

“BELOVED, BROKEN AND BEAUTIFUL”

Rekindling Hope and Perseverance through the Power of Story

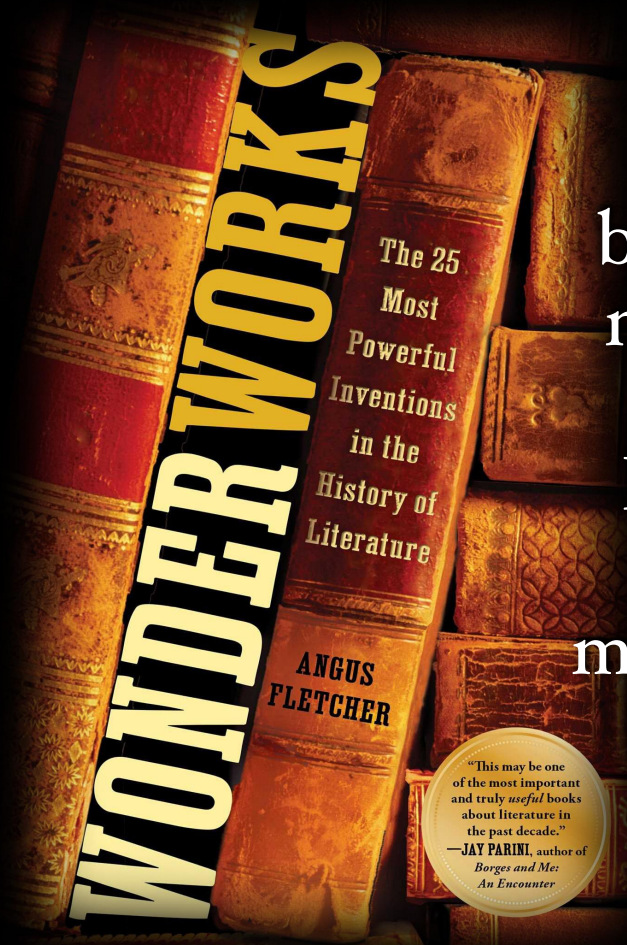
WE HAVE OUR HOPE SET
ON THE LIVING GOD

1 TIMOTHY 4:10

Angus Fletcher on the Power of Story to Inspire Hope (adapted from Brené Brown's interview on [brenebrown.com](https://www.brenebrown.com))

Angus Fletcher's most recent book, "*Wonderworks*" (Simon & Schuster, 2021), has been formally endorsed by some of the world's most respected psychologists, neuroscientists, doctors, and literature scholars.

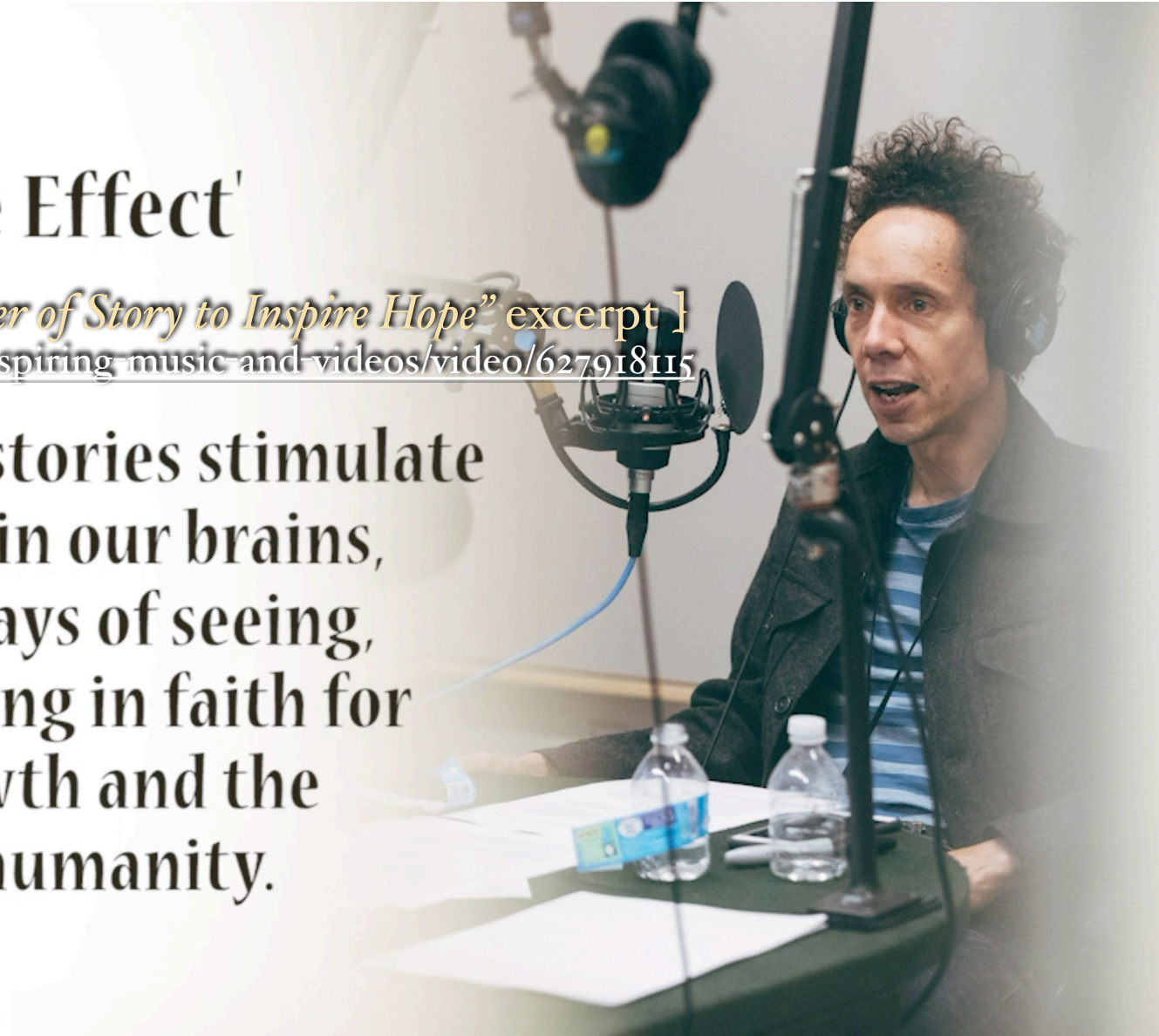
In it, he explains the secrets to unlocking the hidden powers of your favourite poems, memoirs, novels, and tv shows to boost courage, love, empathy, creativity, hope, and curiosity — and to alleviate grief, loneliness, anxiety, and even trauma.



The 'Hope Effect'

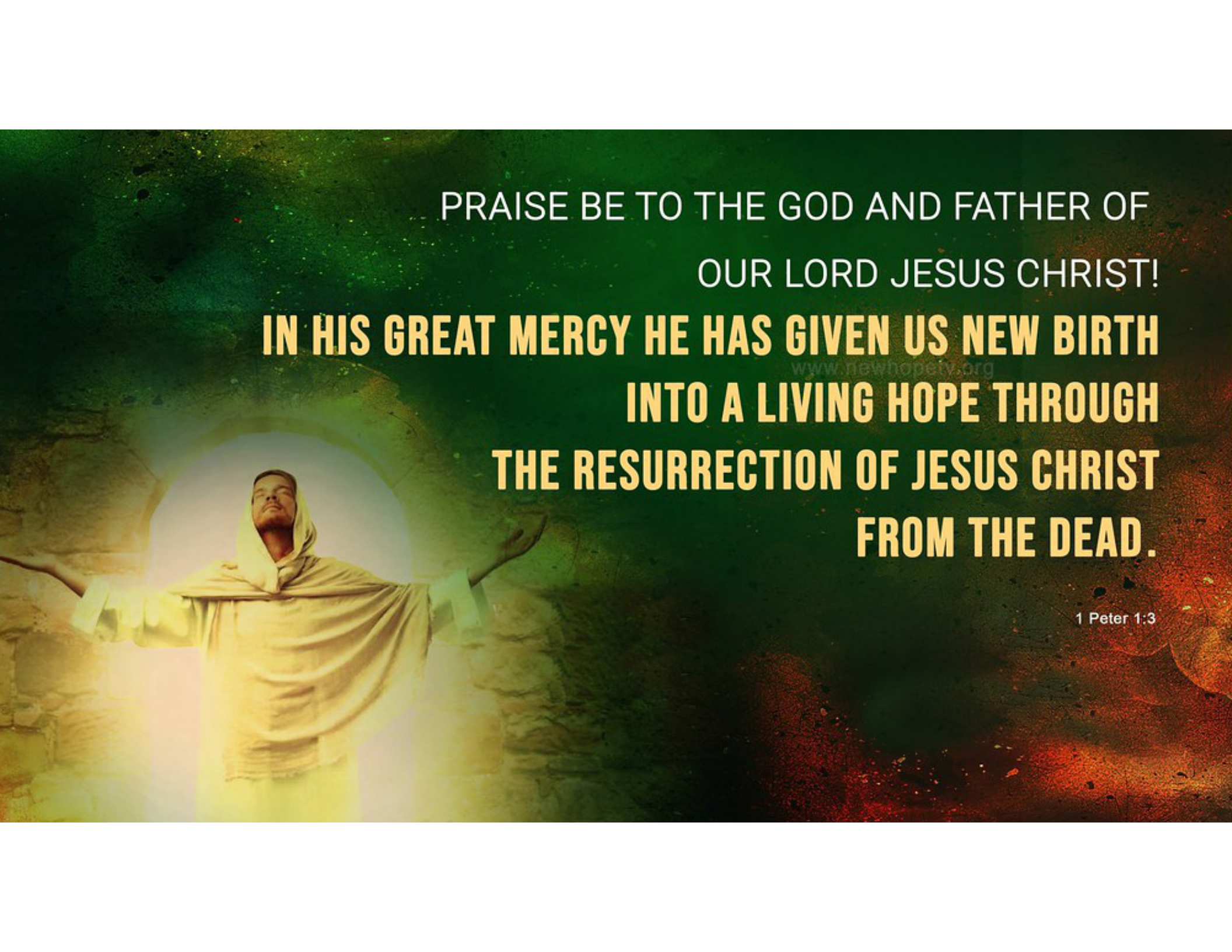
[click link below for "*The Power of Story to Inspire Hope*" excerpt]
<https://vimeopro.com/user2890445/inspiring-music-and-videos/video/627918115>

The power of great stories stimulate the 'hope effect' in our brains, enabling new ways of seeing, thinking and acting in faith for personal growth and the thriving of humanity.





“Hope is lived where we come out of our shells and participate in the lives of others, in both joy and pain.”
- Juergen Moltmann



PRAISE BE TO THE GOD AND FATHER OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!
**IN HIS GREAT MERCY HE HAS GIVEN US NEW BIRTH
INTO A LIVING HOPE THROUGH
THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST
FROM THE DEAD.**

1 Peter 1:3

Being confident of this, that he who began
a good work in you will carry it on to completion
until the day of Christ Jesus.

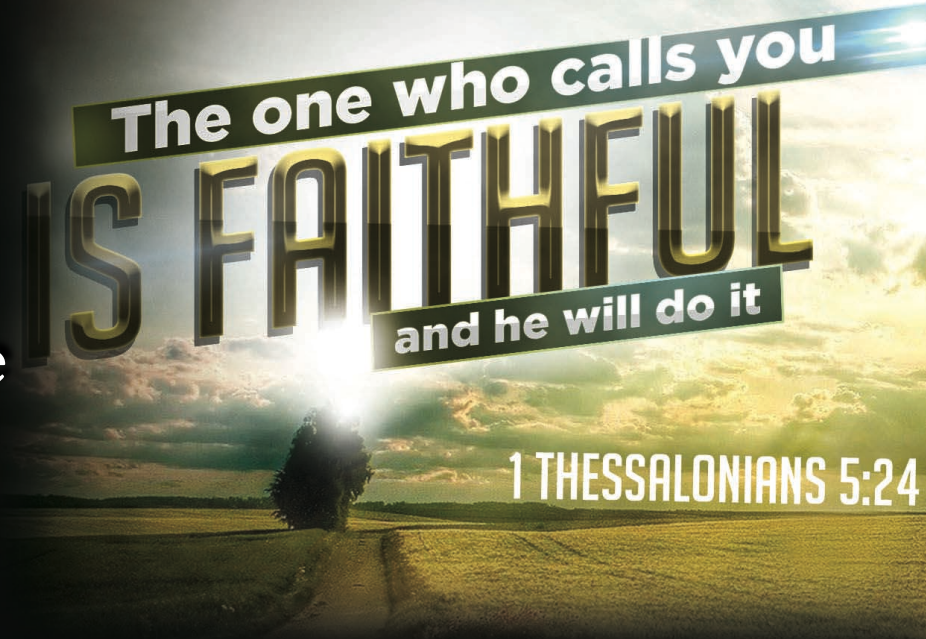
Philippians 1:6



“Proper Confidence” by Lesslie Newbigin

When Newbigin talks about a proper confidence he doesn't mean a faith that removes uncertainty from our lives. Rather, our faith is properly confident not because of our ability to be certain about it, **but because of who our faith is in:** our eternally faithful and unconditionally loving God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

“If the biblical story is true, the kind of certainty proper to a human being will be one which rests on the fidelity of God, **not upon the competence of the human knower.** It will be a kind of certainty which is inseparable from gratitude and trust” (p 20)



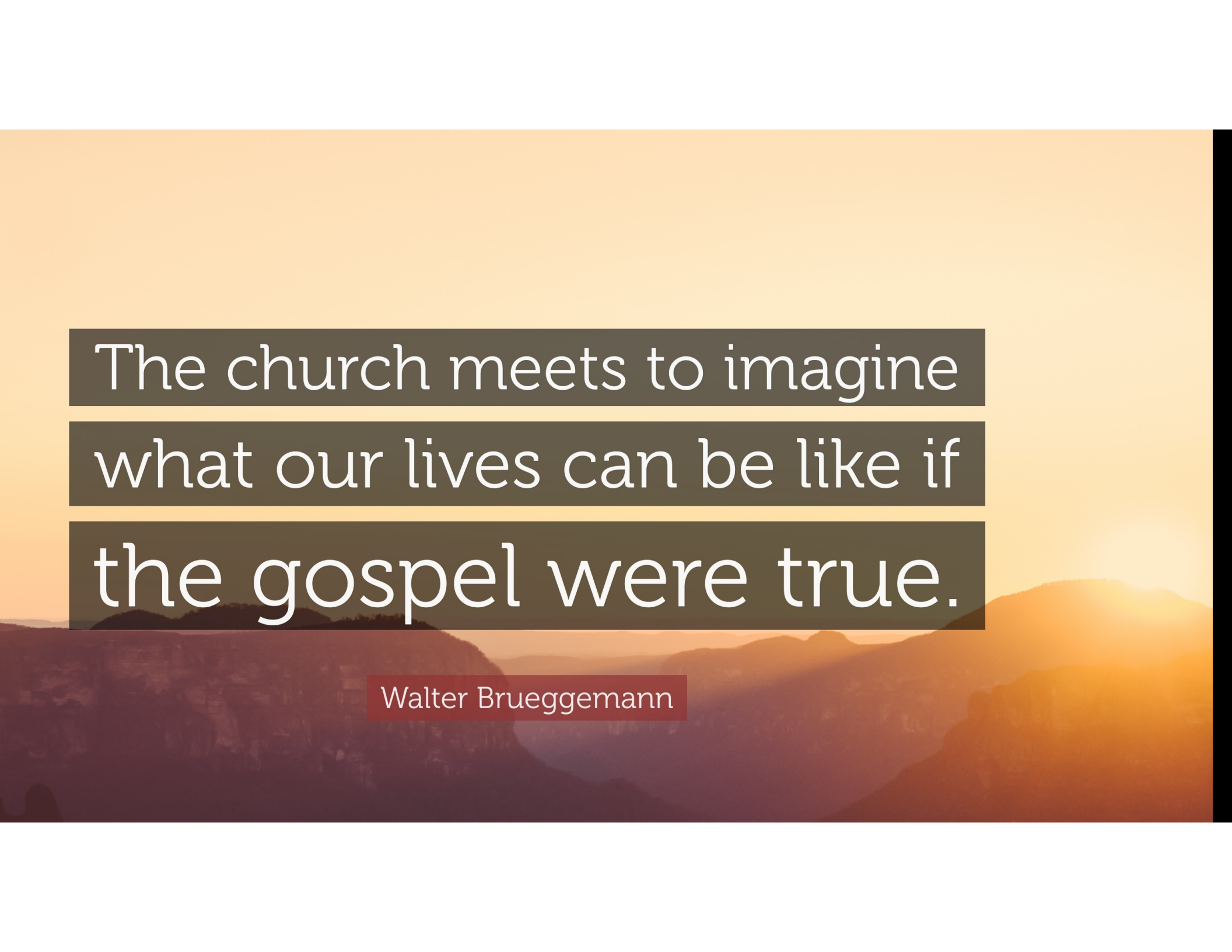
The Unveiling of Jesus Christ is an Ongoing, Present Reality

“Wherefore having girded up the loins of your mind, being sober, **HOPE perfectly upon the grace that is being brought to you** in the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

(1 Peter 1:13, Young's Literal Translation)

The verb sometimes translated “*to be brought*” is the present, passive participle, which means it should be literally worded “is being brought to you”.

Grace **IS BEING** brought to us **NOW** in the **UNVEILING** of Jesus Christ by the Spirit in our hearts **AND** revealed to the world as our faith is expressed in self-giving, agape love.



The church meets to imagine
what our lives can be like if
the gospel were true.

Walter Brueggemann

Living an “AS IF” Life of Faith from the “I AM’s” of Jesus

Most of us struggle to live from and enjoy the essential truth of our being and beloved identity that is rooted in Jesus’ own being and identity as the Father’s beloved Son.

John’s Gospel reveals that the eternal Word, who was face to face with the Father from all eternity, has fully ‘entered the room’ of our humanity, unveiling God’s glory in us, so that we might increasingly see, know and enjoy the truth of his “I AM-ness” as our own.

**ABIDE IN MY
LOVE...YOU
SHALL BEAR
MUCH FRUIT.**

JOHN 15:1-17

Jesus “I AM” declaration and ongoing invitation to experientially abide in and make ourselves at home in his love is rooted in his own knowing and resting in His Father’s loving affirmation.

- Michael Lafleur (May 8th 2022)

Responding to the “AS IF’s” invitation to live by faith from Jesus’ “I AM’s”

1. Consider Jesus’ declaration “I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE”.

What are its “AS IF” implications for living by faith in a broken world?

E.g. “If Jesus has really has defeated the power of sin and death,
if he really has overcome the world, then that means ...”

[remember Malcom Guite’s poem]

“...To live as if I had no fear of losing, To spend as if I had no need to earn,
To turn my cheek as if it felt no bruising, To lend as if I needed no return,
As if my debts and sins were all forgiven,
As if God’s kingdom’s come to earth from Heaven”

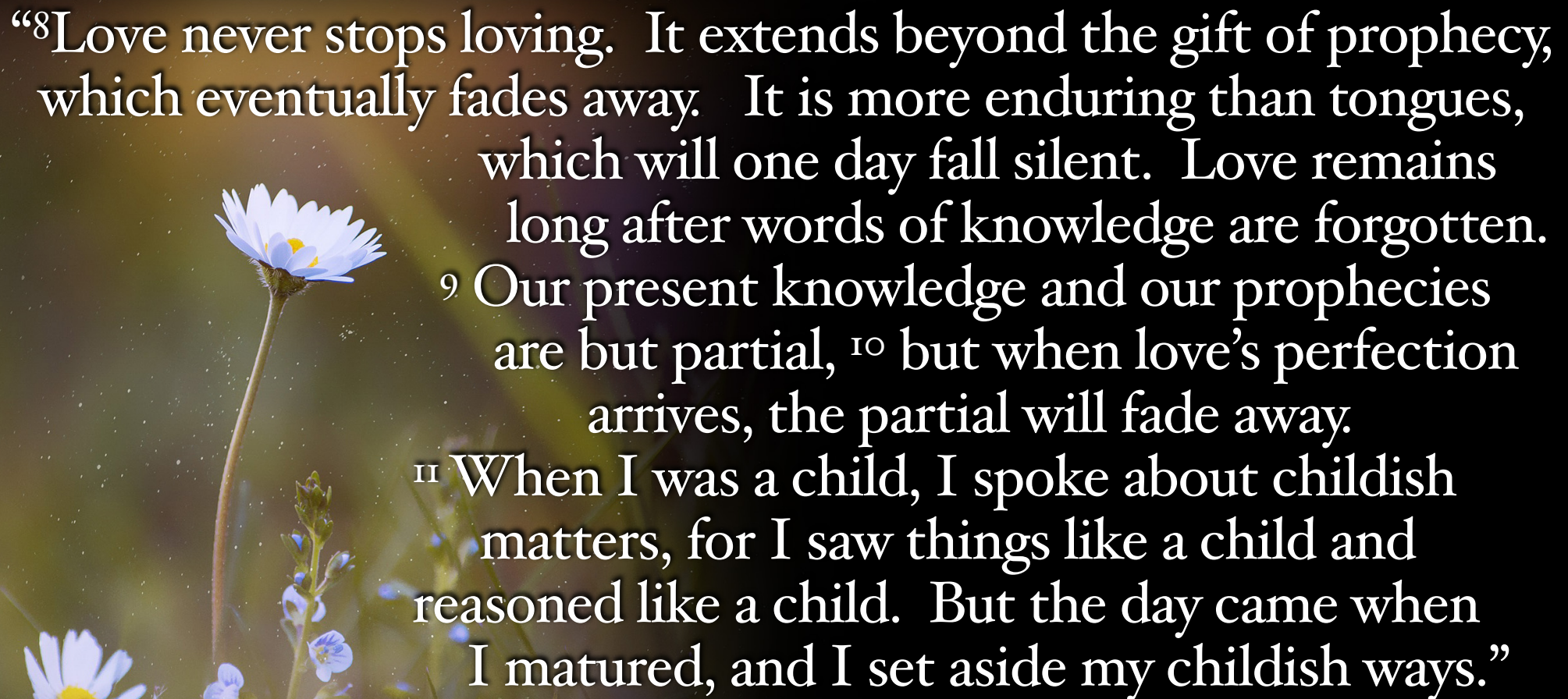
Hebrews 12:2-3 NIV

“**Fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the **joy set before him** he endured the cross scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ **Consider him** who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not **grow weary and lose heart.**”

Responding to the “AS IF’s” invitation to live by faith from Jesus’ “I AM’s”

2. From your own story and life experience, what helps or hinders you from seeing and living “AS IF” from Jesus’ own “I AM’s”?
3. In Hebrews 12:1-3, we are encouraged to “Fix our eyes on Jesus...” and “Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men...”
As One who continues to share fully in our humanity, how might Jesus help us persevere as we run the race of faith in a fallen world?

1Cor 13:8-13 (PASSION Translation)



“⁸Love never stops loving. It extends beyond the gift of prophecy, which eventually fades away. It is more enduring than tongues, which will one day fall silent. Love remains long after words of knowledge are forgotten.

⁹ Our present knowledge and our prophecies are but partial, ¹⁰ but when love’s perfection arrives, the partial will fade away.

¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke about childish matters, for I saw things like a child and reasoned like a child. But the day came when I matured, and I set aside my childish ways.”



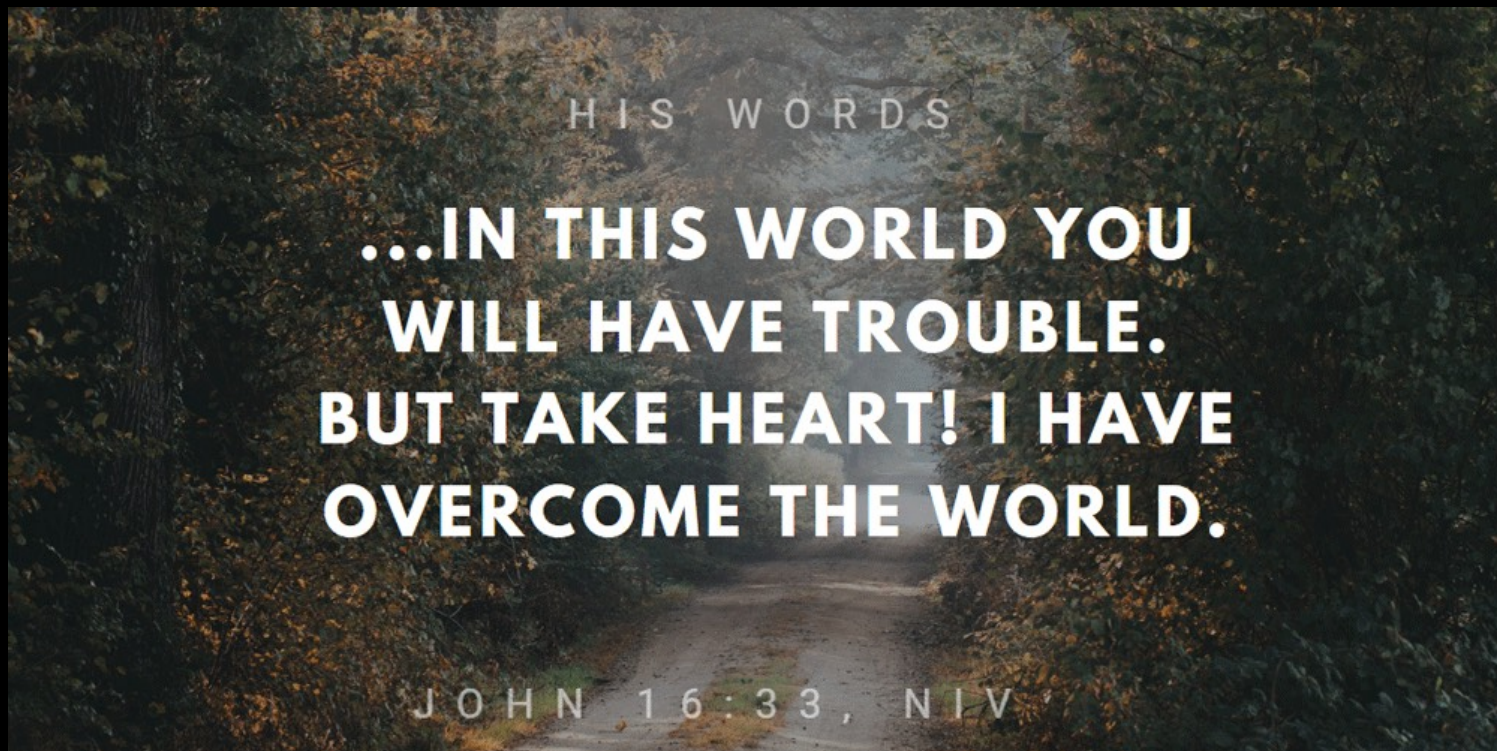
1Cor 13:12-13 (PASSION Translation)

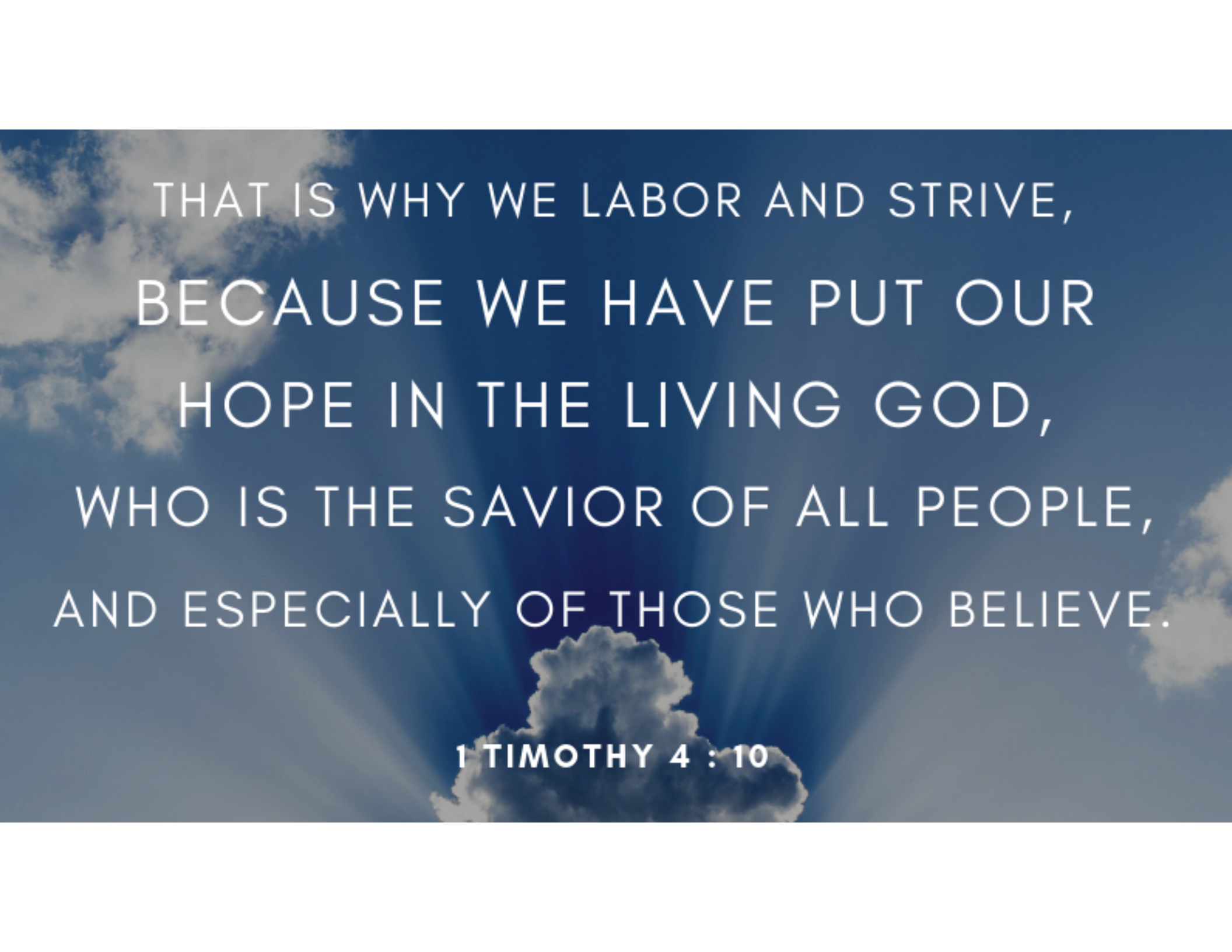
“¹² For now we see but a faint reflection of riddles and mysteries as though reflected in a mirror, but one day we will see face-to-face.

My understanding is incomplete now, but one day I will understand everything, just as everything about me has been fully understood.

¹³ Until then, there are three things that remain: faith, hope, and love — yet love surpasses them all.”

The HOPE of the Resurrection and the Ultimate Redemption of ALL things helps us today on our Journey of Beholding our Belovedness and Becoming Loving Persons.





THAT IS WHY WE LABOR AND STRIVE,
BECAUSE WE HAVE PUT OUR
HOPE IN THE LIVING GOD,
WHO IS THE SAVIOR OF ALL PEOPLE,
AND ESPECIALLY OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE.

1 TIMOTHY 4 : 10

Hebrews 10:24-25 (MIRROR)

24 Let us also think of creative ways by which we can influence one another to find inspired expression in doing things that benefit others. Good actions give voice and volume to the love of God.

25 In the light of our free access to the Father, let us extend that embrace to one another. Our gatherings are no longer a repetition of tradition but an essential fellowship where we remind one another of our true identity.

Let us do so with greater urgency now the day has dawned in our understanding.



Hebrews 11:1 (MIRROR Bible)

“¹ Persuasion confirms confident expectation and proves the unseen world to be more real than the seen.

**Faith celebrates as certain
what hope visualizes as future.**

*(The shadow no longer substitutes the substance.
Jesus is the substance of things hoped for
the evidence of everything the Prophets foretold.
The unveiling of Christ in human life
completes mankind's every expectation.*

Col 1:27 “which is Christ in you, the hope of glory”.)



(adapted from Kenneth Tanner - Twitter April 28th 2019)

AND HIS
NAME WILL
BE THE
HOPE
OF ALL THE
WORLD

-MATTHEW 12:21 NLT



Can you see this divine and
human partnership that
changes the world? ...
It's not just "going to church."
It's going to the future and
bringing resurrection life back
to this moment we now inhabit
before God's glorious
future fully arrives.
It brings the kingdom of God.



Empathetic listening releases the resonance of hope and reminds us of our redeemed identity as beloved children.

- Michael Lafleur



REMEMBERING OUR REDEEMED IDENTITY

Reminding one Another of our Belovedness and Celebrating our
Inclusion in the Communion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit