

Be Obedient

1 John

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We are sheep.



Sheep tend to stray.



Lost sheep get lonely.



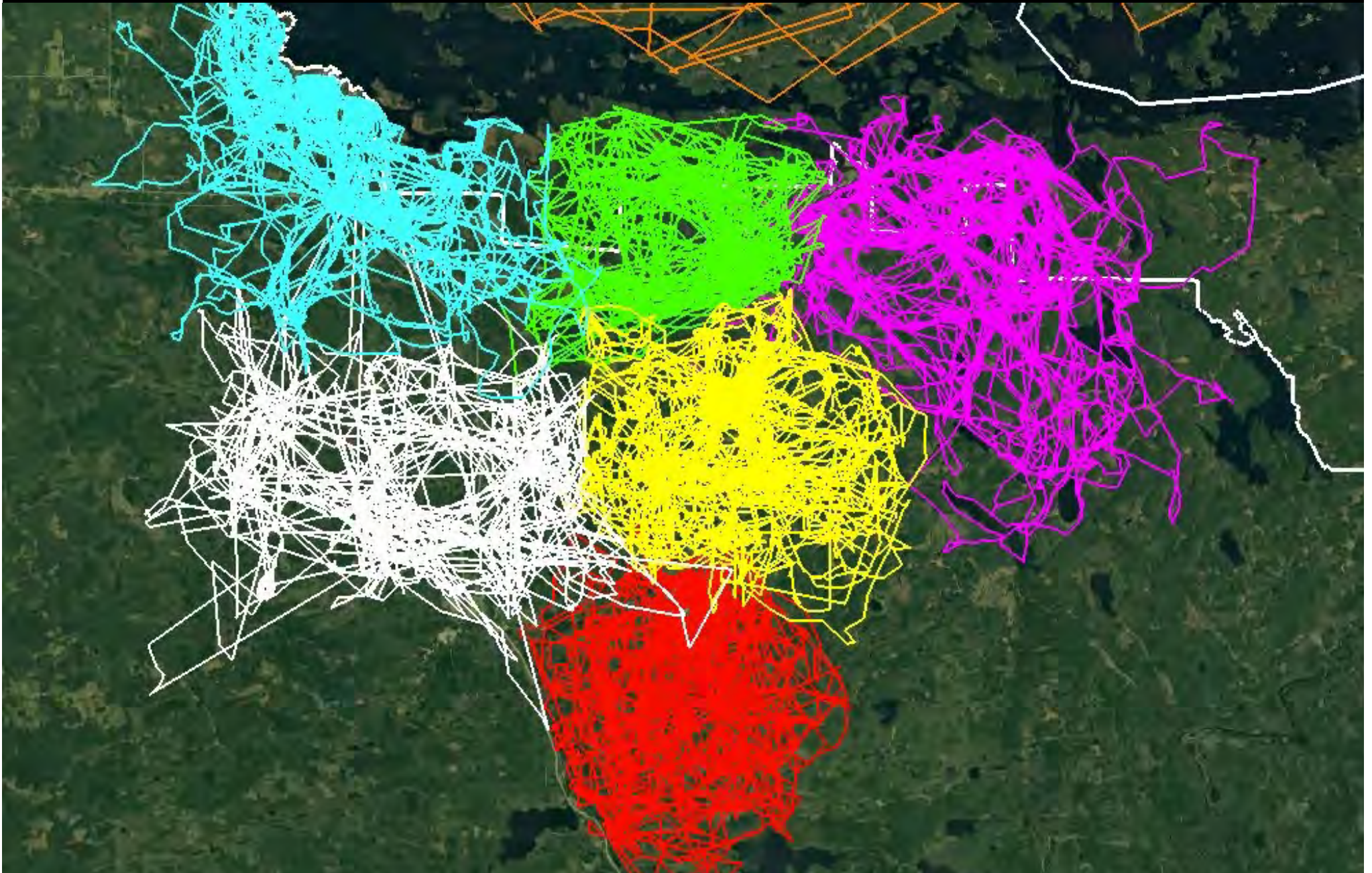
Sheep tend to return.



But straying has a price.



GPS Tracking Shows How Much Wolf Packs Avoid Each Other's Range



Have you strayed?

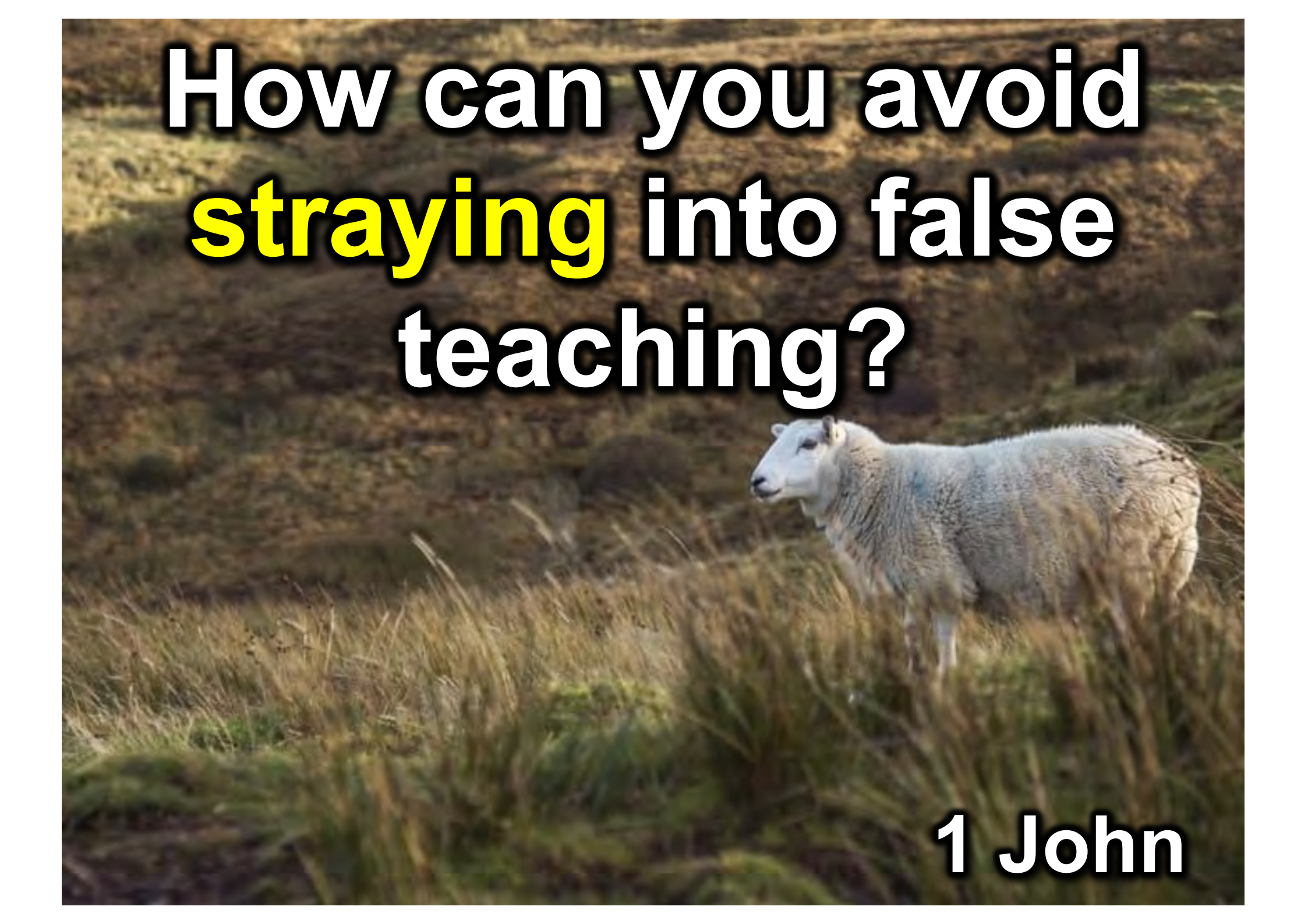
Buying?

Porn?

Law v. Grace?

Imbalanced?



A white sheep is standing in a field of tall, dry grass. The sheep is facing left, looking towards the horizon. The background is a hilly landscape with more grass and some trees in the distance. The lighting suggests it might be late afternoon or early morning.

**How can you avoid
straying into false
teaching?**

1 John

Theme

23

**Obedience in Love Combats
Early Gnosticism**

1 John

**How can the
existence of creation
be explained?**

Gnosticism: Perplexing Questions

**What is the
origin of evil?**

*How can a holy
God create a
universe with sin?*

Chart 43

Essential Components of Gnosticism

- (1) Dualism*
- (2) Emanations*
- (3) Knowledge*

God
(Pure Spirit)

Demiurge

World

Man



Chart 44

Gnosticism's Concept of Salvation

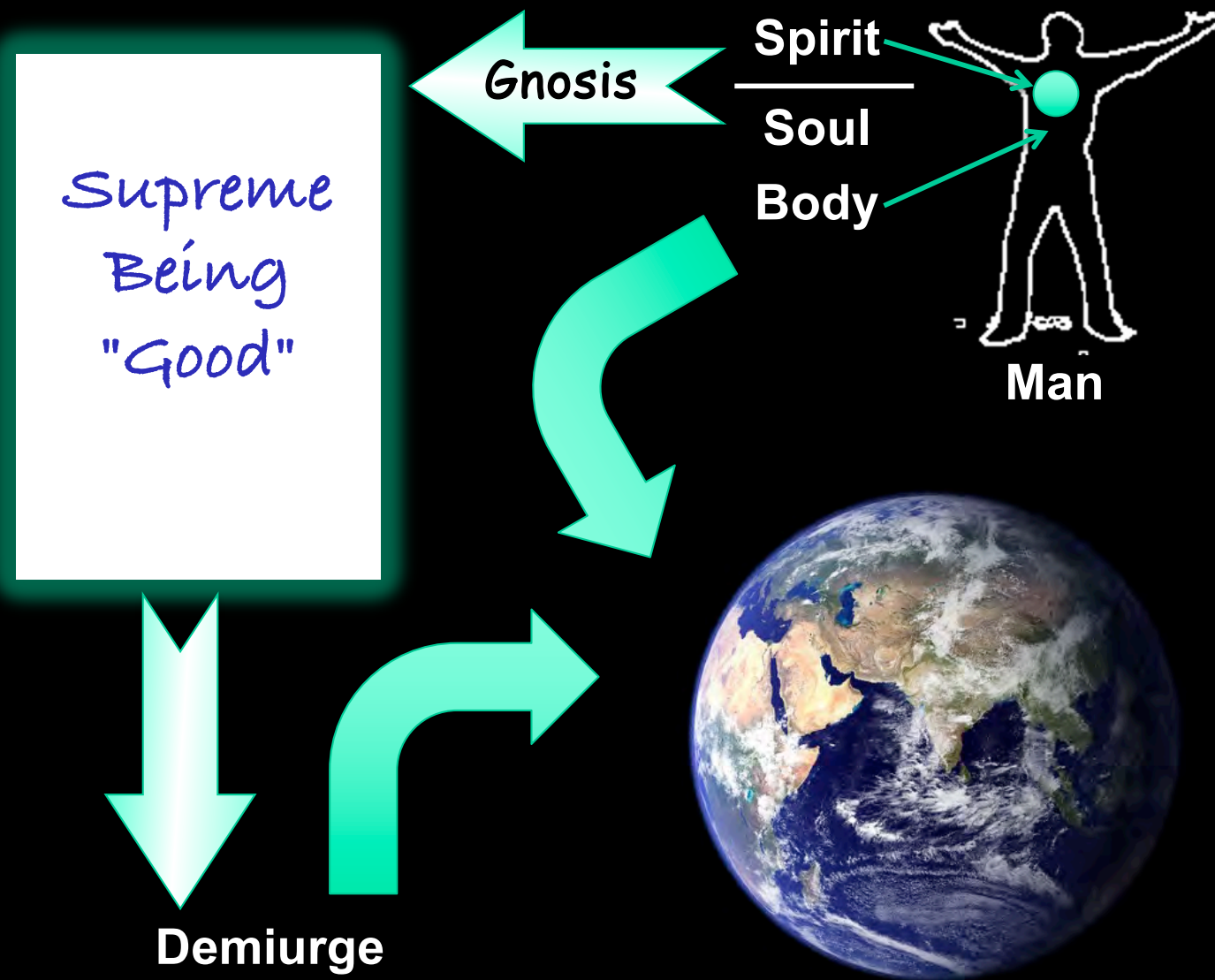
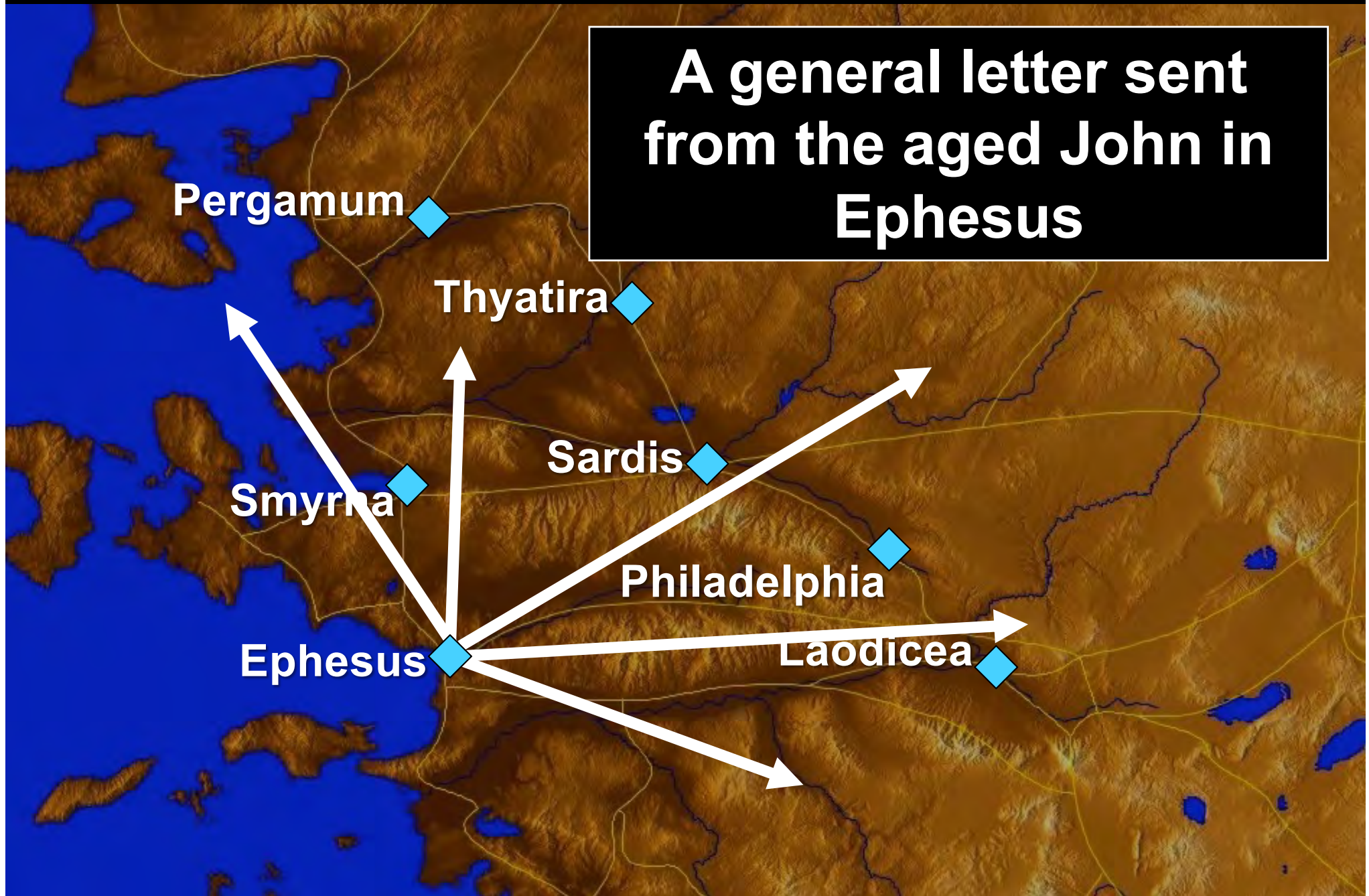


Chart 45

Origin/Destination

291

**A general letter sent
from the aged John in
Ephesus**

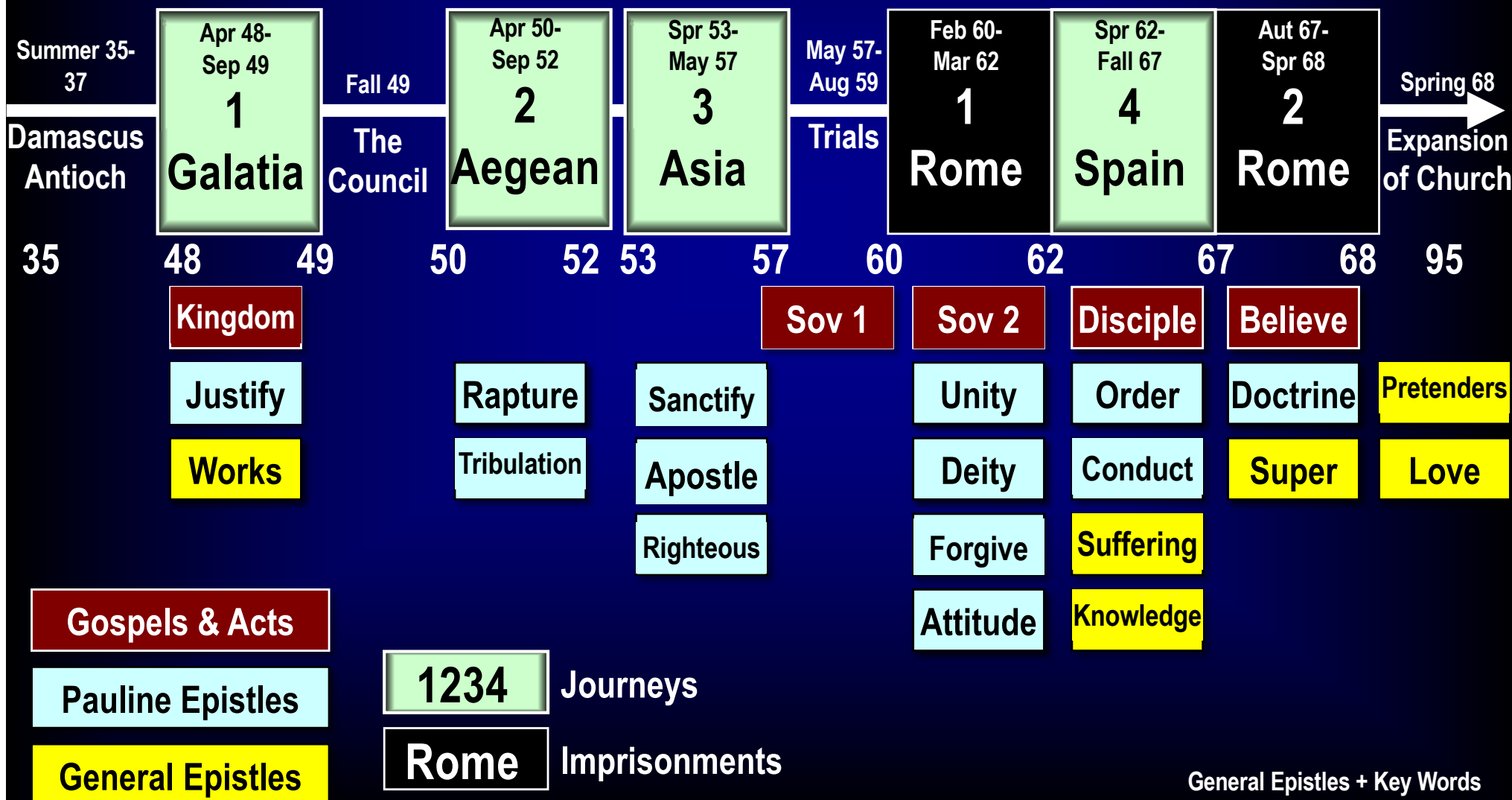


NT Overview (General + Key Words)

38
124
39-41

"To the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8)

Acts 9 13 14 15 16 18 21 27 28



John's letter has at least five stated purposes:

1. to promote **fellowship** (1:3),
2. to produce **joy** (1:4),
3. to protect **holiness** (2:1),
4. to prevent **heresy** (2:26), and
5. to provide **assurance** of salvation (5:13)

Argument



- This makes 1 John **hard to sum up** in one theme or purpose and difficult to outline, especially since the subjects overlap.
- But the general theme of obedience, especially shown by **loving** others, **sums up all** of the above purposes.
- These benefits are many, but the **immediate benefit** of obedience by love is its **protection** from early Gnosticism.

1 John – Summary Chart

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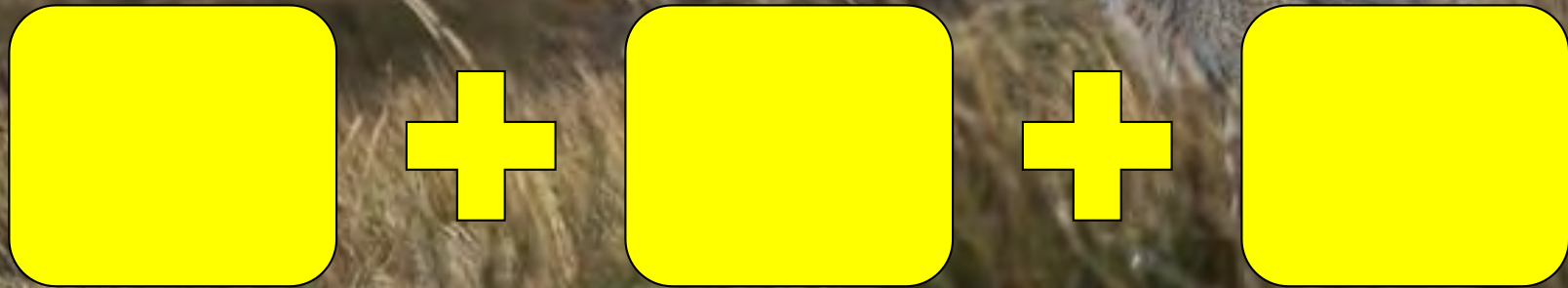
Obedience in Love Combats Early Gnosticism

Necessity of Obedience	Characteristics of Love	Benefits of Obedience
Chapters 1–2	3:1–5:3	5:4-21
Humanity of Christ Prerequisites to obedience Hindrances to obedience	Don't sin Don't hate believers Compassion Confidence before God Obey apostolic teaching Care for believers Obey God's commands	Victory over the world Assurance of salvation Guidance in prayer Freedom from sin Fidelity to God

Ephesus to Asia Minor Churches

AD 85-95

How can you avoid
straying into false
teaching?



1 John

HOW CAN YOU...

1 John

Obey

God's commands

(1-2)



AVOID

STRAYING

...INTO FALSE TEACHING?

1 John 1

I. Obey God's commands (1 John 1–2).

**Believe in Christ's humanity for
fellowship and joy (1:1-4).**





"We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life" (1 John 1:1 NLT).

Gnostics Taught a "Secret Knowledge"

Two Types Addressed in 1 John

Docetic Gnosticism

From *dokeo*, "to seem"
(Christ only *seemed* to
be a man)

Matter is Evil

Depreciated Materialism

Denied Christ's Humanity

Touched Jesus (1:1)

Led to Asceticism

Immorality exalted

Cerinthian Gnosticism

From Cerinthus, founder in Asia
(Christ only *seemed* to be
God)

Spirit is Good

Exalted Knowledge (*gnosis*)

Denied Christ's Deity

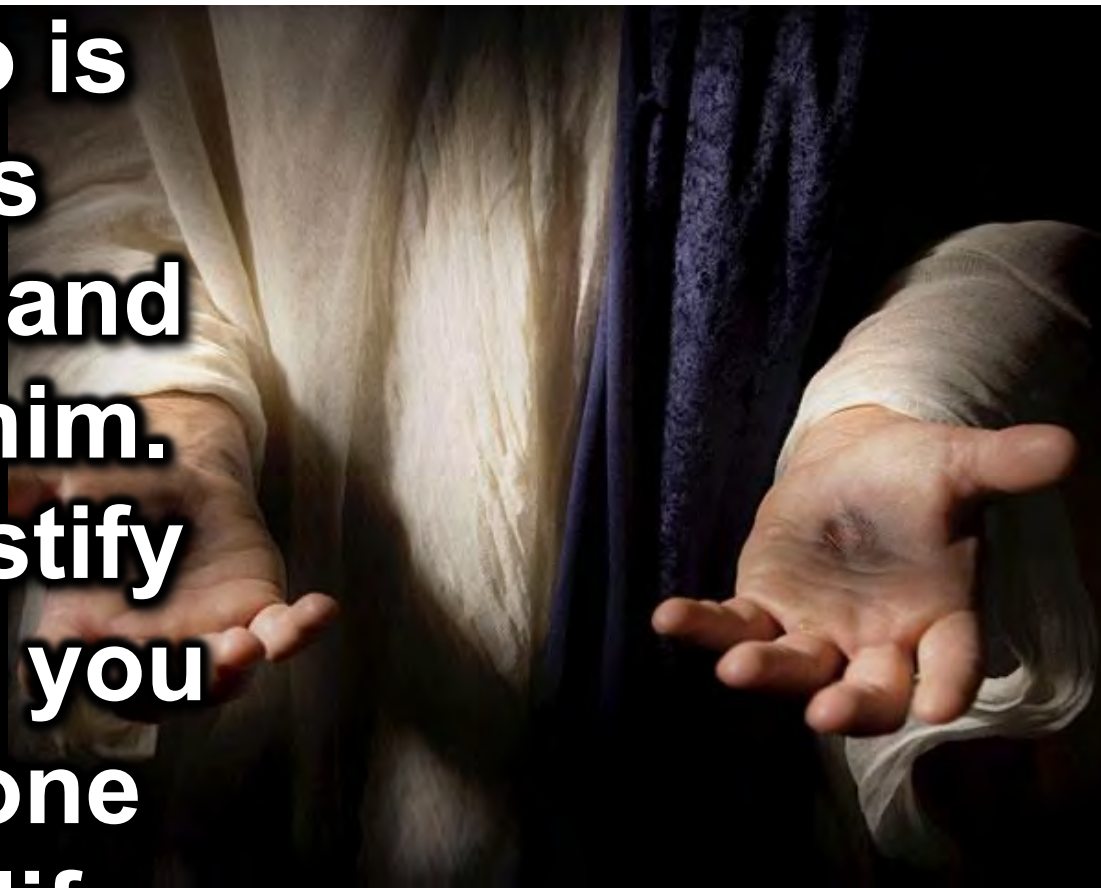
Water & Blood (5:6)

Led to Pride

Education exalted

**"This one who is
life itself was
revealed to us, and
we have seen him.
And now we testify
and proclaim to you
that he is the one
who is eternal life.**

**He was with the
Father, and then he
was revealed to us"
(1 John 1:2 NLT).**



"We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy" (1 John 1:3-4 NLT).

John taught that God showcased Jesus

291
-292

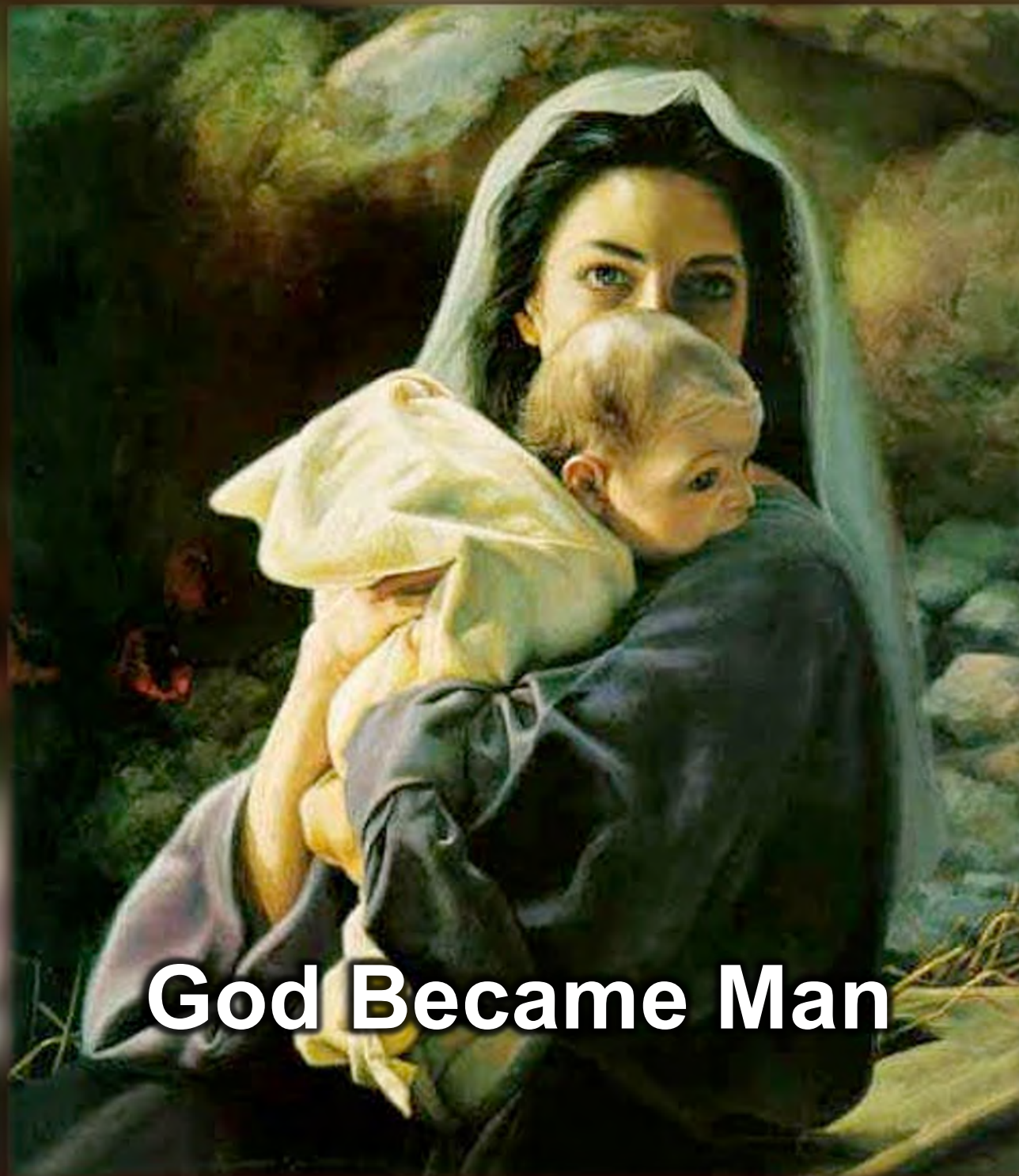


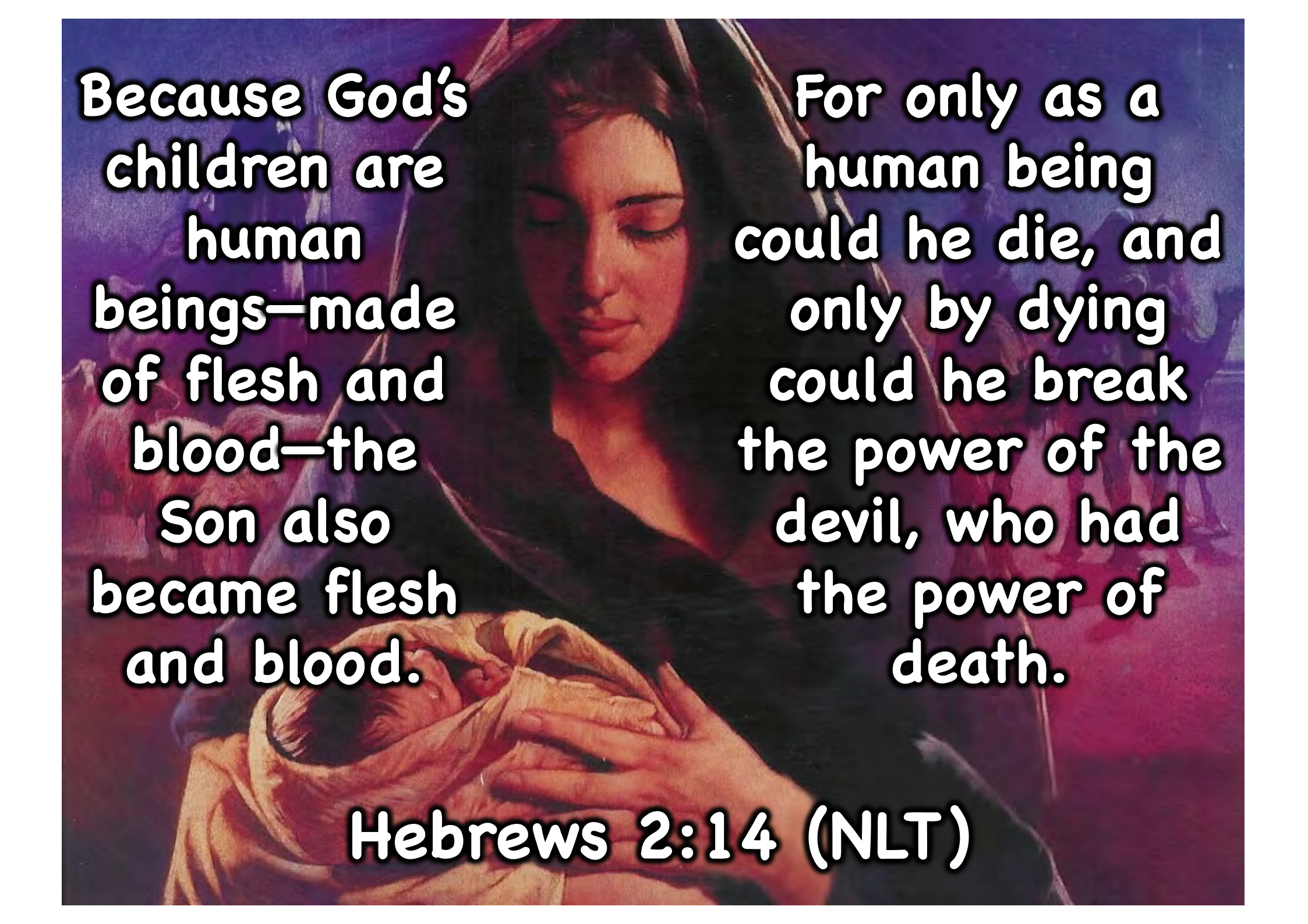
JC Hall



God did the same thing when He sent Jesus Christ into the world. That's when the Word of Life was moved from behind the counters, out of the drawers and placed in a display case for all the world to see, handle and admire.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us" (1 John 1:1-2).



A painting of the Virgin Mary holding the infant Jesus. Mary is depicted with a serene expression, her eyes closed, and her hands gently cradling the baby. The baby is wrapped in a yellow cloth. The background is a soft, warm glow, suggesting a peaceful, divine atmosphere. The overall color palette is dominated by warm tones like gold, brown, and soft reds, with a hint of blue in the background.

**Because God's
children are
human
beings—made
of flesh and
blood—the
Son also
became flesh
and blood.**

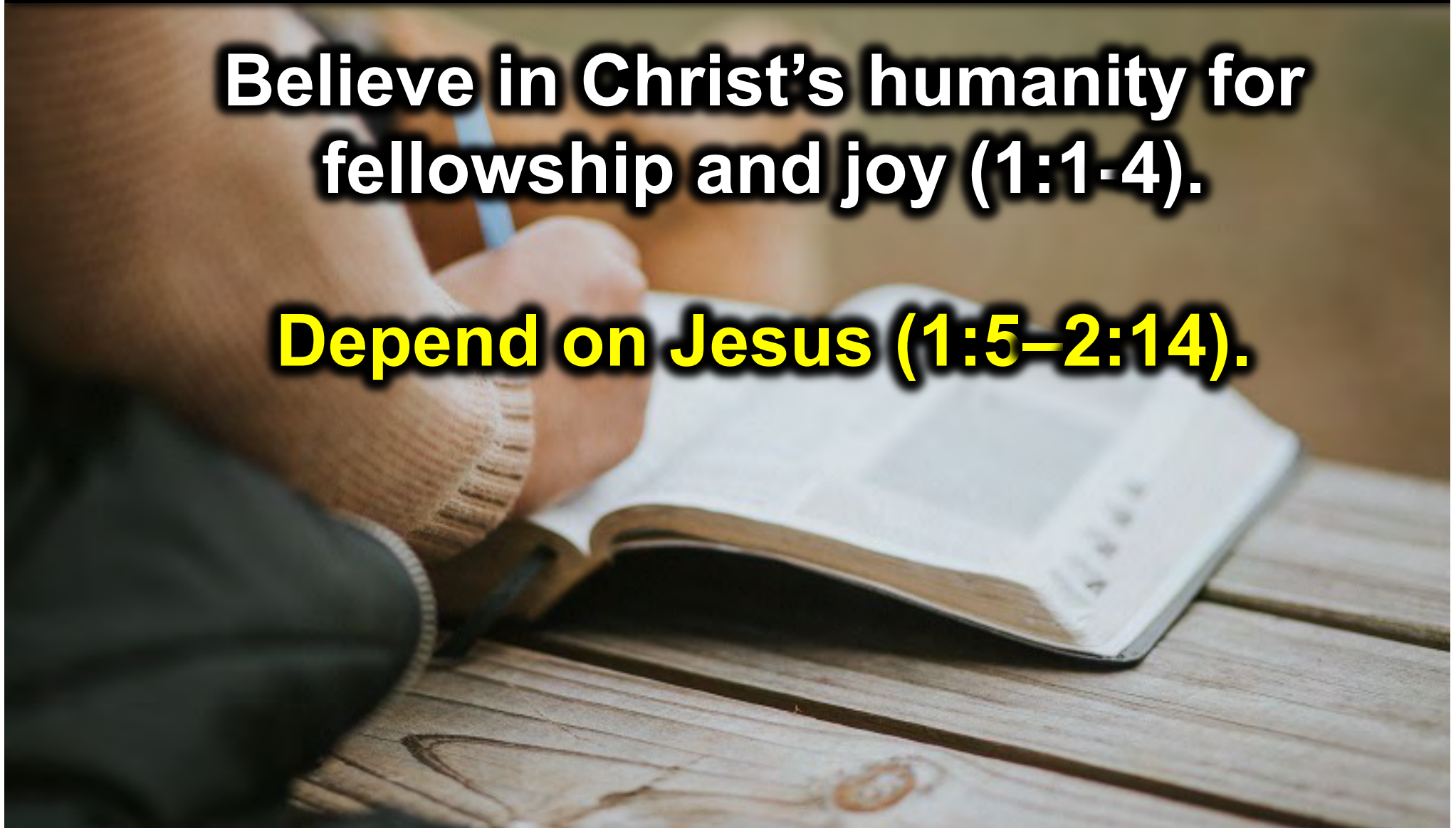
**For only as a
human being
could he die, and
only by dying
could he break
the power of the
devil, who had
the power of
death.**

Hebrews 2:14 (NLT)

I. Obey God's commands (1 John 1–2).

**Believe in Christ's humanity for
fellowship and joy (1:1-4).**

Depend on Jesus (1:5–2:14).




Light

Darkness



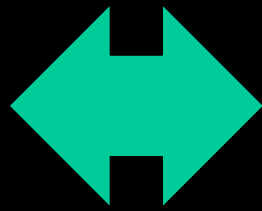
**"This is the message we heard from
Jesus and now declare to you:
God is light, and there is no darkness in
him at all" (1 John 1:5 NLT).**

**"So we are lying
if we say we
have fellowship
with God but go
on living in
spiritual
darkness; we are
not practicing
the truth.**

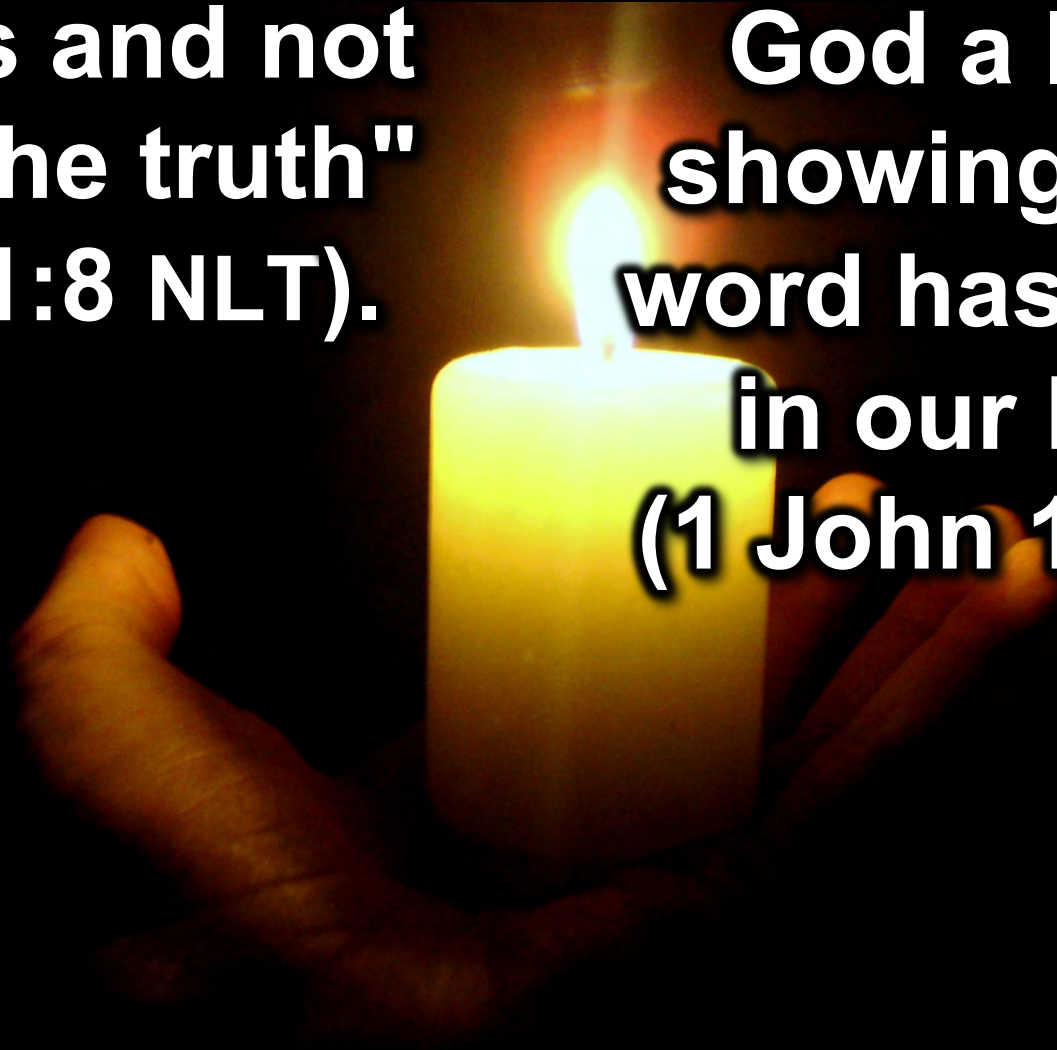


**⁷ But if we are
living in the light,
as God is in the
light, then we have
fellowship with
each other, and the
blood of Jesus, his
Son, cleanses us
from all sin"
(1 John 1:6-7 NLT).**

**"If we claim we
have no sin, we
are only fooling
ourselves and not
living in the truth"
(1 John 1:8 NLT).**



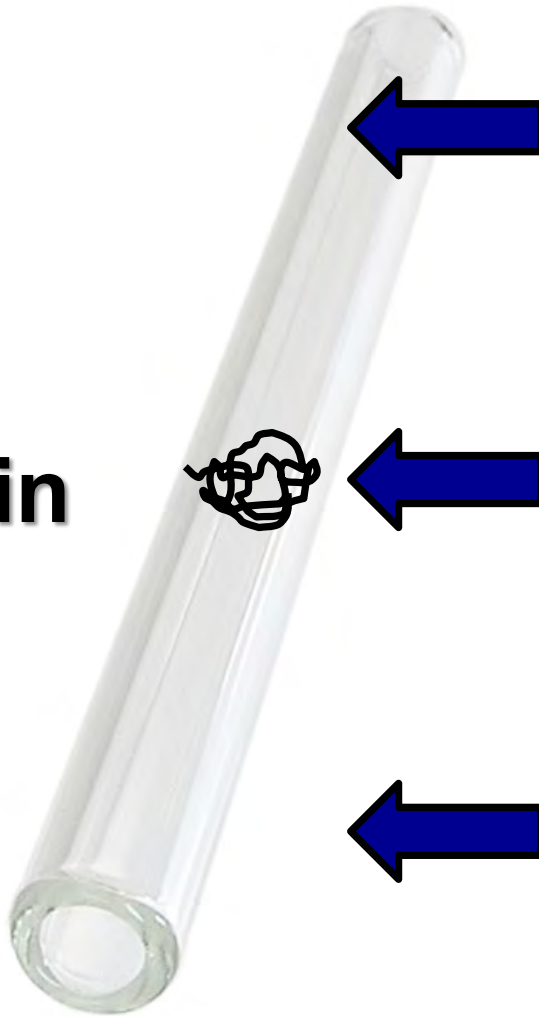
**"If we claim we
have not sinned,
we are calling
God a liar and
showing that his
word has no place
in our hearts"
(1 John 1:10 NLT).**



NT Forgiveness of Sin

121b

Sin



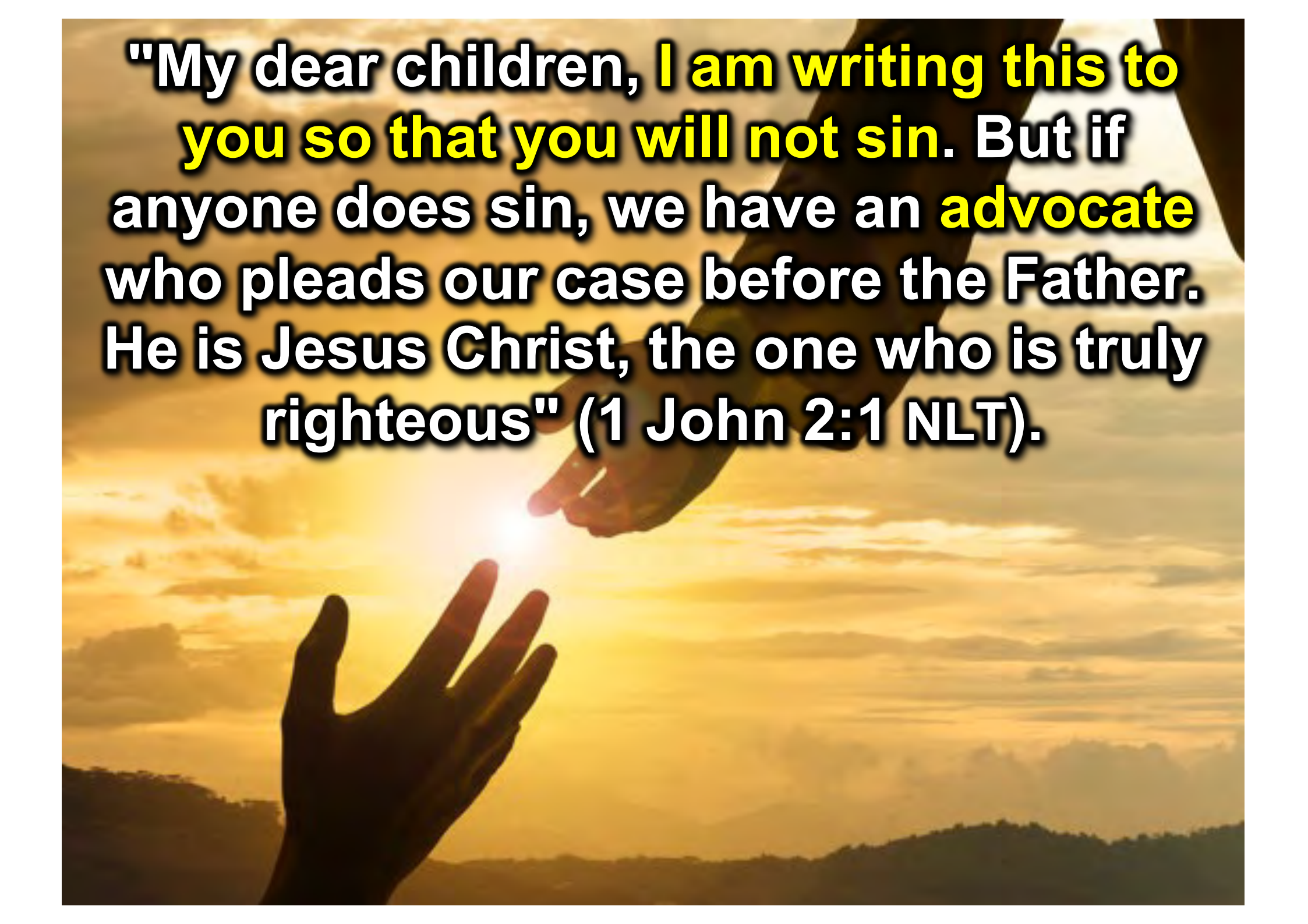
Pipe
(new)

Clog
(hindrance)

"If we confess our sins,
He is faithful and righteous
to forgive us our sins and
to cleanse us from all
unrighteousness"
(1 John 1:9 NAU)

Christ's Sacrifice = The Basis
for **Confession** of Sin (sin is
forgiven to restore fellowship
but relationship has never
been threatened)

1 John 2

The background of the image shows a sunset or sunrise with a warm, golden-orange sky and silhouetted clouds. In the foreground, two hands are visible: one hand is reaching down from the upper right, and another hand is reaching up from the lower left. Their fingers are just inches apart, creating a sense of tension and divine spark. The text is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

"My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous" (1 John 2:1 NLT).

“Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God’s right hand, pleading for us.”



■ **Romans 8:34 (NLT)**

**"He himself is the sacrifice that atones
for our sins—and not only our sins but
the sins of all the world"
(1 John 2:2 NLT).**



I. Obey God's commands (1 John 1–2).

**Believe in Christ's humanity for
fellowship and joy (1:1-4).**

Depend on Jesus (1:5–2:14).

**Avoid two hindrances to obedience to
fight early Gnosticism (2:15-29).**

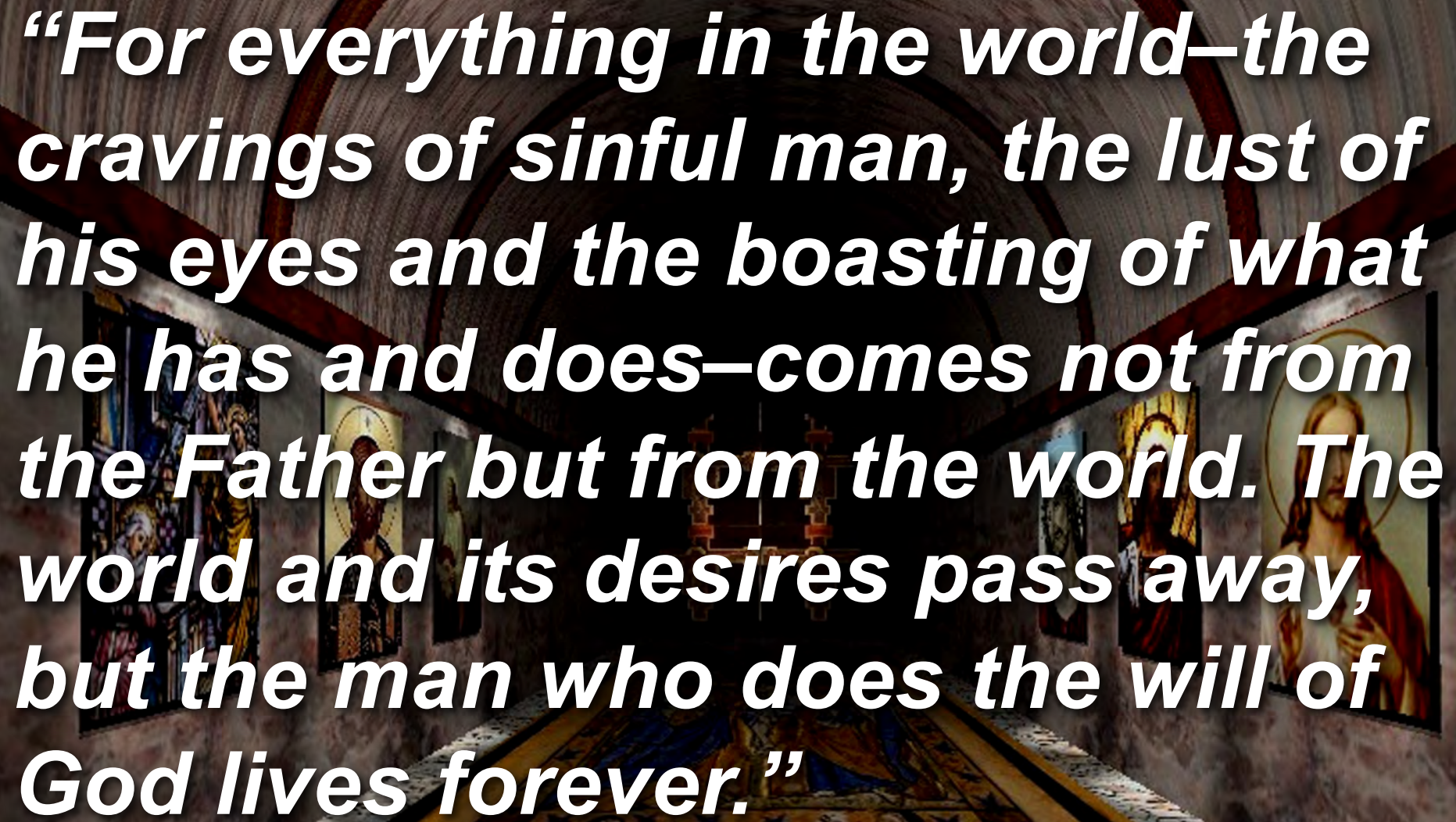
"Do not love the world" (1 John 2:15)





“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

1 John 2:15 (NIV)

The background image is a perspective view of a long, vaulted stone corridor. The walls are covered in religious murals, including a large one of Jesus Christ on the right and several smaller ones on the left. The floor is made of stone tiles, and a large, colorful floor painting of two figures in robes is visible in the distance. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

***“For everything in the world—the
cravings of sinful man, the lust of
his eyes and the boasting of what
he has and does—comes not from
the Father but from the world. The
world and its desires pass away,
but the man who does the will of
God lives forever.”***

1 John 2:16-17 (NIV)



**"...for the world
and its desires are
passing away"
(1 John 2:17a)**



The Things of the World

Comparing Some Key Texts

World (1 John 2:15-16)	Sources of Temptation	Eve (Gen. 3)	Christ (Matt. 4)
"Cravings of sinful man"	Ungodly bodily desires (sex outside marriage, gluttony, etc.)	"Good for food"	Stones to bread
"Lust of the eyes"	Greed, coveting (10th commandment)	"Pleasing to the eye"	Possess all kingdoms
"Boasting of what he has and does"	Pride & boasting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • occupation • position • worldly advantages • etc. 	"Desirable for gaining wisdom"	Acclaim by men ("throw yourself from the temple")

***Avoid two hindrances to obedience
to fight early Gnosticism (2:15-29).***

Worldliness
(2:15-17)

Deception
(2:18-29)

"Dear children, the last hour is here. You have heard that the Antichrist is coming, and already many such antichrists have appeared. From this we know that the last hour has come. ¹⁹ These people left our churches, but they never really belonged with us; otherwise they would have stayed with us. When they left, it proved that they did not belong with us" (1 John 2:18-19 NLT).



The Anointing of the Spirit

*"But **you have an anointing** from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth...²⁷ As for you, **the anointing you received from him remains in you**, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him" (1 John 2:20, 27)*

Ryrie on the Anointing

*"The difference between the anointing and indwelling seems to lie in their distinct purposes. The **indwelling** brings the **presence** of God into the life of the believer. The **anointing**, as far as the believer is concerned, is that he **might be taught** (1 John 2:20, 27). Actually, this seems to be the only purpose specified in the believer's case.*

Key Verse



John's Key Purpose in Writing
"I am writing these things to you about those **who are trying to lead you astray**... And now, dear children, **continue in him**, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming" (1 John 2:26, 28).

Oprah Winfrey's Influence

**22 million viewers
each day!**

**Named most
influential celebrity
two years in a row
(2012-2013)**



Oprah Leads Millions Astray

"All that is divine, my heart is open to you..."

"The universe is not interested in your struggles and your pain and your sorrow..."

"My heart is open to find the flow, the flow, the flow, the flow that is my life."



Oprah Leads Millions Astray



“I am not talking about religion. I am a Christian. That is my faith. I'm not asking you to be a Christian. If you want to be one I can show you how. But it is not required. I have respect for all faiths. All faiths. But what I'm talking about is not faith or religion. I'm talking about spirituality,” Winfrey said.

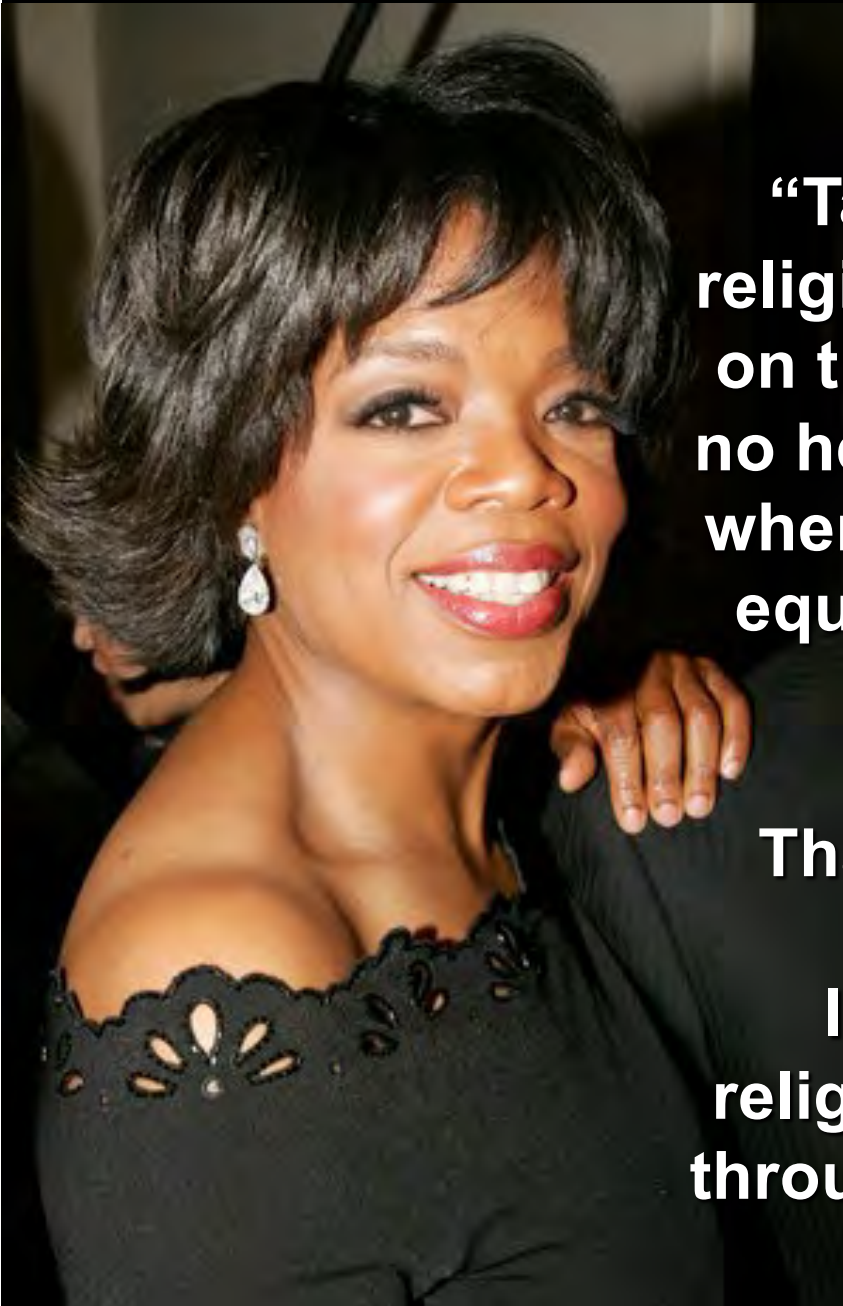
Oprah Leads Millions Astray

One commented on her...

“Take a few moments and imagine a religion where Jesus did not come to die on the cross, where there is no heaven, no hell, no sin, no salvation, no doctrine, where all spiritual paths in the world are equally valid and where ‘god’ is in you and in everything else you see.

That is the religion of Oprah Winfrey.

It is also the New Age ‘one world religion’ that many other spiritual gurus throughout the world have been trying to bring to fruition.”



HOW CAN YOU...

1 John

Obey

God's commands

(1–2)

Love

others

(3:1–5:3)



AVOID



STRAYING



...INTO FALSE TEACHING?

1 John 3

II. **Love** others (3:1–5:3).

Don't sin (3:1-10)



How much can a believer sin (1 John 3:4)?

NLT (cf. NIV)

"Everyone who
sins is
breaking God's
law, for all sin
is contrary to
the law of
God."

Absolute

NAU (cf. NET)

"Everyone who
practices sin
also practices
lawlessness;
and sin is
lawlessness."

Habitual

**Both
translations are
possible in the
Greek text.**

**However,
wouldn't it be
lawless to sin
even once?**

How much can a believer sin (1 John 3:6)?

NLT (cf. NIV)

"Anyone who continues to live in him will not sin. But anyone who **keeps on sinning does not know him or understand who he is."**

Habitual

NAU (cf. NET)

"No one who abides in Him **sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him."**

Absolute

Each of the preceding four translations are inconsistent in rendering verses 4 and 6.

But NLT, NAU, and NET all give the habitual sense to verse 6—all but the NIV, that reads, “He who does what is sinful is of the devil...”

**BOTTOM LINE:
We sin when we follow Satan
rather than God!**

II. **Love** others (3:1–5:3).

Don't sin (3:1-10)

Don't hate believers (3:11-15)





**"This is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another"
(1 John 3:11 NLT).**

Hatred of people is from Satan.

“DARKNESS
cannot drive out
DARKNESS
only light can do that.

HATE
cannot drive out
HATE
only love can do that.”
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



II. **Love** others (3:1–5:3).

Don't sin (3:1-10)

Don't hate believers (3:11-15)

Show compassion (3:16-20)



"We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person?" (1 John 3:16-17 NLT).

"Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. ¹⁹ Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God. ²⁰ Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and he knows everything" (1 John 3:18-20 NLT).

II. Love others (3:1–5:3).

Don't sin (3:1-10)

Don't hate believers (3:11-15)

Show compassion (3:16-20)

Be confident before God (3:21-24)



**"Dear friends, if we don't feel guilty, we
can come to God with bold confidence"
(1 John 3:21 NLT).**



**And we will receive from him whatever
we ask because we obey him and do the
things that please him"
(1 John 3:22 NLT)."**



"And this is his commandment: We must believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he commanded us. ²⁴ Those who obey God's commandments remain in fellowship with him, and he with them. And we know he lives in us because the Spirit he gave us lives in us"
(1 John 3:23-24 NLT).

1 John 4

II. Love others (3:1–5:3).

Don't sin (3:1-10)

Don't hate believers (3:11-15)

Show compassion (3:16-20)

Be confident before God (3:21-24)

Obey apostolic teaching (4:1-6)



A magnifying glass with a black handle and silver-colored frame is positioned diagonally, focusing on the text 'test the spirits'. The text is written in a large, bold, brown, cursive-style font. The background of the image features a dark, smoky red sky with lighter red, cloud-like patterns. The magnifying glass's lens is centered over the text, and its handle extends towards the bottom left corner of the frame.

test the
spirits

1 John 4:1

"Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

²This is how we know if they have the Spirit of God: If a person claiming to be a prophet acknowledges that Jesus Christ came in a real body, that person has the Spirit of God"
(1 John 4:1-2 NLT).

"But if someone claims to be a prophet and does not acknowledge the truth about Jesus, that person is not from God. Such a person has the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming into the world and indeed is already here"
(1 John 4:3 NLT).

"But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world.

⁵ Those people belong to this world, so they speak from the world's viewpoint, and the world listens to them"

(1 John 4:4-5 NLT).

"But we belong to God, and those who know God listen to us. If they do not belong to God, they do not listen to us. That is how we know if someone has the Spirit of truth or the spirit of deception"
(1 John 4:6 NLT).

II. Love others (3:1–5:3).

Don't sin (3:1-10)

Don't hate believers (3:11-15)

Show compassion (3:16-20)

Be confident before God (3:21-24)

Obey apostolic teaching (4:1-6)

Care for believers (4:7-21)



"Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. ⁸ But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:7-8 NLT).



1 John 5

II. Love others (3:1–5:3).

Don't sin (3:1-10)

Don't hate believers (3:11-15)

Show compassion (3:16-20)

Be confident before God (3:21-24)

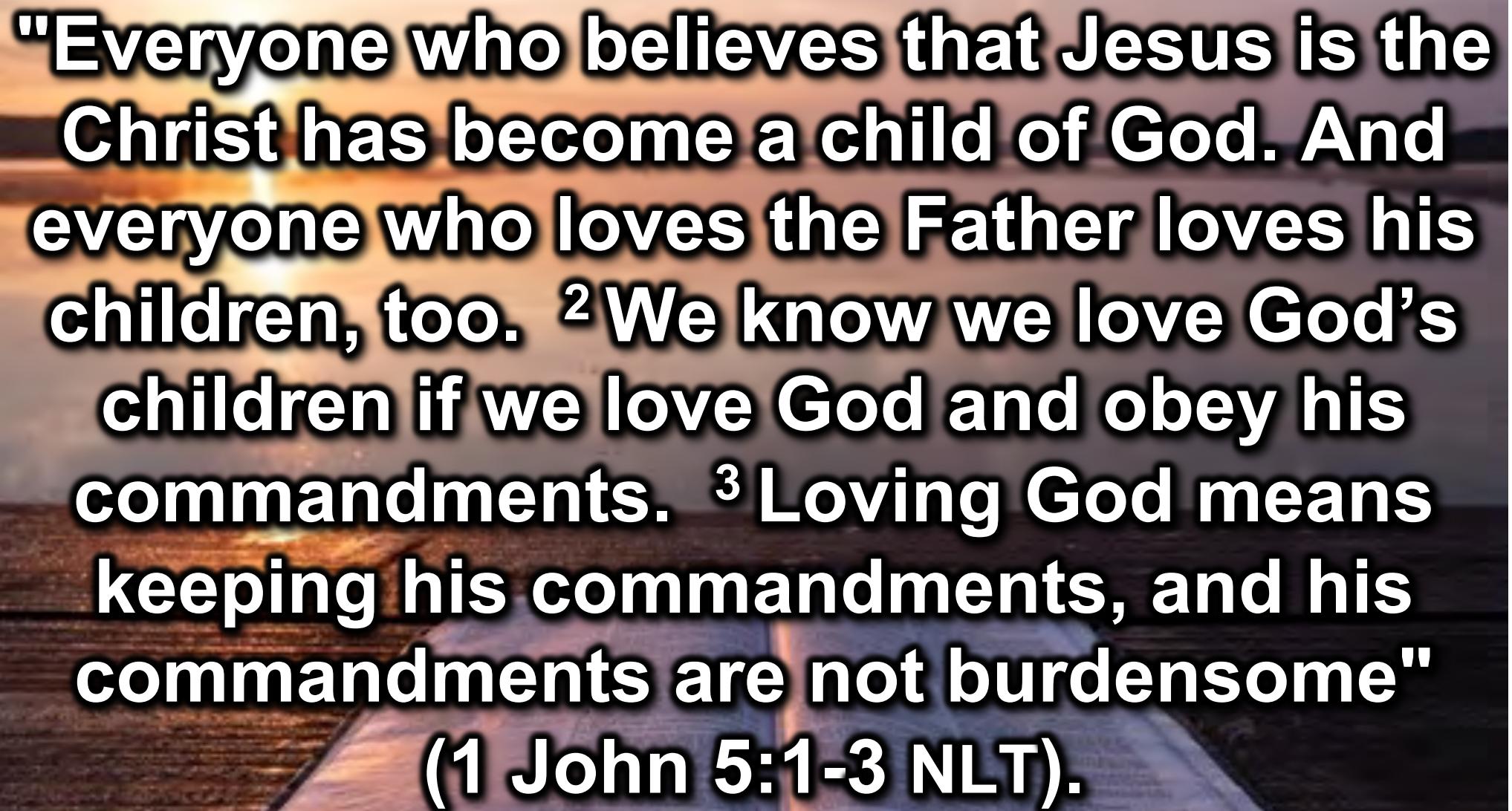
Obey apostolic teaching (4:1-6)

Care for believers (4:7-21)

Obey God's commands (5:1-3)



"Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has become a child of God. And everyone who loves the Father loves his children, too. ² We know we love God's children if we love God and obey his commandments. ³ Loving God means keeping his commandments, and his commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:1-3 NLT).

An open Bible is shown from a high angle, resting on a dark wooden surface. The pages are slightly aged and the text is visible. In the background, a warm sunset or sunrise is visible over a body of water, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a soft, golden glow. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual.

HOW CAN YOU...

1 John

Obey

**God's commands
(1-2)**

Love

**others
(3:1-5:3)**



AVOID



STRAYING



**Realize that obedience produces
what you really **need**
(5:4-21)**

...INTO FALSE TEACHING?



The Bible says that when we obey God's commands, we benefit. I think we naturally assume that if we look out for our own interests and concerns, we will be happy. But people who sacrifice for others will tell you that seasons of giving are the most rewarding of their lives.

— *Francis Chan* —

III. Realize that obedience produces what you really **need (5:4-21).**

Benefits of Obedience:

Victory over the world system (5:4-5)

**"For every child of God
defeats this evil world,
and we achieve this
victory through our
faith. ⁵ And who can win
this battle against the
world? Only those who
believe that Jesus is the
Son of God"
(1 John 5:4-5 NLT).**

III. Realize that obedience produces what you really **need (5:4-21).**

Benefits of Obedience:

Victory over the world system (5:4-5)

Assurance of salvation (5:6-13)

"And this is what God has testified:
He has given us eternal life, and this life is
in his Son. ¹²**Whoever has the Son has life**;
whoever does not have God's Son does not
have life. ¹³I have written this to you who
believe in the name of the Son of God, so
that you may **know you have eternal life.**"



God's Gift (1 John 5:12-13)

III. Realize that obedience produces what you really **need (5:4-21).**

Benefits of Obedience:

Victory over the world system (5:4-5)

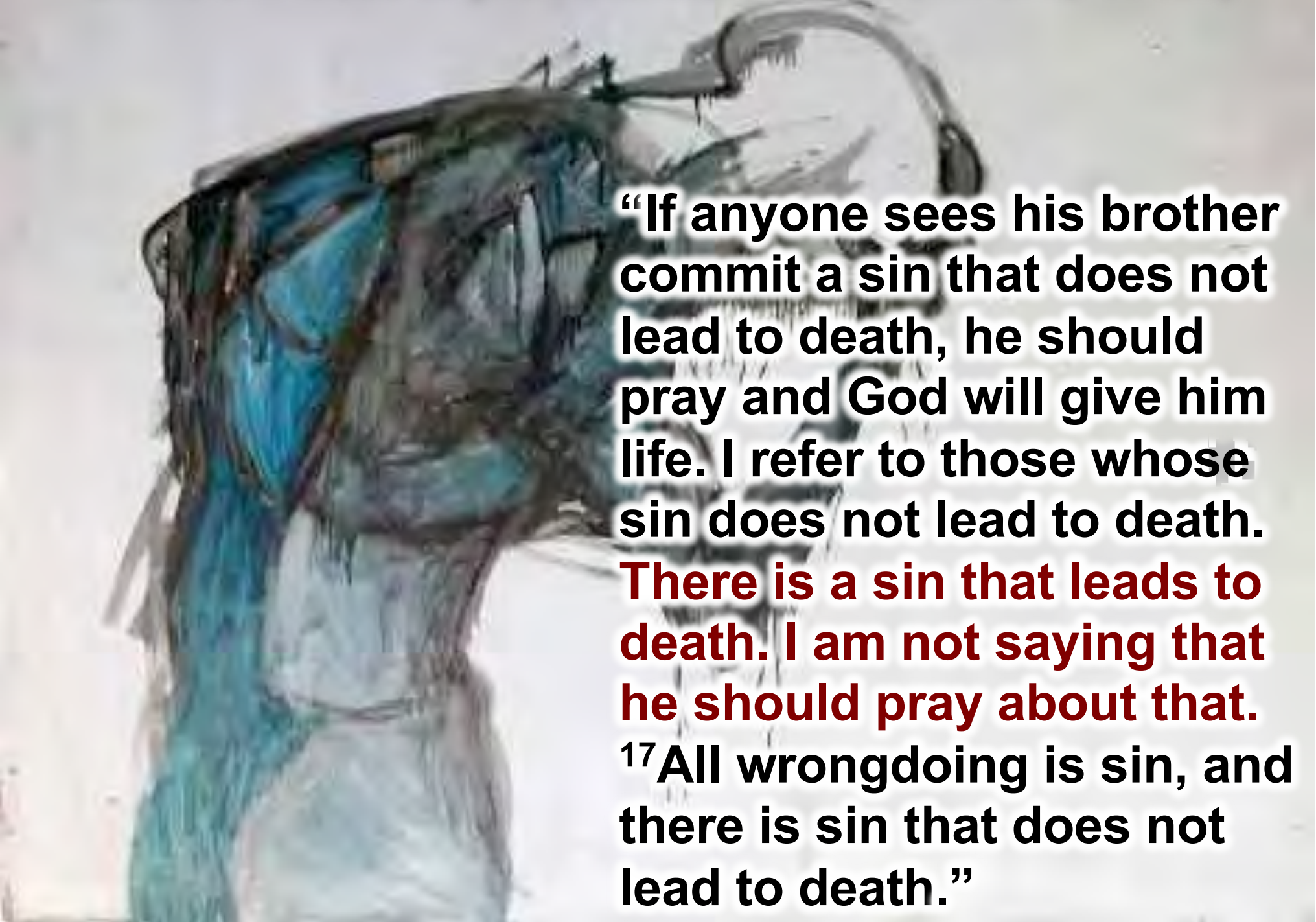
Assurance of salvation (5:6-13)

Guidance in prayer (5:14-17)

"And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. ¹⁵ And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for" (1 John 5:14-15 NLT).



Some sin leads to premature death (1 John 5:16-17 NIV)



“If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death.

There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that.

¹⁷All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death.”

III. Realize that obedience produces what you really **need (5:4-21).**

Benefits of Obedience:

Victory over the world system (5:4-5)

Assurance of salvation (5:6-13)

Guidance in prayer (5:14-17)

Freedom from habitual sin (5:18-20)

How much can a believer sin (1 John 5:18)?

NLT (cf. NIV)

"We know that God's children do not make a **practice of sinning, for God's Son holds them securely, and the evil one cannot touch them."**

Habitual

NAU (cf. NET)

"We know that no one who is born of God **sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him."**

Absolute

III. Realize that obedience produces what you really **need (5:4-21).**

Benefits of Obedience:

Victory over the world system (5:4-5)

Assurance of salvation (5:6-13)

Guidance in prayer (5:14-17)

Freedom from habitual sin (5:18-20)

**Fidelity to God by avoiding idolatry
(5:21)**

Derek Tidball

Preacher, keep yourself from idols



***"Keep yourself
from idols"***



1 John 5:21 (NIV)

"Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts" (1 John 5:21 NLT).



HOW CAN YOU...

1 John

Obey

**God's commands
(1-2)**

Love

**others
(3:1-5:3)**



AVOID



STRAYING



**Realize that obedience produces
what you really **need**
(5:4-21)**

...INTO FALSE TEACHING?

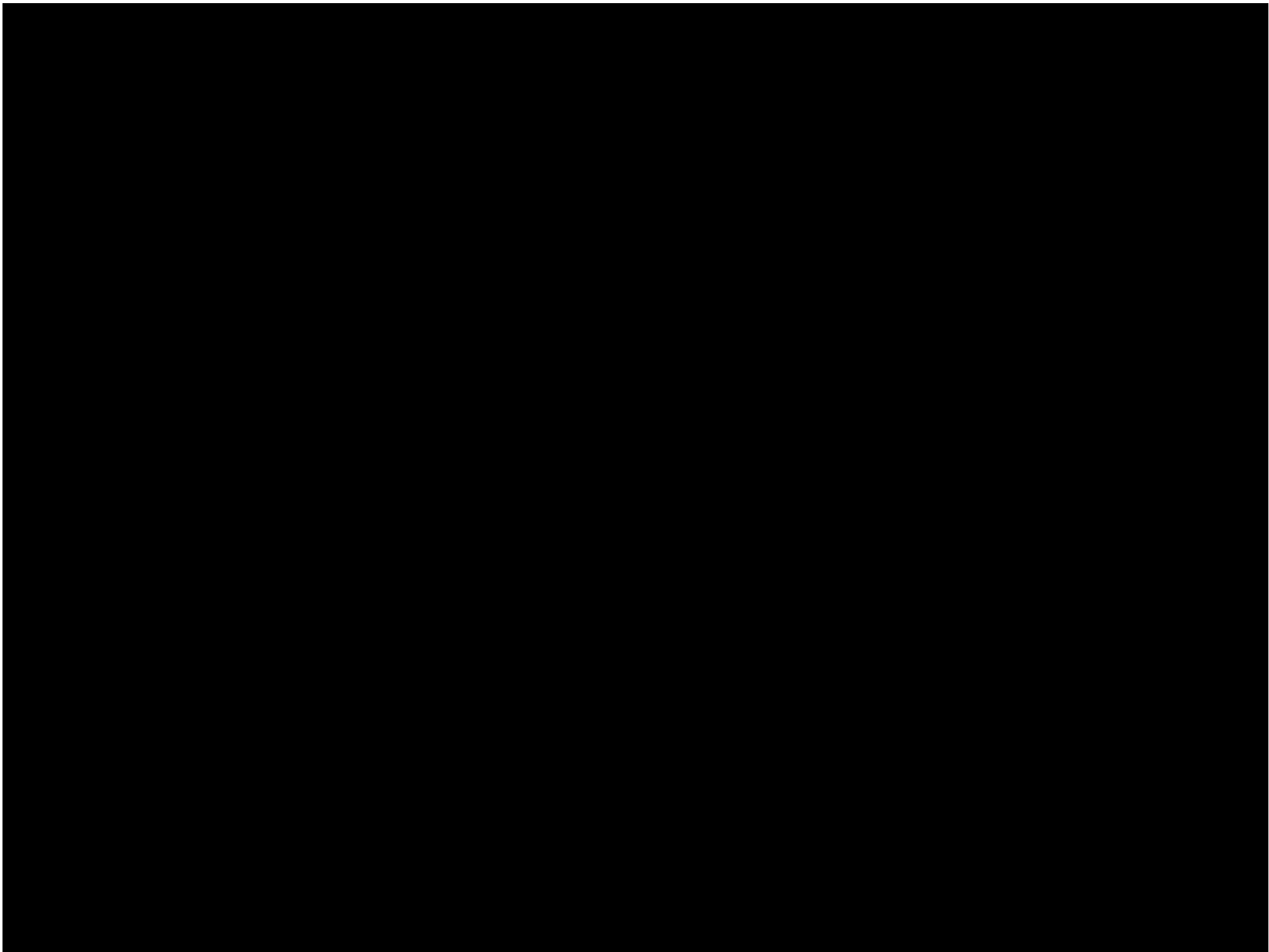
Main Idea of the Letter

**Obey God and love others and
you'll have what you really
need instead of false teaching.**

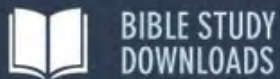
1 John

- **How** can you **show love** to another believer so that heresy might be thwarted?
- **Whom** do you know that **needs** to see Christian love shown in order to turn from false teaching?






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