

SUNDAY 28.07.2024

**DISCERNING OF FALSE
PROPHETS / SPIRITS**

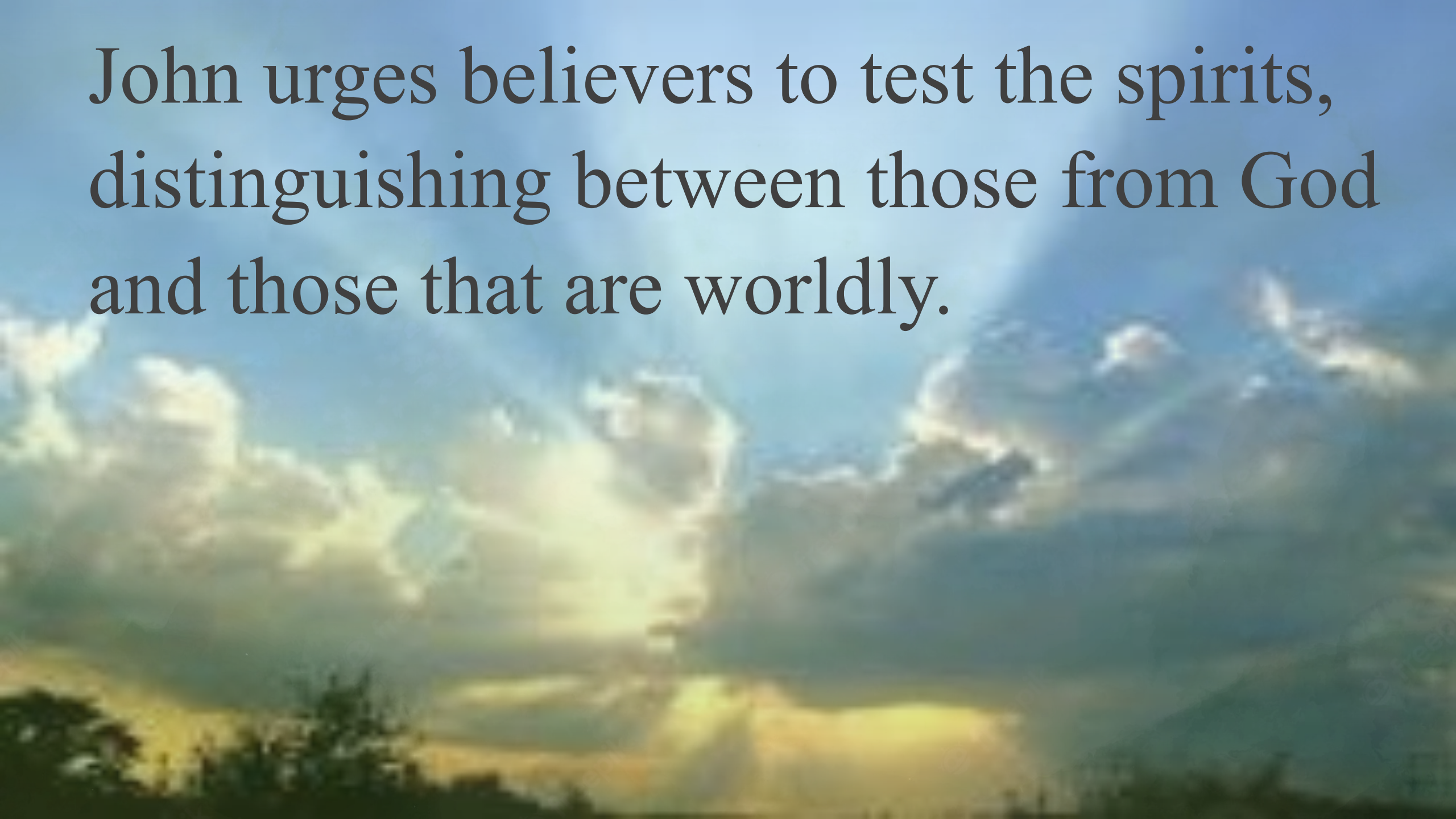
1 JOHN 1:4 NIV

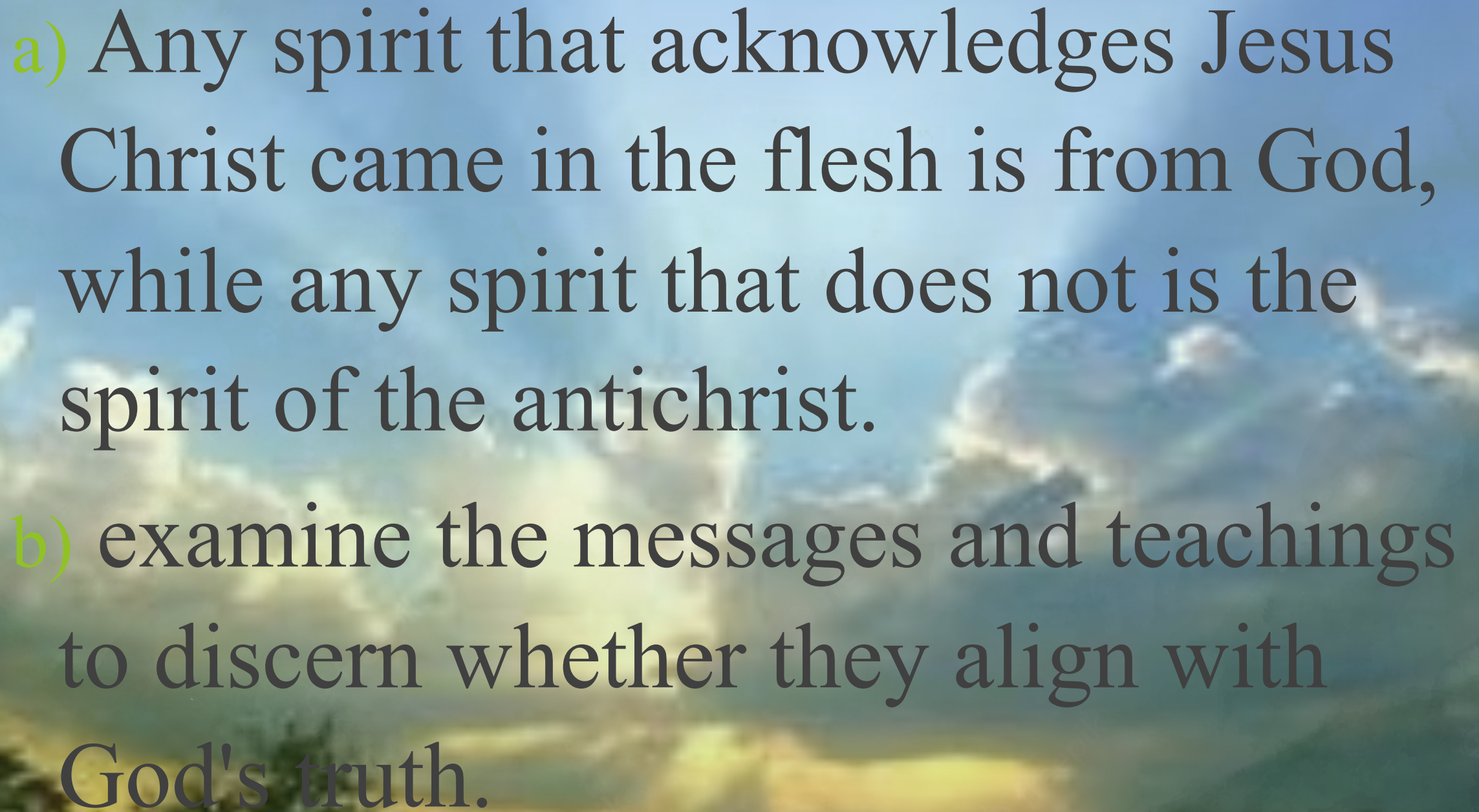
Chapter 4, John continues to address various challenges that faced the early Church, among those challenges were, a) False teachings and b) The need for assurance in their faith. John emphasizes the need for love and the necessity of discerning truth from falsehood.

1. Test the Spirits (verse 1)

“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are from God because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

John urges believers to test the spirits,
distinguishing between those from God
and those that are worldly.



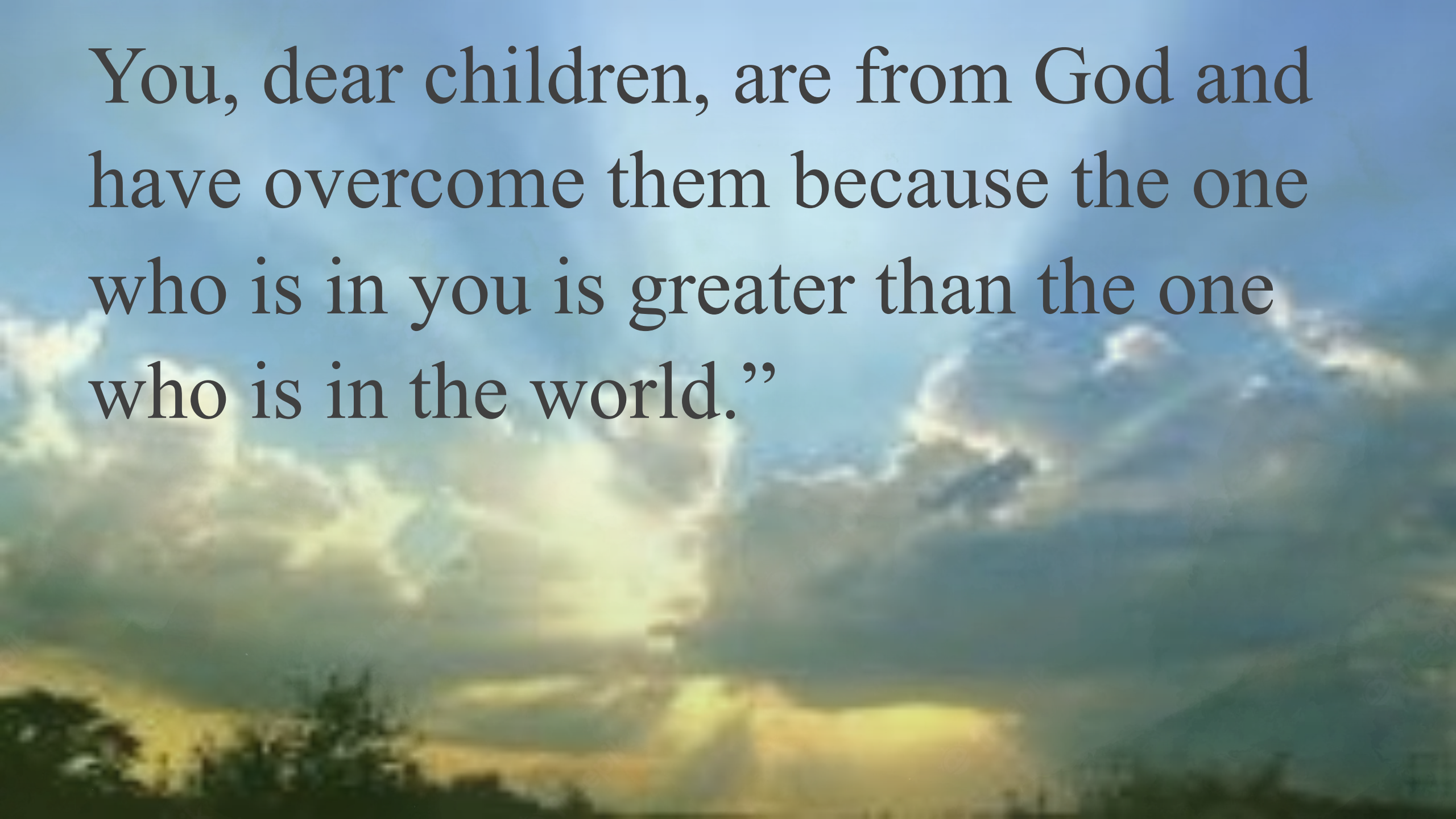
- 
- a) Any spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ came in the flesh is from God, while any spirit that does not is the spirit of the antichrist.
- b) examine the messages and teachings to discern whether they align with God's truth.

c) “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes...?”

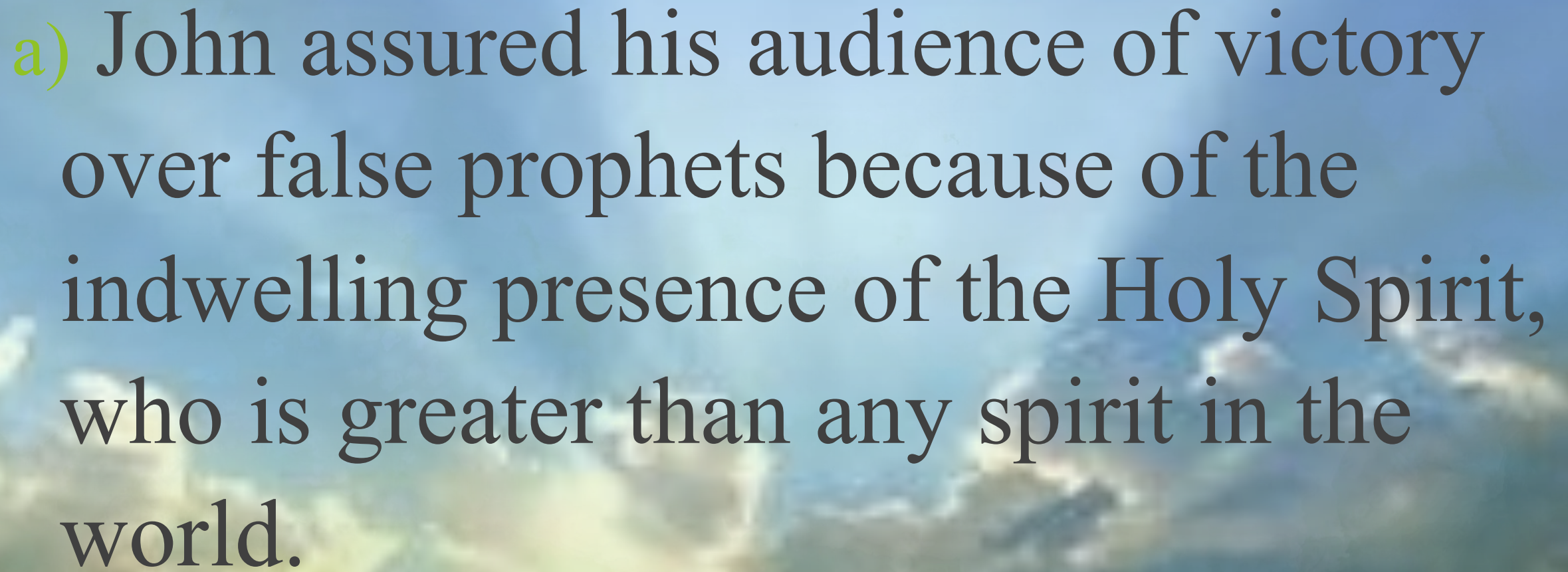
(Matthew 7:15-16)

2. Assured victory over the World (verses 3-4)

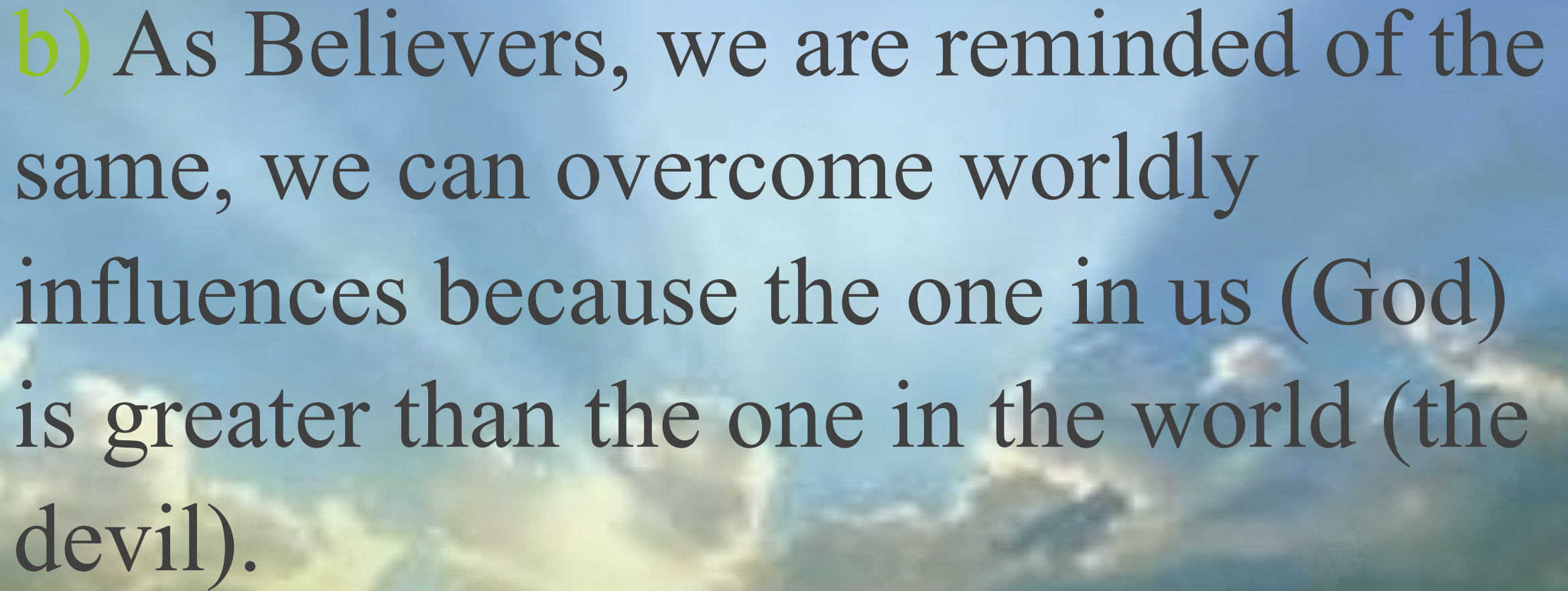
“But every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.



You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”



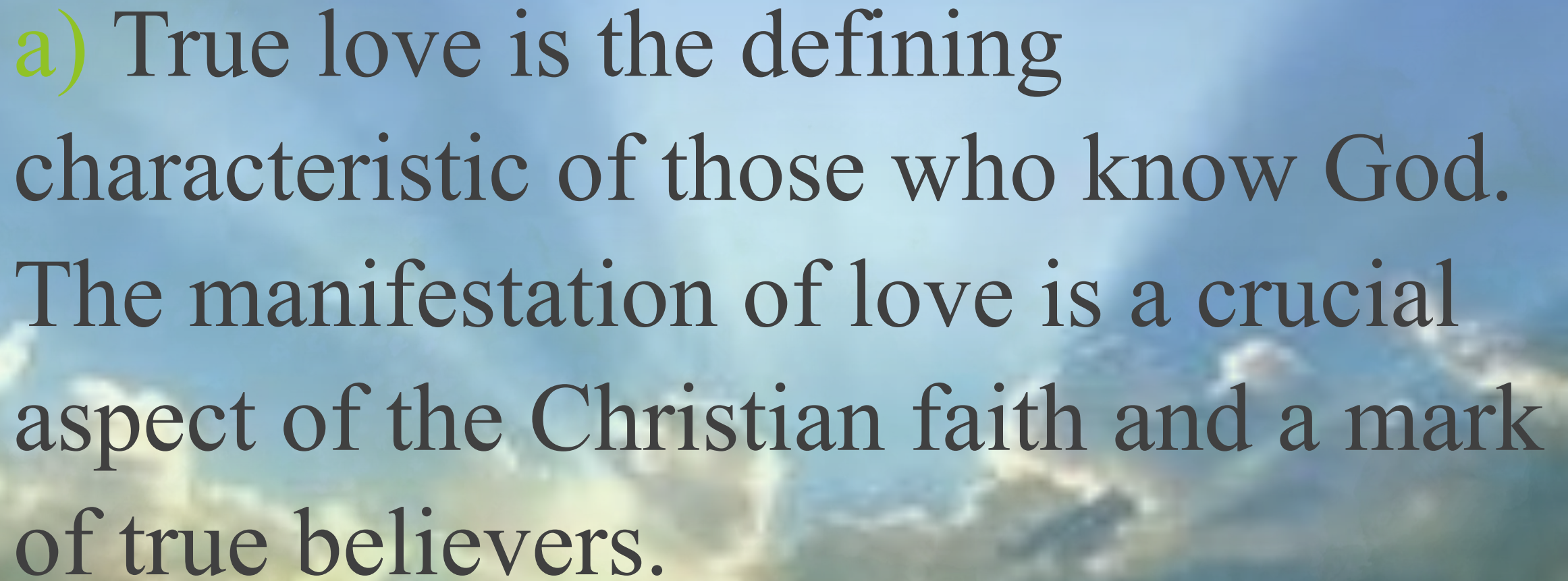
a) John assured his audience of victory over false prophets because of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, who is greater than any spirit in the world.

A scenic landscape with a bright sunburst breaking through a cloudy sky over a valley. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a golden glow and illuminating the clouds. The foreground shows dark silhouettes of trees and a valley floor. The overall mood is hopeful and uplifting.

b) As Believers, we are reminded of the same, we can overcome worldly influences because the one in us (God) is greater than the one in the world (the devil).

3. Manifestation of God's Love (7-10)

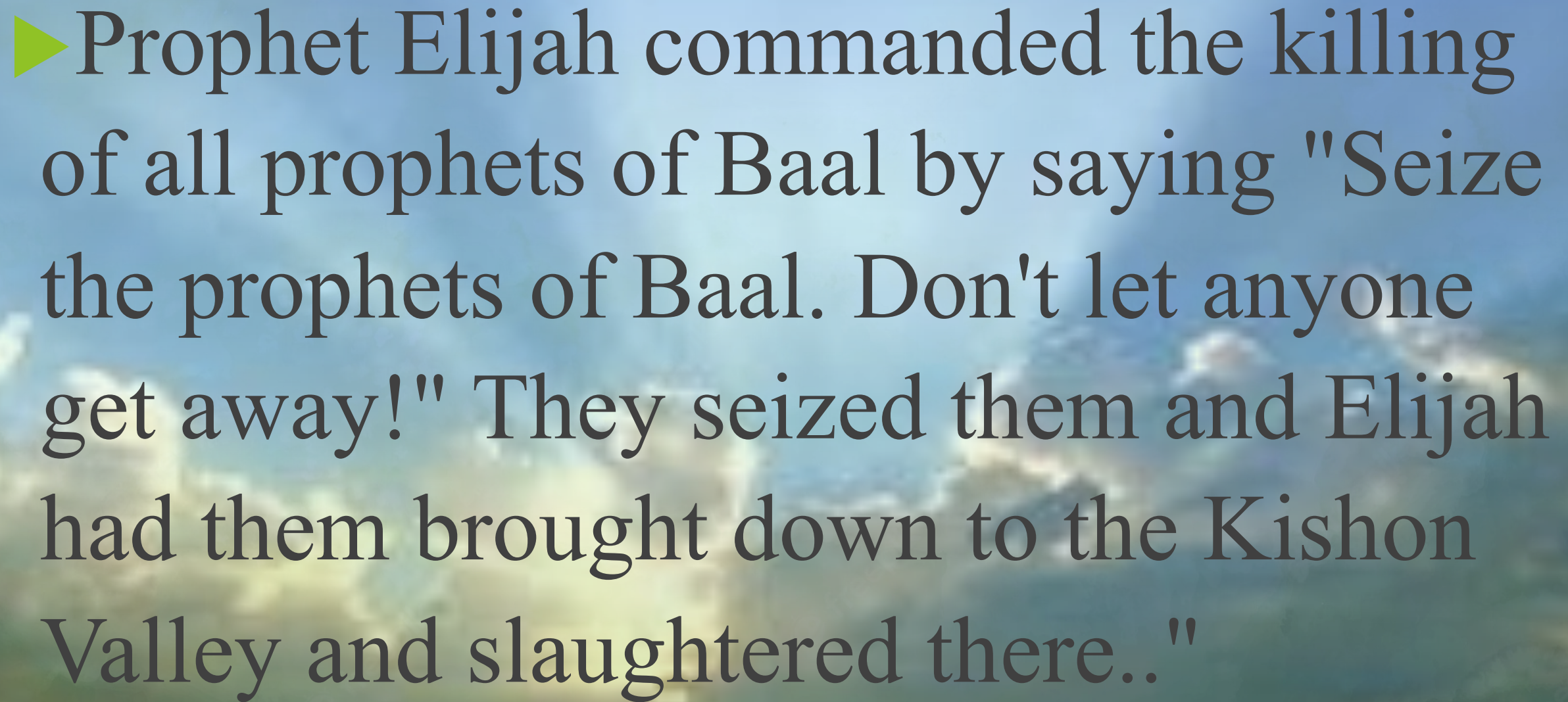
“... let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love...”



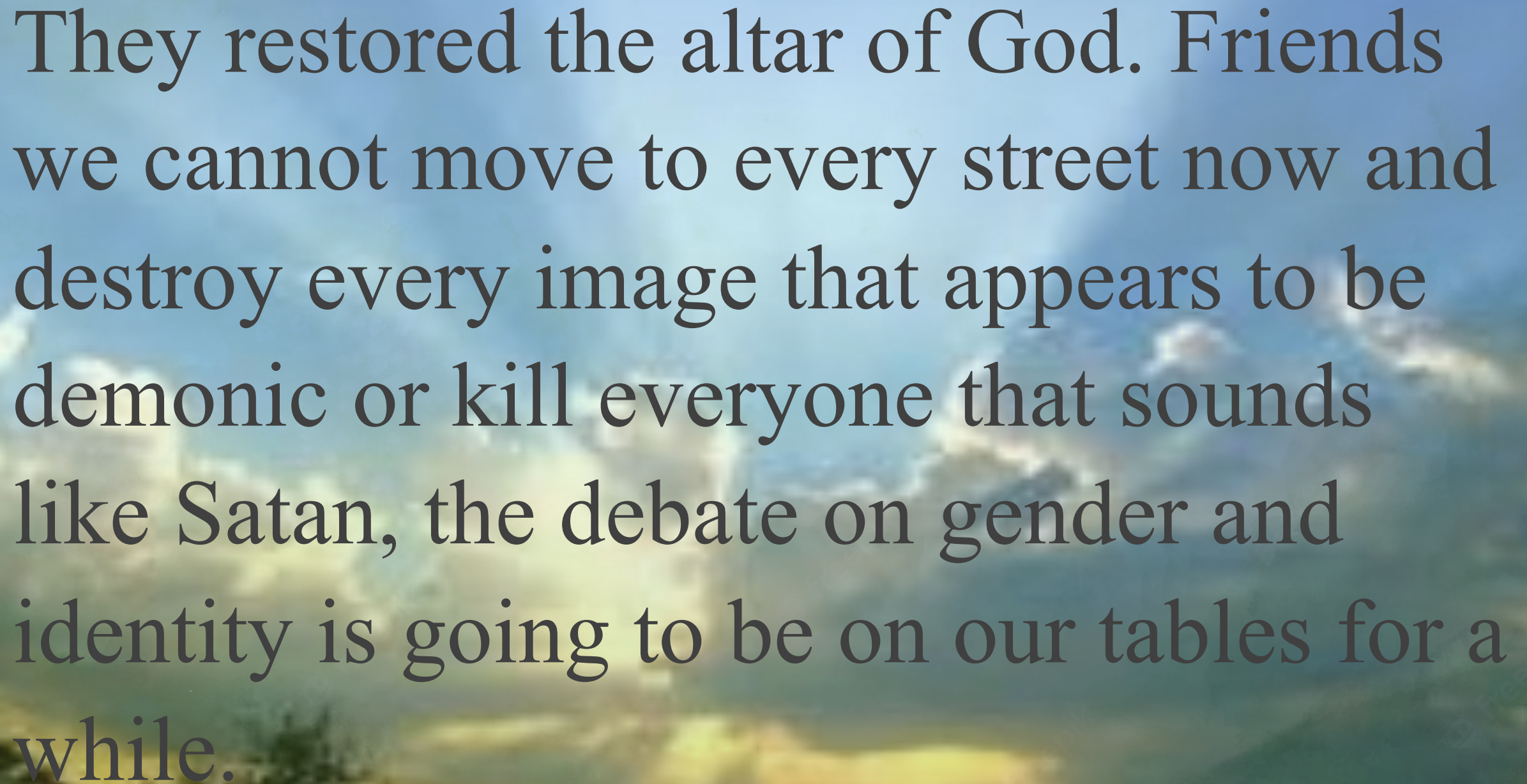
a) True love is the defining characteristic of those who know God. The manifestation of love is a crucial aspect of the Christian faith and a mark of true believers.

b) John emphasizes that love is from God and anyone who loves is born of God and knows Him. Those who don't love don't know God because God is love. He sent His Son into the world to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins, personifying His love.

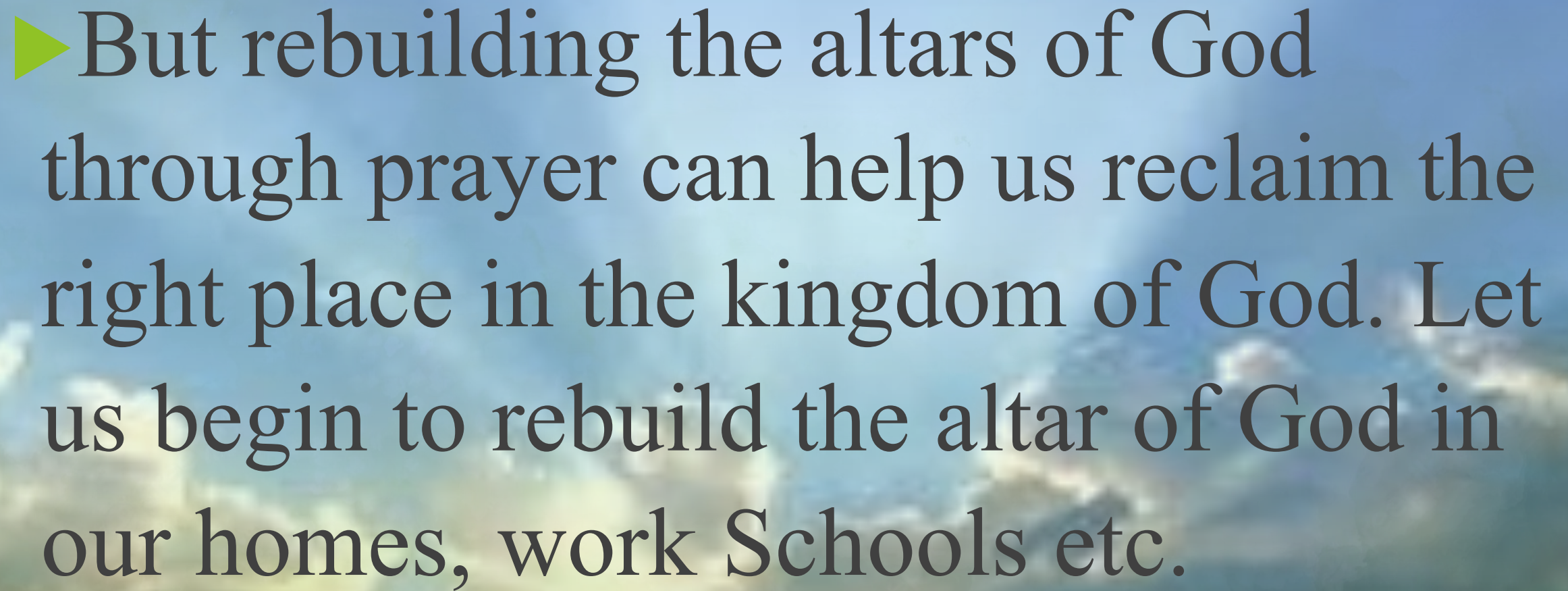
God instructed Gideon, “... tear down the altar of Baal that your father has and cut down the wooden image that is beside it; and build an altar to the LORD your God on top of this rock in the proper arrangement” (Judges 6:25-34 NKJV).



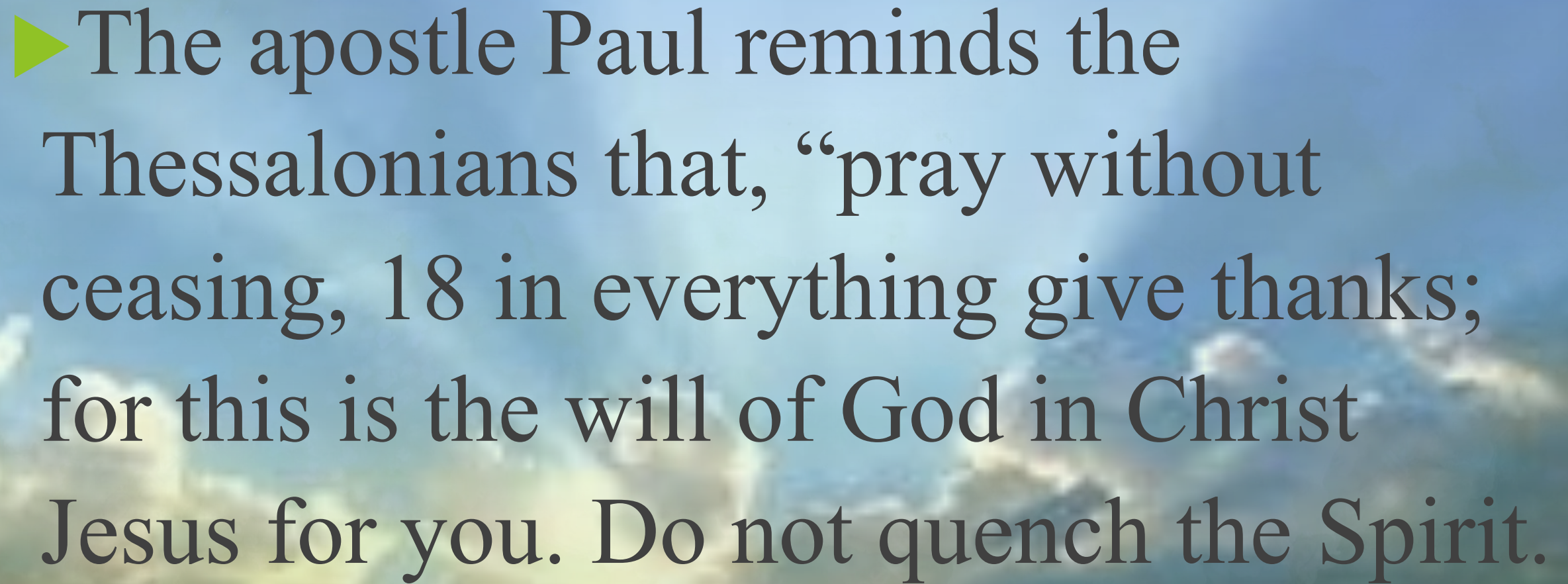
► Prophet Elijah commanded the killing of all prophets of Baal by saying "Seize the prophets of Baal. Don't let anyone get away!" They seized them and Elijah had them brought down to the Kishon Valley and slaughtered there.."

A scenic landscape with a blue sky, white clouds, and green hills. The text is overlaid on the image.

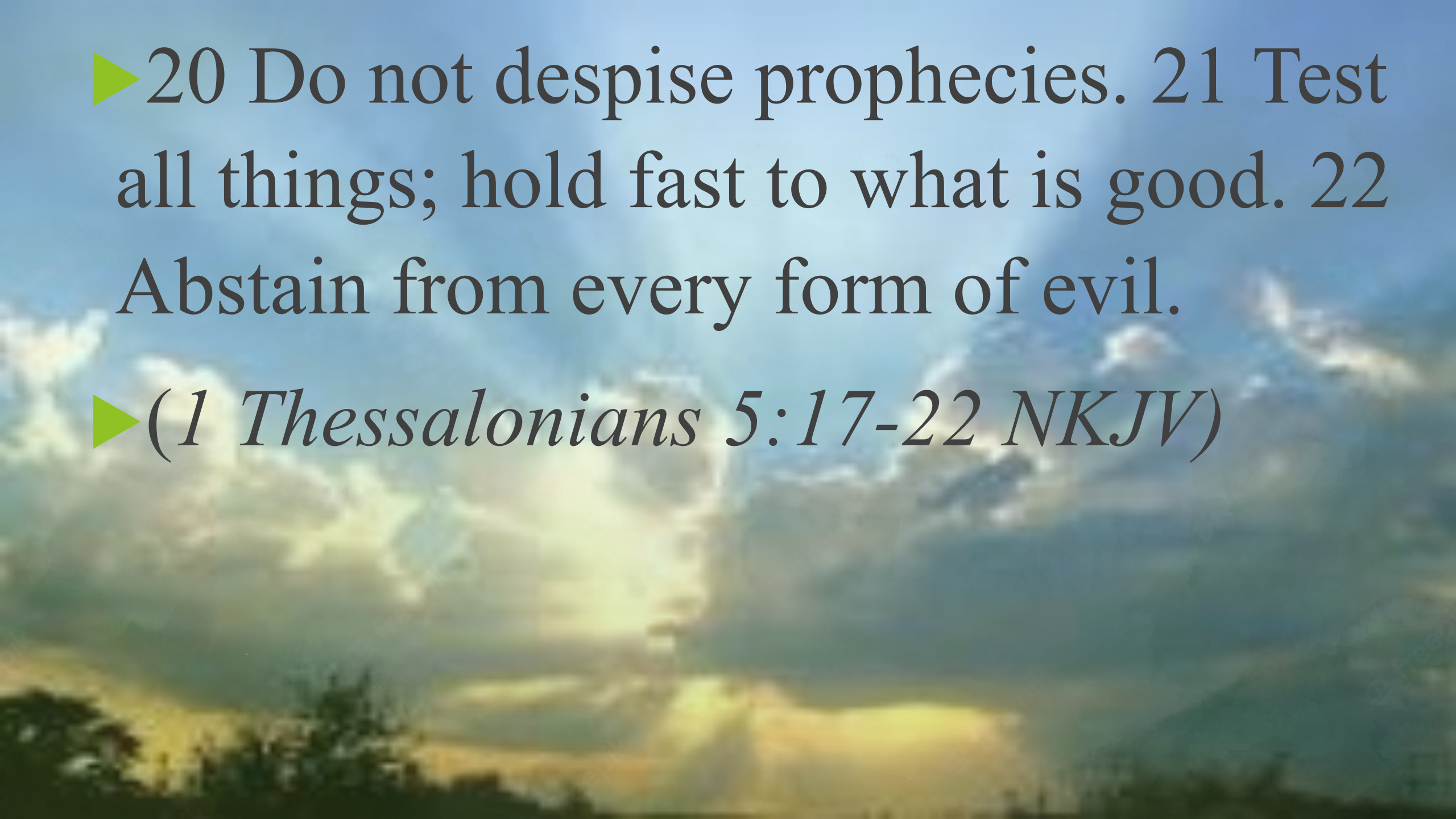
They restored the altar of God. Friends we cannot move to every street now and destroy every image that appears to be demonic or kill everyone that sounds like Satan, the debate on gender and identity is going to be on our tables for a while.



► But rebuilding the altars of God through prayer can help us reclaim the right place in the kingdom of God. Let us begin to rebuild the altar of God in our homes, work Schools etc.



► The apostle Paul reminds the Thessalonians that, “pray without ceasing, 18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.



▶ 20 Do not despise prophecies. 21 Test all things; hold fast to what is good. 22 Abstain from every form of evil.

▶ (*1 Thessalonians 5:17-22 NKJV*)