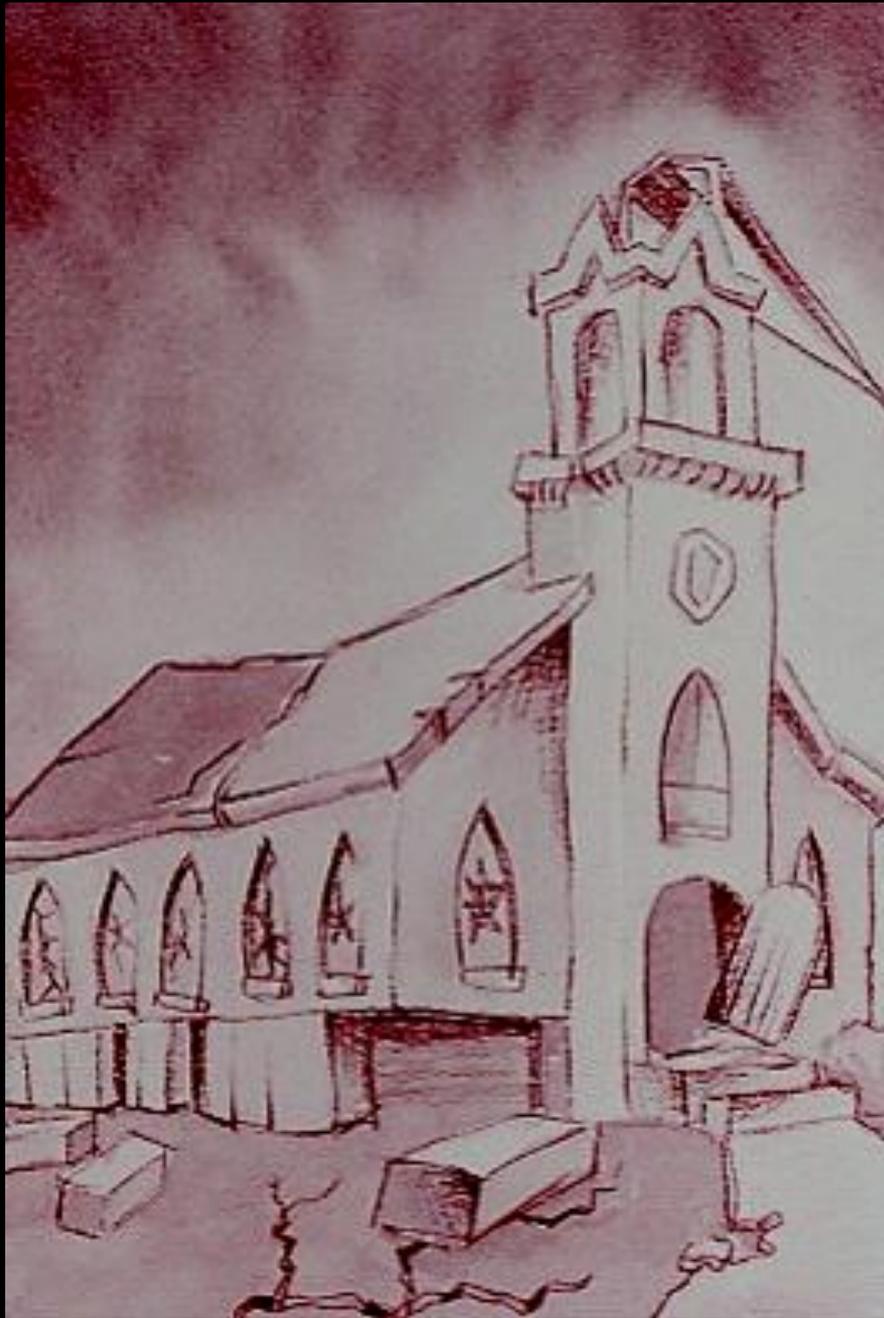




(1) The Church of Jesus Christ

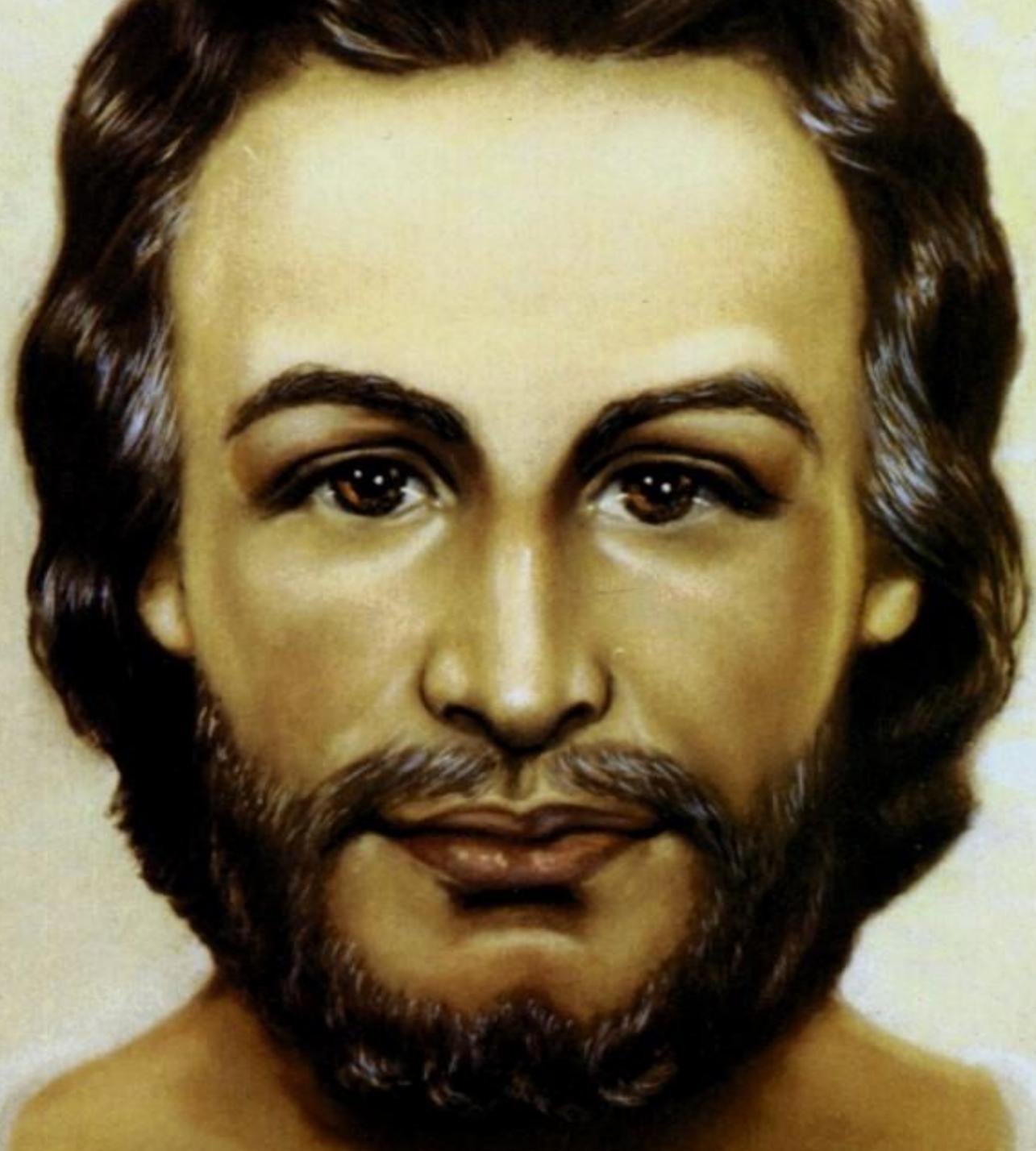


(2) The Falling Away



The Apostasy

(Falling Away)





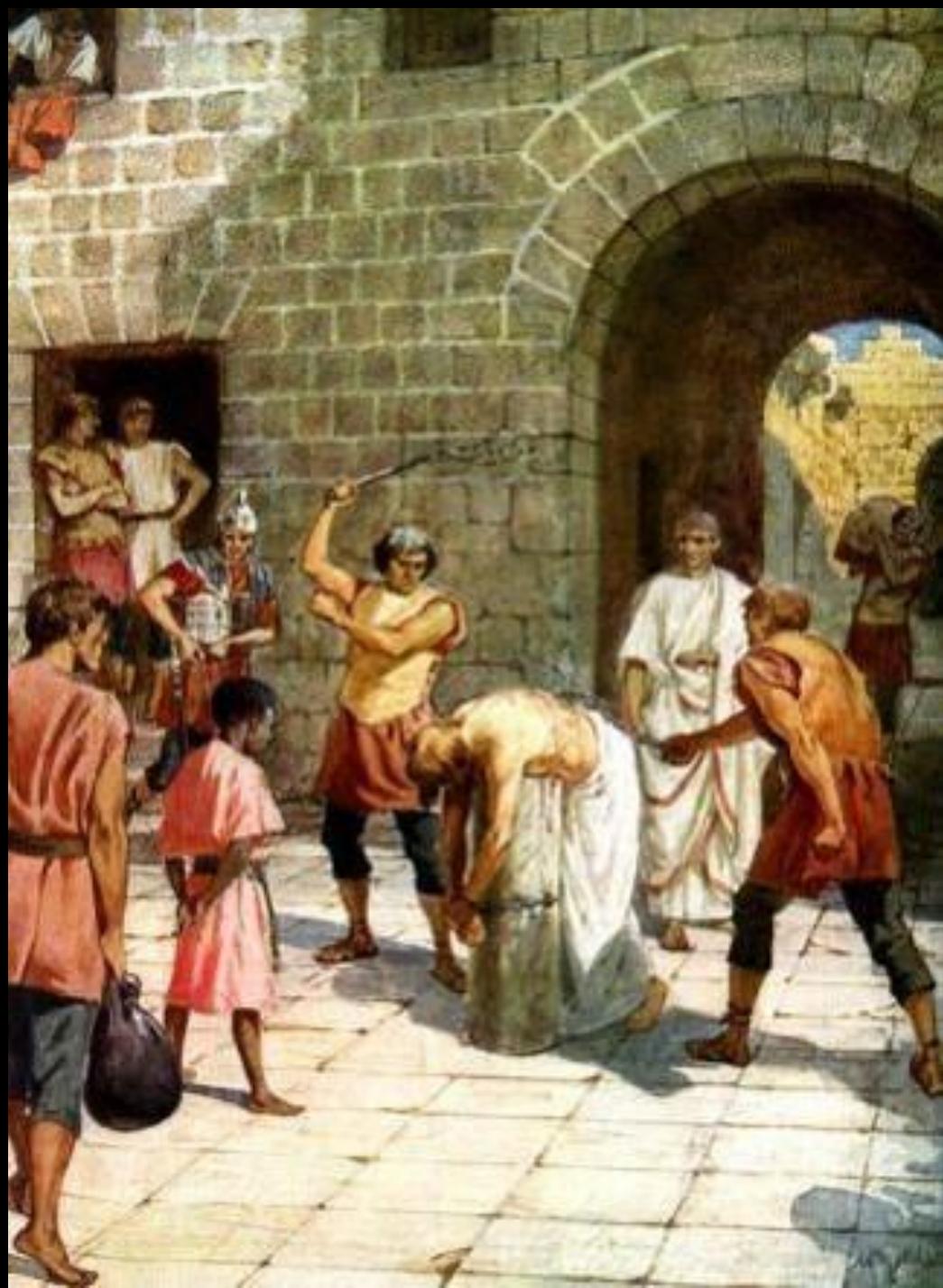






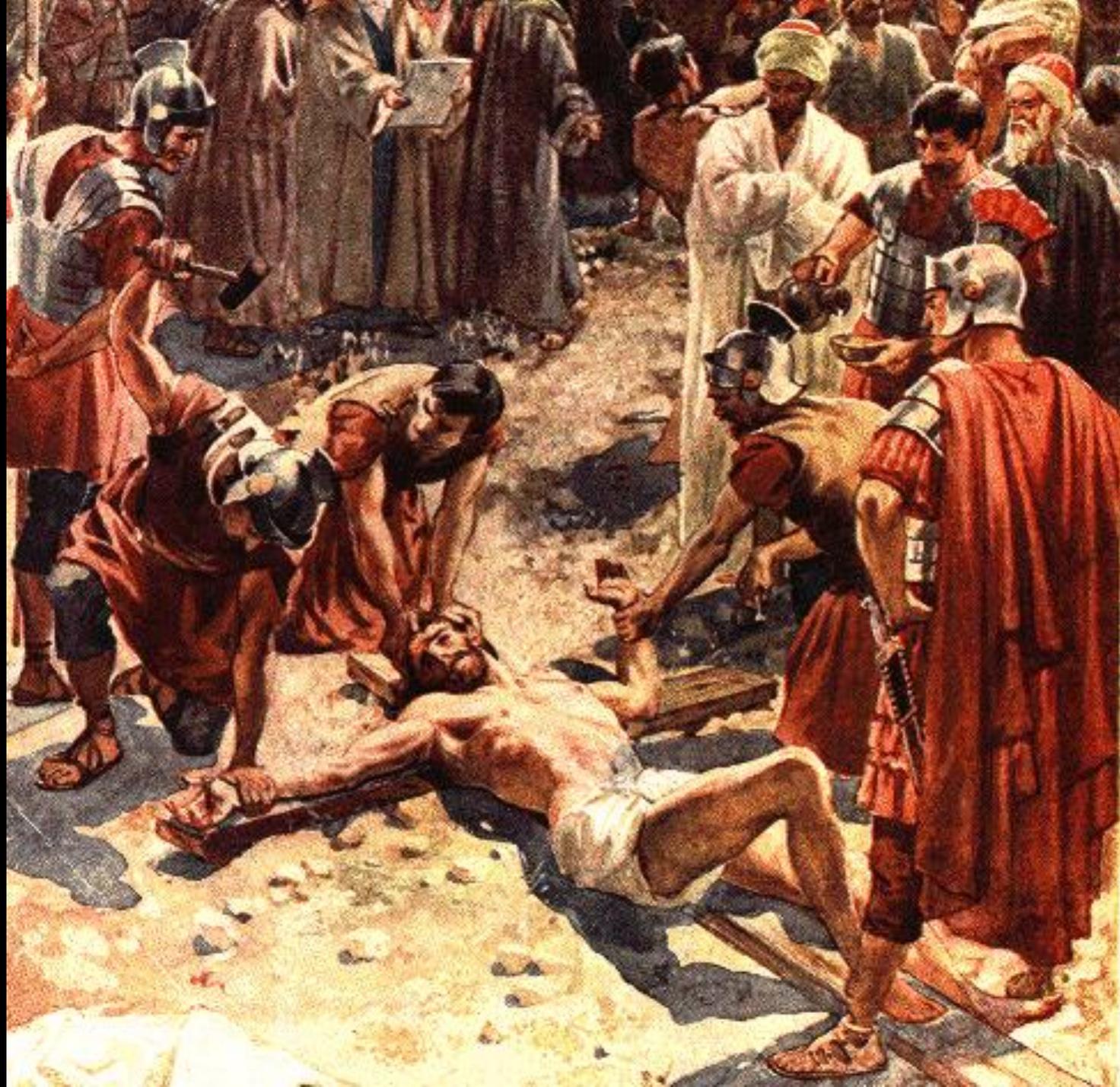














יהושע בן נצרתי
יהושע נאזרתי
יהושע נאזרתי
JESUS NAZARENUS
REX
IUDAEORUM

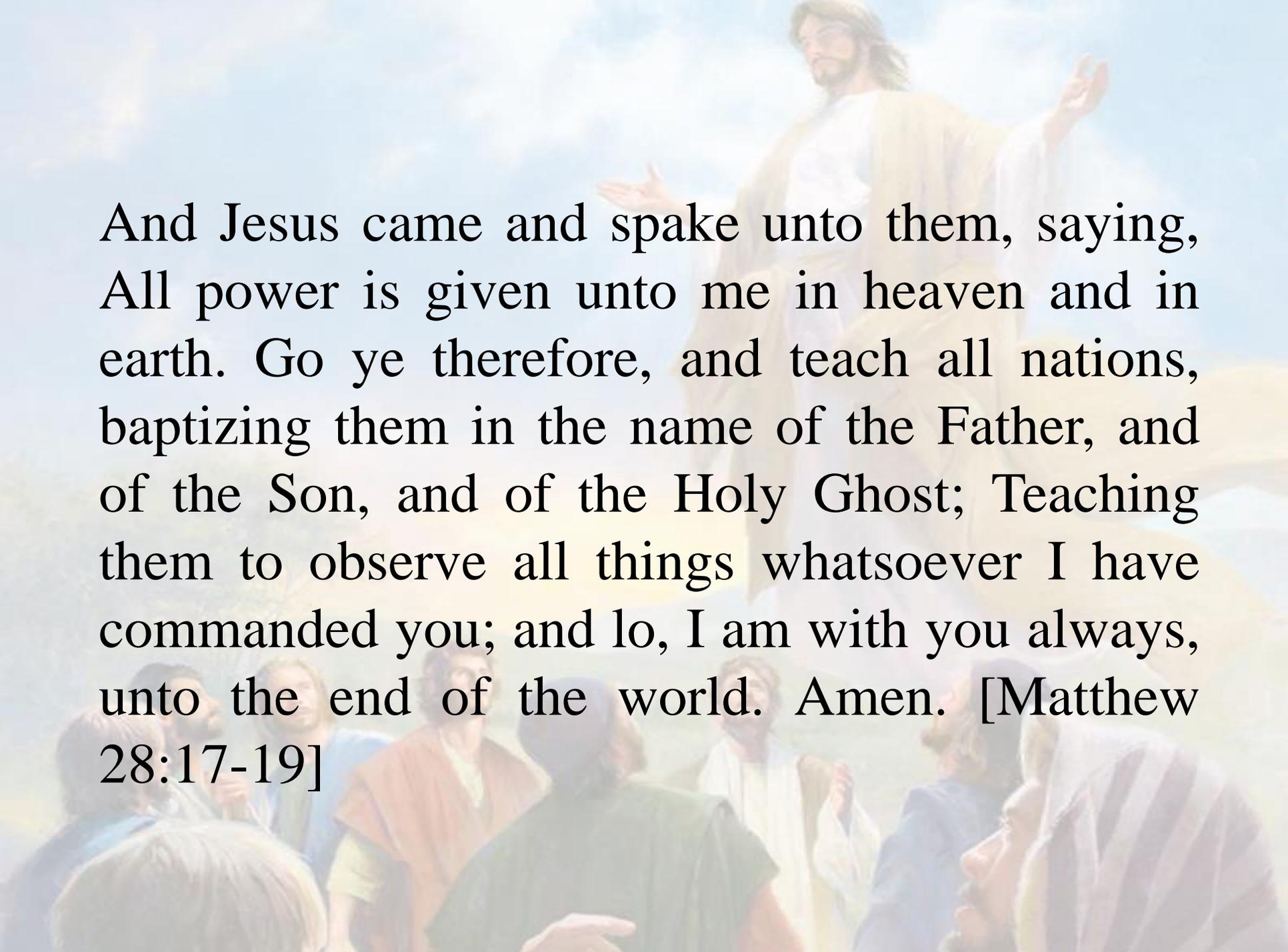


“Father,
it is
finished.”









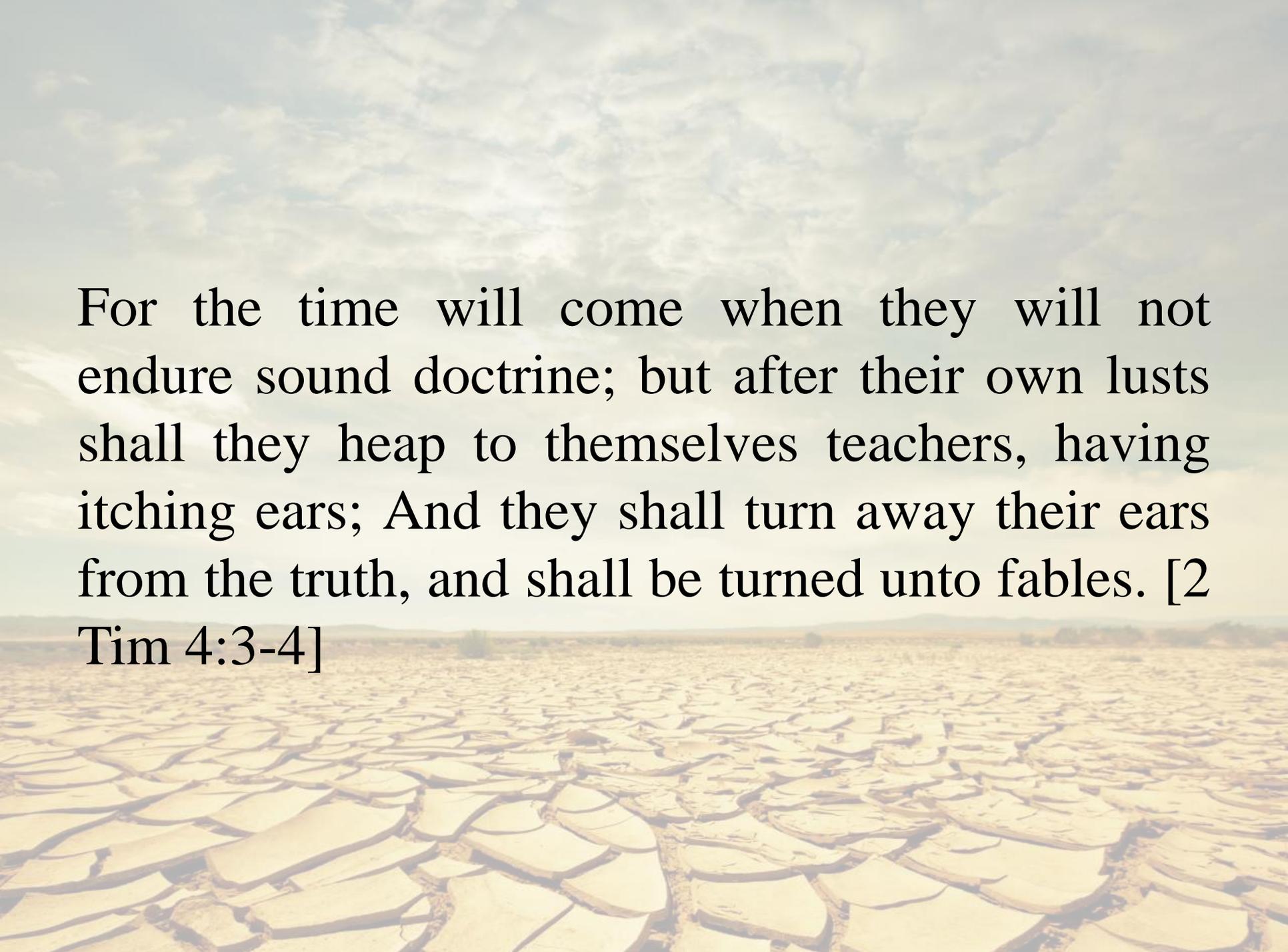
And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world. Amen. [Matthew 28:17-19]



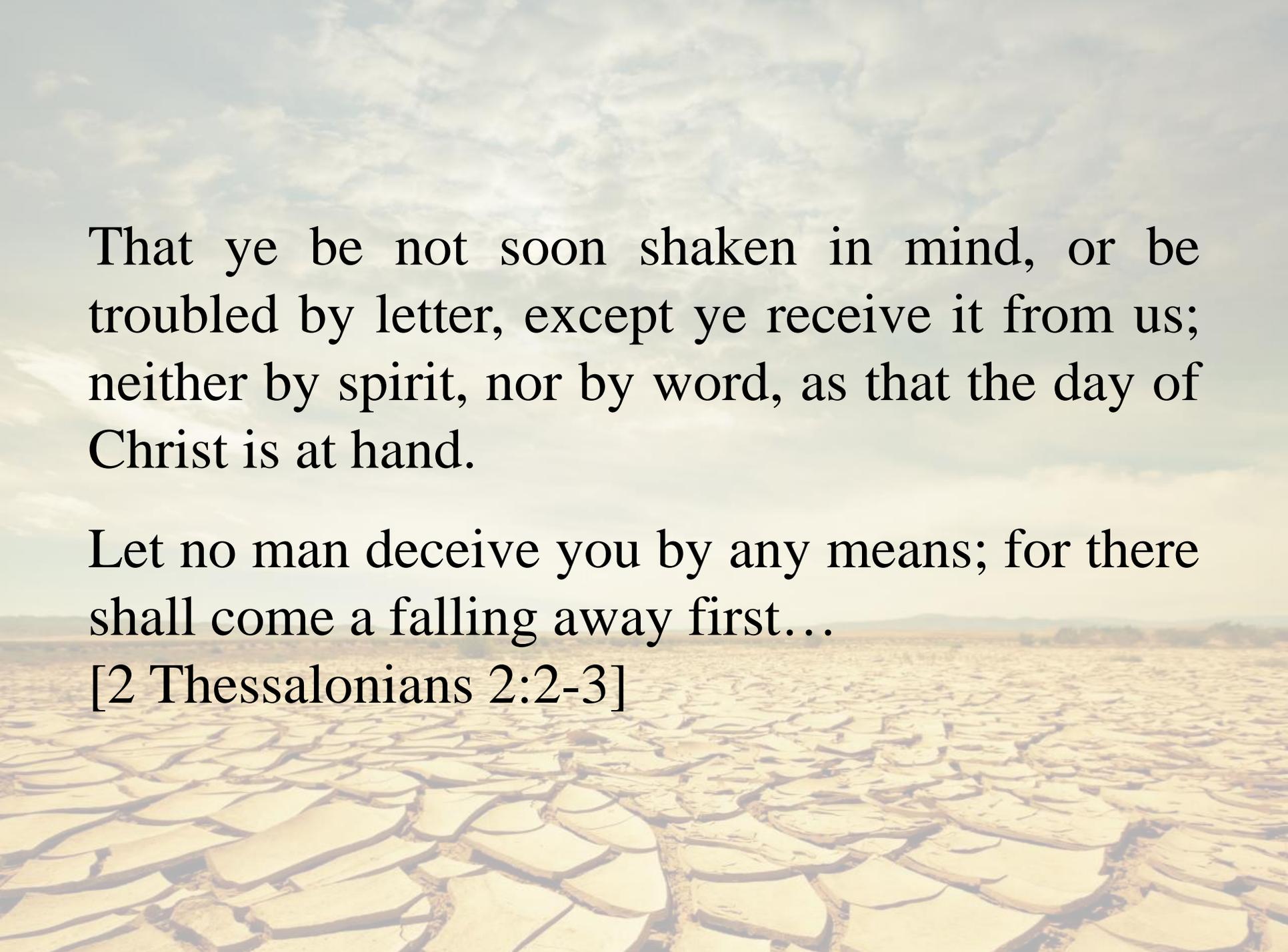






The background of the slide is a photograph of a dry, cracked desert landscape. The ground is parched and broken into irregular, polygonal shapes, resembling a mosaic of dried mud. The sky above is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall lighting is bright and somewhat hazy, suggesting a clear but dry day. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of this image.

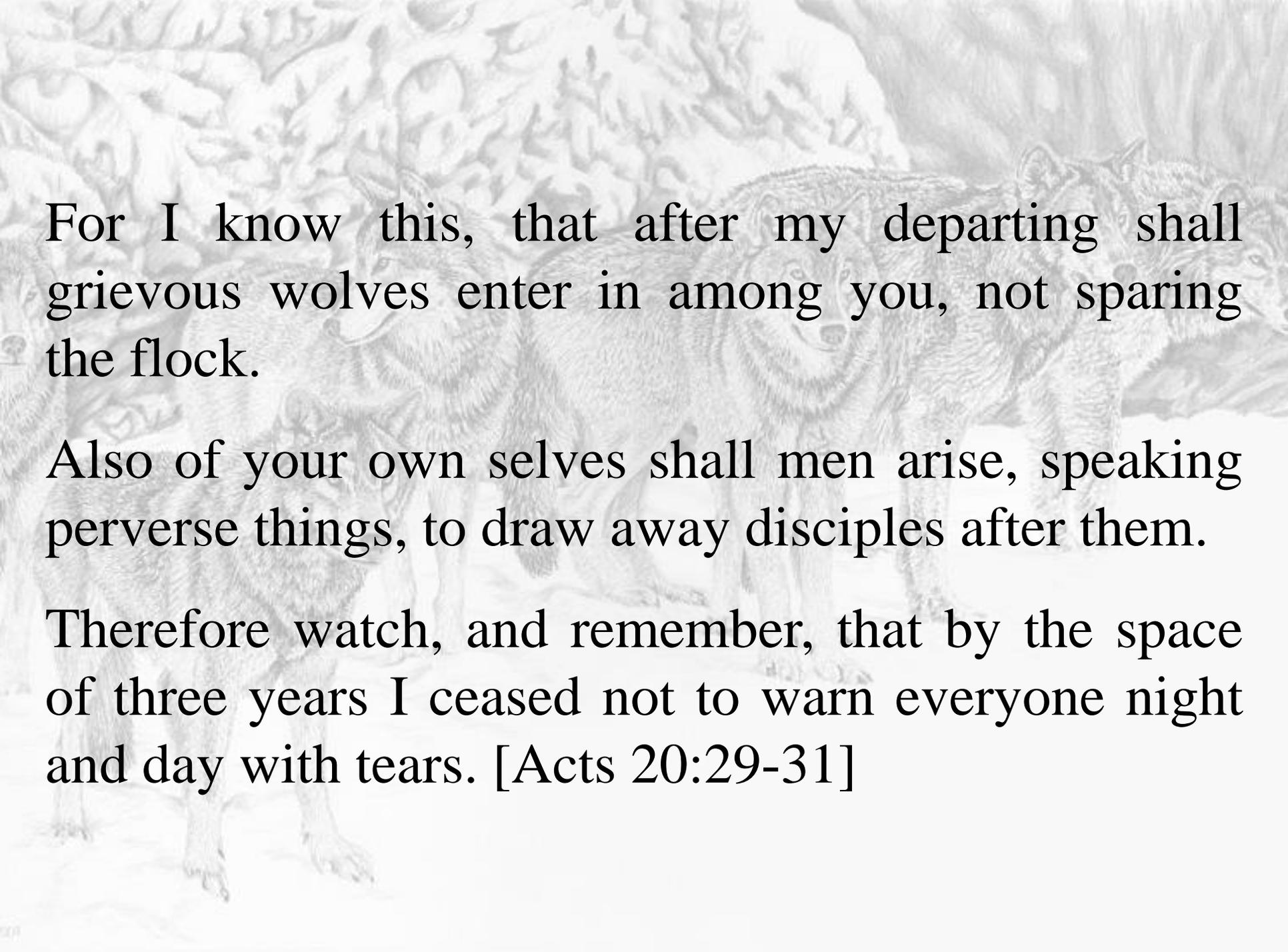
For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. [2 Tim 4:3-4]



That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled by letter, except ye receive it from us; neither by spirit, nor by word, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

Let no man deceive you by any means; for there shall come a falling away first...

[2 Thessalonians 2:2-3]



For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears. [Acts 20:29-31]







**WHAT BECAME
OF THE CHURCH
THAT CHRIST
BUILT?**

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel;

Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. [Galatians 1:6-9]



John Wesley
(1703-1791)

It does not appear, that these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were common in the church for more than two or three centuries. We seldom hear of them after the fatal period, when the emperor Constantine called himself a Christian: From this time they almost totally ceased.

The cause of this was not, (as has been vulgarly supposed,) 'because there was no more occasion for them,' because all of the world became Christian. This is a miserable mistake: not a twentieth part of it [the world] was then nominally Christian.

(Continued)

The real cause was, ‘the love of many’ almost of all Christians, so called, was ‘waxed cold.’ The Christians had no more of the Spirit of Christ, than the other heathens.

This was the real cause why extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be found in the Christian church; because the Christians were turned heathens again, and had only a dead form left.

– *Wesley’s Sermons*, Vol. 2, p. 266

















Mosheim:

The Christian church was scarcely formed when in different places, there started up a certain pretended reformer, who not satisfied with the simplicity of that religion that was taught by the Apostles, meditated changes of doctrine and worship.

– *First Century*, Ch. 5, p. 2

Mosheim:

There is no institution so pure and excellent which the corruption and folly of man will not in time alter for the worse, and load with additions foreign to its natures and original designs. Such in a particular manner, was the fate of Christianity.

In this century many unnecessary rites and ceremonies were added to the Christian worship, the introduction of which was extremely offensive to wise and good men.

– *Second Century*, Ch. 4, p. 2

During this [seventh century] true religion lay buried under a senseless mass of superstitions, and was unable to raise her head. The earlier Christians had worshipped only God and His Son; but those called Christians in this century worshipped the wood of a cross, the images of holy men, and bones of dubious origin.

- *Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Fourth American Edition, p. 50*

Evidences of the Apostasy

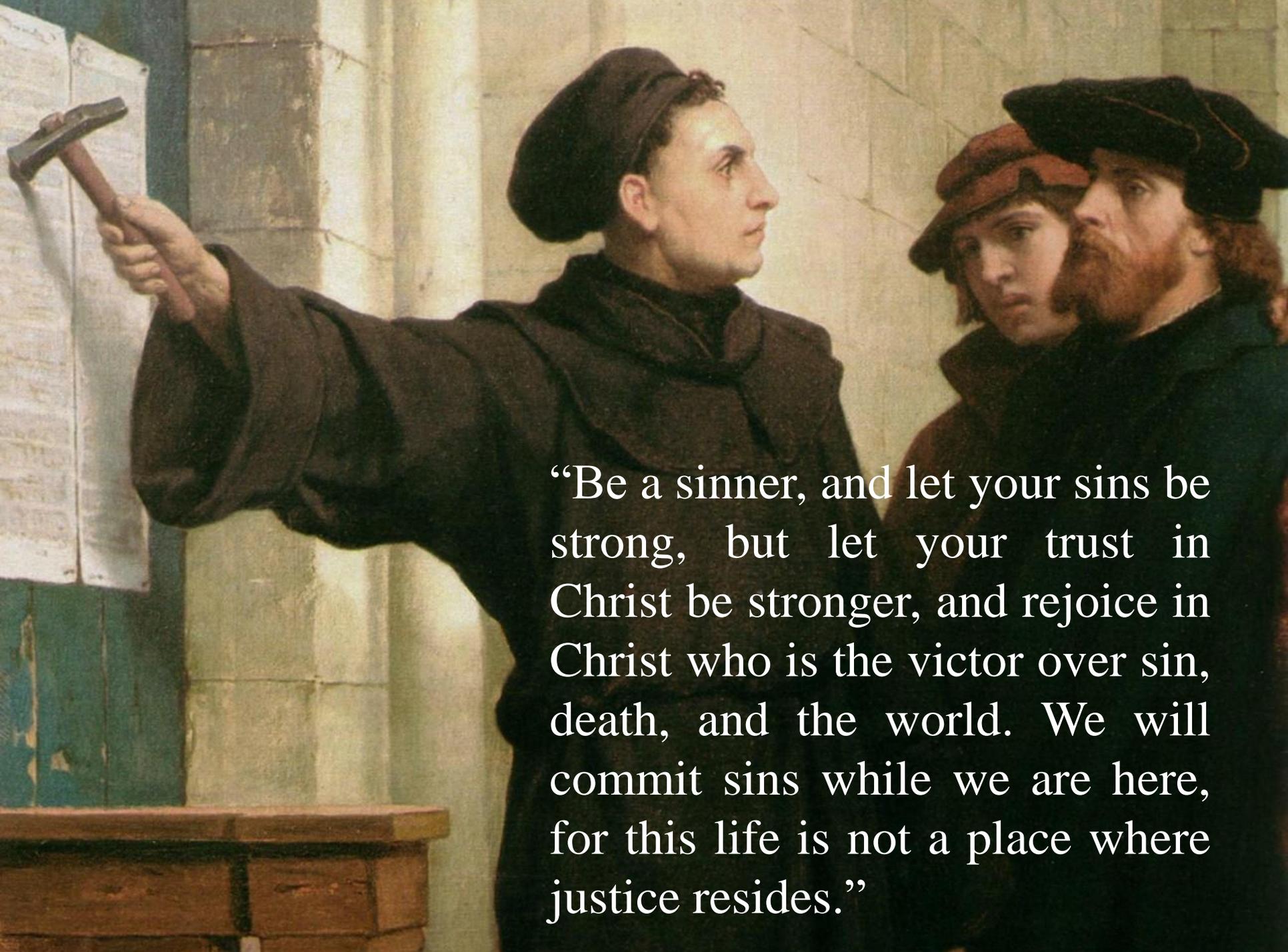
- 200 AD – Prayers offered for the dead
- 254 AD – Baptism of infants required
- 325 AD – Bible compiled – further revelation not allowed
- 360AD – Adoration of Saints started
- 438 AD – Mary called Mother of God
- 500 AD – Priests began to dress differently
- 570 AD – Bishop of Rome ascends to power
- 593 AD – Prayers offered to Mary
- 682 AD – Holy water introduced
- 708 AD – Ritual of kissing Pope's toe introduced
- 817 AD – Cardinals created

Evidences of the Apostasy

- 988 AD – Fasting on Fridays & Lent began
- 1079 AD – Marriage of priests forbidden (All priests who were married had their marriages dissolved)
- 1090 AD – Rosary beads invented
- 1100 AD – Money was accepted for Masses
- 1190 AD – Sale of indulgences began
- 1215 AD – Transubstantiation of bread and wine declared
Oral confession before a priest became mandatory
- 1229 AD – Members not allowed to read the Bible

Evidences of the Apostasy

- 1263 AD – Sacramental cup was forbidden to people at communion
- 1311 AD – Baptism by sprinkling first legalized
- 1439 AD – Purgatory and the Treasury of Merit
- 1854 AD – Immaculate conception of Mary taught
- 1870 AD – Infallibility of Pope declared
- 1950 AD – Assumption of Mary proclaimed



“Be a sinner, and let your sins be strong, but let your trust in Christ be stronger, and rejoice in Christ who is the victor over sin, death, and the world. We will commit sins while we are here, for this life is not a place where justice resides.”



Martin Luther

1517 AD
(Lutheran)



John Robinson

1620 AD
(Episcopal)



Roger Williams

1639 AD
(Baptist)



Isaac Newton

1704 AD
(Episcopal)



John Wesley

1739 AD
(Methodist)



Alexander Campbell

1832 AD
(Disciples of Christ)

Of Roger Williams it is reported:

He seems rather to have conceived that the church of Christ had so fallen into apostasy, as to have lost both its right form and the due administration of the ordinances, which could only be restored by some new apostolic, or specially commissioned messenger from above...He conceived “that the apostasy of Anti-Christ has so far corrupted all, that there can be no recovery out of that apostasy, till Christ shall send forth new apostles to plant churches anew.”

– *Struggles and Triumphs of Religious Liberty*, pp. 238-

After Constantine, a true ministry no longer existed, and none but God could now bring it back. Williams did not come to this position easily, nor did he find it easy to persuade others that recreating the true church of Christ was a vain pursuit – apart from direct divine intervention.

- Edwin S. Gaustad, *Liberty of Conscience: Roger Williams in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 91-92.

One member baptized [Roger] Williams, who in turn baptized all the others. About twenty persons joined in the creation of this, the first church of Baptist identification not only in Rhode Island but in all of North America as well... For Williams, who wrote of the “restless unsatisfiedness of my soul,” found no enduring peace, not even in the church molded by his own hands.

What authority did he have to be baptized or to baptize others? What line of apostolic continuity could be traced to that score of Bible believers who agreed to worship together? What biblical commission or divine command set this church apart or perhaps even above all others?...

In writing to John Winthrop as early as 1636, Williams bemoaned the spiritual nakedness of New England's churches but added the hope that within a few years the Lord would reveal "the first and most ancient path" more plainly "to you and me." More than a dozen years later, in a letter to Winthrop's son, Williams indicated that he found no churches organized "after the first pattern" . . . His growing unease about the nature of all man-made (as opposed to Christ-created) churches led to his departure from the Providence church after only a few months of fellowship in that congregation's midst...

On his return from England he [Roger Williams] refrained from fellowship with the church, and lived in an isolated religious condition, preaching the gospel to the Indians as he found opportunity, but refusing to participate in the ordinances. He had embraced a singular notion, which is thus stated by one of his biographers: “He denied that any ministry now exists which is authorized to preach the gospel to the impenitent, or to administer the ordinances.”

- *Baptist History*, J. M. Cramp, p.461

Almighty God of love,
Set up the attracting sign,
And summon whom thou dost
approve,
For messengers divine.

From favored Abraham's seed
The new apostles choose,
In isles and continents to spread
The soul-reviving news.

– Charles Wesley





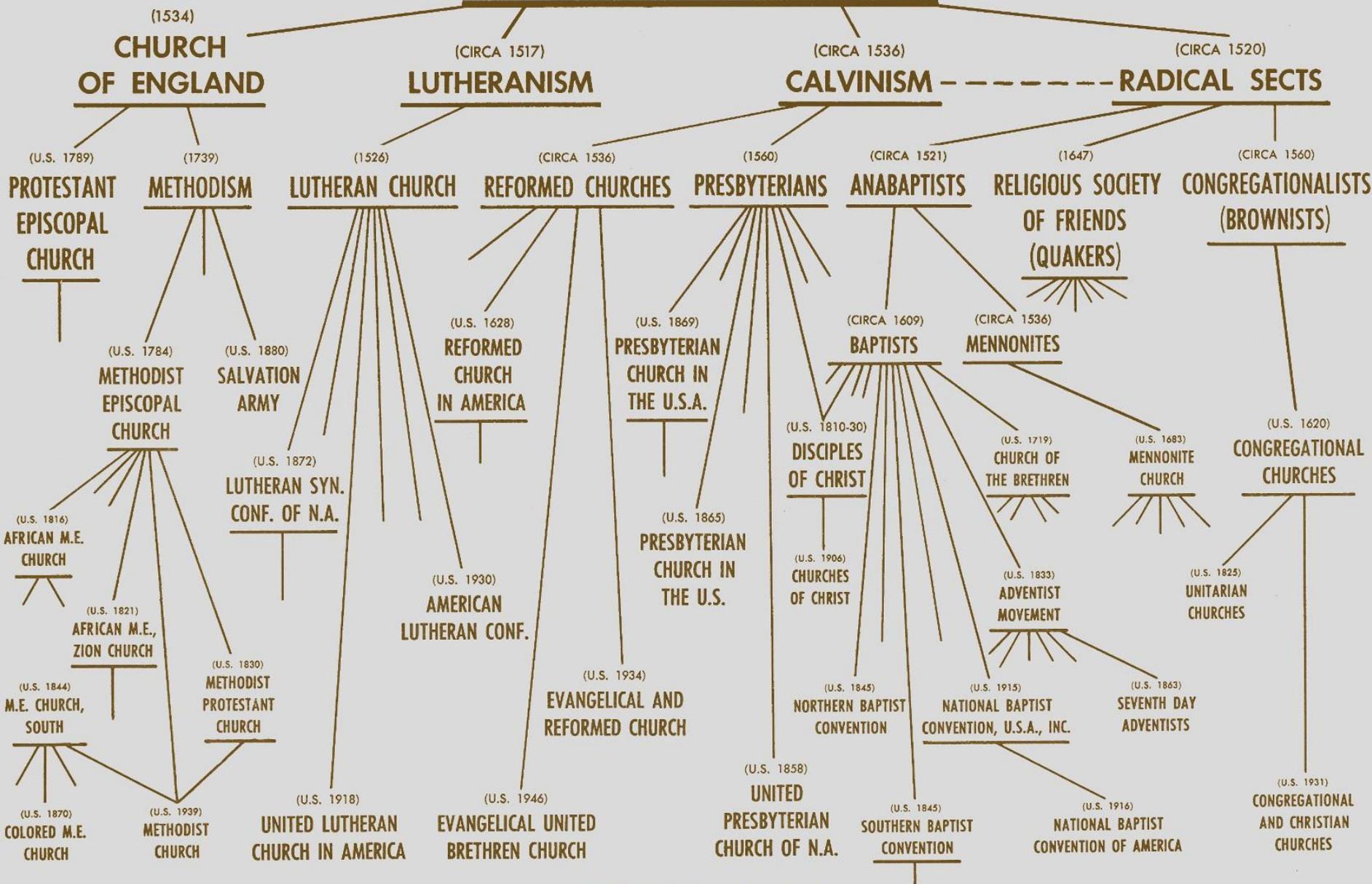
“We argue that all christian sects are more or less apostatized from the institutions of the Saviour: that by all of the obligations of the christian religion, they that fear and love the Lord are bound to return to the ancient order of things, in spirit and truth.”

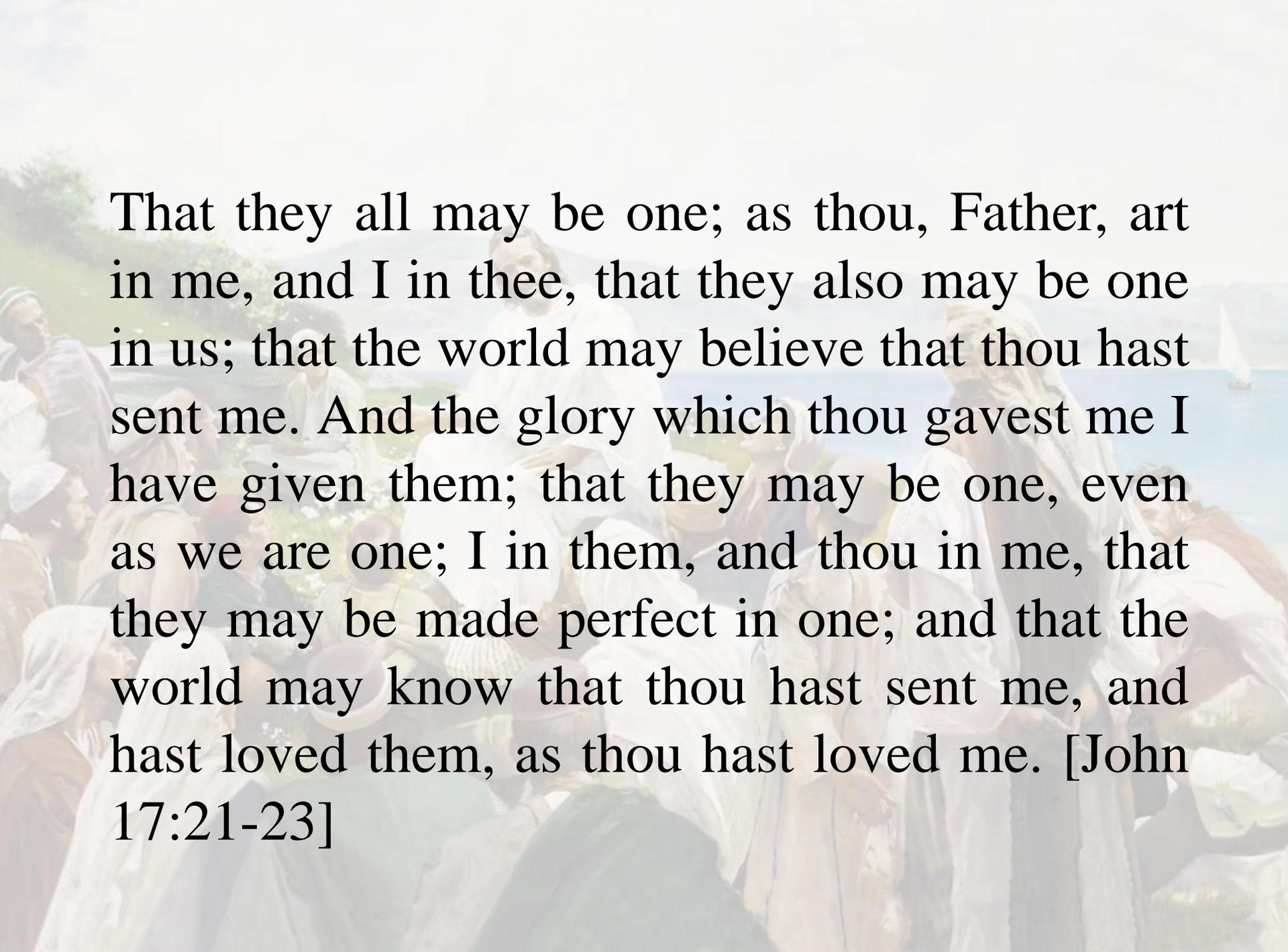
– A. Campbell, *The Christian Baptist*,
Vol. 5, p. 402

“We have to pattern after the first church as well as we can. But we can never equal it. With all our efforts, the great disparity will ever remain. And could the Apostles and primitive Christians be here, they would doubtless weep at beholding it.”

– A. Campbell, *Millenial Harbinger*,
Vol. 5, p. 40

CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY





That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. [John 17:21-23]



“The primitive gospel, in its effulgence and power, is yet to shine out in its original splendor to regenerate the world.”

– A. Campbell, as quoted in *History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve*
by A. S. Hayden, p. 37

“I am very confident the Lord hath more truth and light yet to break forth out of His holy word.”

– From John Robinson’s address to the departing Puritans



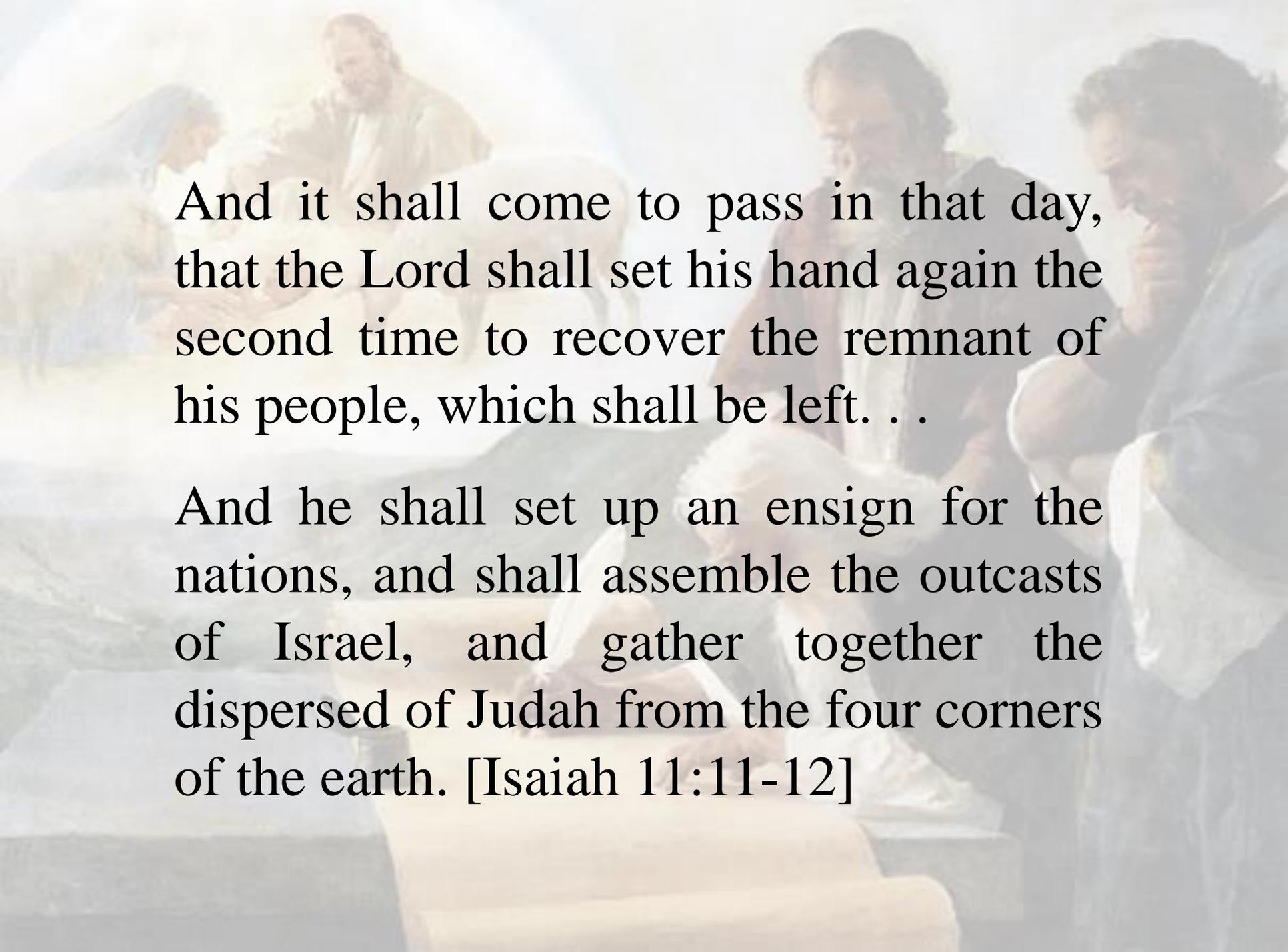


“The times which we have reason to believe are at hand—if they are not already begun—are what many pious men have termed, the time of ‘the Latter-Day Glory’; meaning the time wherein God would gloriously display his power and love...and set up his kingdom over the earth.”

– John Wesley’s Sermon #71

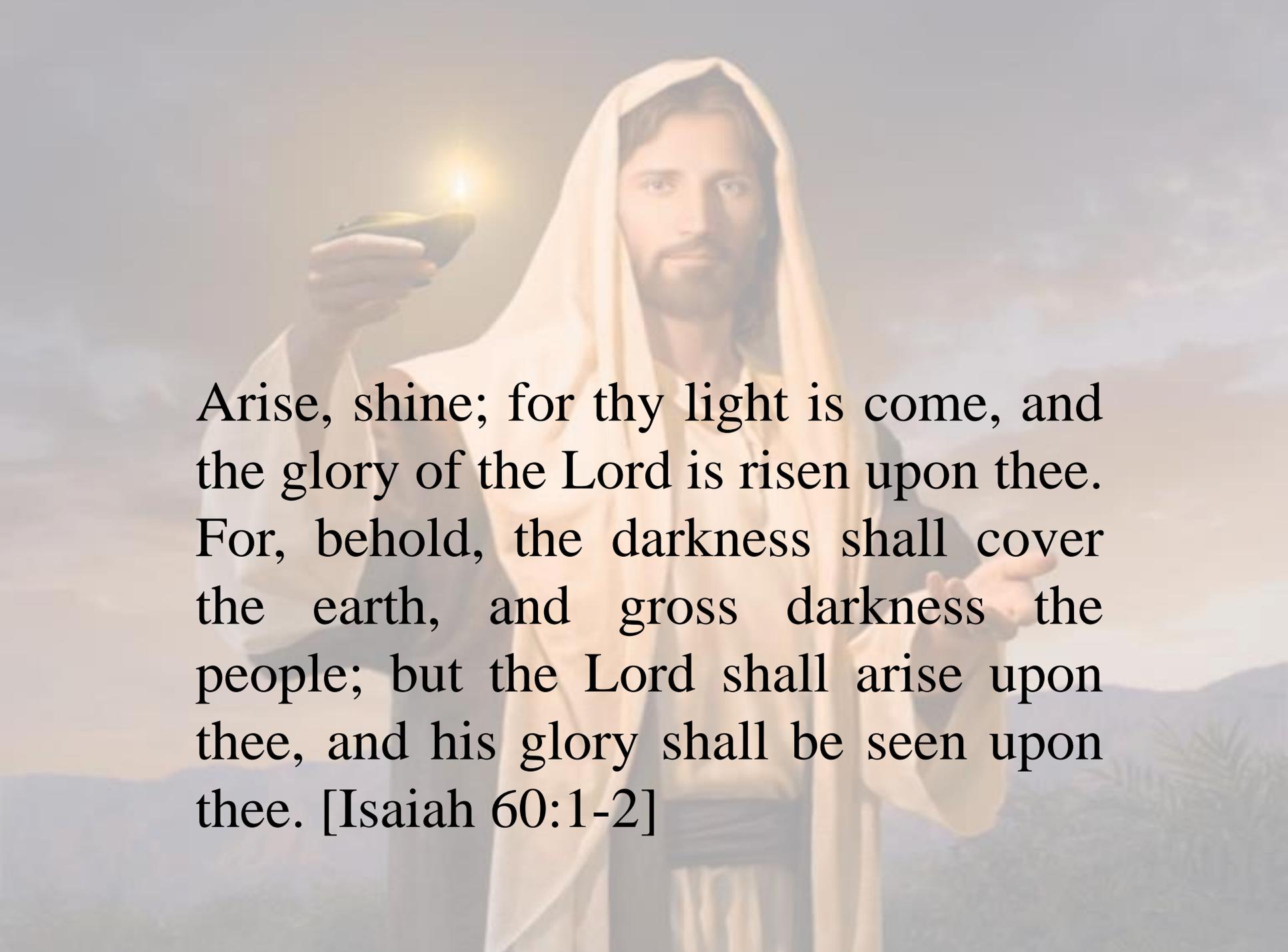
What could God have done which He hath not done, to convince you that the day is coming, that the time is at hand, when He will fulfill His glorious promises; when He will arise and maintain His own cause and to set up His Kingdom over all the earth?

—*Wesley's Sermons, vol. 2, p. 98*

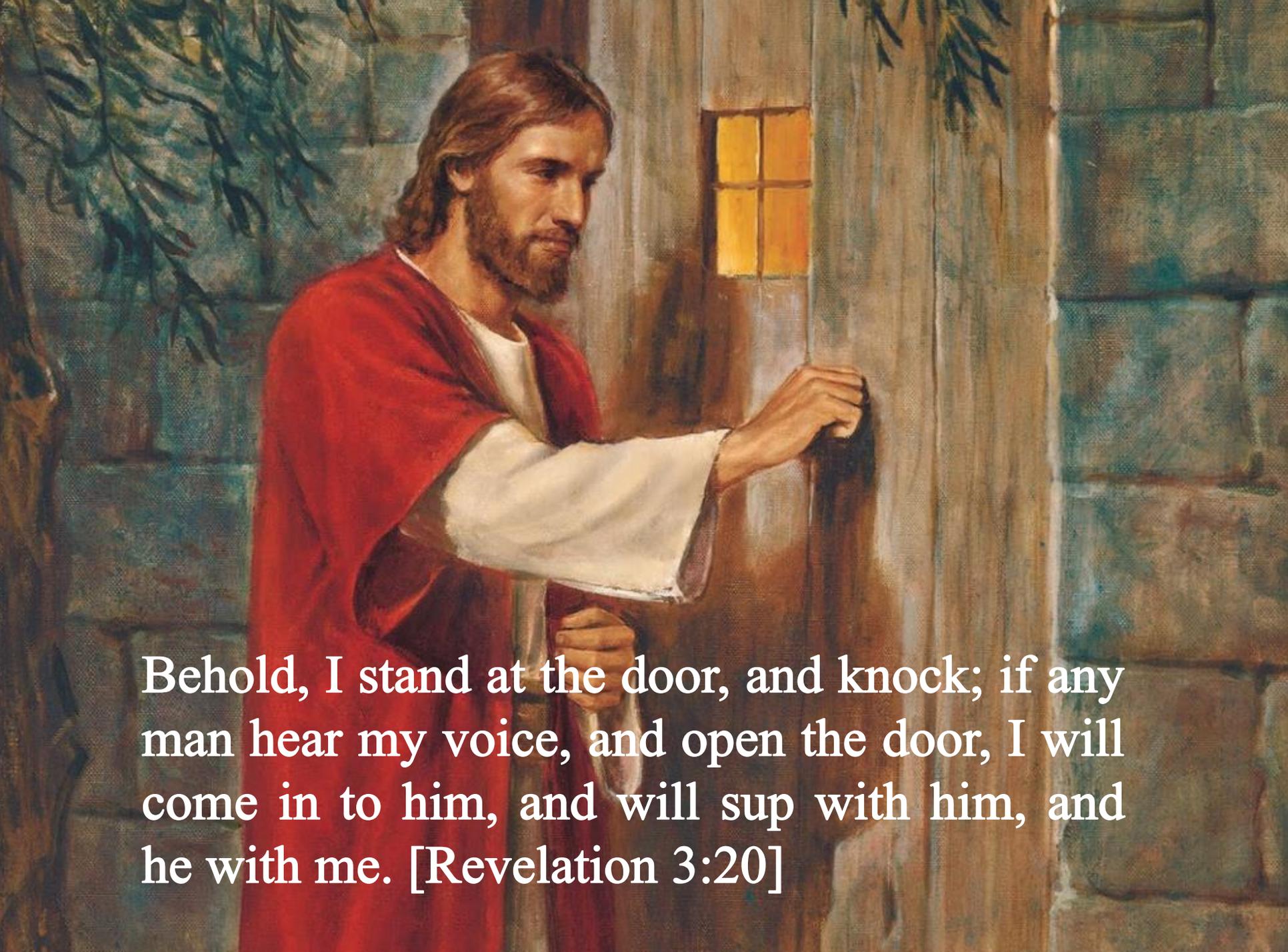
A group of people, including a man in a white robe, gathered around a table, possibly in a classroom or study setting. The image is faded and serves as a background for the text.

And it shall come to pass in that day,
that the Lord shall set his hand again the
second time to recover the remnant of
his people, which shall be left. . .

And he shall set up an ensign for the
nations, and shall assemble the outcasts
of Israel, and gather together the
dispersed of Judah from the four corners
of the earth. [Isaiah 11:11-12]

A man with a beard and long hair, wearing a white robe and a white head covering, stands against a soft, hazy background. He holds a glowing, golden orb in his right hand, which emits a bright light. His left hand is raised in a gesture of blessing or proclamation. The overall atmosphere is serene and spiritual.

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. [Isaiah 60:1-2]



Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. [Revelation 3:20]



Appendix

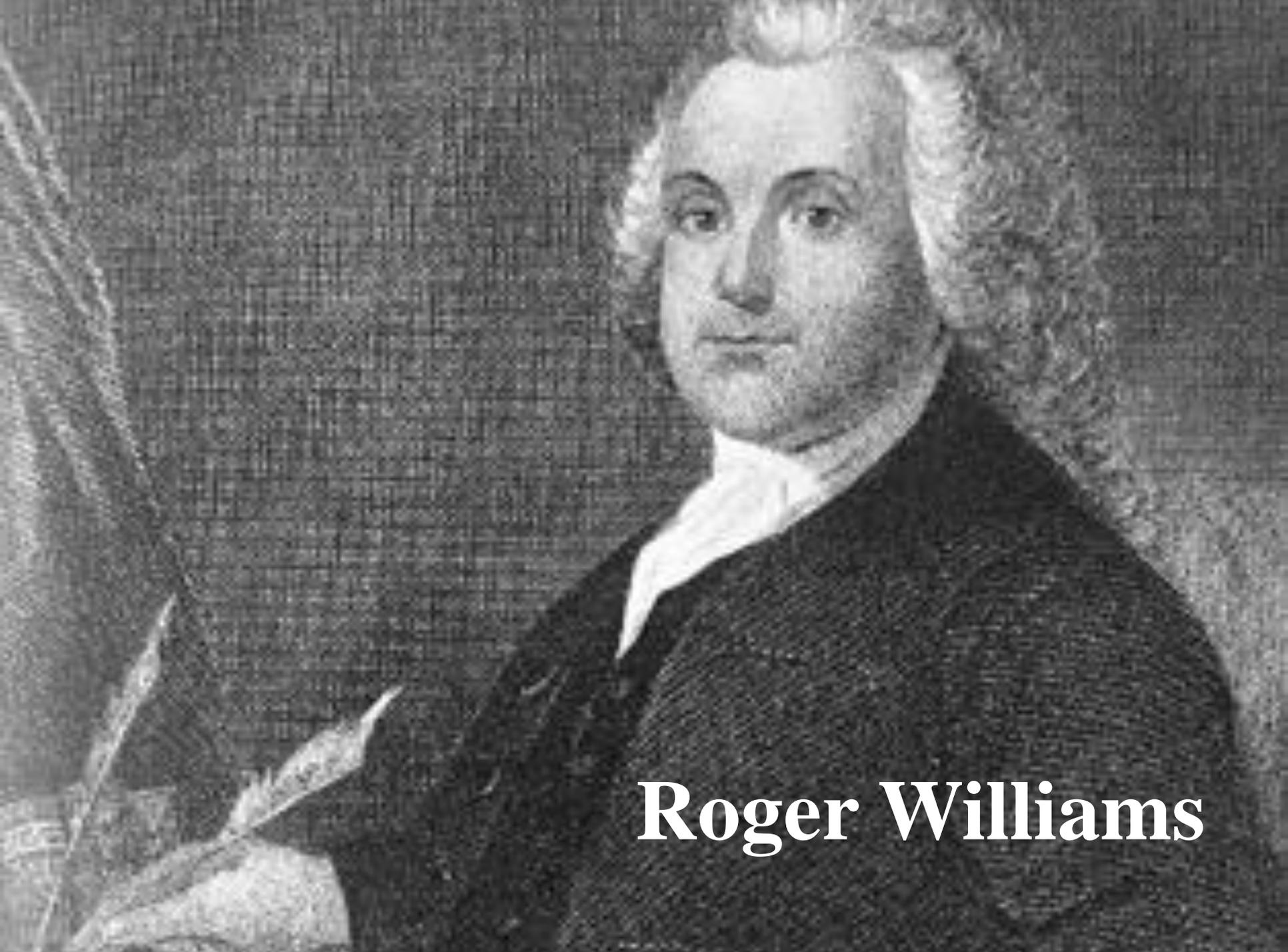
“ . . . either some new revelation, or some new development of the revelation of God must be made . . . We want the old gospel back, and sustained by the ancient order of things;”

– A. Campbell, *Christian System*, p. 250

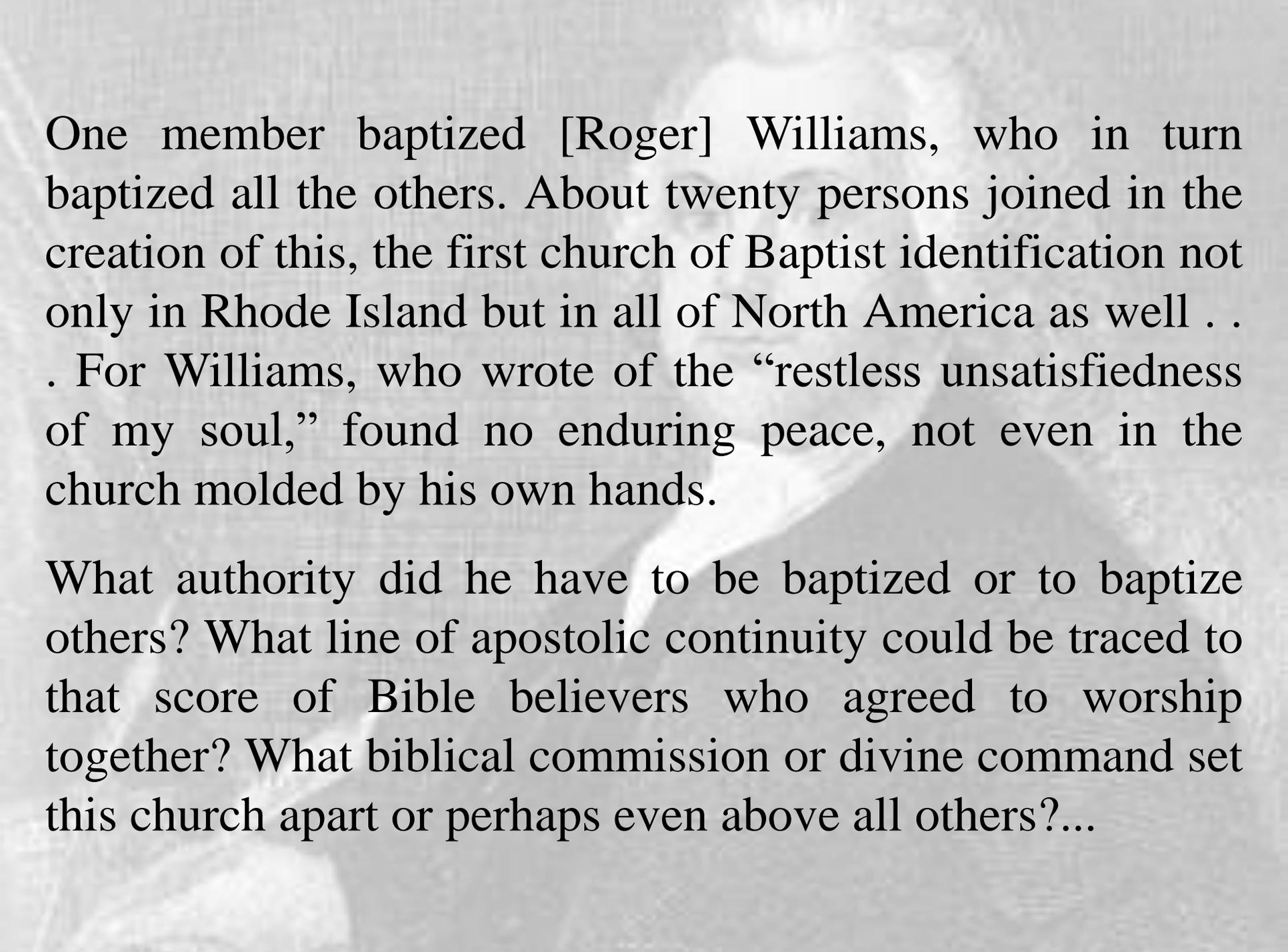
Dr. William Smith:

“We must not expect to see the church of Holy Scripture actually existing in its perfection on earth. It is not to be found, thus perfect, either in the collected fragments of Christendom, or still less in any one of these fragments; though it is possible that one of those fragments more than another may approach the scriptural or apostolic ideal.”

– Classical Examiner of the University of
London Bible Dictionary, p. 163



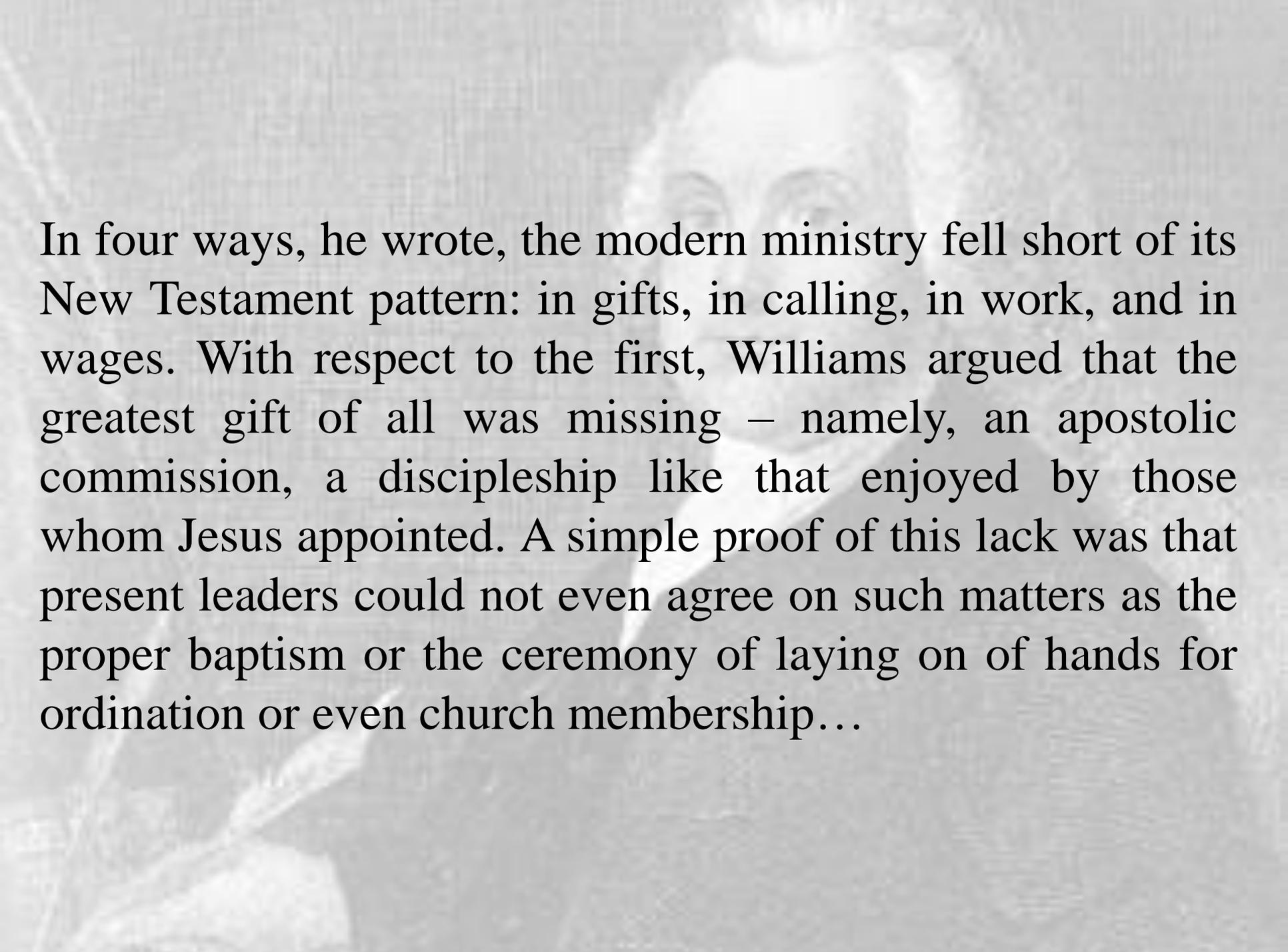
Roger Williams



One member baptized [Roger] Williams, who in turn baptized all the others. About twenty persons joined in the creation of this, the first church of Baptist identification not only in Rhode Island but in all of North America as well . . . For Williams, who wrote of the “restless unsatisfiedness of my soul,” found no enduring peace, not even in the church molded by his own hands.

What authority did he have to be baptized or to baptize others? What line of apostolic continuity could be traced to that score of Bible believers who agreed to worship together? What biblical commission or divine command set this church apart or perhaps even above all others?...

In writing to John Winthrop as early as 1636, Williams bemoaned the spiritual nakedness of New England's churches but added the hope that within a few years the Lord would reveal "the first and most ancient path" more plainly "to you and me." More than a dozen years later, in a letter to Winthrop's son, Williams indicated that he found no churches organized "after the first pattern" . . . His growing unease about the nature of all man-made (as opposed to Christ-created) churches led to his departure from the Providence church after only a few months of fellowship in that congregation's midst...



In four ways, he wrote, the modern ministry fell short of its New Testament pattern: in gifts, in calling, in work, and in wages. With respect to the first, Williams argued that the greatest gift of all was missing – namely, an apostolic commission, a discipleship like that enjoyed by those whom Jesus appointed. A simple proof of this lack was that present leaders could not even agree on such matters as the proper baptism or the ceremony of laying on of hands for ordination or even church membership...

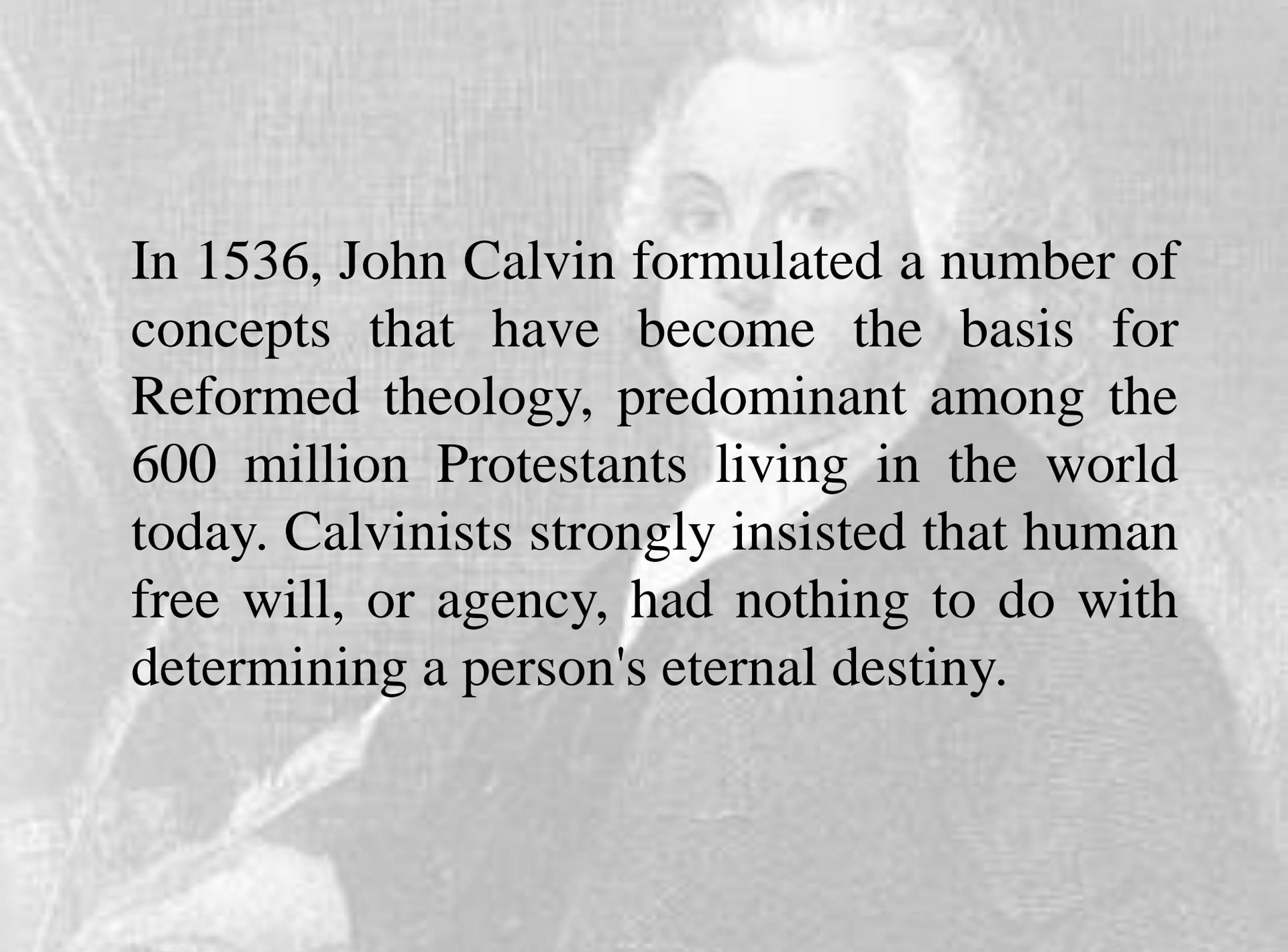
But it was the fourth point that attracted Williams' chief attention: the matter of wages, and more particularly of wages paid by means of a forced tithe collected by the civil power. The ministry was a calling, not a trade, Williams argued He who haggles over his wages, who bargains for his keep, who "makes the cure of Souls, and the charge of men's eternal welfare, a trade, a maintenance, and living" was never sent of God to be a laborer in his vineyard. Like servants hired by the year, today's clergy leave one parish for another the minute they hear offers "of more Ease and better wages." Indeed, they even leave one religion for another . . . in order to keep their comfort and their salary...

We also learn from Williams in 1649 that the Baptists not only persisted in rejecting infant baptism but came to require that adult believers be fully immersed. Not content with sprinkling, as was the case with infants, Baptists now wanted all members “dipped,” symbolically buried with Christ in baptism and raised with him into a new life. “I believe,” Williams wrote, that this baptism “comes nearer the practice of our great Founder, Christ Jesus, than other religions do, and yet . . .” For Williams, always that “and yet.” His qualification pertained, of course, to his conviction that until Christ came again and created new apostles, all church ordinances lacked full validity.

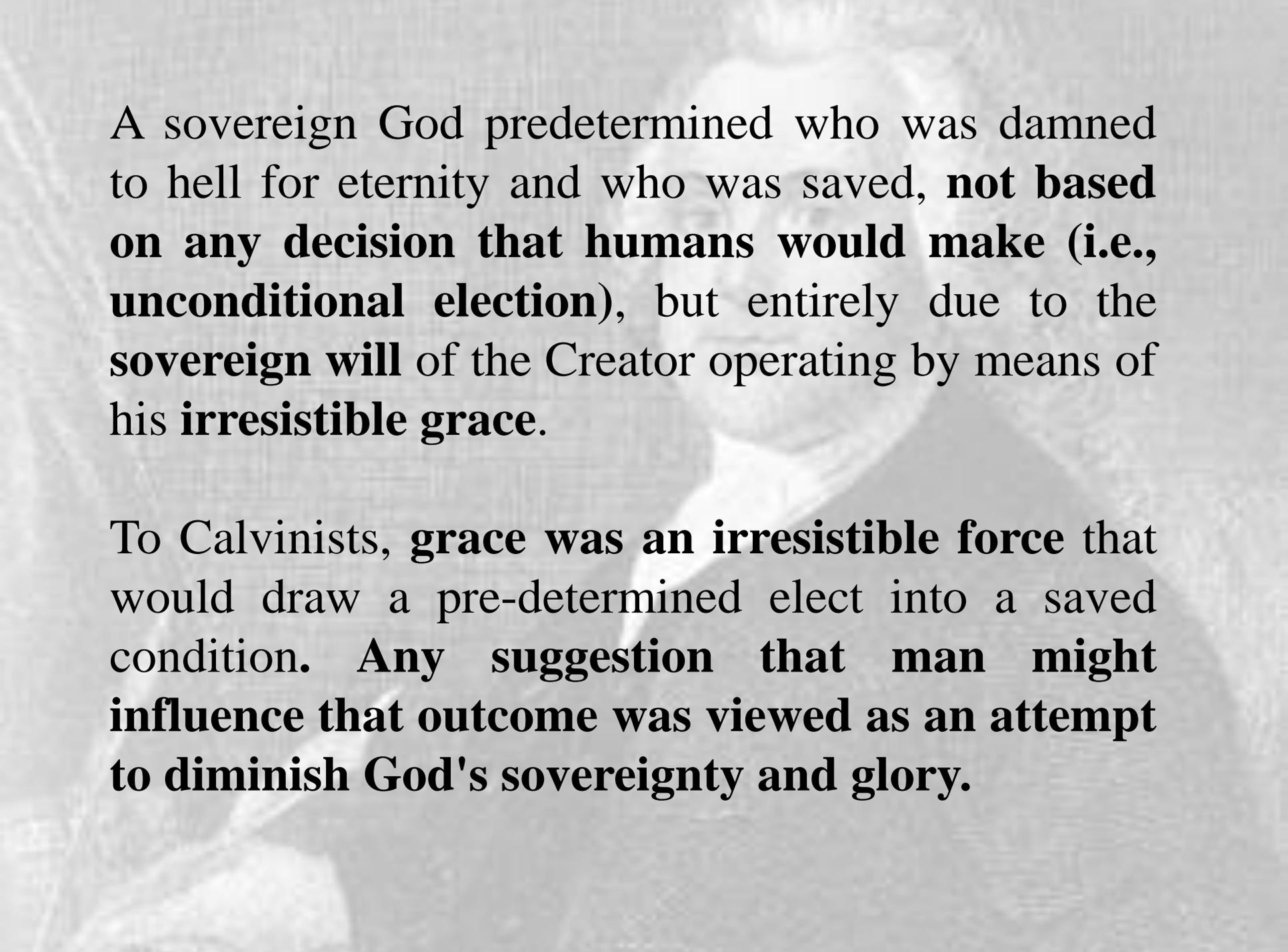
Edwin S. Gaustad, *Liberty of Conscience: Roger Williams in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991),
pg. 90-93 and 116

Calvinism



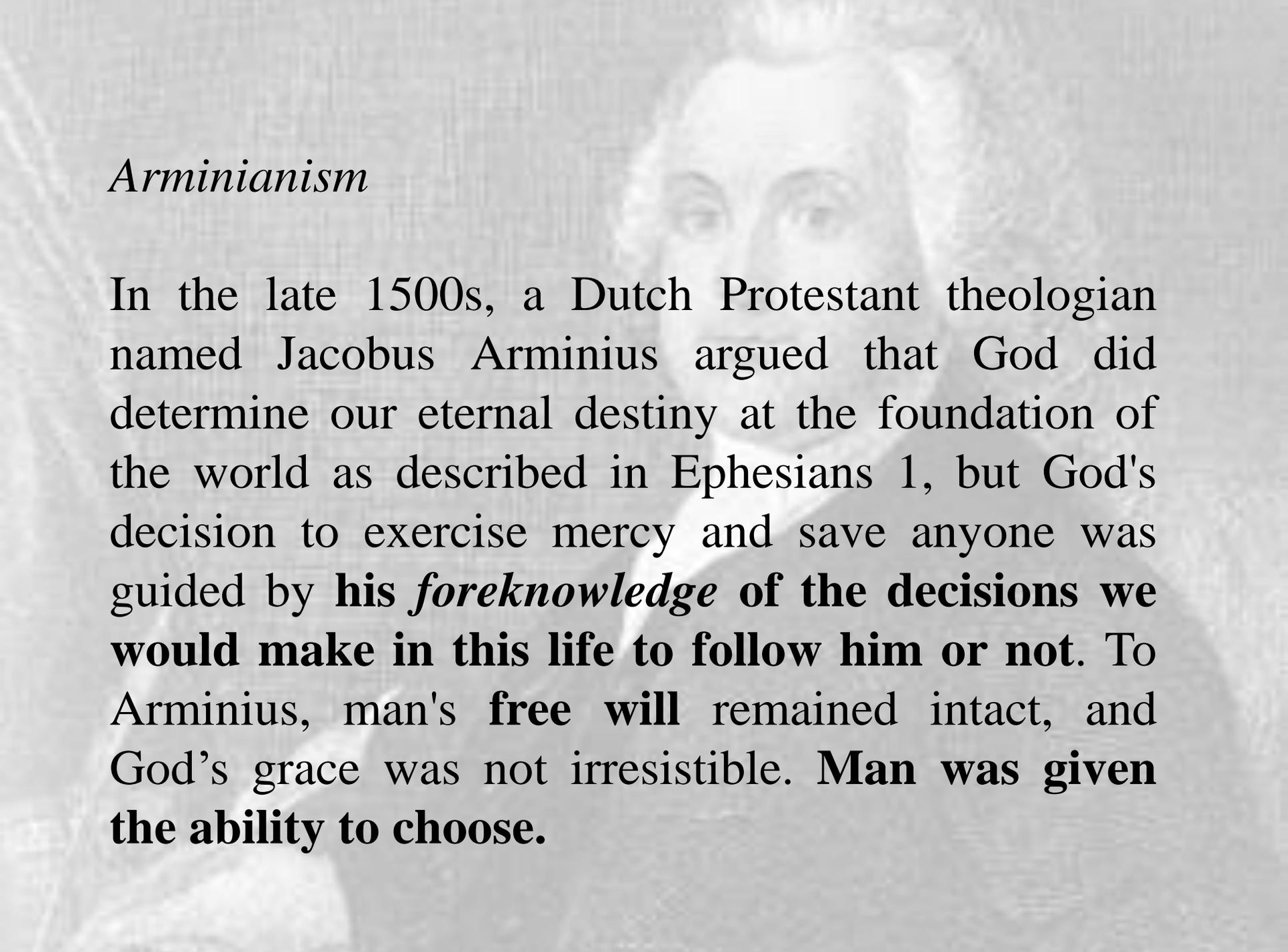


In 1536, John Calvin formulated a number of concepts that have become the basis for Reformed theology, predominant among the 600 million Protestants living in the world today. Calvinists strongly insisted that human free will, or agency, had nothing to do with determining a person's eternal destiny.



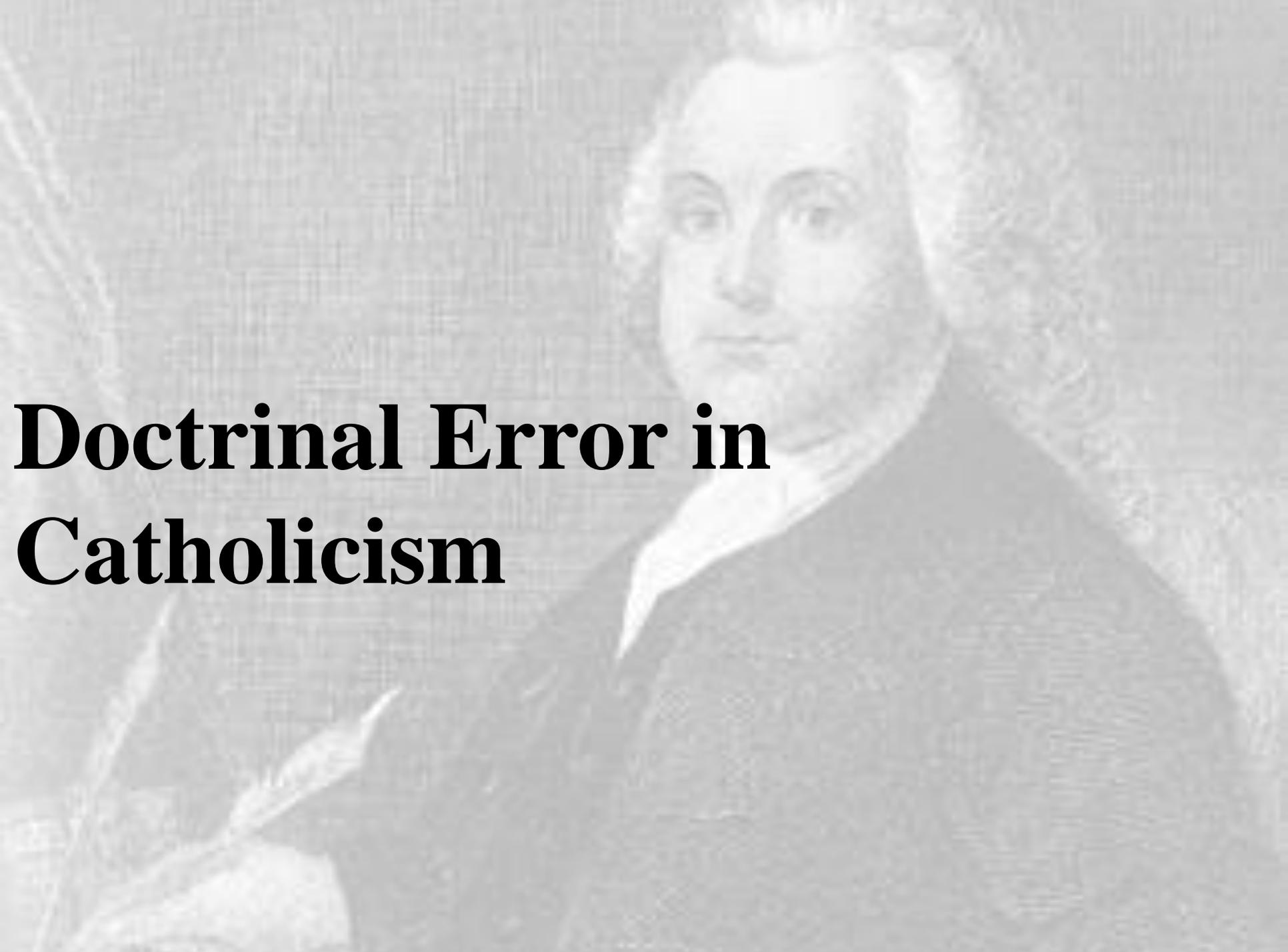
A sovereign God predetermined who was damned to hell for eternity and who was saved, **not based on any decision that humans would make (i.e., unconditional election)**, but entirely due to the **sovereign will** of the Creator operating by means of his **irresistible grace**.

To Calvinists, **grace was an irresistible force** that would draw a pre-determined elect into a saved condition. **Any suggestion that man might influence that outcome was viewed as an attempt to diminish God's sovereignty and glory.**



Arminianism

In the late 1500s, a Dutch Protestant theologian named Jacobus Arminius argued that God did determine our eternal destiny at the foundation of the world as described in Ephesians 1, but God's decision to exercise mercy and save anyone was guided by **his *foreknowledge* of the decisions we would make in this life to follow him or not.** To Arminius, man's **free will** remained intact, and God's grace was not irresistible. **Man was given the ability to choose.**



Doctrinal Error in Catholicism

PAPAL INFALLIBILITY

This is a dogma of the Catholic church that says **when the pope speaks “ex cathedra”** (i.e., when he speaks about doctrine or morals in the discharge of his duties as pastor over all Christians), **the supernatural assistance of the Holy Spirit will prevent him from making any mistakes.** The book *Catholic Dogma* says, “The Pope is judged by nobody.” The supreme teacher is unilaterally responsible to have jurisdiction over all matters of church life. So the pope is supposed to be infallible when he speaks ex cathedra.

The idea of **papal infallibility** had existed for centuries. It became the majority view of Catholics during the Counter-Reformation (1545-1648) in reaction to dissension caused by Reformers. **However, it did not become official doctrine until the First Vatican Council of 1869.**

“THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL”

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; **and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.** [Matthew 16:18]

The phrase “and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” is often used by Catholics to suggest that Christ’s church will remain intact without interruption throughout history. They point to, what they believe to be, a continuous succession of the church down through the centuries until our day.

It is true that “the gates of hell shall not prevail against” Christ’s church. **But it is misleading to infer that there will never be an apostasy and therefore no need for a restoration of Christ’s gospel.** Christ leaves people’s free will intact, and the battle between good and evil continues.

Just like the score in a football game, the lead can potentially swing back and forth, but we know who will ultimately win the struggle. The Lord Jesus and his church will be victorious. He will conquer his enemies. All of creation will submit to his will. Eventually, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that he is Lord. In this sense, the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church.

PAPAL SUCCESSION

This is the idea that there was an unbroken chain of papal succession from Peter in Rome until today. However, there is no record in scripture of Peter ever assuming leadership of the church in Rome. Peter's activities are described in Acts 15, and then that is it -- nothing about passing his leadership to Clement. In fact there were time periods when there was no Bishop of Rome at all: the years 304 to 308, 638-640, 1085-1086, 1241-1243, 1269-1271, 1292-1294, 1314-1316 and 1415-1417. For hundreds of years, five episcopal sees of the Roman empire, each one with their own bishop, battled over who would be victorious. That issue was not settled until Rome became dominant under Gregory the Great (Bishop in Rome from 590 to 604 AD). At that point, to justify Rome's pre-eminent position, a myth was constructed about Peter leading the church in Rome and continuous succession down through the centuries.

SEVEN SACRAMENTS

Baptism: Catholics say, “Infant baptism removes both the guilt and the punishment due to Original Sin.” However, this is not true; **unbaptized infants will not go to hell.**

Confirmation: Around the age of twelve, a bishop or priest can anoint a member to consecrate and empower them for service to God. However, Acts 8 indicates that **the gift of the Holy Spirit should be conferred soon after water baptism.**

Eucharist: The communion or Mass involves ingesting the Real Presence of Jesus (i.e., literal body and blood of Christ). However, this is not true, **the bread and wine should be merely symbolic of Christ’s body and blood.**

Penance (Confession): Members allegedly atone for their sins by performing an act or paying a price.

Sacraments also include **Matrimony, Anointing the Sick** and **Holy Orders** (i.e. ministerial ordination).

PRIESTS' ROLE IN TRANSUBSTANTIATION

The book *Catholic Dogma* states, “When **the priest** announces the tremendous words of consecration at the Mass, **he reaches up into the heavens, he brings Christ down from His throne and places Him upon our altar** to be offered up again as the victim for the sins of man. It is a power greater than that of saints and angels, greater than that of seraphim and cherubim.”

At the **Mass or Eucharist**, bread and wine are placed on the altar, and through a supernatural power greater than the angels, **the priest raises his arms**, allegedly to enact a miracle every time that Mass occurs (i.e., **change the water and wine into the literal body and blood of Christ**). This is called transubstantiation. One conclusion from the Council of Trent in 1546 was that **even the bread and wine are therefore worthy of worship**. Also, Mass can supposedly be conducted to **atone for the sins of the *dead* as well**.

CELIBACY OF CLERGY

Celibacy had been practiced for centuries, but **in 1079**, Pope Gregory VII made it an official doctrine and **began to rigorously enforce celibacy as an obligation of Roman clergy**. The problem with this unscriptural requirement is described in 1 Corinthians 7:9: “It is better to marry than to burn.” In other words, **it is better to marry than to have lust burn in the heart of the believer**. The rationale for the celibacy requirement is supposedly Matthew 19:12, which talks about *voluntarily* being a eunuch for the kingdom’s sake.

The celibacy requirement has contributed to the large number of sexual scandals that have rained down in torrents upon the Catholic church in recent decades. 1 Timothy 4:1-3 says, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times **some shall depart from the faith . . . speaking lies in hypocrisy . . . forbidding to marry . . .**”

PURGATORY

In 1439, the Council of Florence made the concept of Purgatory official dogma of the Catholic church. **Prayers had been offered for the dead for centuries**, and the concept of **Purgatory** helped to promote an active relationship between those on earth and those who had passed on.

Revelation 21:17 supposedly offers a rationale by saying that no unclean thing can enter heaven. So Catholics believe that we go to Purgatory to be purged or cleansed of sin. However, **there actually is no scriptural justification for the concept of Purgatory.**

In the 1500s, Johann Tetzel **sold indulgences to shorten people's stay in Purgatory.** This was a way to raise money to build St. Peter's Basilica. This helped to launch the Reformation and Martin Luther's stinging criticisms of the Catholic church.

MARY: IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

This is the idea that, at her birth, Mary was not subject to original sin.

In 1854, Pope Pius IX made this official dogma by issuing Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* which said:

“Mary was preserved by Immaculate Conception when conceived in her mother's body and was miraculously free from pollution of sin inherited from Adam. She was in soul and body holy, sinless, stainless, undefiled, pure innocence . . . the Most Blessed Virgin Mary in the first instance of her conception by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of Original Sin. This is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful.”

MARY: PERPETUAL VIRGINITY

This is the idea that, through a miracle, Jesus was born without passing through the birth canal, thus not injuring the body of Mary. It also includes the idea that Mary remained a virgin throughout her life – perpetual virginity.

In 649 AD, Pope Martin made this an official belief. He stated, "Mary gave birth in miraculous fashion without any opening of her womb and injury to her body and without pain."

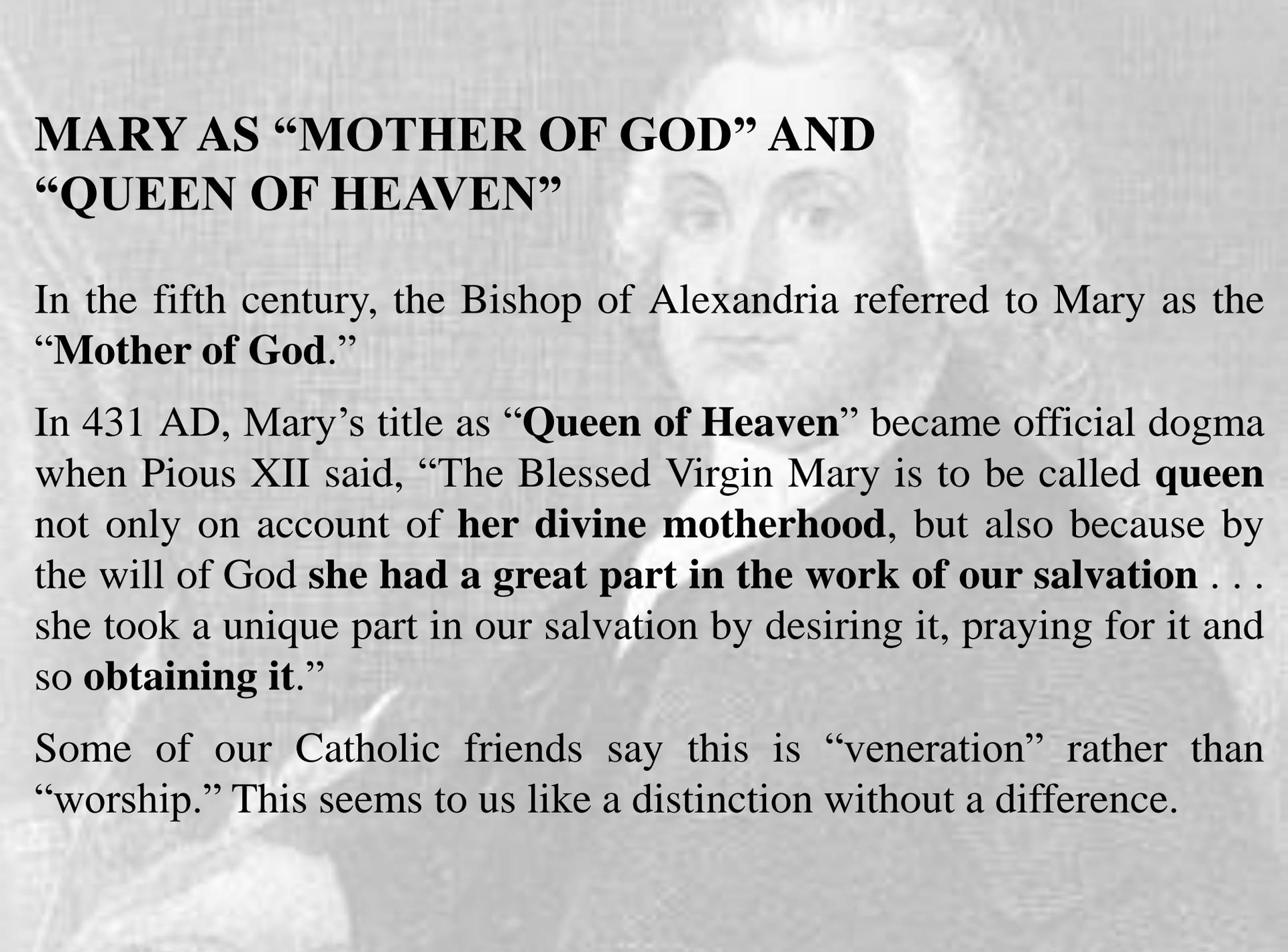
However, Matthew 1:18 says, ". . . when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they *came together* . . . (This passage tells us that Mary and Joseph eventually "came together.") Matthew 13:55 tells us that Jesus had brothers named "James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas."

THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY

This is the idea that, at the end of her life on earth, Mary ascended into heaven with her body intact just like Jesus did. It is also believed that when that happened, everyone who was in Purgatory was released from there.

Even though this belief existed as early as the fifth century, **it was not official doctrine until November 1, 1950** when Pope Pius XII stated, “The bodily assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven is a dogma of the divine and Catholic faith.”

The idea of the assumption of Mary showed up in the 400s AD but was labeled as heresy at that time. Prayers to Mary were officially instituted around 600 AD. Rosary beads to aid in prayers to God and Mary were implemented in 1090 AD. But it was not until 1950 that the assumption of Mary became official belief.

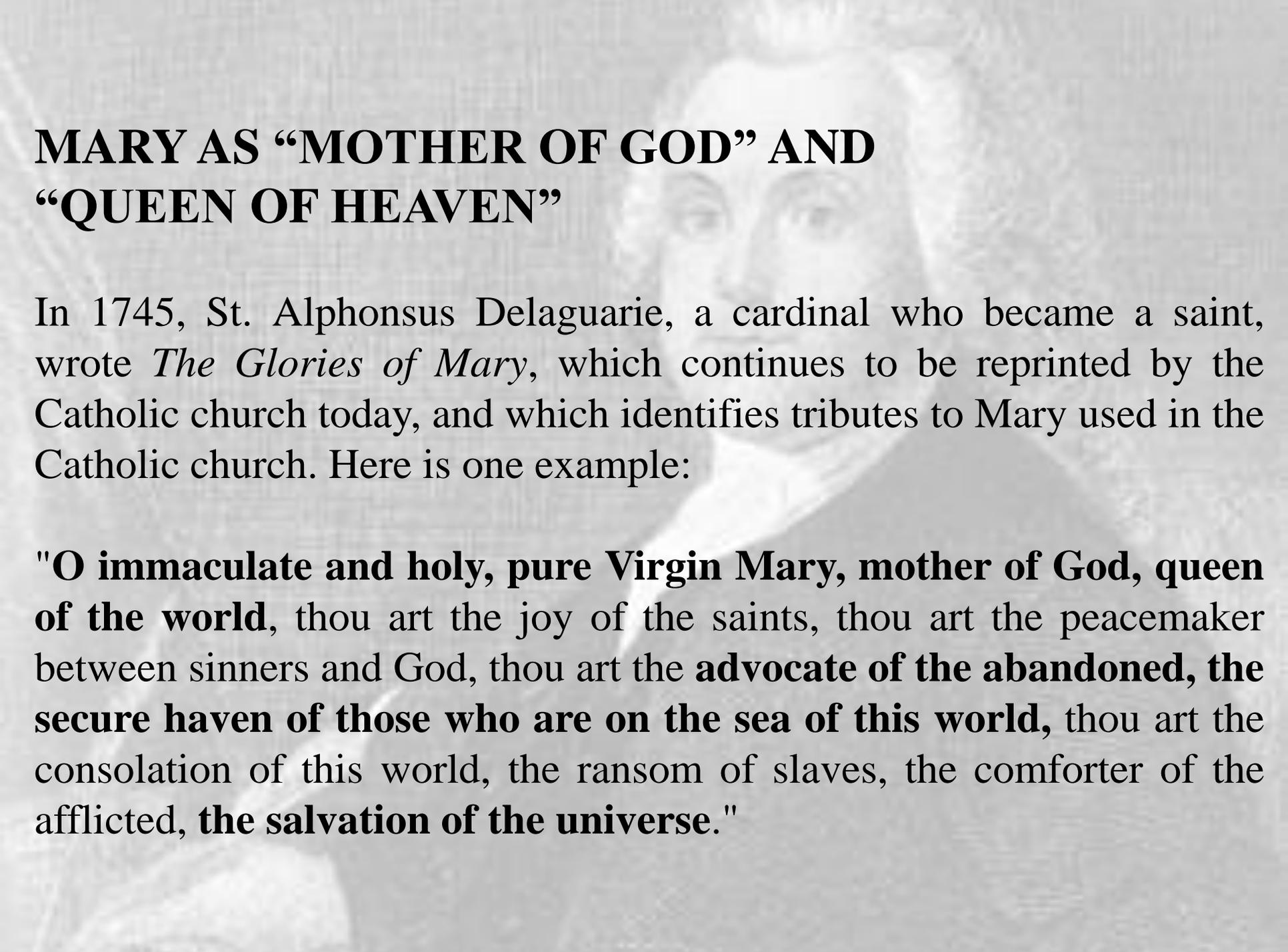


MARY AS “MOTHER OF GOD” AND “QUEEN OF HEAVEN”

In the fifth century, the Bishop of Alexandria referred to Mary as the “**Mother of God.**”

In 431 AD, Mary’s title as “**Queen of Heaven**” became official dogma when Pious XII said, “The Blessed Virgin Mary is to be called **queen** not only on account of **her divine motherhood**, but also because by the will of God **she had a great part in the work of our salvation . . .** she took a unique part in our salvation by desiring it, praying for it and so **obtaining it.**”

Some of our Catholic friends say this is “veneration” rather than “worship.” This seems to us like a distinction without a difference.



MARY AS “MOTHER OF GOD” AND “QUEEN OF HEAVEN”

In 1745, St. Alphonsus Delaguarie, a cardinal who became a saint, wrote *The Glories of Mary*, which continues to be reprinted by the Catholic church today, and which identifies tributes to Mary used in the Catholic church. Here is one example:

"O immaculate and holy, pure Virgin Mary, mother of God, queen of the world, thou art the joy of the saints, thou art the peacemaker between sinners and God, thou art the advocate of the abandoned, the secure haven of those who are on the sea of this world, thou art the consolation of this world, the ransom of slaves, the comforter of the afflicted, the salvation of the universe."

MARY AS “MOTHER OF GOD” AND “QUEEN OF HEAVEN”

It is disturbing to think about Mary’s **immaculate conception, sinlessness, perpetual virginity, ascension into heaven,** so-called appearances (which is part of the church’s official belief), and that she supposedly mediates all divine graces to members because she is **co-redeemer** with the Lord Jesus Christ. **Mary plays a much more prominent role** in congregational names and statues than either the Father or Son. In the rosary, there are **50 prayers to Mary** (10 prayers said five times) and **only five “Our Fathers.”**

"Mary has changed the Trinity into a holy quartet. Mary is viewed as the spouse of the Holy Spirit, the mother of the Son and the daughter of the Father. And even an outsider looking in can see that she is treated as a fourth member of the Godhead."

Newsweek Magazine, August 1997

MARY AS CO-MEDIATOR

Catholic theologian Ludwig Ott catalogued much of official doctrine. He said, "Mary's sublime dignity as Queen of Heaven makes her supremely powerful in her **maternal intercession for her children on earth**. She intercedes to God and Christ to **get the grace for whatever we need and it never comes except by her intercession.**"

Delagarie said, "**We may be afraid to go to God** because it is His infinite majesty we have offended, **Mary has nothing in her to terrify us.**"

The idea here is that, as our advocate, Mary is tender, merciful, and compassionate, whereas the Son and Father are thought to be less approachable. So Mary, as the sinless Mother of God, has great influence on Jesus to convince him to have mercy on us. We have to go through her.

MARY AS CO-REDEEMER

This is not official dogma, but it is such a widely-held belief that, in the 1990s, 4.4 million Catholics from many nations signed a petition to John Paul II imploring him to make it an official belief of the Catholic church that, **“Mary is co-redemptrix with Jesus Christ.”** The widely familiar St. Peter Catechism says, **“God willed that our redemption and all its consequences should depend on the free consent of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”**

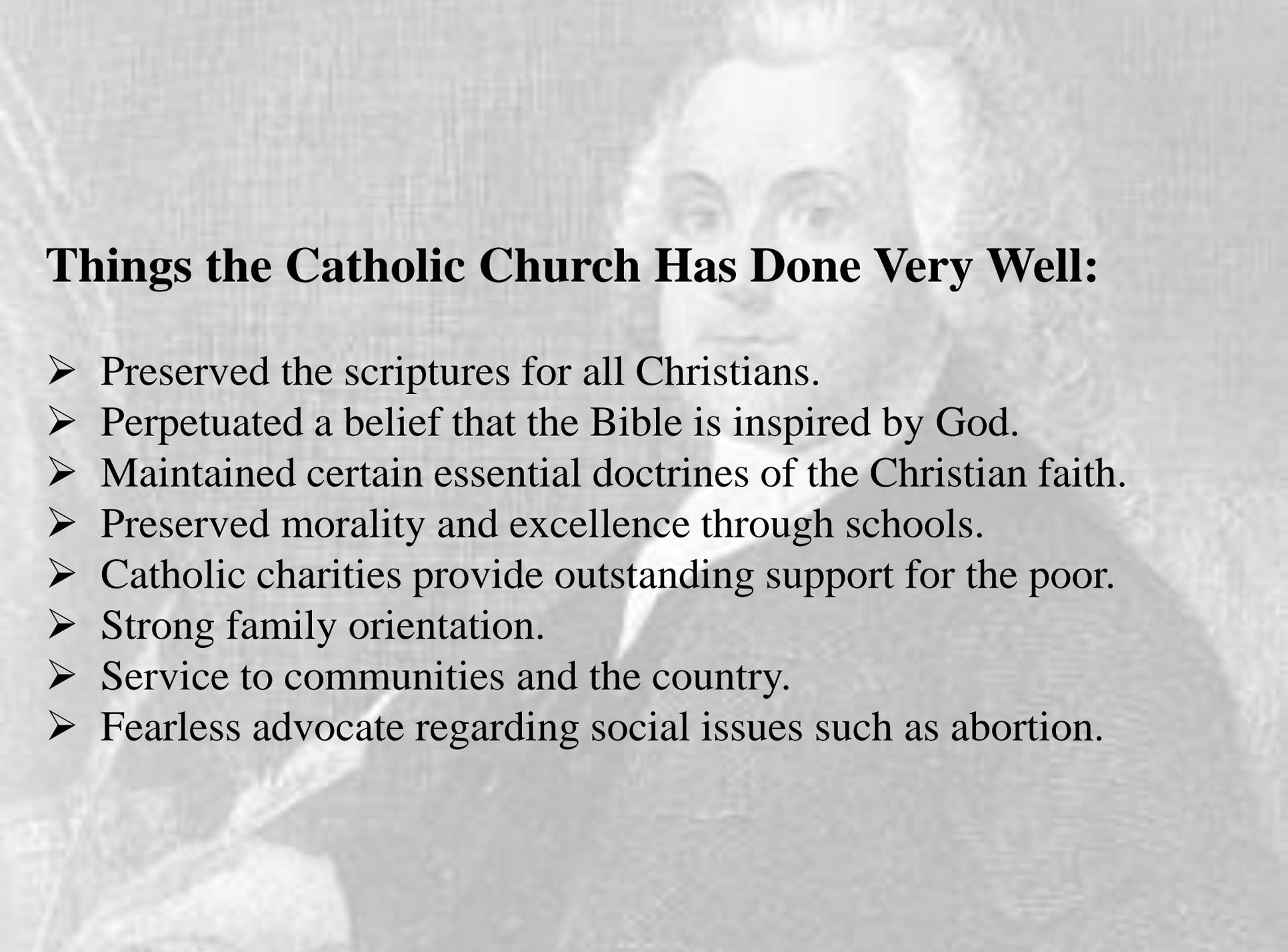
St. Bernard said, **“All men past, present and to come, should look upon Mary as the means and negotiator of salvation.”**

St. Ambrose: **“Open to us, O Mary, the gates of paradise since thou hast its keys.”** Richard of St. Lawrence said, **“Mary is the mistress of heaven, for there she commands as she wills and admits into heaven whom she wills.”** Catholic Theology: **“O Lady, since thou art the dispenser of all graces and since the grace of salvation can only come through thy hands, our salvation depends on thee.”**

THE TREASURY OF MERIT

This begins with the concept of **Purgatory** and includes the idea that most people will not immediately go to heaven. **So to “purge” their sins, they must first go to Purgatory**, perhaps for hundreds or thousands of years. **Time in Purgatory can be shortened** by experiencing the pain that we rightly deserve, **by prayers for the dead** that are offered here on earth, or perhaps **by having someone else’s excess merit applied to us**.

Dead saints have **excess righteousness** or more merit than necessary. **The excess merit of saints is deposited in the treasury of merit**, and that is supposedly available to us. In fact, you can even obtain merit before you die: you can purchase an **indulgence** whereby excess merit will be credited to your account, and your stay in Purgatory will be shortened. You can also **pay a priest to hold Mass** for a departed loved one, who will receive merit to shorten their stay in Purgatory.

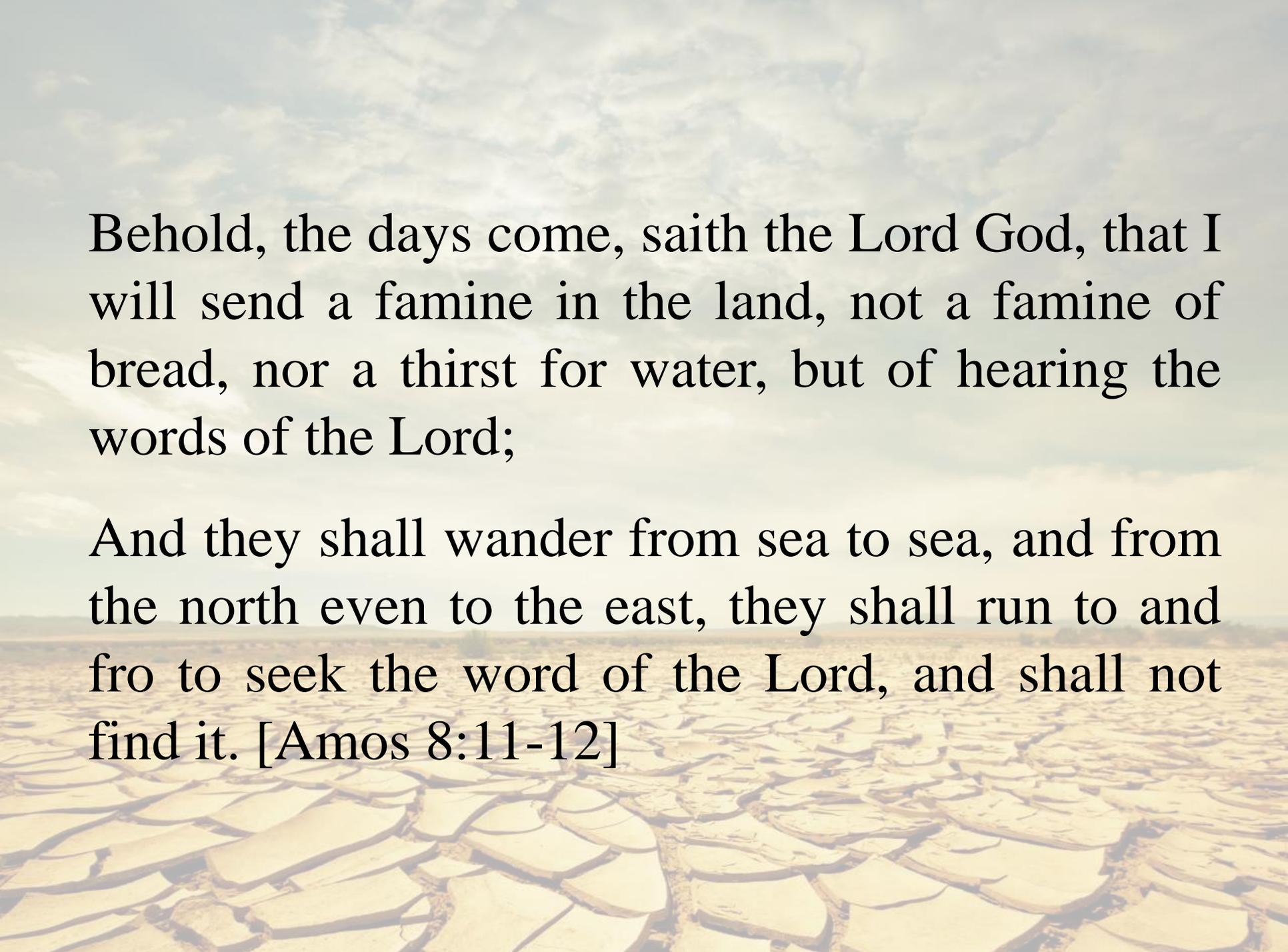


Things the Catholic Church Has Done Very Well:

- Preserved the scriptures for all Christians.
- Perpetuated a belief that the Bible is inspired by God.
- Maintained certain essential doctrines of the Christian faith.
- Preserved morality and excellence through schools.
- Catholic charities provide outstanding support for the poor.
- Strong family orientation.
- Service to communities and the country.
- Fearless advocate regarding social issues such as abortion.

Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.

**Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded; yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God.
[Micah 3:6-7]**



Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord;

And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it. [Amos 8:11-12]