

MAMA BEAR  R

Apologetics



What is a worldview?

- A lens through which you perceive the world around you
- Affects how you interpret your lived experience so that you draw certain conclusions about how the world works
 - What does it mean to be human?
 - Why are we here?
 - Where did we come from?
 - What is wrong with the world?
 - How can it be fixed?
 - Where are we headed?
 - What is “the good life” – what do we mean by “good”?

What is a worldview?

- For a worldview to be cohesive, the answers to these questions must not contradict one another.
 - Most secular worldviews contradict themselves. (Our brains are formed by natural processes aimed at survival AND we should trust these brains to discern ultimate truth)
- A biblical worldview is both cohesive and in line with reality
 - Reality that humanity is broken by sin and the fall
- Most people instinctively understand and agree that our world is broken, yet their diagnosis of our main problems and solutions can vary wildly.



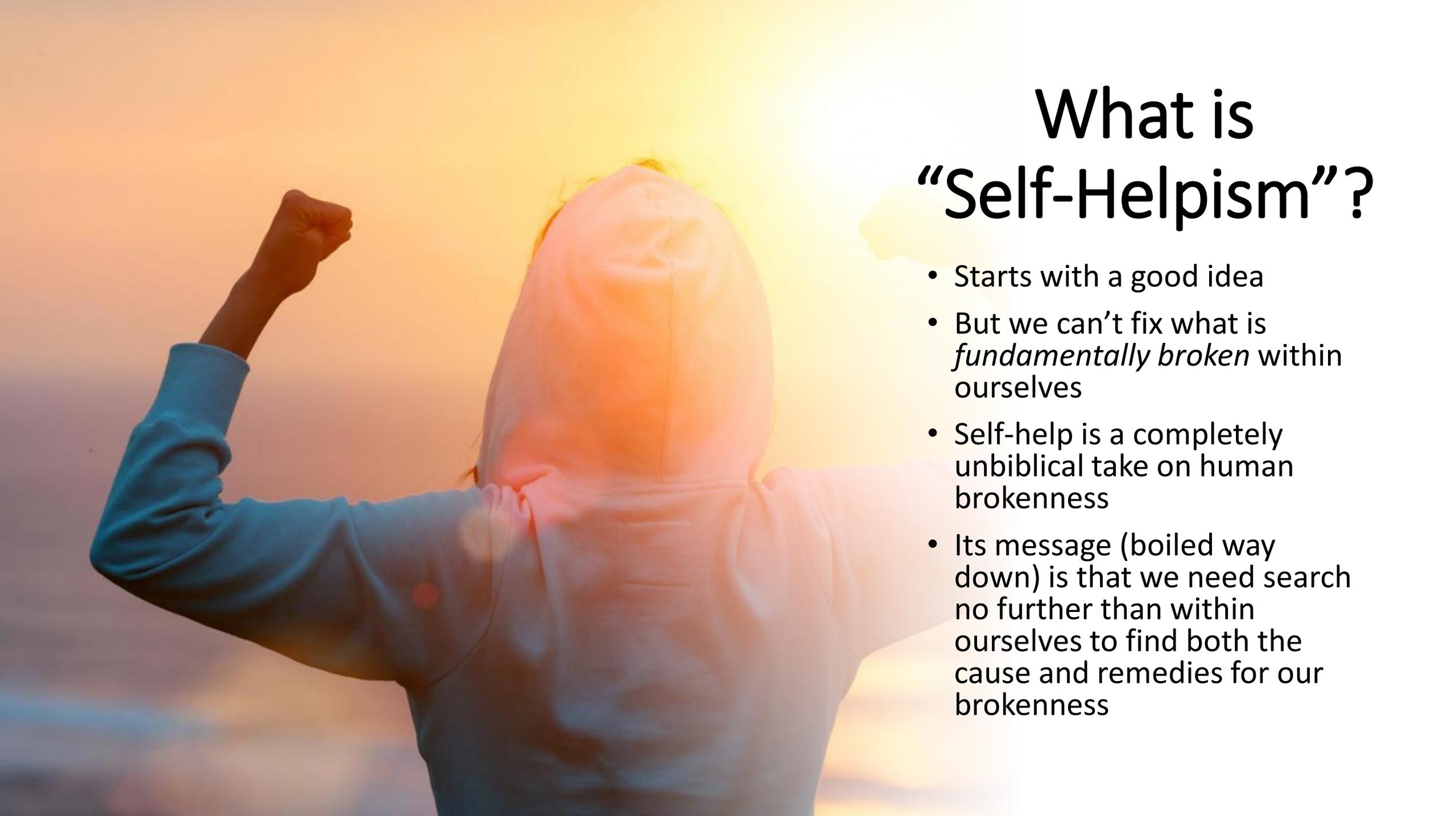
Any foundation that identifies something other than *sin* as the problem and *Christ* as the solution ultimately ends in idolatry – believing that something or someone other than God is the means for healing what is broken, or for bringing us happiness.



Self-awareness is healthy and being willing to admit we aren't perfect is one of the best things we can do for our children. It's what we do with our brokenness, however, that we must be mindful of.

Someday our children will become aware of their own brokenness, and we will want them to know how to diagnose it correctly, what to seek as a remedy, and who to turn to for help.

What is one area of your
life over which you feel
completely powerless?



What is “Self-Helpism”?

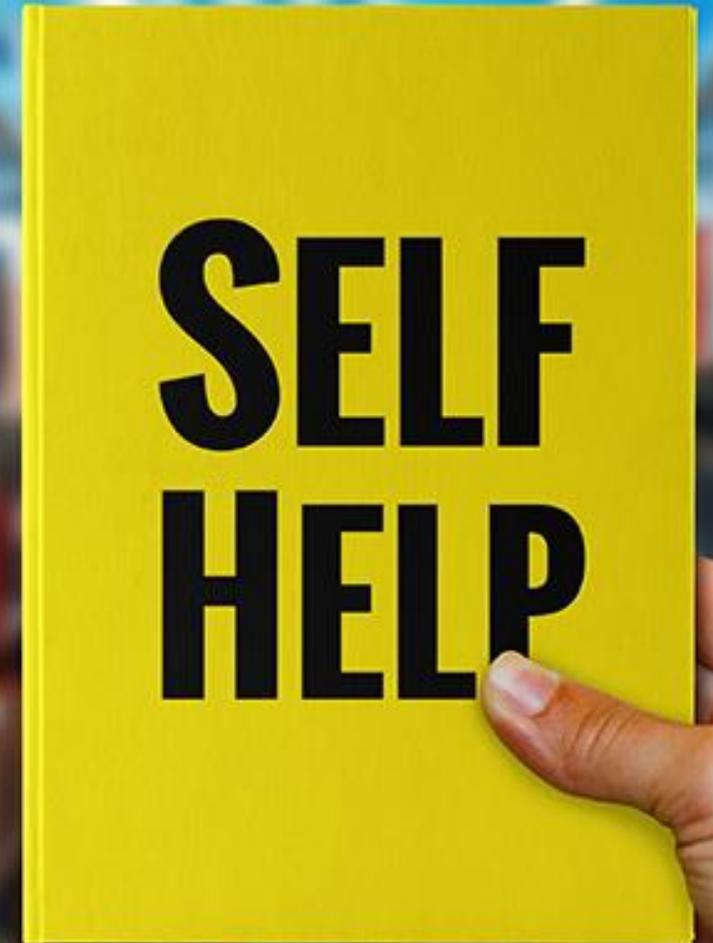
- Starts with a good idea
- But we can't fix what is *fundamentally broken* within ourselves
- Self-help is a completely unbiblical take on human brokenness
- Its message (boiled way down) is that we need search no further than within ourselves to find both the cause and remedies for our brokenness

The self-improvement market is worth \$9.9 billion in America alone (at the time of publishing...significantly more now)

Self-help isn't all bad! Rather, self-help HAS LIMITS.

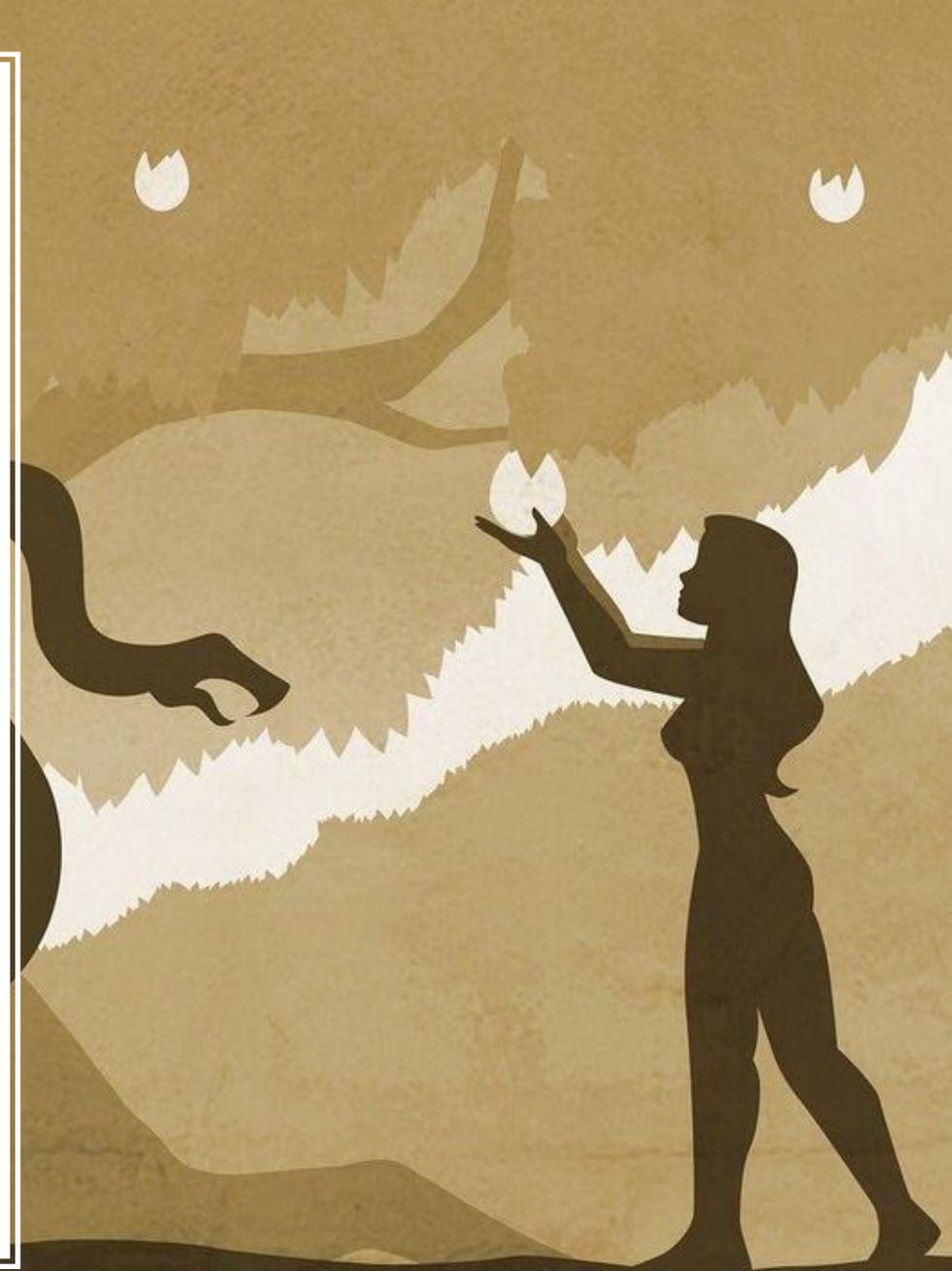
There is a line between being good stewards of our bodies, emotions, and behaviors versus trying to change our own hearts or sin nature apart from the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work.

The message within self-helpism (and within every "ism" mentioned in this book) is idolatry: Humanity takes something good and even powerful, and then mistakes it for God – giving it powers that are God's alone.



A Brief History

- Genesis - Eve took things into her own hands
- Socrates, philosophy of the Stoics, Greco-Roman and Renaissance literature
- 1773 – Poor Richard’s Almanac by Ben Franklin – “God helps those who help themselves.”
- 1859 – *Self-Help* by Samuel Smiles
- This book played a major role in stressing the importance of individual hard work, character, independence, and perseverance for social reform and survival

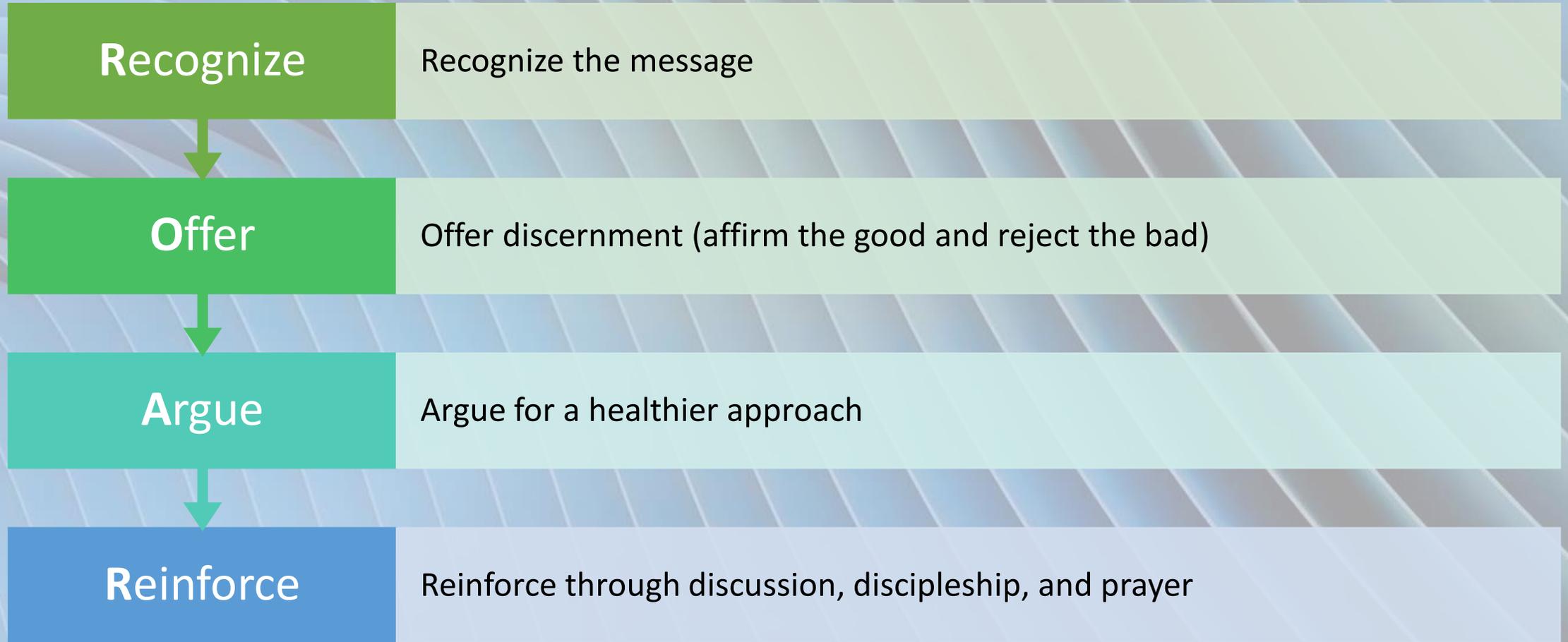


A Brief History

- Norman Vincent Peale
 - Positive thinking
- Robert Schuller
 - Possibility thinking
- Self empowerment and “the good life”
- “Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers, you cannot be successful or happy...this book will help you believe in yourself and release your inner powers.”



ROAR Method



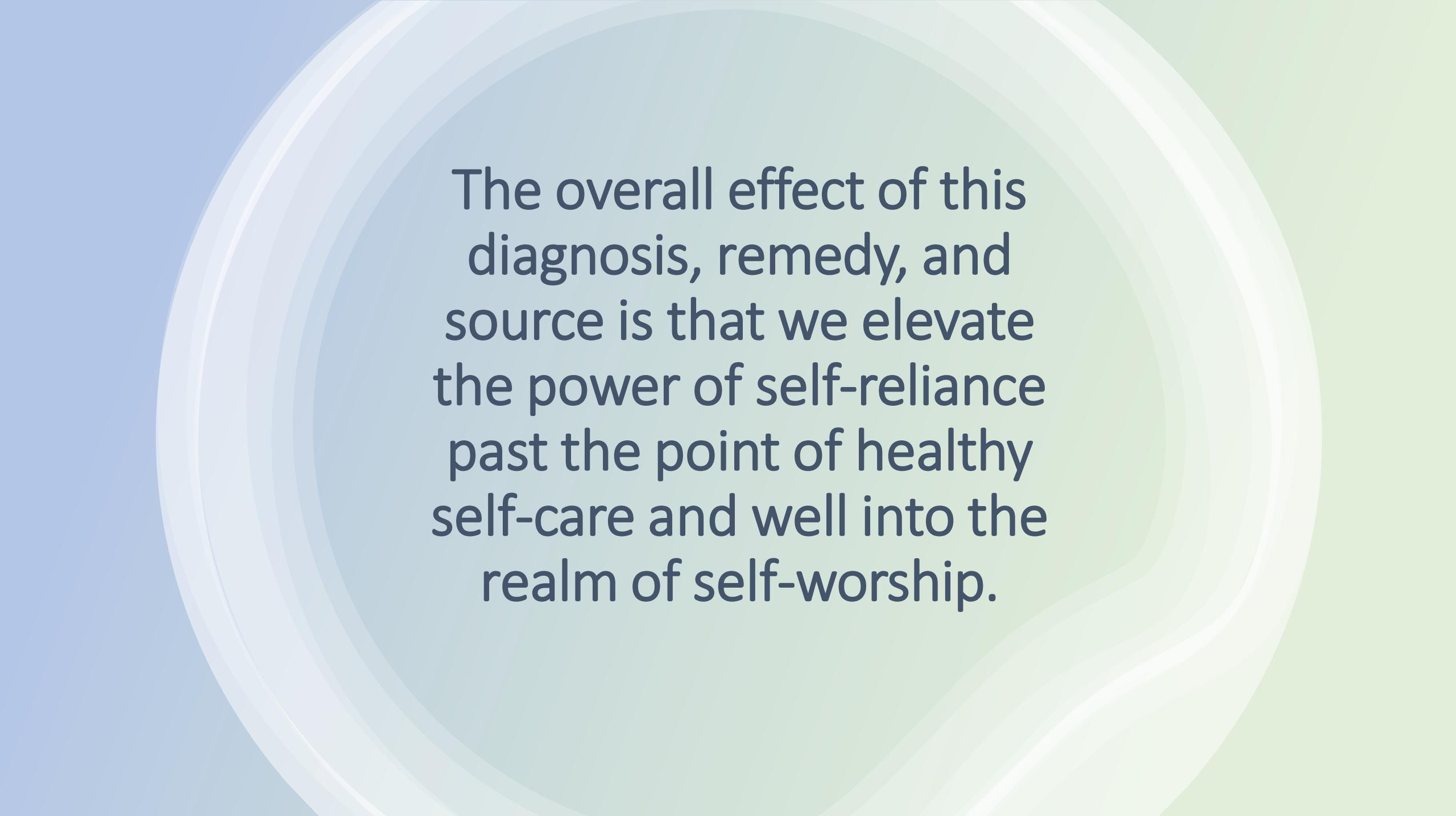
Recognize the Message

- Ultimately, self-helpism points people toward self-reliance rather than God-reliance.
- We are all in need of help – things are not the way they should be.
- “We are experiencing far less than what we think we have a right to experience. We aren’t happy enough and we *deserve* to be.”
- Focus on how we *feel* – Pay attention to how situations and other people affect our emotions and sense of self-worth and security. The better we are at identifying our triggers, motivators, core talents, personality strengths, dreams, and attractions, the better we will be at determining what’s getting in the way of our journey toward living our best life now. And we should expect this to look different for everyone, because everyone’s needs are different.

Recognize the Message

- According to self-helpism, the remedy is self-discovery.
 - Whatever has been stolen, broken, or remained underdeveloped is within us, waiting to be found.
 - Self-love (“I am enough”)
 - Materialistic (stuff brings pleasure)
 - Pantheistic (you are a unique piece of God)
 - Thought lives (think it into fruition)
- In the self-help world, *I* am the source in my life and *you* are the source in your life.
 - Both source and solution – a closed system





The overall effect of this diagnosis, remedy, and source is that we elevate the power of self-reliance past the point of healthy self-care and well into the realm of self-worship.

What do you think is the difference between taking responsibility for ourselves in a healthy way, and striving in an unhealthy way?

Offer Discernment

- Diagnosis - We are not living the life we could be living – we are missing out on what God originally intended.
- Self-helpism has a very low view of just how big of a problem sin is.
 - Mere bad habits or character defects – rather than the soul-wounding, spiritual scar-creating force that sin is
- For those of us who have been reconciled to God, our measuring rod for truth or success is not our feelings. Our goal is to be conformed to the image of Christ, in word and deed. No matter the cost. And we will not have it all on this side of heaven.



Offer Discernment

- The remedy for brokenness is self-discovery
 - There is a place for getting to know how God uniquely made us, being honest about past wounds, or reminding ourselves of former aspirations...the problem is that these efforts alone are not going to heal us.
- Jesus is the One who heals. He is the One who understands every wound, every betrayal, and every temptation...*because He faced them too.*
- By His death, resurrection, and ascension, we have been set free from the ultimate penalty of sin and our enslavement to its power.

Offer Discernment

- God is the ultimate source.
 - We do have a part to play... we have the personal power to choose whom we will serve: self or God.
- Choosing God doesn't mean we get to just sit back and wait for Him to magically change us, expecting nothing of ourselves.
 - Regular practice of spiritual disciplines like prayer, studying the Bible, living a lifestyle of repentance and forgiveness
 - Professionals – counselors or pastors who can see the blind spots that we can't
 - Science
- God doesn't help those who help themselves; He helps those who are helpless and know it.

Argue for a Healthier Approach

- We need our manufacturer. He knows exactly what our hearts need and trying to fix ourselves is as futile as expecting a broken vacuum to fix itself.
- No broken thing can fix itself, and that includes our hearts.
- The Bible is not exhaustive.
- But the Bible is *sufficient*.
- Psychology must always bend the knee to theology.
 - Does the teaching you're listening to line up with who God says He is in the Bible? Who the Bible says we are? Teaching about sin?

Reinforce Through Discussion, Discipleship, and Prayer

1. Discuss what is within *our* power to fix and what is within *God's* power. We can control *what we do*, but it is God who creates the growth to change *who we are*.
2. When you are approached with a problem, begin by saying, "Let's see what the Bible says about it." Once you have identified the biblical principle to strive towards, you can equip them/suggest other helps that enable them to apply what they have learned... Turning to the Bible first and then searching for guidelines that help put God's Word into action.
3. PAWS for Prayer

Self-Evaluation: Where do you fall?

Passive Patties

Spiritualize their laziness,
not recognizing that
obedience is a necessary
part of sanctification

Striving Suzies

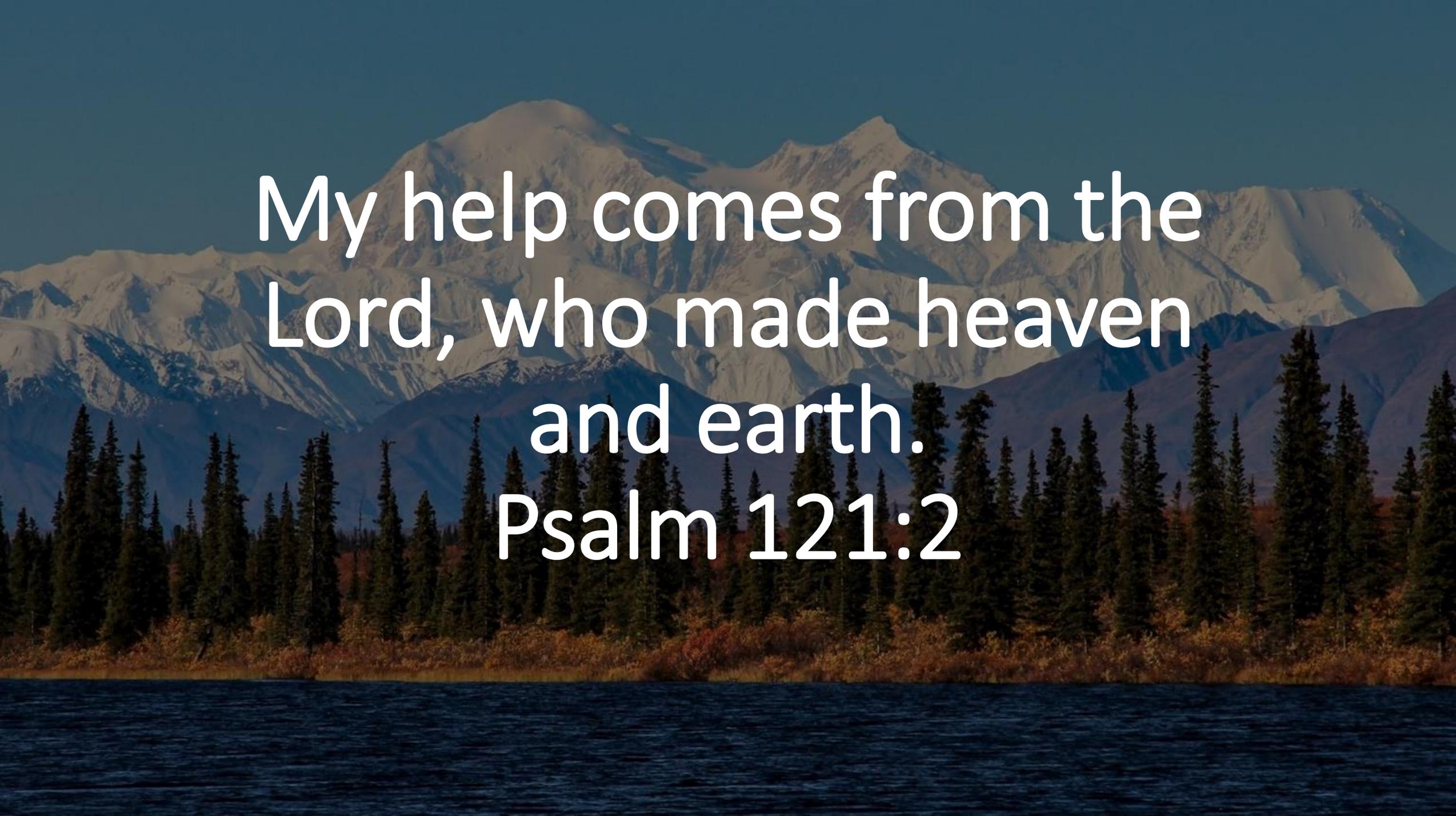
Think that everything is
their responsibility and
forget that God sometimes
works in us at different
speeds than we would like

Brainstorm

ME

GOD





My help comes from the
Lord, who made heaven
and earth.
Psalm 121:2