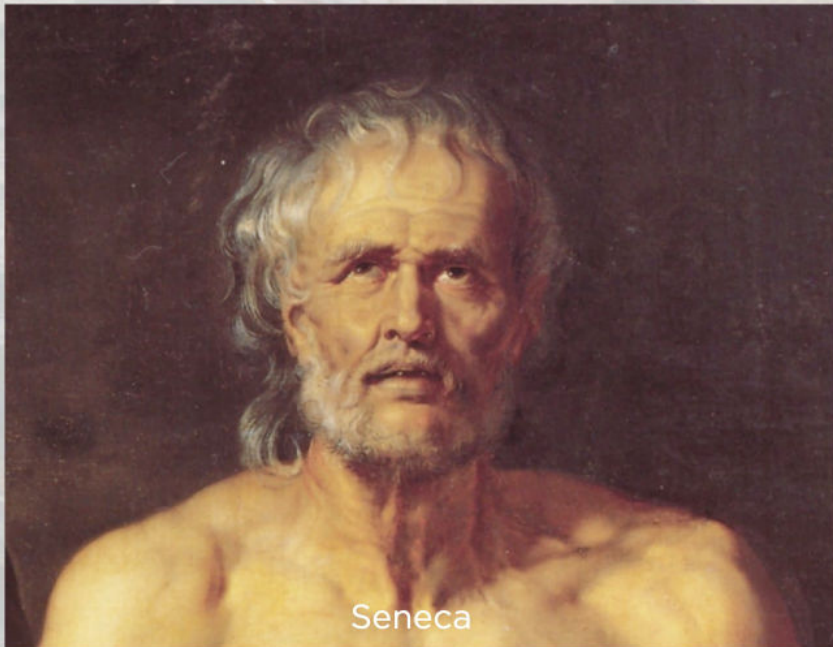


Jesus & Politics

Wisdomfest 2021

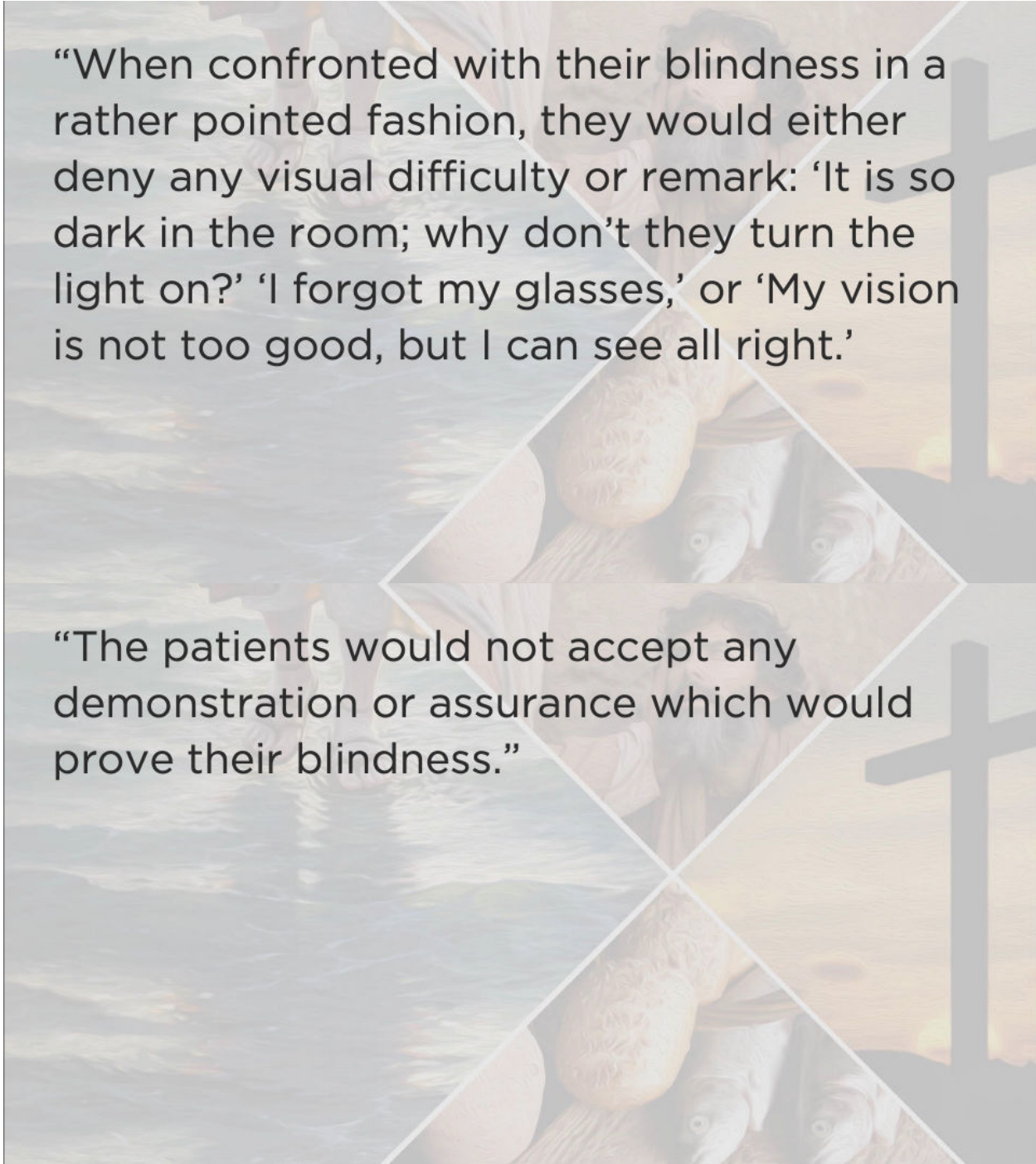


Seneca



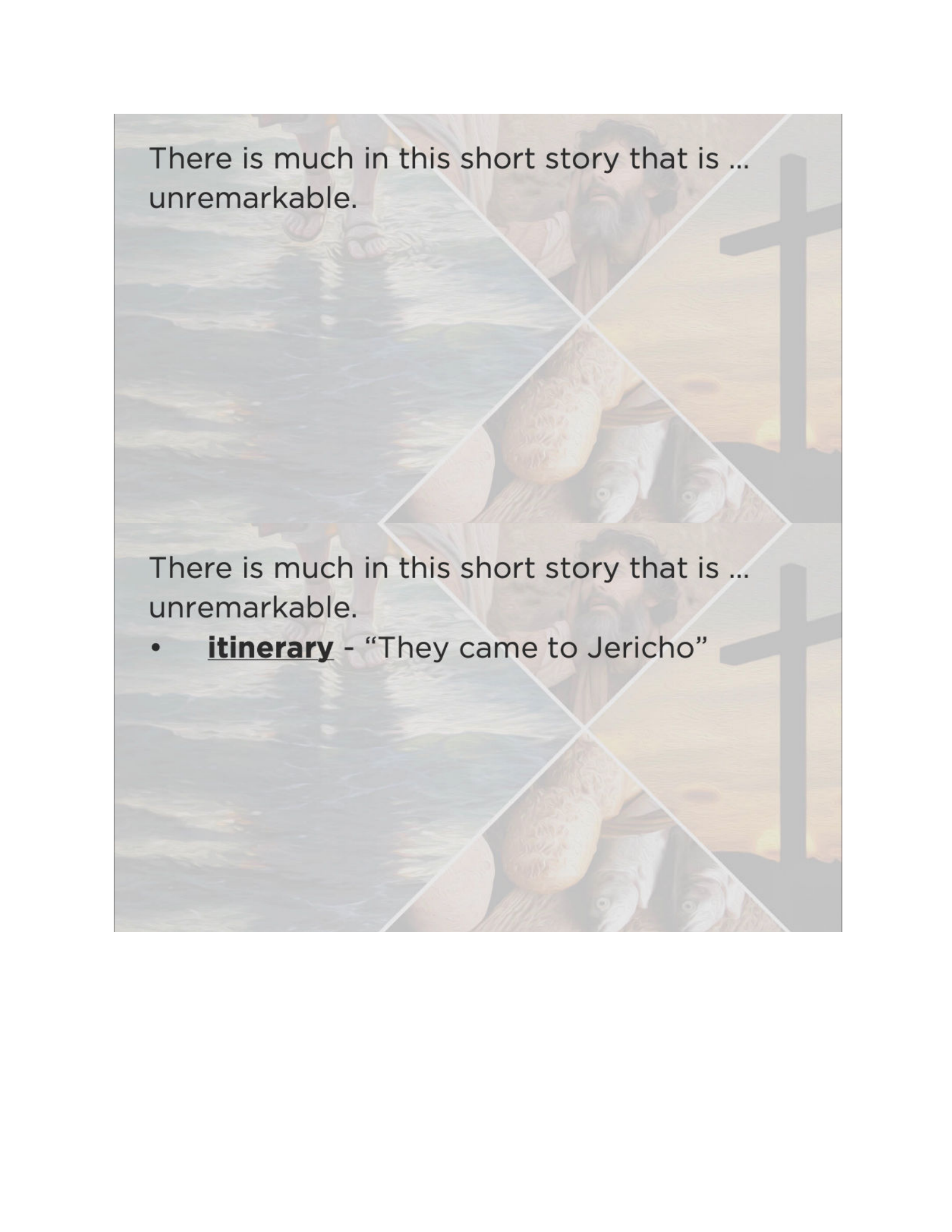
Gabriel Anton

“As they were not aware of their blindness when they walked about, they bumped into the furniture and walls but did not change their behavior.”



“When confronted with their blindness in a rather pointed fashion, they would either deny any visual difficulty or remark: ‘It is so dark in the room; why don’t they turn the light on?’ ‘I forgot my glasses,’ or ‘My vision is not too good, but I can see all right.’

“The patients would not accept any demonstration or assurance which would prove their blindness.”

The background of the slide is a collage. On the right side, there is a large, faint, grey cross. The rest of the background is composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent images. One image shows a man with a long beard and a turban, possibly a prophet or a religious leader, looking down. Another image shows a close-up of a fish, likely a carp, which is a common symbol in Christianity. There are also some abstract, wavy patterns in shades of blue and green.

There is much in this short story that is ...
unremarkable.

There is much in this short story that is ...
unremarkable.

- **itinerary** - “They came to Jericho”

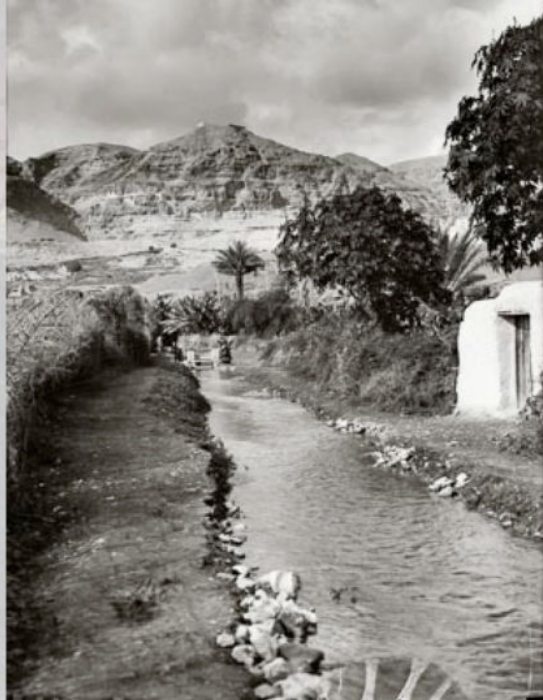
There is much in this short story that is ... unremarkable.

- **itinerary** - “They came to Jericho”

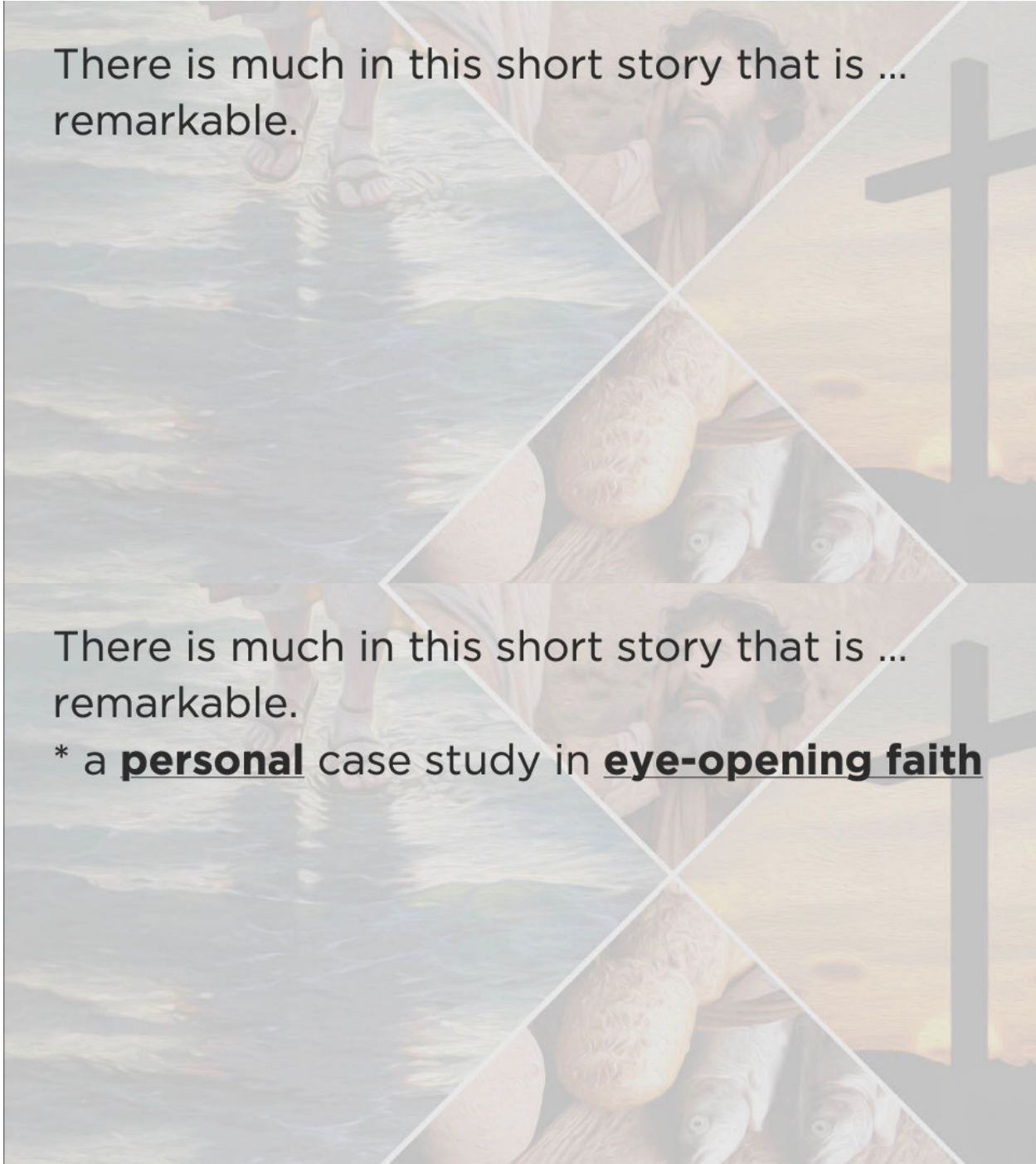


There is much in this short story that is ... unremarkable.

- itinerary -
- **skepticism** -
“And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd”



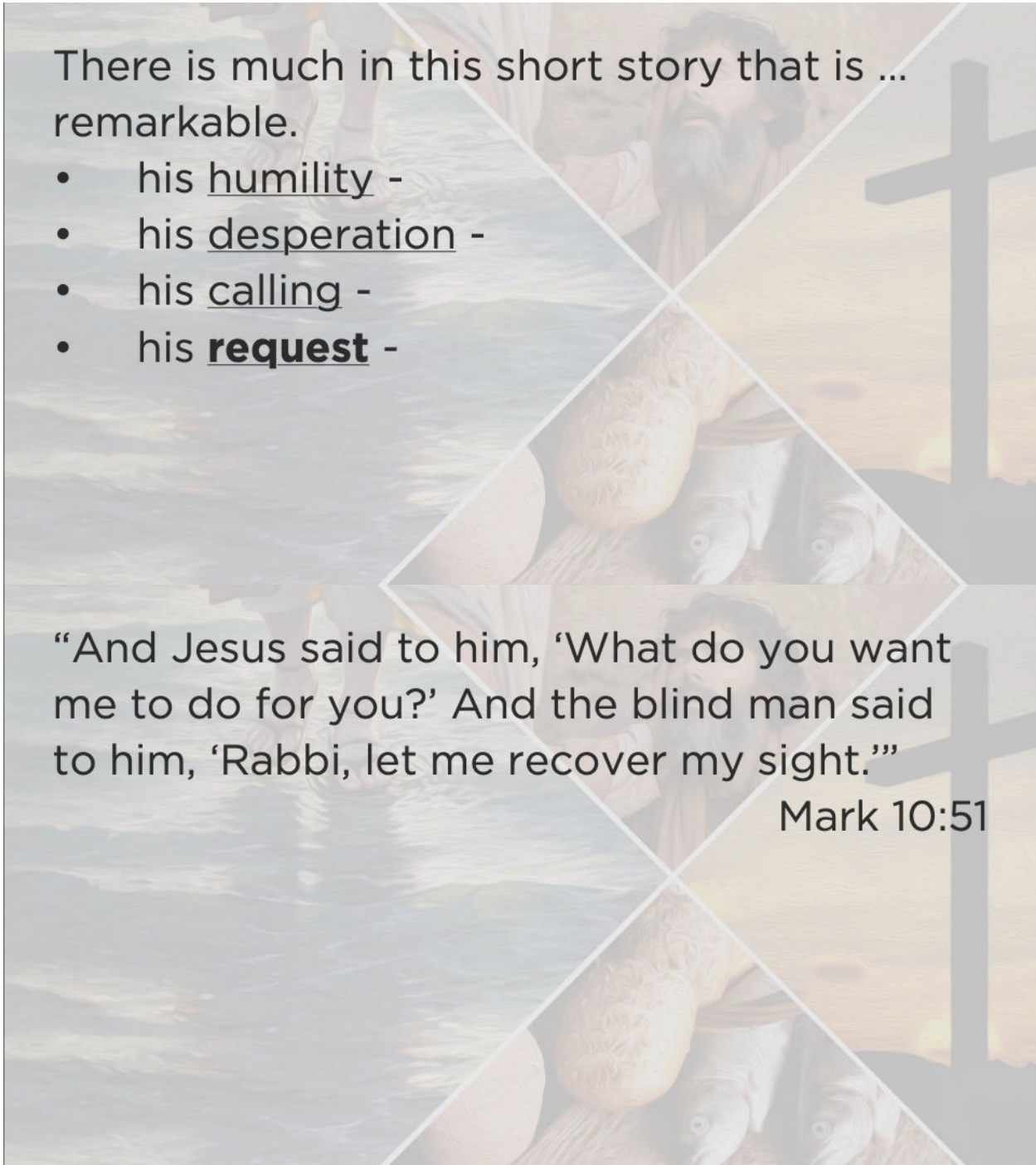




There is much in this short story that is ...
remarkable.

There is much in this short story that is ...
remarkable.

* a **personal** case study in **eye-opening faith**

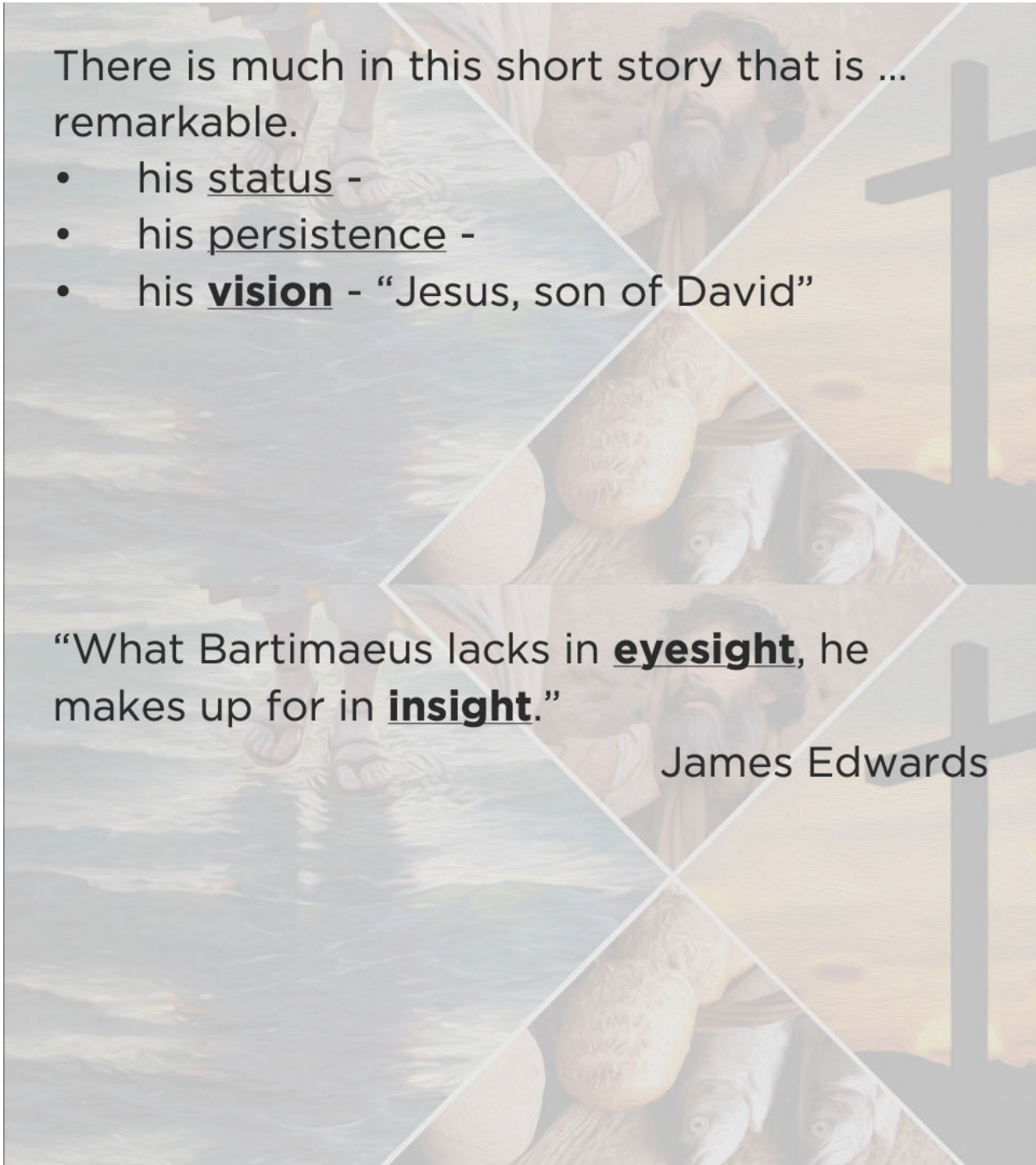
The background of the slide is a composite image. On the left, there is a depiction of Jesus with a beard and long hair, wearing a brown robe, sitting in a boat on a body of water. On the right, there is a large, dark cross against a light, hazy sky. The entire background is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent 'X' shape.

There is much in this short story that is ... remarkable.

- his **status** - “sitting by the roadside”

There is much in this short story that is ... remarkable.

- his status -
- his **persistence** - “he began to cry out”

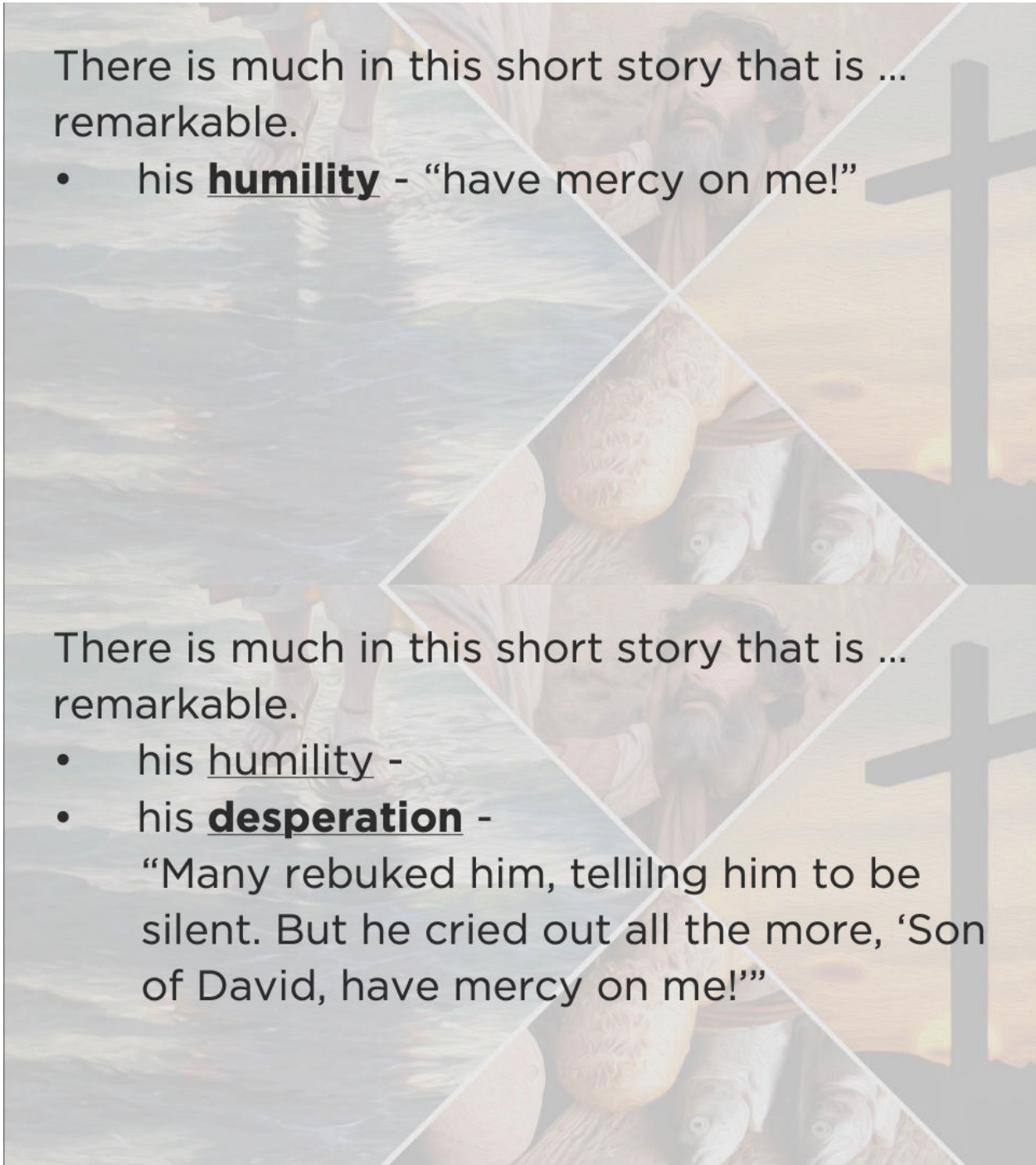
The background of the slide features a faint, artistic illustration. On the right side, a large, dark cross is visible against a light, hazy sky. In the lower-left and center, there are depictions of fish, likely representing the miracle of the loaves and fishes. The overall image has a soft, painterly quality with a muted color palette.

There is much in this short story that is ... remarkable.

- his status -
- his persistence -
- his **vision** - “Jesus, son of David”

“What Bartimaeus lacks in **eyesight**, he makes up for in **insight**.”

James Edwards

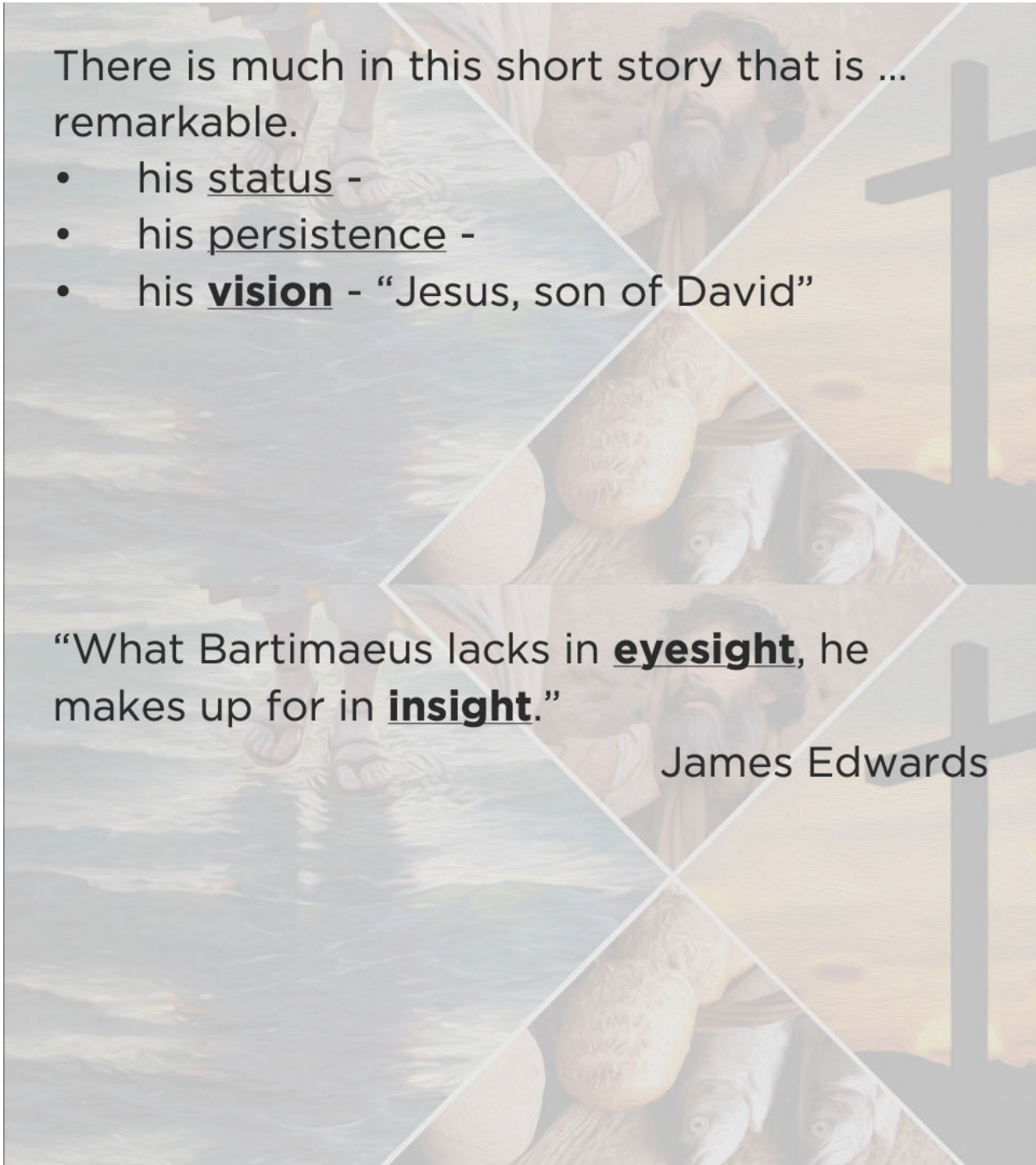


There is much in this short story that is ... remarkable.

- his **humility** - “have mercy on me!”

There is much in this short story that is ... remarkable.

- his humility -
- his **desperation** -
“Many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, ‘Son of David, have mercy on me!’”

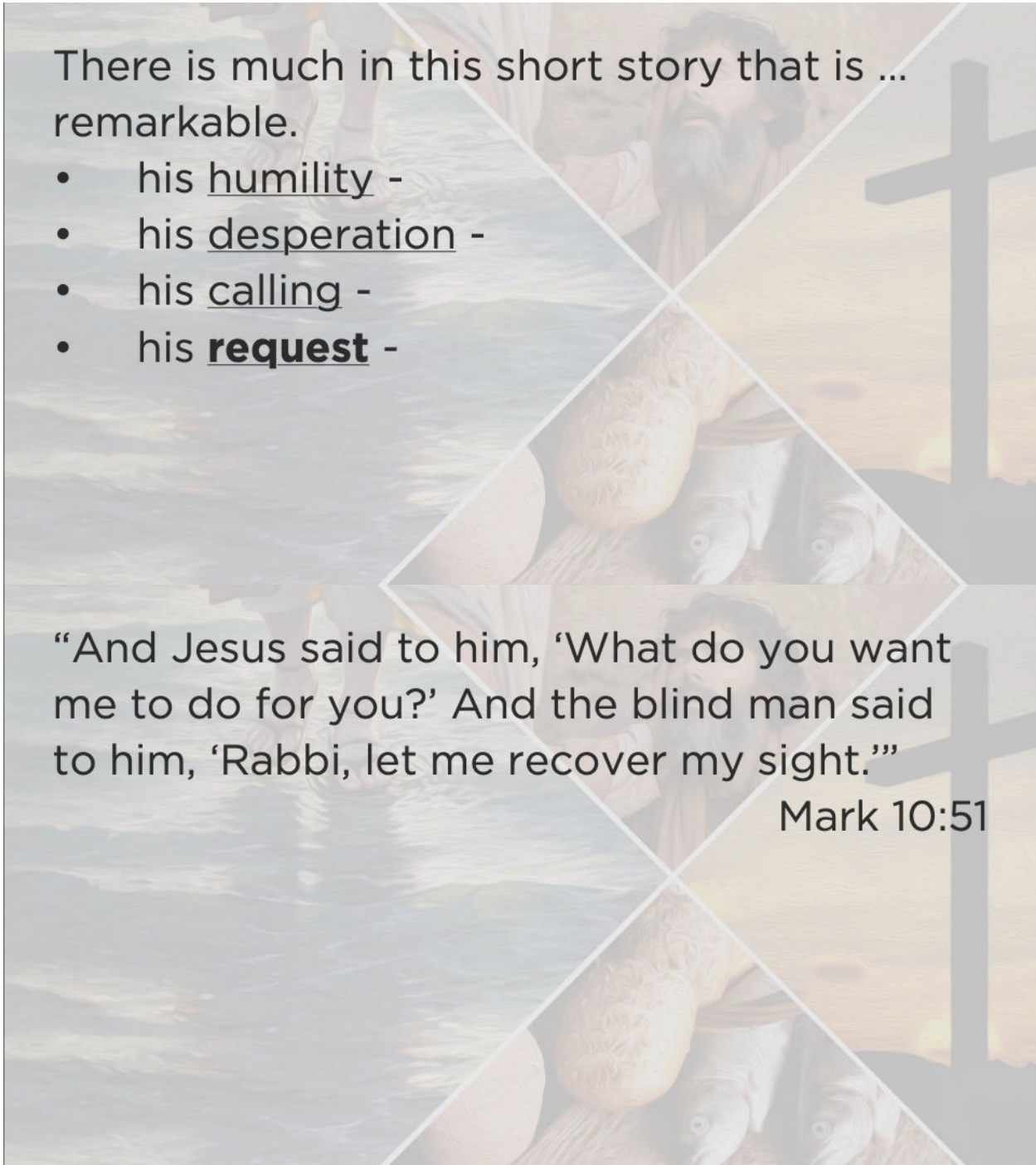
The background of the slide features a faint, artistic depiction of Jesus with a beard and long hair, wearing a robe. To his right is a large, dark cross. Below him are several fish, likely representing the miracle of the loaves and fishes. The entire background is overlaid with a large, white, semi-transparent 'X' shape.

There is much in this short story that is ... remarkable.

- his humility -
- his desperation -
- his **calling** -

“And Jesus stopped and said, ‘Call him.’ And they called the blind man, saying to him, ‘Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.’ And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.”

Mark 10:49-50

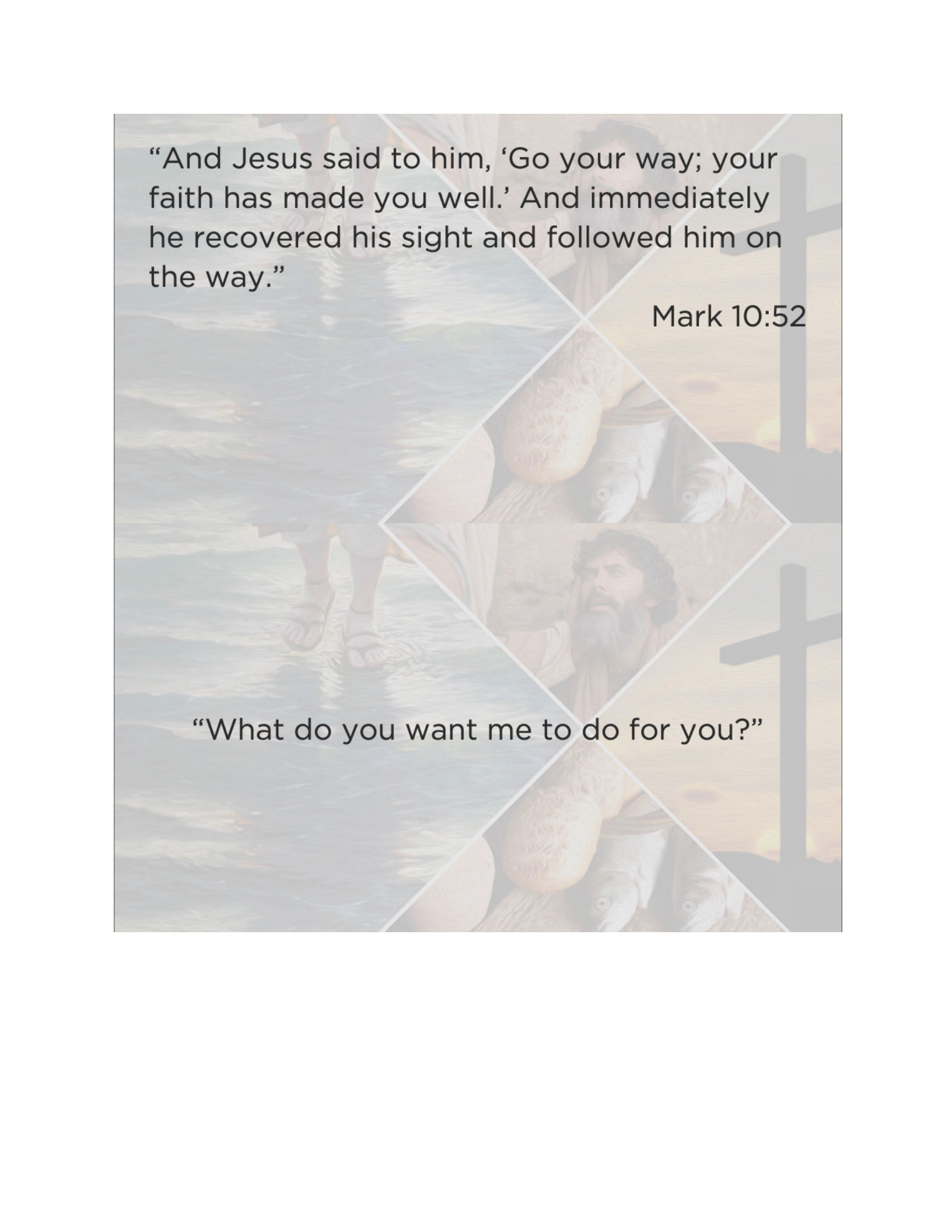
The background of the slide is a composite image. On the left, there's a depiction of Jesus with a beard and long hair, wearing a brown robe, looking down. To his right is a large, dark cross. Below these elements, there are several fish, possibly carp or similar, swimming in water. The entire background is overlaid with a large, faint 'X' shape.

There is much in this short story that is ... remarkable.

- his humility -
- his desperation -
- his calling -
- his **request** -

“And Jesus said to him, ‘What do you want me to do for you?’ And the blind man said to him, ‘Rabbi, let me recover my sight.’”

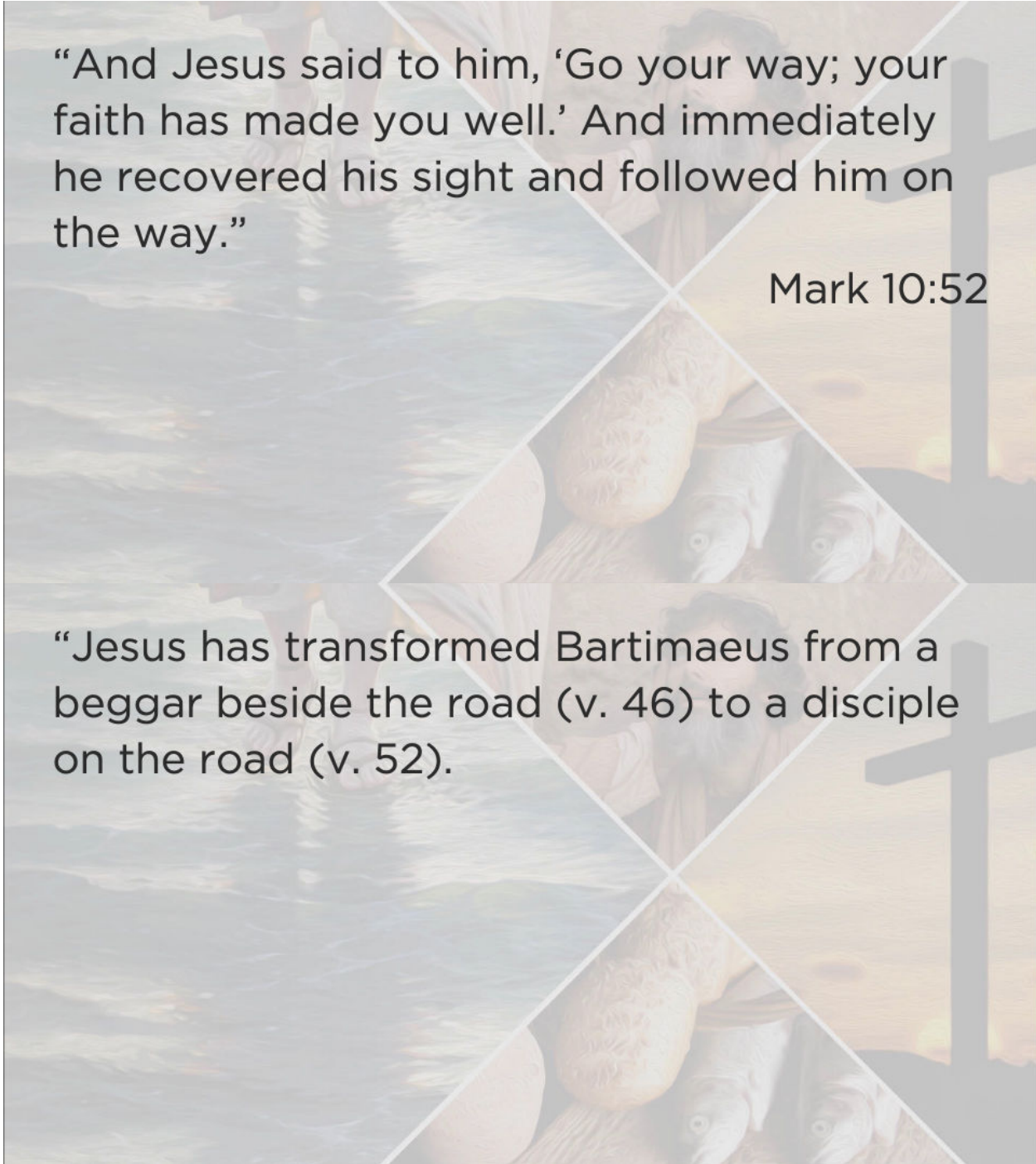
Mark 10:51



“And Jesus said to him, ‘Go your way; your faith has made you well.’ And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.”

Mark 10:52

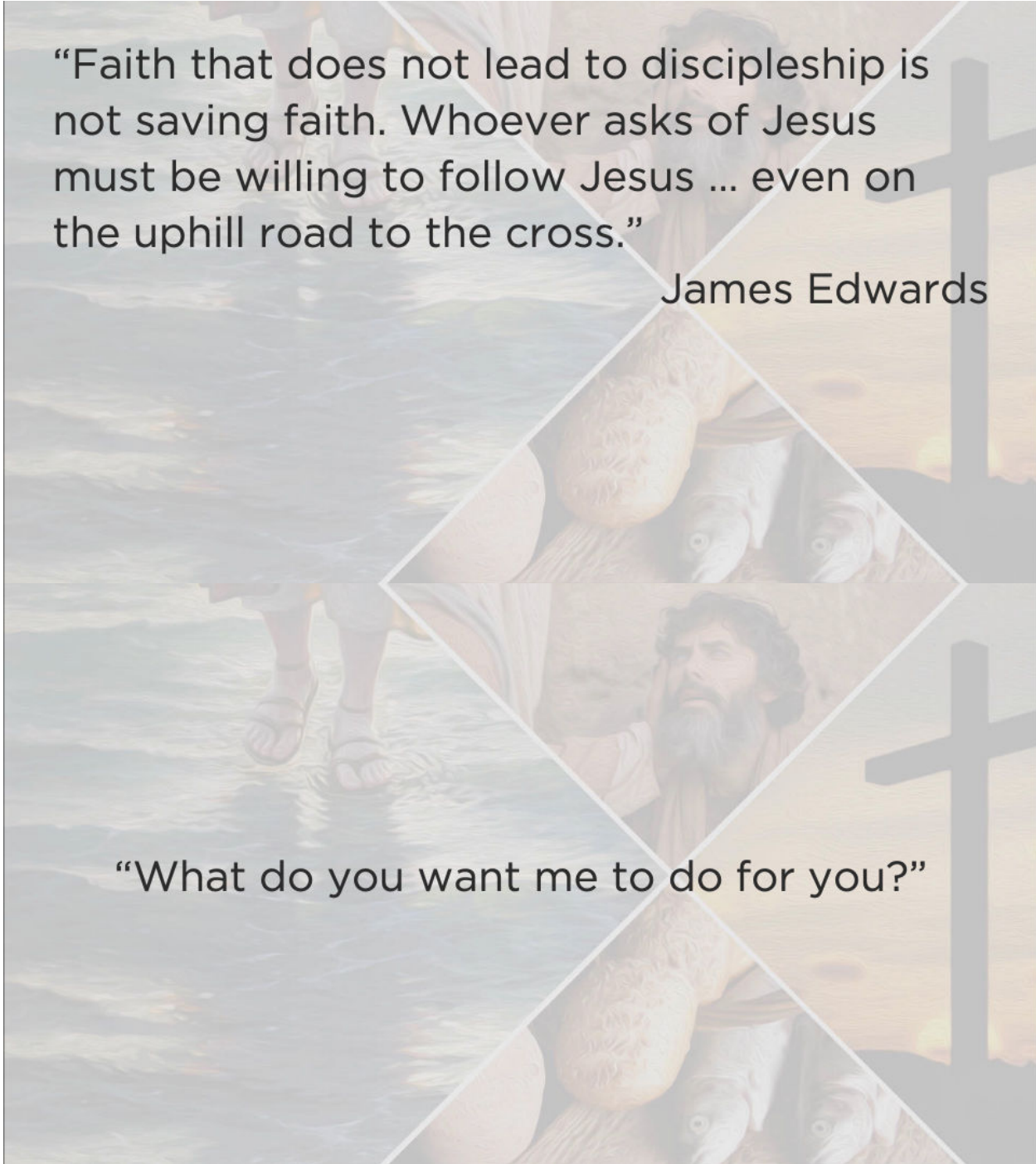
“What do you want me to do for you?”



“And Jesus said to him, ‘Go your way; your faith has made you well.’ And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.”

Mark 10:52

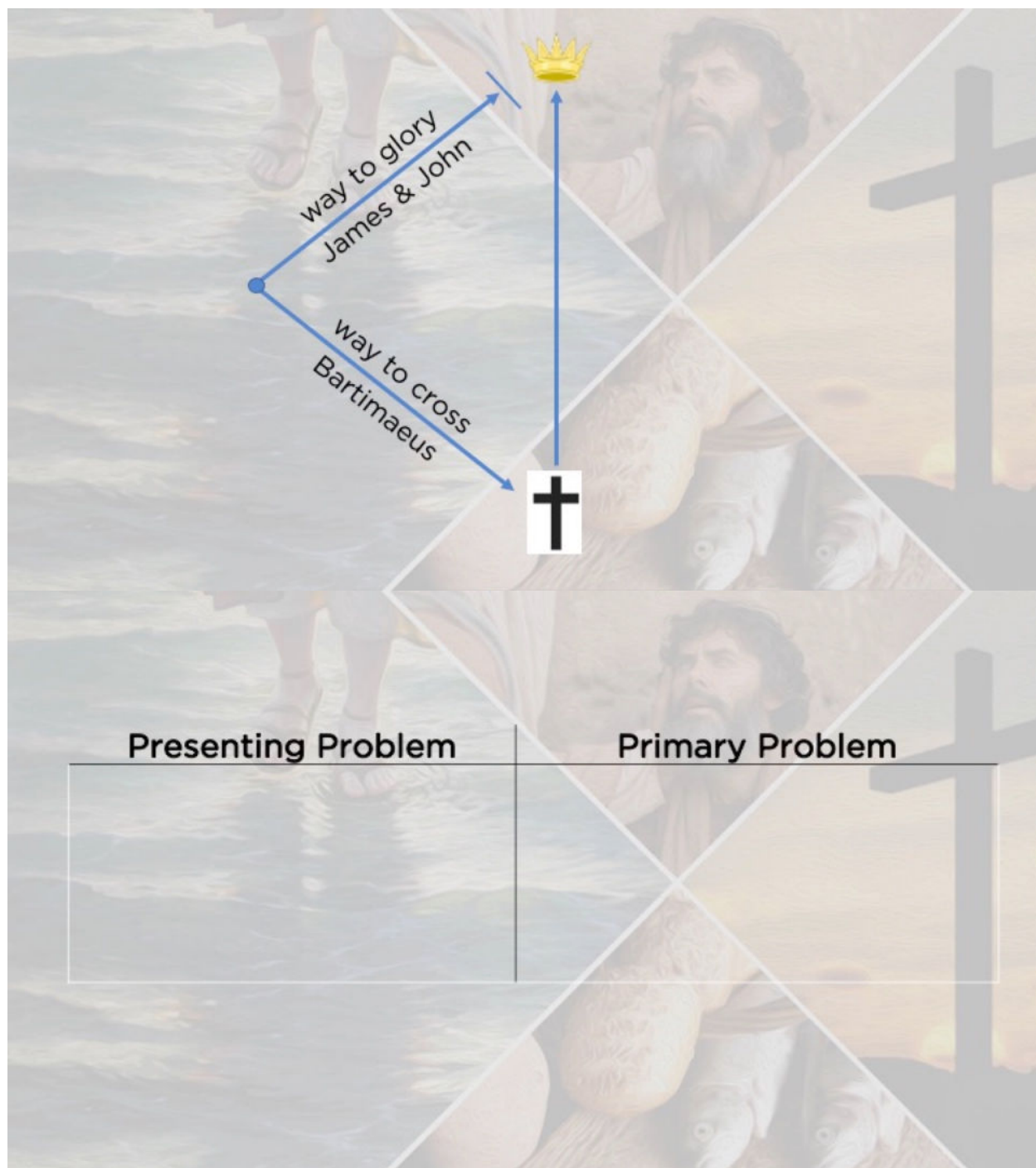
“Jesus has transformed Bartimaeus from a beggar beside the road (v. 46) to a disciple on the road (v. 52).

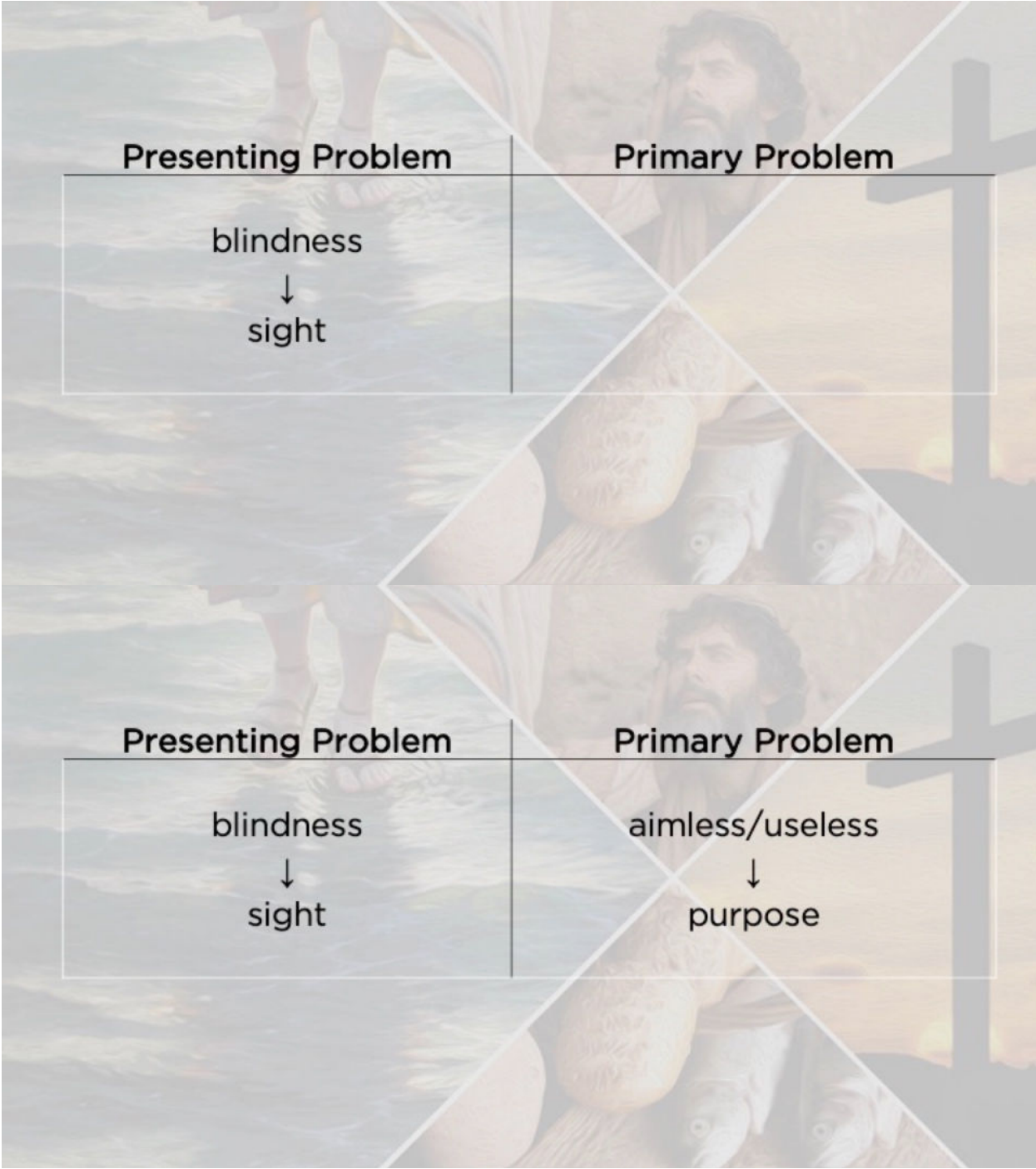


“Faith that does not lead to discipleship is not saving faith. Whoever asks of Jesus must be willing to follow Jesus ... even on the uphill road to the cross.”

James Edwards

“What do you want me to do for you?”





Presenting Problem

Primary Problem

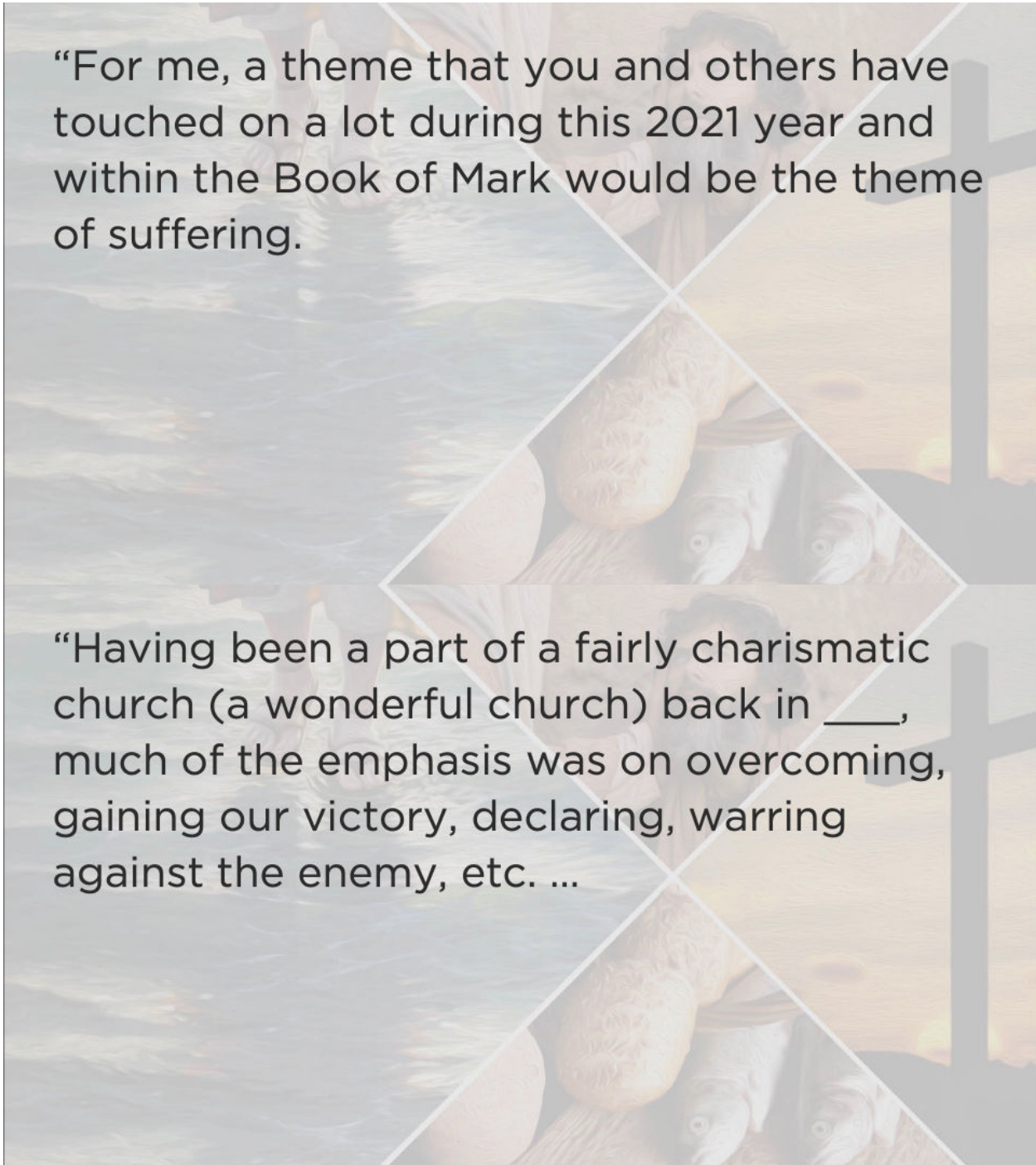
blindness
↓
sight

Presenting Problem

Primary Problem

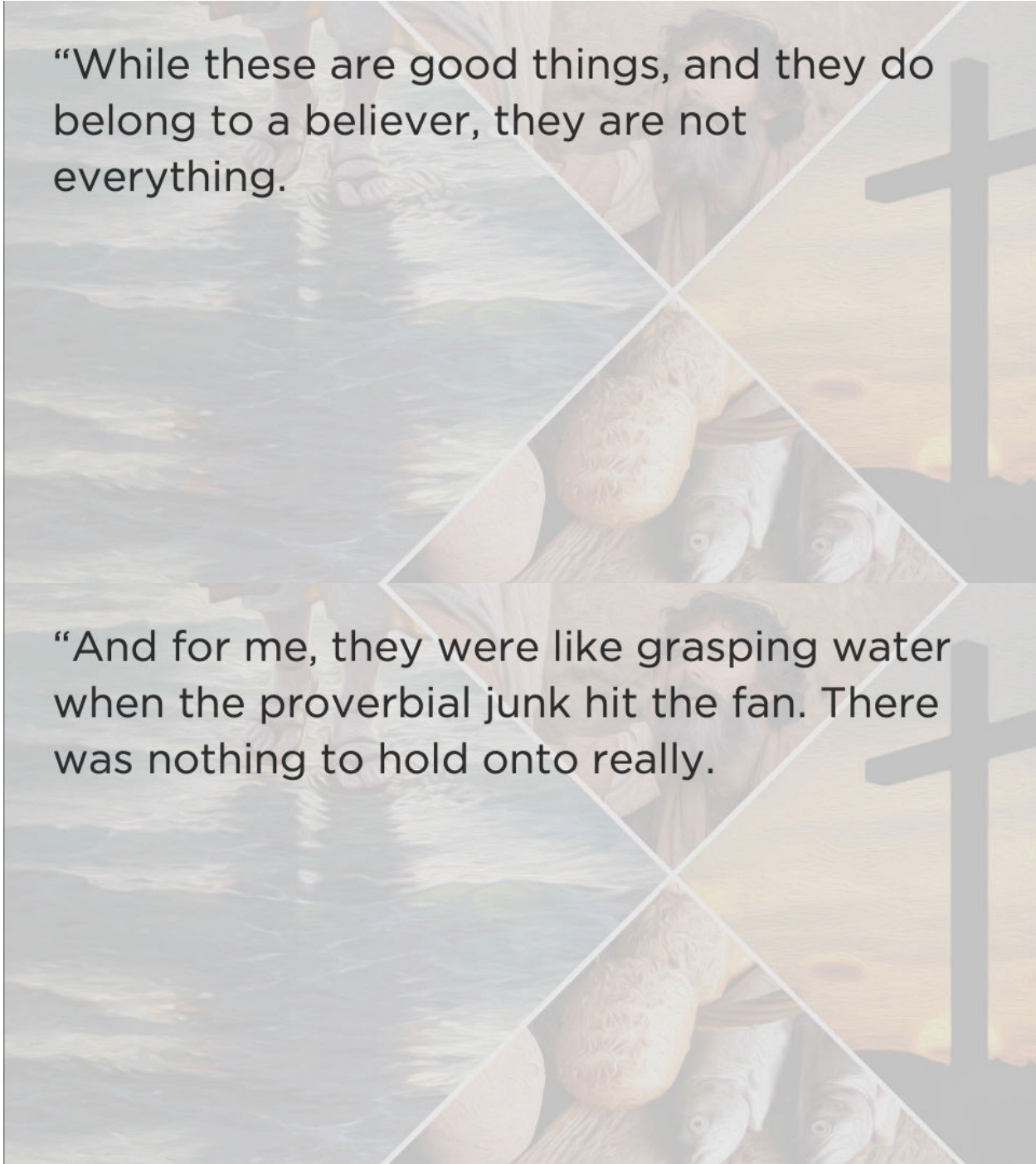
blindness
↓
sight

aimless/useless
↓
purpose



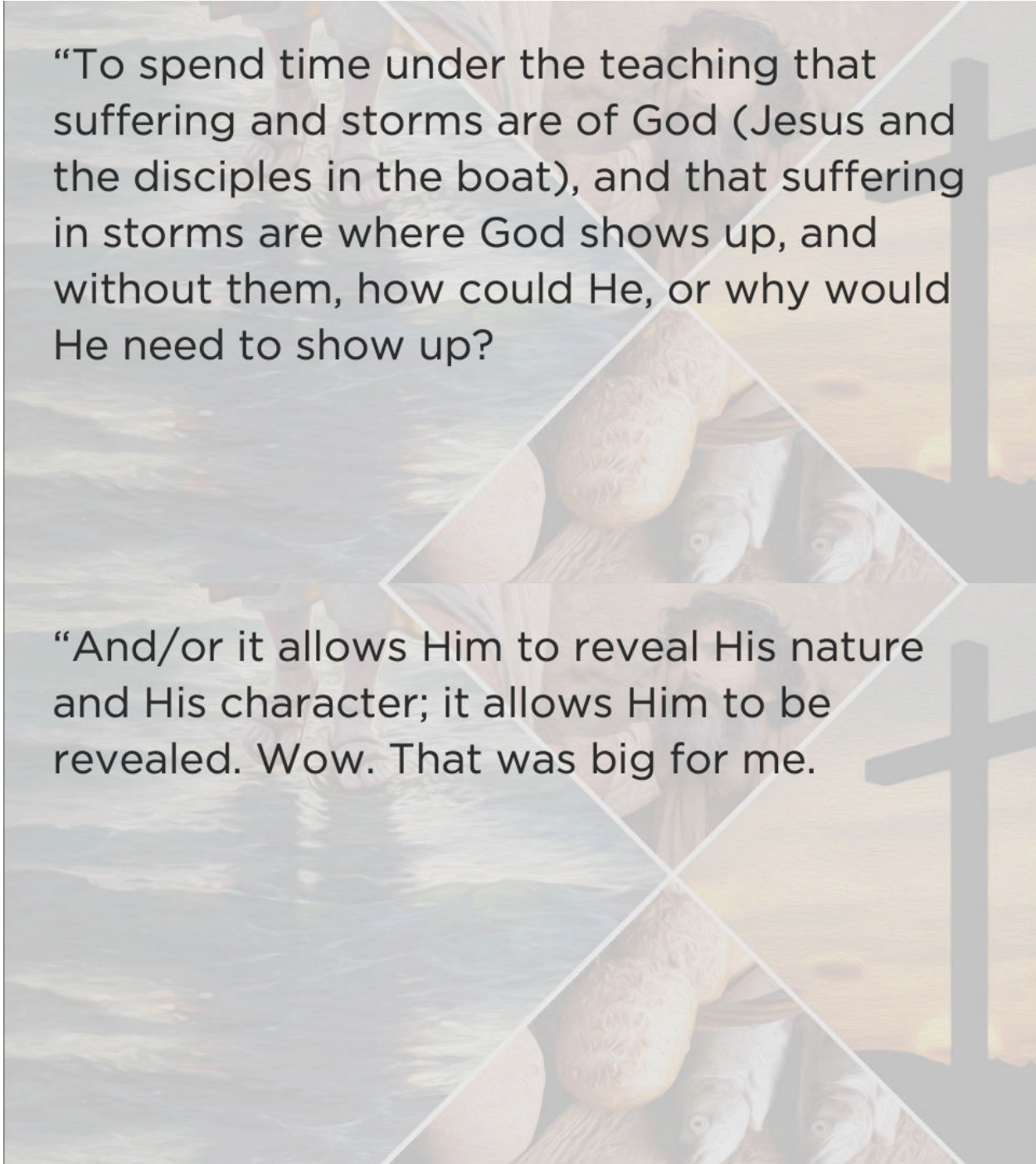
“For me, a theme that you and others have touched on a lot during this 2021 year and within the Book of Mark would be the theme of suffering.

“Having been a part of a fairly charismatic church (a wonderful church) back in ____, much of the emphasis was on overcoming, gaining our victory, declaring, warring against the enemy, etc. ...



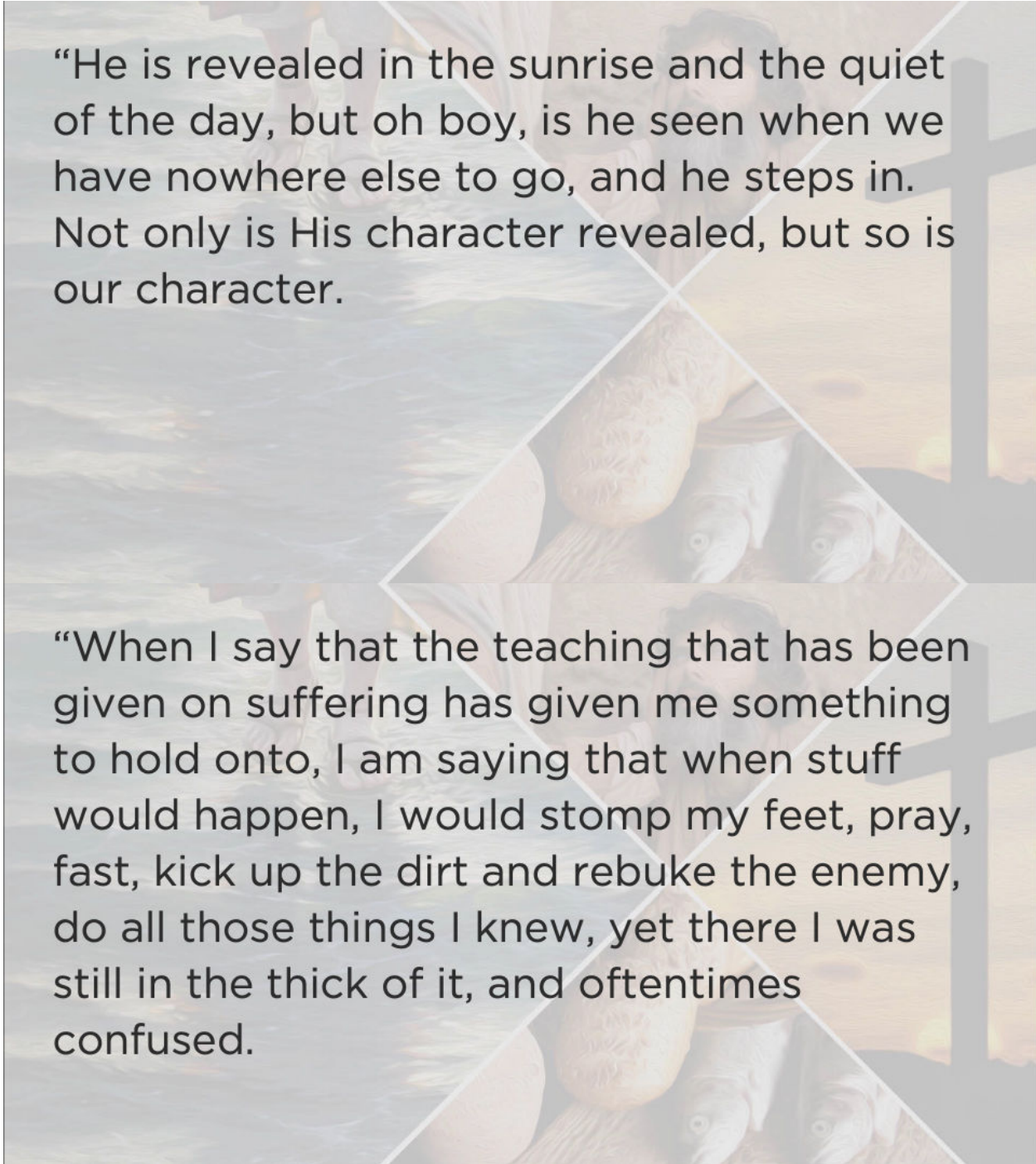
“While these are good things, and they do belong to a believer, they are not everything.

“And for me, they were like grasping water when the proverbial junk hit the fan. There was nothing to hold onto really.

The background of the slide features a painting of Jesus calming the storm, with Jesus in the center of a boat, his hands raised, and the sea around him. A large, faint cross is superimposed over the entire scene. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

“To spend time under the teaching that suffering and storms are of God (Jesus and the disciples in the boat), and that suffering in storms are where God shows up, and without them, how could He, or why would He need to show up?

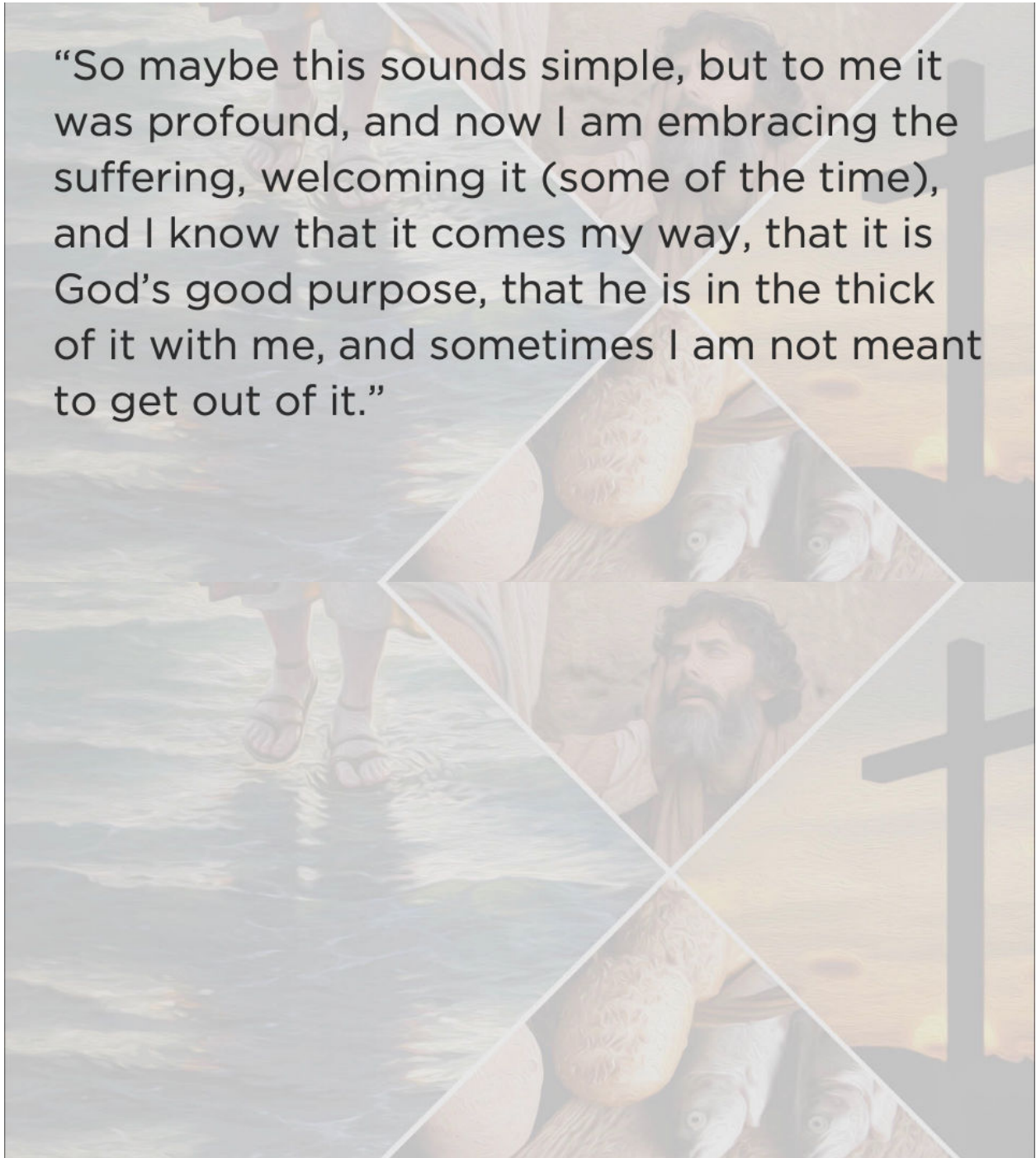
“And/or it allows Him to reveal His nature and His character; it allows Him to be revealed. Wow. That was big for me.

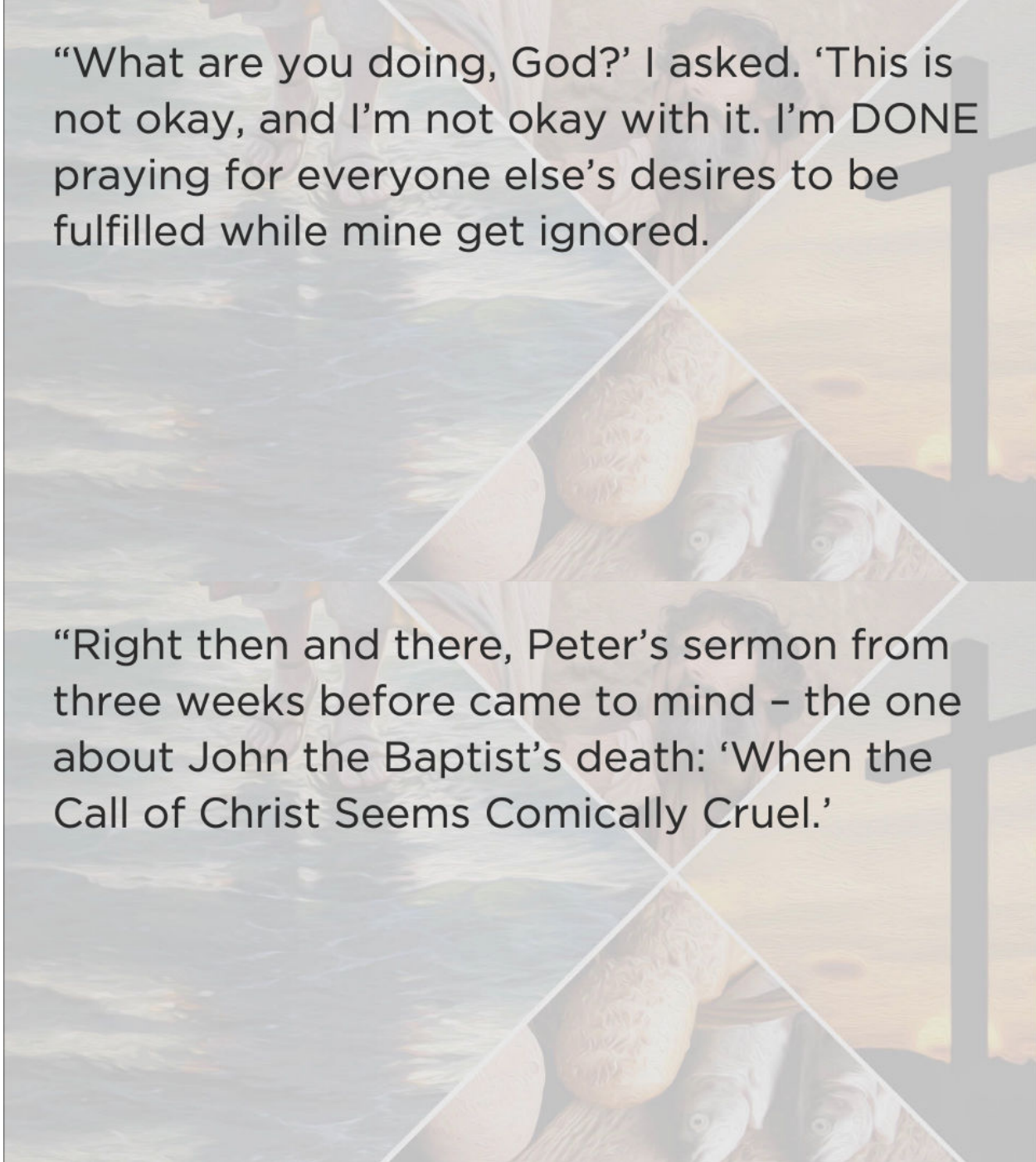


“He is revealed in the sunrise and the quiet of the day, but oh boy, is he seen when we have nowhere else to go, and he steps in. Not only is His character revealed, but so is our character.

“When I say that the teaching that has been given on suffering has given me something to hold onto, I am saying that when stuff would happen, I would stomp my feet, pray, fast, kick up the dirt and rebuke the enemy, do all those things I knew, yet there I was still in the thick of it, and oftentimes confused.

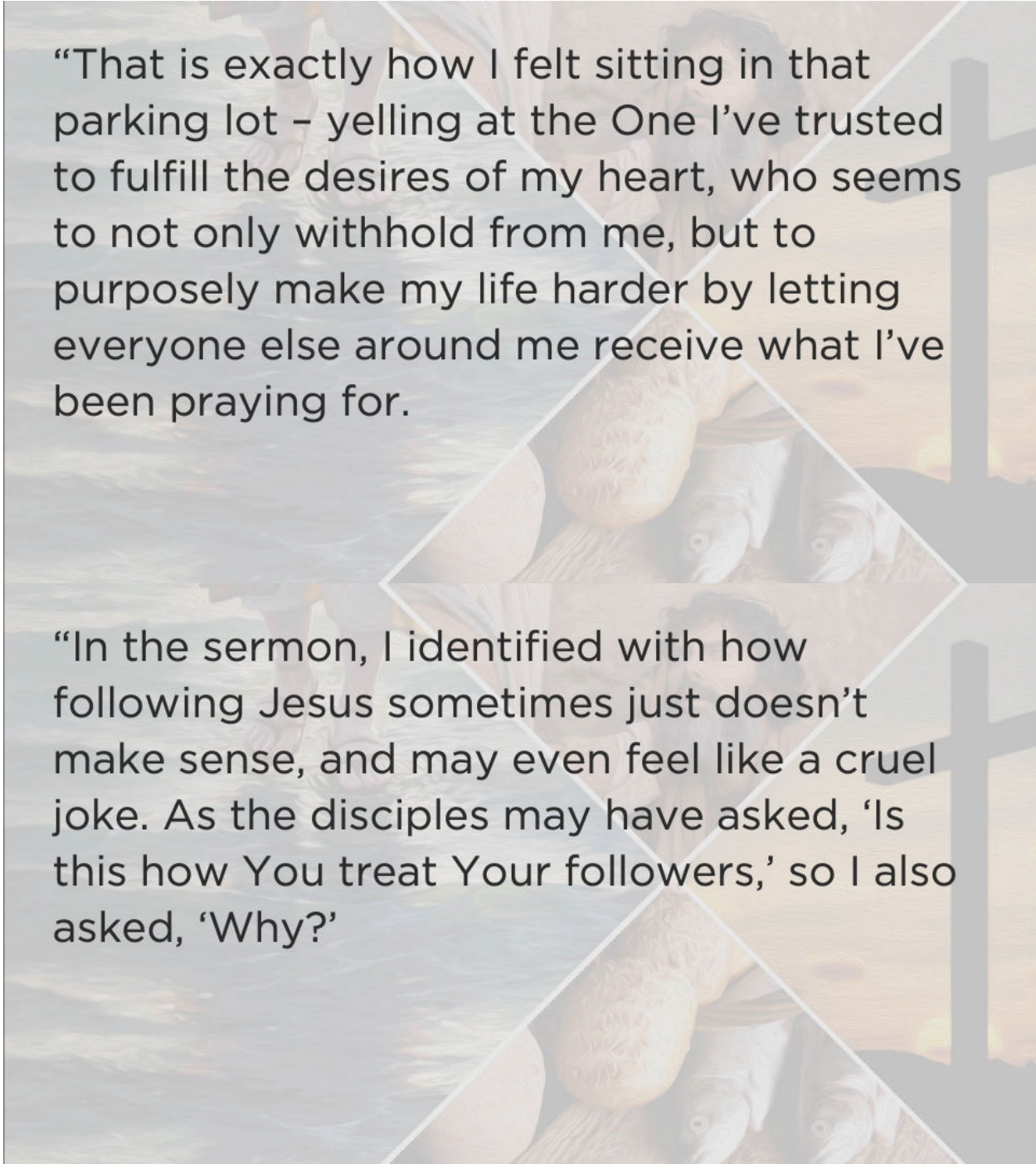
“So maybe this sounds simple, but to me it was profound, and now I am embracing the suffering, welcoming it (some of the time), and I know that it comes my way, that it is God’s good purpose, that he is in the thick of it with me, and sometimes I am not meant to get out of it.”





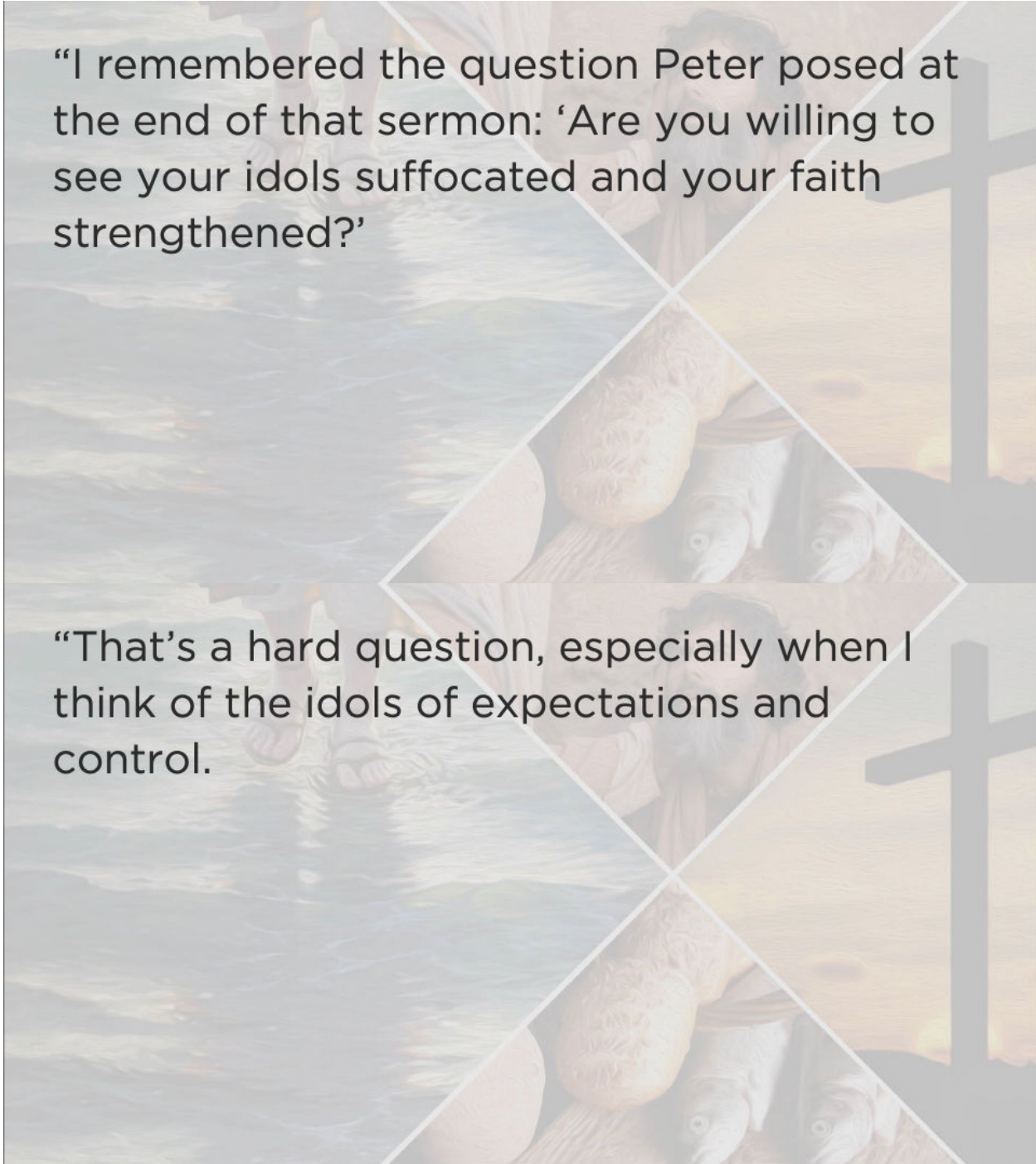
“What are you doing, God?’ I asked. ‘This is not okay, and I’m not okay with it. I’m DONE praying for everyone else’s desires to be fulfilled while mine get ignored.

“Right then and there, Peter’s sermon from three weeks before came to mind – the one about John the Baptist’s death: ‘When the Call of Christ Seems Comically Cruel.’



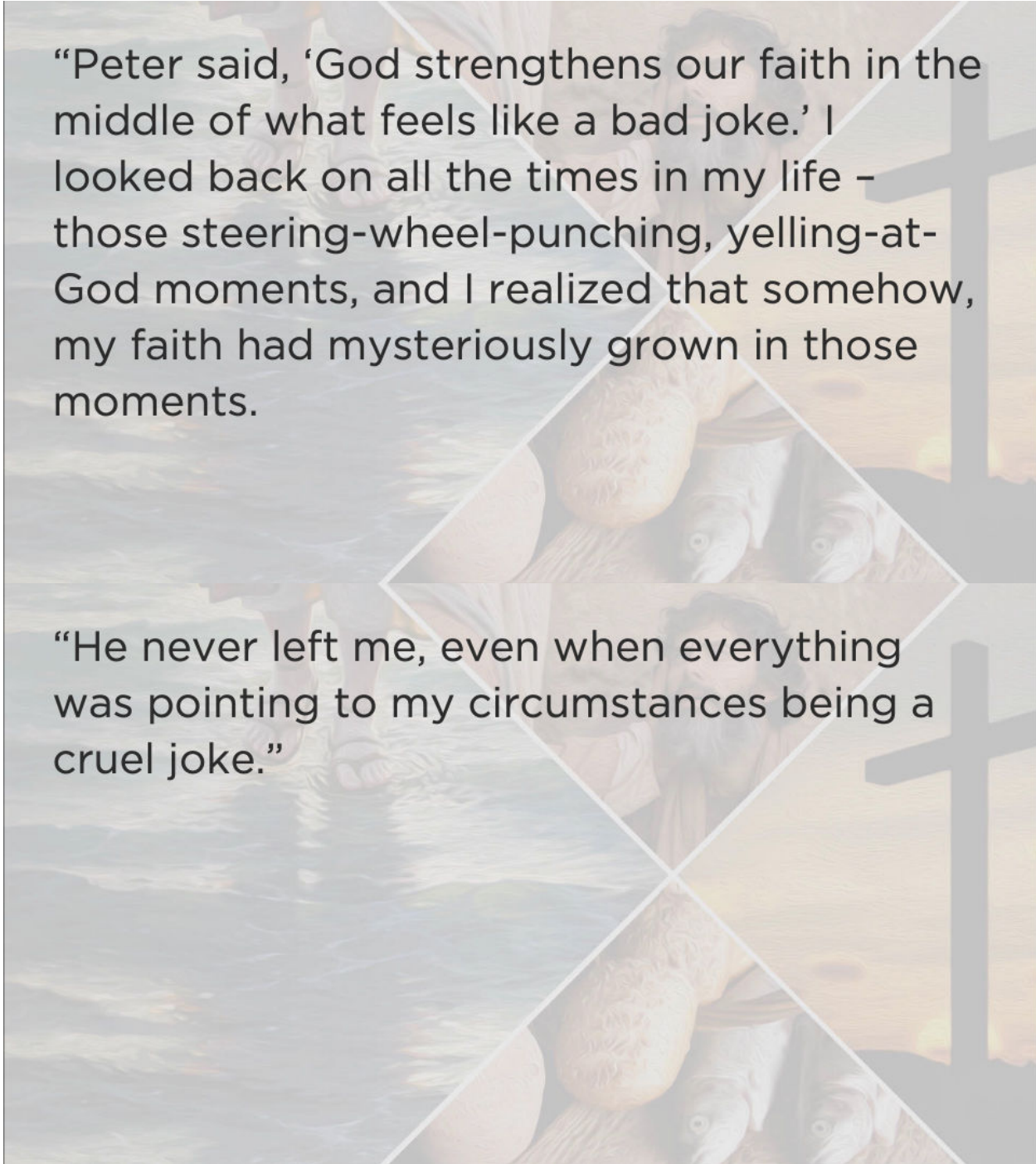
“That is exactly how I felt sitting in that parking lot – yelling at the One I’ve trusted to fulfill the desires of my heart, who seems to not only withhold from me, but to purposely make my life harder by letting everyone else around me receive what I’ve been praying for.

“In the sermon, I identified with how following Jesus sometimes just doesn’t make sense, and may even feel like a cruel joke. As the disciples may have asked, ‘Is this how You treat Your followers,’ so I also asked, ‘Why?’



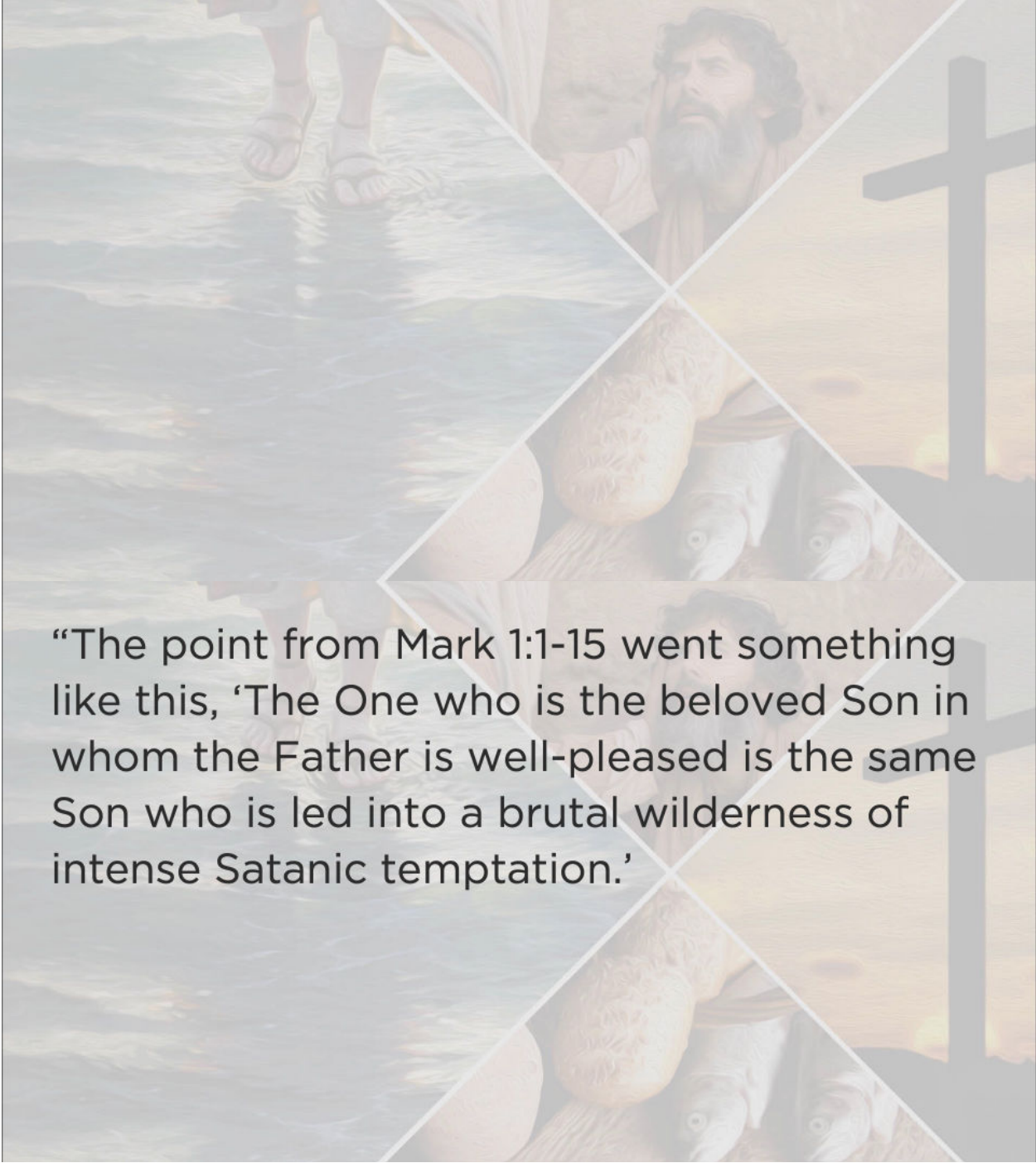
“I remembered the question Peter posed at the end of that sermon: ‘Are you willing to see your idols suffocated and your faith strengthened?’

“That’s a hard question, especially when I think of the idols of expectations and control.

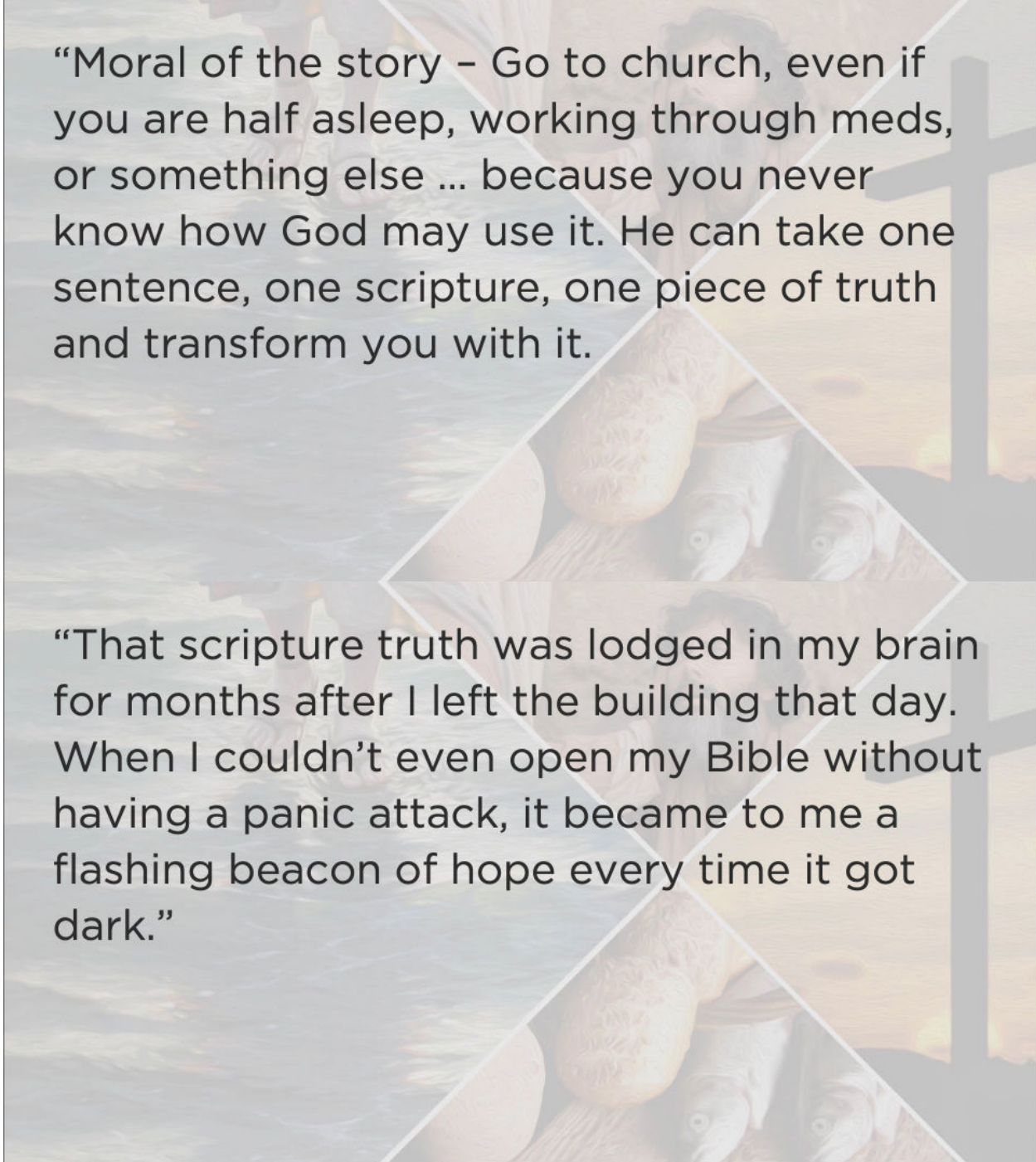
The background of the slide is a composite image. On the left, there's a depiction of a figure, likely Jesus, in a small boat on a body of water. On the right, a large, dark cross is visible against a lighter, possibly sunset or sunrise, sky. In the center, there are several fish, likely representing the miracle of the loaves and fishes. The entire background is overlaid with a large, faint, white 'X' shape.

“Peter said, ‘God strengthens our faith in the middle of what feels like a bad joke.’ I looked back on all the times in my life – those steering-wheel-punching, yelling-at-God moments, and I realized that somehow, my faith had mysteriously grown in those moments.

“He never left me, even when everything was pointing to my circumstances being a cruel joke.”

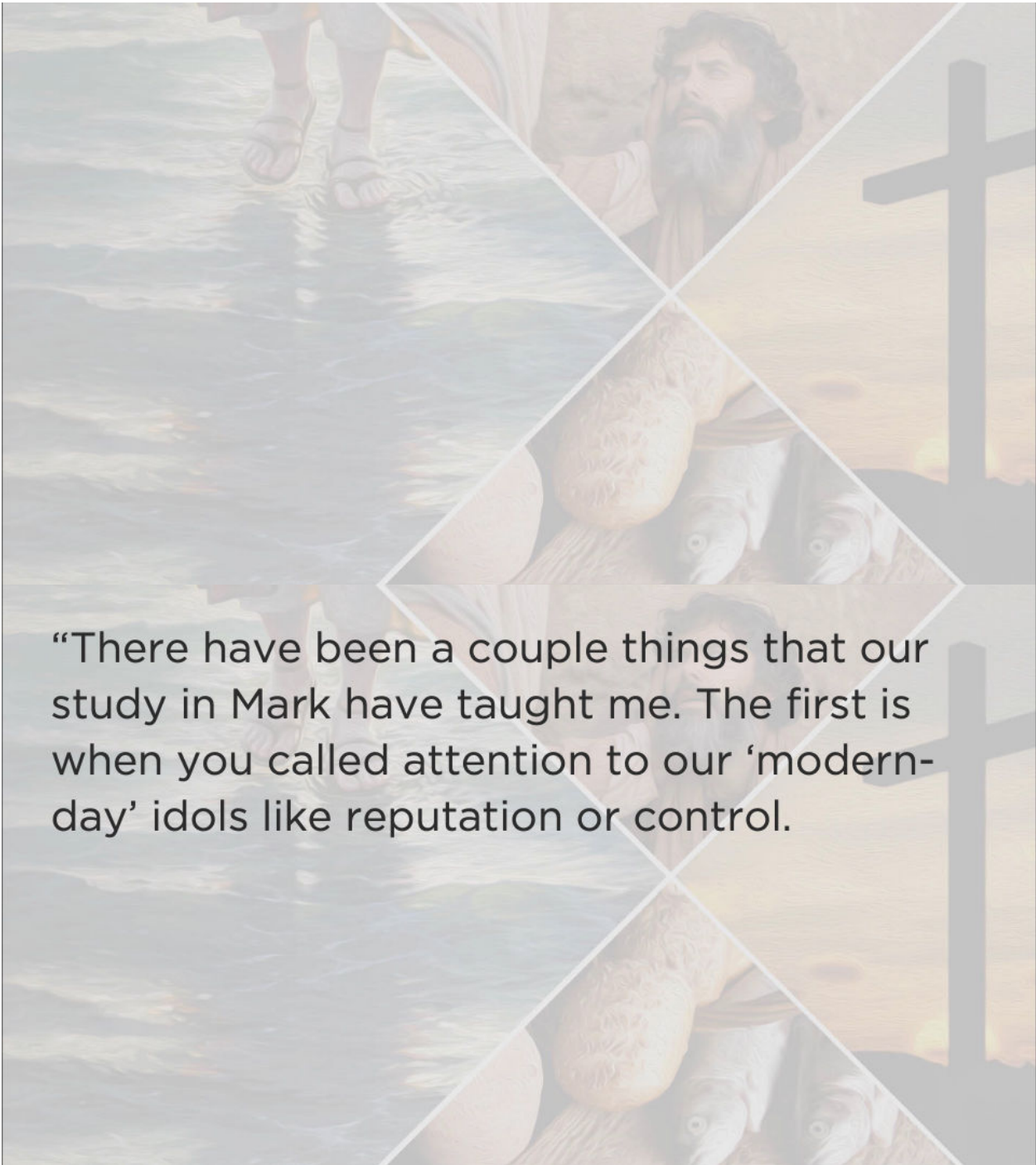


“The point from Mark 1:1-15 went something like this, ‘The One who is the beloved Son in whom the Father is well-pleased is the same Son who is led into a brutal wilderness of intense Satanic temptation.’

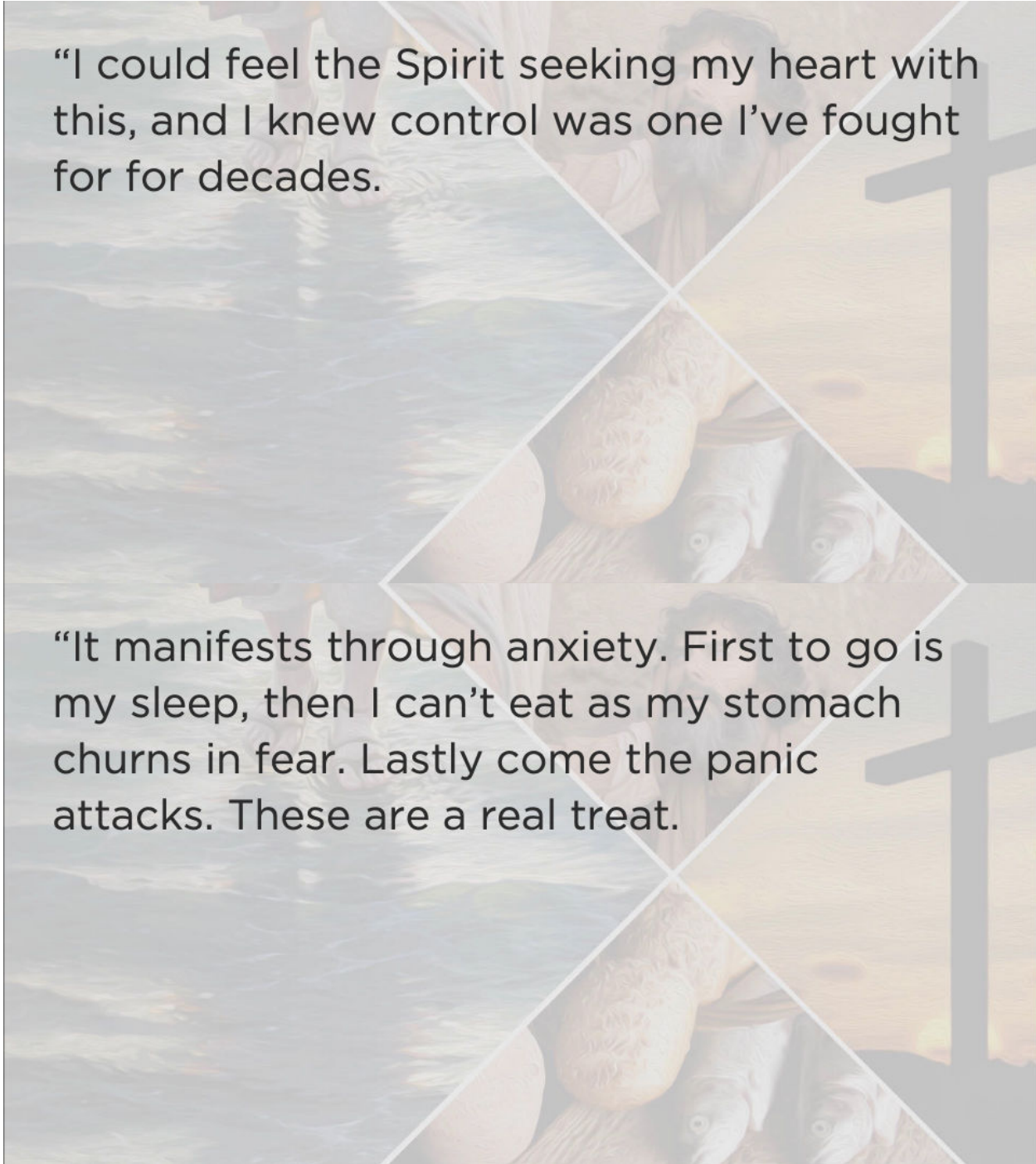


“Moral of the story – Go to church, even if you are half asleep, working through meds, or something else ... because you never know how God may use it. He can take one sentence, one scripture, one piece of truth and transform you with it.

“That scripture truth was lodged in my brain for months after I left the building that day. When I couldn’t even open my Bible without having a panic attack, it became to me a flashing beacon of hope every time it got dark.”

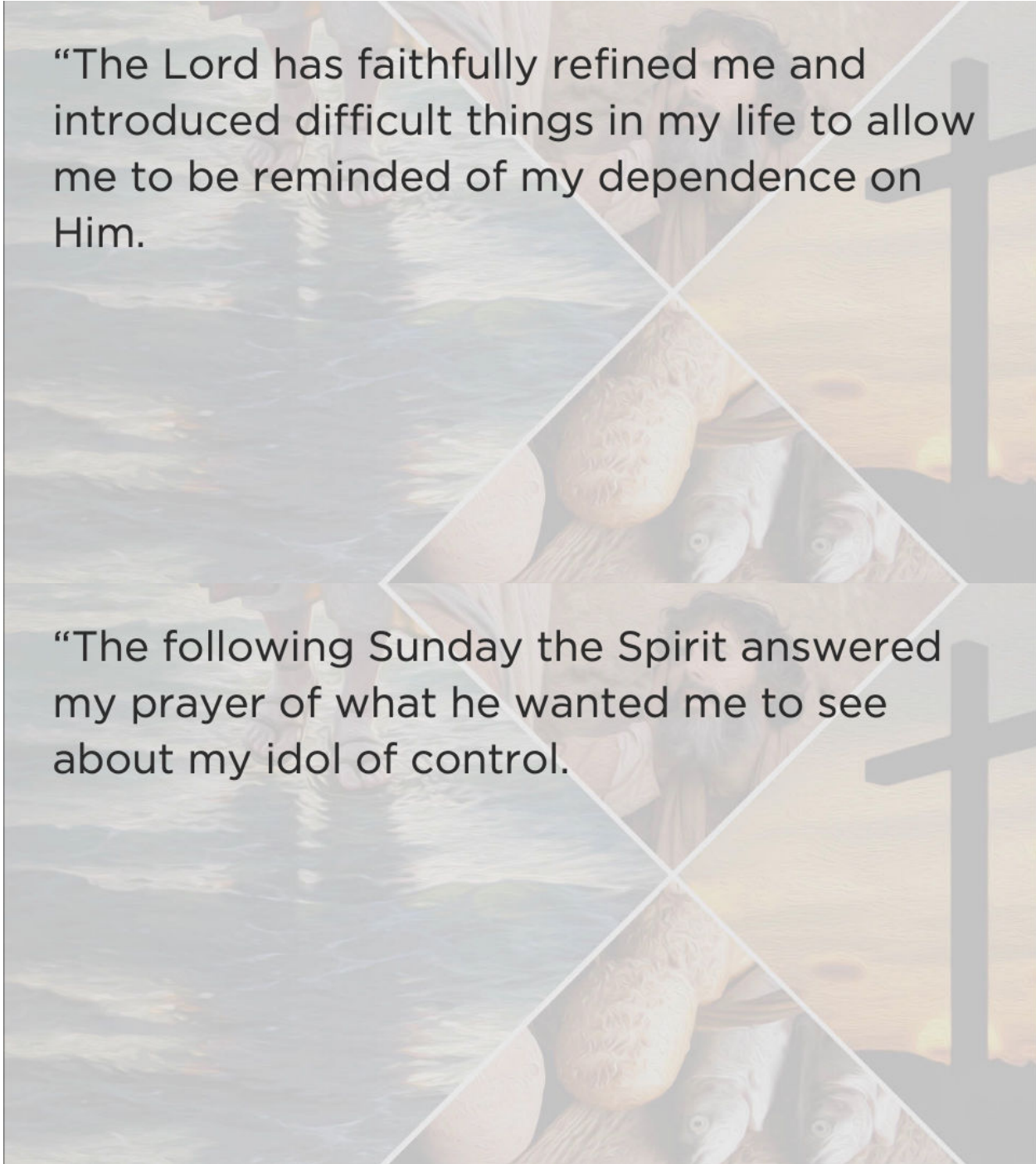


“There have been a couple things that our study in Mark have taught me. The first is when you called attention to our ‘modern-day’ idols like reputation or control.



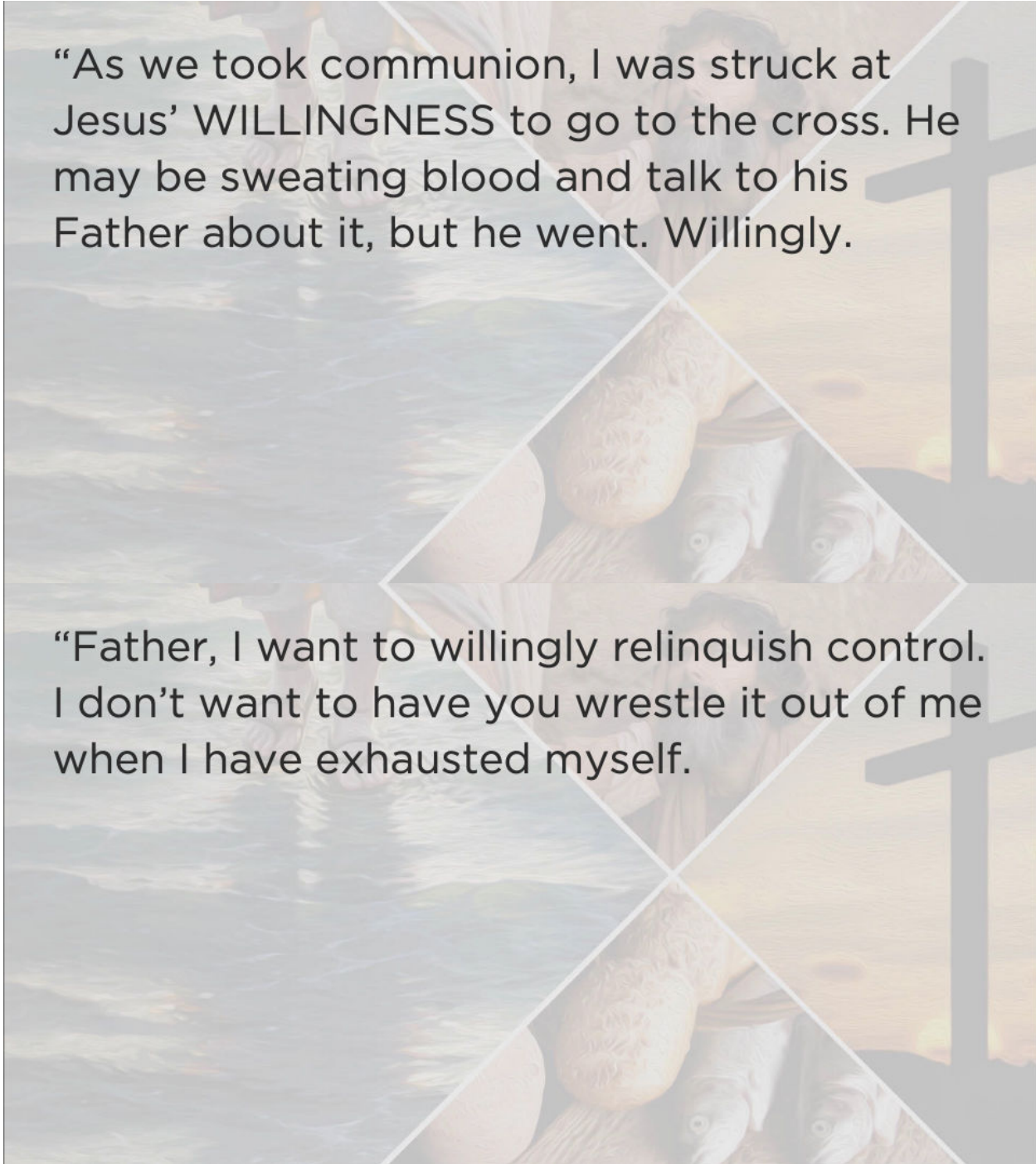
“I could feel the Spirit seeking my heart with this, and I knew control was one I’ve fought for for decades.

“It manifests through anxiety. First to go is my sleep, then I can’t eat as my stomach churns in fear. Lastly come the panic attacks. These are a real treat.



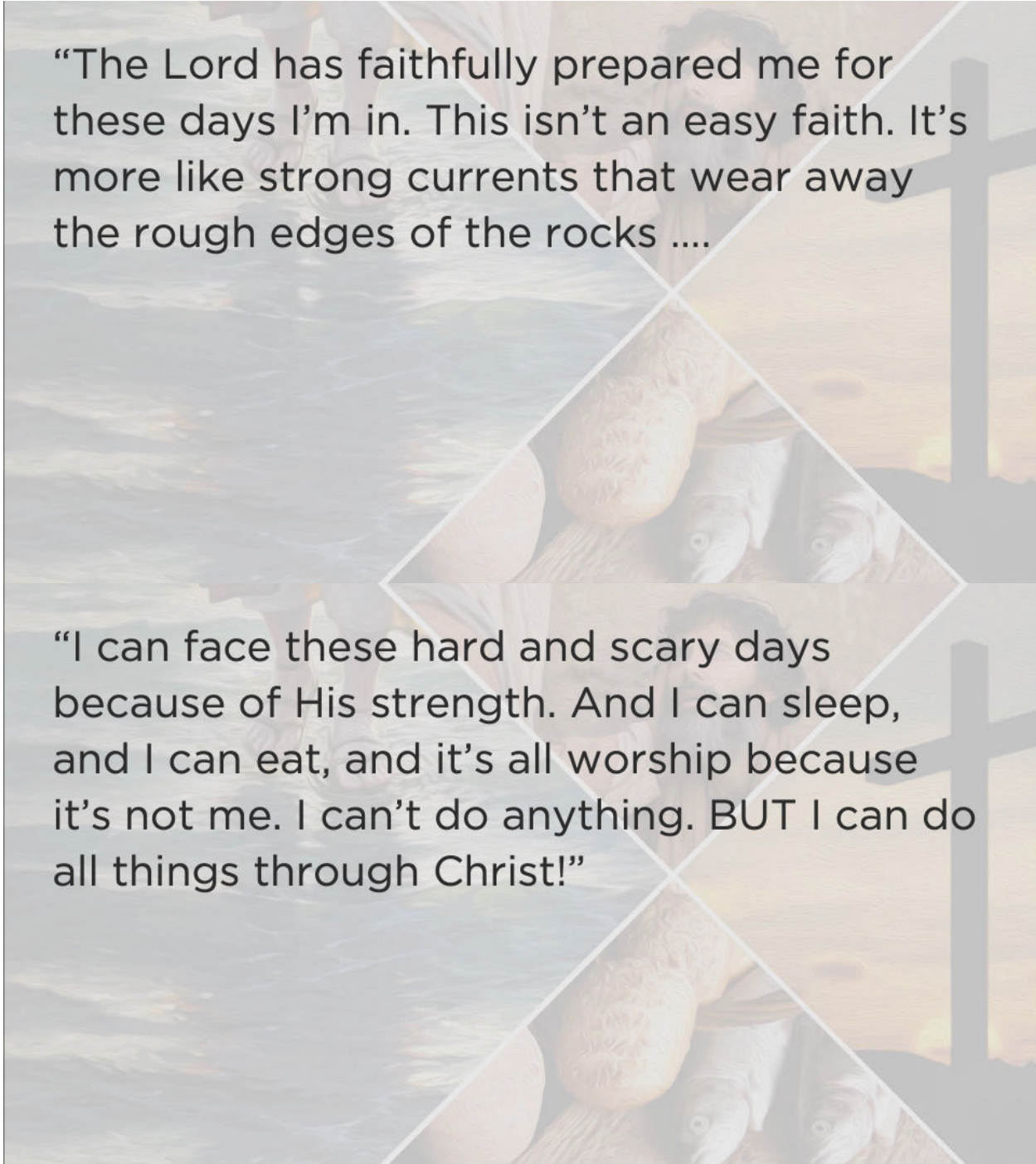
“The Lord has faithfully refined me and introduced difficult things in my life to allow me to be reminded of my dependence on Him.

“The following Sunday the Spirit answered my prayer of what he wanted me to see about my idol of control.

The background of the slide is a collage. On the right side, there is a large, faint, grey cross. Overlaid on the left and center is a circular image of a fisherman in a yellow raincoat and hat, carrying a large cod fish on his back. The entire background has a soft, painterly texture with muted colors.

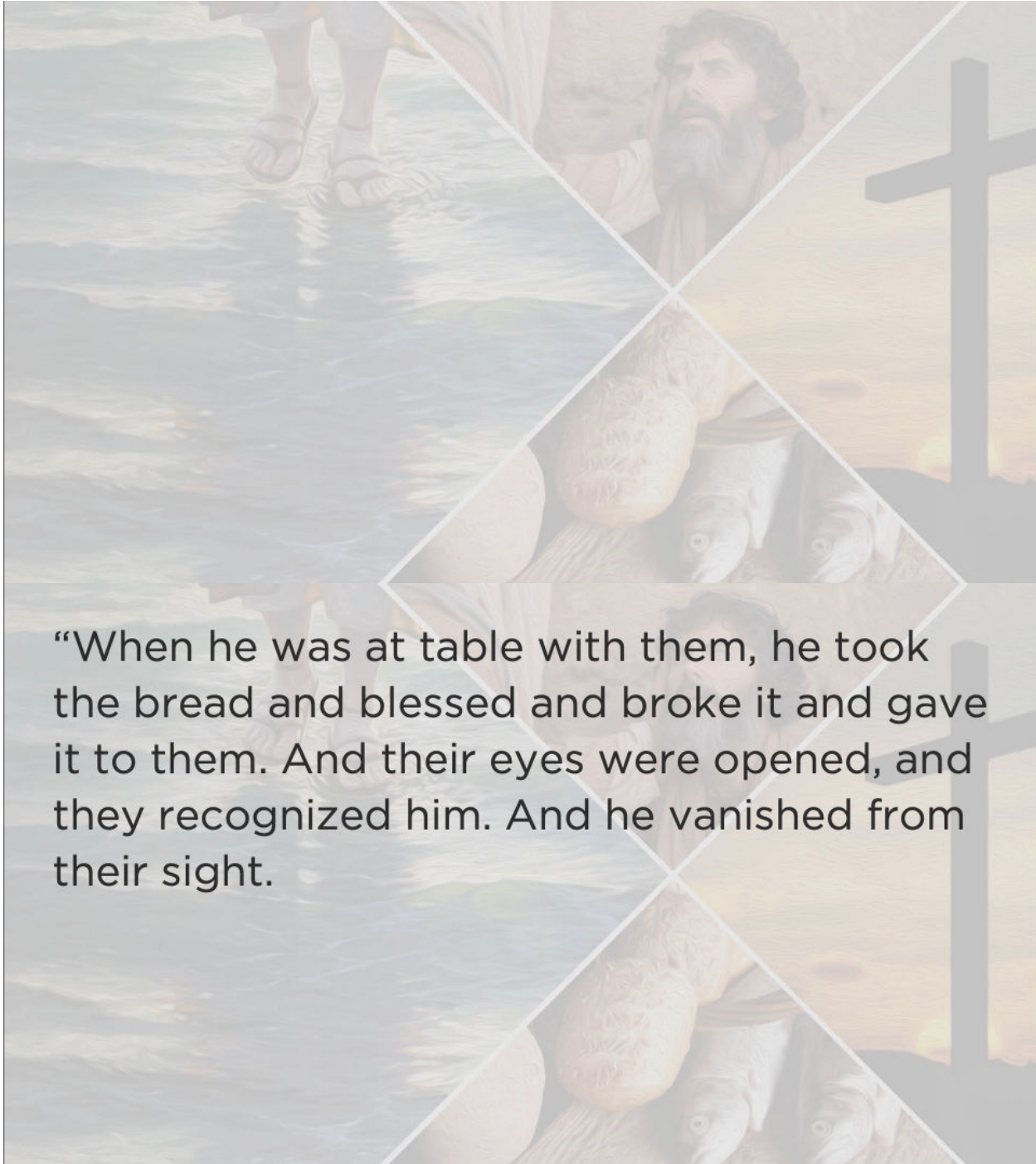
“As we took communion, I was struck at Jesus’ WILLINGNESS to go to the cross. He may be sweating blood and talk to his Father about it, but he went. Willingly.

“Father, I want to willingly relinquish control. I don’t want to have you wrestle it out of me when I have exhausted myself.

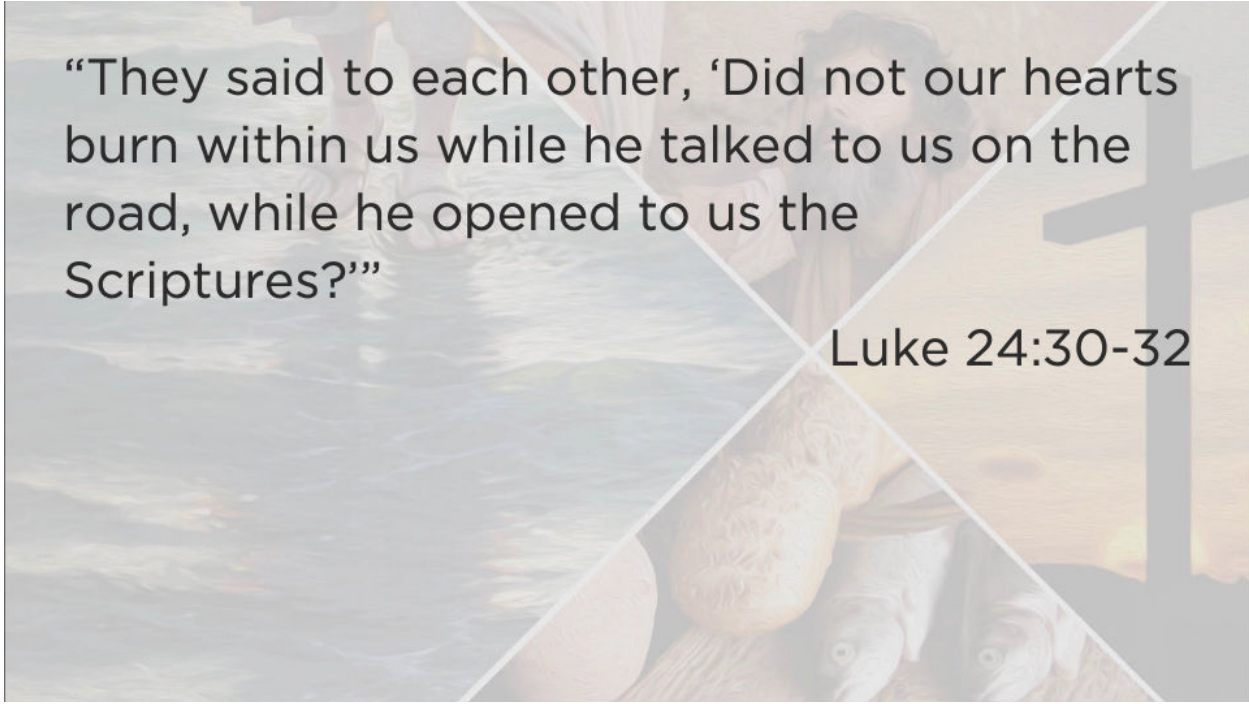


“The Lord has faithfully prepared me for these days I’m in. This isn’t an easy faith. It’s more like strong currents that wear away the rough edges of the rocks

“I can face these hard and scary days because of His strength. And I can sleep, and I can eat, and it’s all worship because it’s not me. I can’t do anything. BUT I can do all things through Christ!”



“When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.



“They said to each other, ‘Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?’”

Luke 24:30-32