
STEP INTO
REVELATION


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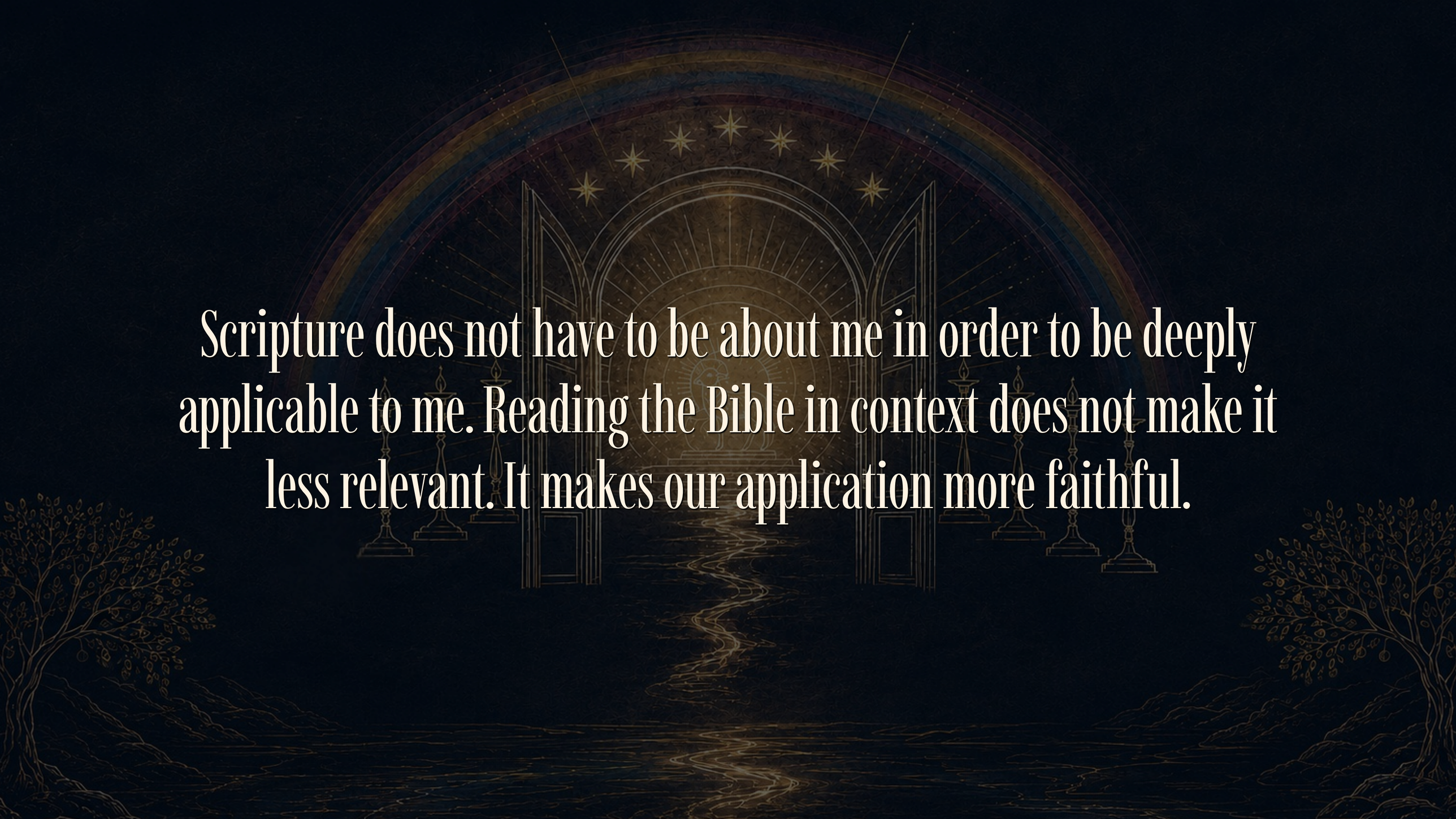
WEEK TWO: LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

REVELATION 1:20

20 The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand
and of the seven golden lampstands is this:
The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the
seven lampstands are the seven churches.


Jesus addresses real churches in real geographical locations
dealing with real circumstances.


Scripture does not have to be about me in order to be deeply applicable to me. Reading the Bible in context does not make it less relevant. It makes our application more faithful.


We first ask what the image communicated to them, and then
we ask what that truth means for us.

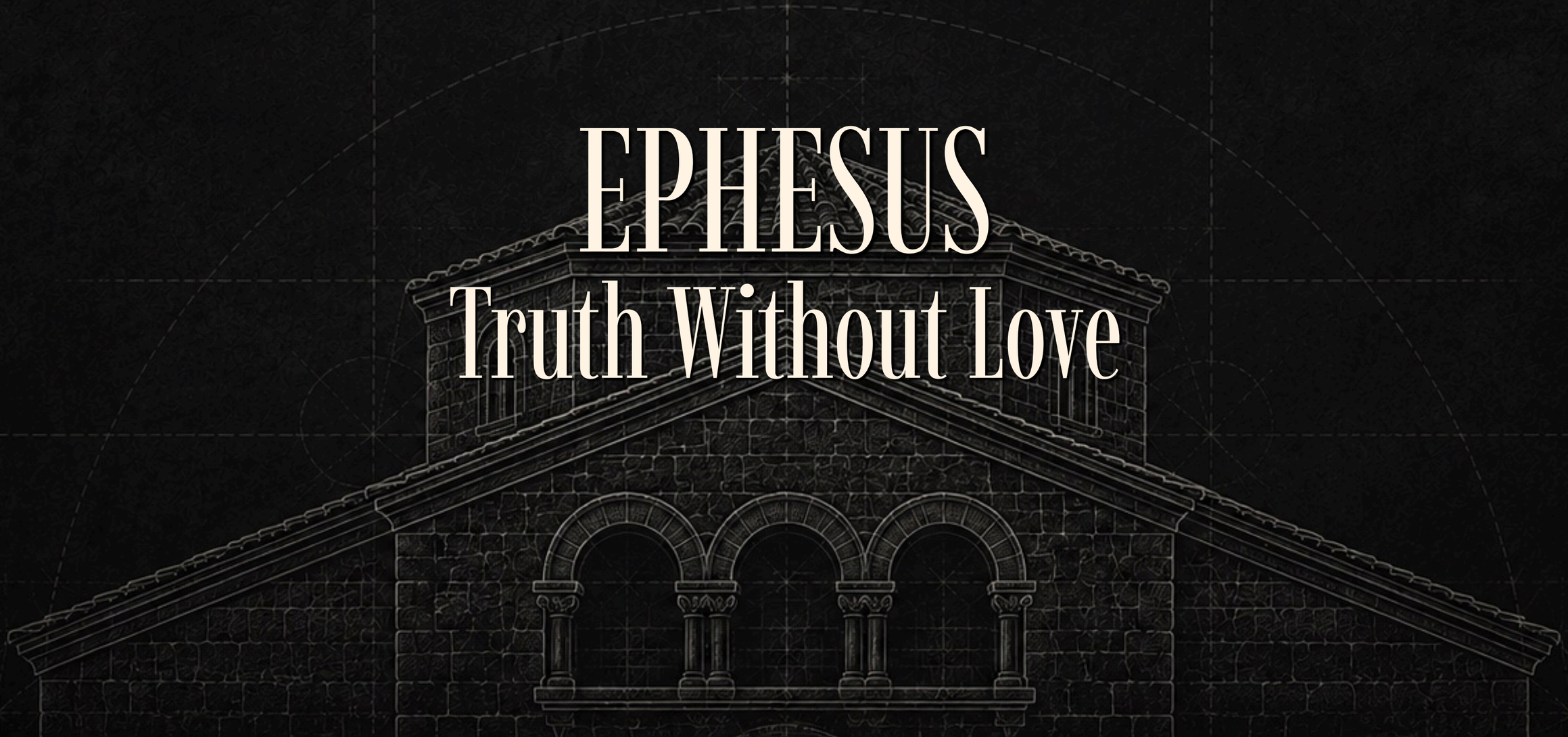
NOTICE THE PATTERN

1. Jesus identifies Himself.
2. He tells the church what He knows about them.
3. He gives commendation where it is deserved, correction where it is needed.
4. He warns of consequences if they refuse to repent
5. He promises reward to those who overcome.


Jesus cares deeply about the local church.

EPHESUS

Truth Without Love



REVELATION 2:1-3

1 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who
holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden
lampstands. 2 I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know
that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be
apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3 You have persevered and have
endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

REVELATION 2:4

4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first.


Right actions can exist without a heart that matches them.

REVELATION 2:5a

5a Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first.


Remember where you started.
Repent of how you've strayed.
Return to your former ways.

REVELATION 2:5b



5b If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

HEBREWS 10:24-25

24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love
and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the
habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as
you see the Day approaching.


The tree of life (Revelation 2:7).

SMYRNA

Poor, Yet Rich



REVELATION 2:8

8 These are the words of him who is the First and the Last,
who died and came to life again.

REVELATION 2:9a

9a I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich!

HEBREWS 10:34

34 You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting posessions.

REVELATION 2:9b

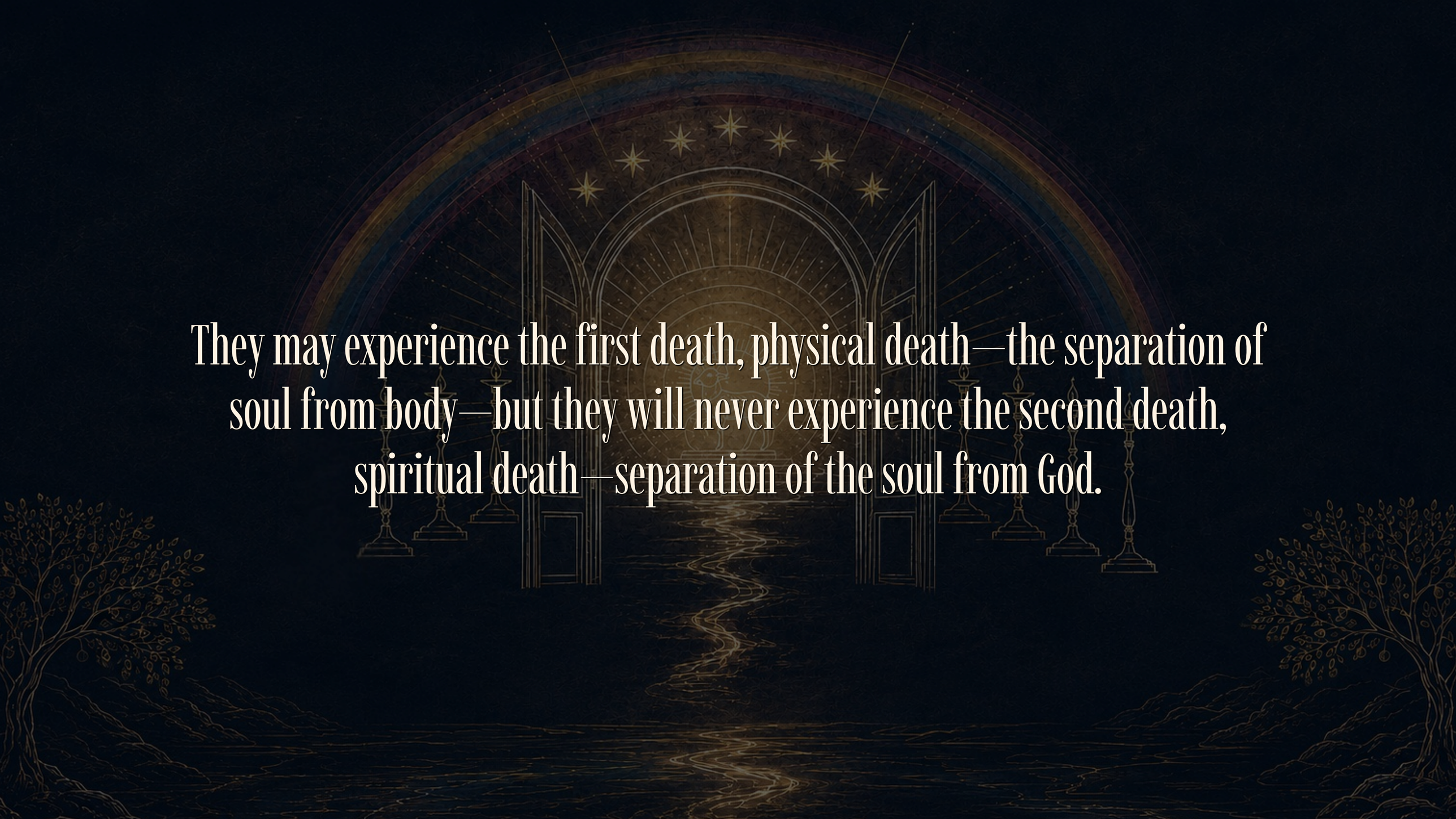
9b I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not,
but are a synagogue of Satan.

REVELATION 2:10

10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown.

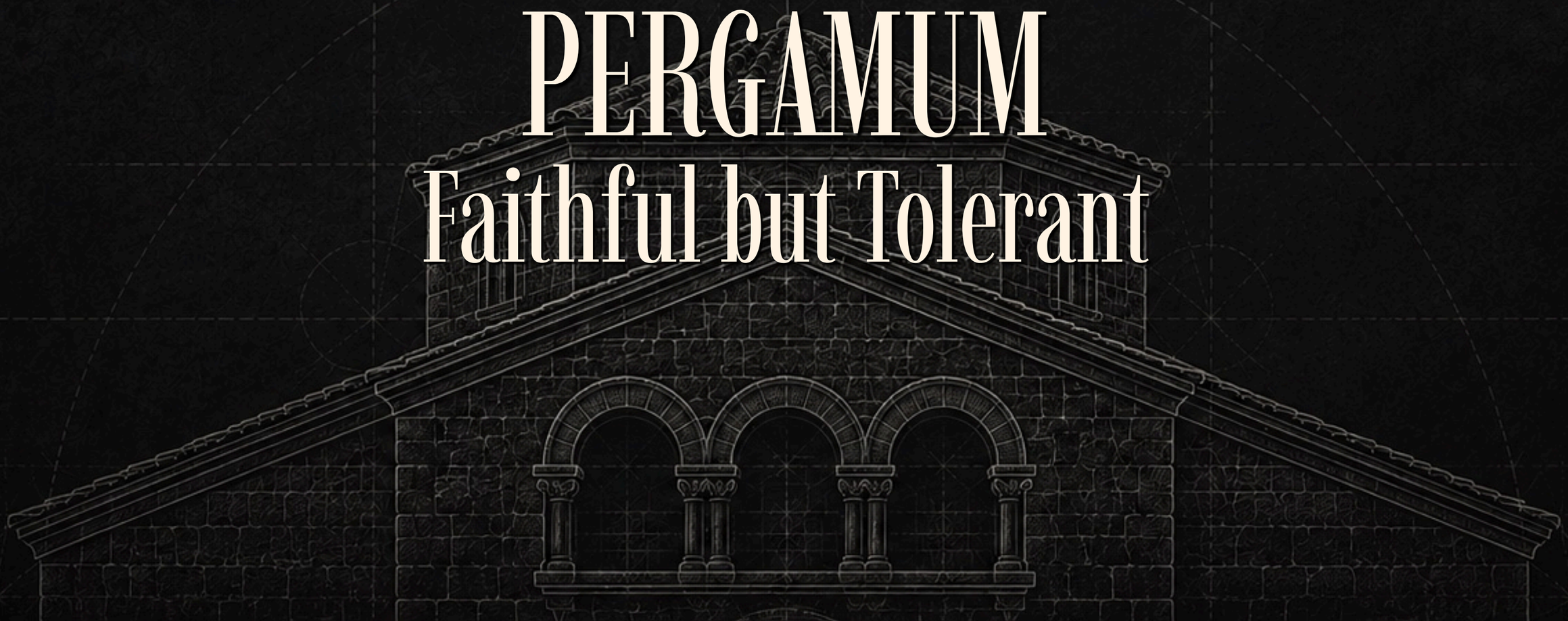
REVELATION 2:11

11 The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.


They may experience the first death, physical death—the separation of soul from body—but they will never experience the second death, spiritual death—separation of the soul from God.

PERGAMUM

Faithful but Tolerant



REVELATION 2:12

12 These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.

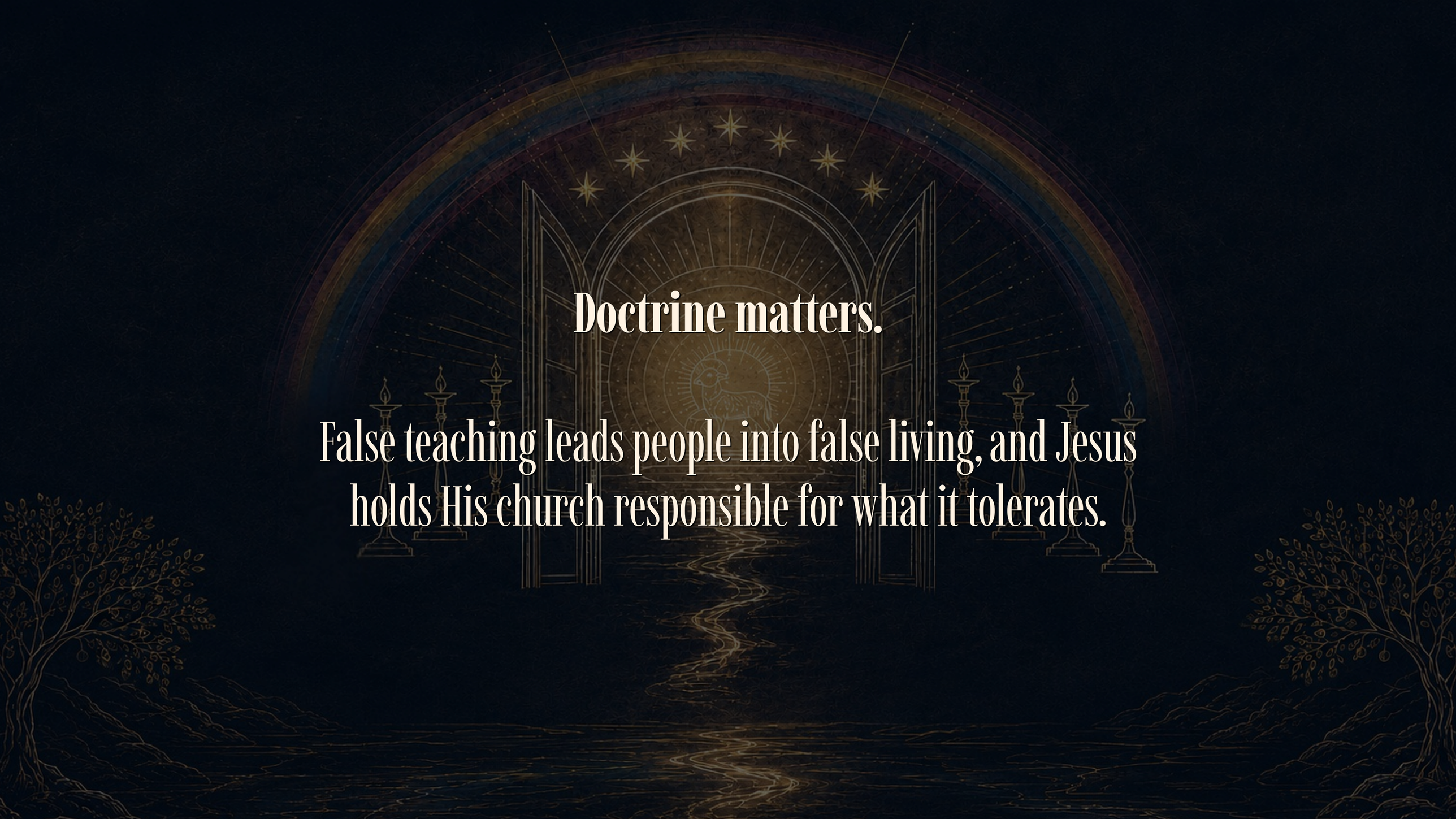
HEBREWS 4:12

12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-
edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and
marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

REVELATION 2:13

13 I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you
remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me,
not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was
put to death in your city—where Satan lives.



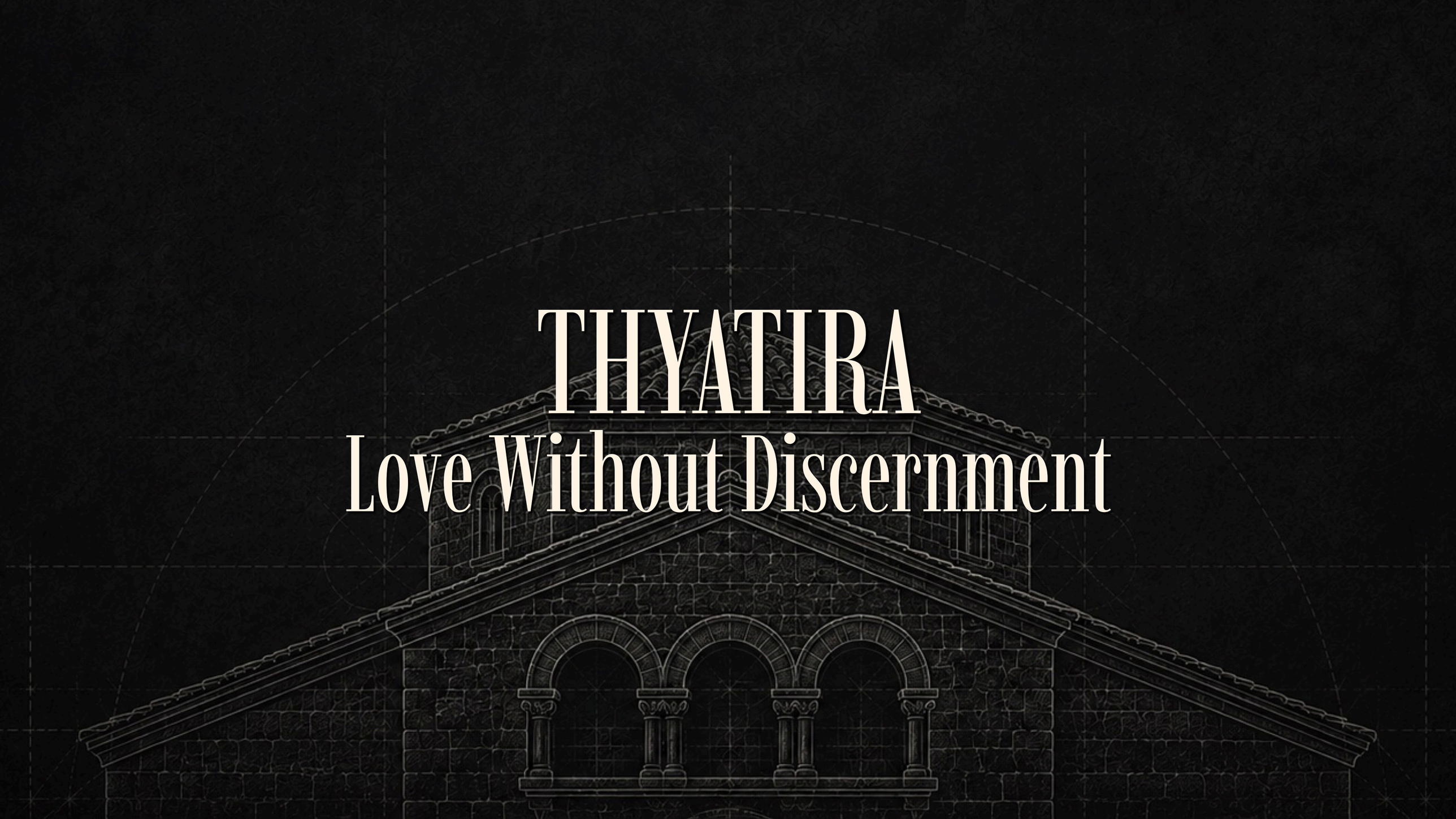


Doctrine matters.

False teaching leads people into false living, and Jesus holds His church responsible for what it tolerates.

THYATIRA

Love Without Discernment



REVELATION 2:19

19 I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.

REVELATION 2:20

20 Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet.


“Satan's so-called deep secrets” (Revelation 2:24).

REVELATION 2:21

21 I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling.


God's patience always precedes his judgment.

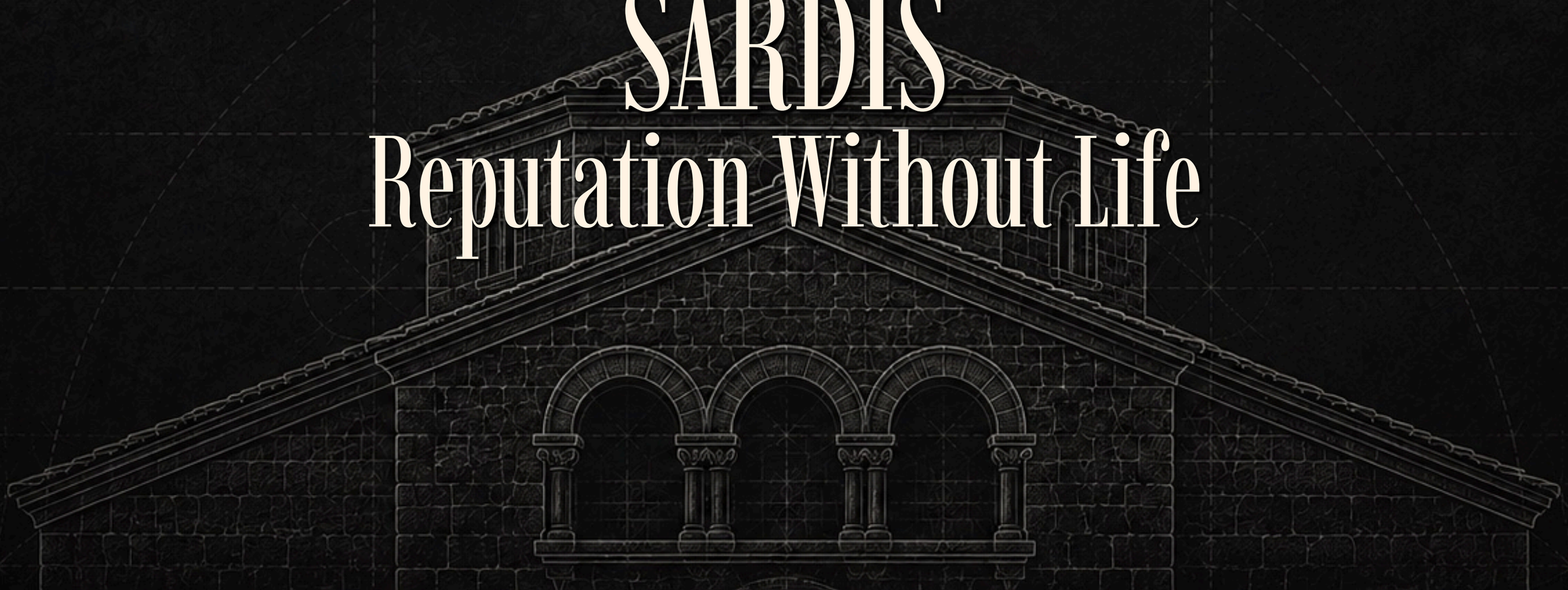
REVELATION 2:26-27

26 To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give
authority over the nations— 27 that one ‘will rule them with an iron
scepter and will dash them to pieces like pottery’ —just as I have
received authority from my Father.

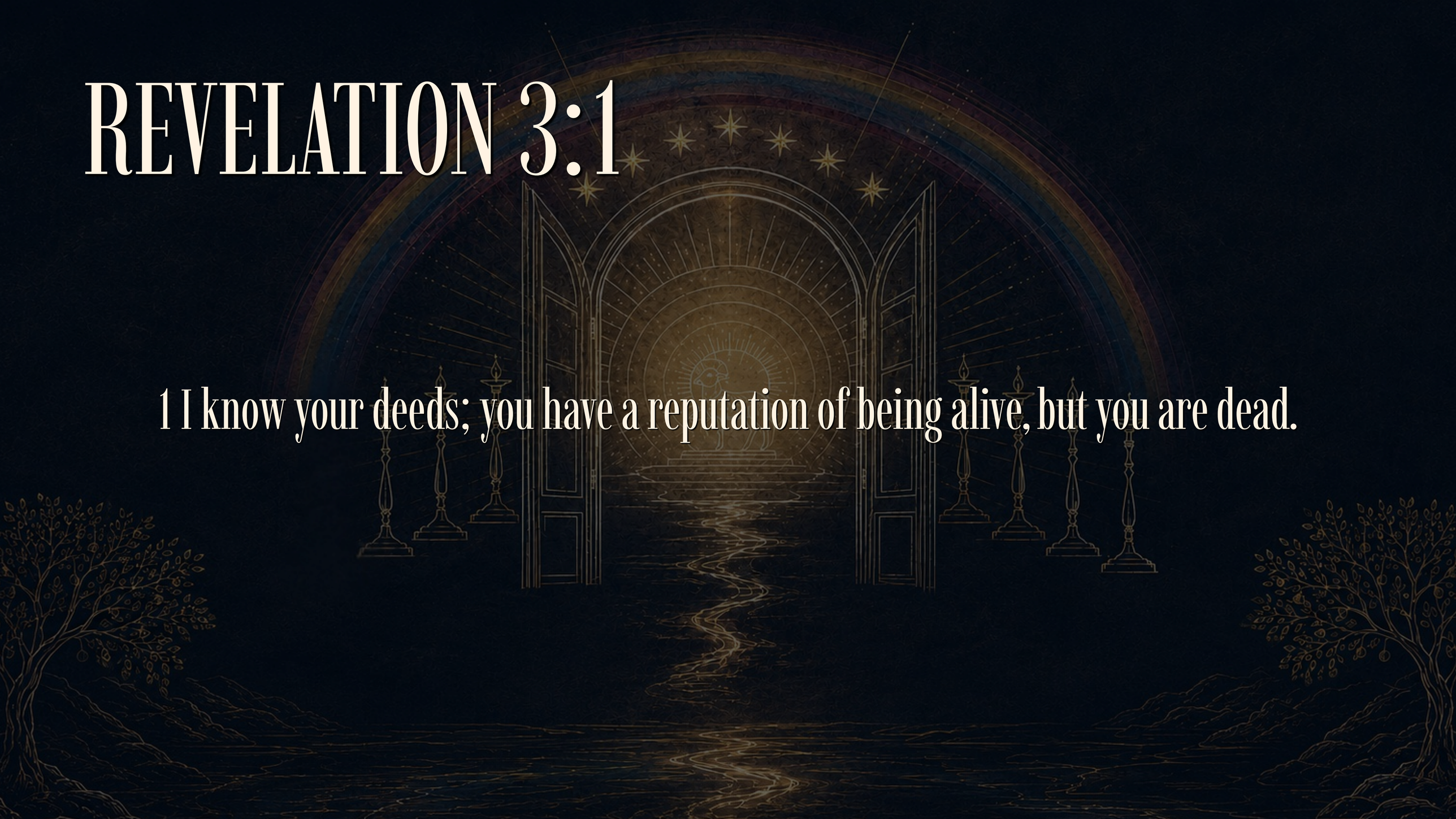

“the morning star” (Revelation 2:28)
“the bright Morning Star” (Revelation 22:16)


The reward is proximity to Jesus Himself.

SARDIS
Reputation Without Life



REVELATION 3:1



1 I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.

REVELATION 3:2

2 Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found
your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God.

REVELATION 3:4–5

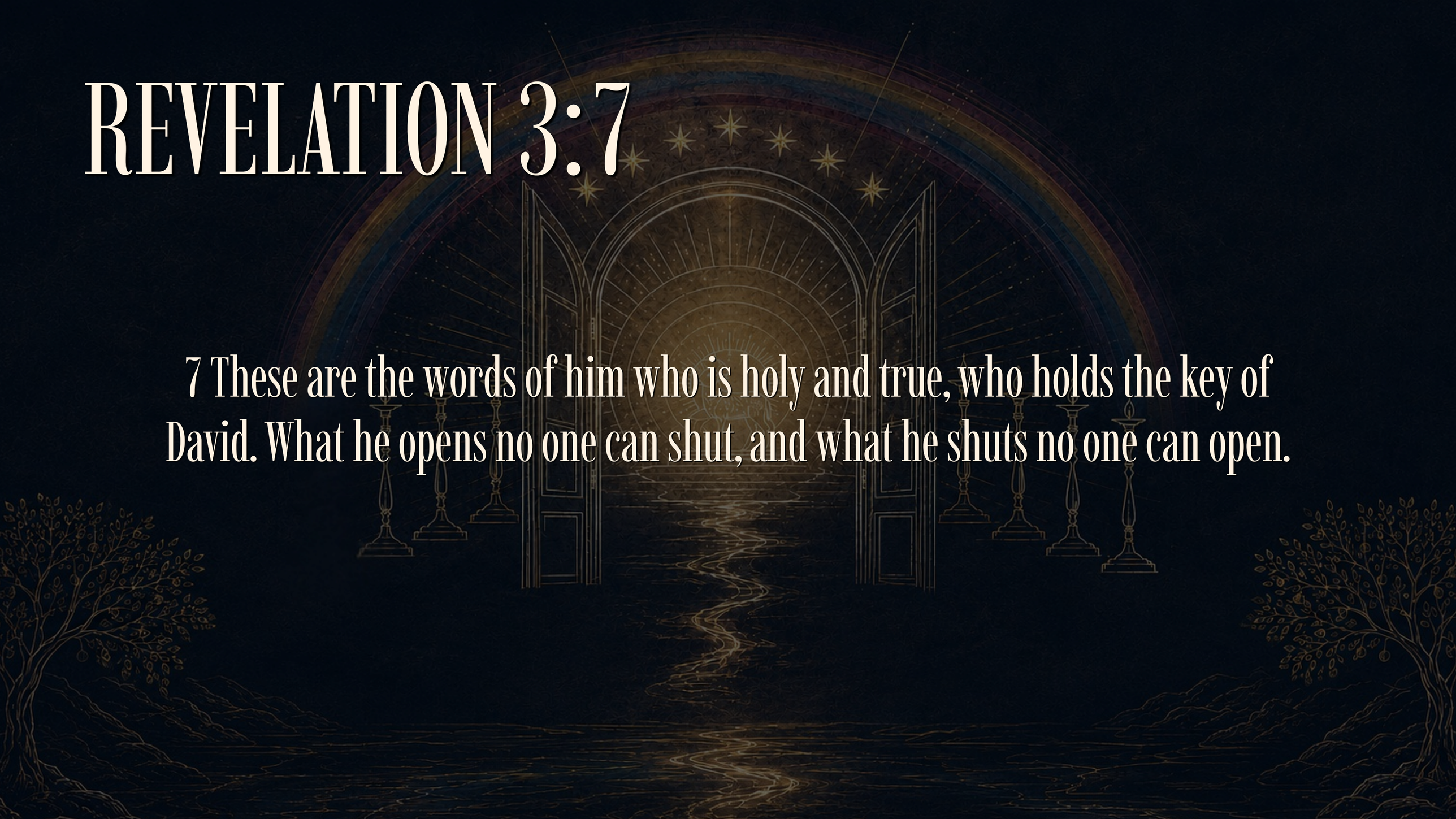
4 Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. 5 The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.

PHILADELPHIA

Little Strength, Great Faithfulness



REVELATION 3:7



7 These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

REVELATION 3:8

8 I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one
can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word
and have not denied my name.

REVELATION 3:9

9 I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews
though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at
your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.

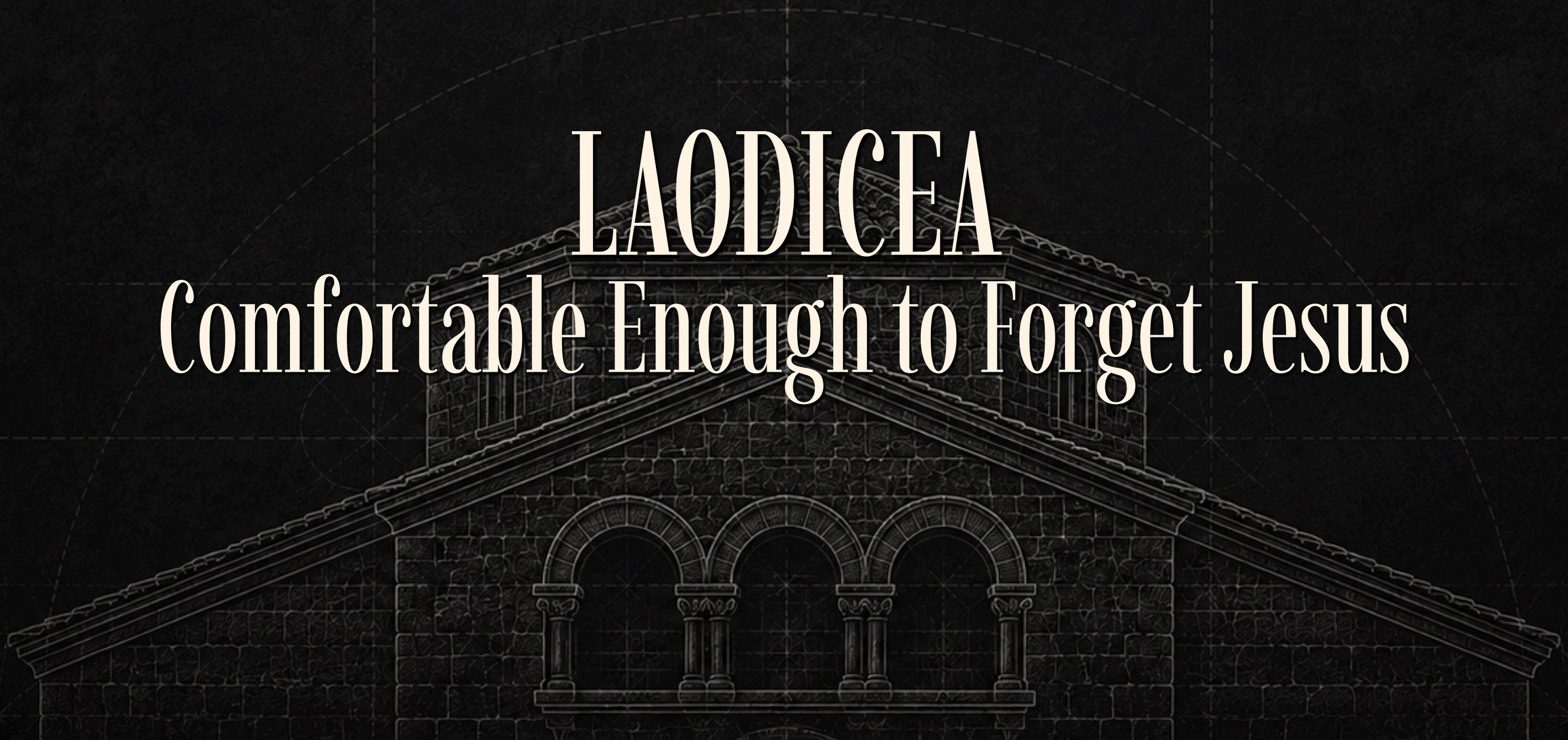
REVELATION 3:12

12 The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God.
Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and
the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down
out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.



LAODICEA

Comfortable Enough to Forget Jesus



REVELATION 3:15-16

15 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were
either one or the other! 16 So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor
cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

REVELATION 3:17

17 You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But
you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.


Comfort can work against spiritual urgency.

REVELATION 3:19

19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.

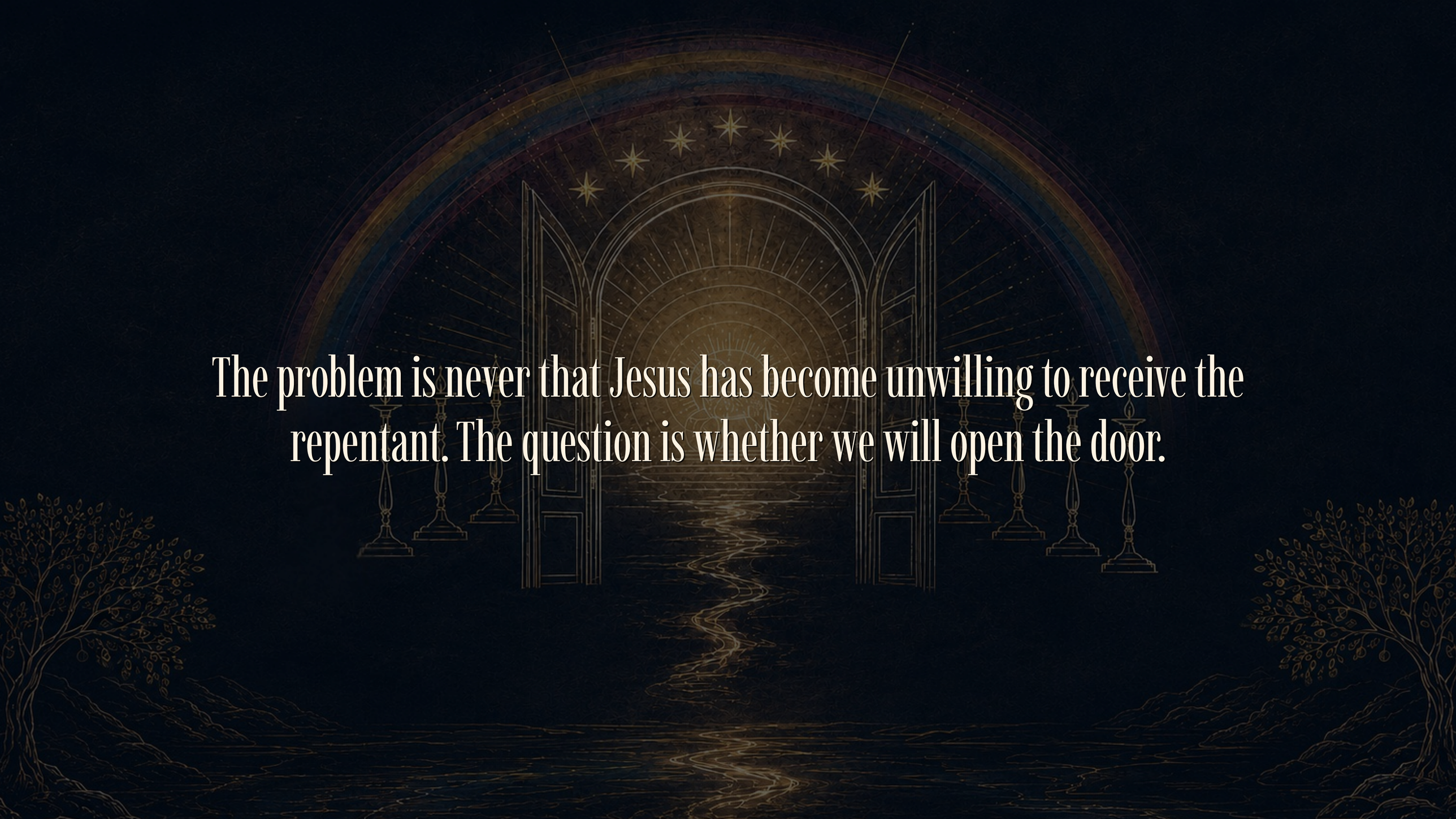
PROVERBS 13:24

24 Whoever spares the rod hates their children,
but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them.

REVELATION 3:20

20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.


Their lukewarmness and self-sufficiency have displaced Him.


The problem is never that Jesus has become unwilling to receive the repentant. The question is whether we will open the door.

REVELATION 3:21

21 To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Human beings were created to live in unbroken fellowship with God, bearing His image, resting in His provision, and ruling over His creation with Him.

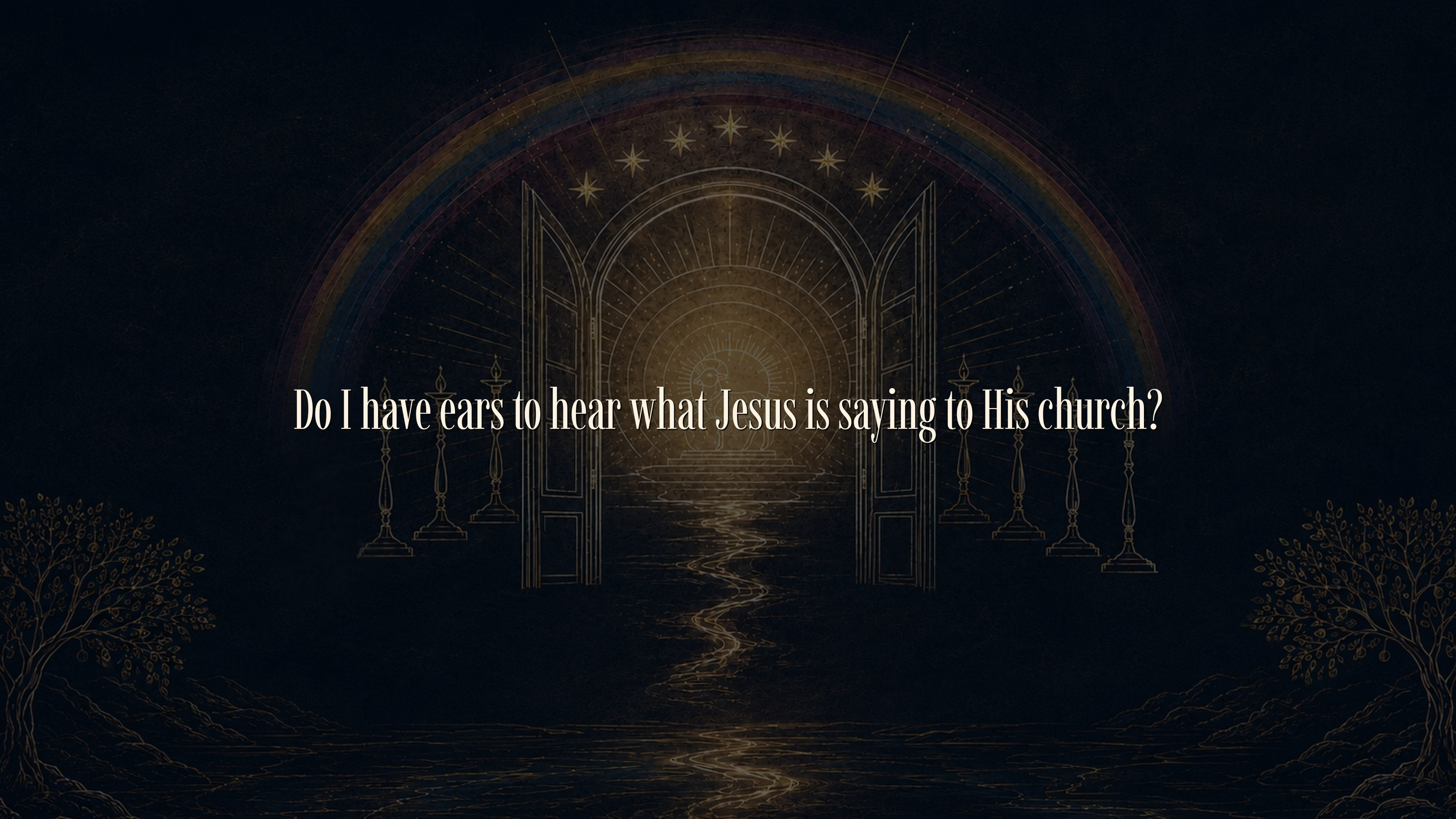
Sin destroyed that fellowship.

Christ restores it.

2 TIMOTHY 2:12

12 if we endure,
we will also reign with him.
If we disown him,
he will also disown us;


“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.“


Do I have ears to hear what Jesus is saying to His church?