



# Will God Answer?

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Curt Deming  
Melbourne Community Church  
January 31, 2016

# Jonathan Edwards:

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- ❖ Our bad things will turn out for good (Romans 8:28).
- ❖ Our good things can never be taken away from us (Psalm 4:6-7).
- ❖ The best things are yet to come (1 Corinthians 2:9).



# Prayer Professors:

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- ❖ Bible
  - ❖ Jesus
  - ❖ David and other Psalmists
  - ❖ Paul



# Prayer Professors:

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- ❖ Church history
  - ❖ Augustine
  - ❖ Martin Luther
  - ❖ John Calvin



# Prayer Professors:

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- ❖ Contemporary
  - ❖ Richard Foster
  - ❖ Tim Keller



# Challenges for 2015/2016

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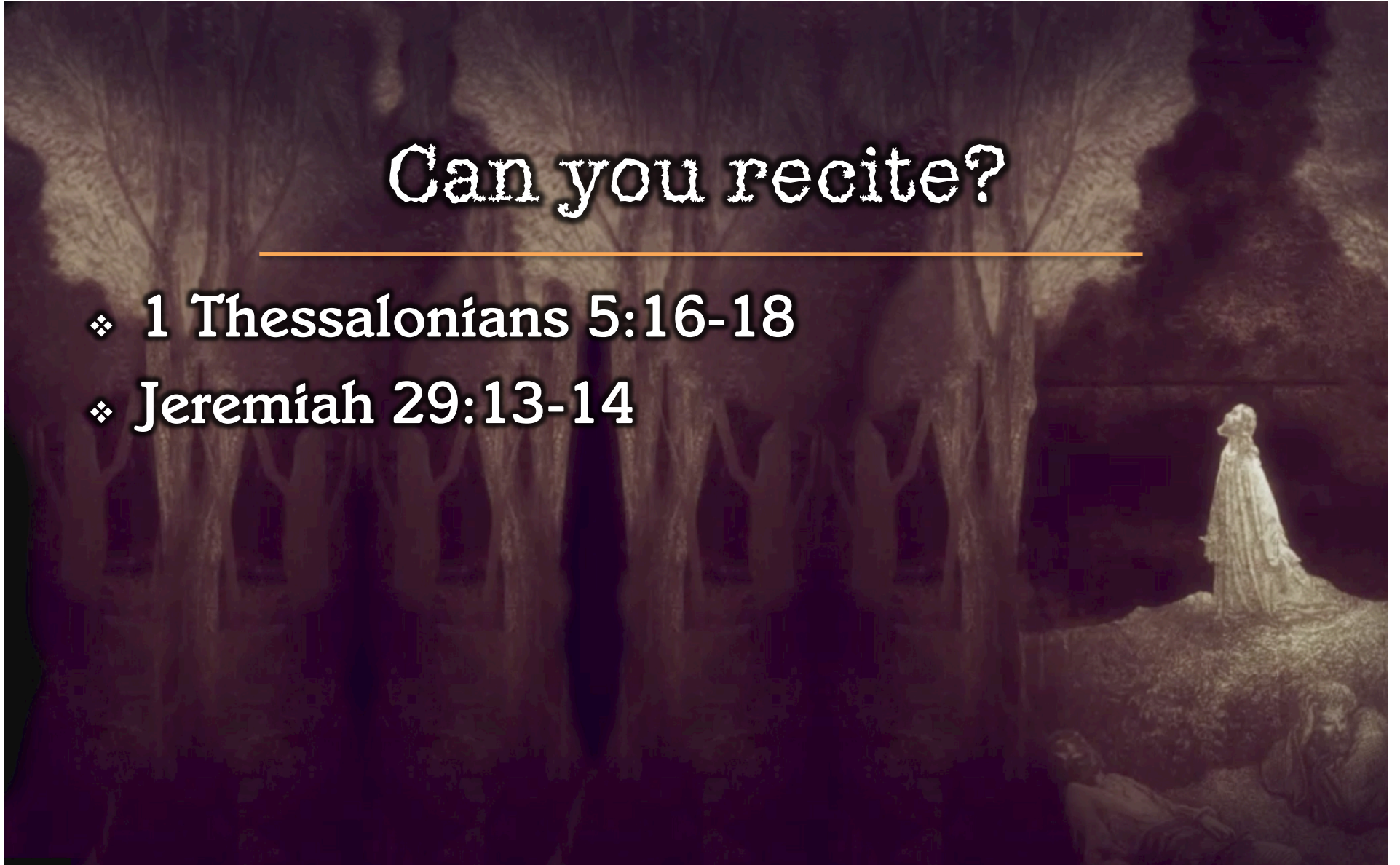
- ❖ Read the Bible — one book at a time.
- ❖ Pray routinely for your church.
- ❖ Read a book on prayer.



# Can you recite?

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- ❖ 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
- ❖ Jeremiah 29:13-14



# 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

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Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.





## Jeremiah 29:13-14

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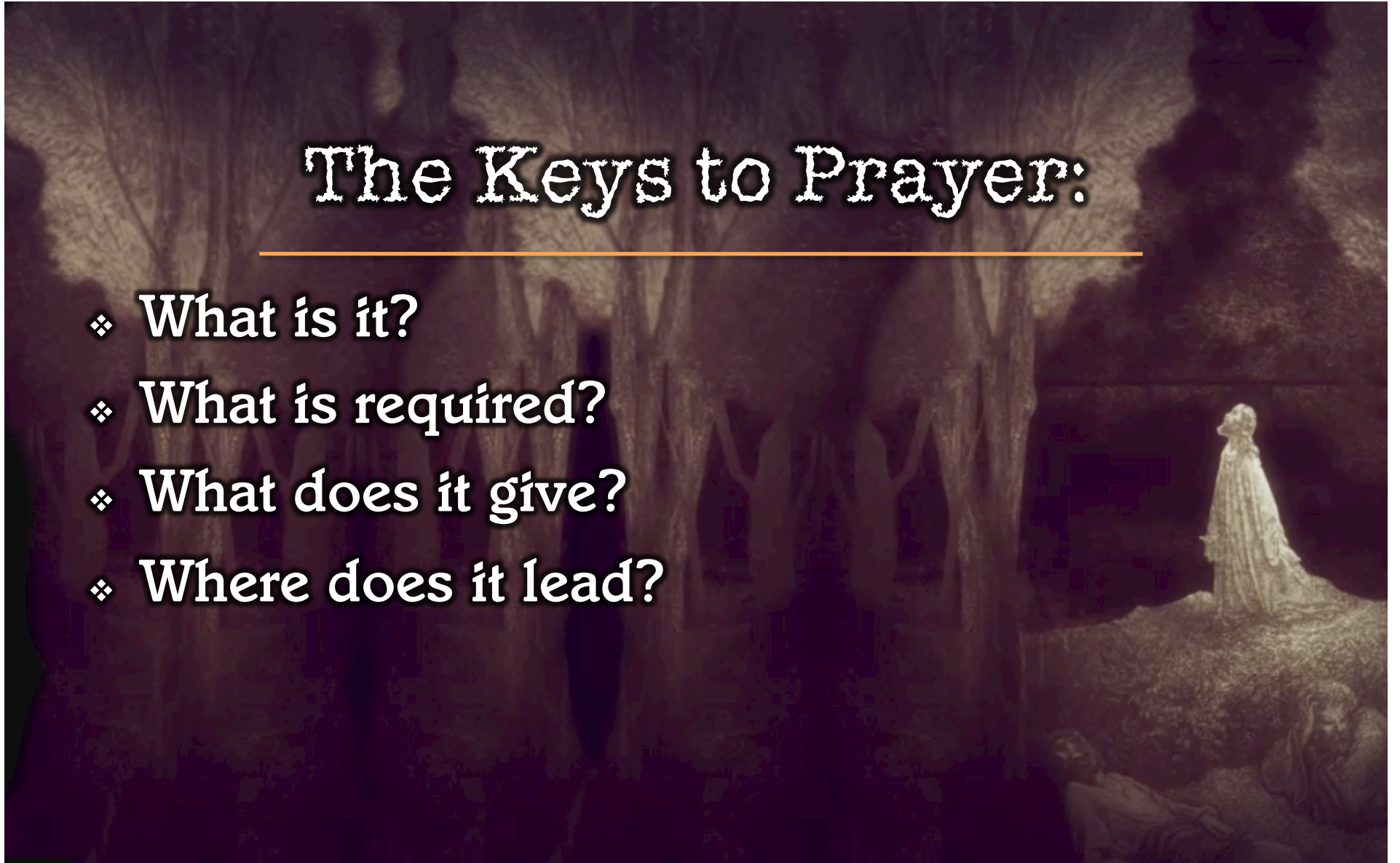
**“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back from captivity.”**



# The Keys to Prayer:

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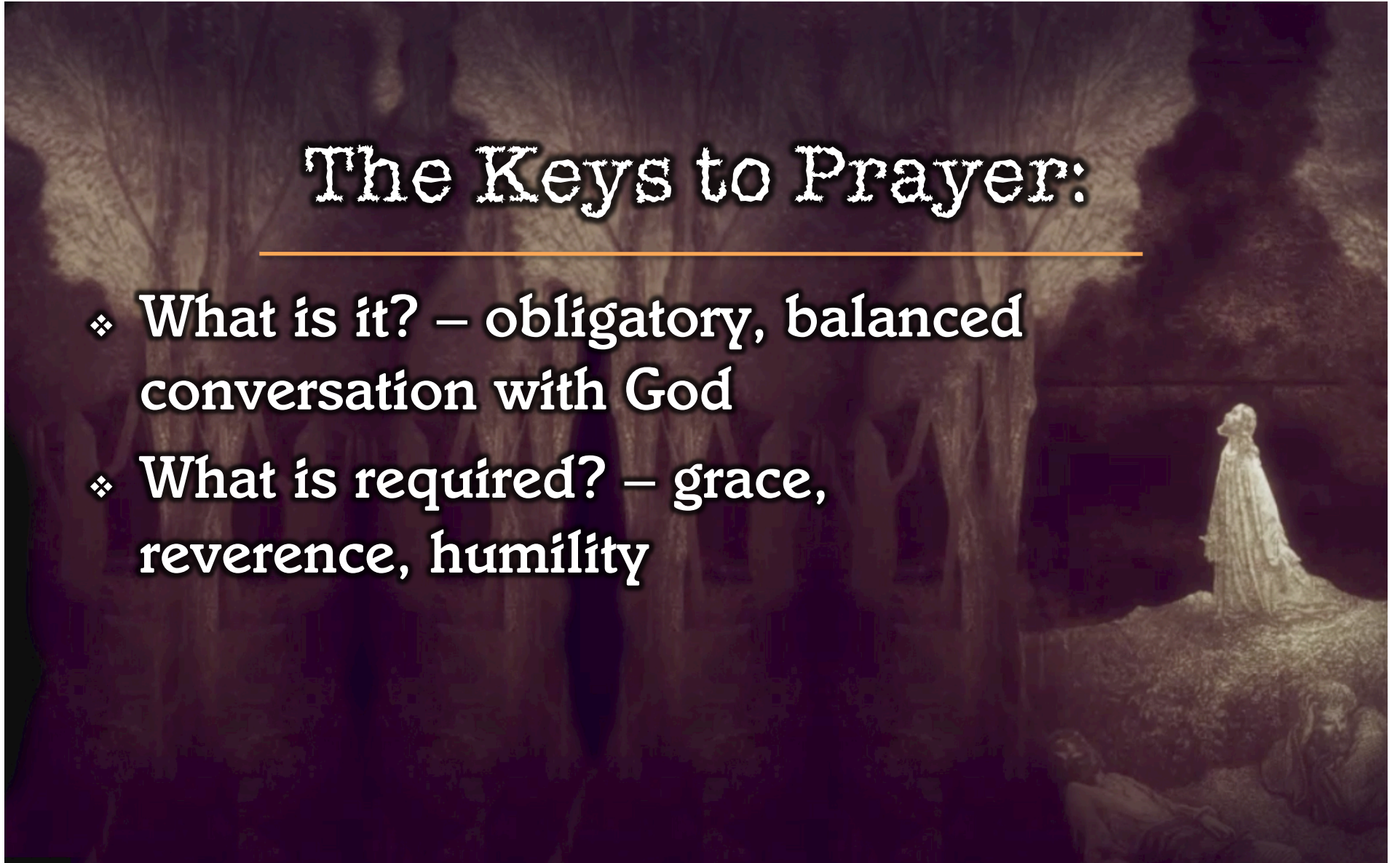
- ❖ What is it?
- ❖ What is required?
- ❖ What does it give?
- ❖ Where does it lead?



# The Keys to Prayer:

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- ❖ What is it? – obligatory, balanced conversation with God
- ❖ What is required? – grace, reverence, humility



# The Keys to Prayer:

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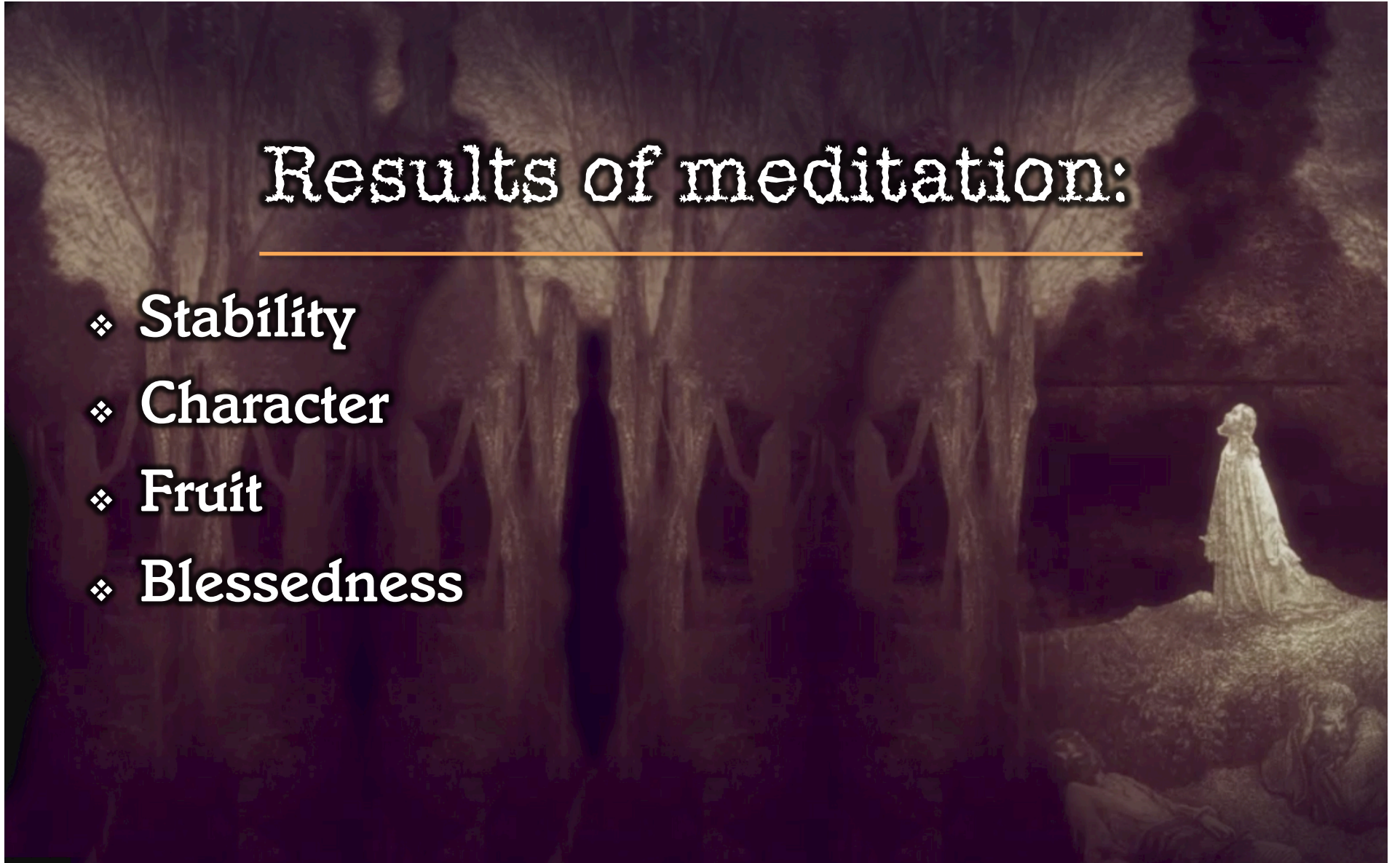
- ❖ What does it give? – perspective, strength, intimacy with God
- ❖ Where does it lead? – self-awareness, trust, surrender



# Results of meditation:

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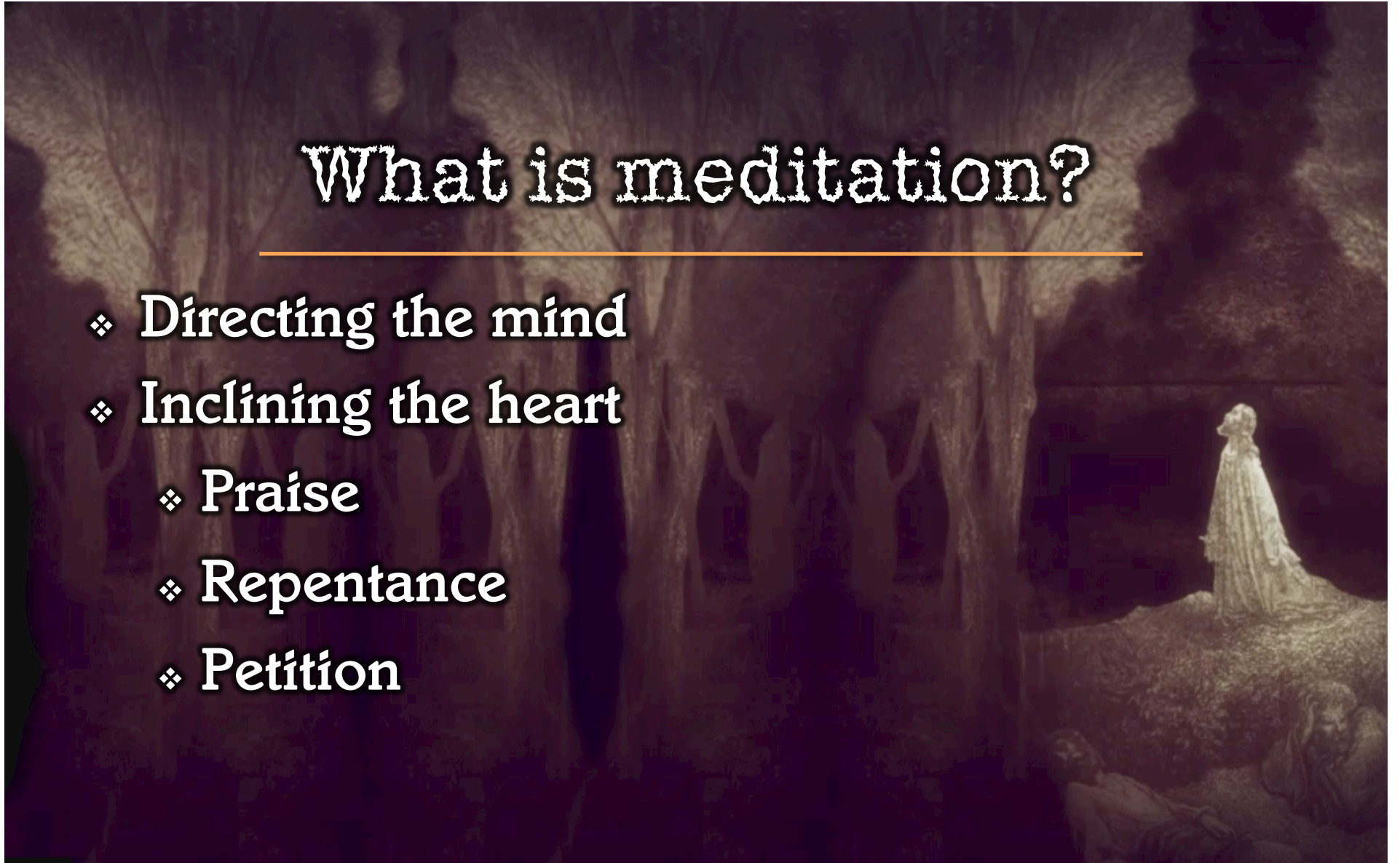
- ❖ Stability
- ❖ Character
- ❖ Fruit
- ❖ Blessedness



# What is meditation?

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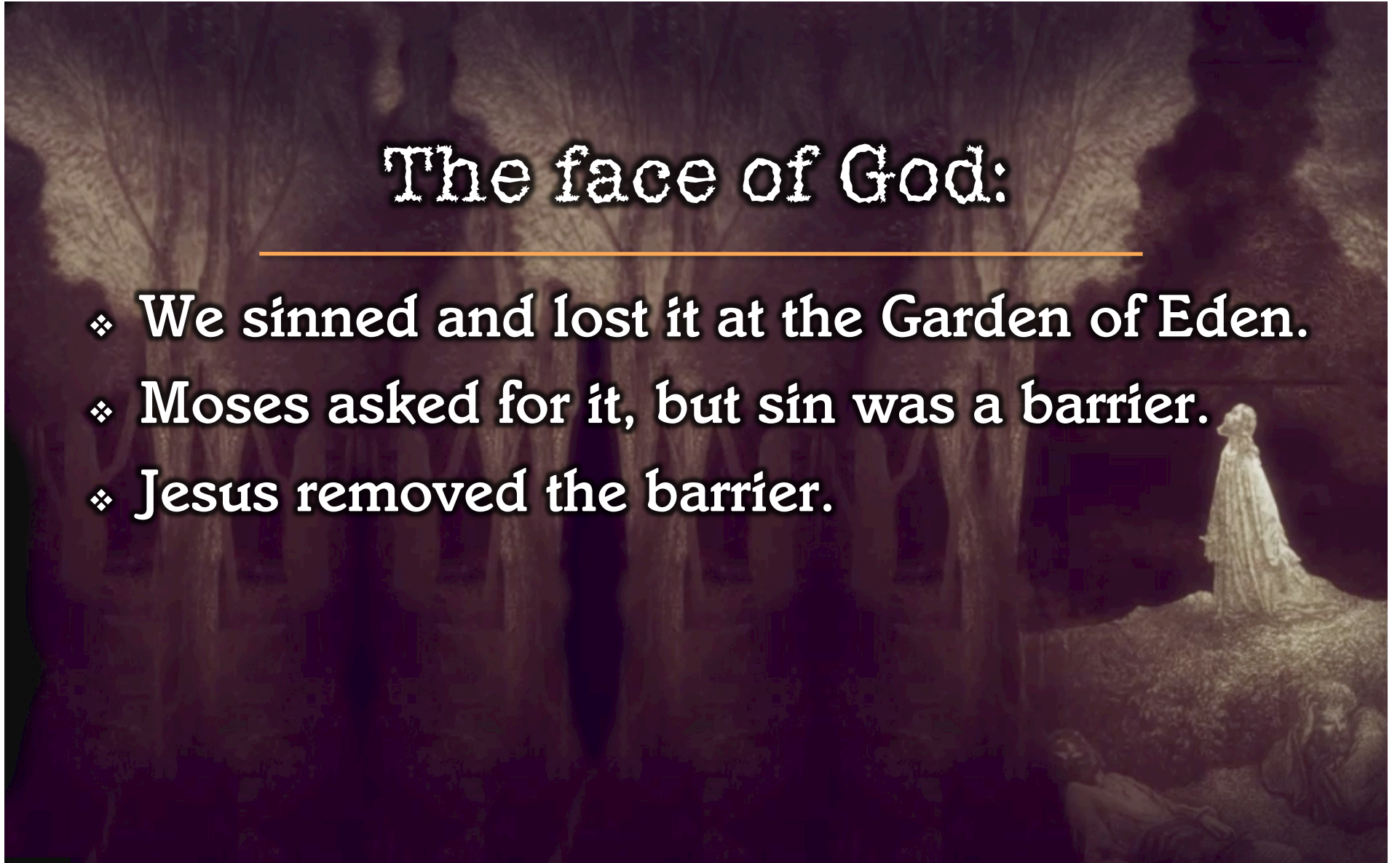
- ❖ Directing the mind
- ❖ Inclining the heart
  - ❖ Praise
  - ❖ Repentance
  - ❖ Petition



# The face of God:

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- ❖ We sinned and lost it at the Garden of Eden.
- ❖ Moses asked for it, but sin was a barrier.
- ❖ Jesus removed the barrier.



# Basic kinds of prayer:

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- ❖ Upward – praise
- ❖ Inward – confession
- ❖ Outward – petition
  - ❖ Supplication
  - ❖ Intercession

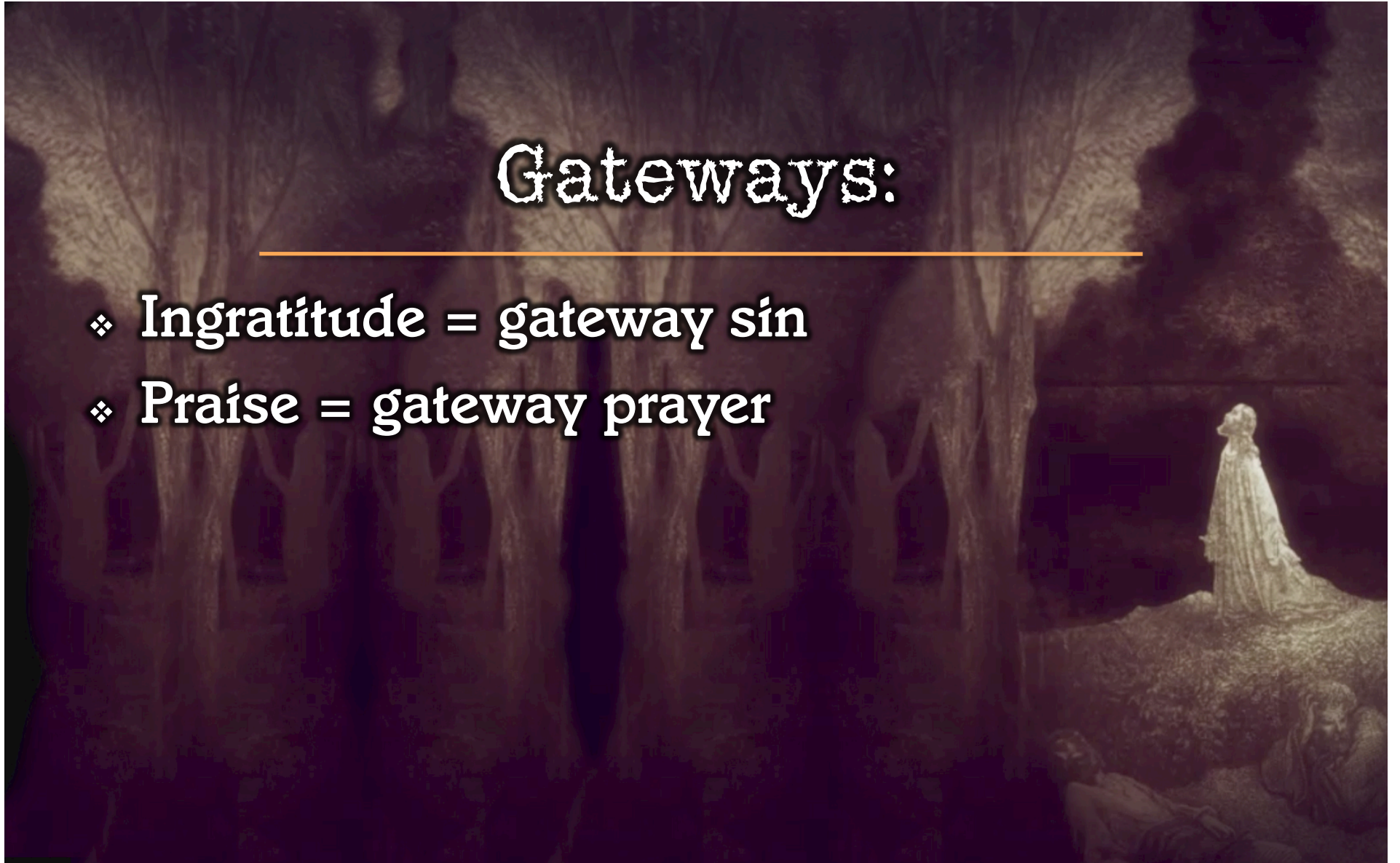




# Gateways:

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- ❖ Ingratitude = gateway sin
- ❖ Praise = gateway prayer



# Worship and adoration of God:

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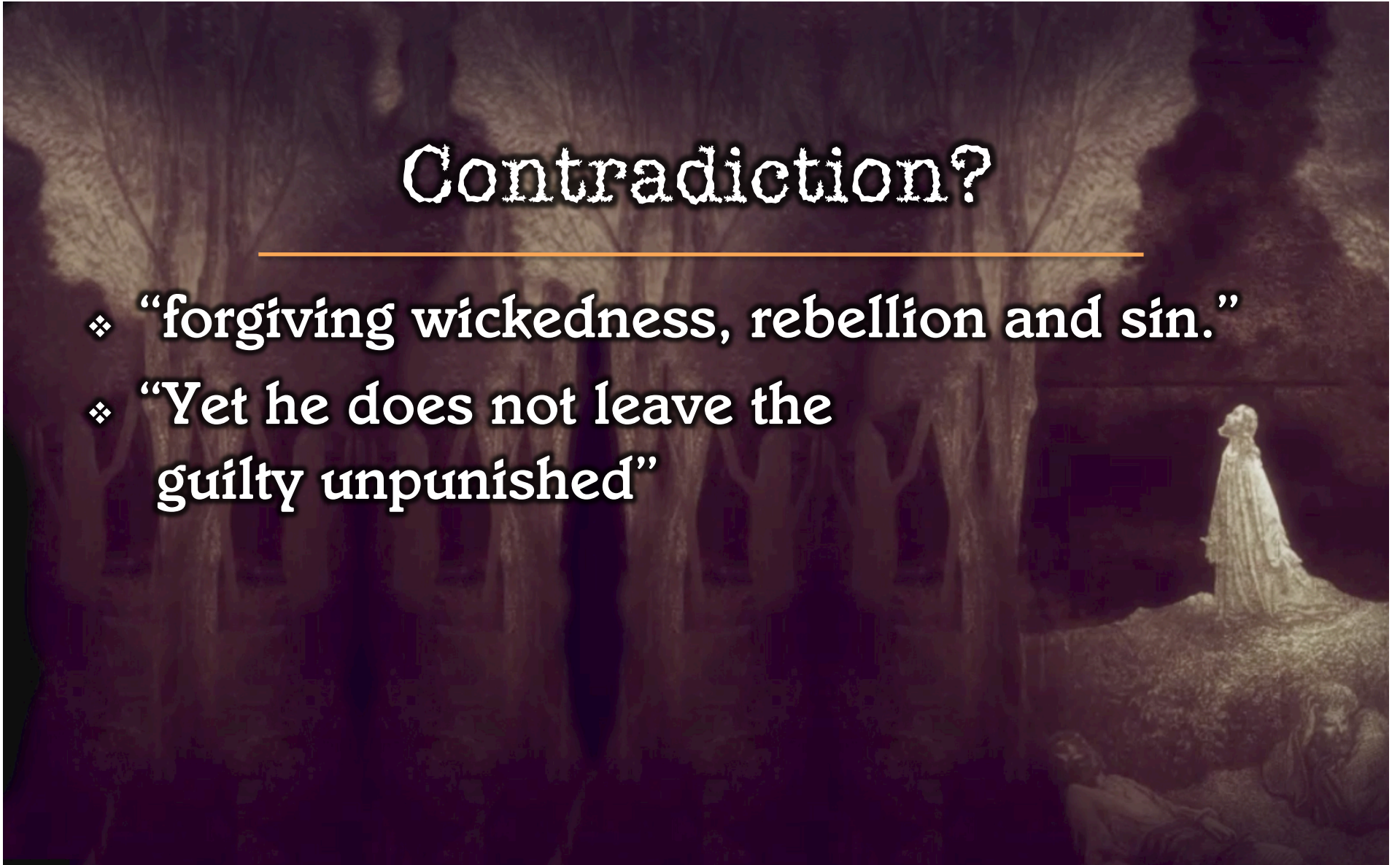
- ❖ It can reshape your personality.
- ❖ It can create healthy community.



# Contradiction?

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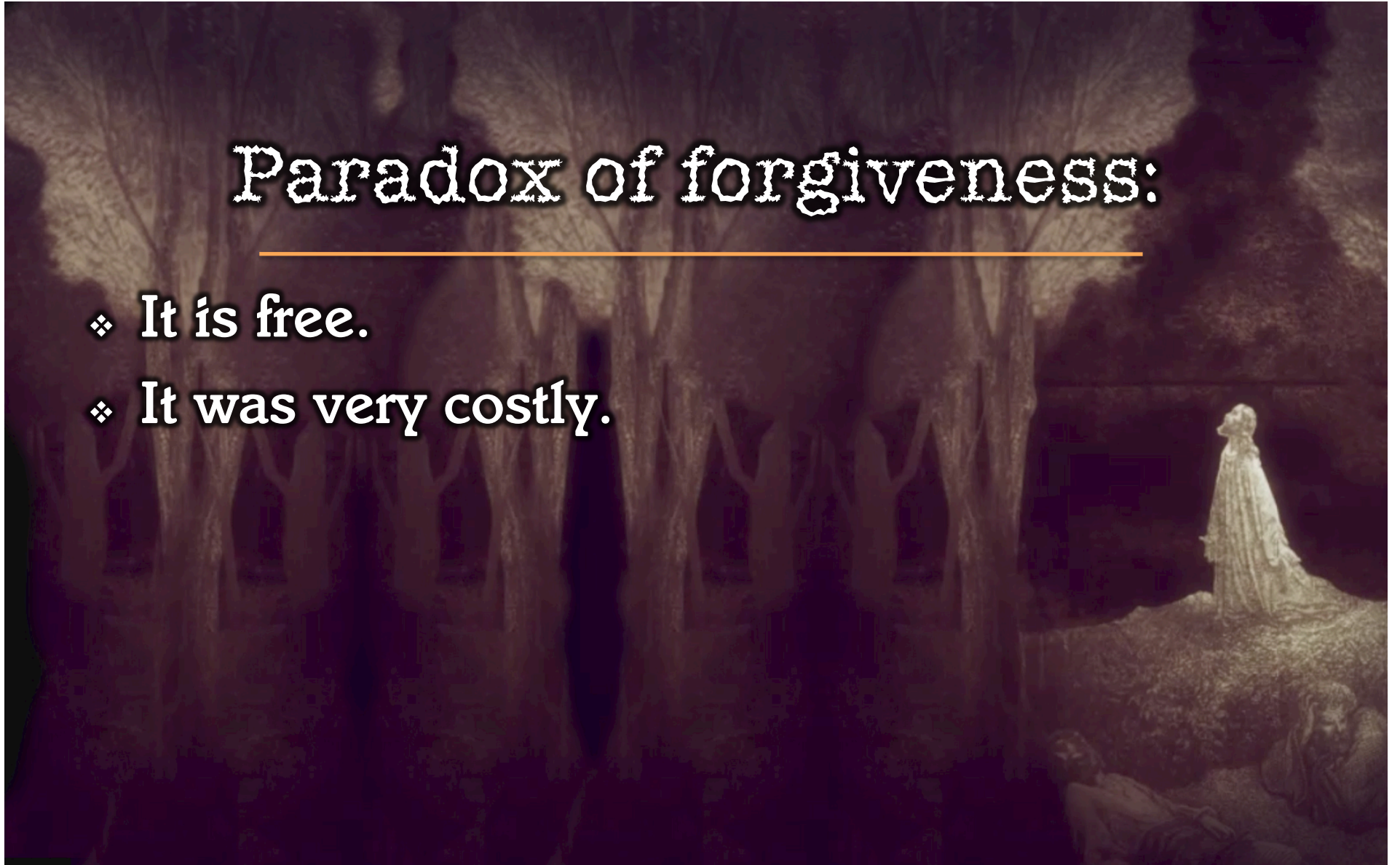
- ❖ “forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.”
- ❖ “Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished”



# Paradox of forgiveness:

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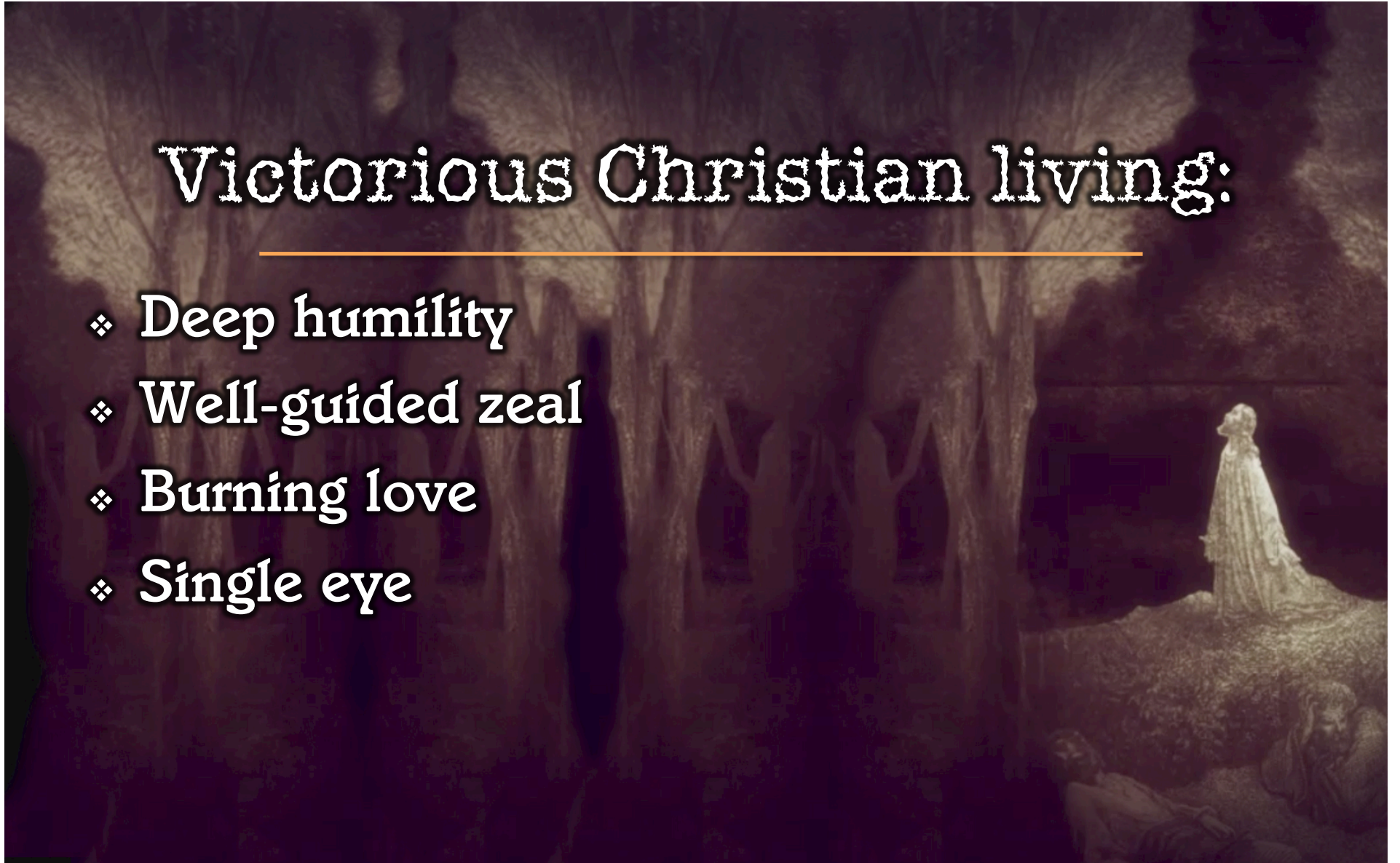
- ❖ It is free.
- ❖ It was very costly.



# Victorious Christian living:

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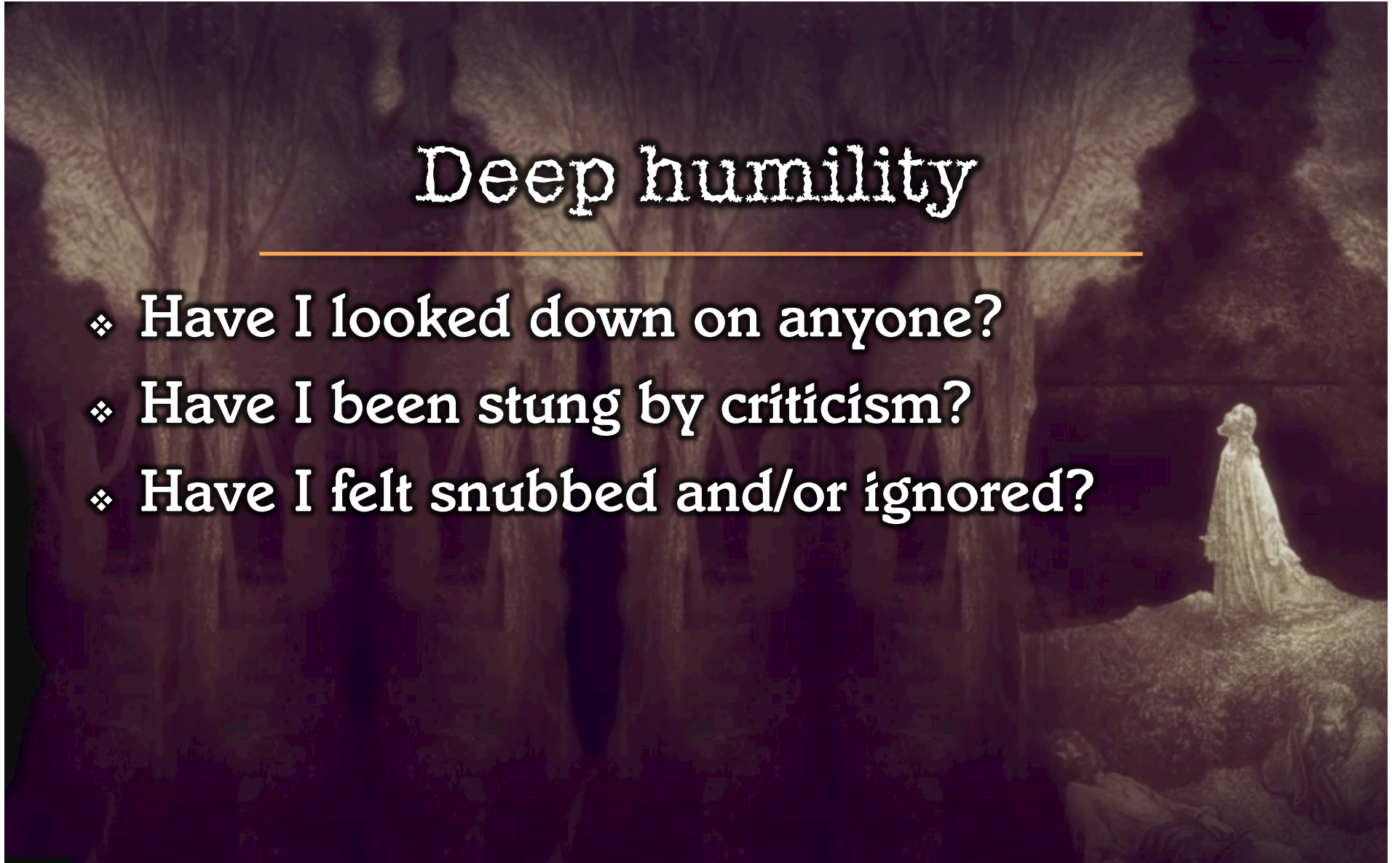
- ❖ Deep humility
- ❖ Well-guided zeal
- ❖ Burning love
- ❖ Single eye



# Deep humility

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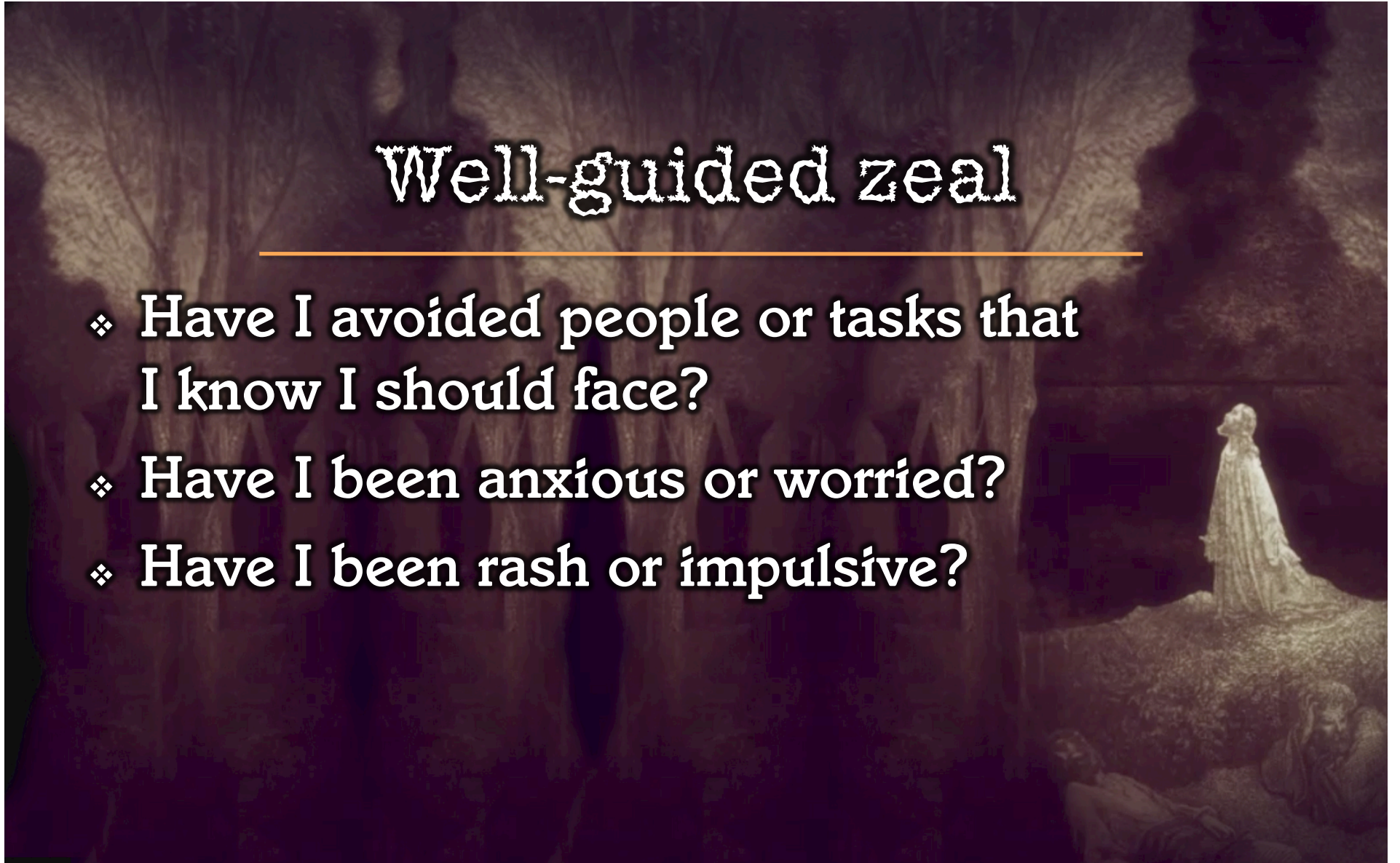
- ❖ Have I looked down on anyone?
- ❖ Have I been stung by criticism?
- ❖ Have I felt snubbed and/or ignored?



# Well-guided zeal

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- ❖ Have I avoided people or tasks that I know I should face?
- ❖ Have I been anxious or worried?
- ❖ Have I been rash or impulsive?



# Burning love

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- ❖ Have I spoken (or even thought) unkindly of anyone?
- ❖ Am I justifying myself by demonizing someone else?
- ❖ Have I been impatient or irritable?
- ❖ Have I been self-absorbed, indifferent or inattentive?





# Single eye

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- ❖ Am I working for the glory of God and the good of others, or am I driven by fear, need for approval or desire for control?
- ❖ Am I envious?
- ❖ Am I giving in to lust or gluttony?
- ❖ Am I spending my time on urgent things over important things?

## Psalm 61:1-2

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Hear my cry, O God;  
listen to my prayer.

From the ends of the earth I call to you,  
I call as my heart grows faint;  
lead me to the rock that is higher than I.



## James 4:2-3

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You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

## Donald Bloesch:

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“Prayer is not simply petition, but strenuous petition. It is ... Active pleading with God. It consists not merely in reflection on the promises of God but in taking hold of those promises.”



## Romans 15:30

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I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.



## Ephesians 6:12

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For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.



## James 5:16

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Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.



## James 5:17-18

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Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.





## John Calvin:

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“It was a notable event for God to put heaven, in some sense, under the control of Elijah’s prayer, to be obedient to his requests.”



## Nehemiah 4:8-9

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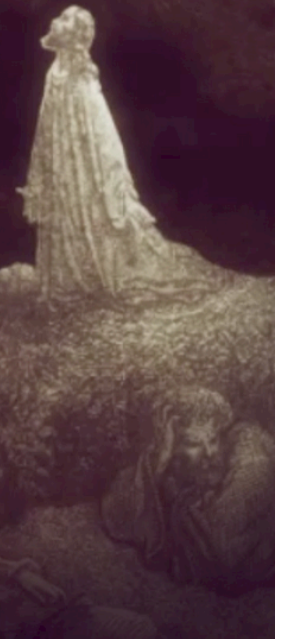
They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.



## Isaiah 38:5

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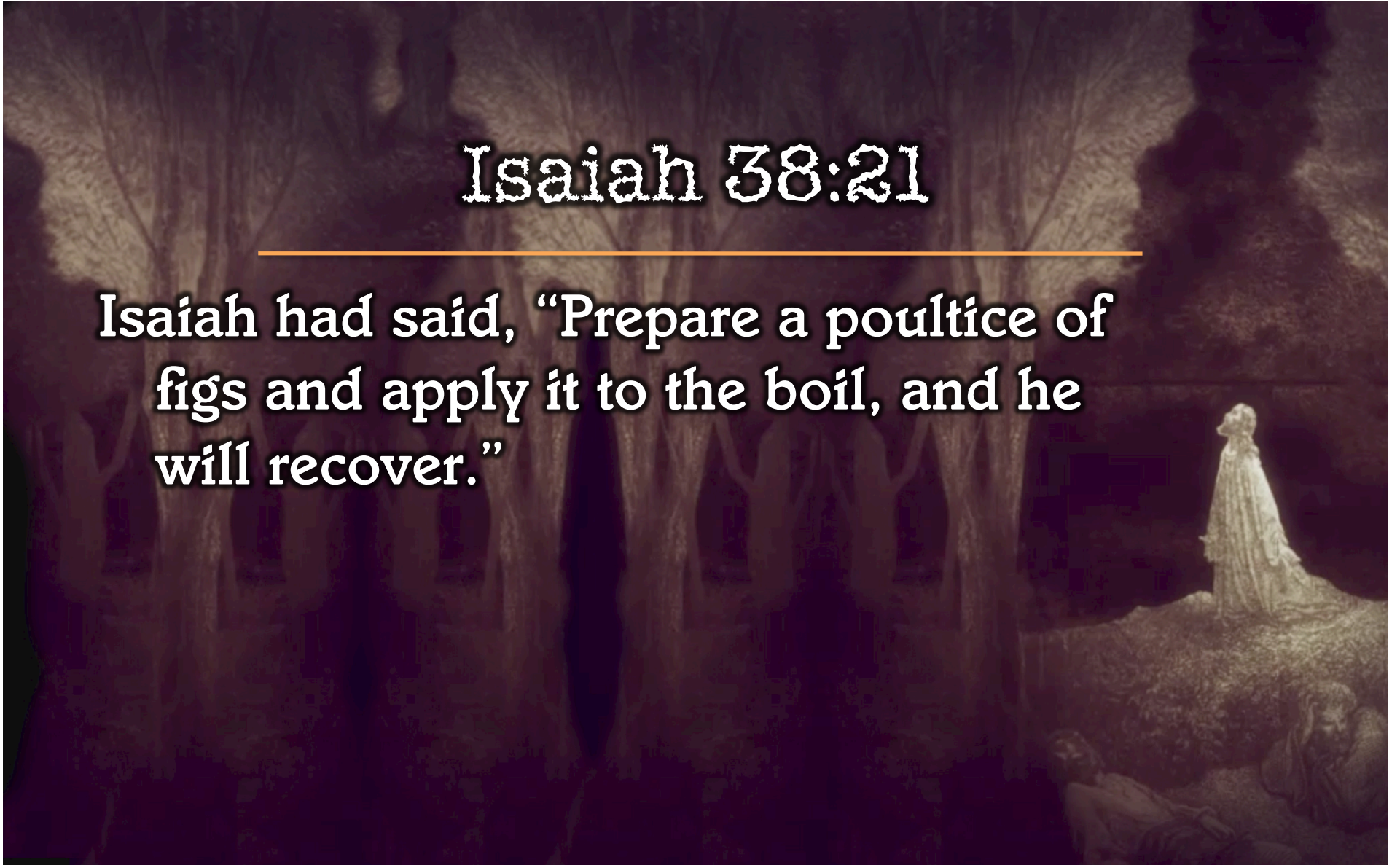
“Go and tell Hezekiah, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life.’”



## Isaiah 38:21

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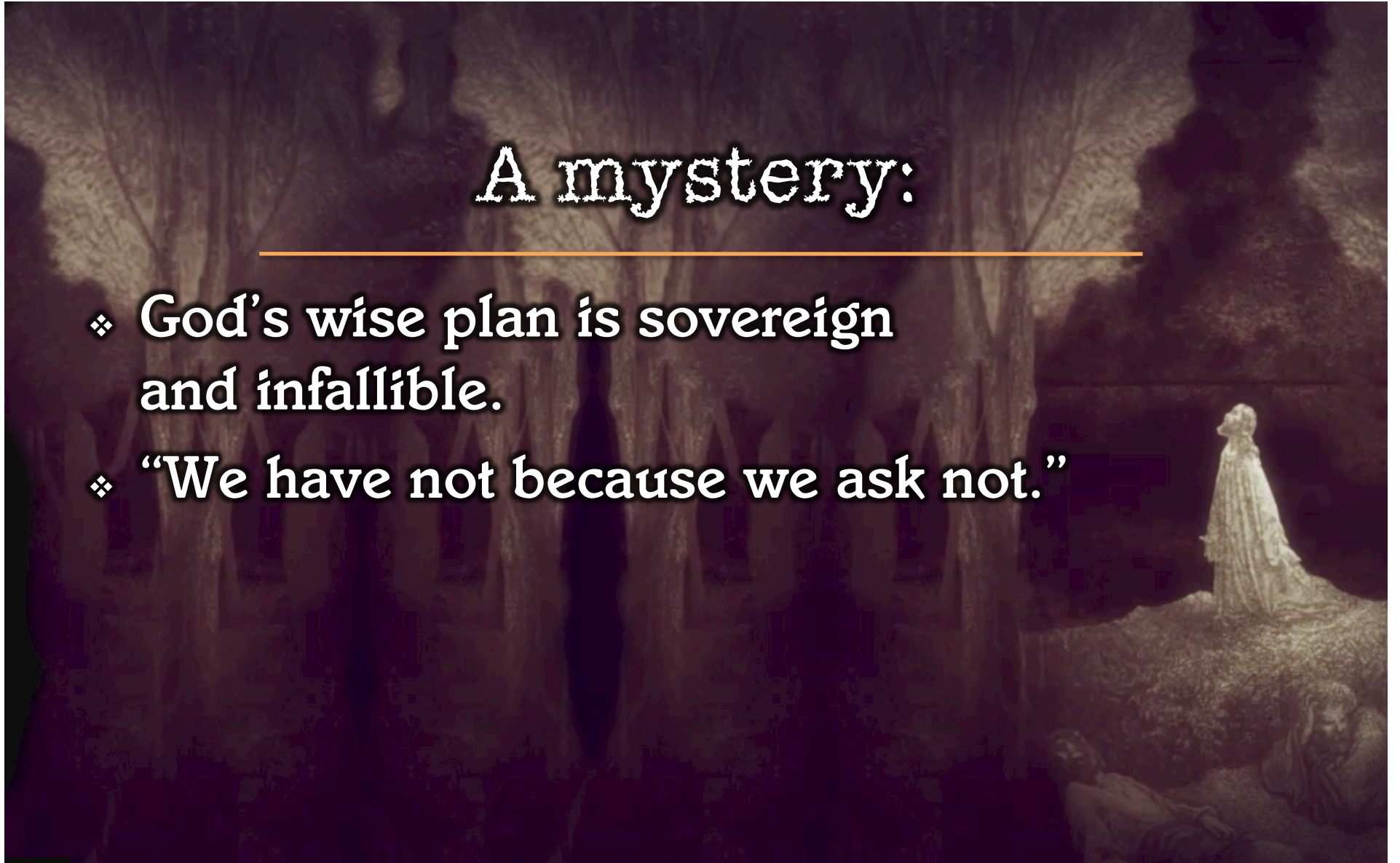
Isaiah had said, "Prepare a poultice of figs and apply it to the boil, and he will recover."



## A mystery:

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- ❖ God's wise plan is sovereign and infallible.
- ❖ "We have not because we ask not."



## Jeremiah 29:11

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**“For I know the plans I have for you,”  
declares the LORD, “plans to prosper  
you and not to harm you, plans to give  
you hope and a future.”**



# Westminster Shorter Catechism:

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“Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.”



## John 14:12-14

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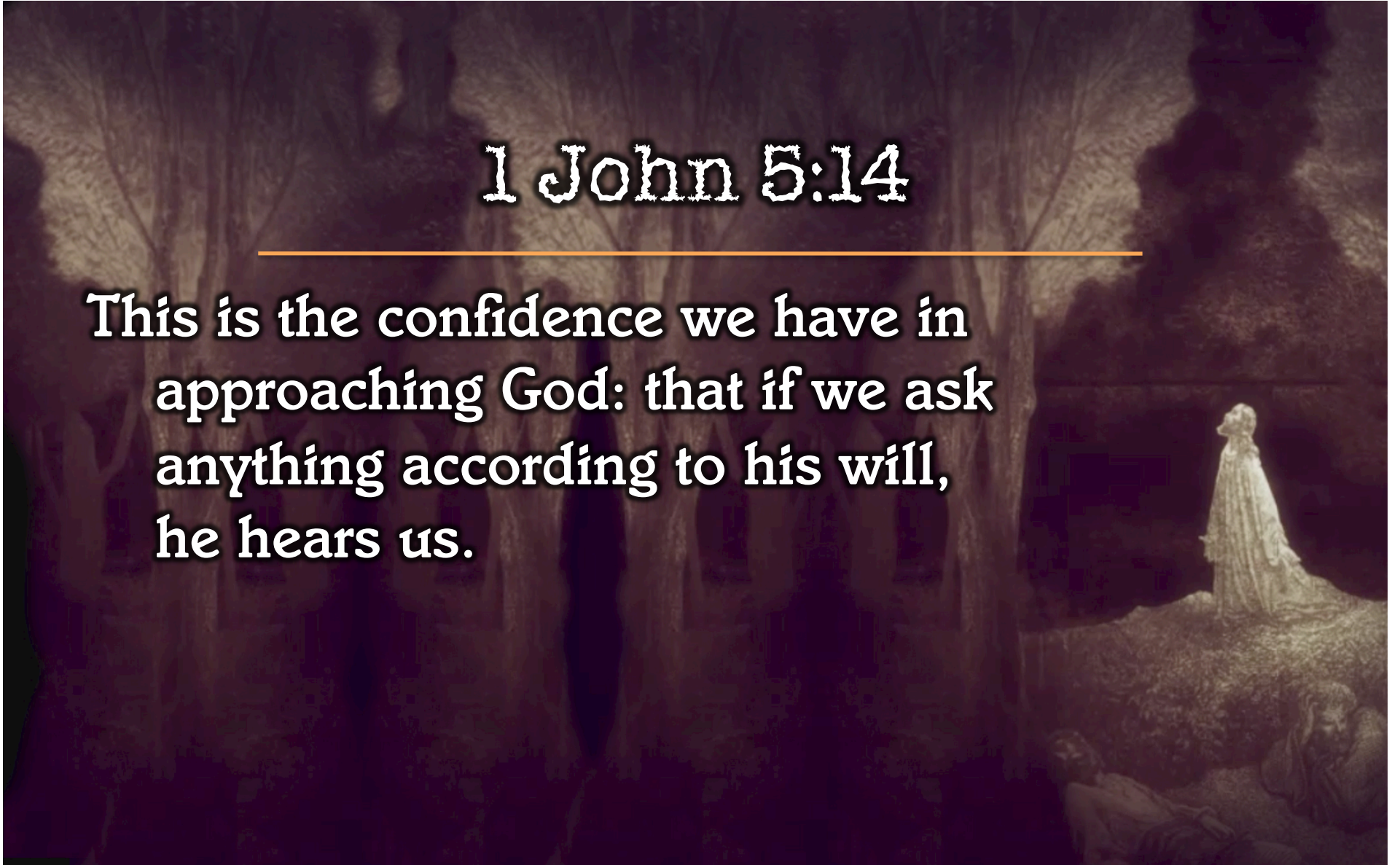
[Jesus]: “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”



# 1 John 5:14

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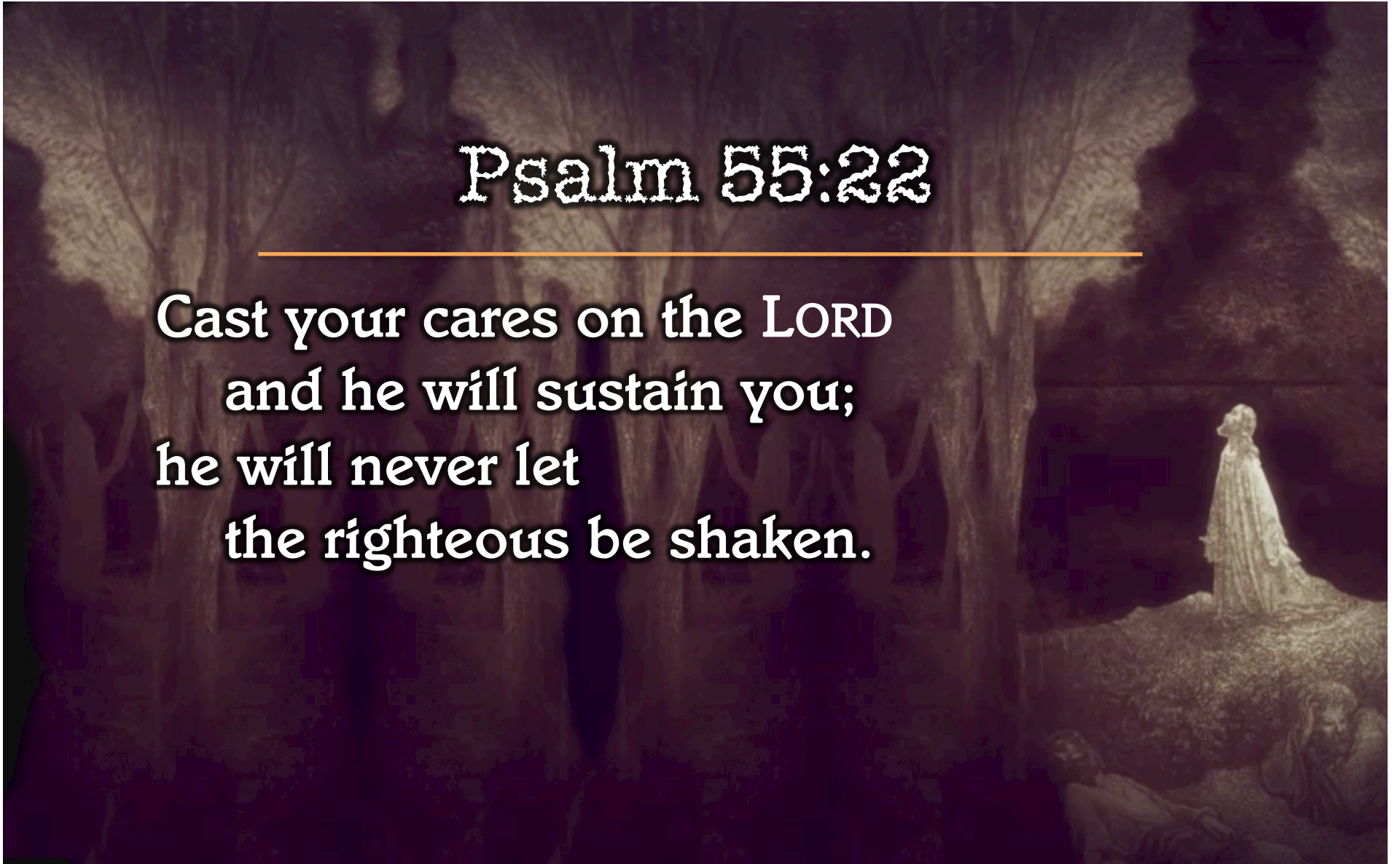
This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.



## Psalm 55:22

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Cast your cares on the LORD  
and he will sustain you;  
he will never let  
the righteous be shaken.



## 1 Peter 5:6-7

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Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.



## Genesis 17:18-19

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And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!" Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him."

## Genesis 17:20-21

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And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year.”

## Romans 8:26-27

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In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

# Two purposes of petition:

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- ❖ “thy kingdom come”
- ❖ “thy will be done”



## Matthew 26:39

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Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”





## Isaiah 37:14

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Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the temple of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD.



# Jonathan Edwards:

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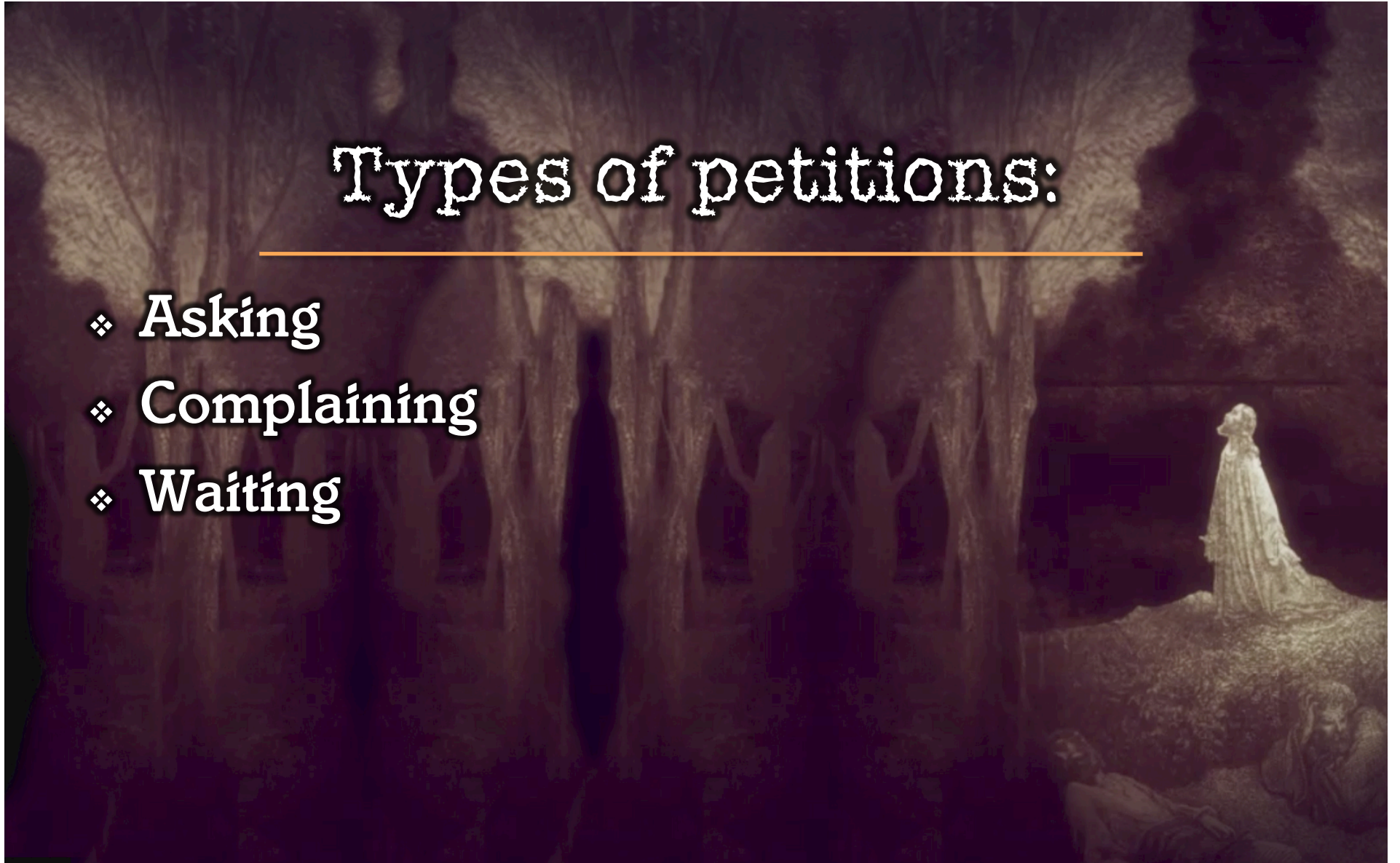
- ❖ Our bad things will turn out for good (Romans 8:28).
- ❖ Our good things can never be taken away from us (Psalm 4:6-7).
- ❖ The best things are yet to come (1 Corinthians 2:9).



# Types of petitions:

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- ❖ Asking
- ❖ Complaining
- ❖ Waiting



## James 5:13-14

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Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.



## James 5:15-16

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And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

# Laments:

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- ❖ When facing opposition  
(Psalms 13, 55)
- ❖ When facing deprivation  
(Psalms 6, 38)
- ❖ When facing isolation  
(Psalms 39, 79)



The background of the slide is a dark, atmospheric painting. It depicts a dense forest of tall, thin trees with bare branches. In the foreground, a woman in a long, flowing white dress stands on a rocky outcrop, looking towards the viewer. The lighting is dramatic, with a strong light source from the right, creating a silhouette effect and highlighting the woman's dress. The overall mood is somber and mysterious.

## J. I. Packer:

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**“Northern European-influenced culture has historically embraced the stiff-upper-lip ideal of human behavior, and habitually looks down on people who voice personal complaints in public as morally inferior weaklings.”**

## Tim Keller:

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**“We know God will answer us when we call because one terrible day he did not answer Jesus when he called.”**





## Luke 18:7-8

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[Jesus]: And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

## 2 Peter 3:9

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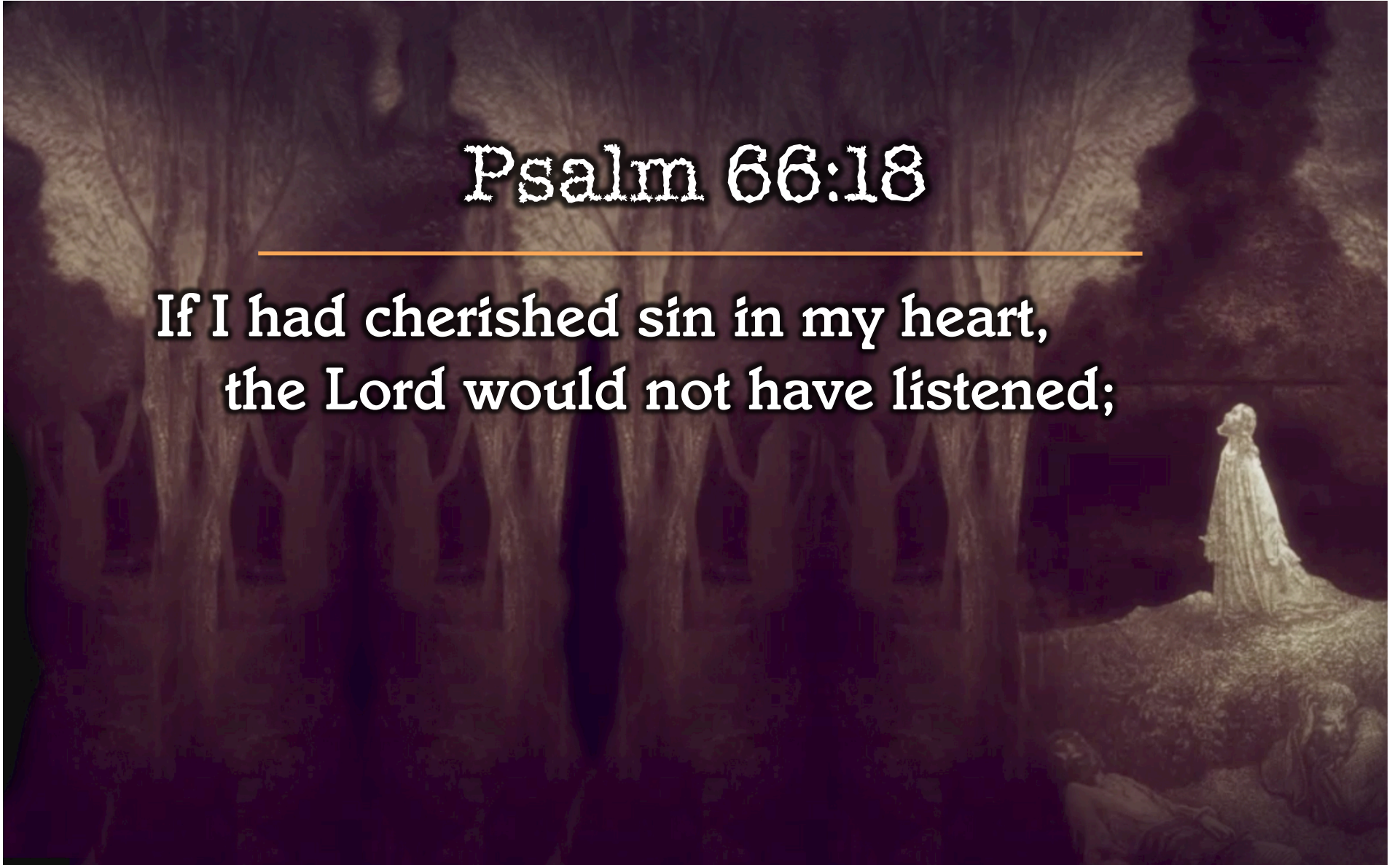
The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.



## Psalm 66:18

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If I had cherished sin in my heart,  
the Lord would not have listened;



## 2 Corinthians 5:21

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God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.



## Luke 11:11-13

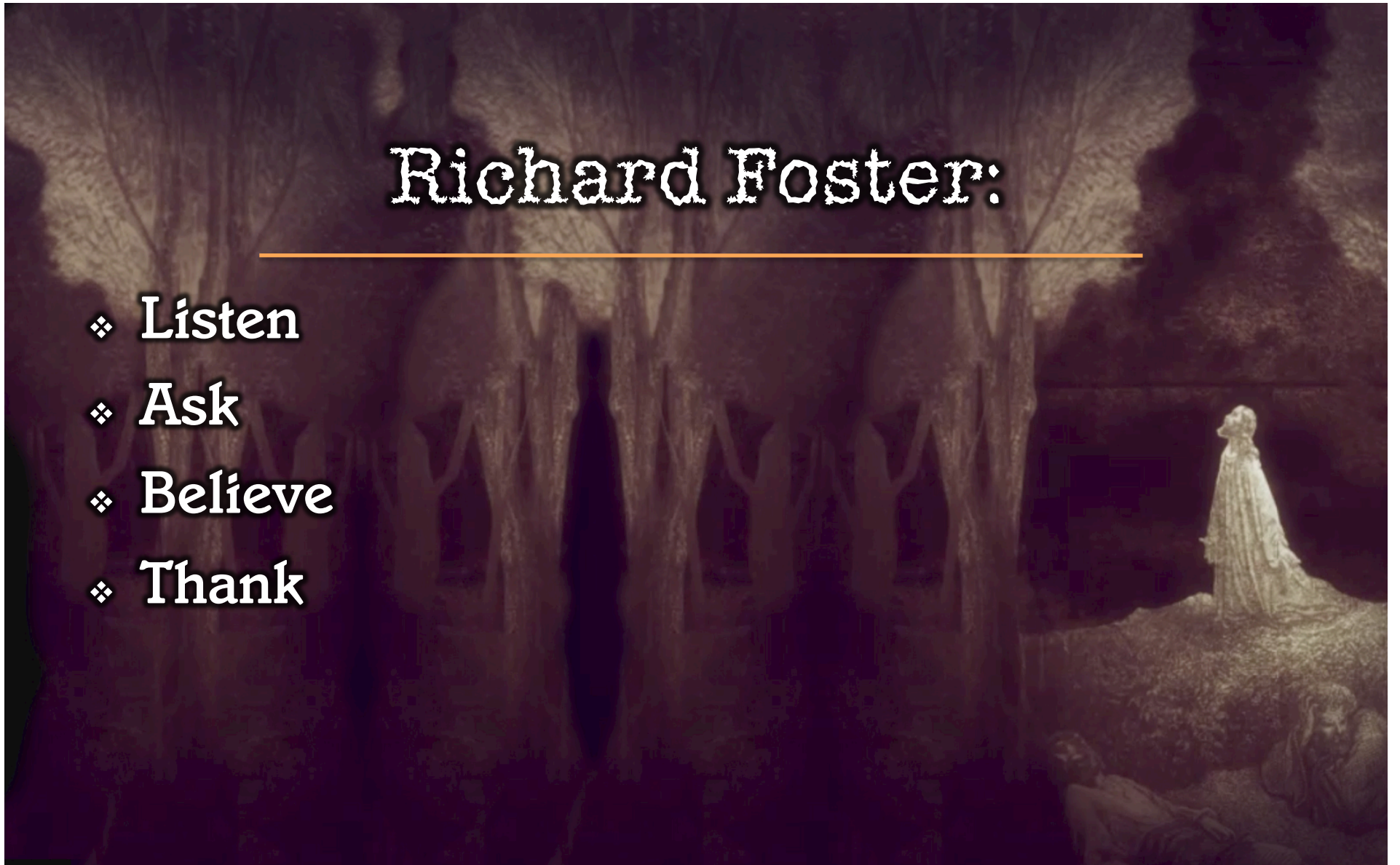
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[Jesus]: “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

# Richard Foster:

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- ❖ Listen
- ❖ Ask
- ❖ Believe
- ❖ Thank



# Pray boldly:

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- ❖ Our bad things will turn out for good (Romans 8:28).
- ❖ Our good things can never be taken away from us (Psalm 4:6-7).
- ❖ The best things are yet to come (1 Corinthians 2:9).







# Are you being called?

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- ❖ To receive Christ
- ❖ To become a member of Melbourne Community Church
- ❖ To pray / to receive prayer
- ❖ To affirm or reaffirm a commitment
- ❖ To receive the LORD's Supper

