

Born For Greatness

— The Gospel of Mark 10:35-45 —



The Descent of Christmas

Advent 2022 - Mercy Hill Church



**If you had to
summarize the
Christmas story
with one word,
what word would
you choose?**

— Paul David Tripp —



**Do you have a word
in mind? Maybe
you're thinking that
it's not just possible
to summarize the
greatest story ever
with just one word.**



**It doesn't take
paragraph after
paragraph, filling
volume after volume to
communicate how
God chose to respond
to the outrageous
rebellion of Adam and
Eve and the subtle and
not-so-subtle rebellion
of everyone since.**



**The single word that
captures God's
response to sin even
better than the word
grace is not a
theological word;
it is a name.
That name is Jesus.**



**The Lord of glory
didn't choose to bask
in his glory; instead
he emptied himself,
took the form of not
just a man, but of
a lowly servant.
What humility!**



**...the humility of Jesus
didn't end with his
birth; it shaped the
way he lived. He lived
a humble, homeless
life of daily service.**

**The one whom
creation was made to
serve came not to be
served, but to serve.**

— Paul David Tripp —



Born For Greatness

— The Gospel of Mark 10:35-45 —





Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.

Jesus of Nazareth
The Gospel of Mark 10:24



**But many who are first
will be last, and the last first.**

Jesus of Nazareth
The Gospel of Mark 10:31

32 And they were on the road, going up to **Jerusalem**, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were **amazed**, and those who followed were **afraid**.

32 And taking the twelve again, **he began to tell them what was going to happen to him....,**

33 saying, “See, we are going up to **Jerusalem**, and **the Son of Man** will be delivered up to the chief priests and scribes, and they will **condemn him** to death and **deliver him** over to the Gentiles. 34 And they will **spit on him** and **flog him** and **kill him**. And after three days **he will rise**.

33 saying, “See, we are going up to **Jerusalem, and the Son of Man** will be delivered up to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. 34 And they will spit on him and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.

**...behold, with the clouds of
heaven there came one like
a son of man, and he came
to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.**



**...to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and
languages should serve him;
his dominion is an everlasting
dominion, which shall not pass
away, and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed.**

— cf. Daniel 7:13-14 —



35 And **James** and **John**, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, **“Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.”**

— The Gospel of Mark, Chapter 10 —

36 And he said to them, **“What do you want me to do for you?”**

36 And he said to them, **“What do you want me to do for you?”** 37 And they said to him, **“Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.”**

38 Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am to be baptized?”

— The Gospel of Mark, Chapter 10 —

39 And they said to him, **“We are able.”**

40 And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be **indignant at James and John.**



42 And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 But it shall not be so among you....”

**I want to be
a queen so
I can boss
everyone
around!**



43 But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.

— The Gospel of Mark, Chapter 10 —

43 **But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your **servant**,** 44 and whoever would be first among you must be **slave** of all.

an attendant, a waiter, a server

an indentured servant, bond-servant, slave

Important Point

**Jesus is not debunking
the desire for greatness,
but only our definition
of greatness.**

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? You have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings, and crowned him with glory and honor.

— Psalm 8 —



Important Point

We are designed for greatness, but we naturally think that means people recognizing our greatness and serving us. Jesus turns this notion inside out.



Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

— The Apostle Paul in Philippians 2:3 —

43 But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.

43 But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

**Jesus defined true greatness
not by being served, but rather
in becoming the greatest servant.**





Jesus Christ was possessed of more true greatness in a stable than any other king ever possessed in a palace.

— Charles Haddon Spurgeon —

...the humility of Jesus didn't end with his birth; it shaped the way he lived. He lived a humble, homeless life of daily service.

The one whom creation was made to serve came not to be served, but to serve.



**It would have taken
great humility for
Jesus to leave his
rightful place as God
and live a lavishly rich
life on earth, because
no human wealth or
power could compare
with his rightful place.**



**But he willingly
emptied himself of
all those rights and
privileges, because
he didn't come for
himself—he came
for us.**

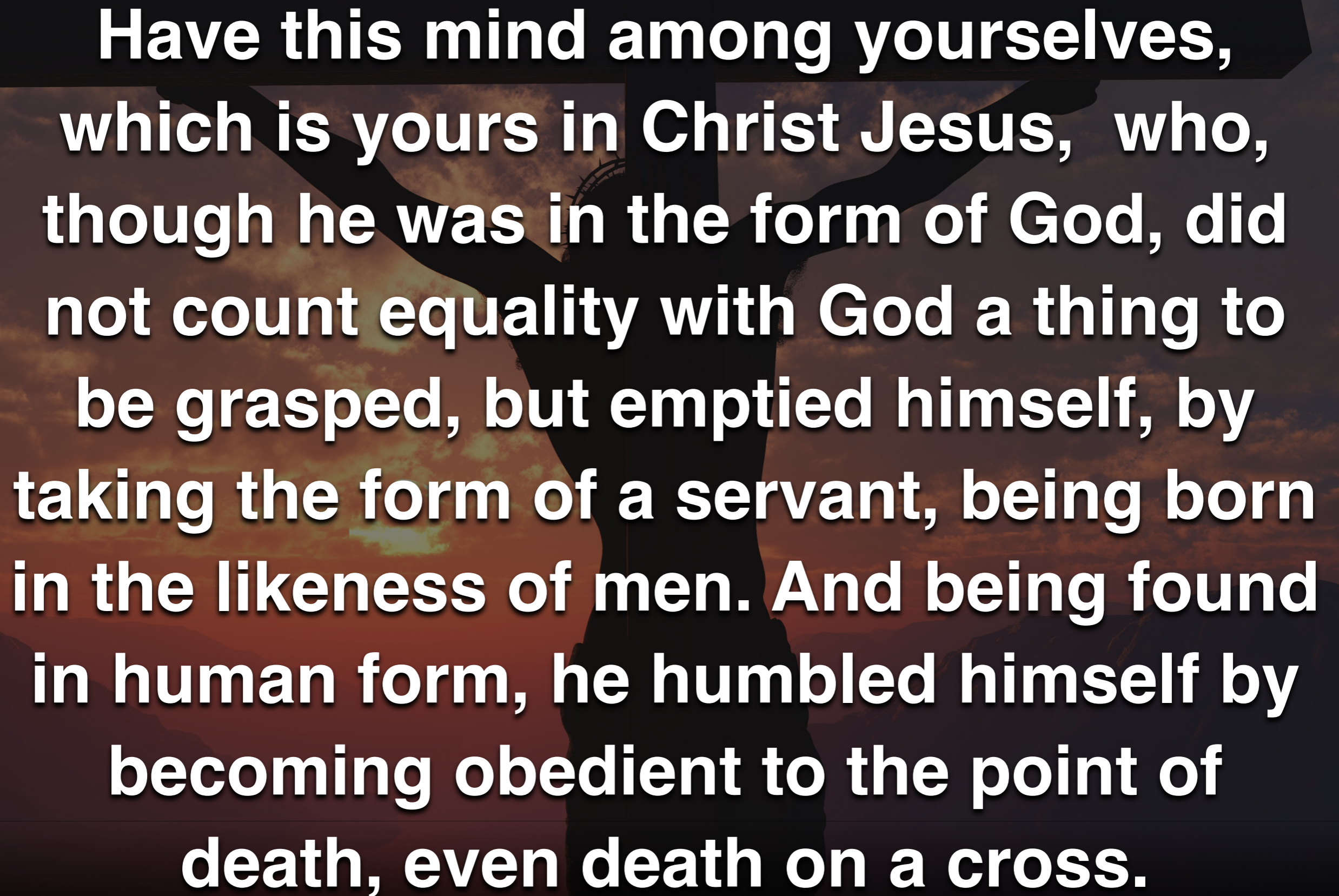


**But his humility didn't
even end with his
humble servant's life:
Jesus' humility
carried him to the
cross. Without words
or actions in his own
defense, he humbly
became the final
sacrificial lamb, dying
so that we would live.**

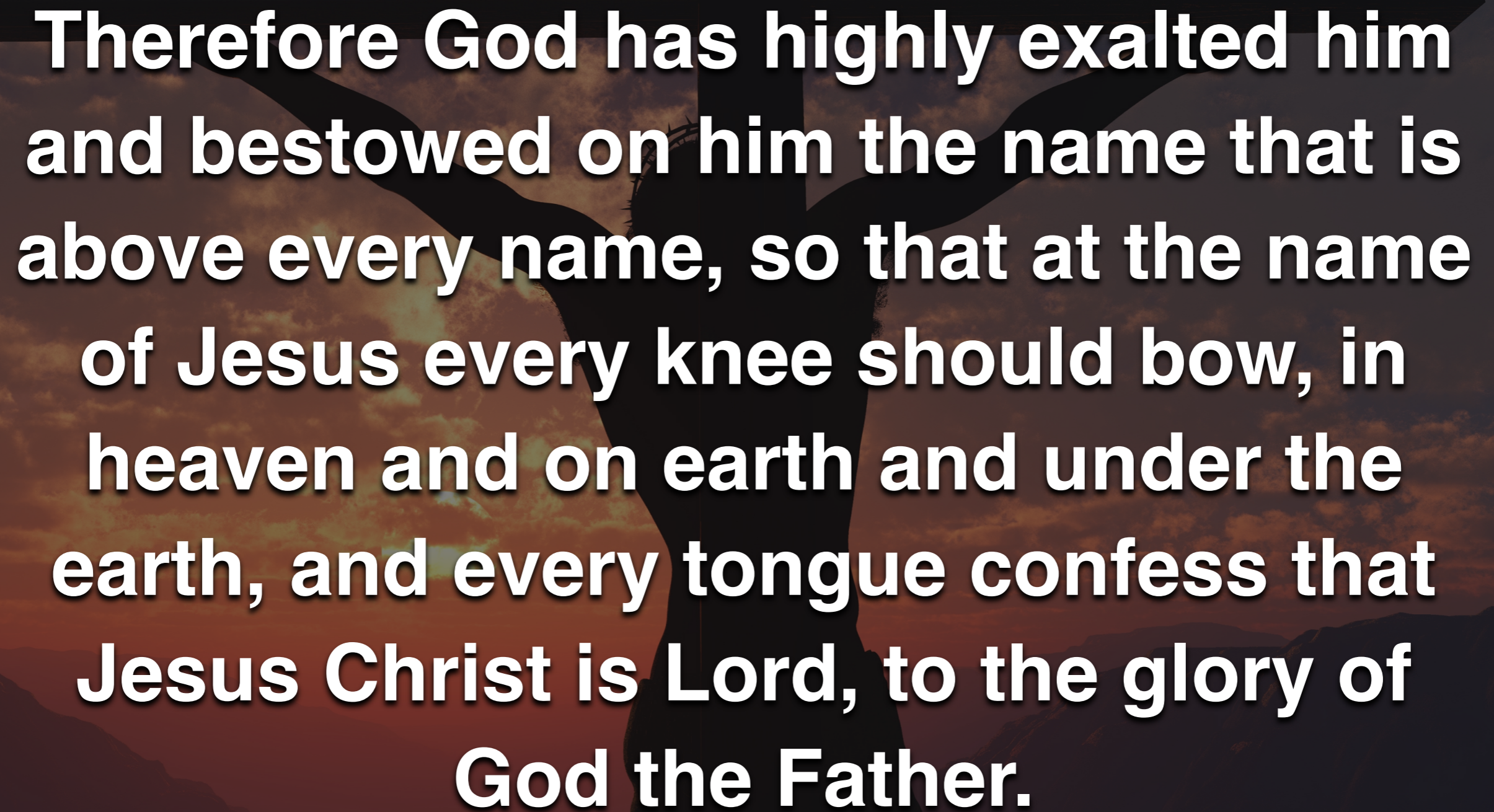
— Paul David Tripp —





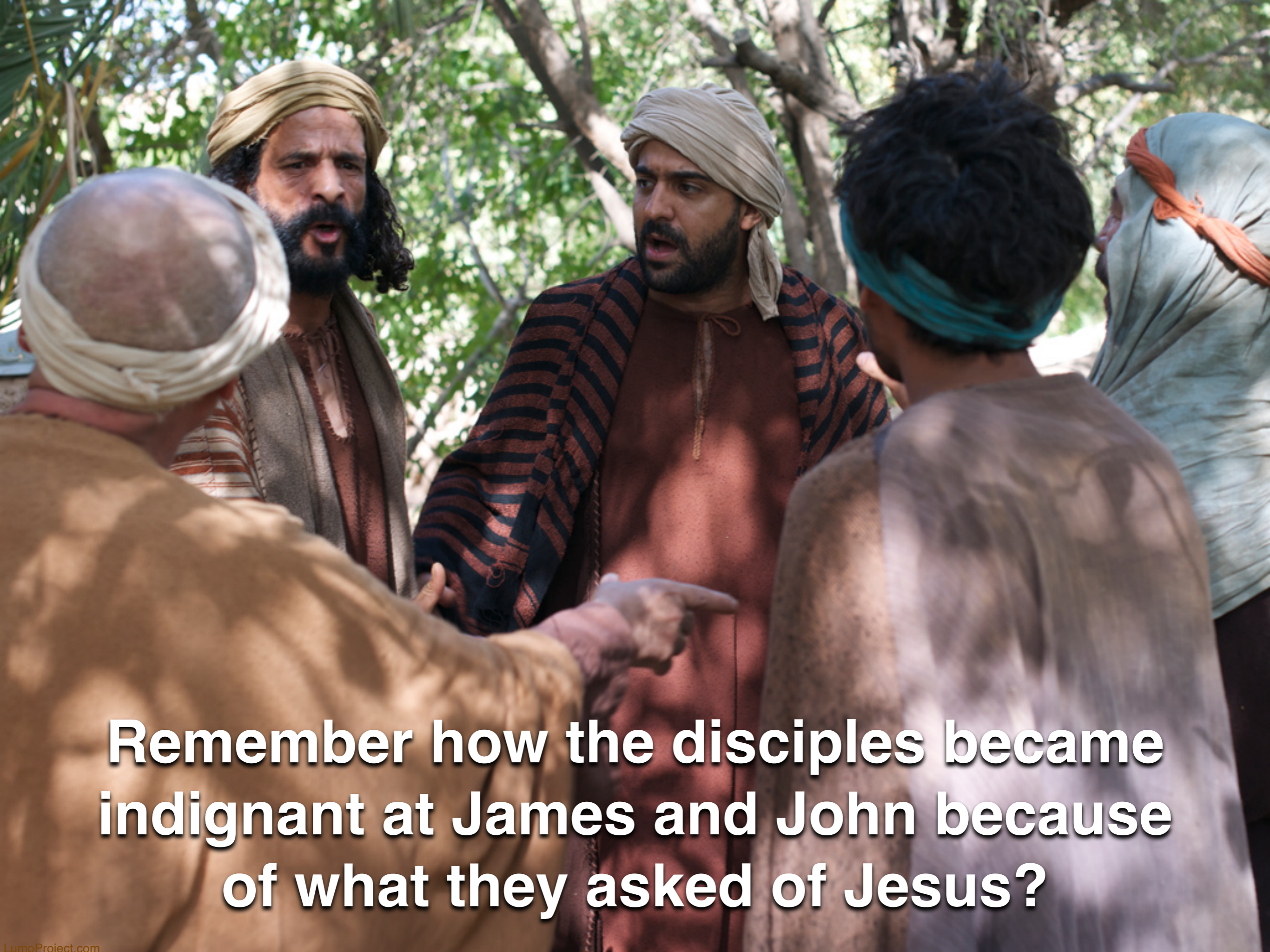
A silhouette of a person on a cross is centered in the background. The person's arms are outstretched horizontally, forming the cross's arms. The background is a dramatic sky with orange, yellow, and dark blue tones, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The text is overlaid on this image in a large, white, bold font with a slight drop shadow.

**Have this mind among yourselves,
which is yours in Christ Jesus, who,
though he was in the form of God, did
not count equality with God a thing to
be grasped, but emptied himself, by
taking the form of a servant, being born
in the likeness of men. And being found
in human form, he humbled himself by
becoming obedient to the point of
death, even death on a cross.**



**Therefore God has highly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name that is
above every name, so that at the name
of Jesus every knee should bow, in
heaven and on earth and under the
earth, and every tongue confess that
Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of
God the Father.**

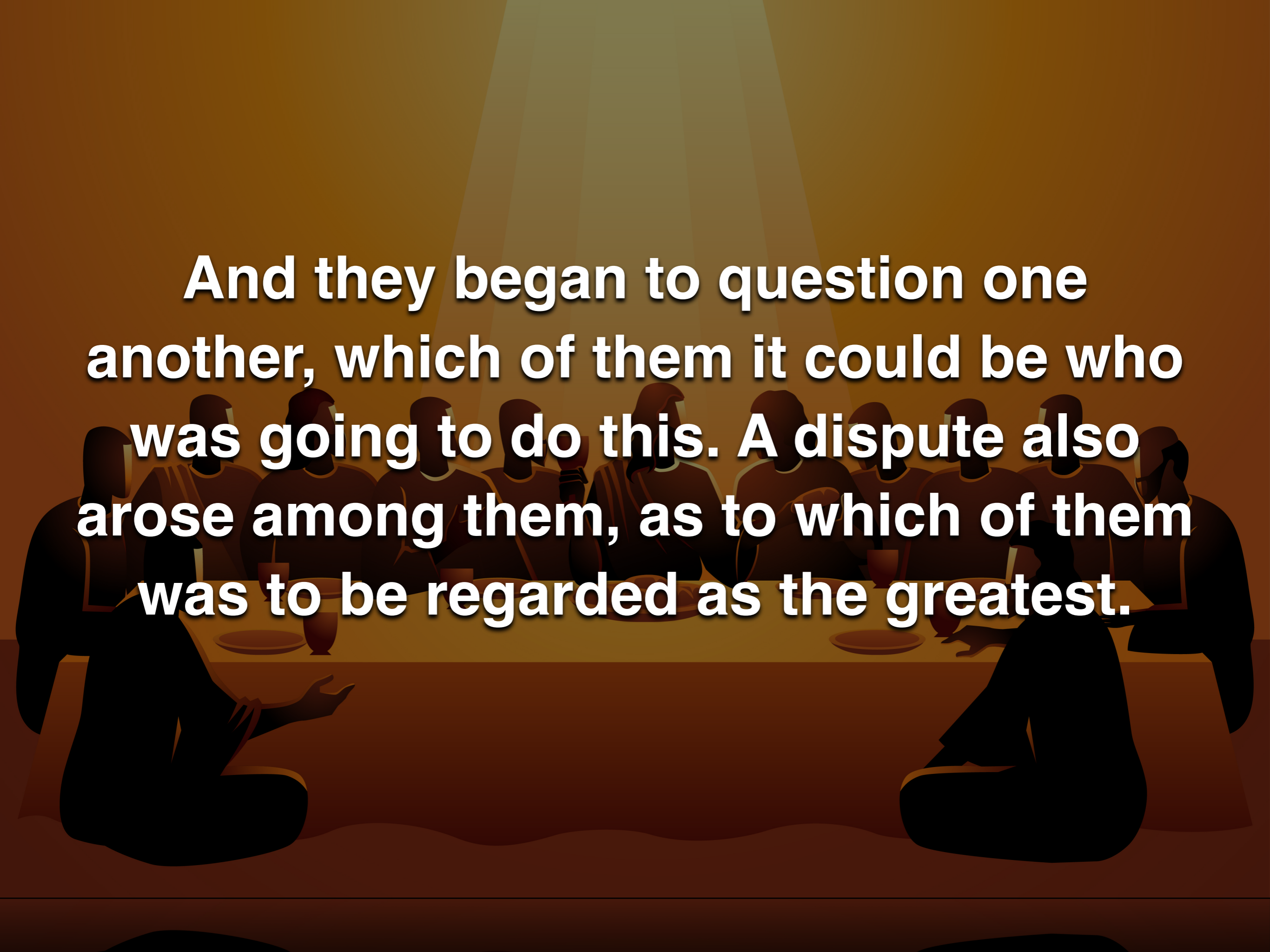
— The Apostle Paul in Philippians 2:5-11 —



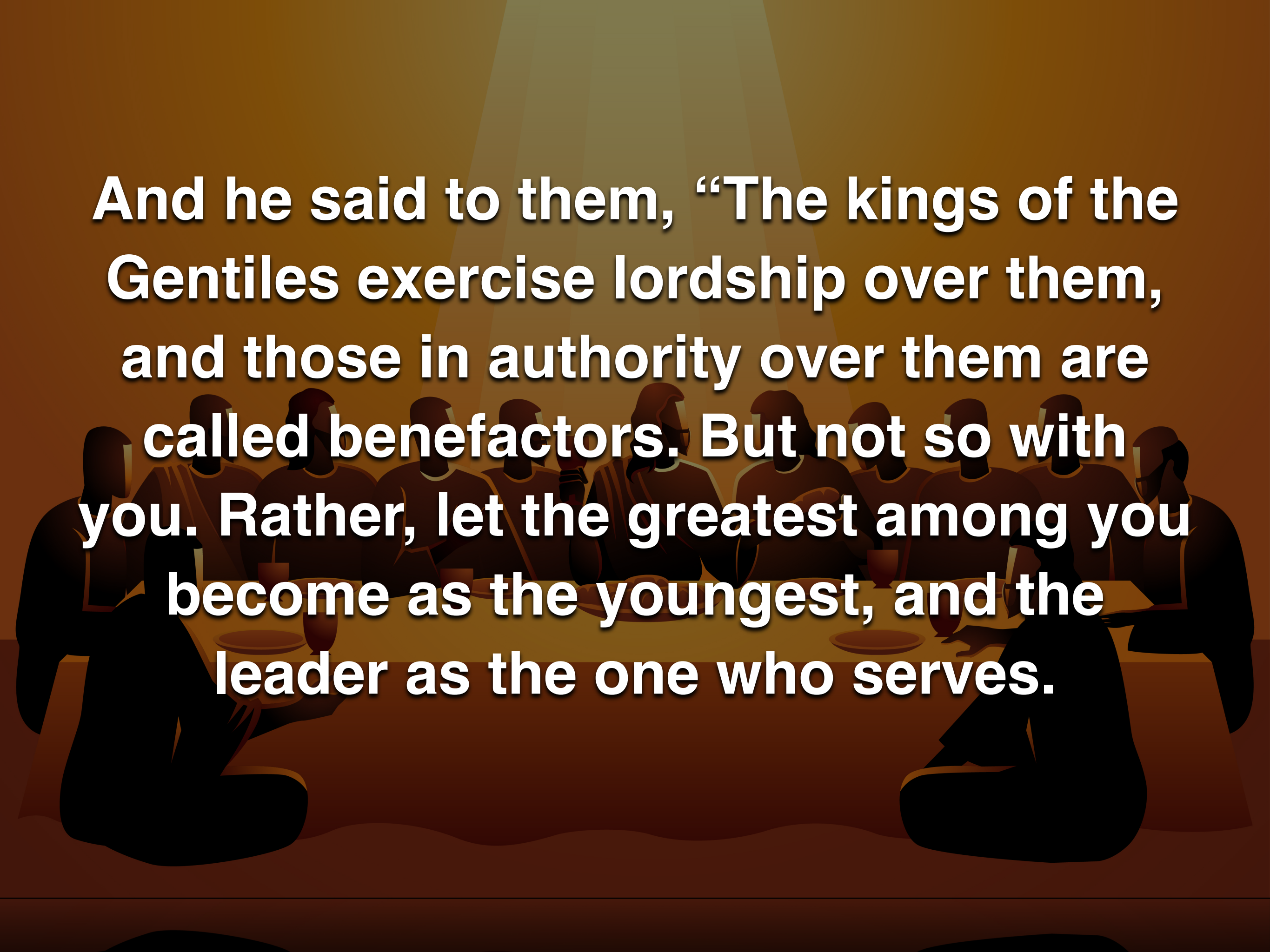
Remember how the disciples became indignant at James and John because of what they asked of Jesus?

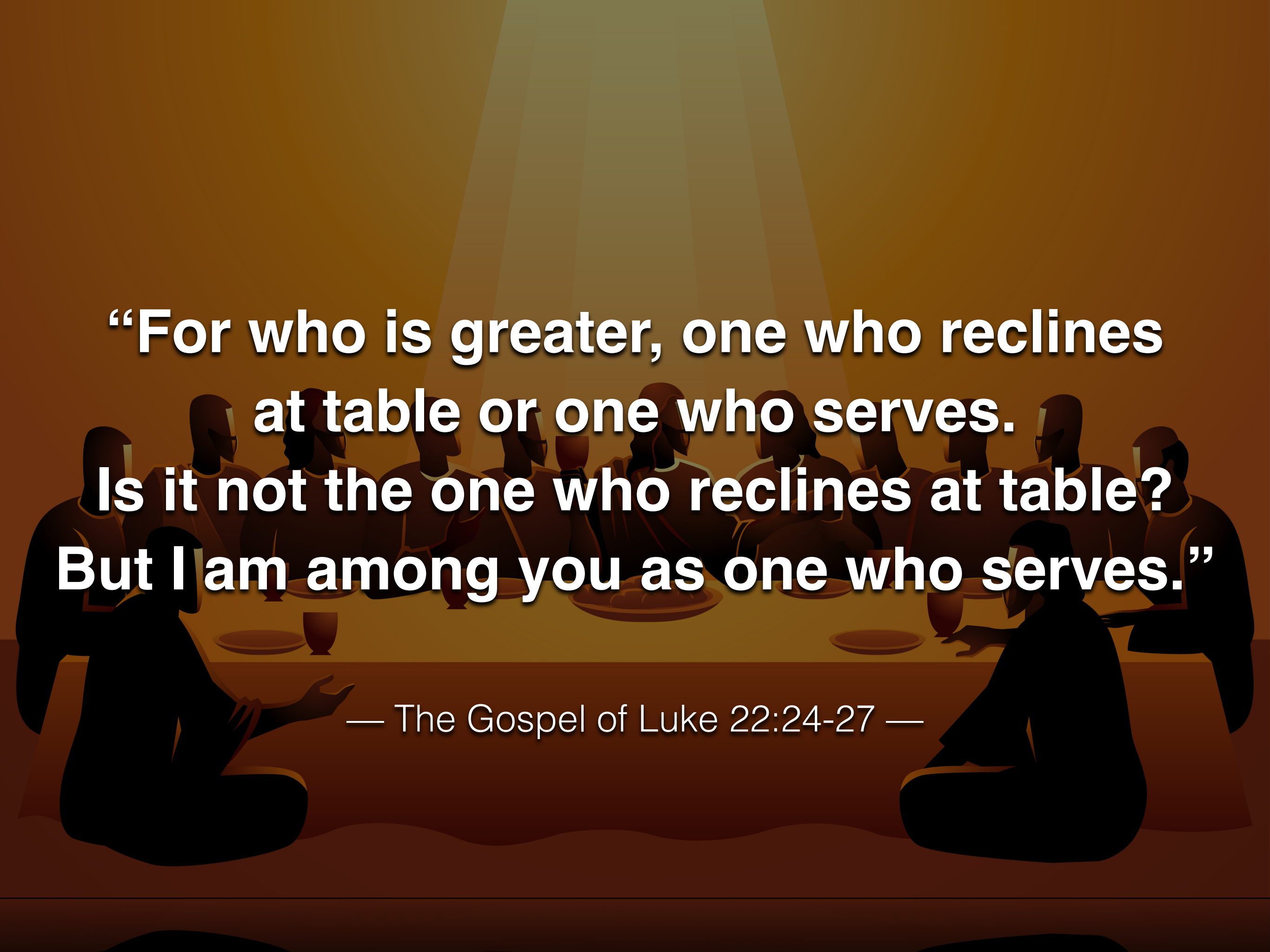


And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this. A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.



And he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the one who serves.

The background of the slide features a group of approximately 15 people sitting around a long table, their forms rendered as dark silhouettes. They appear to be in a dining or meeting setting, with plates and glasses visible on the table. The scene is set against a warm, brownish-gold background, with a soft spotlight effect illuminating the center of the group from above. The overall atmosphere is one of a formal or significant gathering.

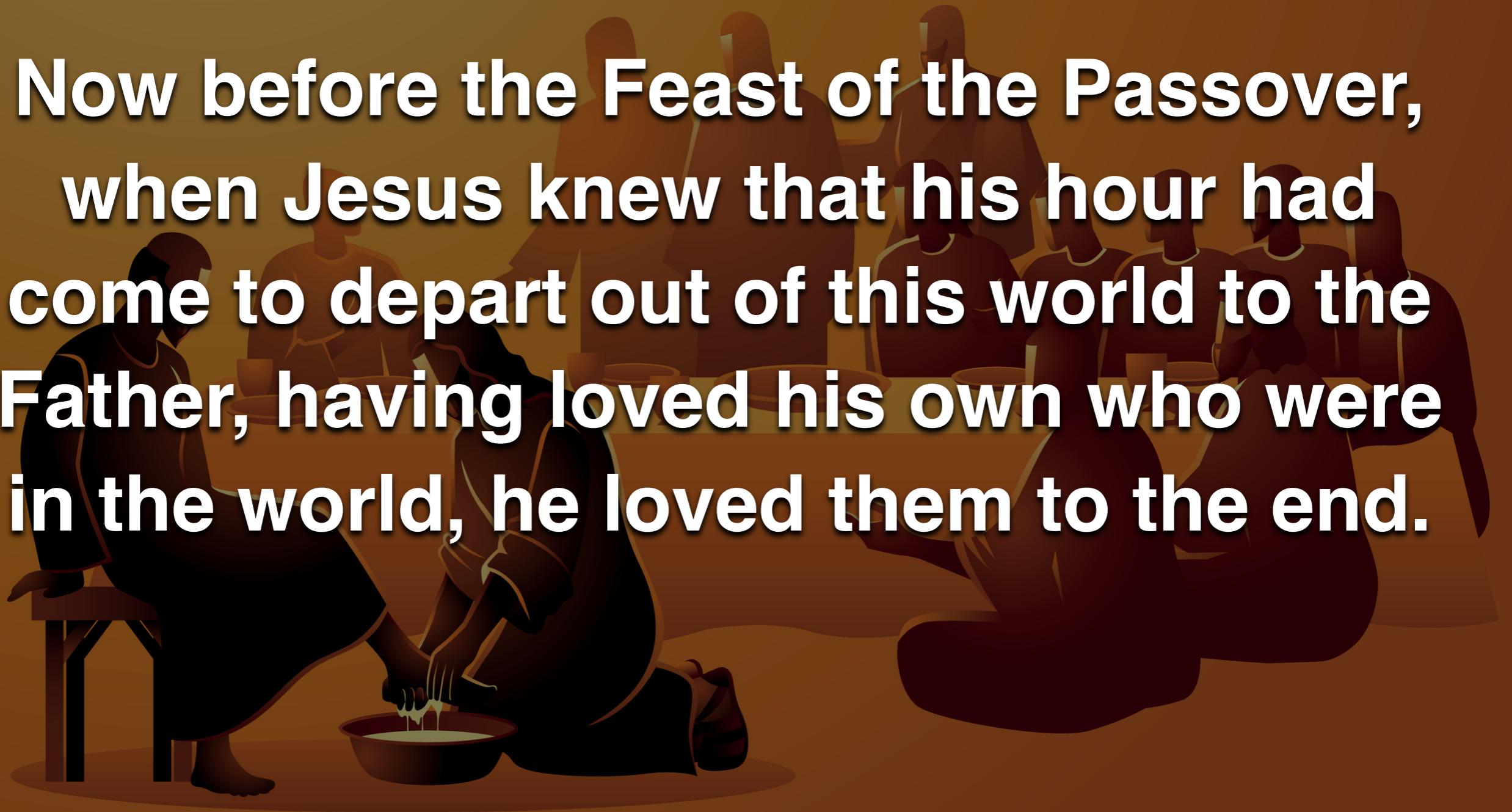
A group of stylized human figures in dark clothing are seated around a long table. The scene is dimly lit, with a bright spotlight shining down from above onto the center of the table. The figures are arranged in a circle, some facing the camera and others with their backs to it. The overall mood is solemn and focused.

**“For who is greater, one who reclines
at table or one who serves.
Is it not the one who reclines at table?
But I am among you as one who serves.”**

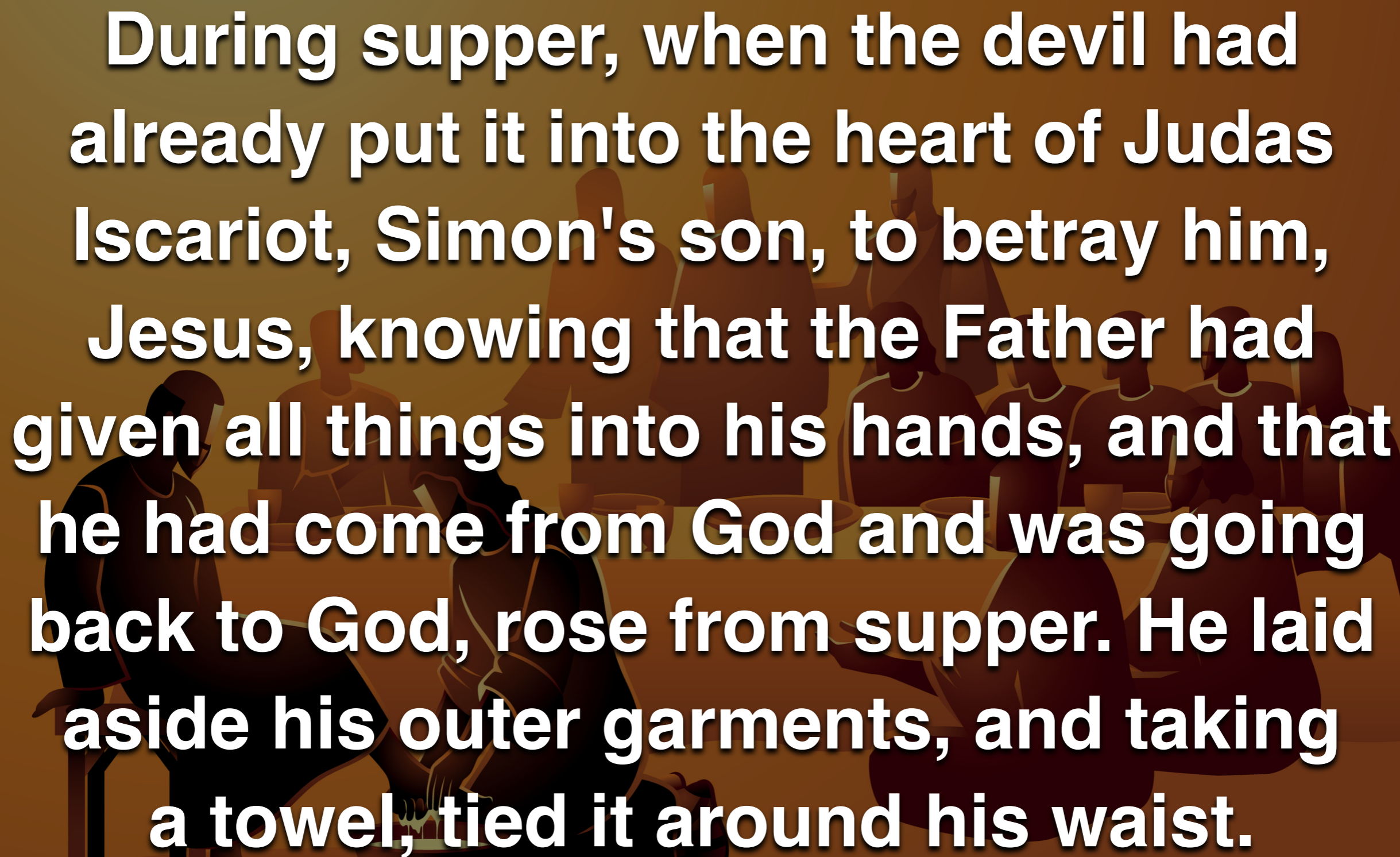
— The Gospel of Luke 22:24-27 —

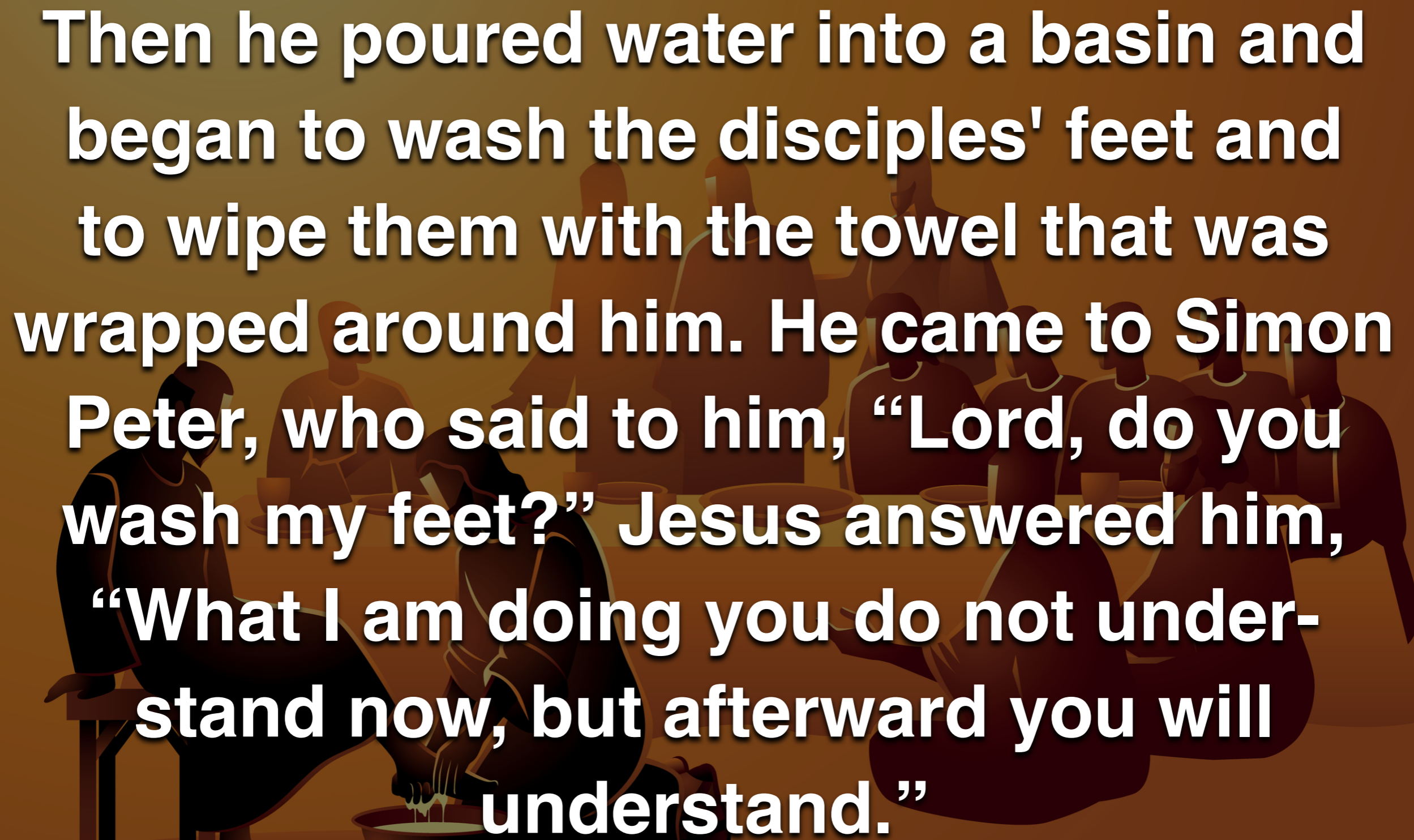


**Now before the Feast of the Passover,
when Jesus knew that his hour had
come to depart out of this world to the
Father, having loved his own who were
in the world, he loved them to the end.**



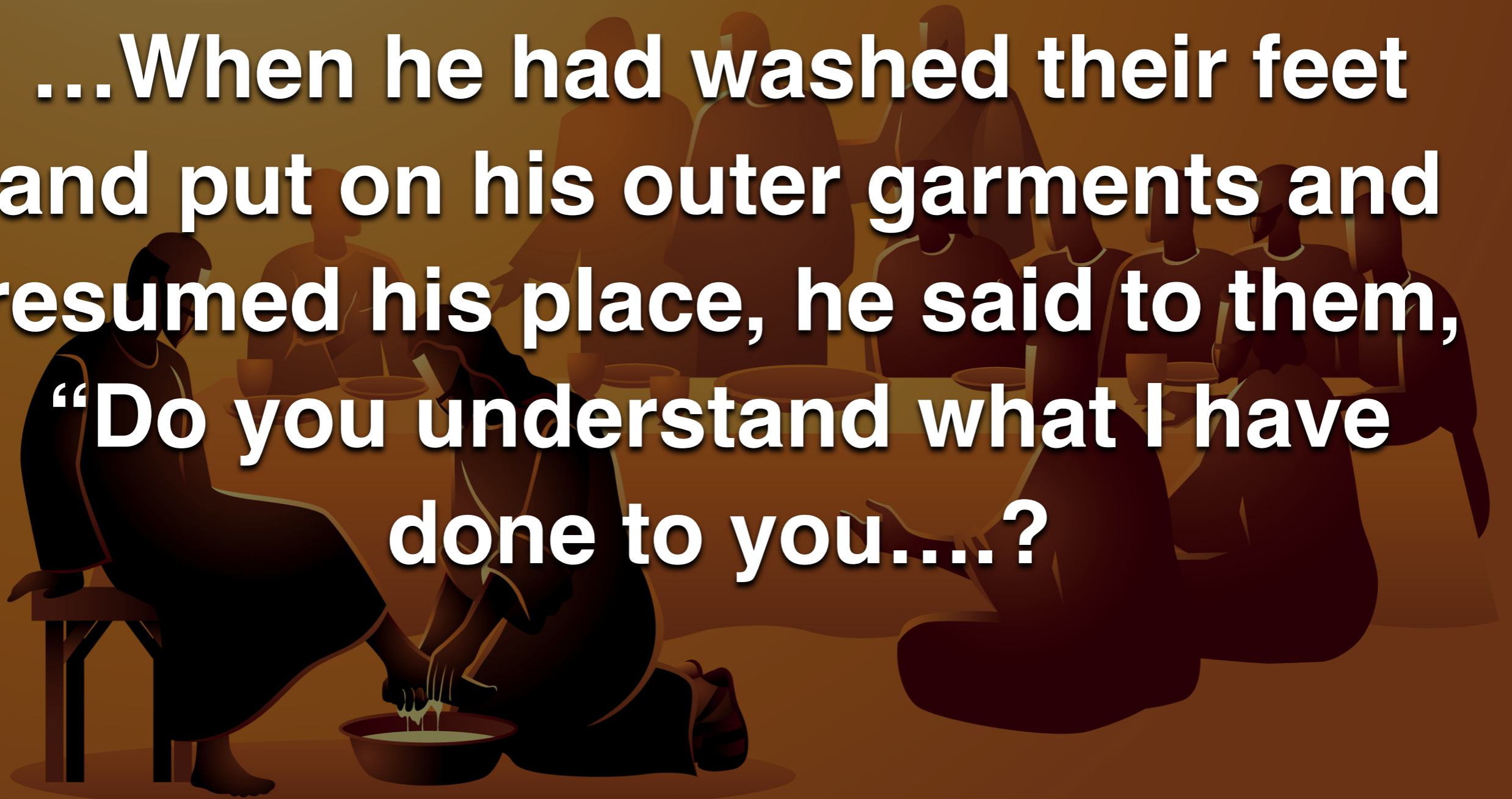
During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.

The background of the image features a dark brown, monochromatic illustration of a group of people seated around a long table, likely representing the Last Supper. The figures are rendered in silhouette, with some showing more detail than others, such as a man on the left who appears to be washing another's feet. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the primary focus being the large, white, bold text overlaid on the image.

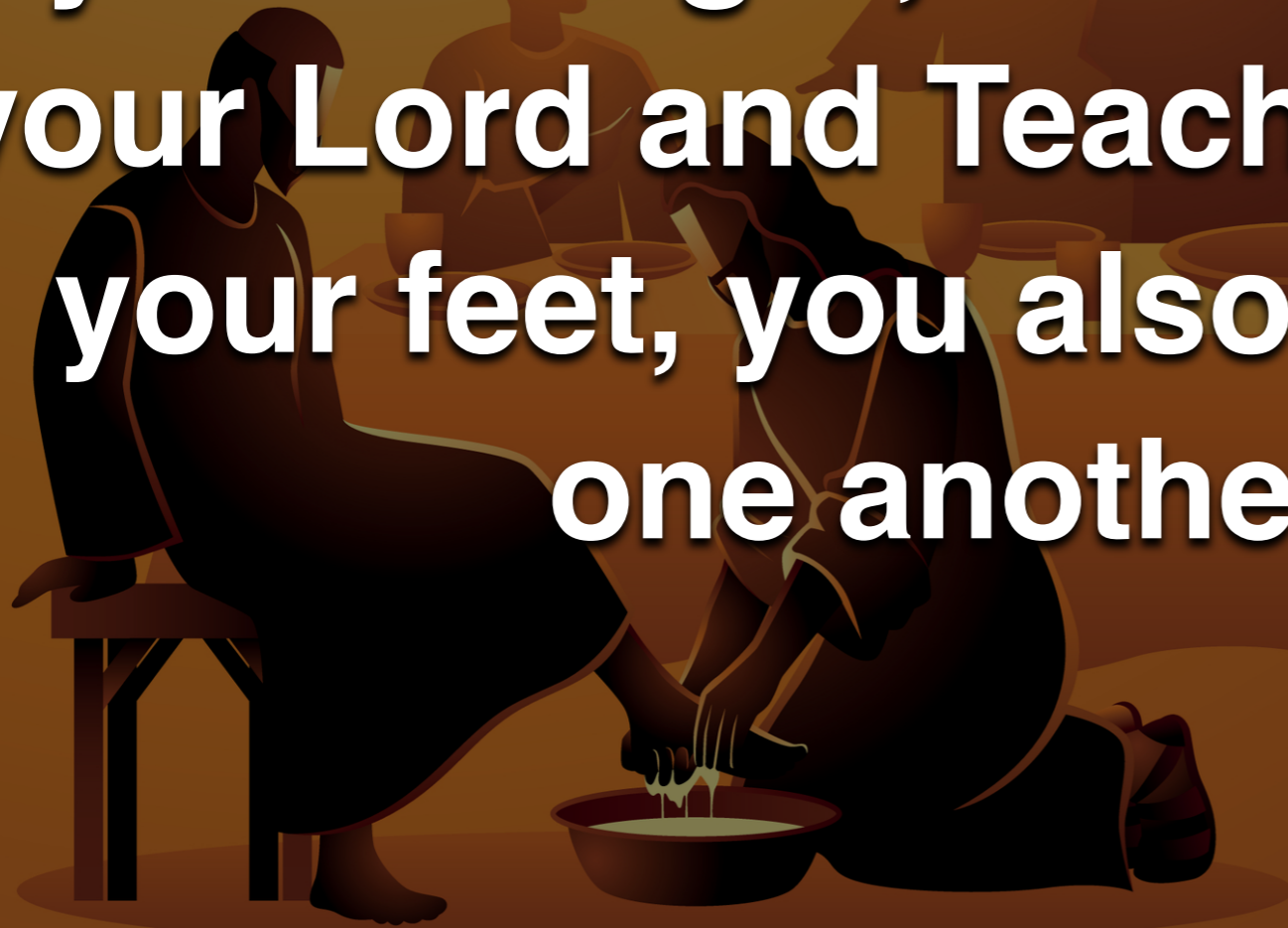
An illustration in a dark, monochromatic style showing Jesus kneeling and washing the feet of a disciple who is seated on a wooden stool. Jesus is holding a basin and pouring water over the disciple's feet. Other disciples are seated around a table in the background, some with plates of food. The scene is set in a simple room with a plain floor.

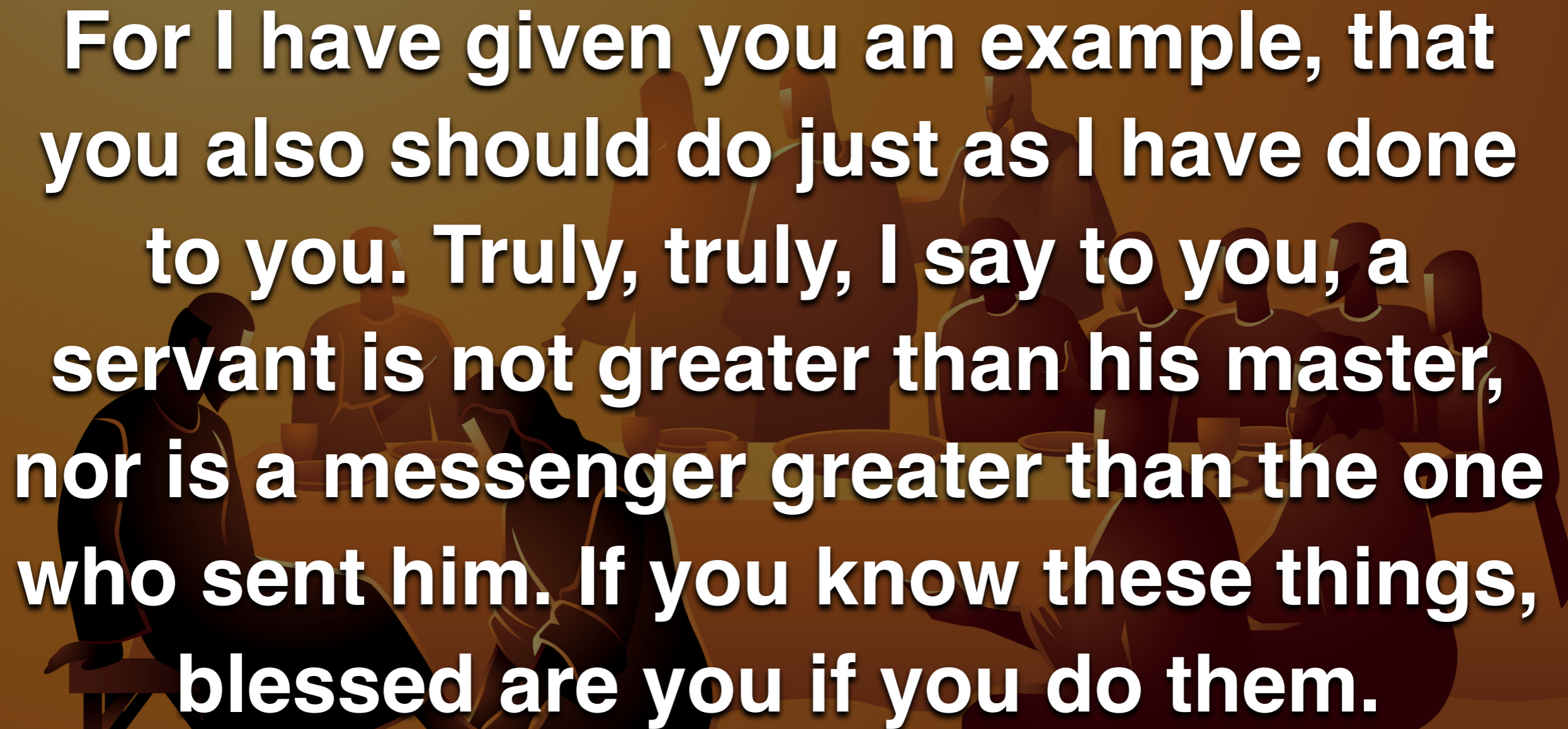
Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand."

...When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you....?”



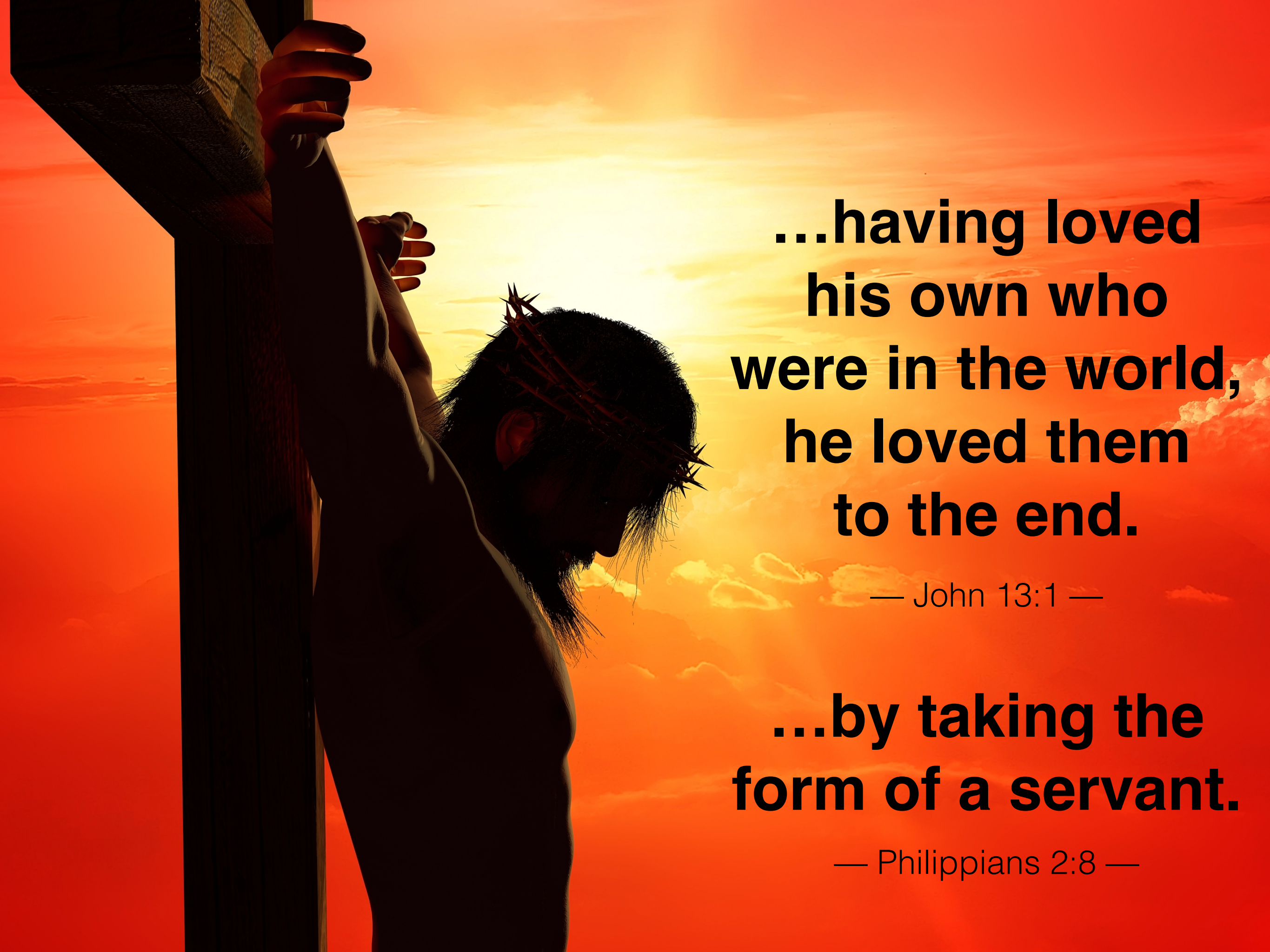
You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.





For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

— The Gospel of John 13:1ff —

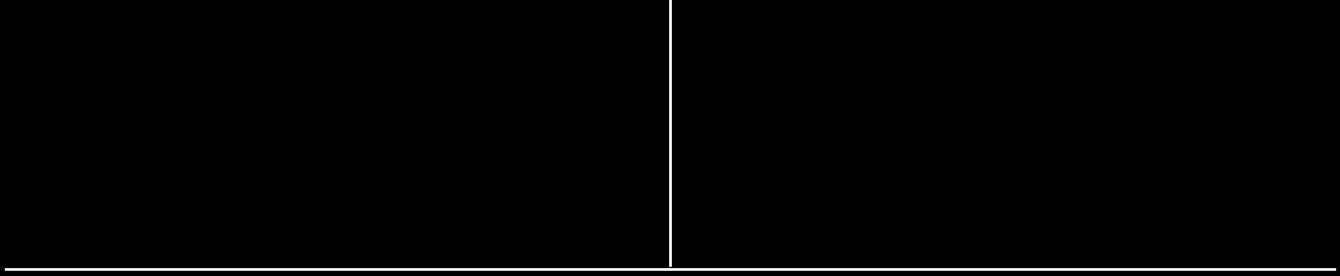
A silhouette of Jesus Christ on the cross, set against a vibrant sunset sky with orange and yellow hues. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong backlighting effect. Jesus is shown from the waist up, with his arms outstretched on the cross. He has a beard and is wearing a crown of thorns. The background is filled with soft, glowing clouds.

**...having loved
his own who
were in the world,
he loved them
to the end.**

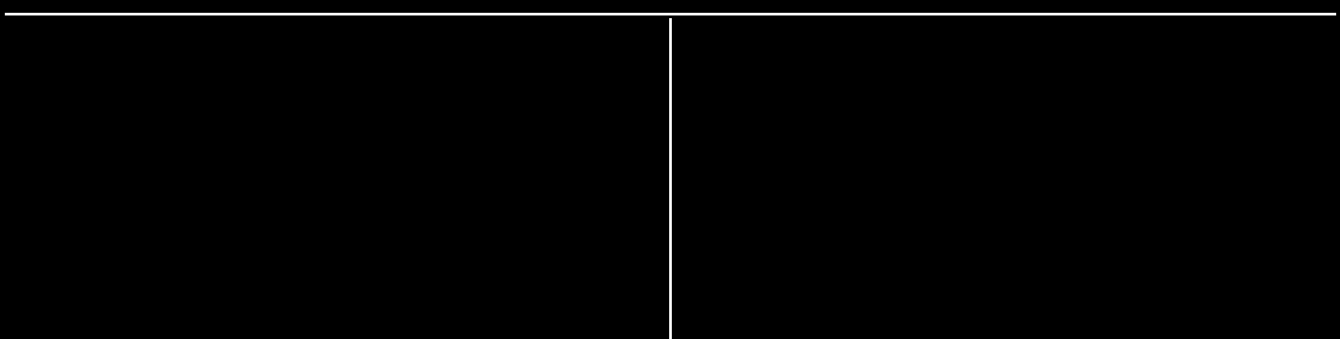
— John 13:1 —

**...by taking the
form of a servant.**

— Philippians 2:8 —



**We are born for greatness,
but we cannot become greater
than our Lord Jesus Christ,
who demonstrated His greatness
by becoming a servant for all.**





**Let's stand in awe of the
King of kings who became not
only the Friend of sinners, but
also the Servant of servants.**



**O come, all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant
O come ye, O come ye
to Bethlehem
Come and adore Him
Born the King of angels**



O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
Christ the Lord

— O Come All Ye Faithful —



We have all heard of the hymn, “O Come, All Ye Faithful,” but have you heard of the hymn, “O Come, All You Unfaithful”?

**O come, all you unfaithful
Come, weak and unstable
Come, know you are not alone**

**O come, barren and waiting ones
Weary of praying, come
See what your God has done**



**Christ is born, Christ is born
Christ is born for you**



**O come, bitter and broken
Come with fears unspoken
Come, taste of His perfect love**

**O come, guilty and hiding ones
There is no need to run
See what your God has done**



**He's the Lamb who was given
Slain for our pardon
His promise is peace
For those who believe**

**So come, though you have nothing
Come, He is the offering
Come, see what your God has done**




Christ is born, Christ is born Christ is born for you

— O Come All You Unfaithful —



**Let's prioritize
true greatness
by becoming
the greatest
servants we
can be.**



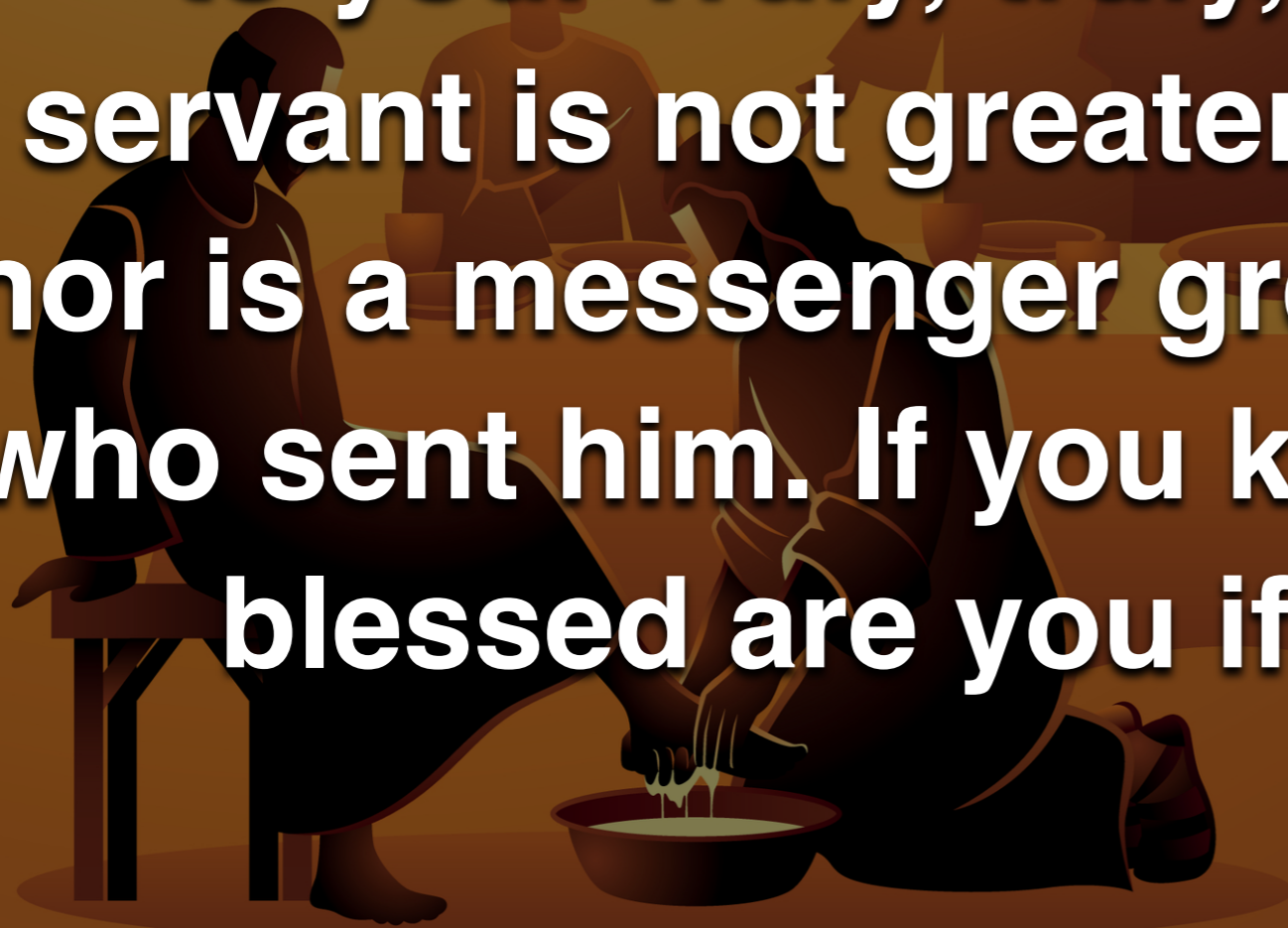
A silhouette of a nativity scene set within a wooden stable structure. The scene is backlit by a vibrant sunset or sunrise, creating a warm orange and yellow glow. The figures of Mary, Joseph, the infant Jesus in a manger, a donkey, and a cow are clearly visible against the bright background. The sky above is a mix of purple, blue, and pink, with some stars visible in the upper portion.

**Jesus humbled himself
by becoming a lowly servant.
This is our high calling too.**

"I am among you
as one who serves."

- the words of Jesus
in Luke 22:27

For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.



**I feel like all
I do is serve.
And nobody
notices.
Or cares.**





Whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

— Jesus of Nazareth in the Gospel of Matthew 10:42 —

**I don't even know
where to begin
in serving others.**

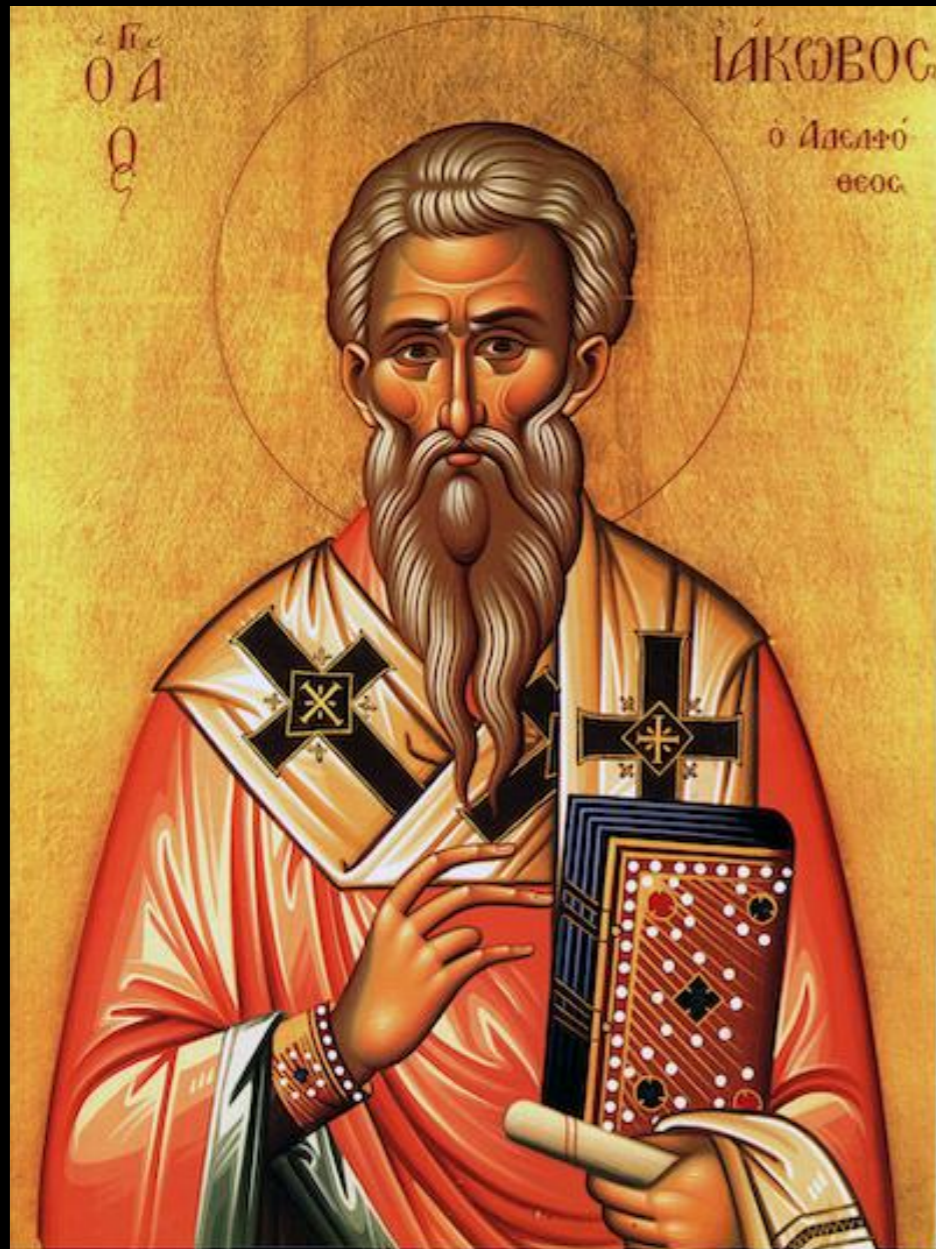


**Learn to ask questions
like, “How can I help?”
“What do you need
help with today?”**



What if ...





**God opposes the
proud, but gives grace
to the humble....
Humble yourselves
before the Lord, and
he will exalt you.**

James, the Brother of Jesus
in James 4:6

**May you be humbled by
the descent of Christ, and
may you rise to true greatness
by blessing others in your
service to them!**

