


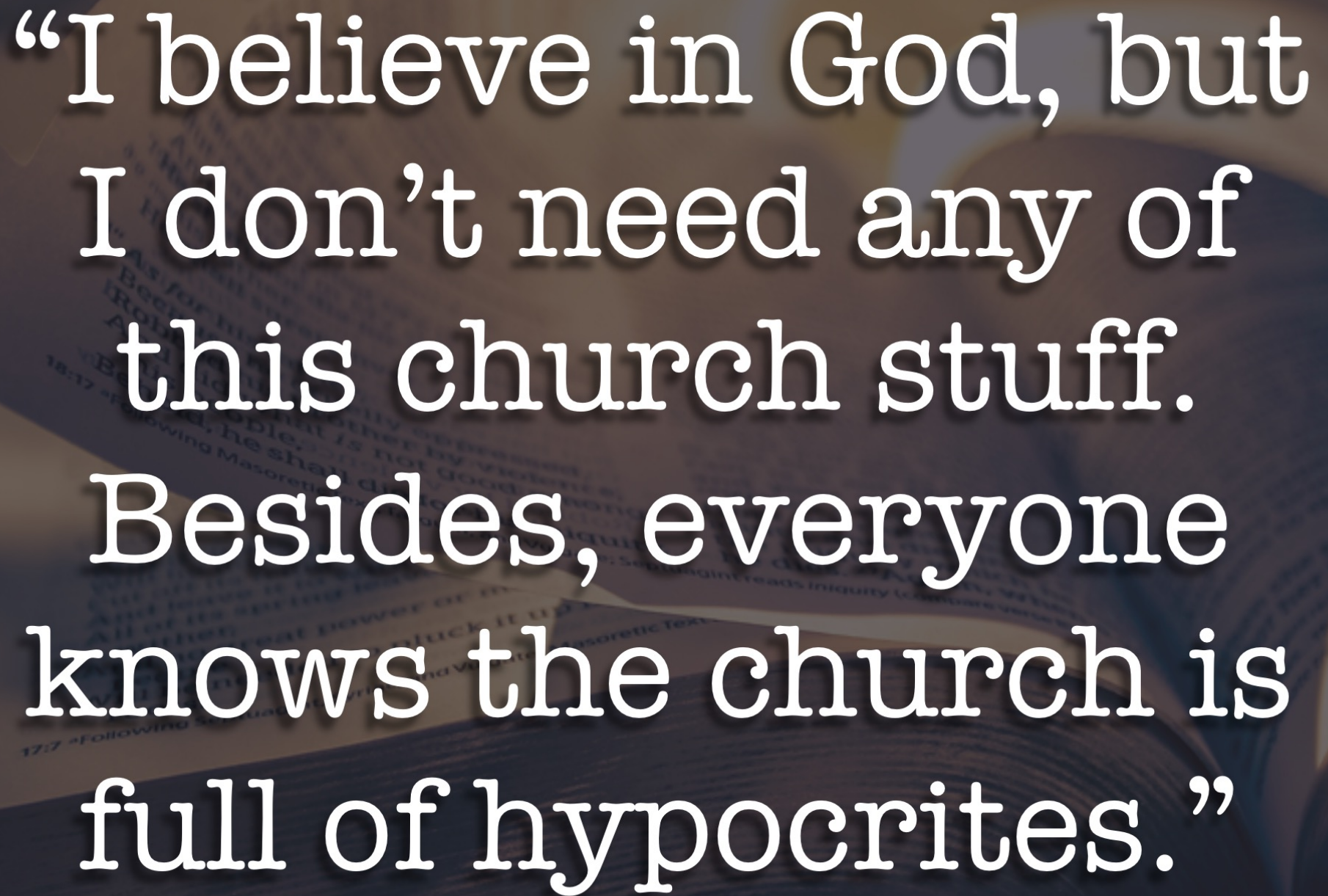


Why Should I Believe?

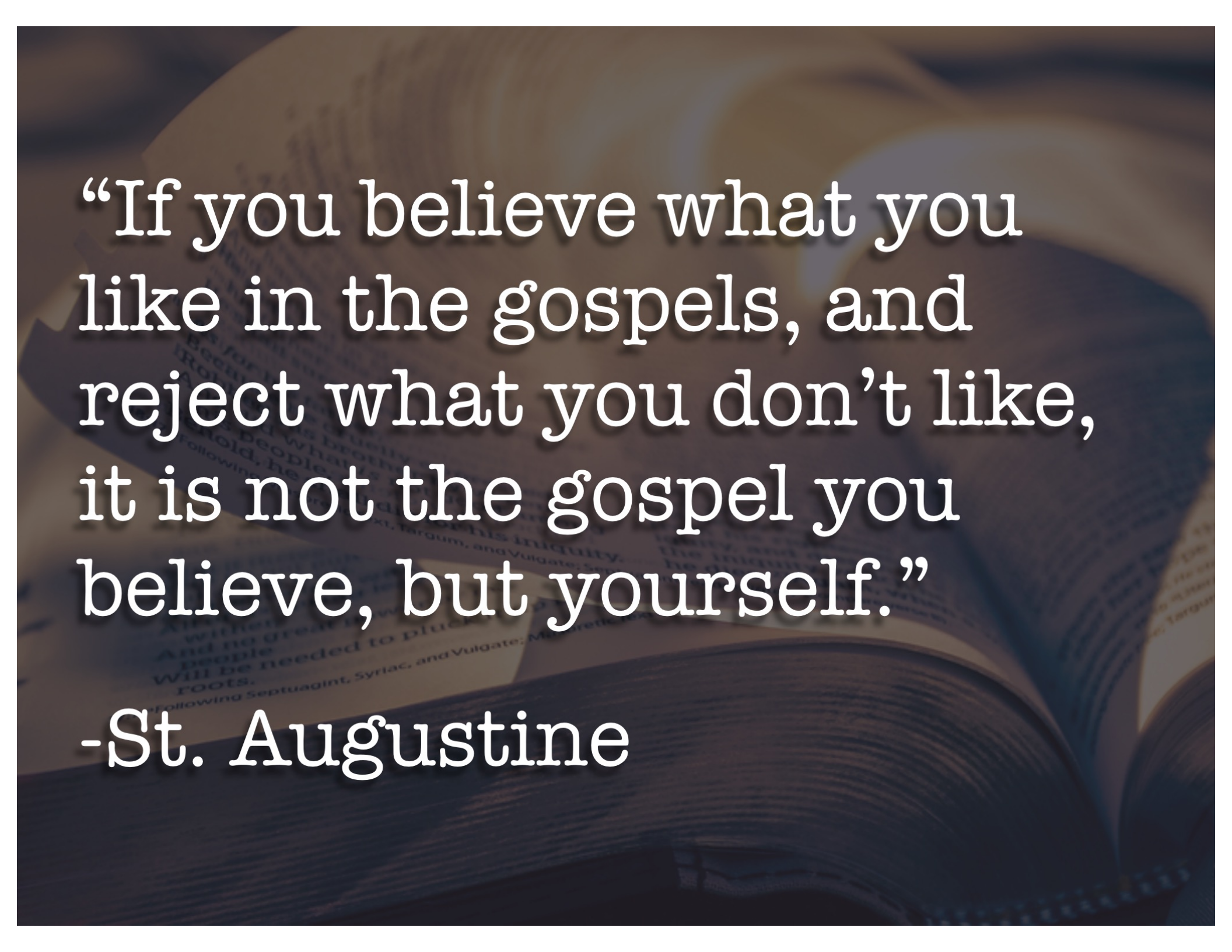


Why Should We "Go to Church"?

Lesson 8

The background of the image is a close-up, slightly blurred view of an open book. The pages are filled with Hebrew text, likely from the Bible. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew font. The book is open, showing two pages. The lighting is soft, and the colors are muted, with a focus on the texture of the paper and the ink of the text. The overall tone is serious and scholarly.

“I believe in God, but
I don't need any of
this church stuff.
Besides, everyone
knows the church is
full of hypocrites.”

The background of the image is a dark, blue-tinted photograph of an open book. The pages are visible, with some text from the book appearing as a faint, ghostly pattern behind the main text. The main text is a quote in white, serif font with a subtle drop shadow, centered on the page.

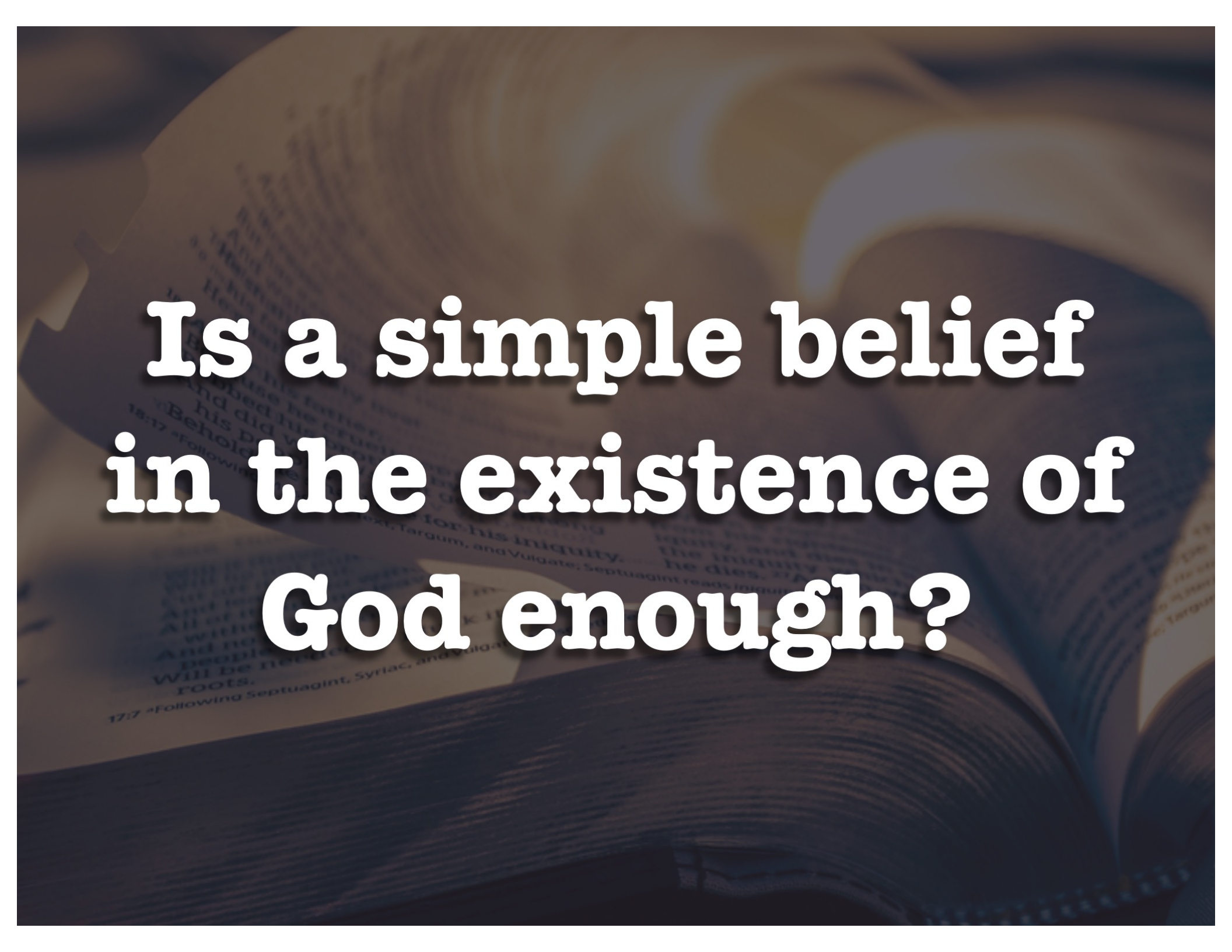
“If you believe what you like in the gospels, and reject what you don’t like, it is not the gospel you believe, but yourself.”

-St. Augustine

*I Don't
Need This
Church
Stuff*

Why Should
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Lesson 8

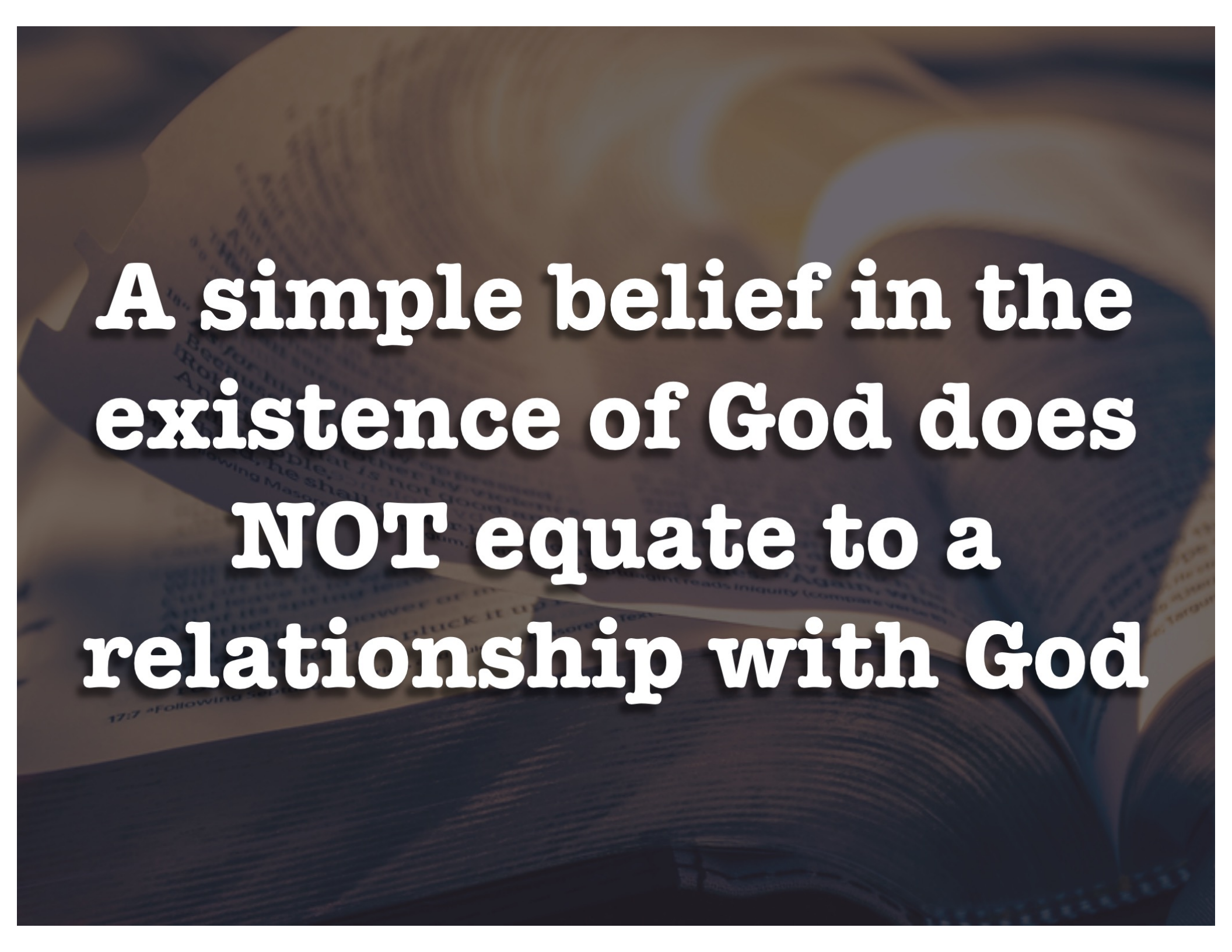


**Is a simple belief
in the existence of
God enough?**



18:17 - Following Masch...

17:7 - Following Septuag...

The background of the image is a dark, slightly blurred photograph of an open book. The pages are visible, with some text from the book appearing as faint, ghostly shapes in the background. The overall color palette is dark, with shades of blue, grey, and brown. The text is centered and stands out prominently against this background.

**A simple belief in the
existence of God does
NOT equate to a
relationship with God**

James 2:18-19 (ESV)

¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹ **You believe** that God is one; you do well. **Even the demons believe—and shudder!**

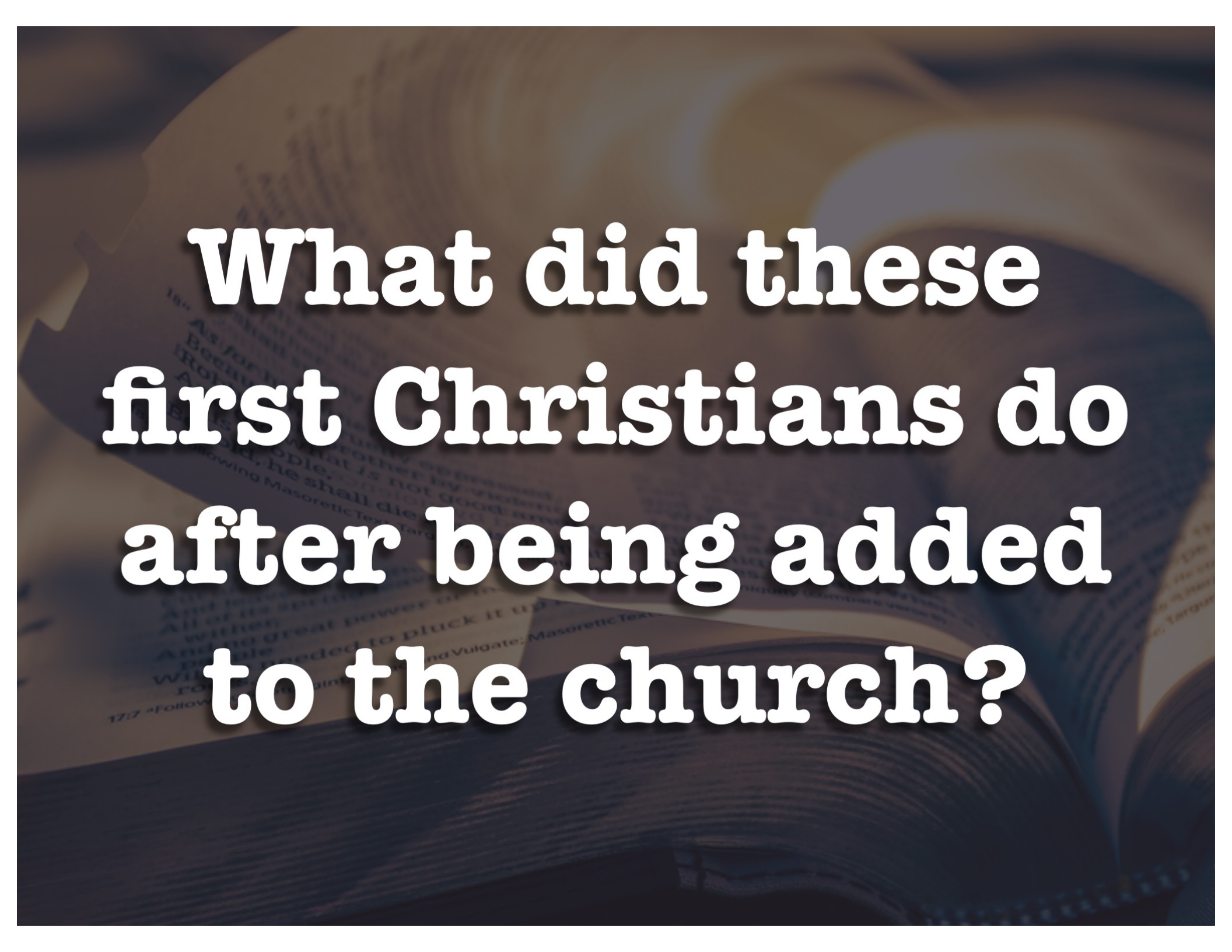
Matthew 7:21-23 (ESV)

²¹ **“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.** ²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

Acts 2:41, 47b (ESV)

⁴¹ So those who received his word were baptized, and there were **added** that day about three thousand souls.

^{47b} ...And the Lord **added** to their number day by day those who were being saved.

An open book is shown in the background, with its pages slightly blurred. The text is overlaid in a large, bold, white font with a subtle drop shadow. The text is centered and reads: "What did these first Christians do after being added to the church?"

**What did these
first Christians do
after being added
to the church?**

Acts 2:42 (ESV) - And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

They Dedicated Themselves To...

The Truth

Apostle's teaching

The Tie


Fellowship

The Table

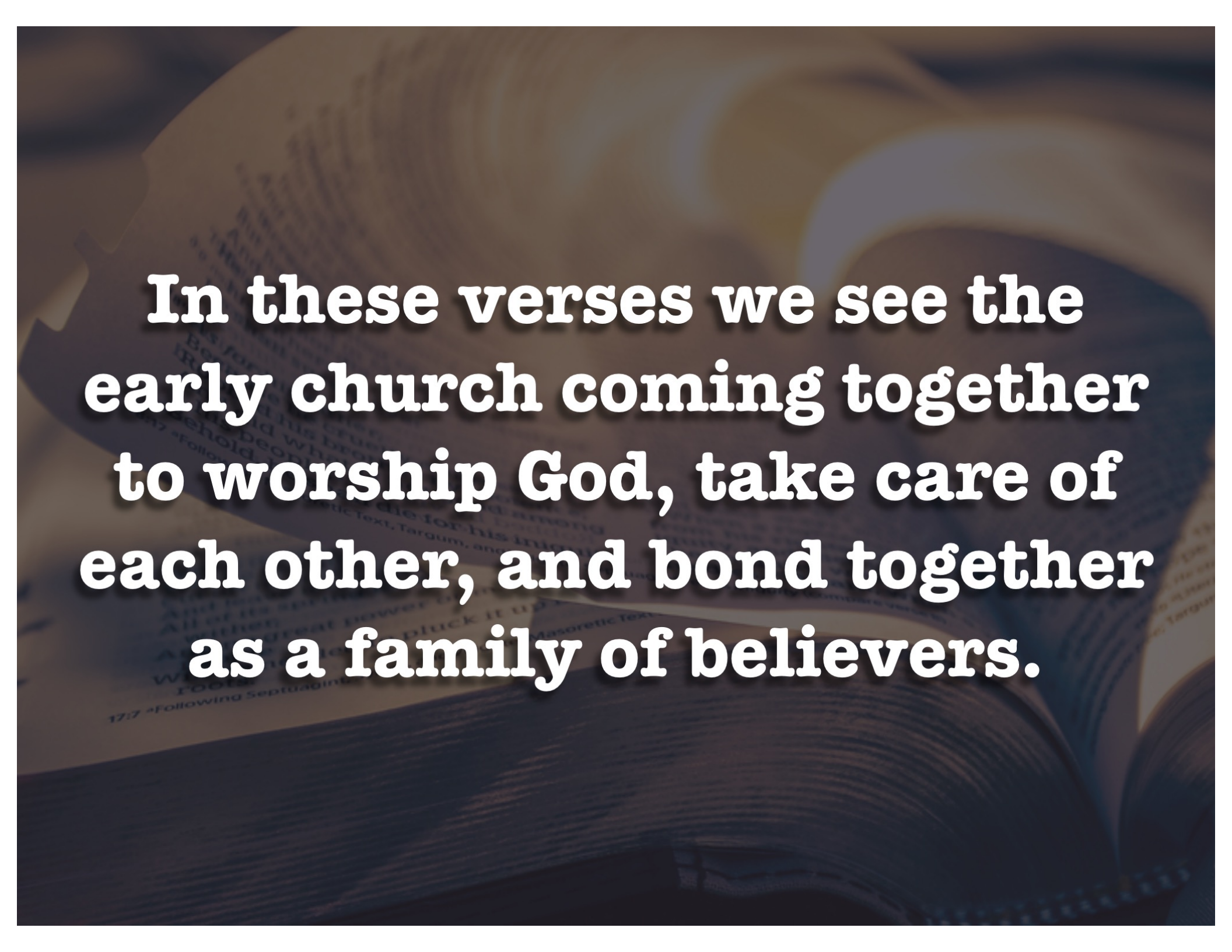
Breaking of bread

The Throne

Prayers

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, with its pages slightly curved. The text on the pages is mostly illegible due to a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The overlay contains the text 'Acts 2:46a (ESV) - And day by day, attending the temple together...' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The background is a dark, muted blue-grey color.

**Acts 2:46a (ESV) - And day
by day, attending the temple
together...**



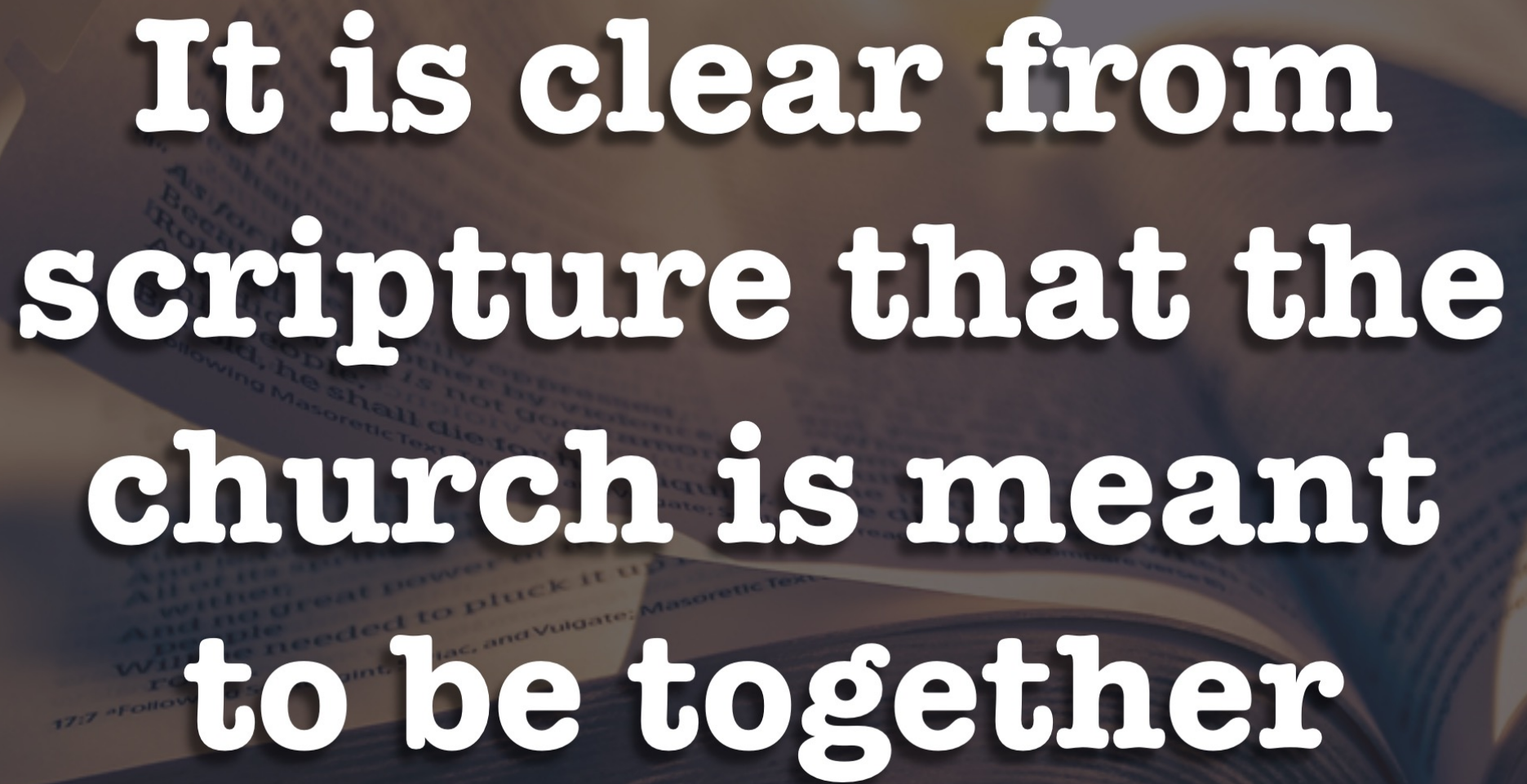
In these verses we see the early church coming together to worship God, take care of each other, and bond together as a family of believers.

1 Corinthians 12:21-26 (ESV)

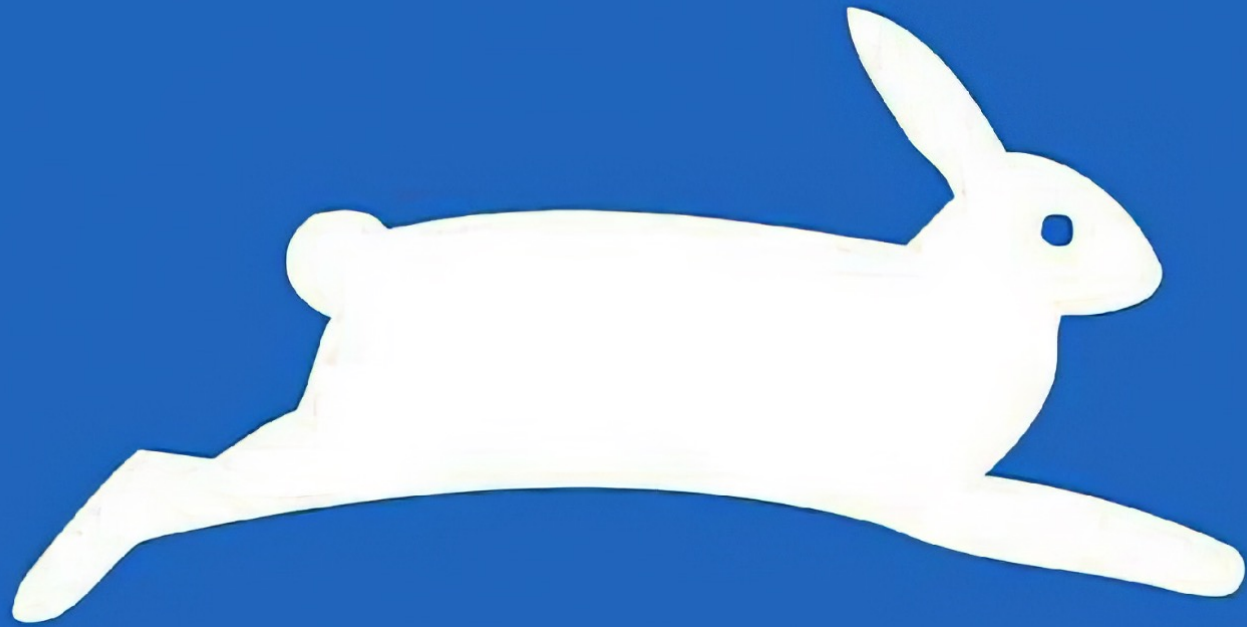
²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²² On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴ which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

Hebrews 10:24-25 (ESV)

²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not **neglecting to meet together**, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.



**It is clear from
scripture that the
church is meant
to be together**



PETA



**MEAT IS
murder**





18:17 - Following

18:17 - Following

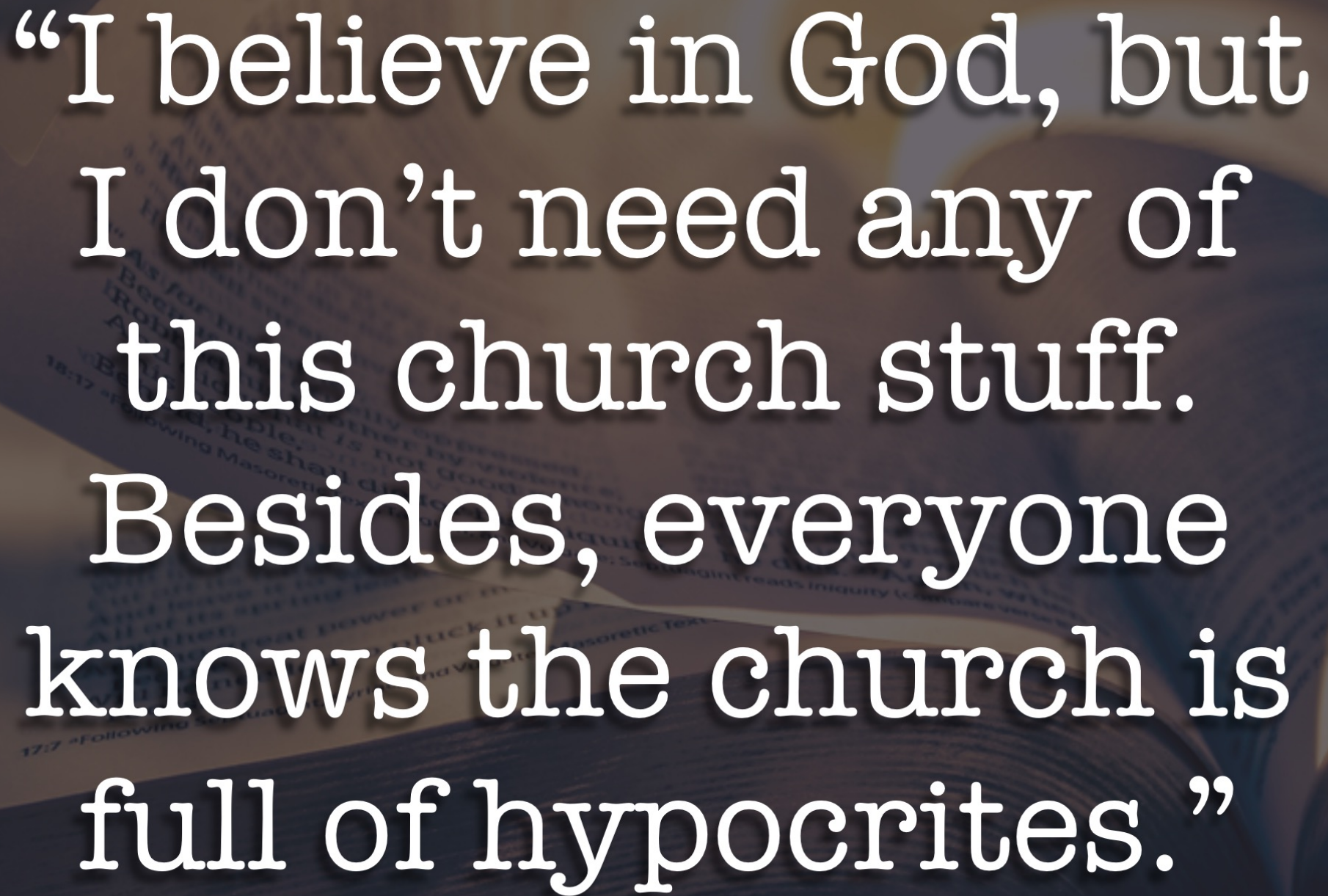
17:7 - Following



*The Church is
full of
Hypocrites*

Why Should
We
"Go to
Church"?

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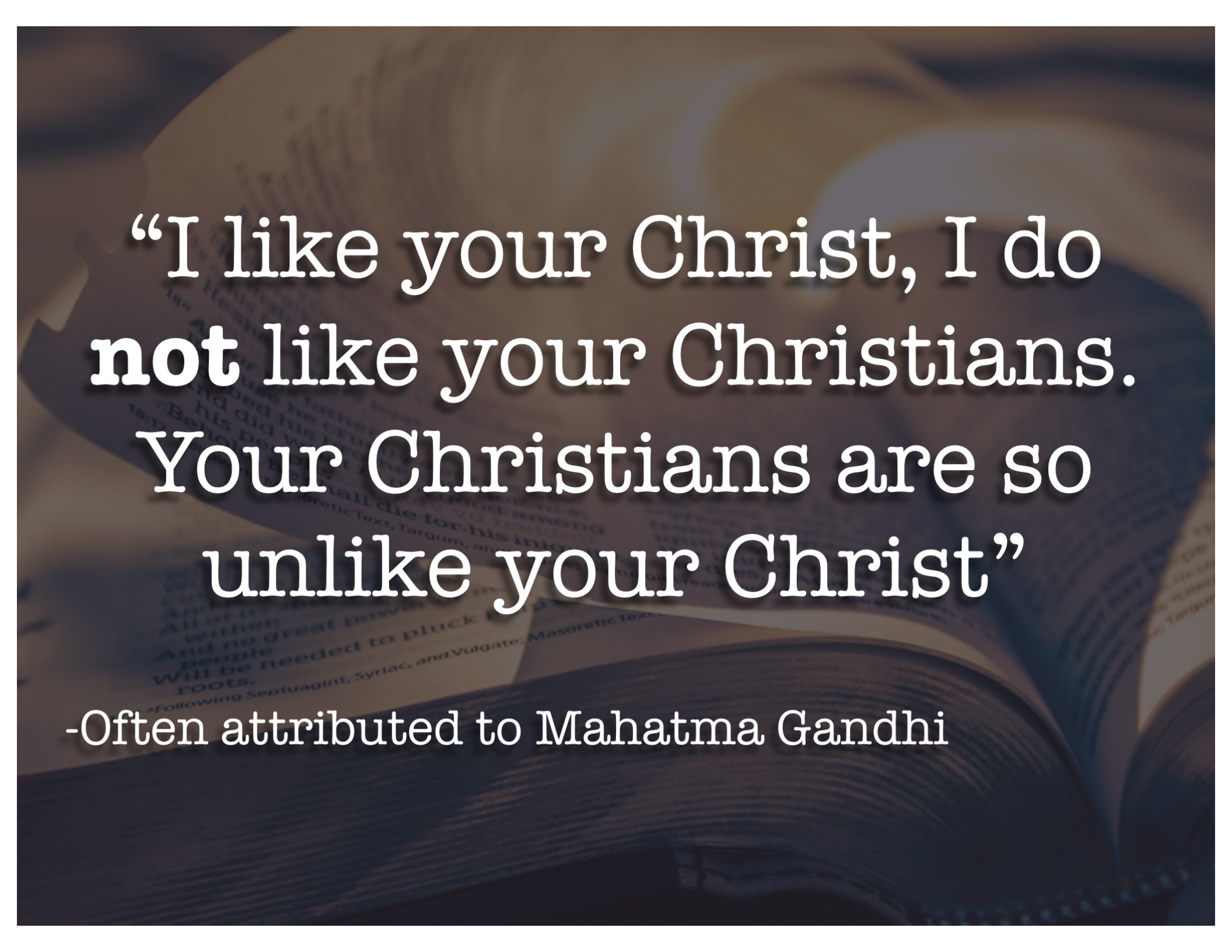
“I believe in God, but
I don't need any of
this church stuff.
Besides, everyone
knows the church is
full of hypocrites.”

Hypocrite

“A person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings”

-“Hypocrite.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hypocrite>. Accessed 13 Nov. 2024.

People often complain that the church is full of **hypocrites**. The irony is that those who claim to have a belief in God but refuse to accept His instruction to become a part of His church are themselves engaging in hypocrisy



“I like your Christ, I do
not like your Christians.
Your Christians are so
unlike your Christ”

-Often attributed to Mahatma Gandhi

The Reciprocal Truth Would Be Rejected

Imagine a Christian leader standing up before the media masses and saying to the modern world,

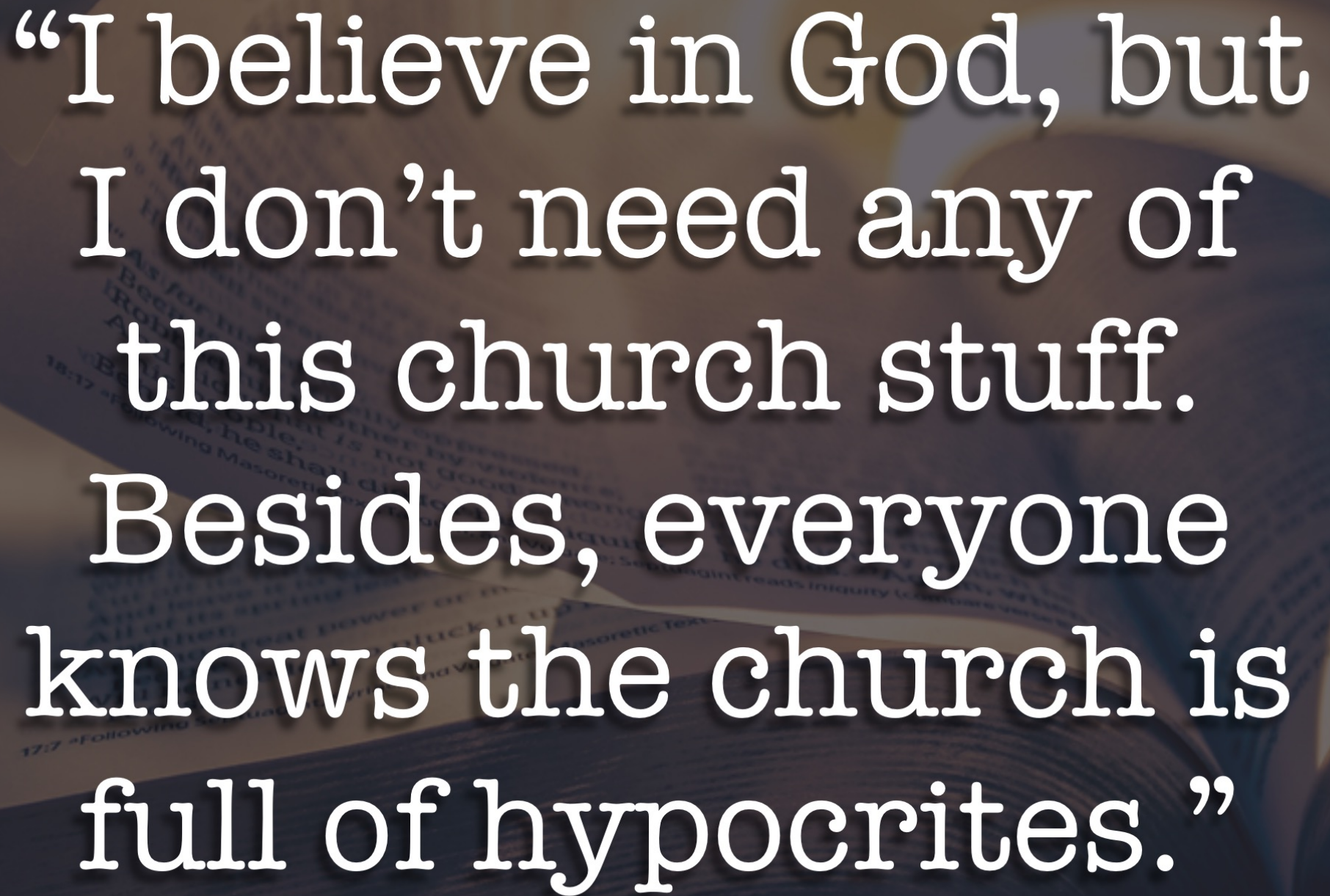
“I like your Gandhi, but I do not like your Hindus”

or

“I like your Muhammad, but I do not like your Muslims.”

Doesn't sound as cute and enlightened, eh? Would that pastor be lauded as a high emissary of other worldly wisdom? No. He'd likely be railroaded out of town as some small-minded bigot. To be so dismissive of such a large diverse group is the opposite of careful nuance. But Gandhi gets a pass where he shouldn't.

-Bryan Daniels / "Chief of the Least" Blog

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“I believe in God, but
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this church stuff.
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full of hypocrites.”

1 Peter 3:15 (ESV)

...in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with **gentleness and respect,**

So would the response of
**“Yeah, well, you’re a
hypocrite too!”**

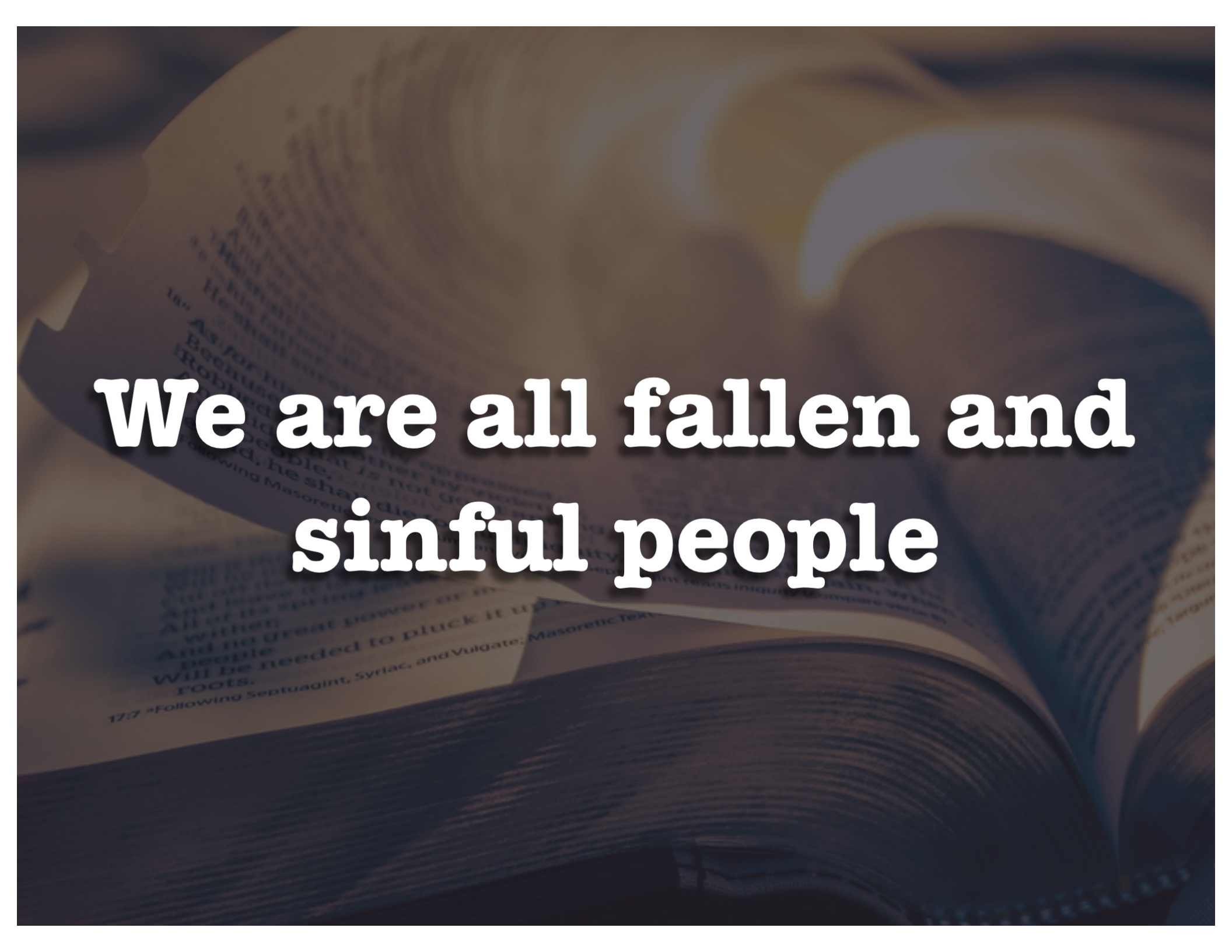
be either **gentle** or **respectful**?

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, with its pages slightly curved. The text on the pages is mostly illegible due to a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The central focus is a large, white, bold question.

**Is the church full of
hypocrites?**

Romans 7:18-19 (ESV)

¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, with its pages slightly curved. The text on the pages is mostly illegible due to a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The central text is in a large, white, bold, serif font.

**We are all fallen and
sinful people**

Acts 5:1-6 (ESV)

¹ But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, ² and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." ⁵ When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it. ⁶ The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him.

Acts 5:7-11 (ESV)

⁷ After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ And Peter said to her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much.” And she said, “Yes, for so much.” ⁹ But Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.” ¹⁰ Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, with its pages slightly curved. The text on the pages is mostly illegible due to a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The central focus is a large, bold, white question with a drop shadow.

**Did their hypocrisy
end the church?**

Acts 5:12-16 (ESV)

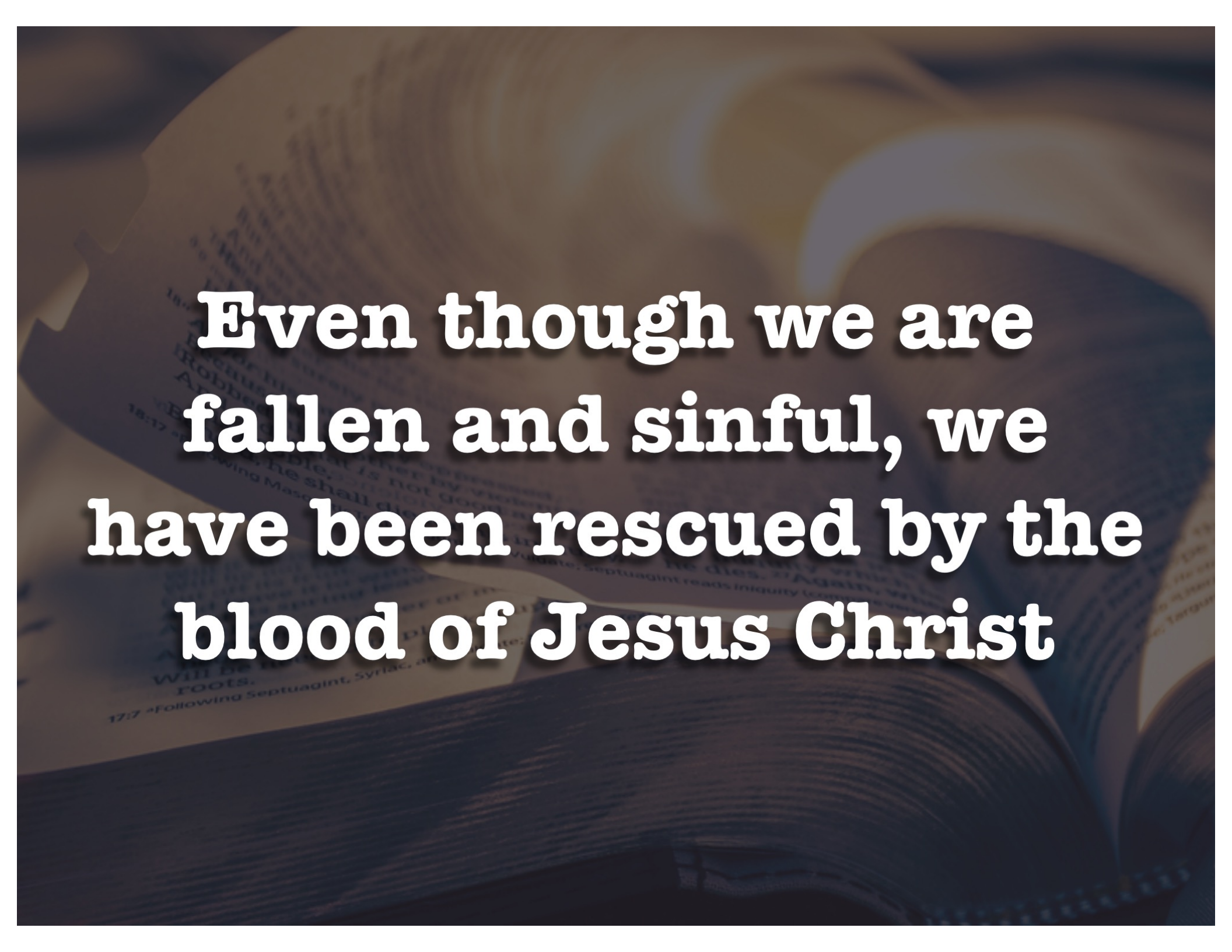
¹² Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. ¹³ None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. ¹⁴ And **more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,** ¹⁵ so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Romans 7:24 (ESV)

Wretched man that I am!
Who will deliver me from
this body of death?

Romans 8:1-2 (ESV)

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.



**Even though we are
fallen and sinful, we
have been rescued by the
blood of Jesus Christ**

*Next
Lesson...*

Is Jesus Really the Only Way?

Lesson 9