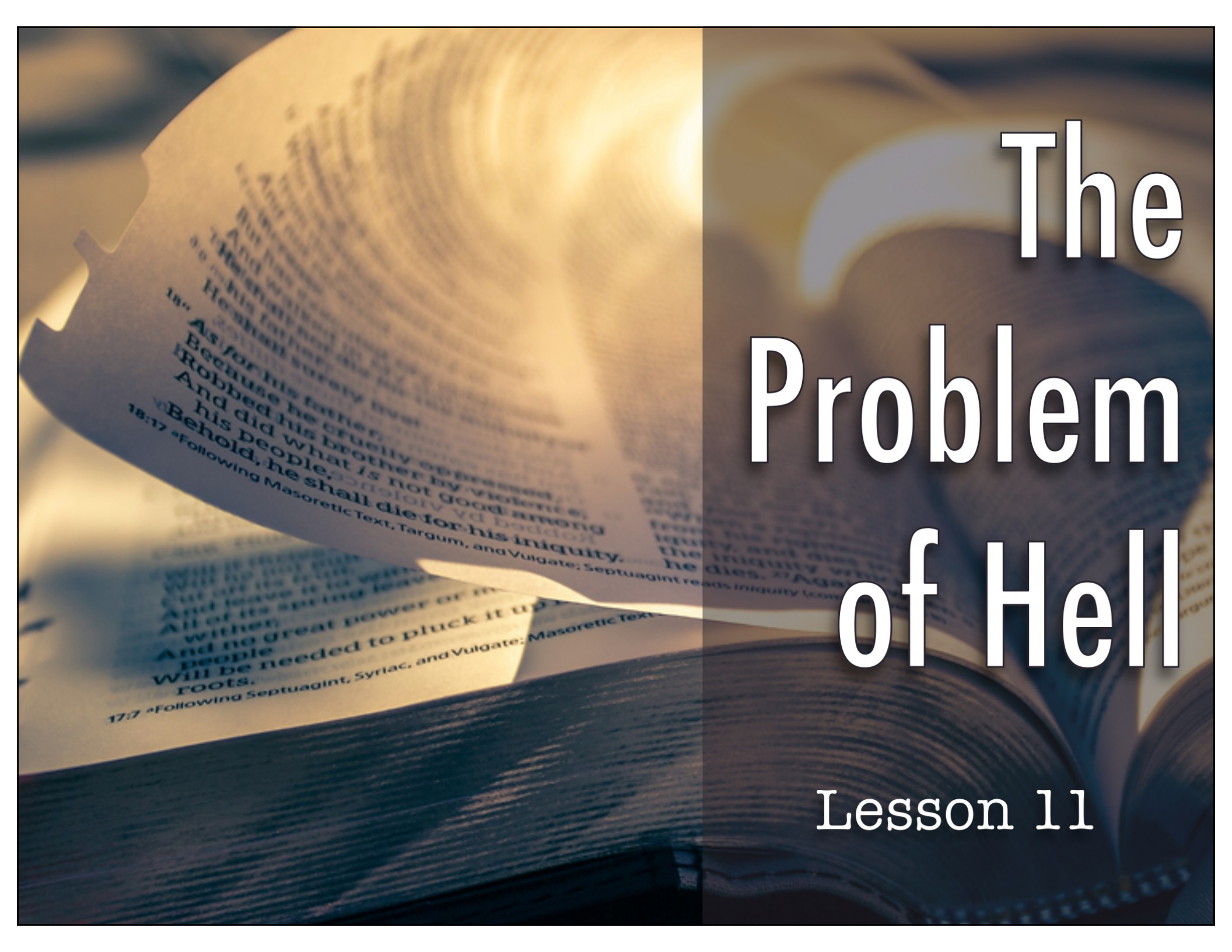




# Why Should I Believe?

[www.teamagee.com/believe2024](http://www.teamagee.com/believe2024)

Slides, Audio, and Video of all  
**"Why Should I Believe"** Lessons



# The Problem of Hell

Lesson 11

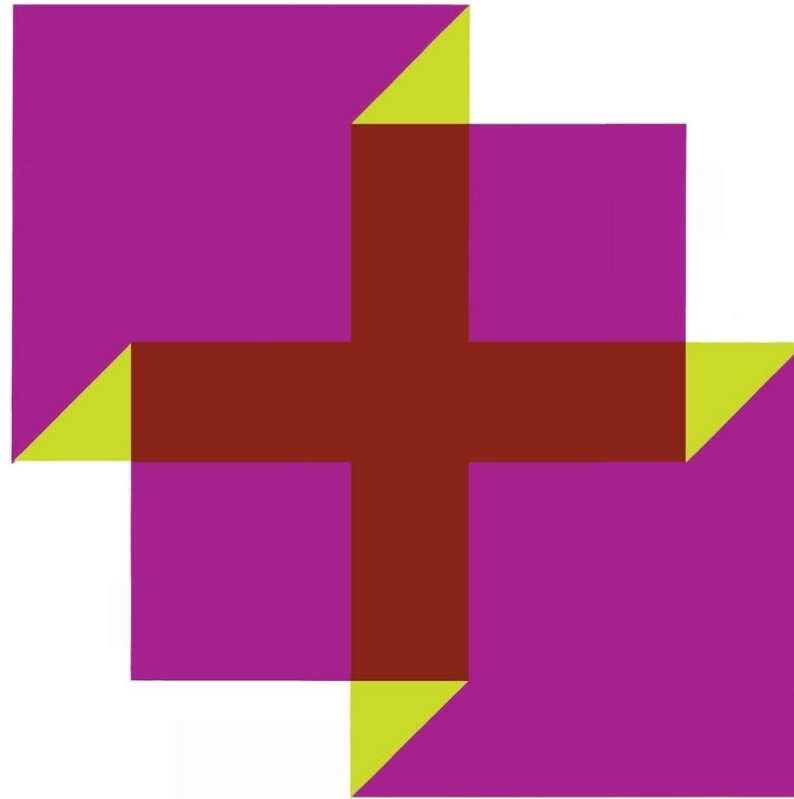
**Problem:**

**How can a loving  
God send people  
to Hell?**

Bertrand  
Russell

# Why I Am Not a Christian

and other essays on religion and related subjects



18:17 - Following Masoretic

17:7 - Following Septuagint

“There is one very serious defect in Christ’s moral character, and that is that He believed in hell. I do not myself feel that any person who is really profoundly humane can believe in everlasting punishment. Christ certainly as depicted in the Gospel did believe in everlasting punishment.”

-Bertrand Russel, British Philosopher  
From his pamphlet: "Why I Am Not a Christian"

## Luke 12:4-5 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> “I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. <sup>5</sup> But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, **has authority to cast into hell.** Yes, I tell you, fear him!

## Mark 9:42-47 (ESV)

<sup>42</sup> “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. <sup>43</sup> And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to **go to hell**, to the unquenchable fire. <sup>45</sup> And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be **thrown into hell**. <sup>47</sup> And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be **thrown into hell**,

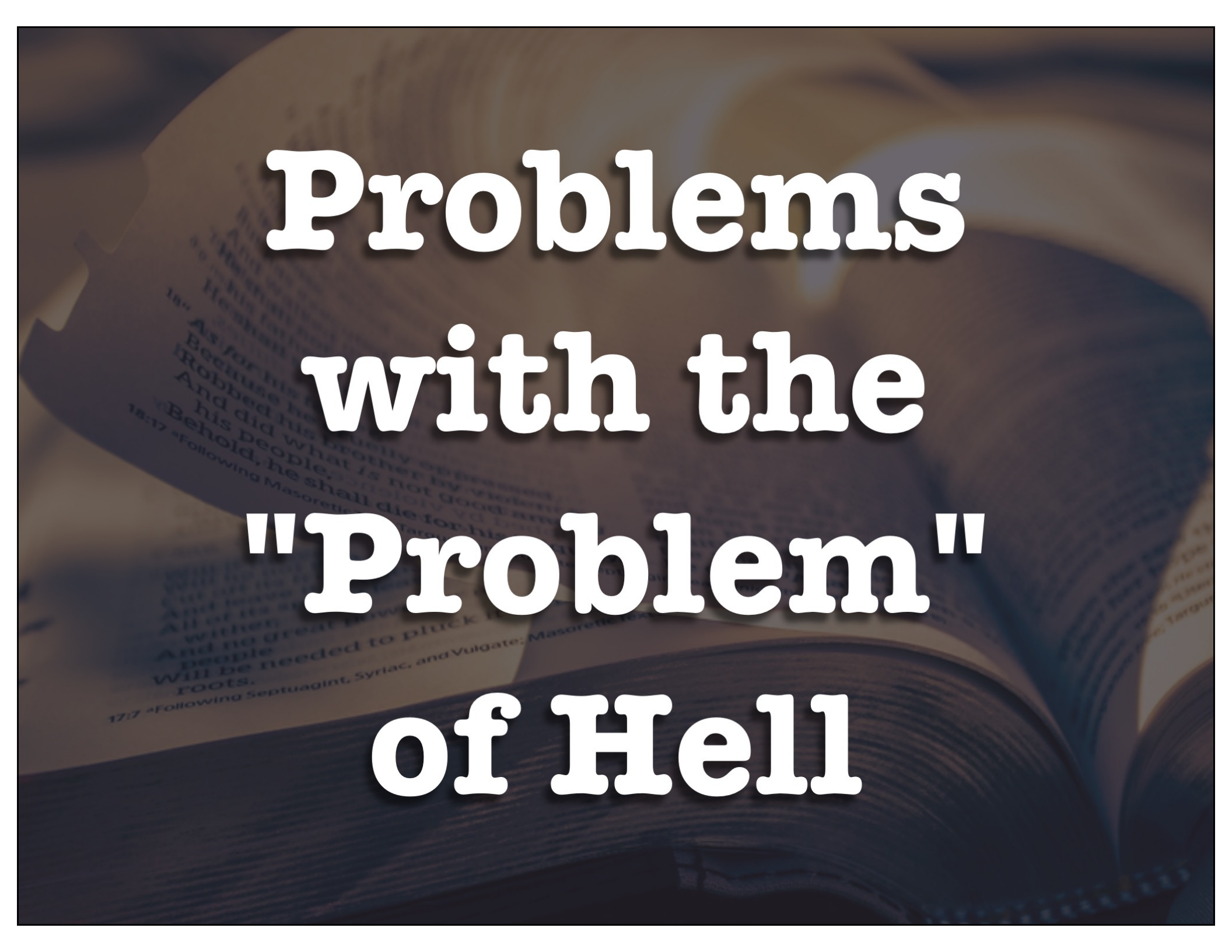


## Matthew 25:41-46 (ESV)

<sup>41</sup> **“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.** <sup>42</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ <sup>44</sup> Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ <sup>45</sup> Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ <sup>46</sup> **And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”**

“I really do not think that a person with a proper degree of kindness in his nature would have put fears and terrors of that sort into the world.... I must say that I think all this doctrine, that hell-fire is a punishment for sin, is a doctrine of cruelty. It is a doctrine that put cruelty into the world and gave the world generations of cruel torture; and the Christ of the Gospels, if you could take Him as His chroniclers represent Him, would certainly have to be considered partly responsible for that.”

-Bertrand Russel, British Philosopher  
From his pamphlet: "Why I Am Not a Christian"



**Problems  
with the  
"Problem"  
of Hell**

# Problem #1

**This "Problem"  
cannot be isolated  
from all other  
evidence for God  
& the Bible**

# Why Should I Believe?

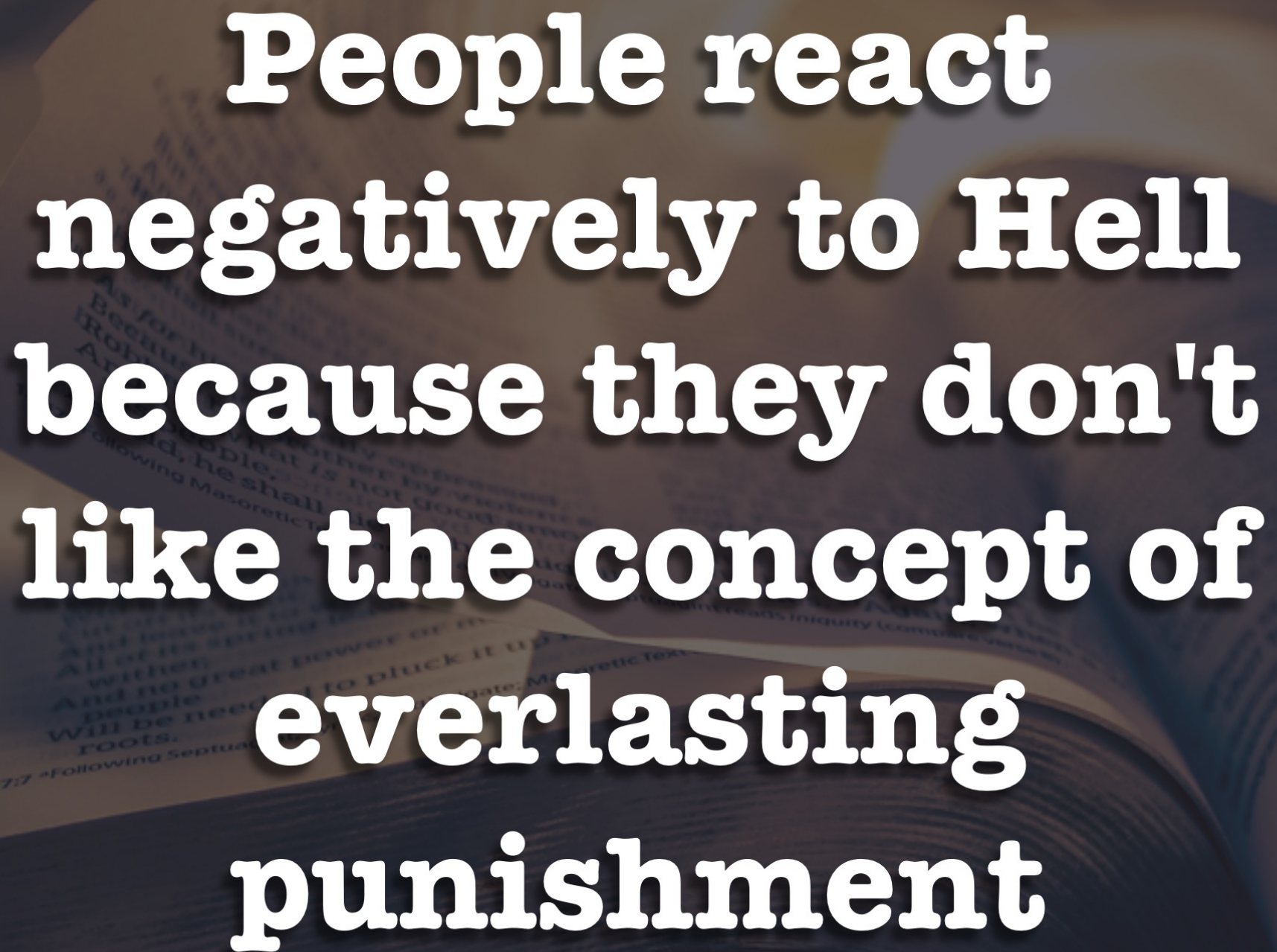
1. What if I Already Believe?
2. Holes in Darwin's Theory of Evolution
3. What About Dinosaurs?
4. Arguments for the Existence of God
5. Can We Really Trust the Bible?
6. Who Did Jesus Claim He Was?
7. The Resurrection of Jesus
8. Why Should We Go to Church?
9. Is Jesus Really the Only Way?

## Problem #2

**The "Problem" is  
based on feelings,  
not fact...**

# The Moral Argument

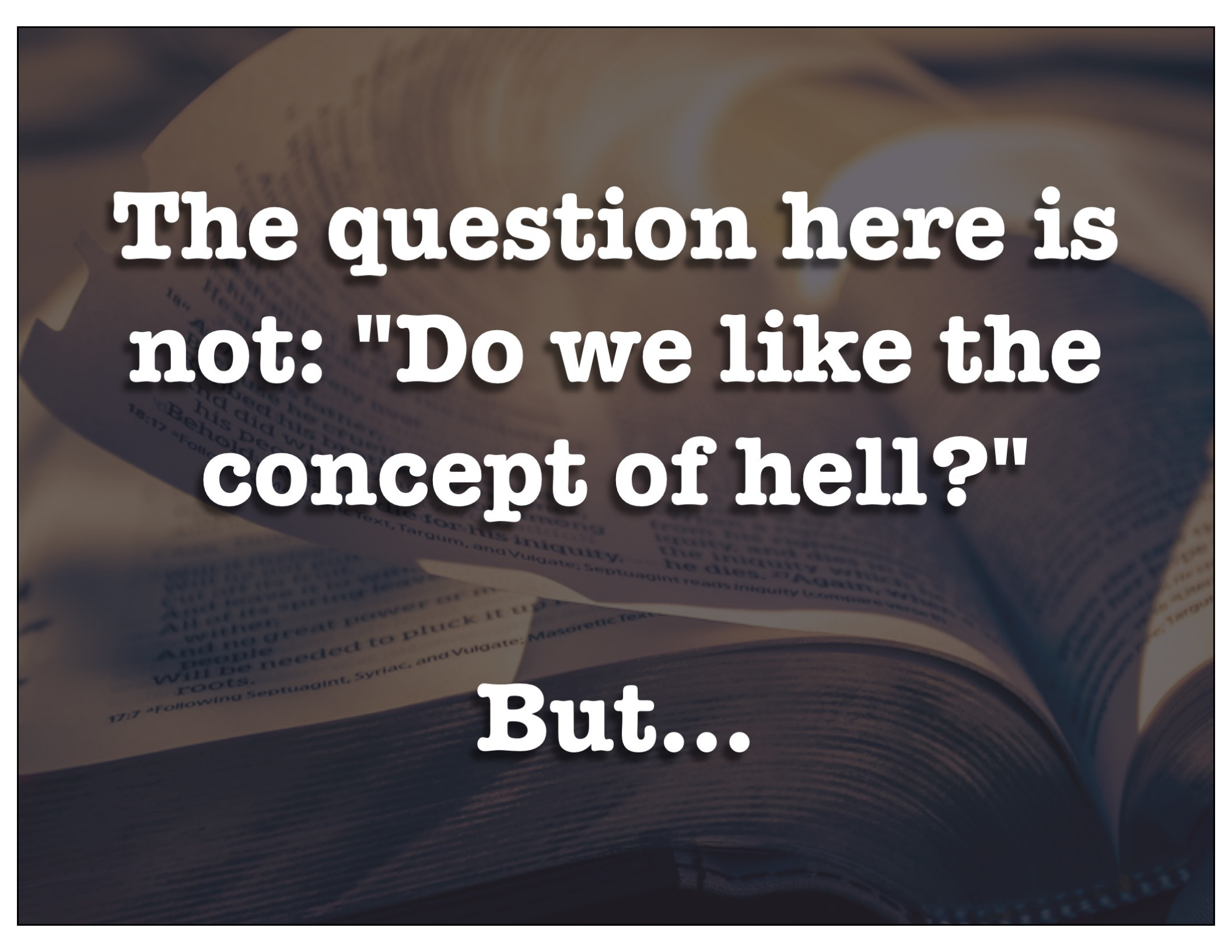
**There is an irony  
with atheists feeling  
that the concept of  
Hell is immoral,  
inhumane, or unfair...**

The background of the image is a dark, blue-tinted photograph of an open book. The pages are filled with Hebrew text, which is mostly illegible due to the low resolution and dark lighting. Some words like 'And he shall', 'And no great power of the', 'Will be needed to pluck it up', and '177 \*following Septua' are faintly visible. The overall tone is somber and scholarly.

**People react  
negatively to Hell  
because they don't  
like the concept of  
everlasting  
punishment**



**However, truth &  
objectivity are not  
based upon people's  
feelings...feelings  
cannot change  
TRUTH**



**The question here is not: "Do we like the concept of hell?"**

**But...**

# "Does Hell Exist?"

177 \*Following Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Masoretic text

## Problem #3

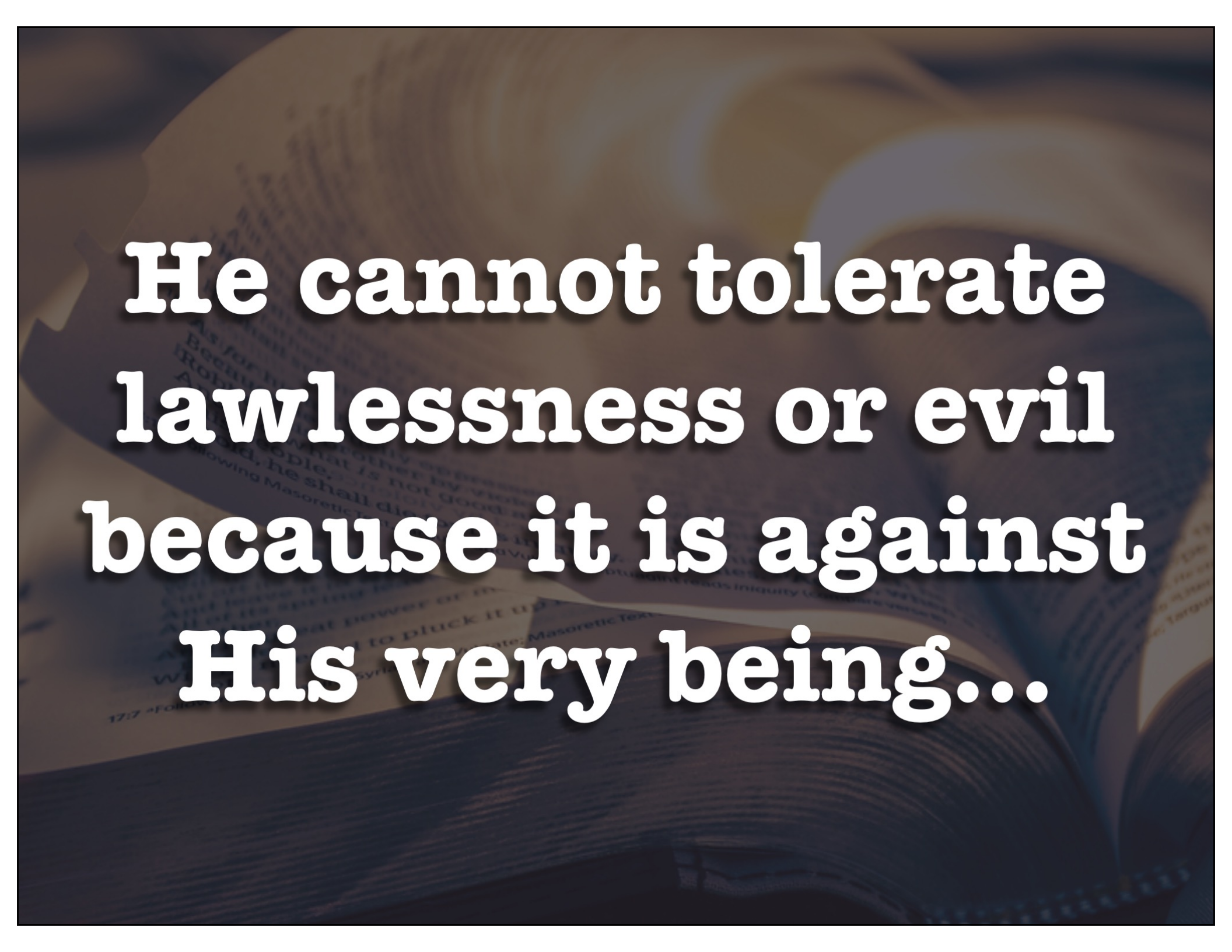
**The "Problem" fails  
to understand the  
true nature of God**

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, bold, white serif font with a subtle drop shadow.

**God CANNOT be  
joined with Sin...**

## **1 John 1:5-6 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup> If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

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 a religious or historical text. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew font. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the paper and the ink of the text. The overall tone is serious and scholarly.

**He cannot tolerate  
lawlessness or evil  
because it is against  
His very being...**

## **Isaiah 59:1-2 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear;  
<sup>2</sup> but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.



## 1 John 3:4-5 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. <sup>5</sup> You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and **in him there is no sin.**

# Problem #4

**The "Problem" does not recognize that God's perfect justice demands punishment for wrongdoing**

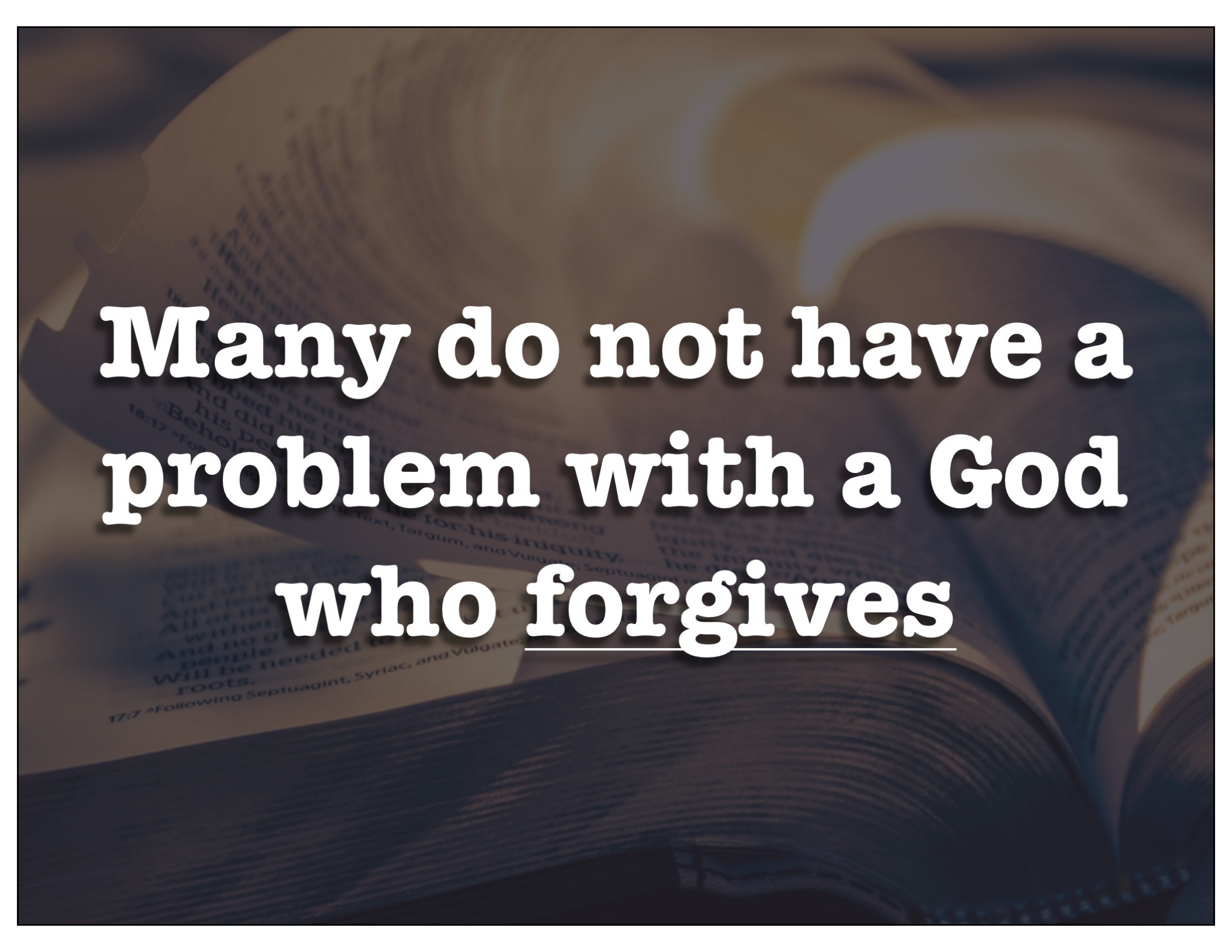
## **Psalm 89:14 (ESV)**

Righteousness and **justice**  
are the **foundation of your**  
**throne**; steadfast love and  
faithfulness go before you.

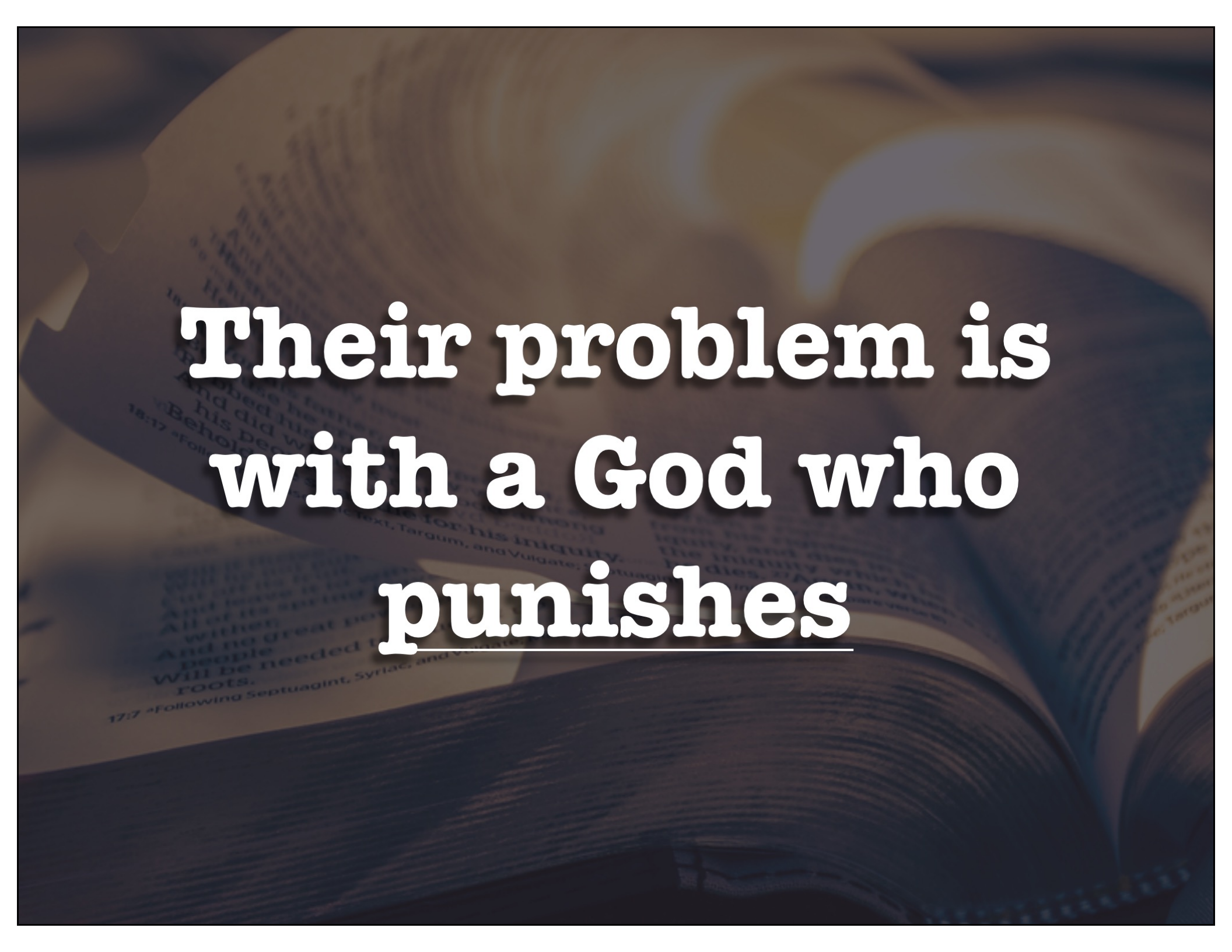
## **Deuteronomy 32:4 (ESV)**

“The Rock, his work is perfect,  
for **all his ways are justice.**

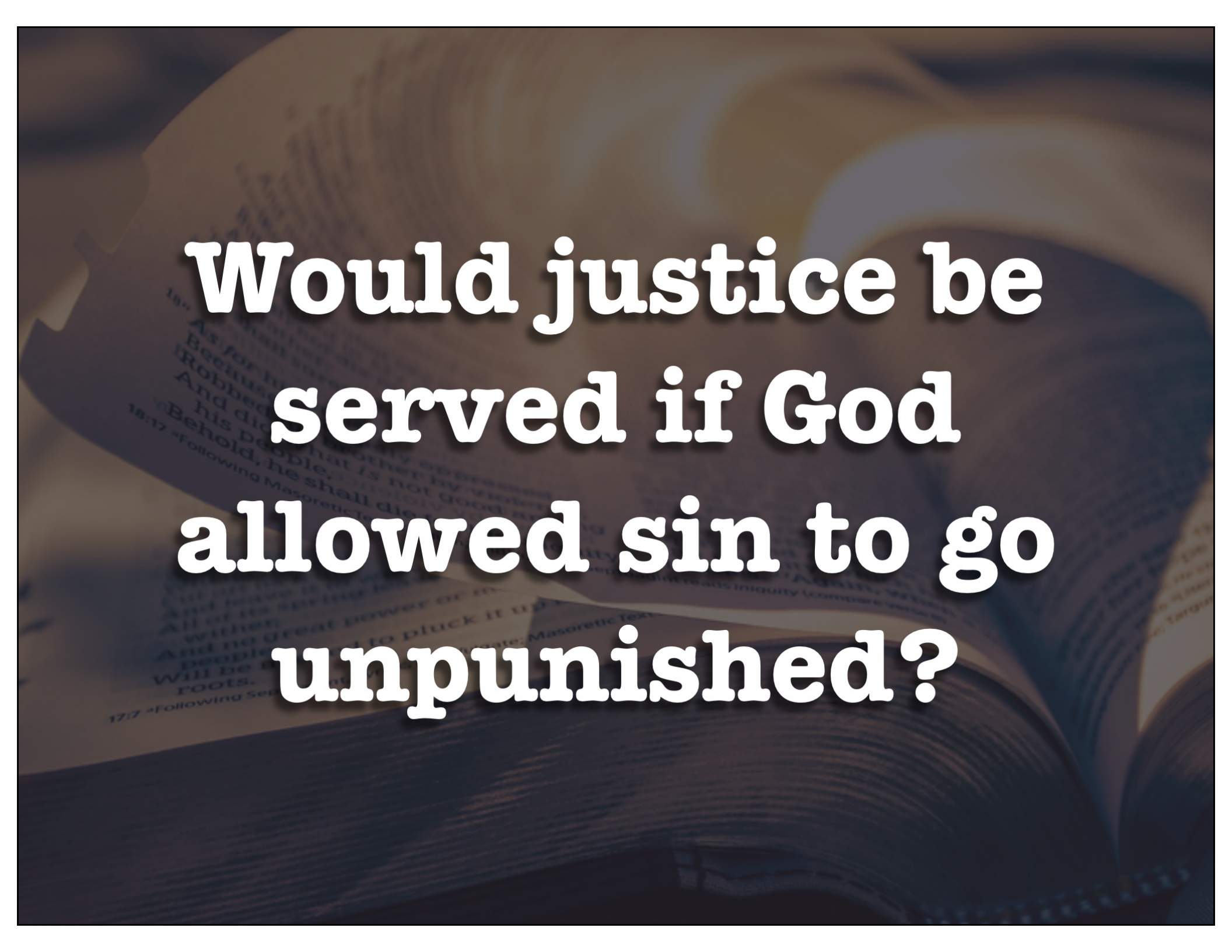
A God of faithfulness and  
without iniquity,  
just and upright is he.



**Many do not have a  
problem with a God  
who forgives**



**Their problem is  
with a God who  
punishes**

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 a large, white, bold question. The background is a dark, muted blue-grey color.

**Would justice be  
served if God  
allowed sin to go  
unpunished?**

## **Deuteronomy 1:17 (ESV)**

You **shall not be partial** in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.'

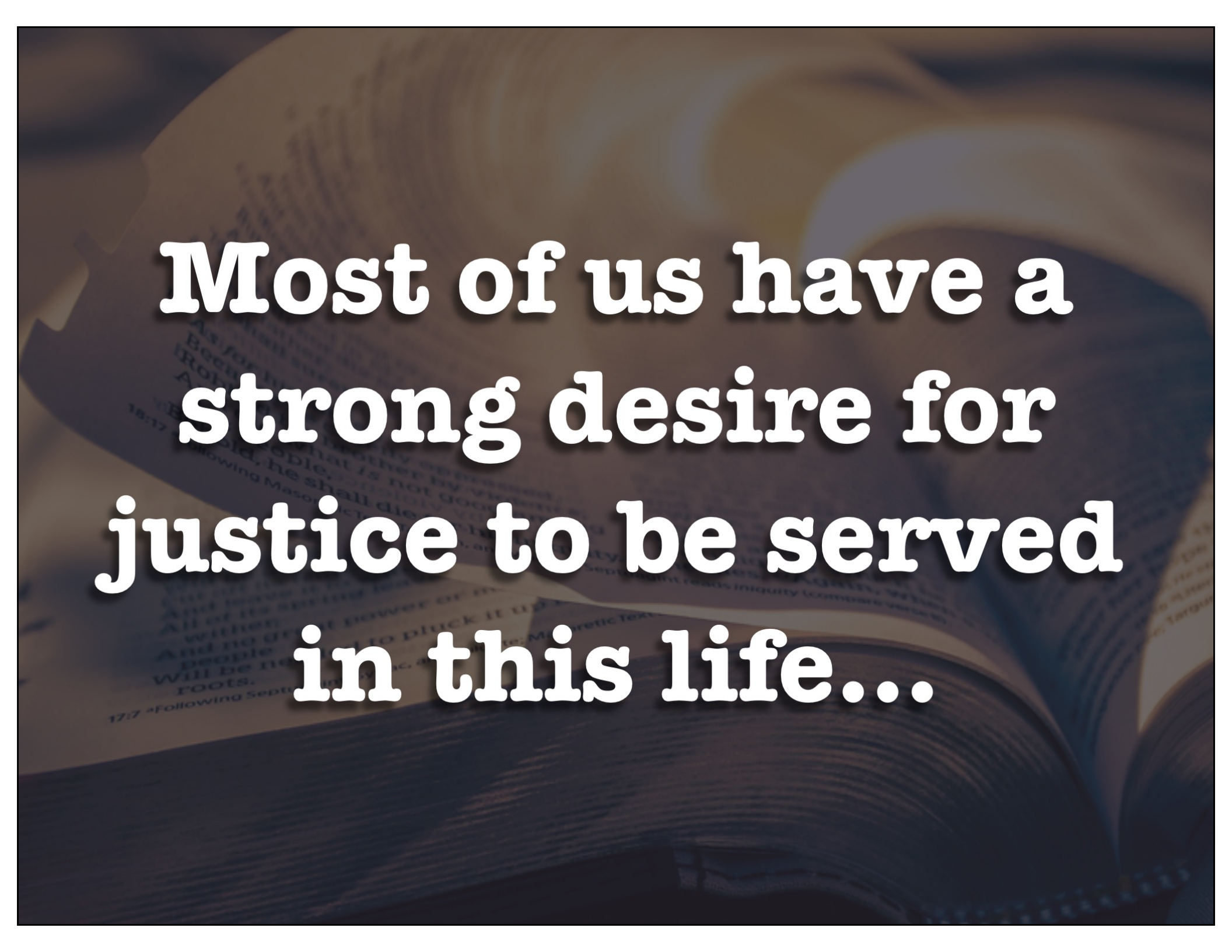
## **Deuteronomy 10:17 (ESV)**

For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who **is not partial** and takes no bribe.



## **Colossians 3:23-25 (ESV)**

<sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. <sup>25</sup> For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

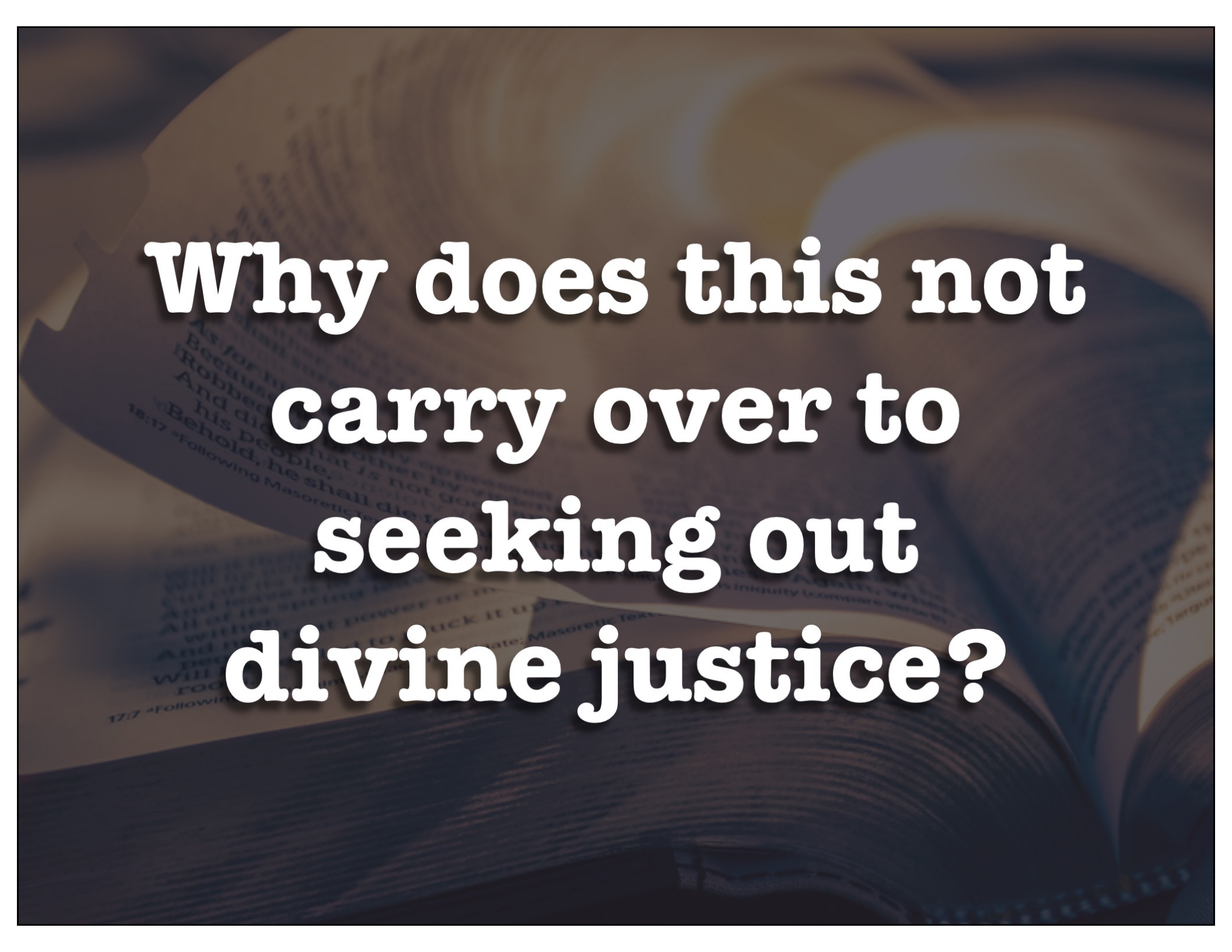


**Most of us have a  
strong desire for  
justice to be served  
in this life...**

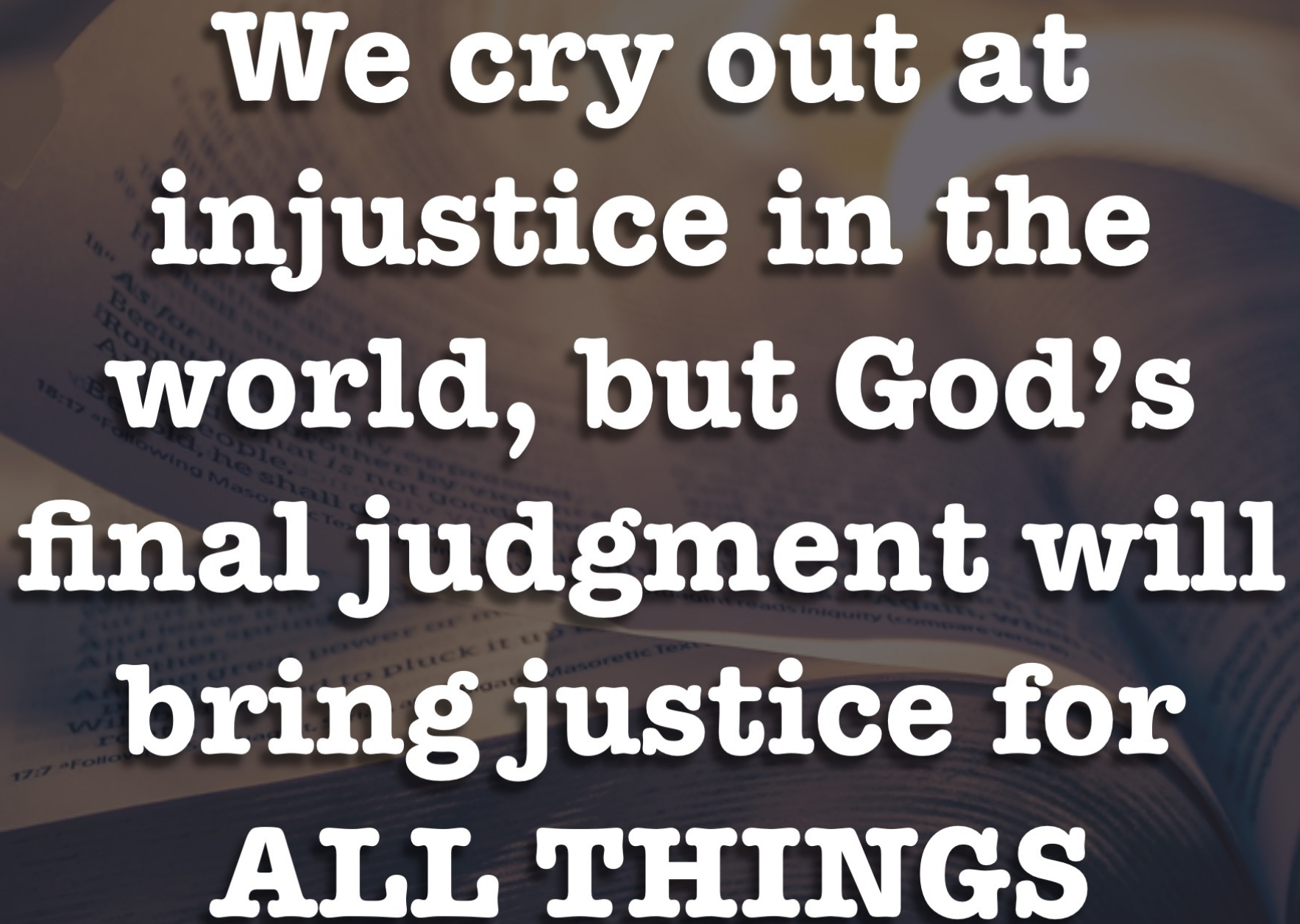
## **Genesis 1:26-27 (ESV)**

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

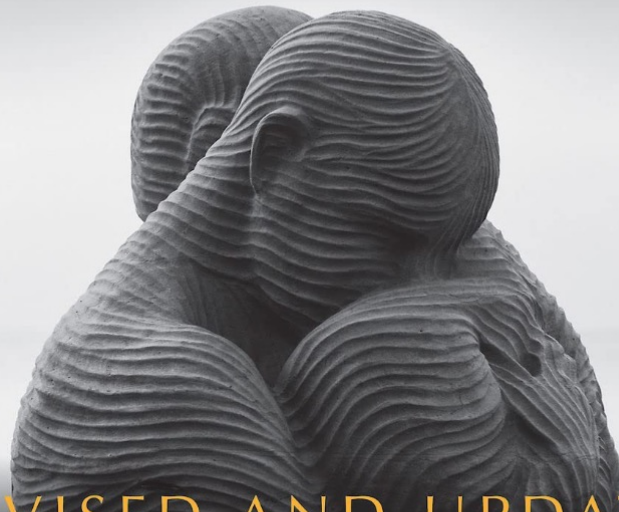


**Why does this not  
carry over to  
seeking out  
divine justice?**



**We cry out at  
injustice in the  
world, but God's  
final judgment will  
bring justice for  
ALL THINGS**

Miroslav Volf



REVISED AND UPDATED

# Exclusion & Embrace

A Theological Exploration of Identity,  
Otherness, and Reconciliation

"I suggest imagining that you are delivering a lecture in a war zone... Among your listeners are people whose cities and villages have been first plundered, then burned and leveled to the ground, whose daughters and sisters have been [defiled], whose fathers and brothers have had their throats slit..."

-Miroslav Volf, Croatian Theologian

\* Professor of Theology and Director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture

\* From his book: "Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation"

## **Romans 12:17-19 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup> If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup> Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”



"...If God were not angry at injustice and deception and did not make a final end of violence, that God would not be worthy of our worship."

-Miroslav Volf, Croatian Theologian

\* Professor of Theology and Director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture

\* From his book: "Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation"

FOREWORD BY DR ROWAN WILLIAMS, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

'Honest ... compassionate ... deeply informed.'

JOHN ORTBERG

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# FREE OF CHARGE

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GIVING AND FORGIVING  
IN A CULTURE STRIPPED OF GRACE



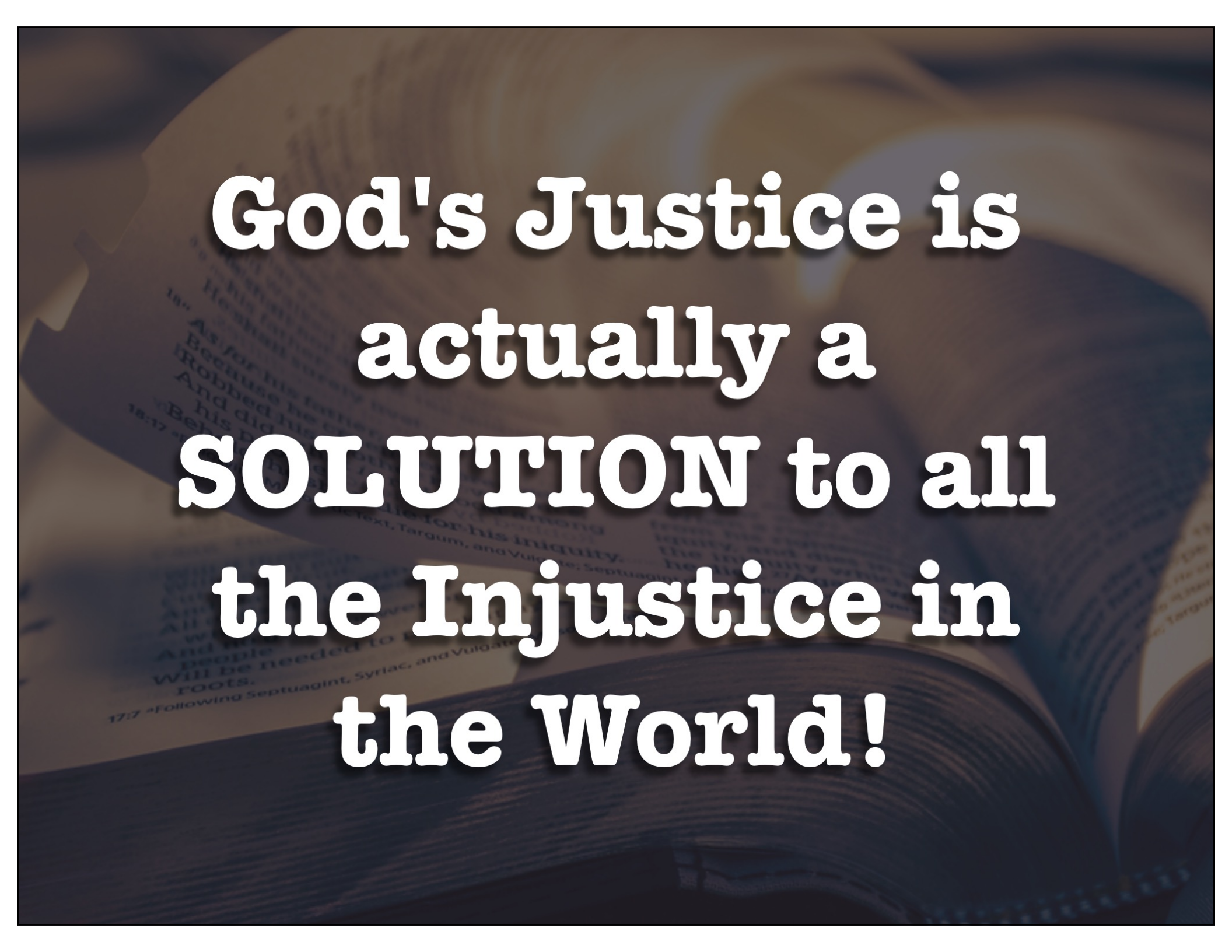
MIROSLAV VOLF

"Though I used to complain about the indecency of the idea of God's wrath, I came to think that I would have to rebel against a God who wasn't wrathful at the sight of the world's evil. God isn't wrathful in spite of being love. God is wrathful **because** God is love. ."

-Miroslav Volf, Croatian Theologian

\* Professor of Theology and Director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture


\* From his book: "Free of Charge"

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 reads: "God's Justice is actually a SOLUTION to all the Injustice in the World!".

**God's Justice is  
actually a  
SOLUTION to all  
the Injustice in  
the World!**

# Problem #5

**The "Problem" does  
not recognize that  
no one has to  
go to hell...**

The background is a dark, semi-transparent overlay on an image of an open book. The book's pages are visible, with some text from the Bible faintly legible. The text on the pages includes phrases like "Behold, the day of the Lord is coming", "And no great power will be needed to pluck it up", and "177 \*Following Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Masoretic text".

# **Romans 3:23 (ESV)**

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

## **Romans 1:16 (ESV)**

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

## **Romans 6:23 (ESV)**

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.



**God's Sinless  
Nature**

**+**

**God's Perfect  
Justice**





+

# Man's Sin

## Genesis 2:15-17 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**”



=

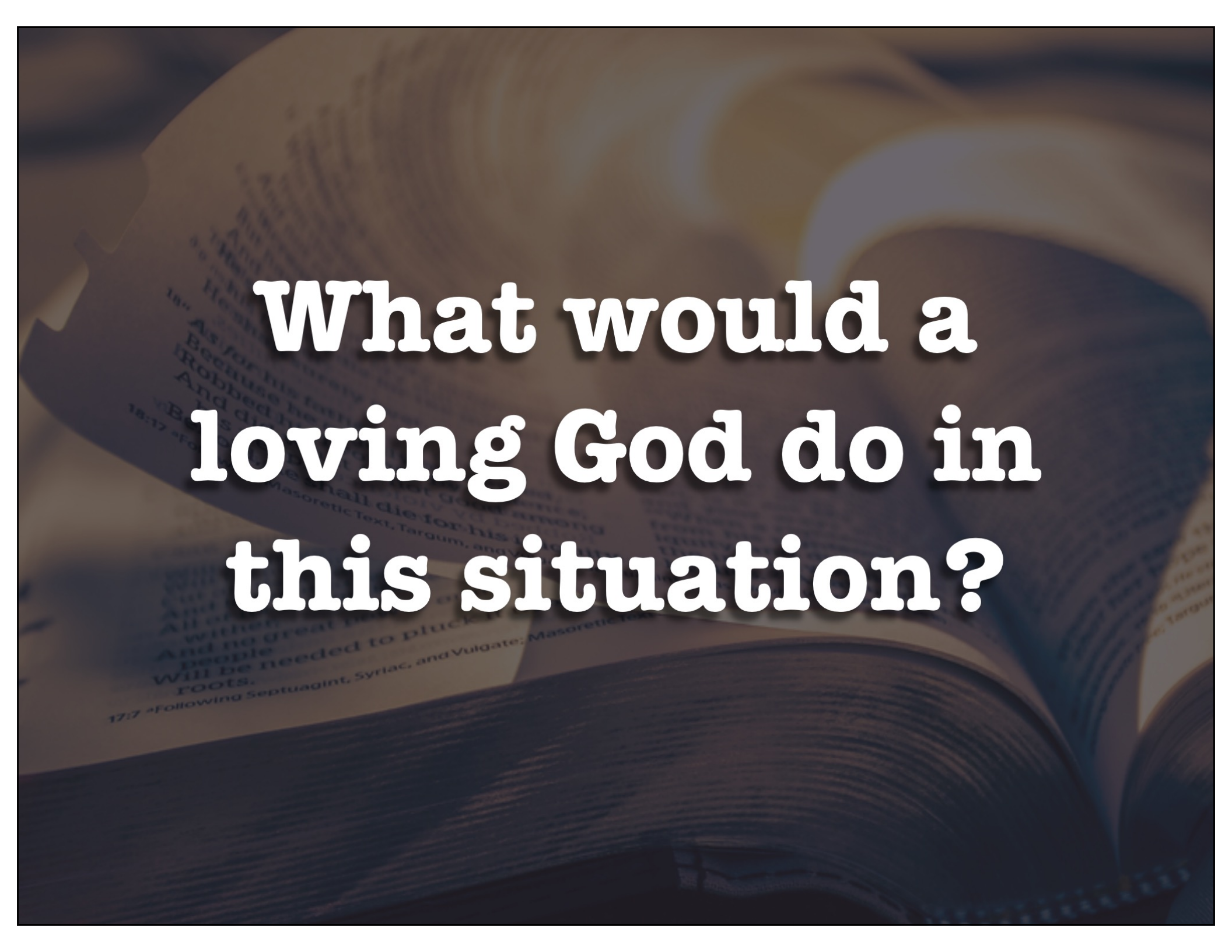
**Separation**

**&**

**Death**

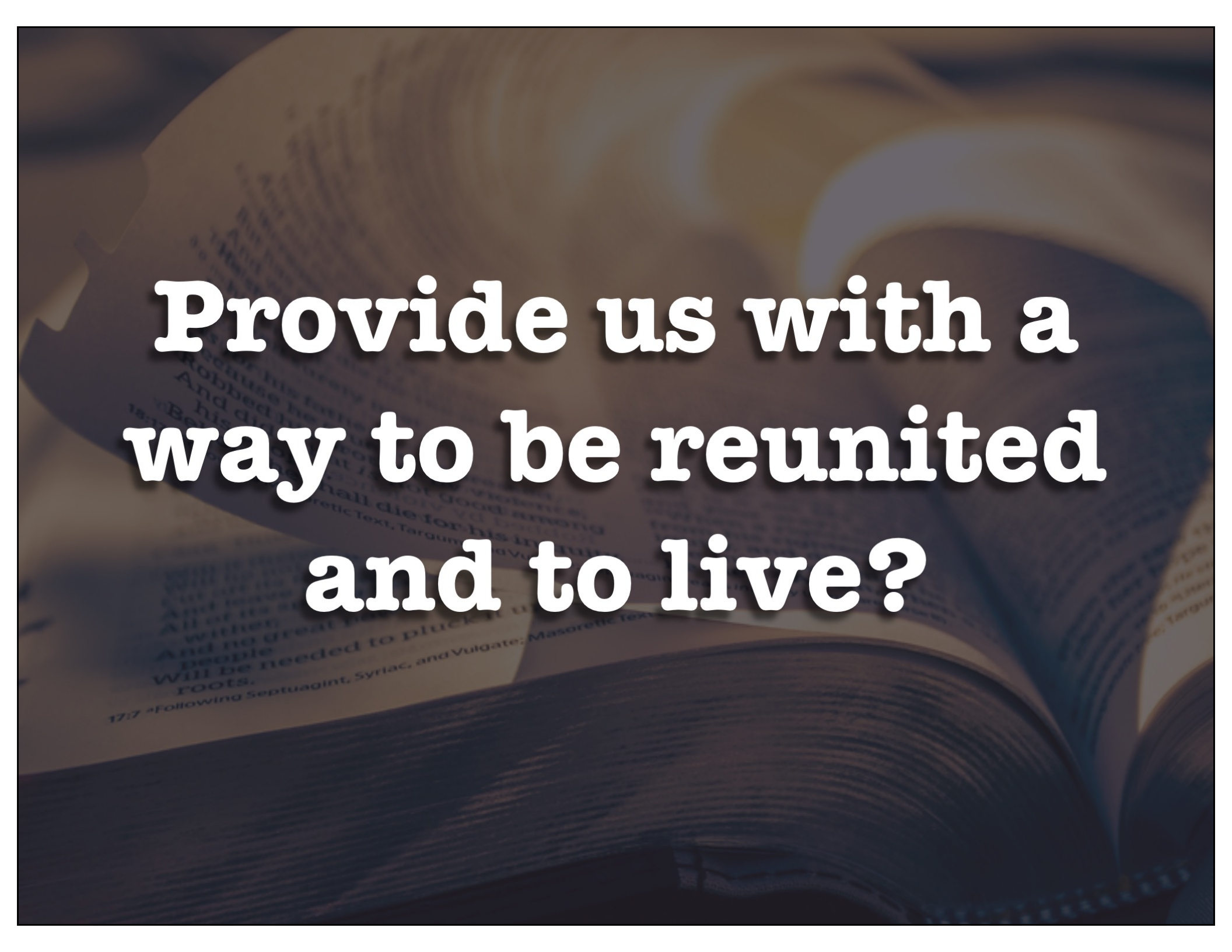
## 1 John 4:7-8 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Anyone who does not love does not know God, because **God is love.**



**What would a  
loving God do in  
this situation?**





**Provide us with a  
way to be reunited  
and to live?**

## **2 Peter 3:9 (ESV)**

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not wishing that any should perish**, but that all should reach repentance.



## 1 Timothy 2:1-4 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. <sup>3</sup> This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who **desires all people to be saved** and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

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 two main text blocks in a white, bold, serif font. The background is a dark, muted blue-grey color.

**This is NOT a  
punishment story!**

**It is a rescue story!**

## John 3:16-18 (ESV)

<sup>16</sup> “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is **condemned already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

**From the moment sin  
entered the world,  
God began revealing  
his solution to allow  
man to be united  
with Him again**

## **Genesis 3:14–15 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> The Lord God said to the serpent,  
“Because you have done this,  
cursed are you above all livestock  
and above all beasts of the field;  
on your belly you shall go,  
and dust you shall eat  
all the days of your life.  
<sup>15</sup> I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and her offspring;  
**he shall bruise your head,  
and you shall bruise his heel.”**

## Genesis 12:1-3 (ESV)

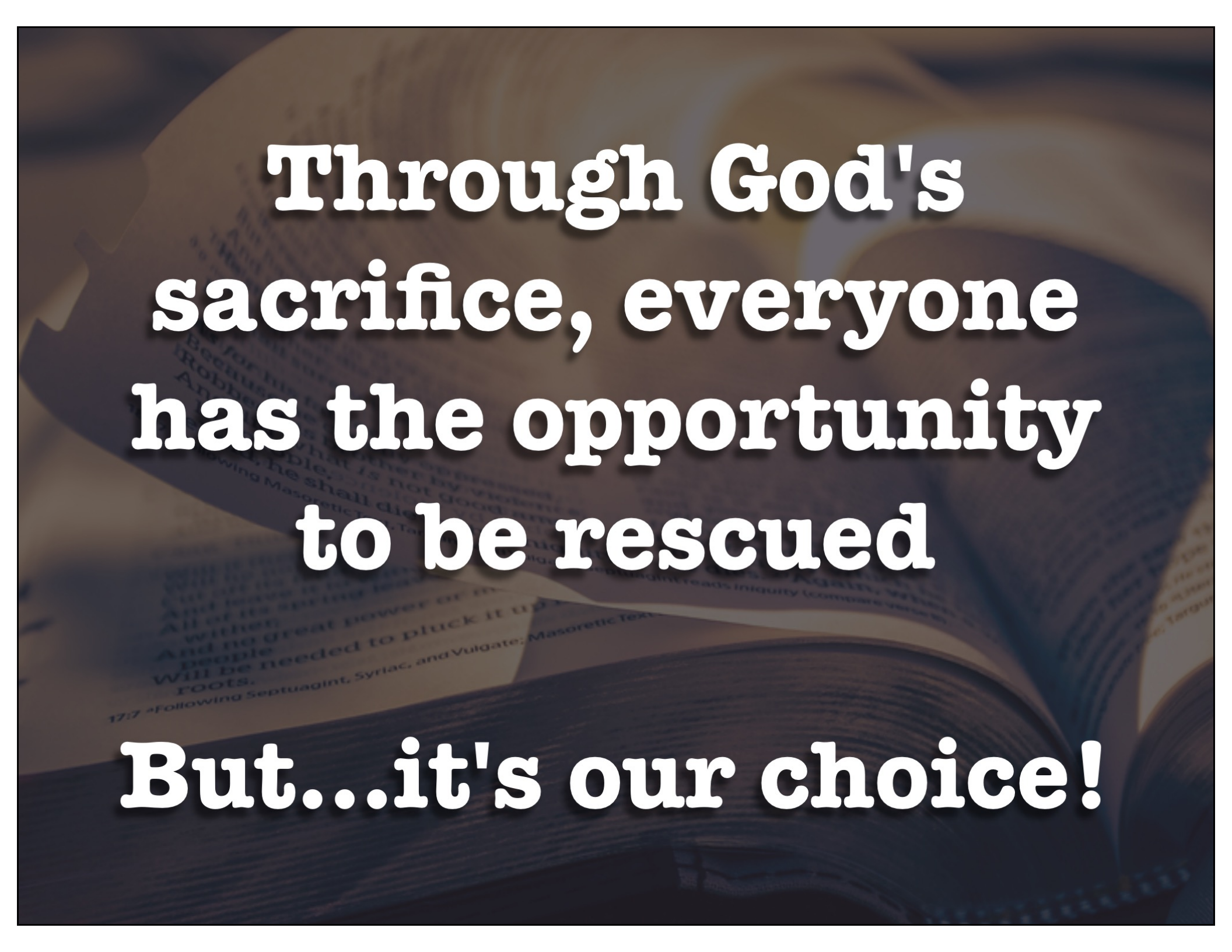
<sup>1</sup> Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and **in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**”

**God is so loving that He not only warned us about the consequences of sin (Gen 2:15-17), but took our punishment upon Himself so that justice might be served and that we might be united with Him in all glory**

## **Romans 3:21-26 (ESV)**

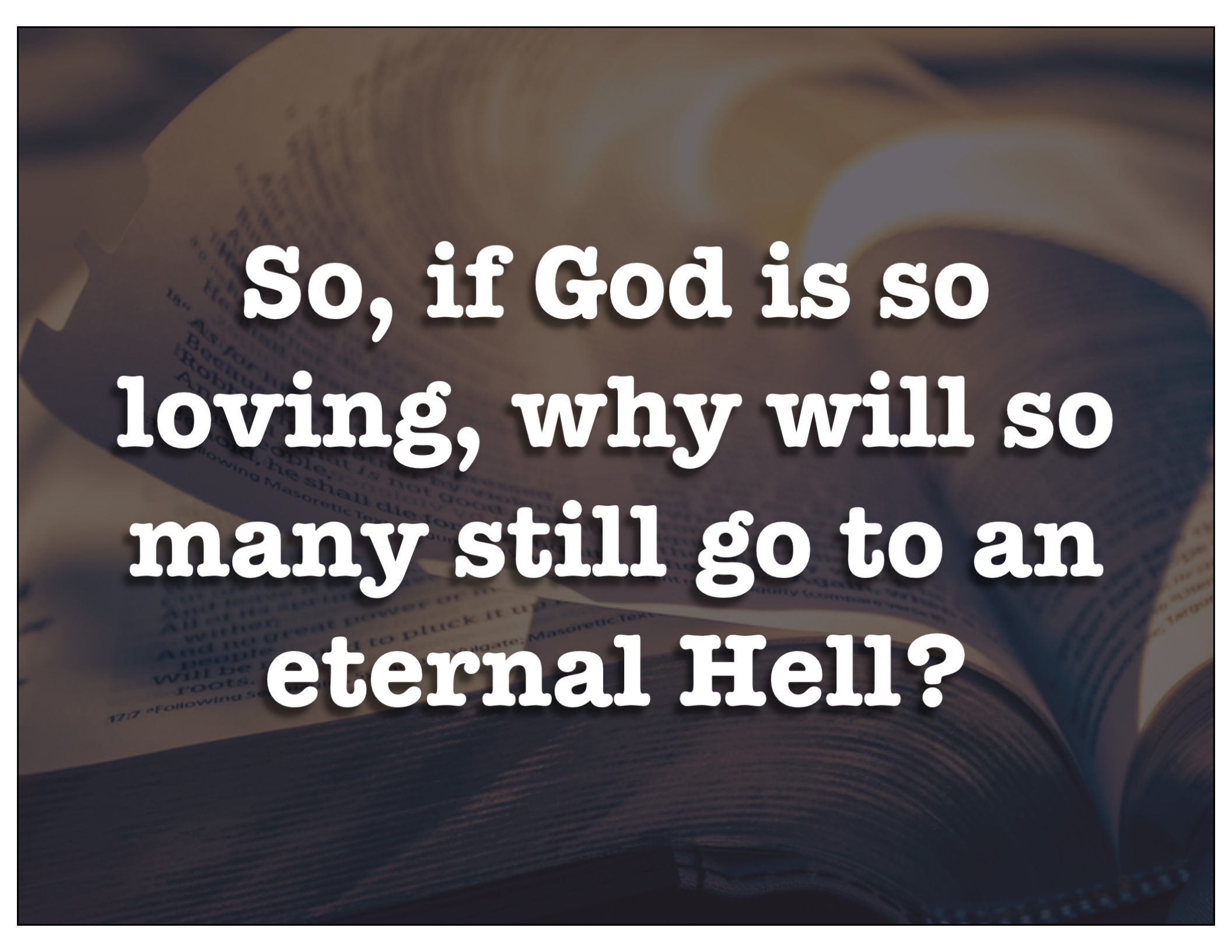
<sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. <sup>26</sup> It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that **he might be just** and **the justifier** of the one who has **faith in Jesus**.



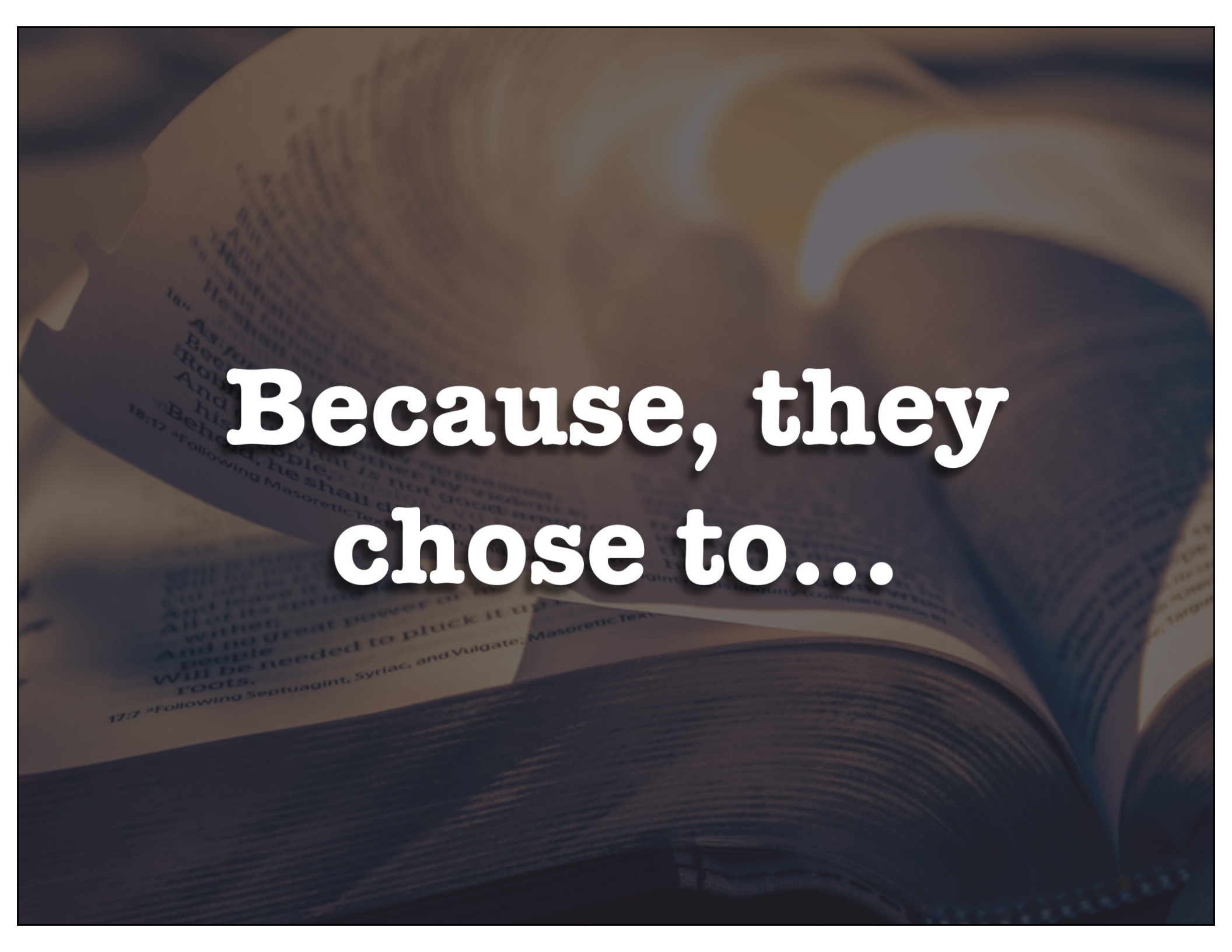


**Through God's  
sacrifice, everyone  
has the opportunity  
to be rescued**

**But...it's our choice!**

An open book is shown in the background, with its pages slightly blurred. The text is overlaid in a large, white, bold font with a subtle drop shadow. The text is centered and reads: "So, if God is so loving, why will so many still go to an eternal Hell?"

**So, if God is so  
loving, why will so  
many still go to an  
eternal Hell?**

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. In the center of the image, the words "Because, they chose to..." are written in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. The background is a deep blue-grey color, and the overall lighting is soft and focused on the central text.

**Because, they  
chose to...**

18:17 \*Following Masoretic Text  
17:7 \*Following Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Masoretic text