

Good News!

The Life and Message of Jesus



LESSON ONE

What Are the Gospels?

John 20:30–31

What Are the Gospels?

- The Gospels are good news.

Have you ever heard someone announce
“good news”? What was the good news?
In what sense are the four Gospels “good news”?



What Are the Gospels?

- The Gospels are good news.
- The Gospels are different from modern biographies.
- The Gospels are historical documents.

How important is it that the Gospels rely on eyewitnesses?

Why do reliable sources force the reader to take the Gospels seriously?



What Are the Gospels?

- The Gospels are **good news**.
- The Gospels are different from modern **biographies**.
- The Gospels are **historical** documents.
- The Gospels contain the **teaching** of Jesus.
- The Gospels are **theological** documents.

Why Four Gospels?

- Each Gospel tells part of the same overall **story**.

Why do you think God revealed Jesus' life in multiple books rather than just one?



Why Four Gospels?

- Each Gospel tells part of the same overall **story**.
- Each Gospel offers a **unique** perspective.

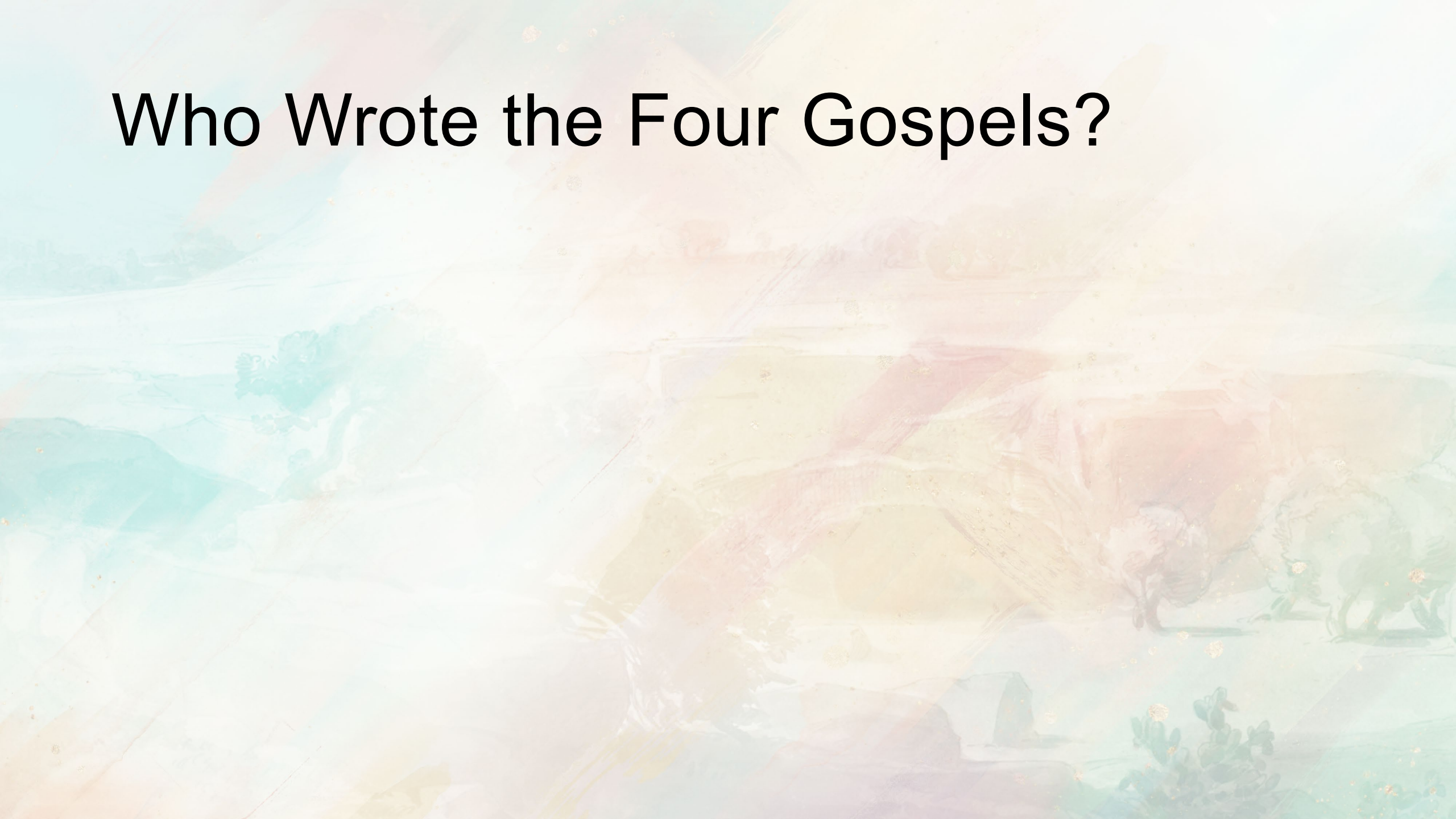
Imagine that you were asked to write a biography of Jesus.

What stories would you include?

Are there things never mentioned in the Gospels that you are curious about? Why do you think God left these out?



Who Wrote the Four Gospels?



Does anonymous authorship of the Gospels
make them any less true?



Why does it help to know who wrote each of the Gospels?



Who Wrote the Four Gospels?

- The Gospel of Matthew
- The Gospel of Mark
- The Gospel of Luke

How do you think Luke's occupation as a physician affected the way he told the story of Jesus?



Who Wrote the Four Gospels?

- The Gospel of Matthew
- The Gospel of Mark
- The Gospel of Luke
- The Gospel of John



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LESSON TWO

The Early Life of Jesus

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 2:1–21

The Birth of Jesus

- An angel made two important birth announcements.
 - An angel announced the birth of **John the Baptist.**
 - An angel announced the birth of **Jesus.**

The Birth of Jesus

- An angel made two important birth announcements. (**John the Baptist**; **Jesus**)
- **Shepherds** visited Jesus at His birth.
- Jesus was born in **Bethlehem**.
- Jesus was born to a **virgin**.

The Infancy of Jesus

- Jesus' parents obeyed God's Law.
- Two prophecies were made in the Temple.
- The Magi visited Jesus.
- The Bible does not say much about the childhood and early life of Jesus.

What do you think it means that Jesus grew in these four ways?

How do these four areas of growth correspond to our own growth?



Why do you think there are not more stories about Jesus as a child?



John's Preaching and the Baptism of Jesus

- John warned of God's approaching **judgment**.
- John urged the people of Israel to turn from their **sins**.
- The people were to show their repentance through **baptism**.
- John proclaimed the coming of the **Messiah**.

The Temptation of Jesus

- Jesus' first temptation was to turn stones into bread.
- Jesus' second temptation was to jump from the Temple.
- Jesus' third temptation was to bow down to Satan.

How can Jesus' response to Satan's temptations serve as a model for our own response to temptations?





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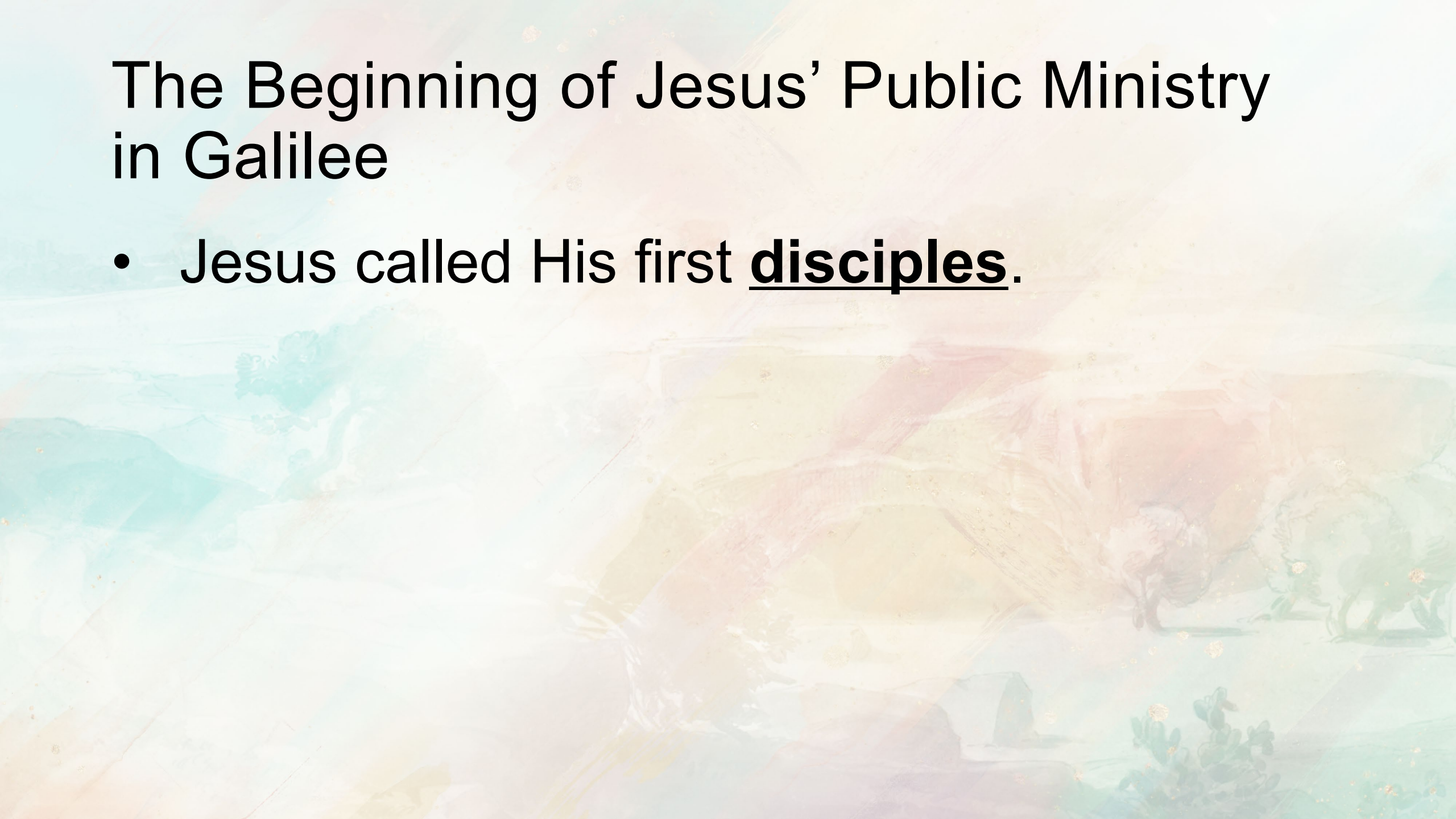
LESSON THREE

The Early Ministry of Jesus

Mark 1:14–6:6a

The Beginning of Jesus' Public Ministry in Galilee

- Jesus called His first **disciples**.



Why do you think Jesus chose fishermen as His first disciples?

Why not choose wealthy or famous people who had a lot of influence in the community and could easily convince many others to join?



The Beginning of Jesus' Public Ministry in Galilee

- Jesus called His first **disciples**.
- Jesus was **rejected** in His hometown.

Why do you think the people in Jesus' hometown refused to believe in Jesus?



The Activities of Jesus' Public Ministry

- He cast out demons.
- He healed the sick.

Why do you think Jesus told the evil spirit and the healed leper to be silent?

What does this teach us about the need for discernment when to speak and when to be silent?



The Activities of Jesus' Public Ministry

- He cast out **demons**.
- He healed the **sick**.
- He forgave **sin**.
- He instructed people in the **truth**.

Why did Jesus want to challenge false views about Sabbath laws?

Since few people observe the Sabbath today, what similar danger could we face with rules that go beyond the Bible?



The Activities of Jesus' Public Ministry

- He instructed people in the **truth**.
- Jesus clarified the **purpose** of the Sabbath.
- Jesus **healed** on the Sabbath.

Negative Responses to Jesus During His Early Ministry

- His family members tried to **stop** Him.

Why do you think Jesus' family was hesitant to believe His message?



Negative Responses to Jesus During His Early Ministry

- His family members tried to **stop** Him.
- The Pharisees **rejected** Him.



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LESSON FOUR

The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 5–7; Luke 6:17–49

Teaching on True Success

- Jesus blessed the poor in spirit.
- Jesus blessed those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.
- Jesus blessed those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness.

In what ways does this happy life described by Jesus differ from the happiness the world seeks?

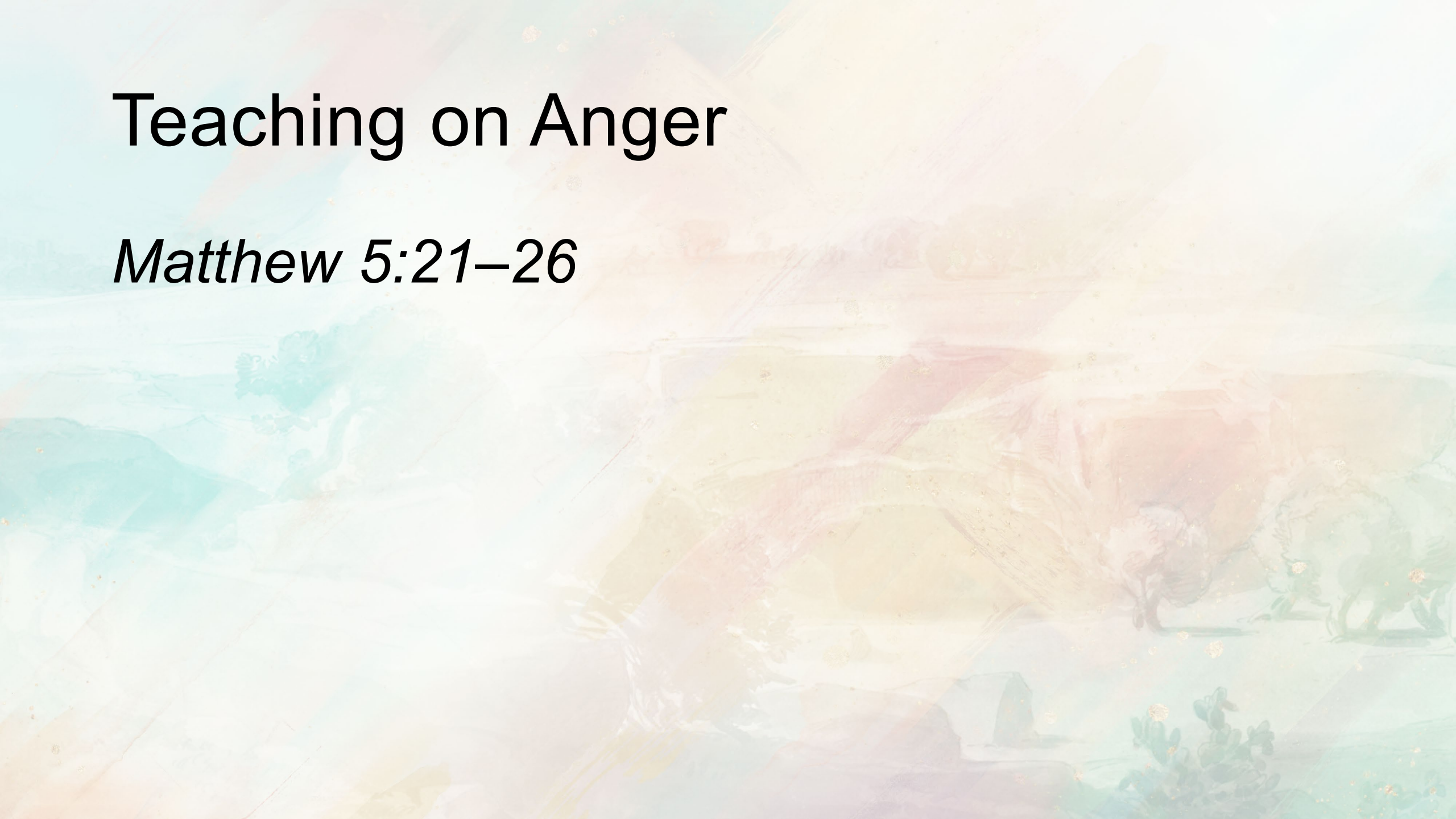


What can you do to help persecuted Christians?



Teaching on Anger

Matthew 5:21–26



What are the most common situations where you are tempted to become angry?

Do you find anger repulsive, and if not, how can we develop the same revulsion that Jesus had for anger?

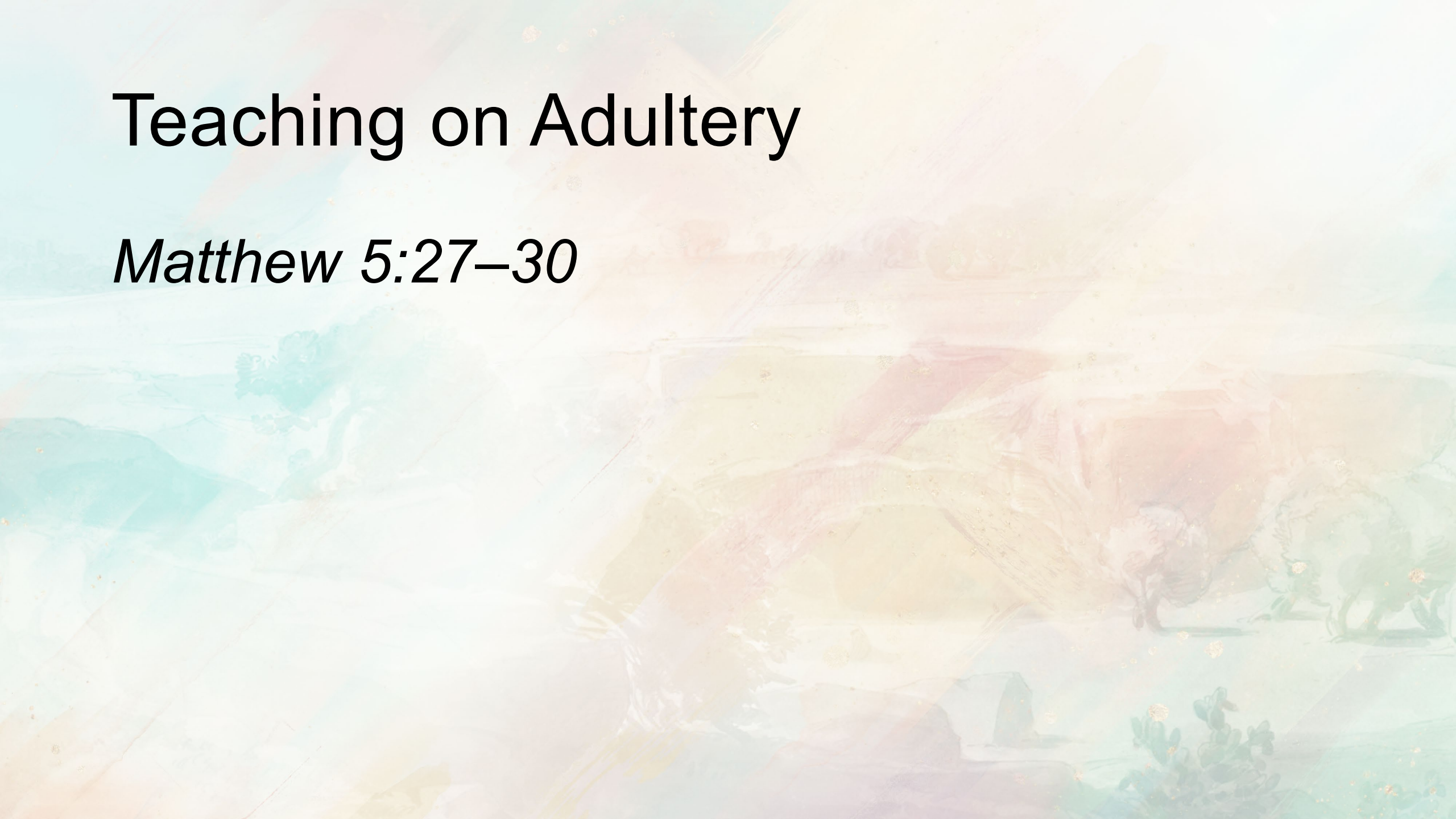


How can anger prevent us from genuine worship?



Teaching on Adultery

Matthew 5:27–30



Obviously, Jesus was not telling His disciples to harm themselves, but how can we “cut off” what causes lust?



Teaching on Prayer

- Pray to worship God.
- Pray for God to accomplish His will.
- Pray for God to meet your daily needs.
- Pray for forgiveness of your sins.
- Pray for deliverance from temptation.

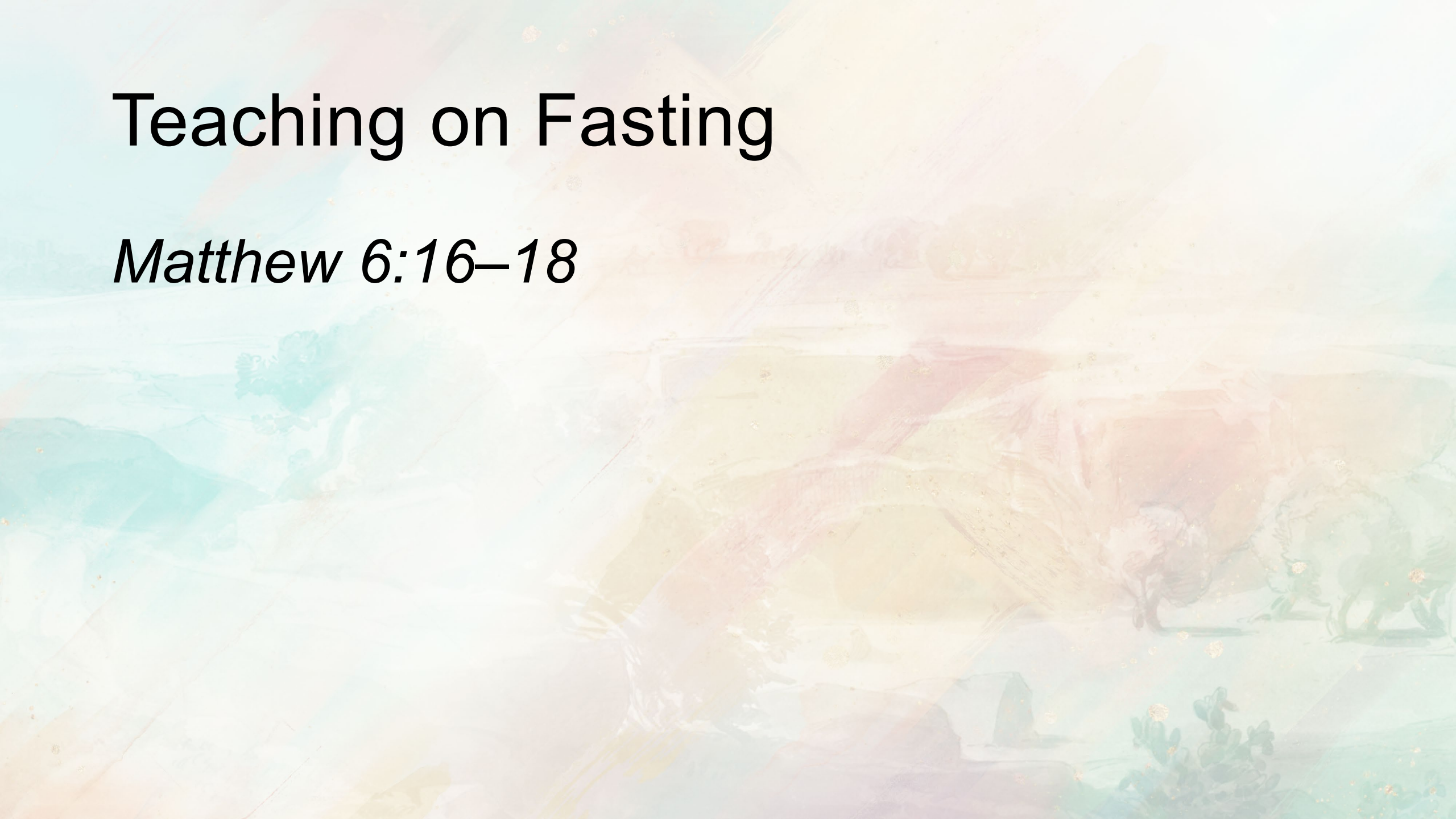
Now that we have looked closely at each specific element in the Lord's Prayer, which elements are weak or missing in your prayer life?

What steps can you take to improve your prayers?



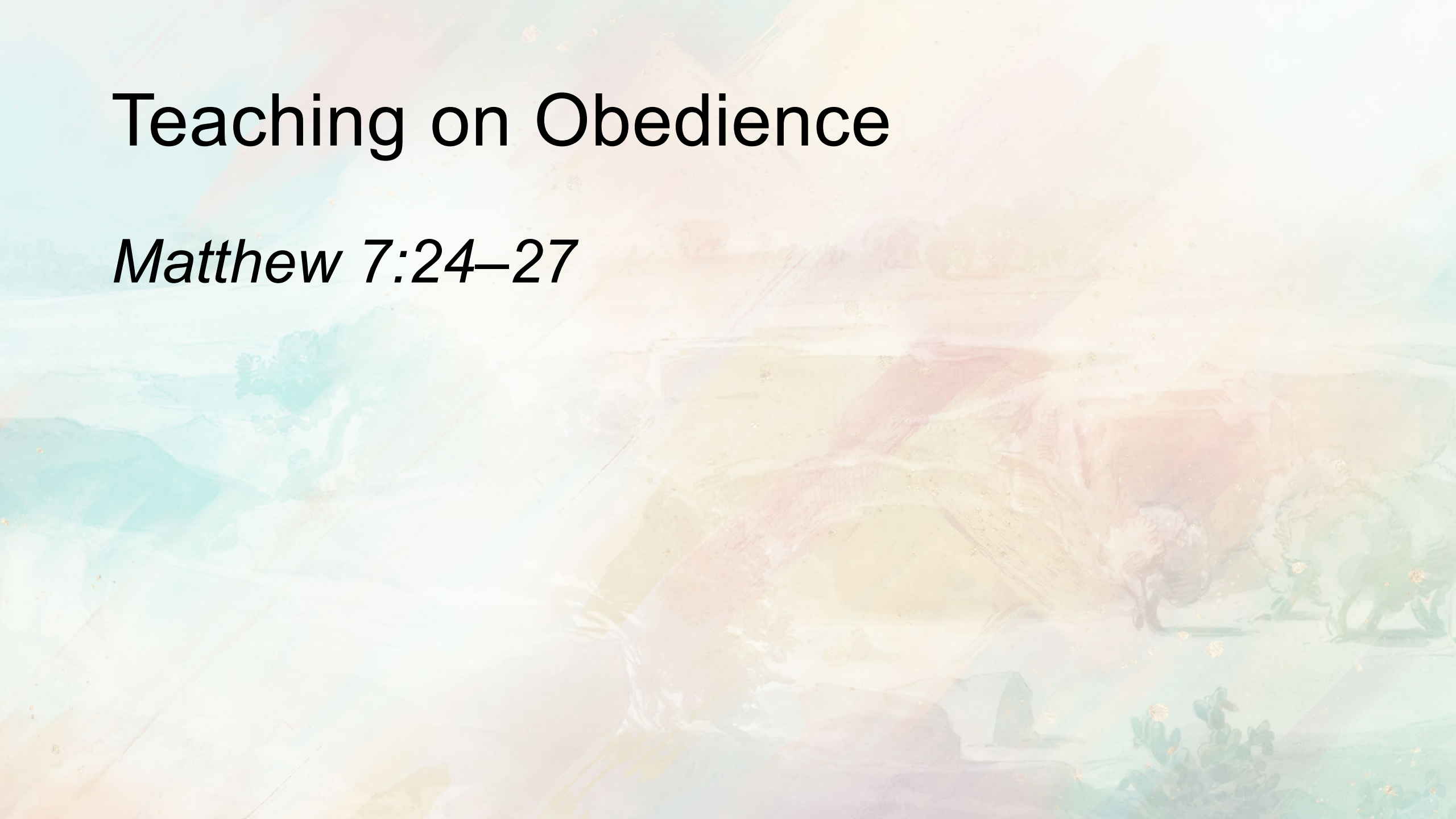
Teaching on Fasting

Matthew 6:16–18



Teaching on Obedience

Matthew 7:24–27



What is different between the actions of the wise builder and the foolish one?

What is the foundation that Jesus wants His followers to build their lives upon?





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LESSON FIVE

The Parables of Jesus

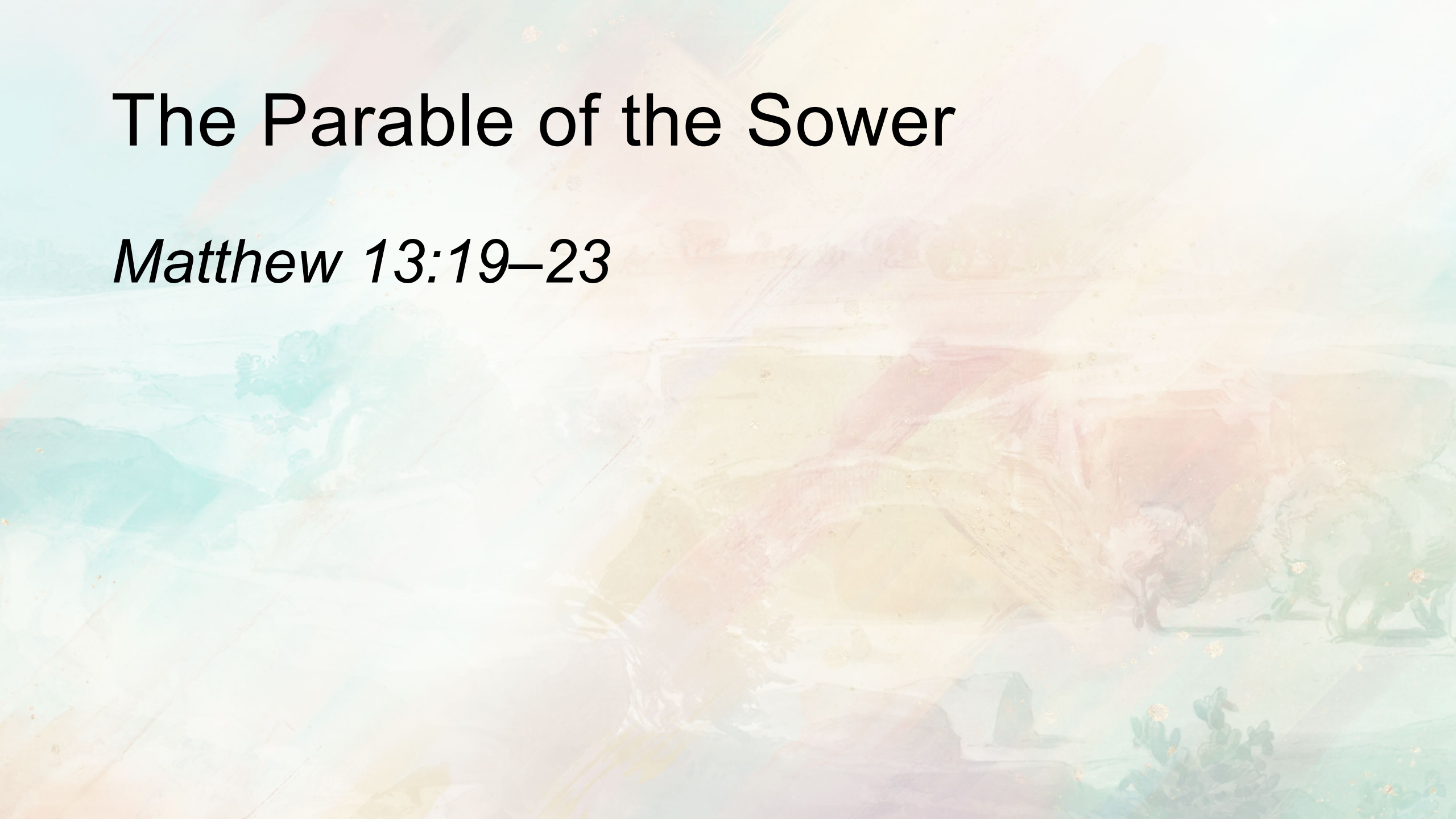
Matthew 13:1–23, 31–35; Luke 10:25–37

What Is a Parable?

- Parables are stories that teach spiritual **truth**.
- Parables are not allegories or **fables**.
- Parables often contrast **two** characters.

The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:19–23



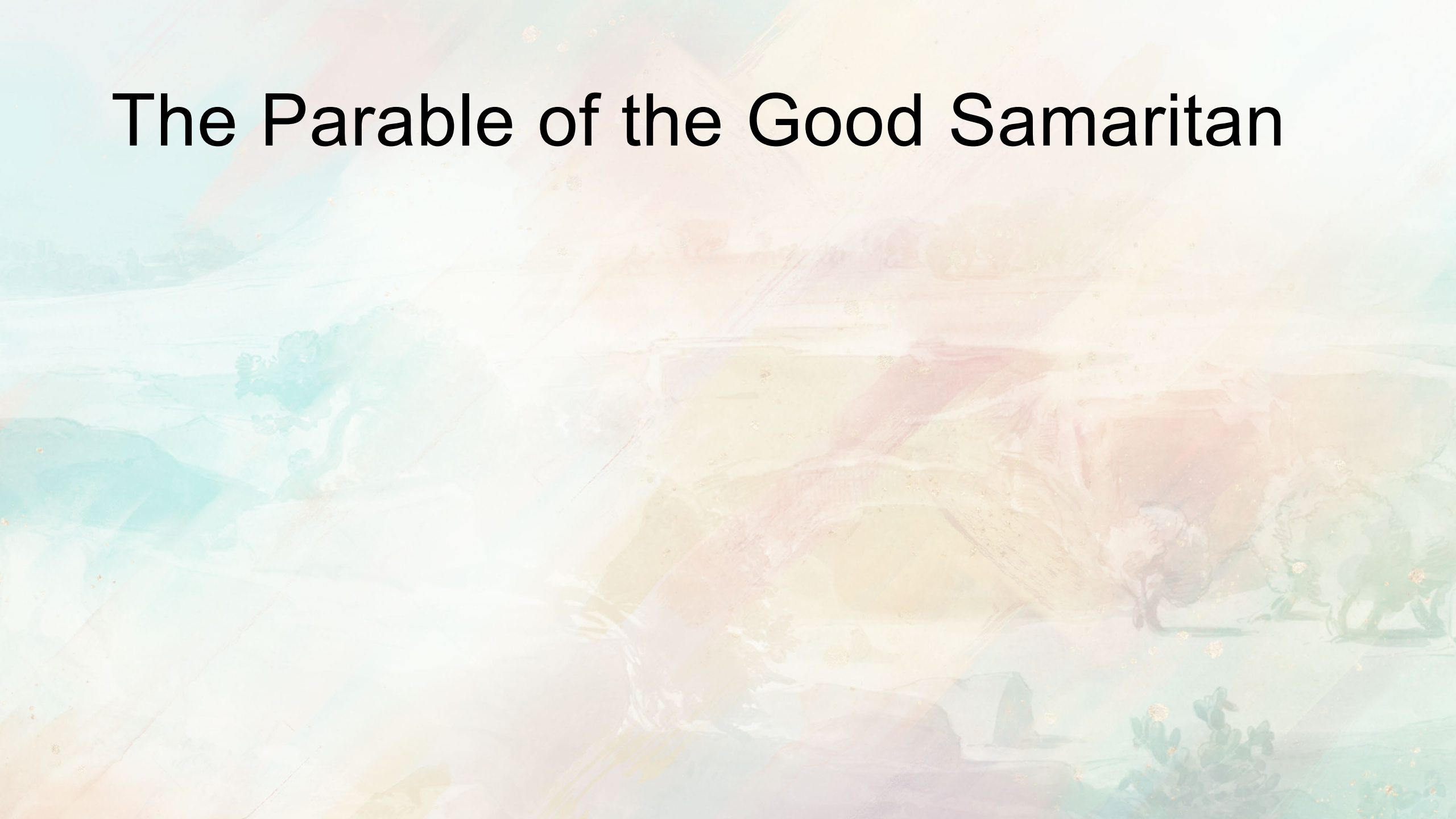
How do the four types of soil illustrate why people reject Jesus' teaching today?



Parables of Small Beginnings with Big Results

- Jesus compared God's kingdom to a **mustard seed**.
- Jesus compared God's kingdom to **leaven**.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

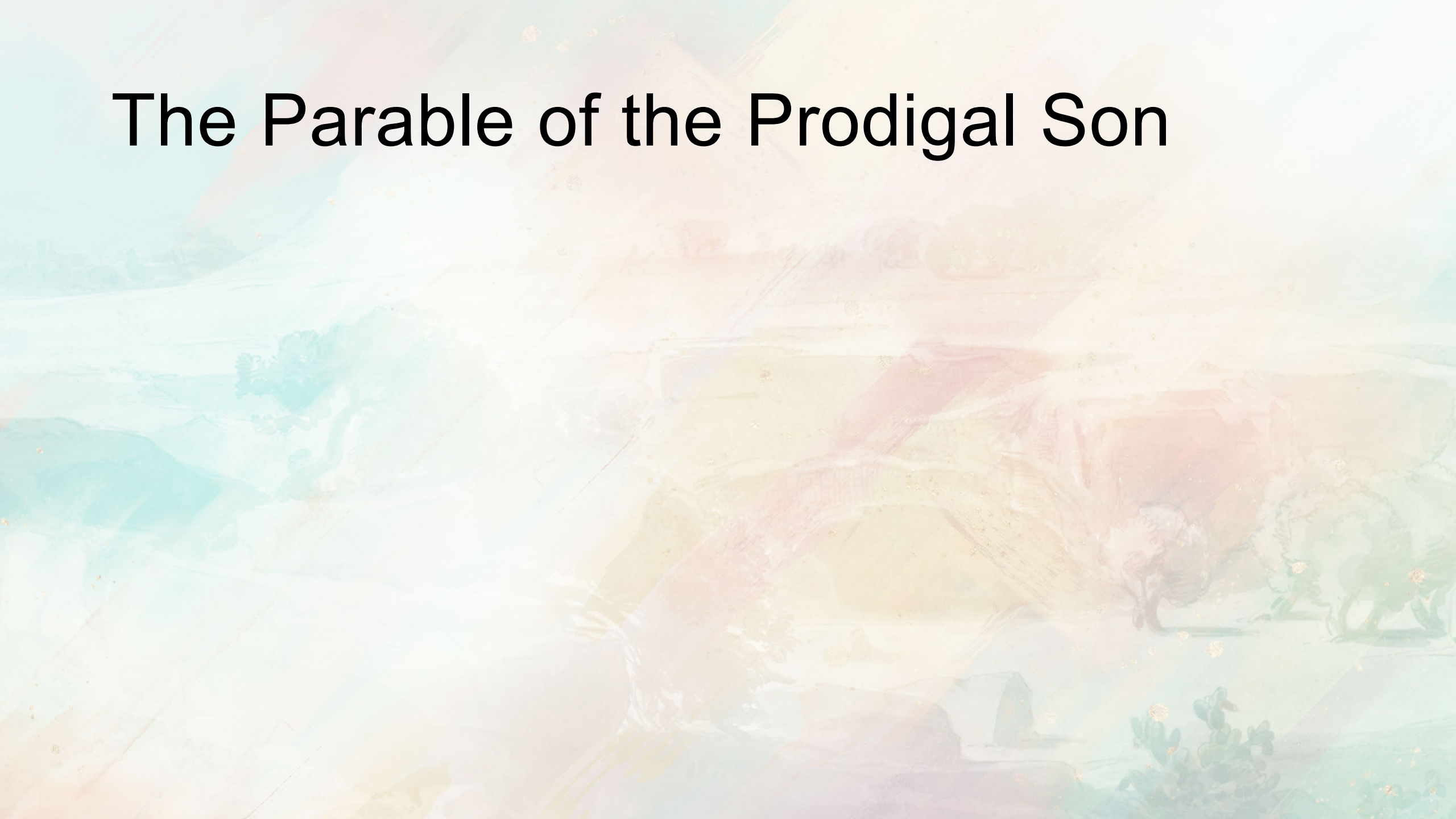


What are some contemporary examples of being a good neighbor in the same way the Samaritan was a good neighbor?

Even non-Christians believe in being good neighbors, so how can Christians be good neighbors in a way that is unique to disciples of Jesus?



The Parable of the Prodigal Son



Think about this parable from the perspective of the prodigal son.

What does the parable teach us about God?





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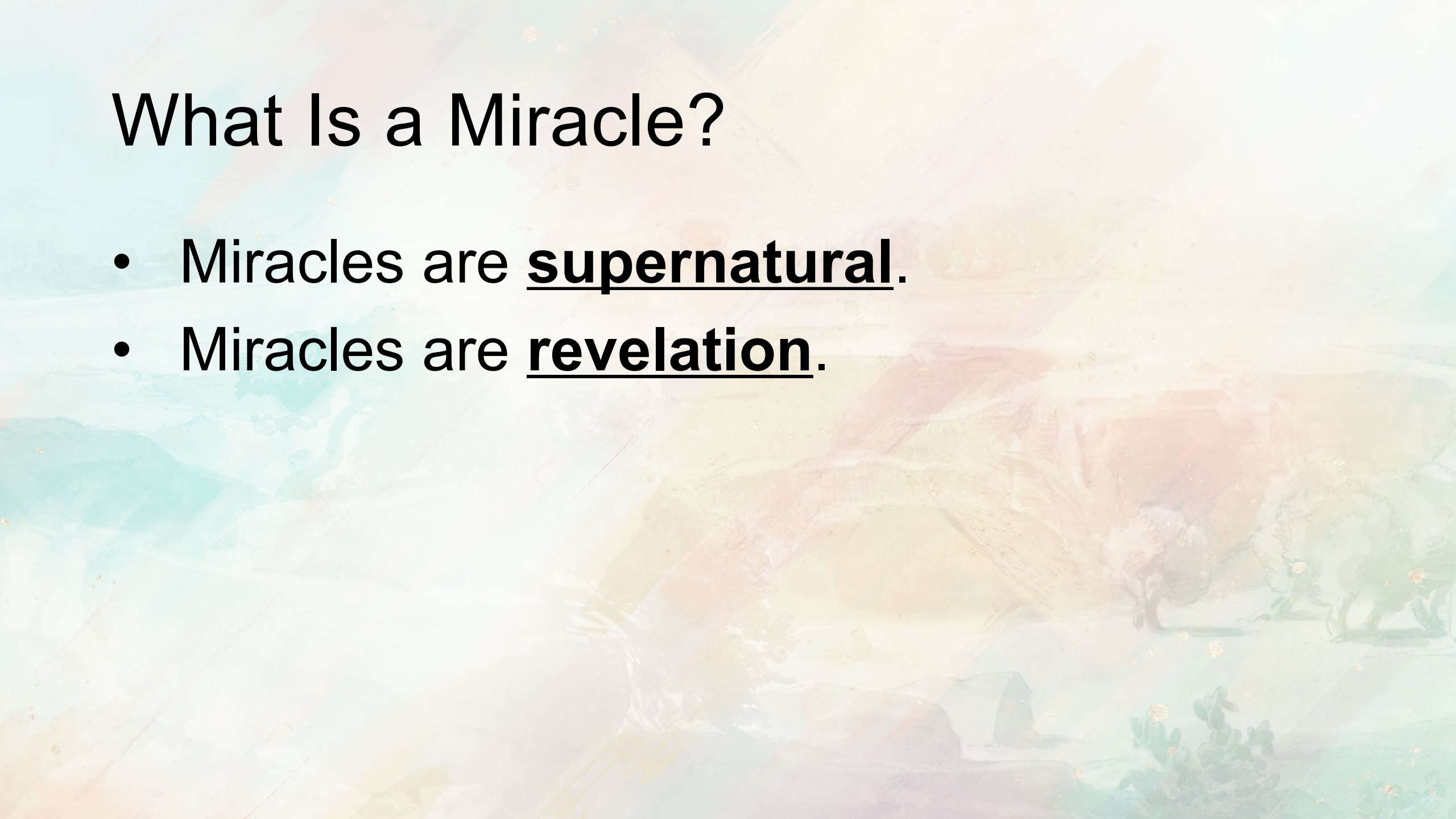
LESSON SIX

The Miracles of Jesus

Mark 1:32–34; John 20:30–31

What Is a Miracle?

- Miracles are **supernatural**.
- Miracles are **revelation**.



Why do you think John the Baptist doubted that Jesus was the Messiah?



How do we know Jesus wasn't just performing tricks like a magician or illusionist?



Examples of Jesus' Miracles

- Jesus controlled nature.

Why do you think the disciples had difficulty grasping the full significance of Jesus' miracles?



Examples of Jesus' Miracles

- Jesus controlled nature.
- Jesus healed people.
- Jesus brought the dead back to life.
- Jesus cast out demons.

Why do you think there were so many demon-possessed people in Jesus' time?



Examples of Jesus' Miracles

- Jesus controlled nature.
- Jesus healed people.
- Jesus brought the dead back to life.
- Jesus cast out demons.
- Jesus performed miracles with symbolic meanings.



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LESSON SEVEN

Ministry in Galilee

Matthew 10:5–15; Mark 6:6b–8:38

The Mission of the Twelve

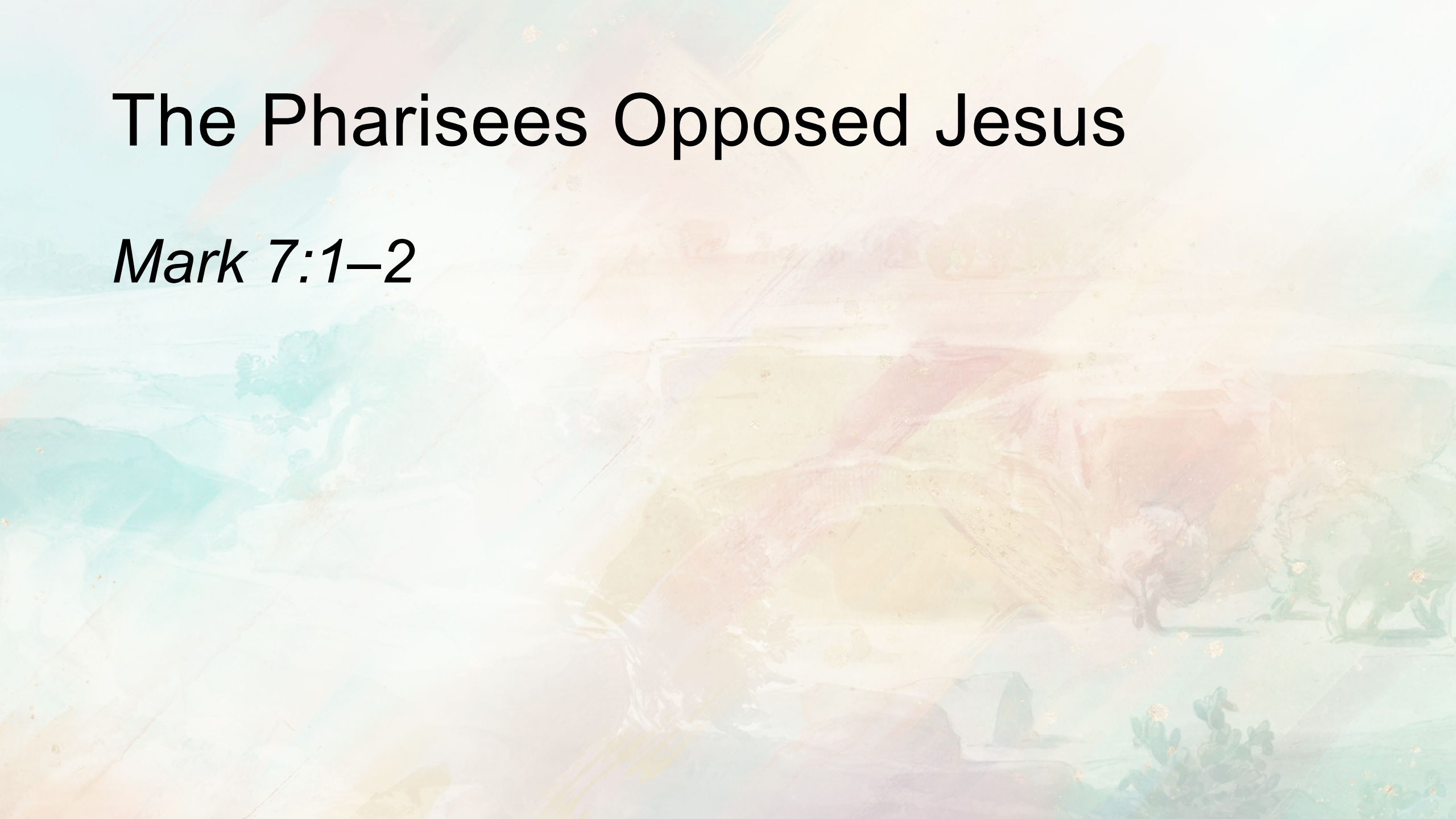
- The disciples went to the people of Israel.
- The disciples preached about the coming kingdom.

Jesus Fed 5,000



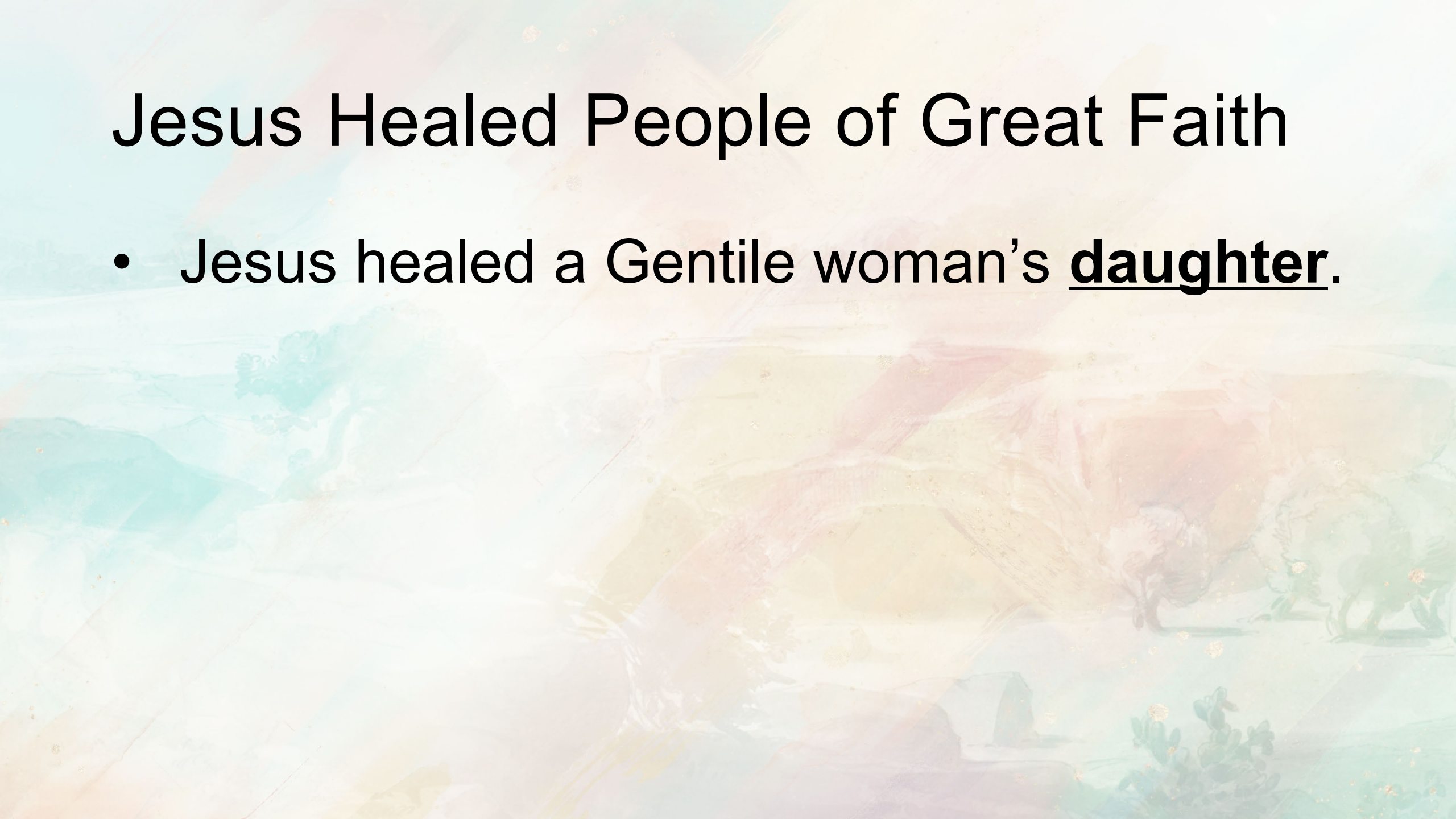
The Pharisees Opposed Jesus

Mark 7:1–2



Jesus Healed People of Great Faith

- Jesus healed a Gentile woman's daughter.



Do you think Jesus was rude when He called the woman's daughter a little dog?

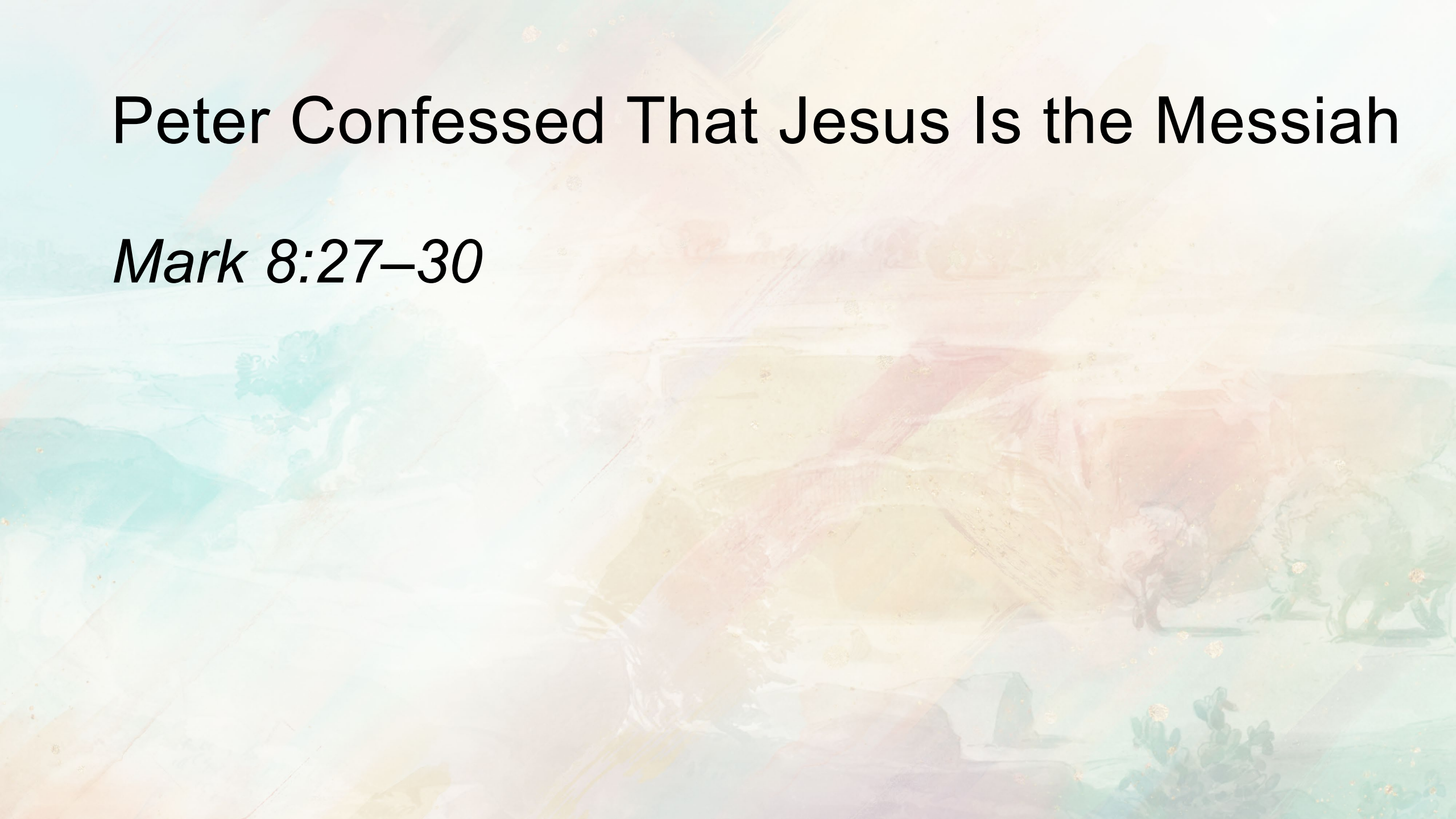


Jesus Healed People of Great Faith

- Jesus healed a Gentile woman's daughter.
- Jesus healed a deaf and mute man.

Peter Confessed That Jesus Is the Messiah

Mark 8:27–30



Do you remember the first time you learned that Jesus was the “Messiah”? How much did you understand about its meaning? As you have learned more about the term, how has it changed your view of Jesus and your desire to live for Him and to tell others about Him?



Why do you think Peter thought He should rebuke Jesus?

Why would the idea of the crucified Messiah be shocking to Peter and the other disciples?

Have you ever questioned something difficult in the Bible? How should you deal with your questions about God and His ways?





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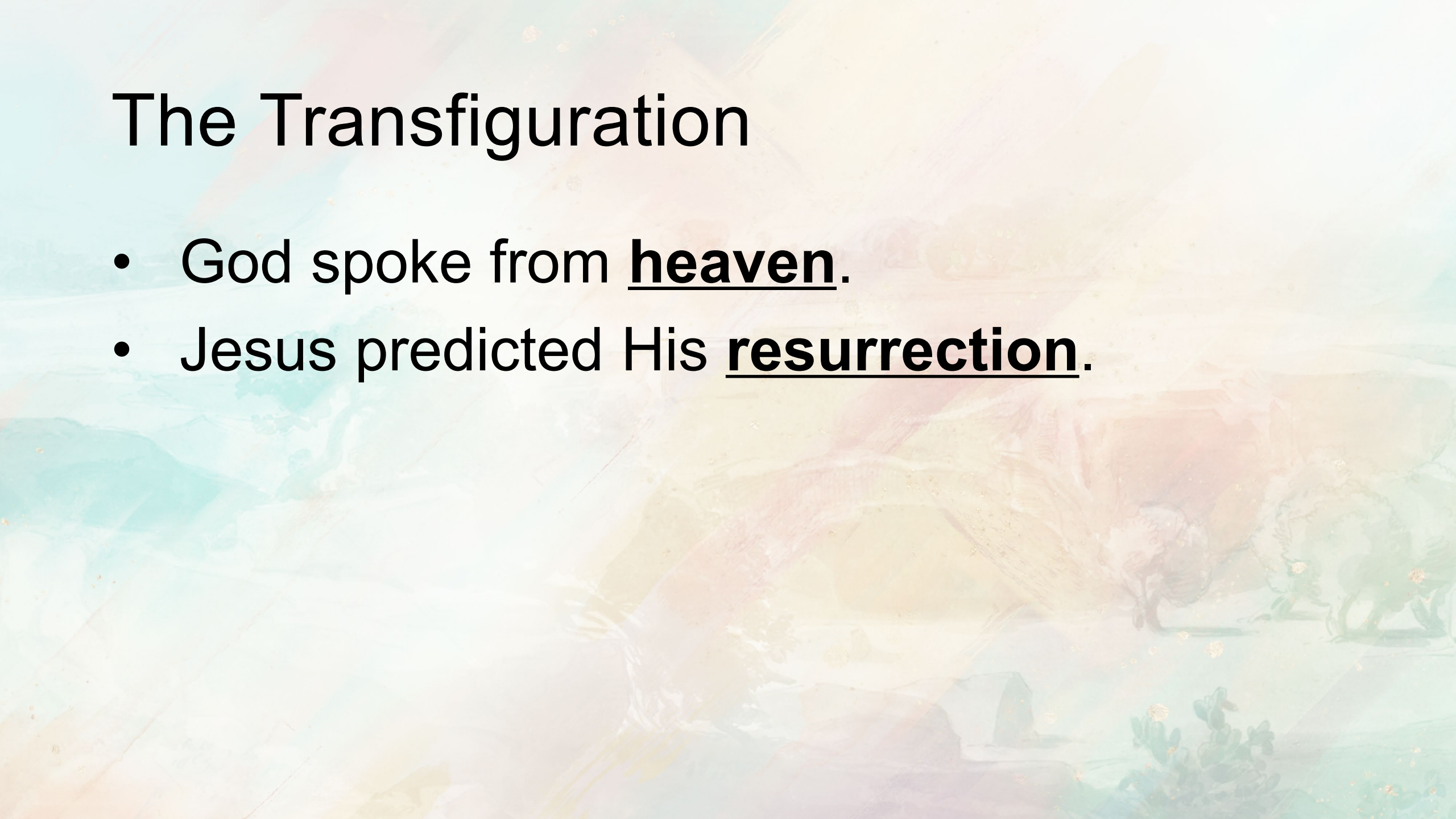
LESSON EIGHT

Traveling Toward Jerusalem

Mark 9:1–10:52

The Transfiguration

- God spoke from heaven.
- Jesus predicted His resurrection.



Why do you think Jesus told His disciples not to discuss the transfiguration?



A Demon-Possessed Boy



Do you think the boy's father believed Jesus could cast out the demon, or did he have doubts?



The Rich Young Man

- The rich man asked Jesus how to obtain **eternal life**.
- The rich man did not like Jesus' **answer**.
- Jesus demanded that His disciples put Him **first**.

Why do you think the rich man asked Jesus this question?



Do you think the rich man was as righteous
as he thought?



The Request of James and John

- James and John asked for a special position of honor in God's kingdom.
- James and John did not understand that Jesus was about to suffer.



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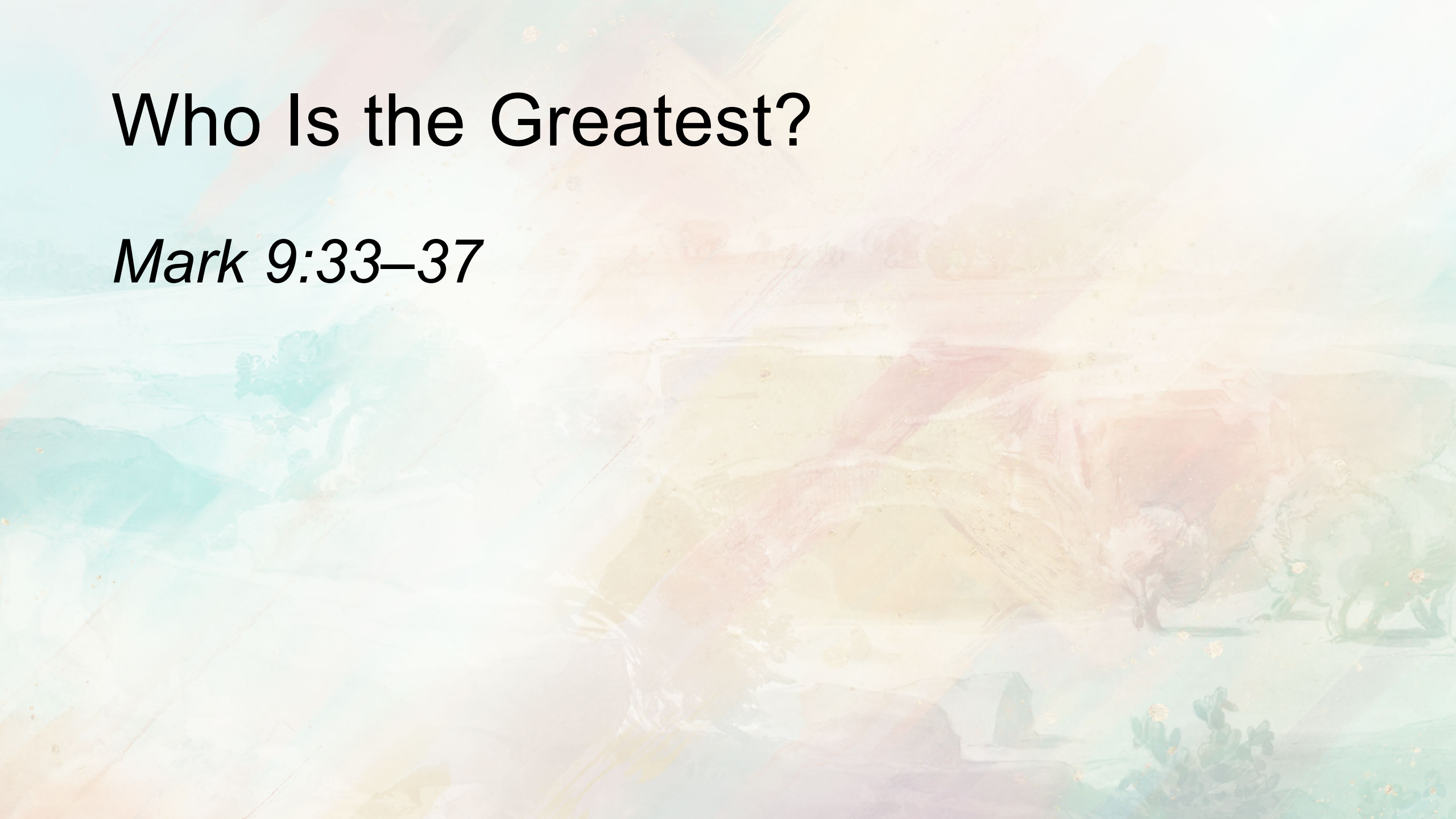
LESSON NINE

Lessons on Discipleship

Matthew 18:1–17; Mark 9–10

Who Is the Greatest?

Mark 9:33–37



What are some other ways a child is a good illustration of humility?



Do Christian young people—or adults—worry too much about rank and status today?



Dealing with Temptation

Matthew 18:7–14



List the five main temptations that teens face today, and describe the situations that expose them to these temptations. How can you best resist these temptations?



How can entertainment become a temptation, and what changes might be necessary to avoid its temptations?



Responding When Someone Sins Against You

- Confront the person **privately**.
- If they don't listen to you, take one or two other **Christians** for a second meeting.
- If they still don't listen to the group, address the sin **publicly**.
- If they still don't listen, **avoid** them.

How can we help one another see faults
without being judgmental?



Peter's Question About Forgiveness

- Peter thought there was a **limit** to forgiving others.
- Jesus taught that we must **always** forgive others.
- Jesus illustrated His point with a **parable** about an unforgiving servant.

How will this kind of grace, mercy, and forgiveness affect a community?

Share a time you experienced forgiveness or observed an example.





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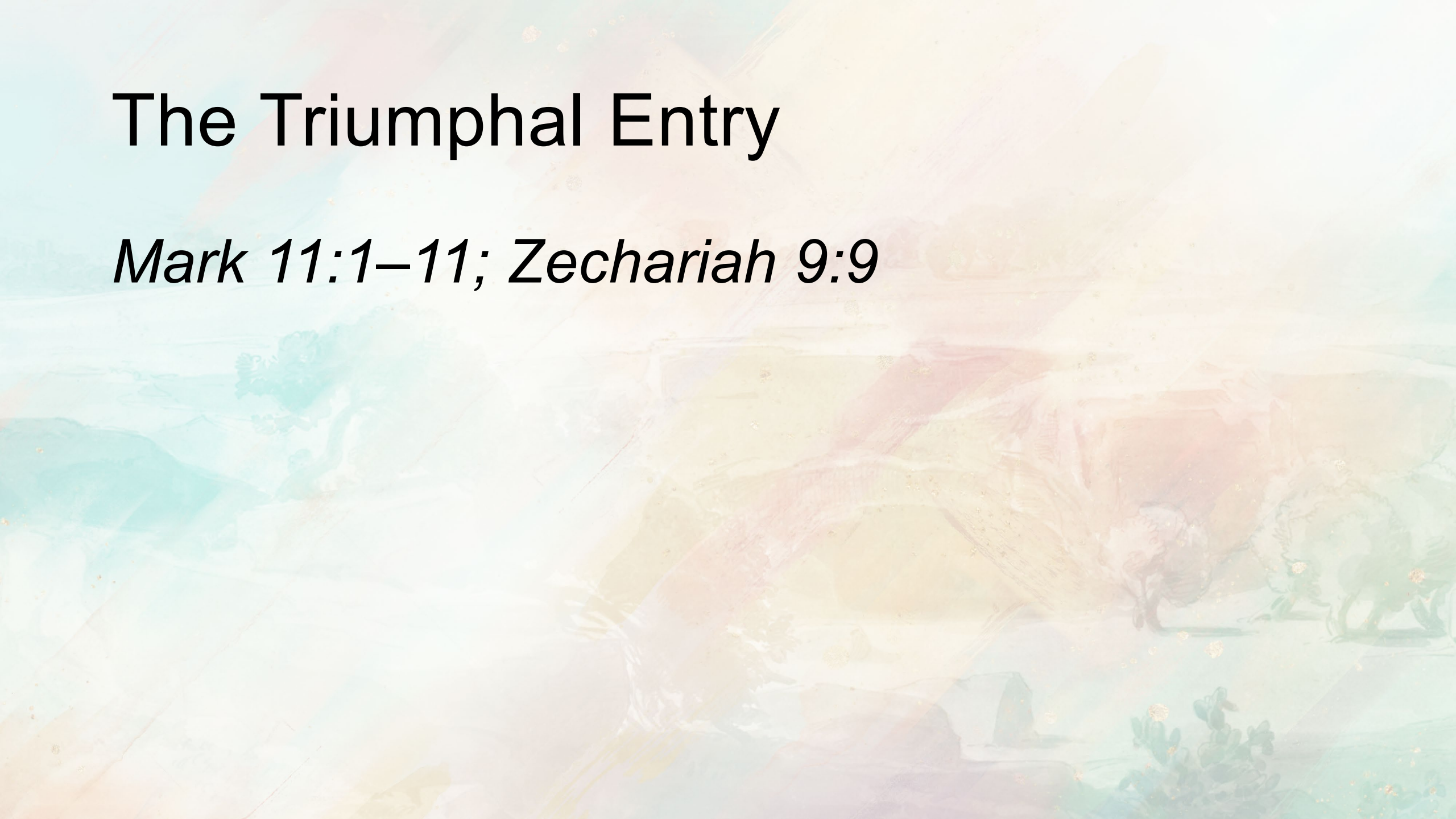
LESSON TEN

Teaching in the Temple

Mark 11–12

The Triumphal Entry

Mark 11:1–11; Zechariah 9:9



What does the crowd's reaction tell you about who they thought Jesus was?



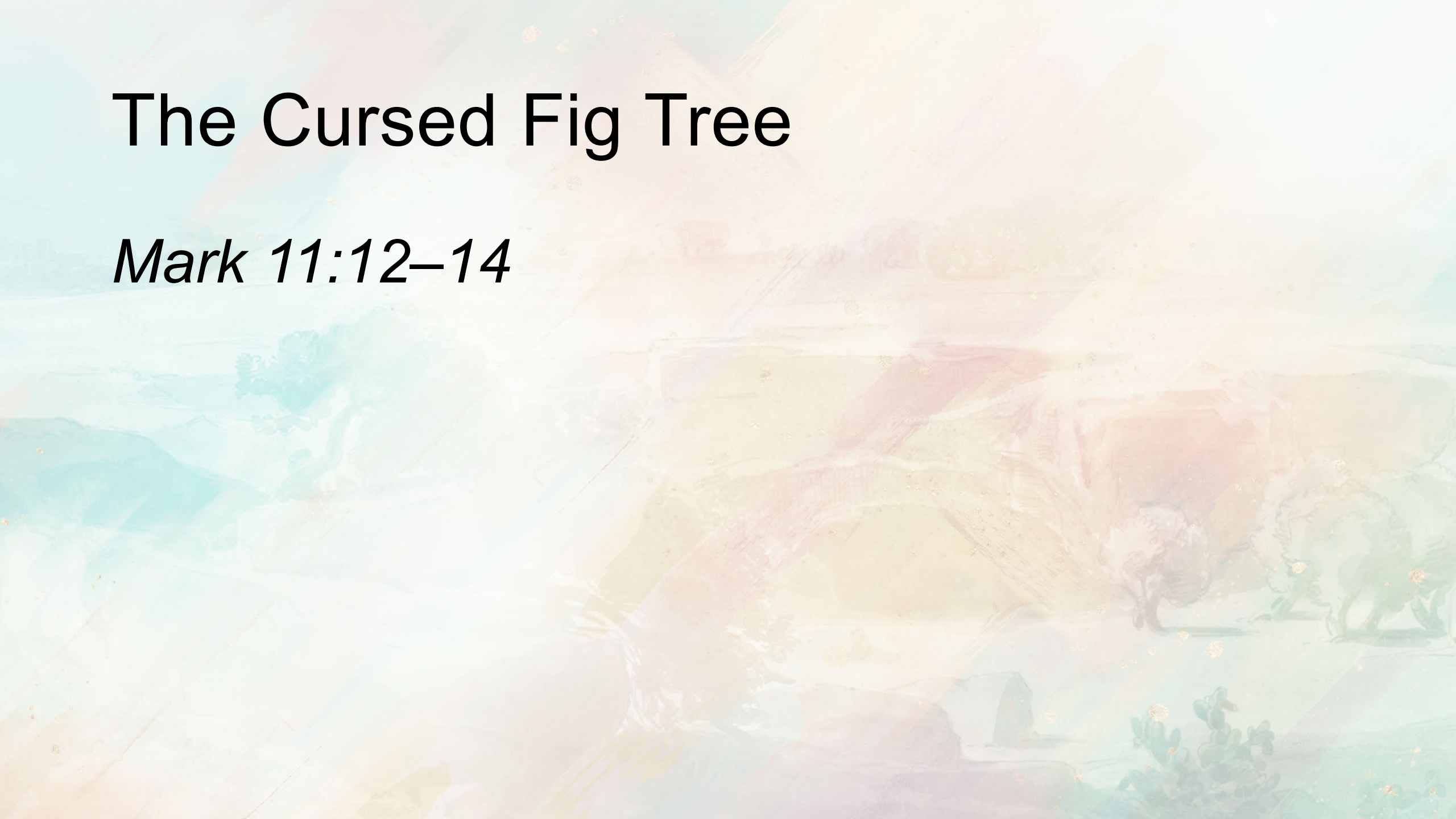
Remember that Peter rebuked Jesus when He predicted His murder after His arrival in Jerusalem.

What do you think Peter and the other disciples thought about the Triumphal Entry?



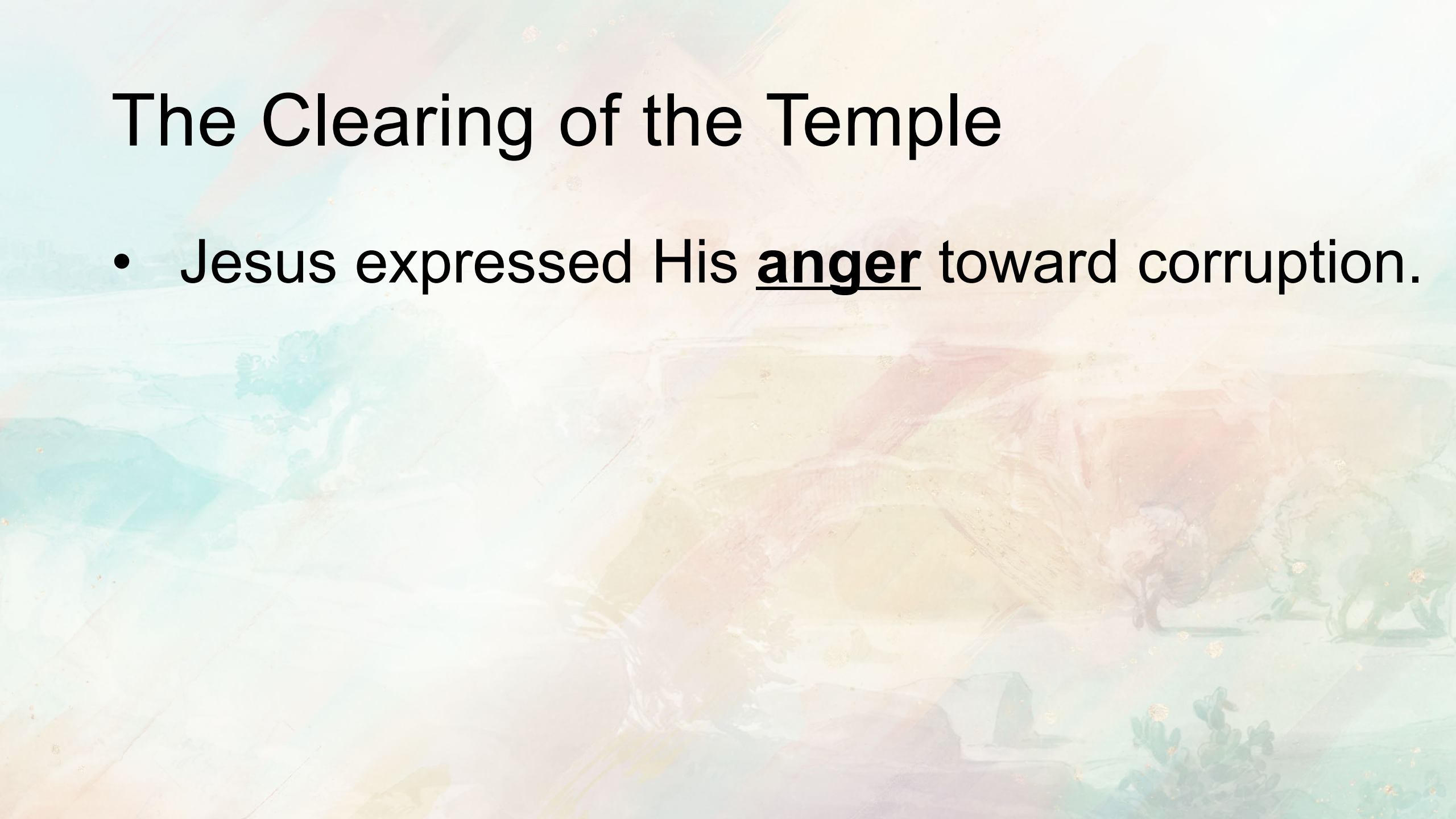
The Cursed Fig Tree

Mark 11:12–14



The Clearing of the Temple

- Jesus expressed His anger toward corruption.



Why was Jesus so upset by the sellers and money changers in the Temple if selling sacrifices was not necessarily forbidden in the Law and if it provided a helpful service?



The Clearing of the Temple

- Jesus expressed His anger toward corruption.
- Jesus demonstrated that He was a prophet.

A Challenge to Jesus' Authority

- Jesus received His authority from God the Father.
- Jesus used a parable to illustrate the unbelief of the religious leaders.

In the parable, who did the two sons represent?
How do the two sons illustrate various
responses to Jesus' preaching in the Gospels?



A Question about Taxes

- Should the Jews pay taxes to Rome?
- Jesus taught the people to pay what they owe to both the government and God.

What do you think it means to render—or give—to God the things that are God's?

Was Jesus only talking about money here?



The Parable of the Tenants

- The tenants rejected the vineyard owner's servants.
- The tenants rejected the vineyard owner's son.
- The religious leaders had rejected God's prophets and Son.

At the end of the parable, some people in the audience wanted to arrest Jesus.

What does this parable teach us about the Jewish leaders who wanted to arrest Jesus?



The Widow's Offering

- A poor widow gave a **small** amount of money to God.
- The widow's small gift was **great** in God's eyes.

How did Jesus' words about the widow serve as a final condemnation of the religious leaders of His day?

What important lessons can we learn about the value of our money today?





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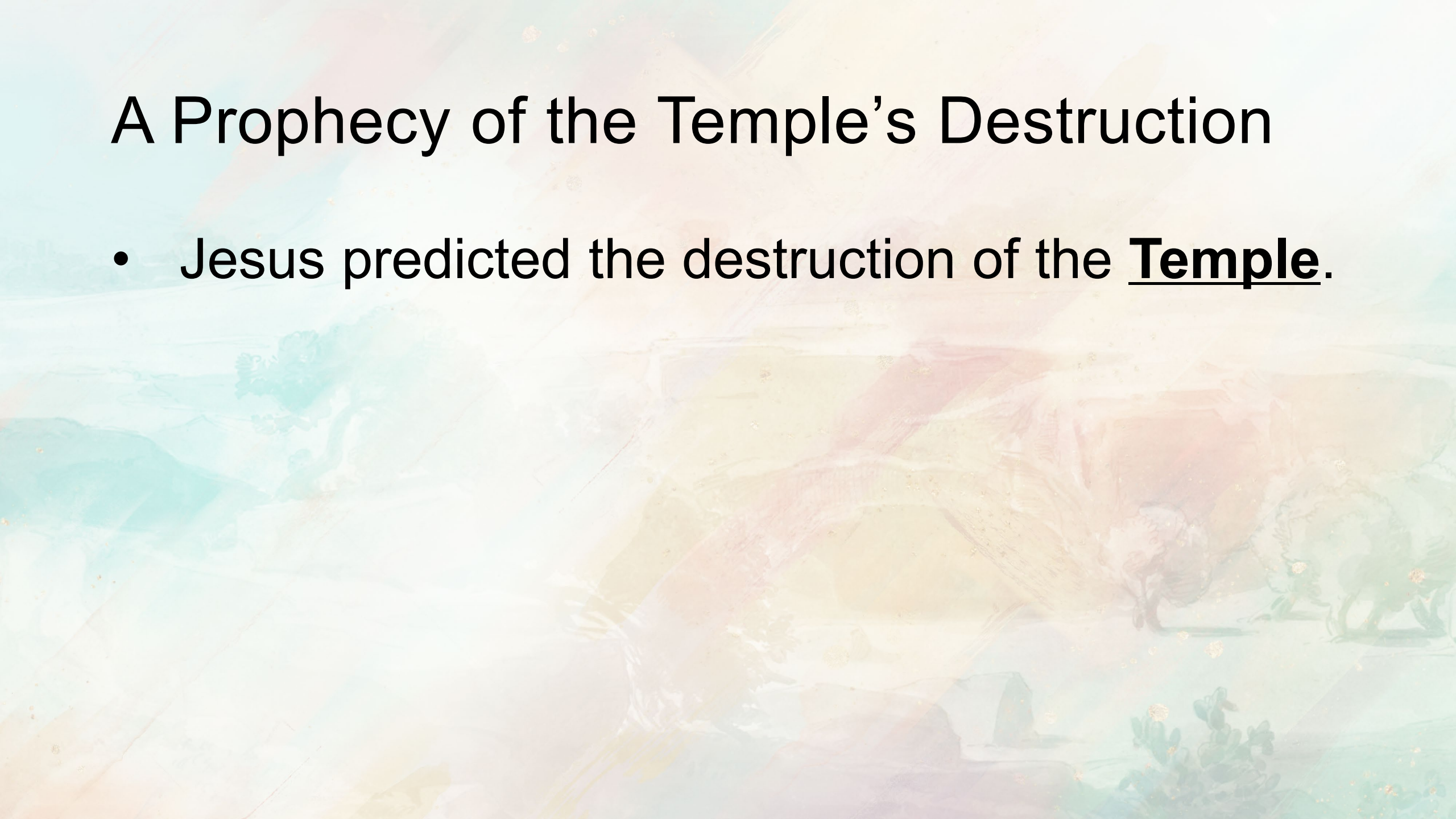
LESSON ELEVEN

The Olivet Discourse

Mark 13

A Prophecy of the Temple's Destruction

- Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple.



How would the original disciples have understood Jesus' prediction that the Temple would be destroyed?



A Prophecy of the Temple's Destruction

- Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple.
- Jesus predicted future suffering for His disciples.

What are some events people claim fulfill prophecy today?



A Prophecy of the Temple's Destruction

- Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple.
- Jesus predicted future suffering for His disciples.
- Jesus predicted a sign of His approaching return.

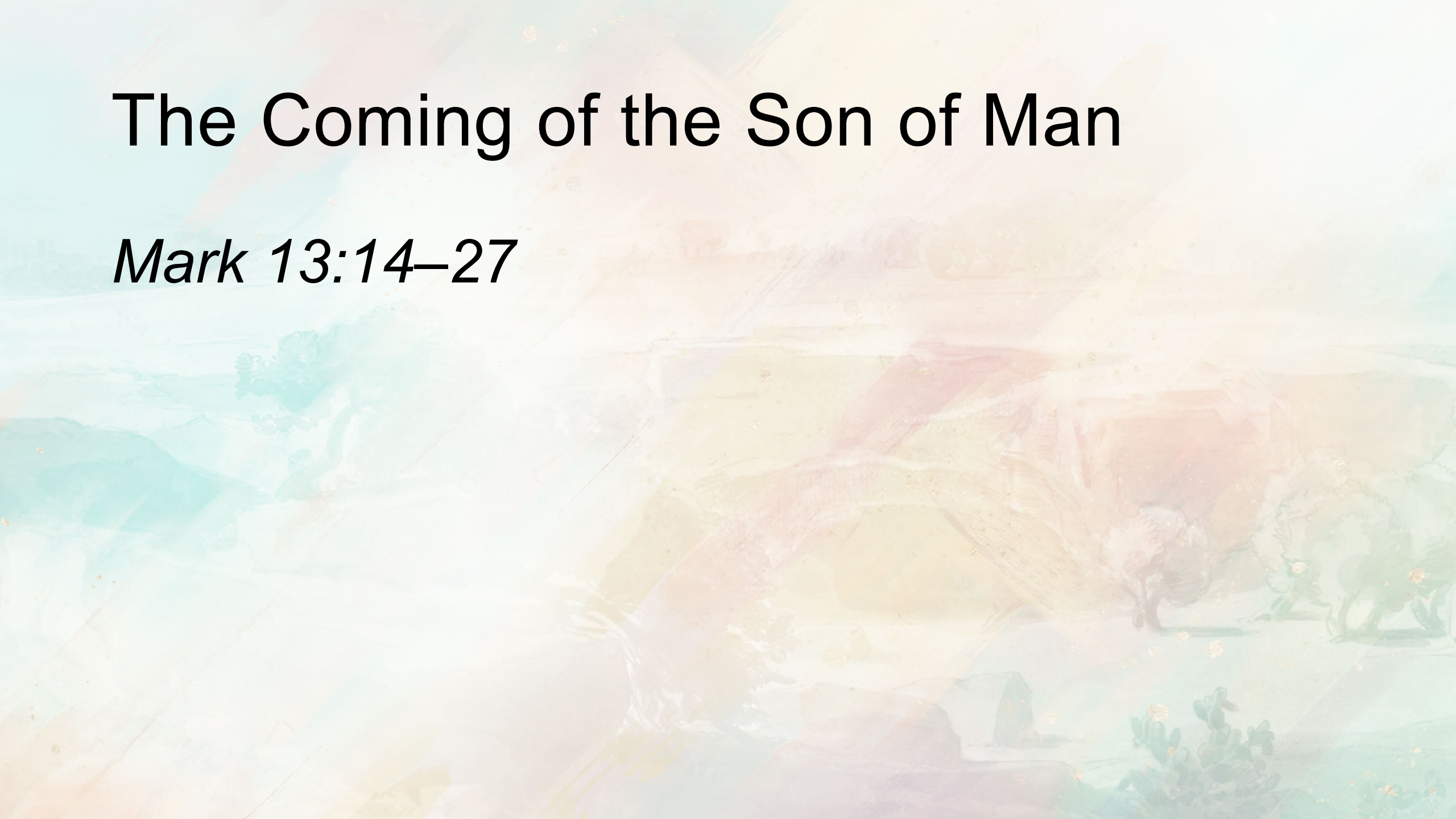
What events do people associate with the signs of the end of the world?

According to Jesus, are these really signs?



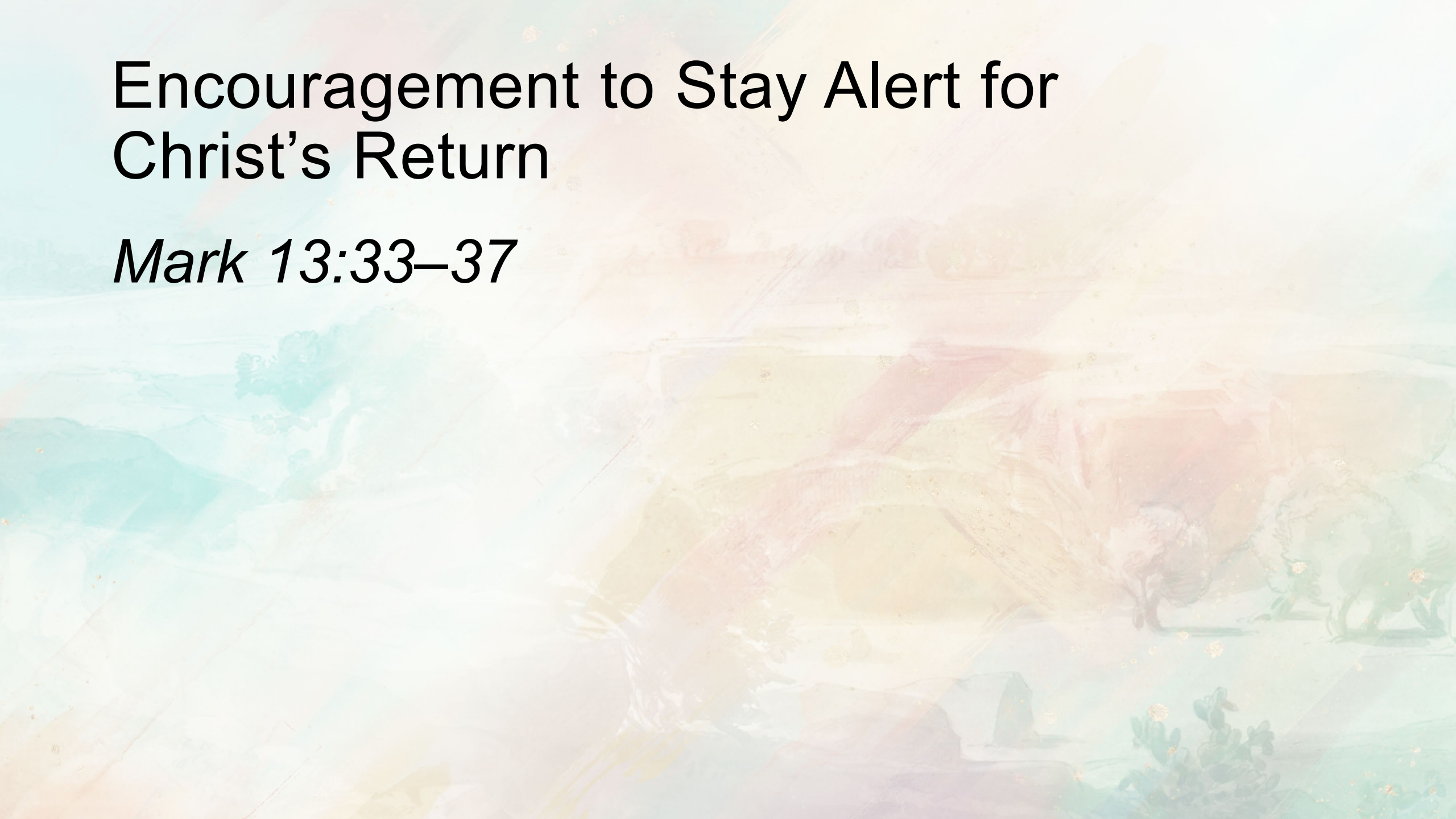
The Coming of the Son of Man

Mark 13:14–27



Encouragement to Stay Alert for Christ's Return

Mark 13:33–37



If it is impossible to know when the Second Coming of Christ will happen, why do people keep trying to calculate the date?



Parables about Readiness and Delay

- Wise disciples should be ready for Christ to return.
- Wise disciples should be prepared to wait for Christ's return.
- Wise disciples invest their resources while they wait for Christ's return.

How can you invest what you have to serve God?





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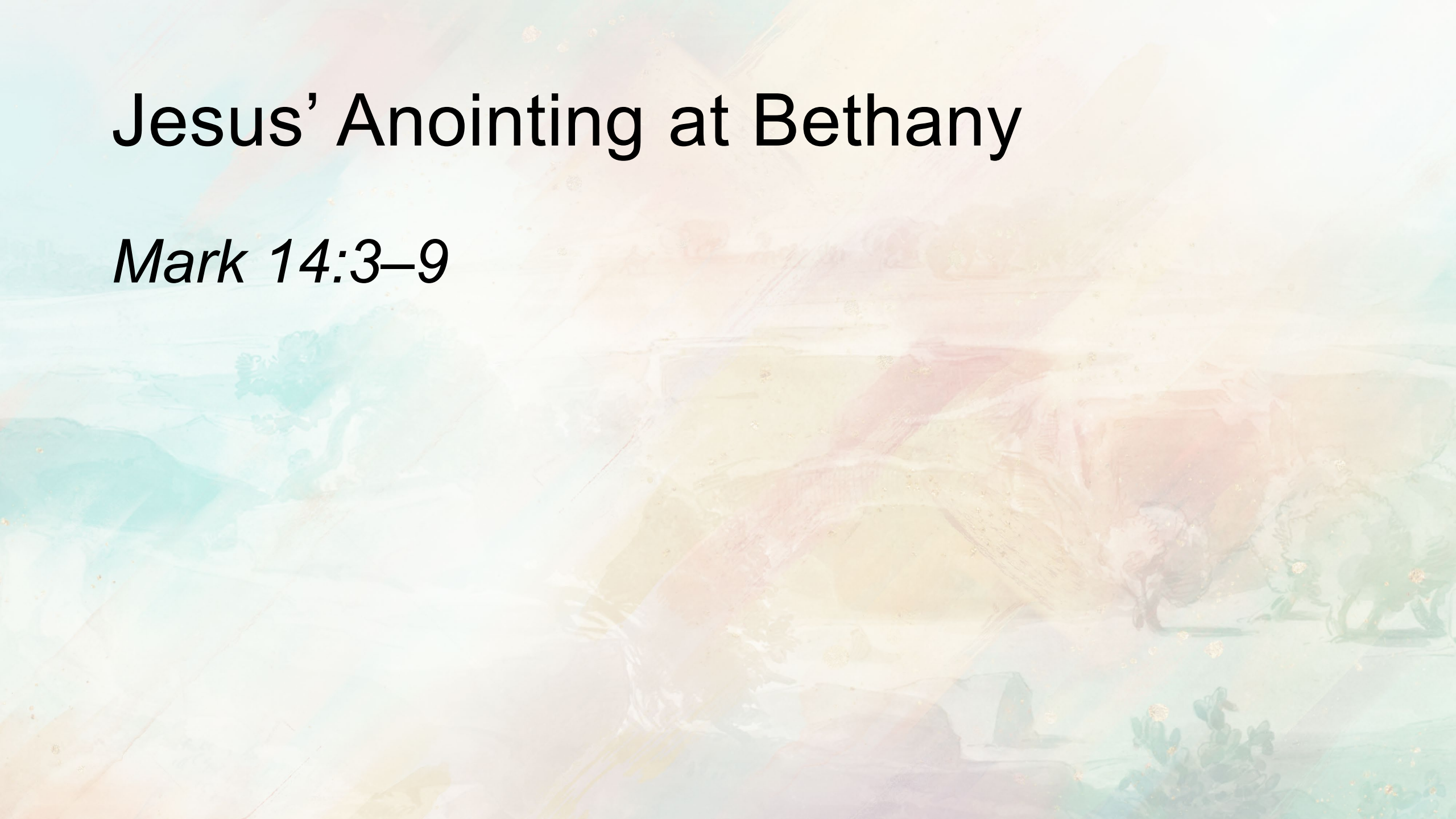
LESSON TWELVE

The Crucifixion of Jesus

Matthew 26–27; Mark 14–15

Jesus' Anointing at Bethany

Mark 14:3–9



The Last Supper

Matthew 26:25; Zechariah 13:7



Jesus clearly predicted His own resurrection.
How could the disciples not understand what
Jesus was saying?

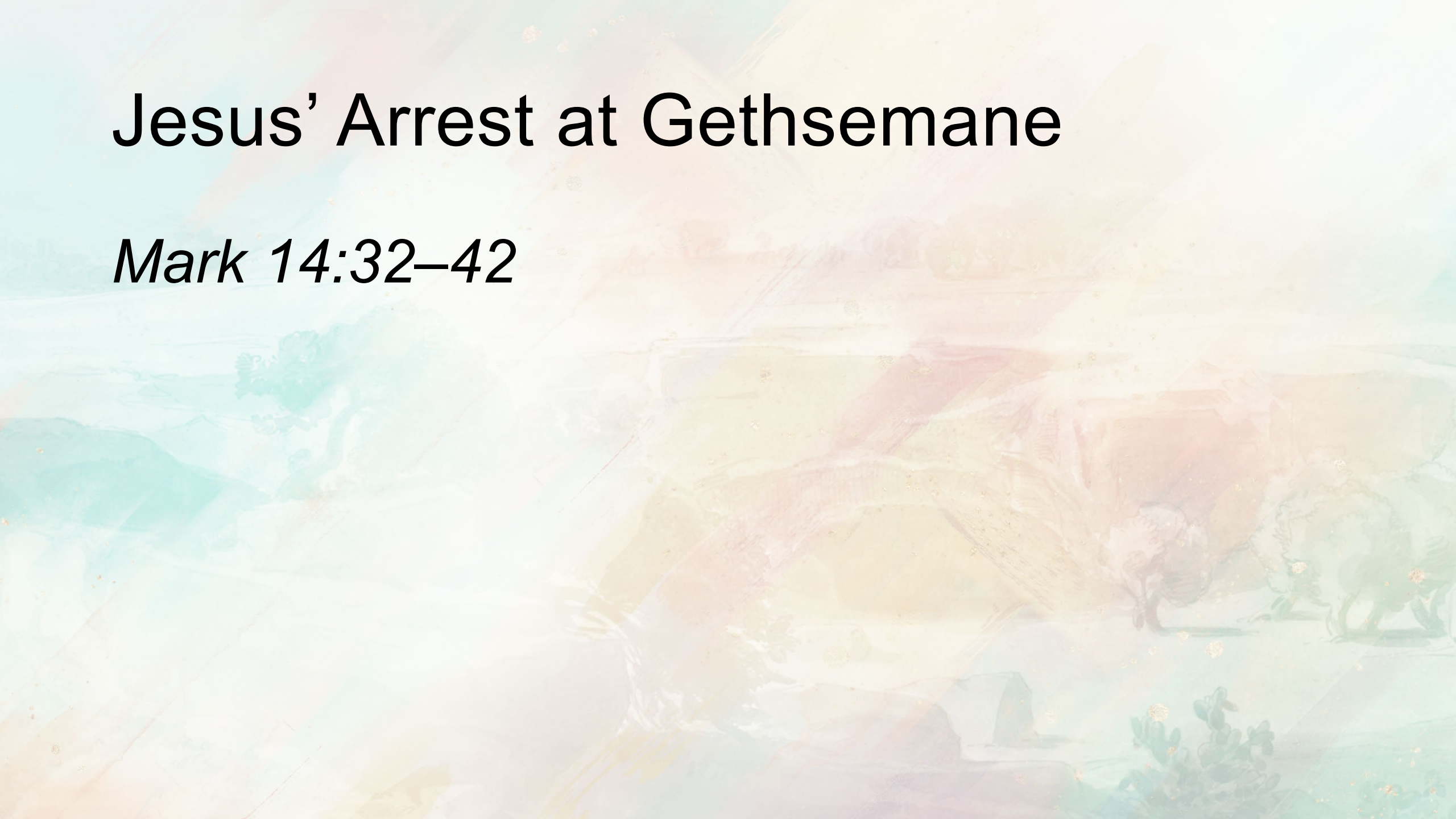


The Last Supper

- Jesus observed the Jewish holiday of **Passover**.
- Christians follow Scripture's **command** to observe the Lord's Supper.

Jesus' Arrest at Gethsemane

Mark 14:32–42



Why is it sometimes hardest to pray when prayer is most needed?

How does God expect us to pray when we're too tired or distraught or depressed?



Jesus' Trials

Mark 14:53–65



Peter's Denials

Mark 14:68



How would you evaluate Peter in these stories?
Are you ever tempted to hide the fact that you
are a Christian?



Jesus' Crucifixion

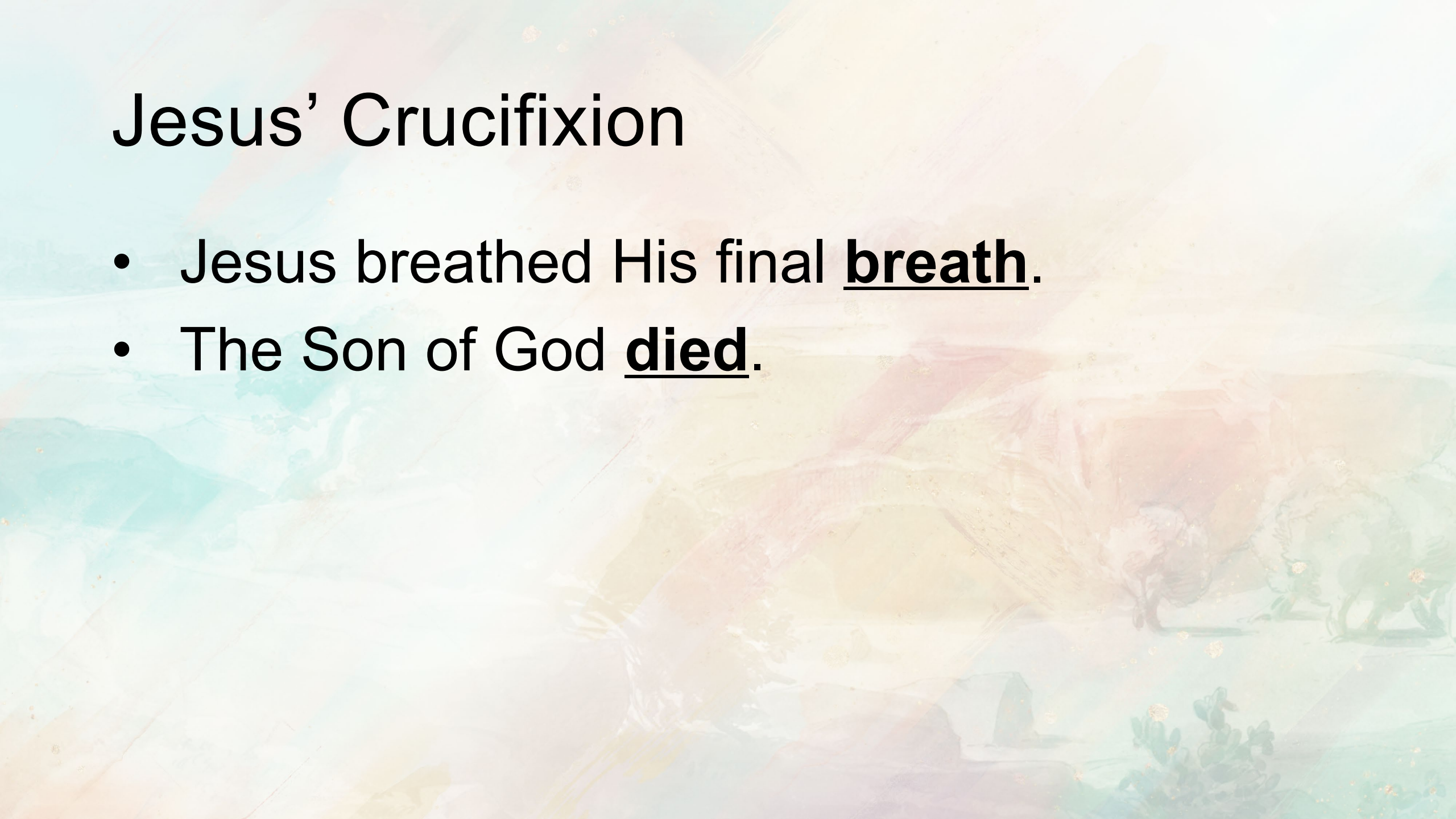
- The Roman soldiers mocked Jesus.
- Jesus could not carry His own cross.
- Jesus demonstrated His willingness to suffer and die on the cross.
- Jesus was crucified.

Jesus' Crucifixion

- The people mocked Jesus.
- Two criminals were crucified with Jesus.
- Jesus' crucifixion was accompanied by three hours of darkness.
- The Temple curtain was torn to show that people now have access to God.

Jesus' Crucifixion

- Jesus breathed His final **breath**.
- The Son of God **died**.





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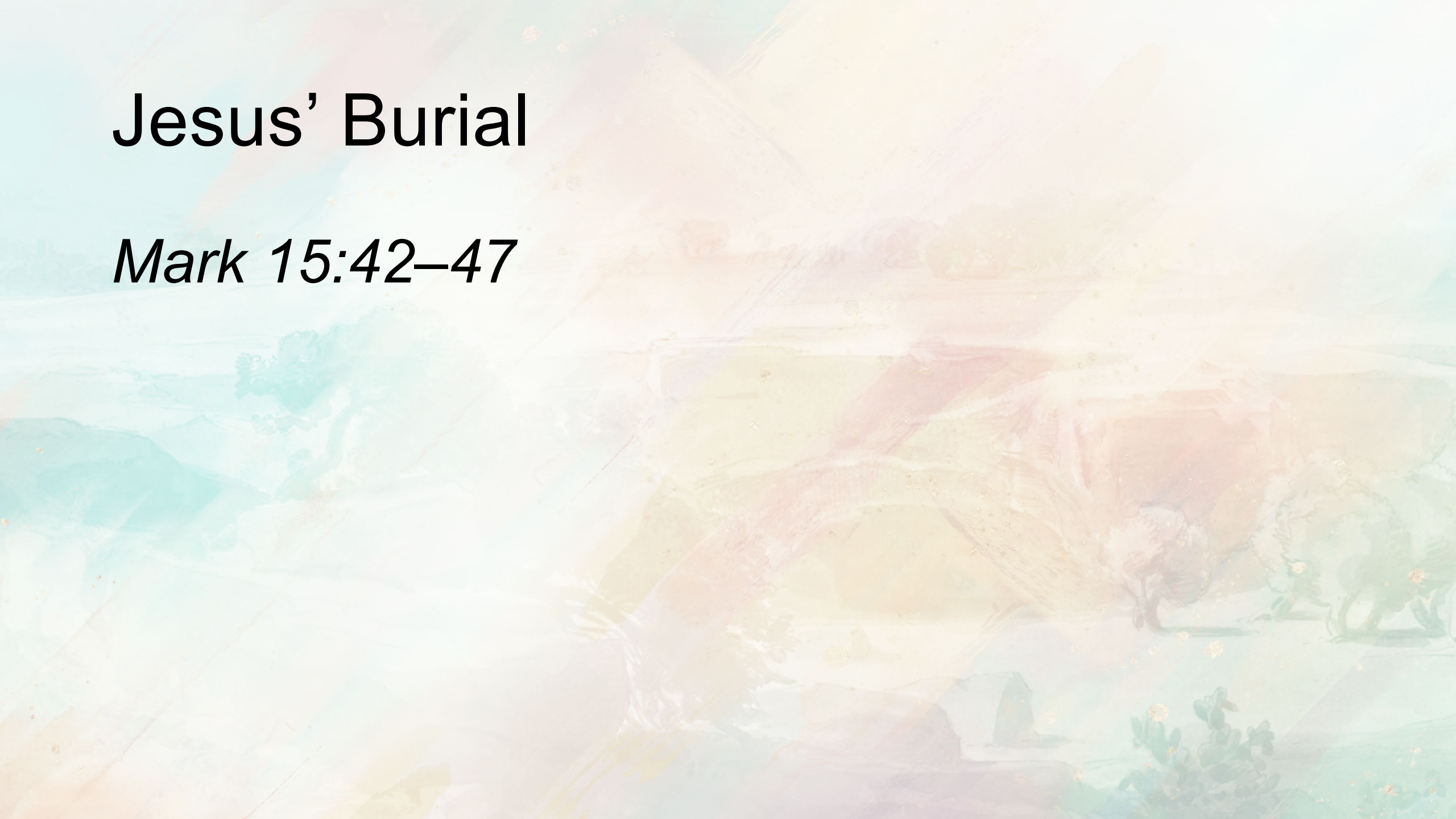
LESSON THIRTEEN

The Resurrection of Jesus

Matthew 28; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24; John 20–21

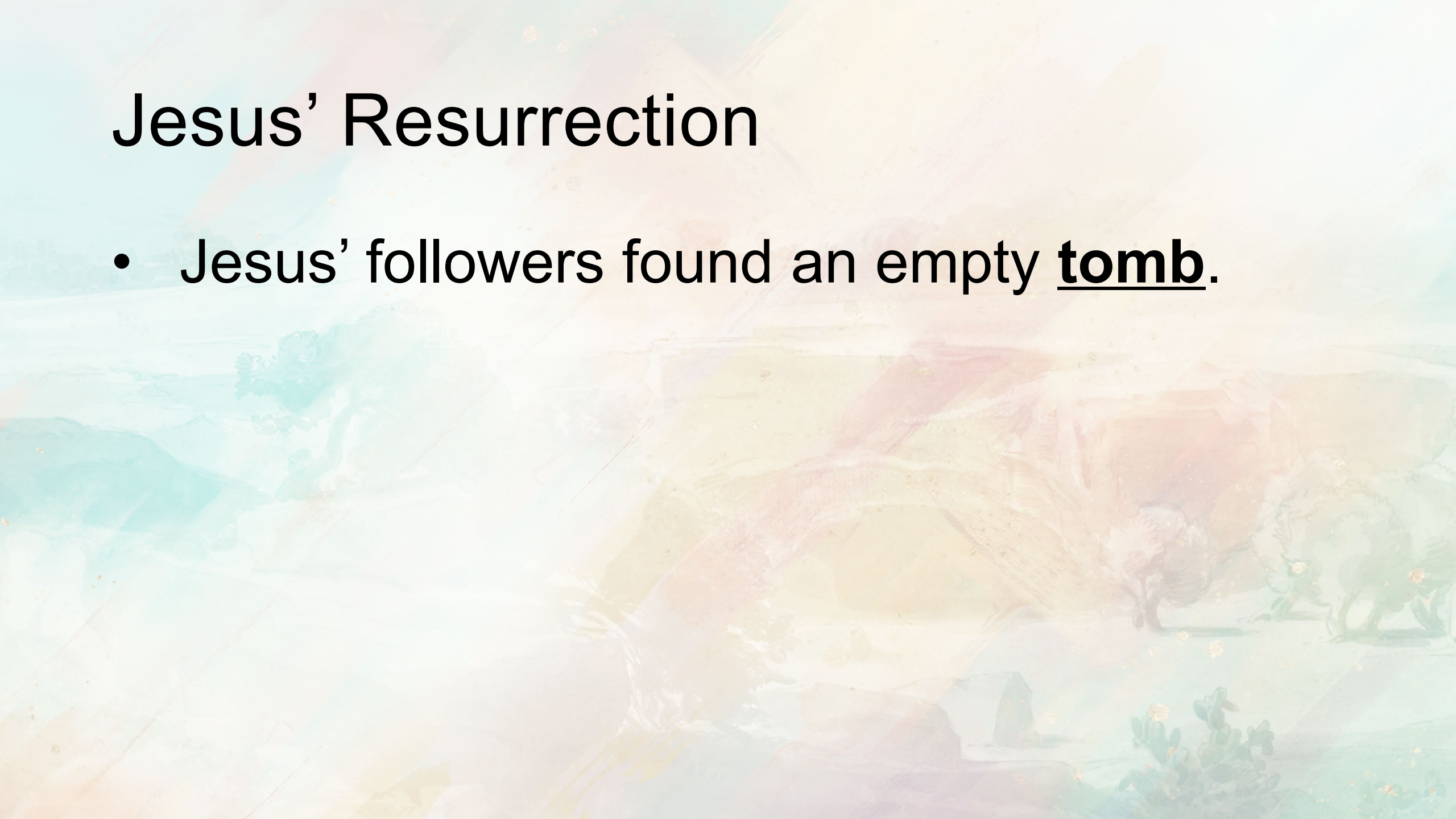
Jesus' Burial

Mark 15:42–47



Jesus' Resurrection

- Jesus' followers found an empty **tomb**.

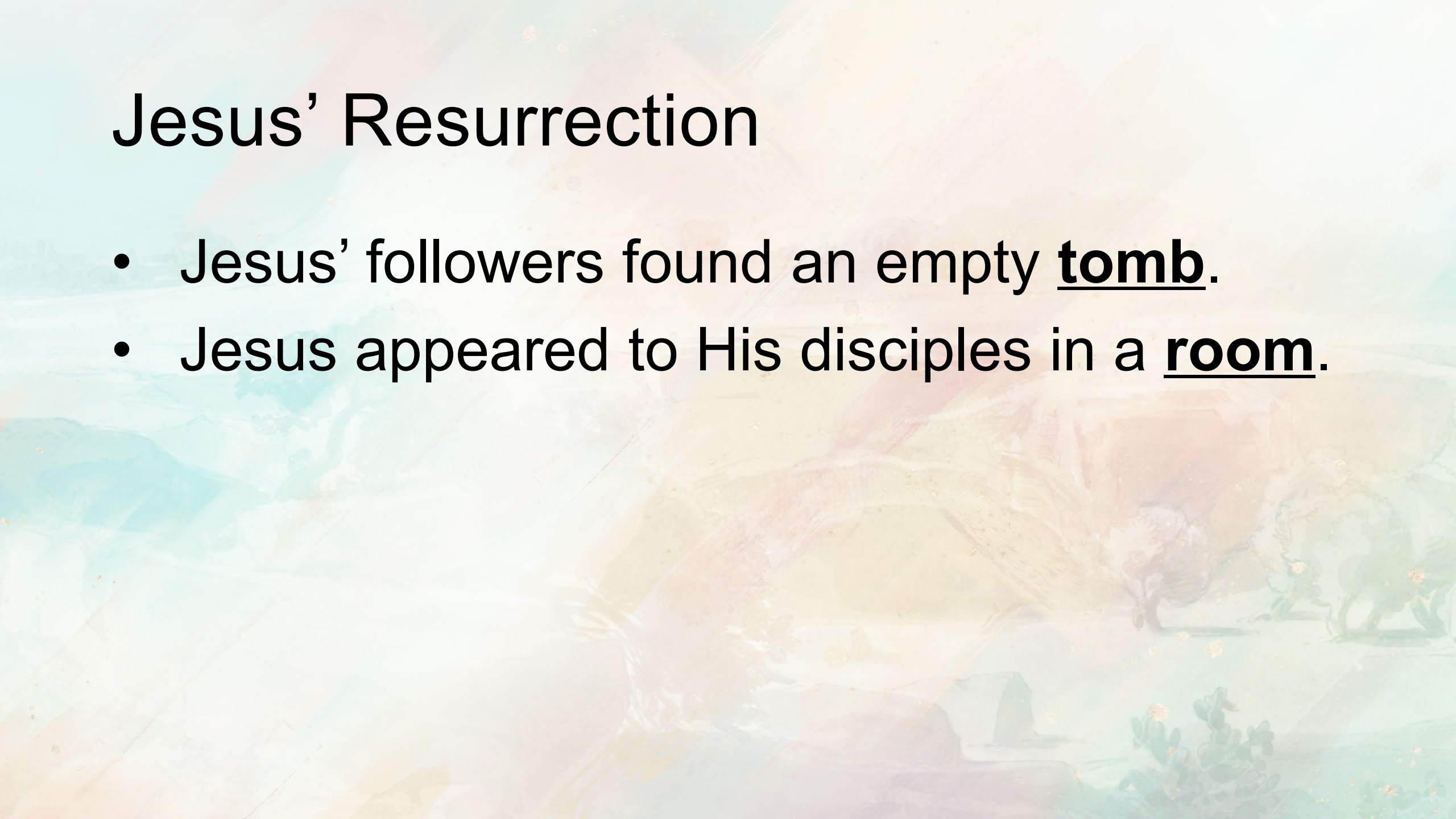


Why do you think God wanted women to be the first witnesses of the resurrection?



Jesus' Resurrection

- Jesus' followers found an empty **tomb**.
- Jesus appeared to His disciples in a **room**.



Why do you think Thomas refused to believe Jesus was alive until he touched Jesus' wounds?



Jesus' Resurrection

- Jesus' followers found an empty **tomb**.
- Jesus appeared to His disciples in a **room**.
- Jesus appeared to two disciples on the **road** to Emmaus.

Jesus' Resurrection

- Jesus appeared to His **disciples** at the Sea of Galilee.
- Jesus commissioned His disciples to make more **disciples**.

When did you first hear about the Great Commission?

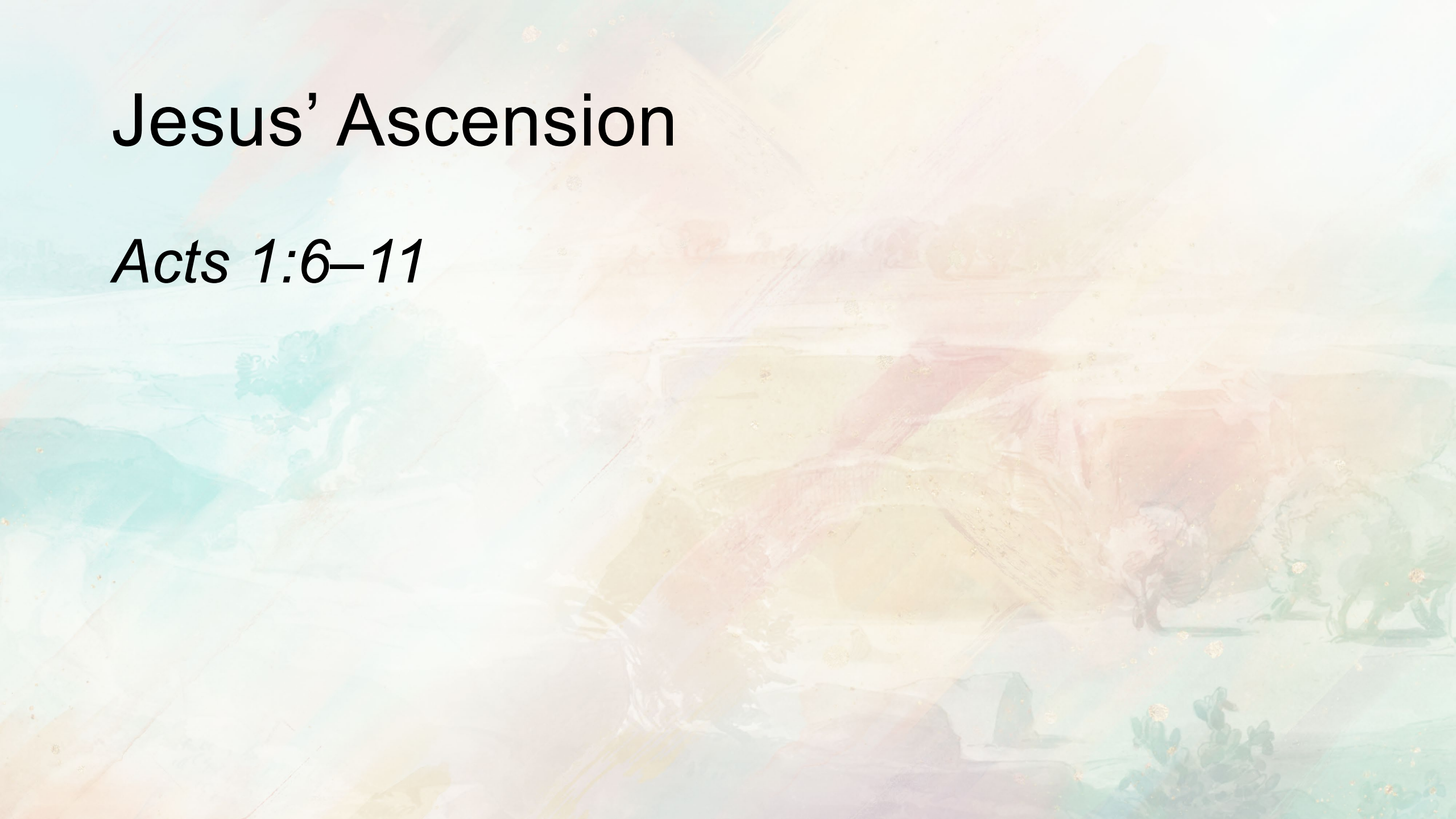
Did you understand it fully then, and did you desire to obey it with all your heart?

If not, what more have you learned since then, and do you have some commitments to make?



Jesus' Ascension

Acts 1:6–11





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