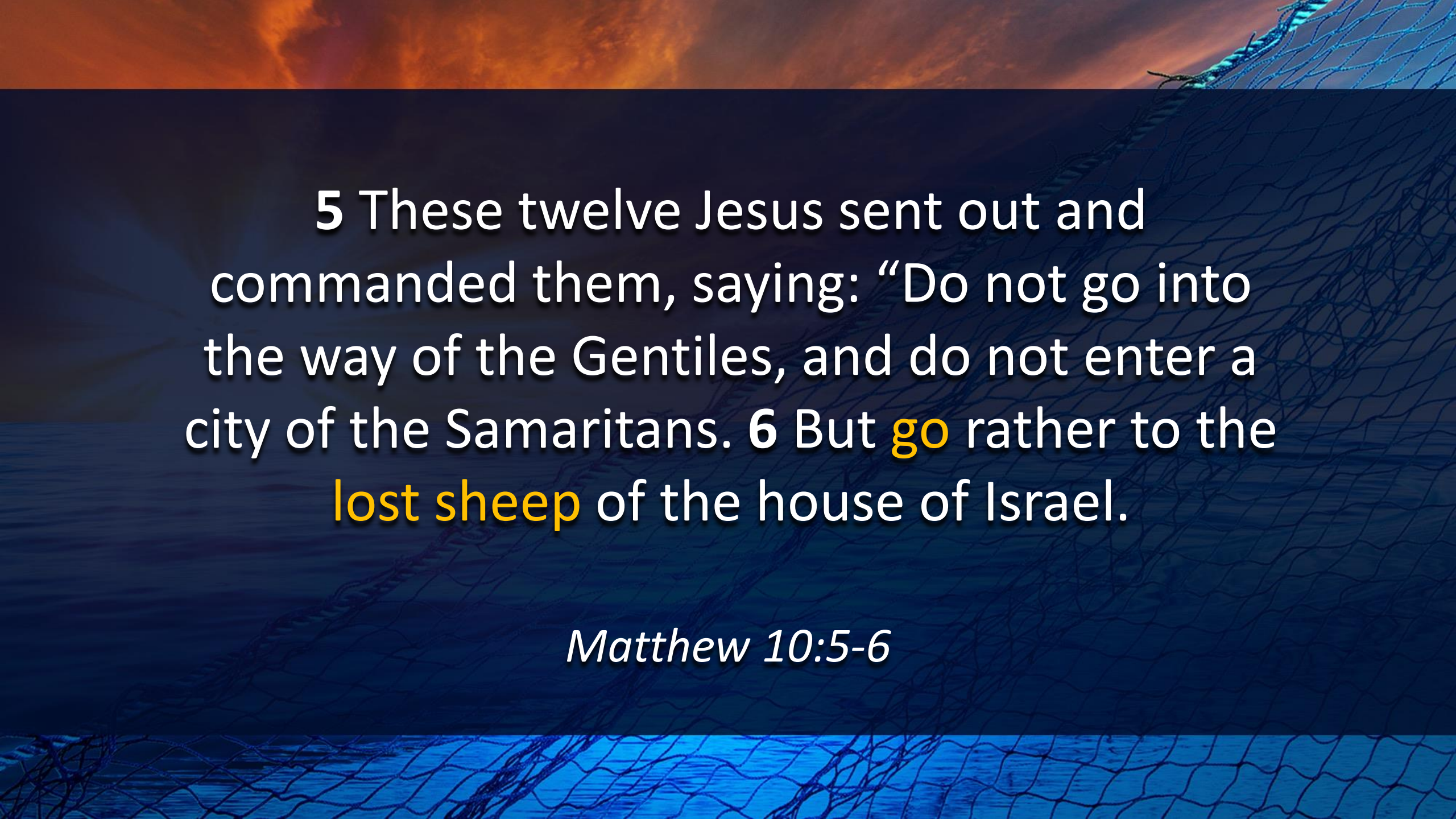


I once was lost but now I'm
found, was blind but now I see.

John Newton

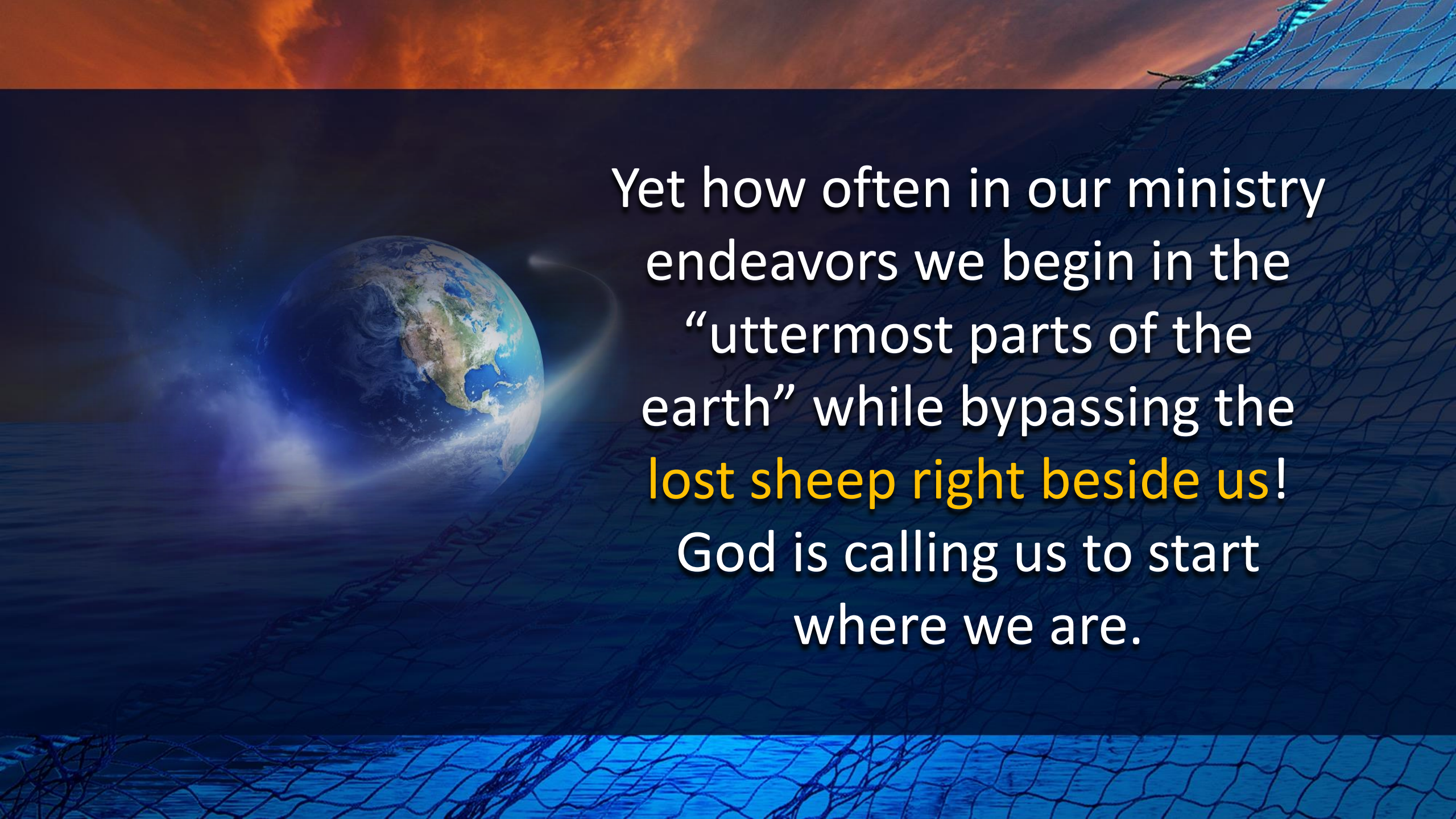
Luke 19:10





5 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. 6 But **go** rather to the **lost sheep** of the house of Israel.

Matthew 10:5-6



Yet how often in our ministry endeavors we begin in the “uttermost parts of the earth” while bypassing the **lost sheep right beside us!** God is calling us to start where we are.





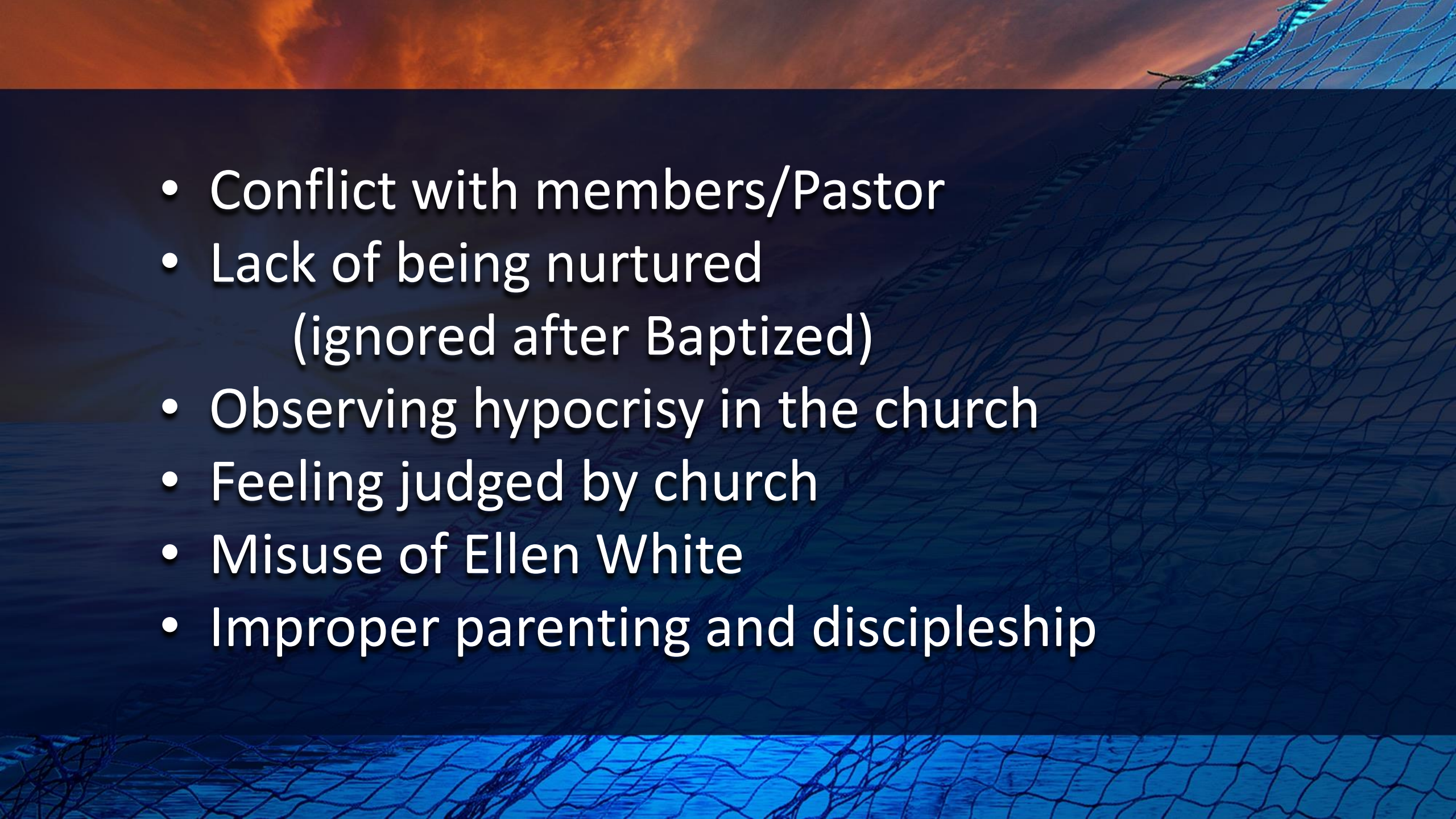
When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts ...

Evangelism, p. 693



will be put forth to save
the lost, and **many who
have strayed** from the
fold will come back to
follow the great
Shepherd

Evangelism, p. 693

- 
- Conflict with members/Pastor
 - Lack of being nurtured
(ignored after Baptized)
 - Observing hypocrisy in the church
 - Feeling judged by church
 - Misuse of Ellen White
 - Improper parenting and discipleship

**Sister White said it—
Well . . . I never really read it,
But someone said she said it,
So of course it must be so.**

**To prove my point, I'll quote it,
Though I can't show where she wrote it.
But someone said she said it.
And that's all I need to know.**



**It saves a lot of time for me,
If I just listen carefully,
When others speak of Sister White,
And what they say she said—**

**Though I can't repeat it word for word,
I'll tell you what I think I heard,
And quote you things from Sister White
No one's ever read – that really are absurd**



Minor Factor
Secondary Factor
Primary Factor

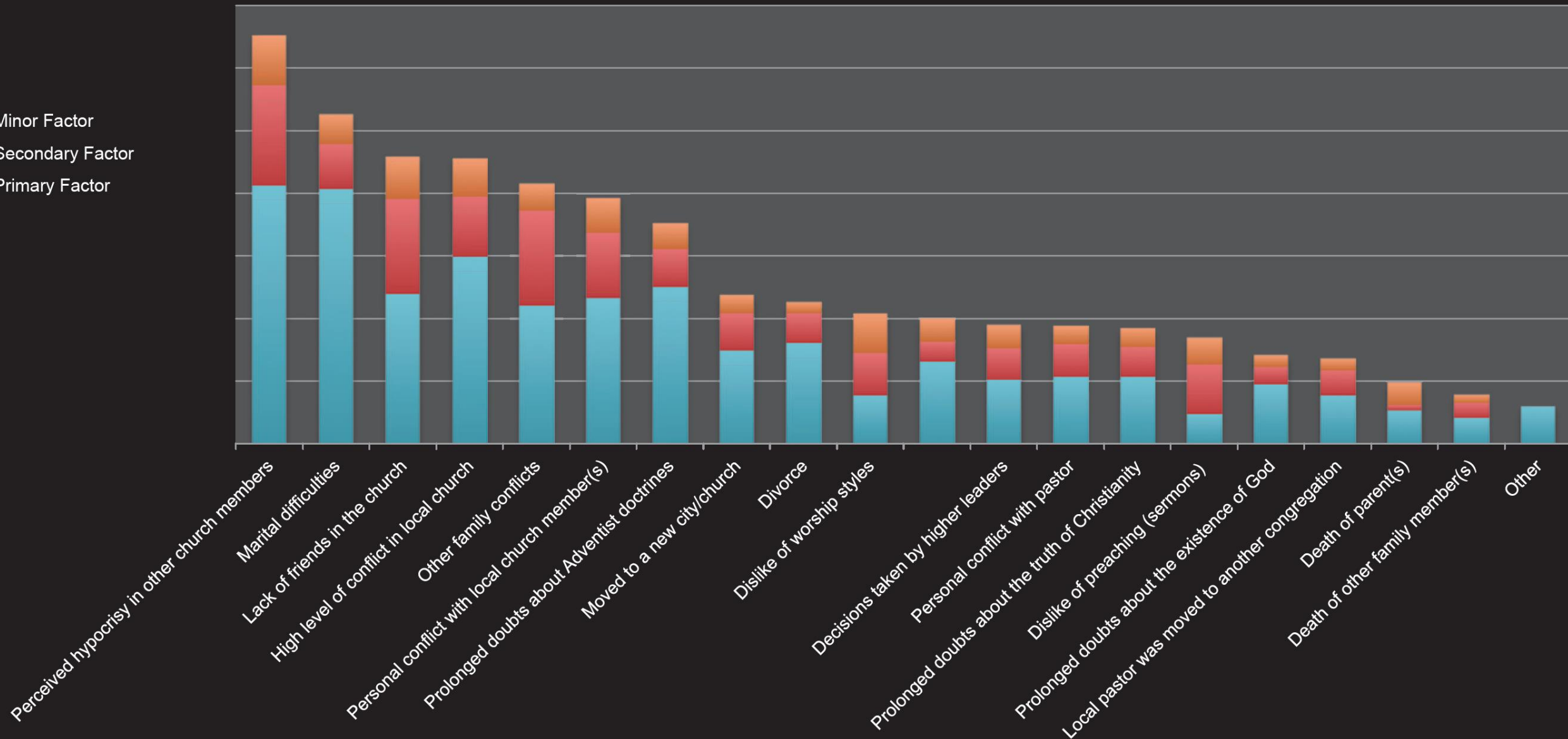


Table 22: Do you still believe in the authority of Scripture, as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church? -- Former Members

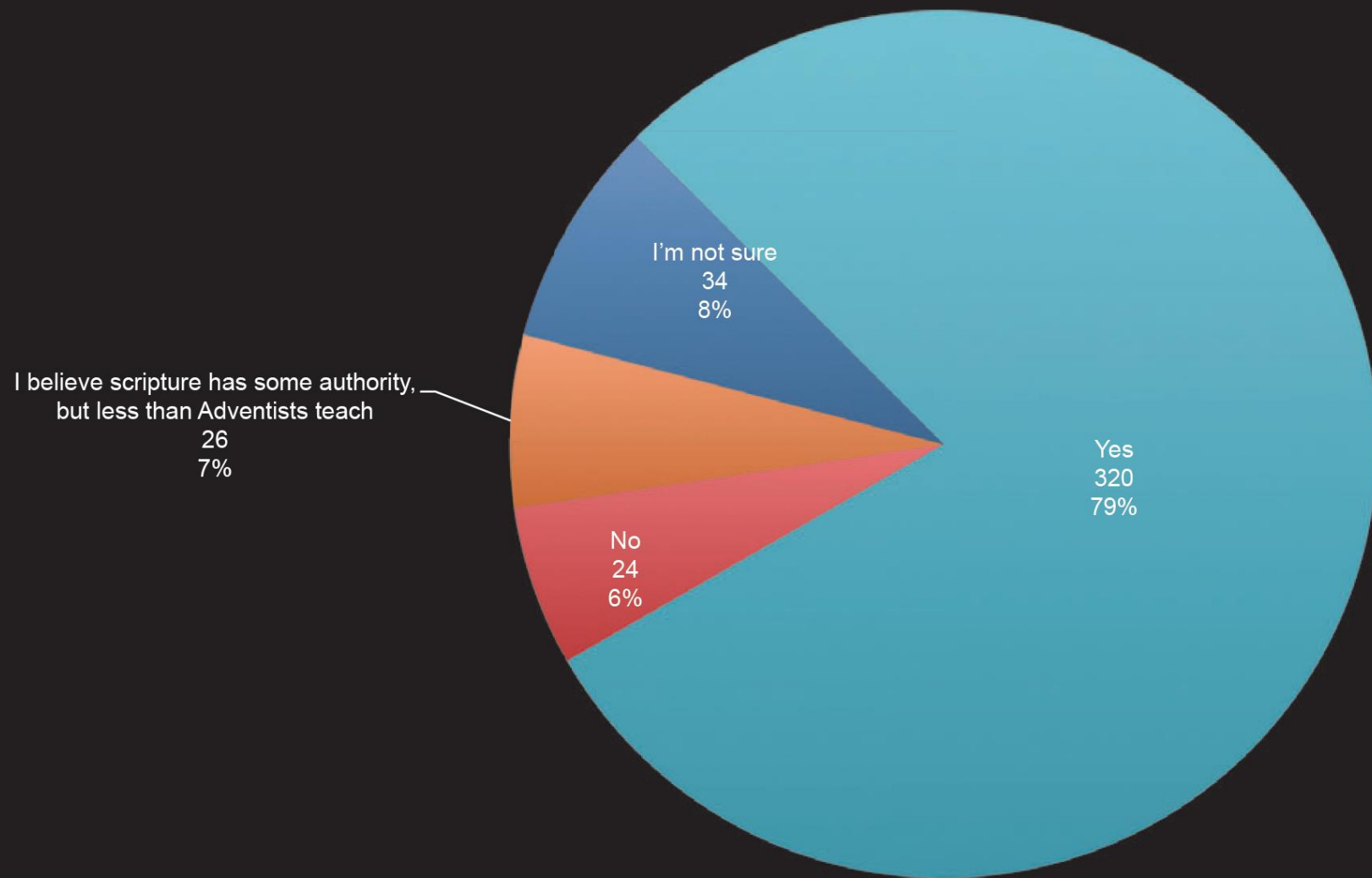
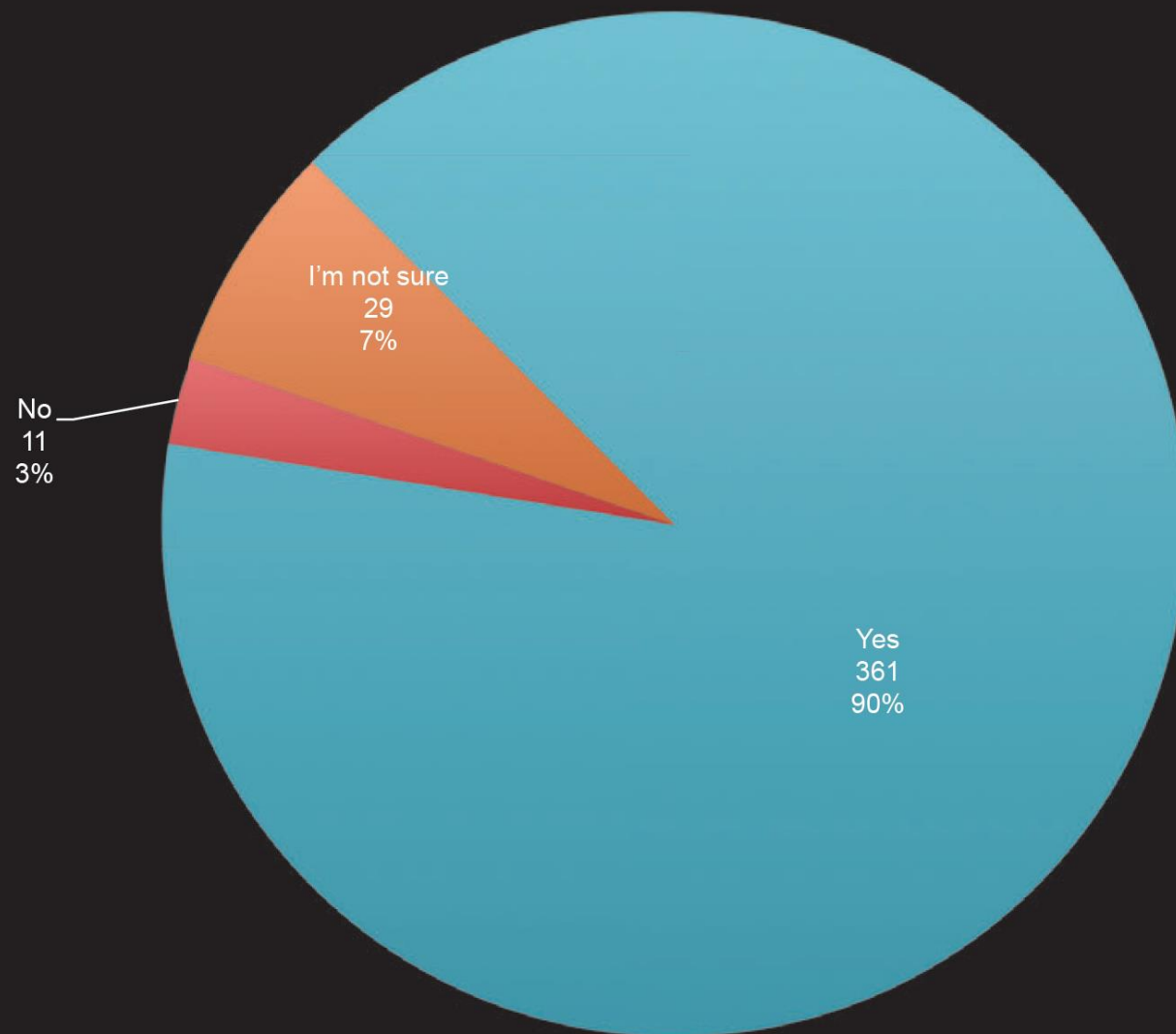
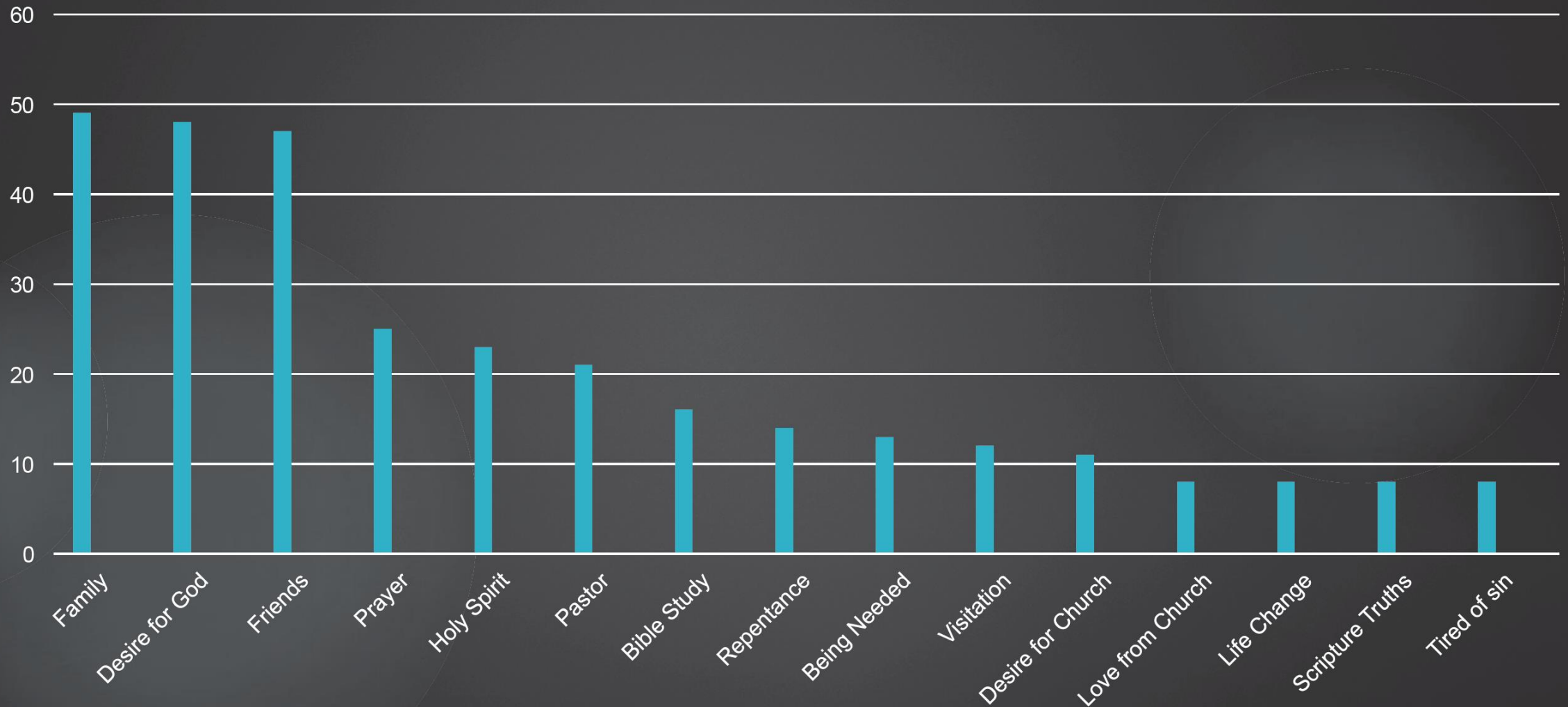


Table 23: Do you still believe there are benefits to Bible study? -- Former Members



Reasons for reconnecting with the Seventh-day Adventist Church: *Returned*



Consider — A few DOs:

- **Get to the point of your visit within a few minutes.**
- **Listen kindly; listen interestedly; listen calmly.**
- **Always close your visit with prayer.**
- **Give a brief invitation to come out to the evening seminar meeting or to church the next Sabbath.**
- **Leave immediately after prayer.**

Consider — A few DON'Ts:

- Don't betray their confidence.
- Don't act shocked.
- Don't defend anyone.
- Don't stay long—ten to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.
- Don't dismiss backsliders as hopeless.
- Don't argue about church standards.
Nurture—don't argue—them back.

Luke 10:30-35

