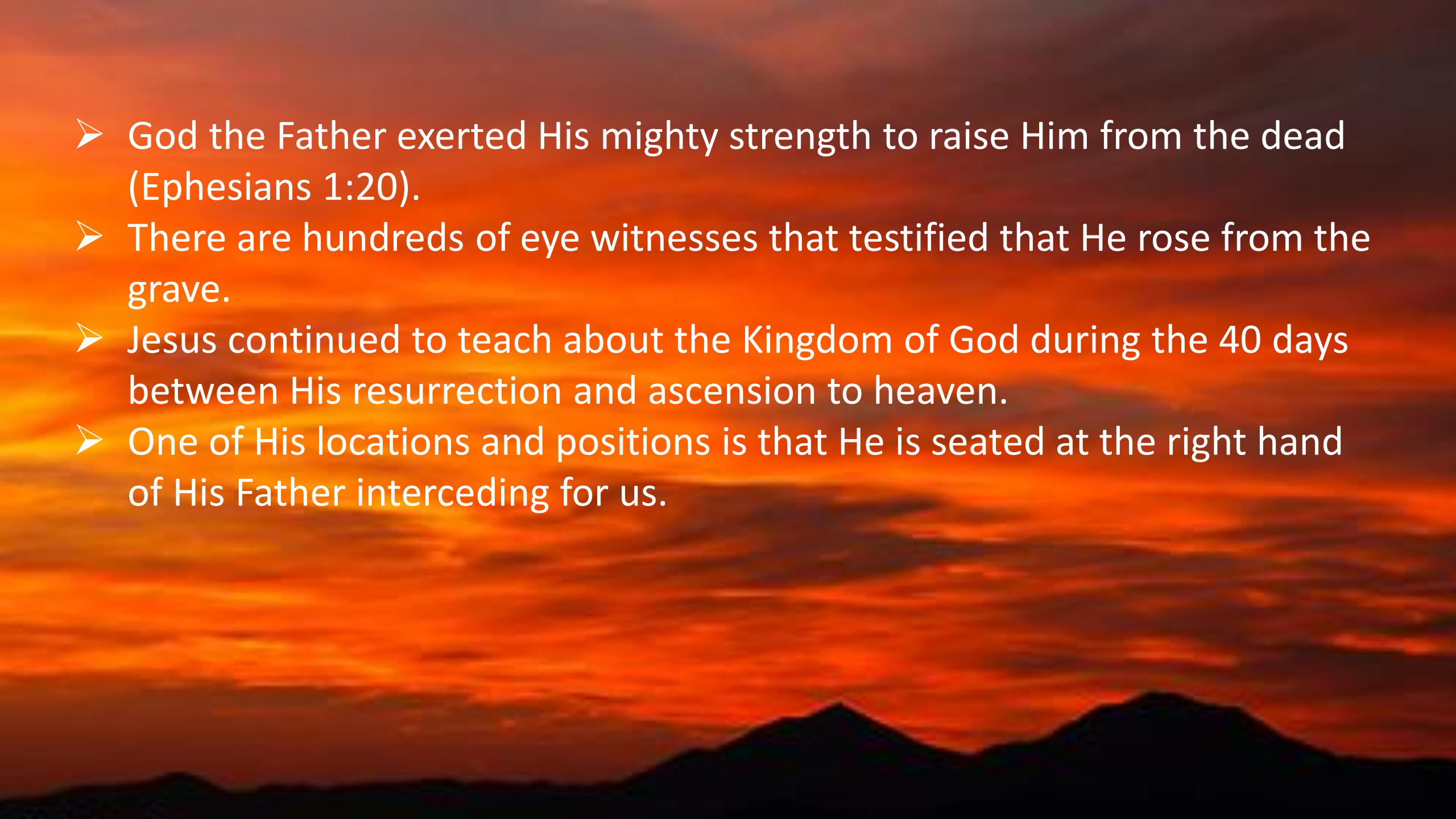




The women, deep in wonder and full of joy, lost no time in leaving the tomb. They ran to tell the disciples. Then Jesus met them, stopping them in their tracks. “Good morning!” he said. They fell to their knees, embraced his feet, and worshiped him. Jesus said, “You’re holding on to me for dear life! Don’t be frightened like that. Go tell my brothers that they are to go to Galilee, and that I’ll meet them there.”

Matthew 28:8-10 (The Message)

- 
- God the Father exerted His mighty strength to raise Him from the dead (Ephesians 1:20).
 - There are hundreds of eye witnesses that testified that He rose from the grave.
 - Jesus continued to teach about the Kingdom of God during the 40 days between His resurrection and ascension to heaven.
 - One of His locations and positions is that He is seated at the right hand of His Father interceding for us.

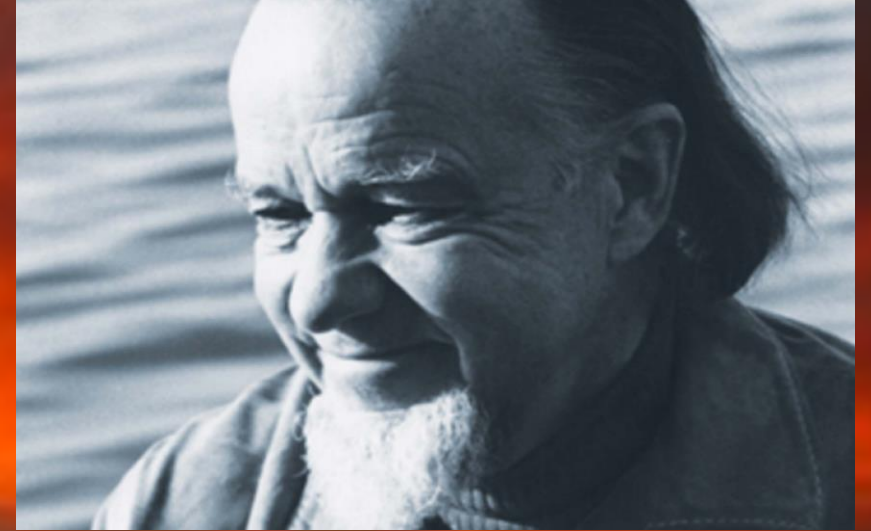


Hebrews 12:1-2 - *And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus....*

Race = *agona* = “to struggle” = agony



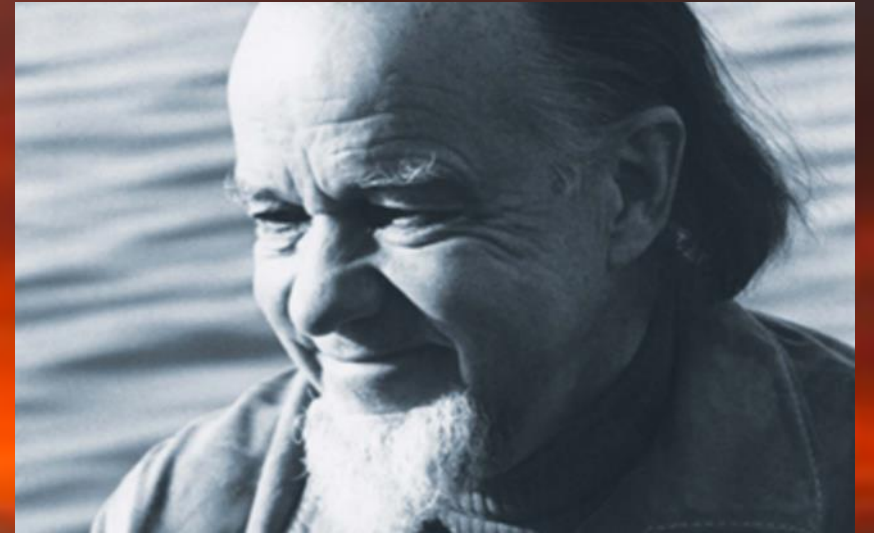
“The [way Christians look at life] can be divided into what I call a major and a minor theme. First, the minor theme is the abnormality of [a world that has revolted]. There is a defeated and sinful side to the Christian’s life. If we are at all honest, we must admit that in this life there is no such thing as totally victorious living.”



Francis Schaeffer (1912-1984)



“The major theme...is the meaningfulness and purposefulness of life. God is here; God exists. Therefore, all is not absurd. Man is made in God’s image and so man has significance. Man is fallen and flawed, but he is redeemable on the basis of Christ’s work. This is beautiful. This is optimism. It is possible [though] for a Christian to so major on the minor theme, emphasizing the lostness of man and the abnormality of the universe, that he is...unbiblical. For the Christian, the major theme is to be dominant.”

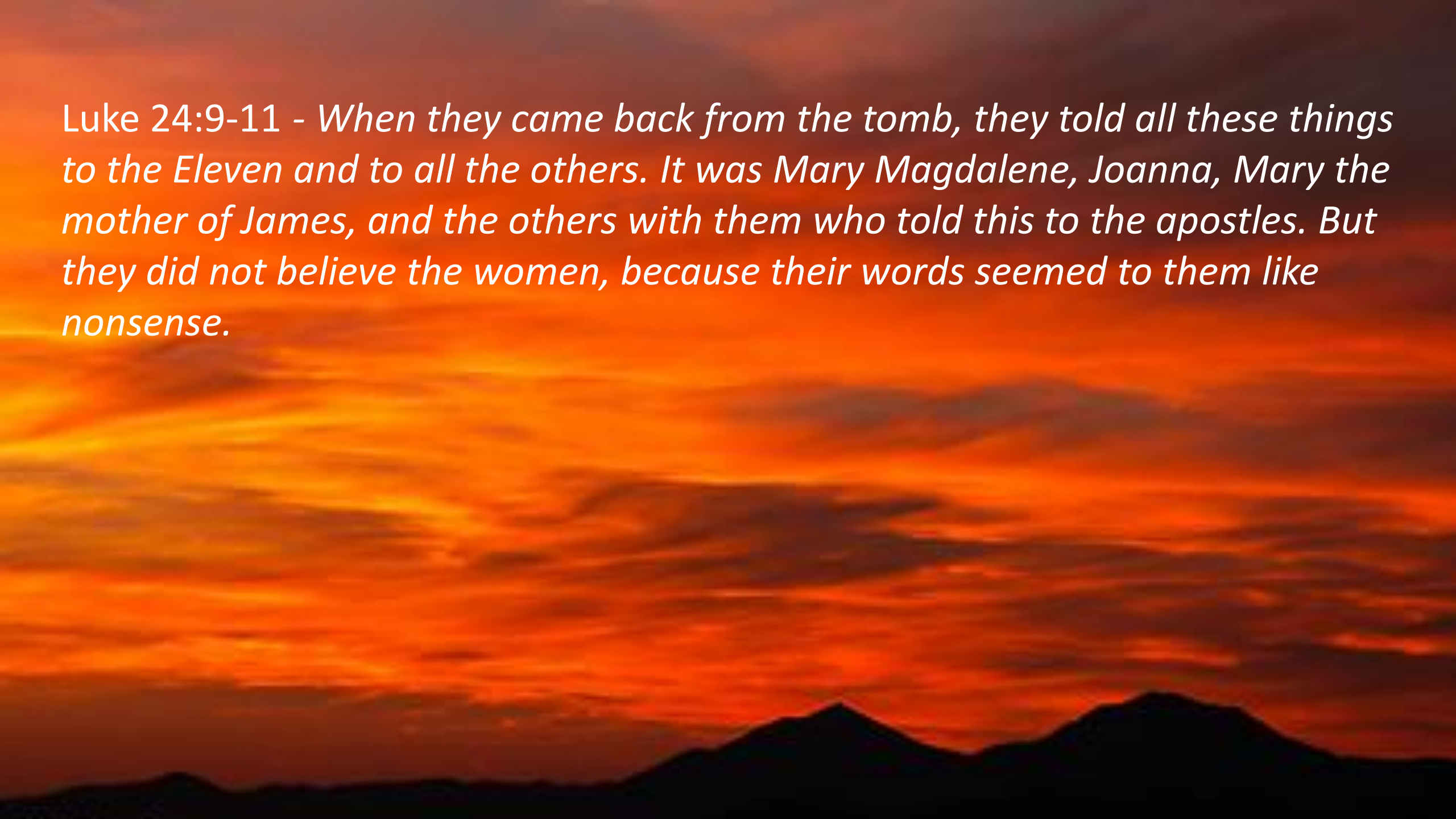


Francis Schaeffer (1912-1984)



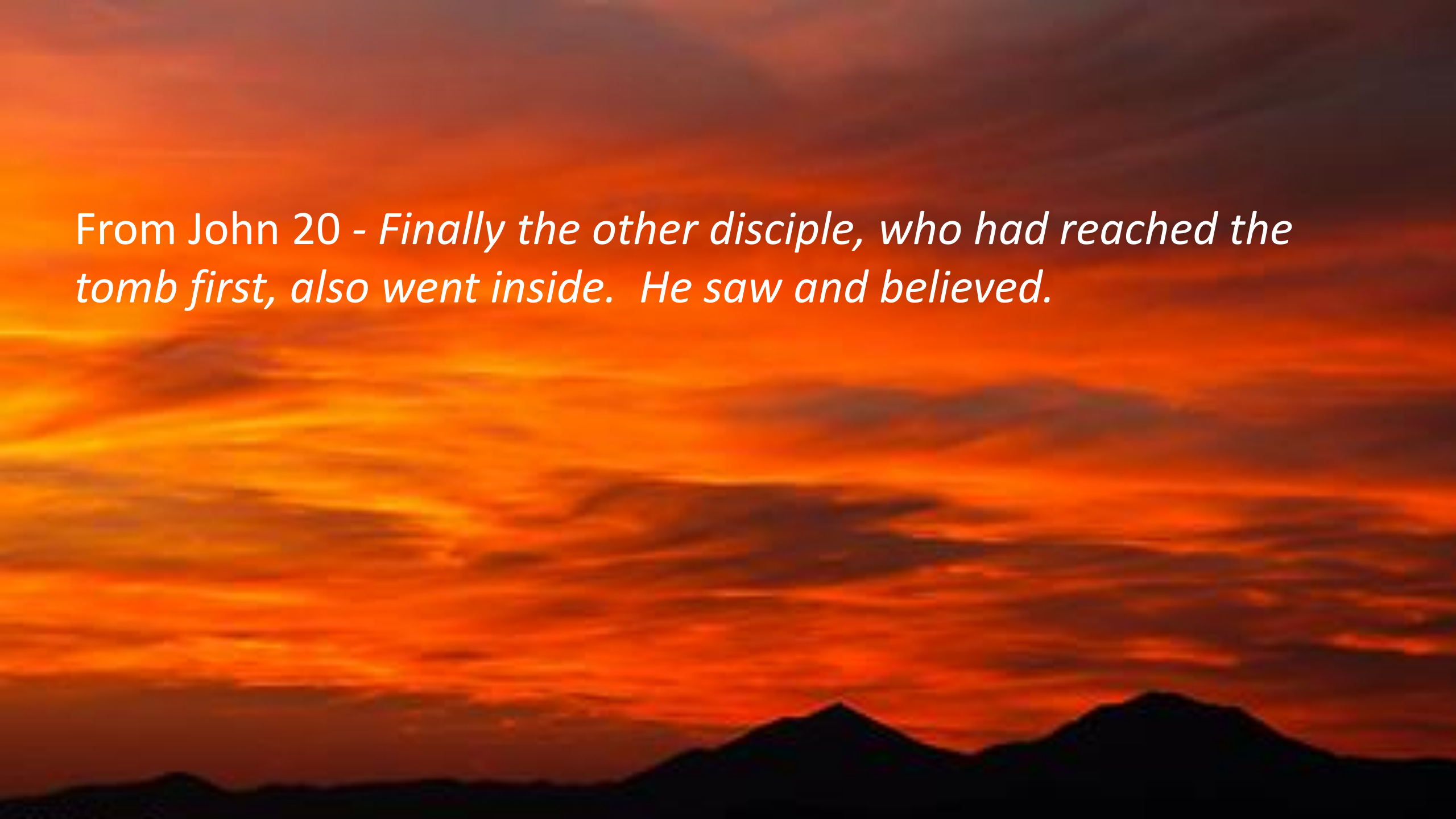
Mark 16:8-14 – *Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid. When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it. Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either. Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.*

Luke 24:9-11 - When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.



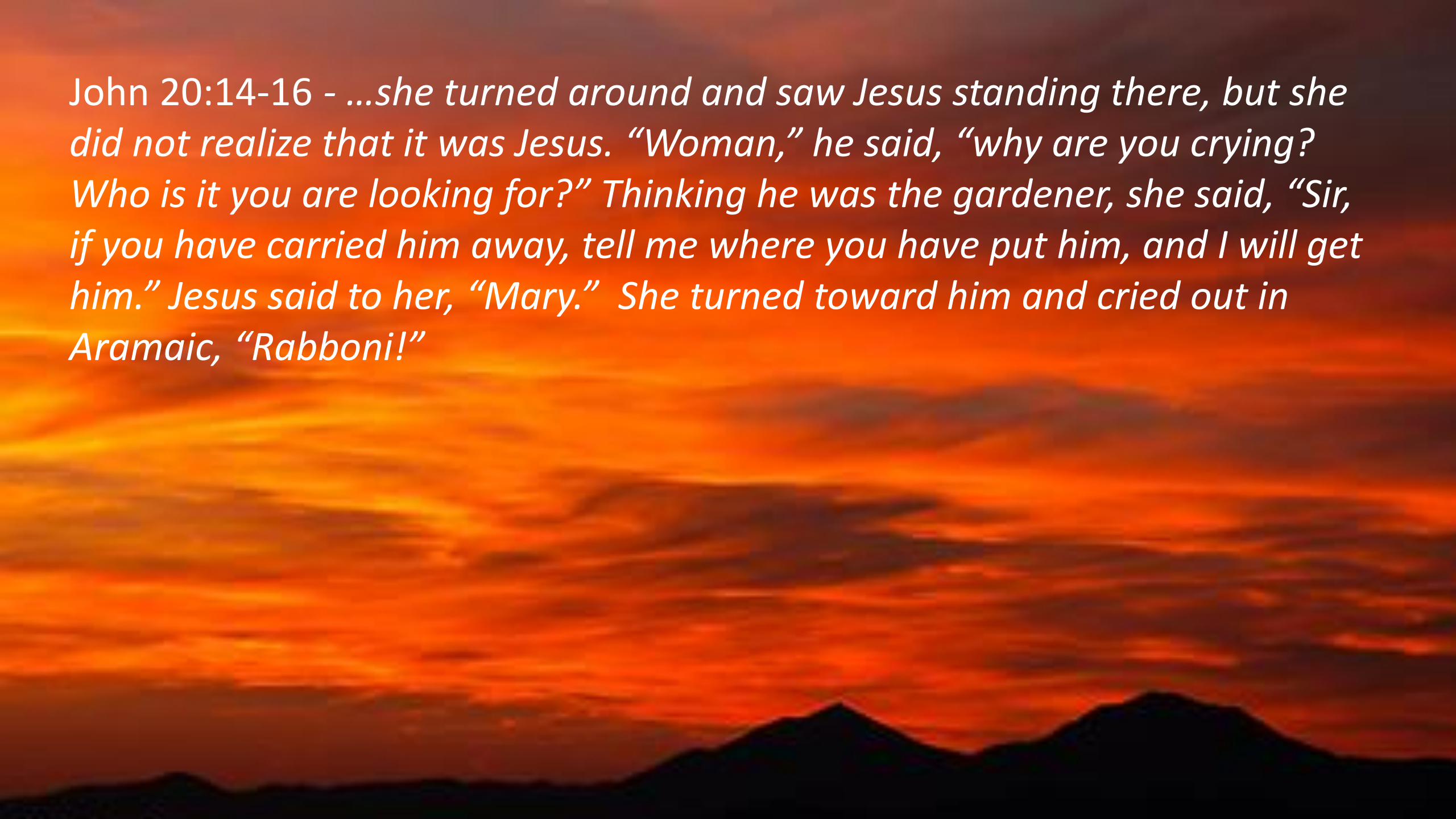
John 20:24-29 - Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."





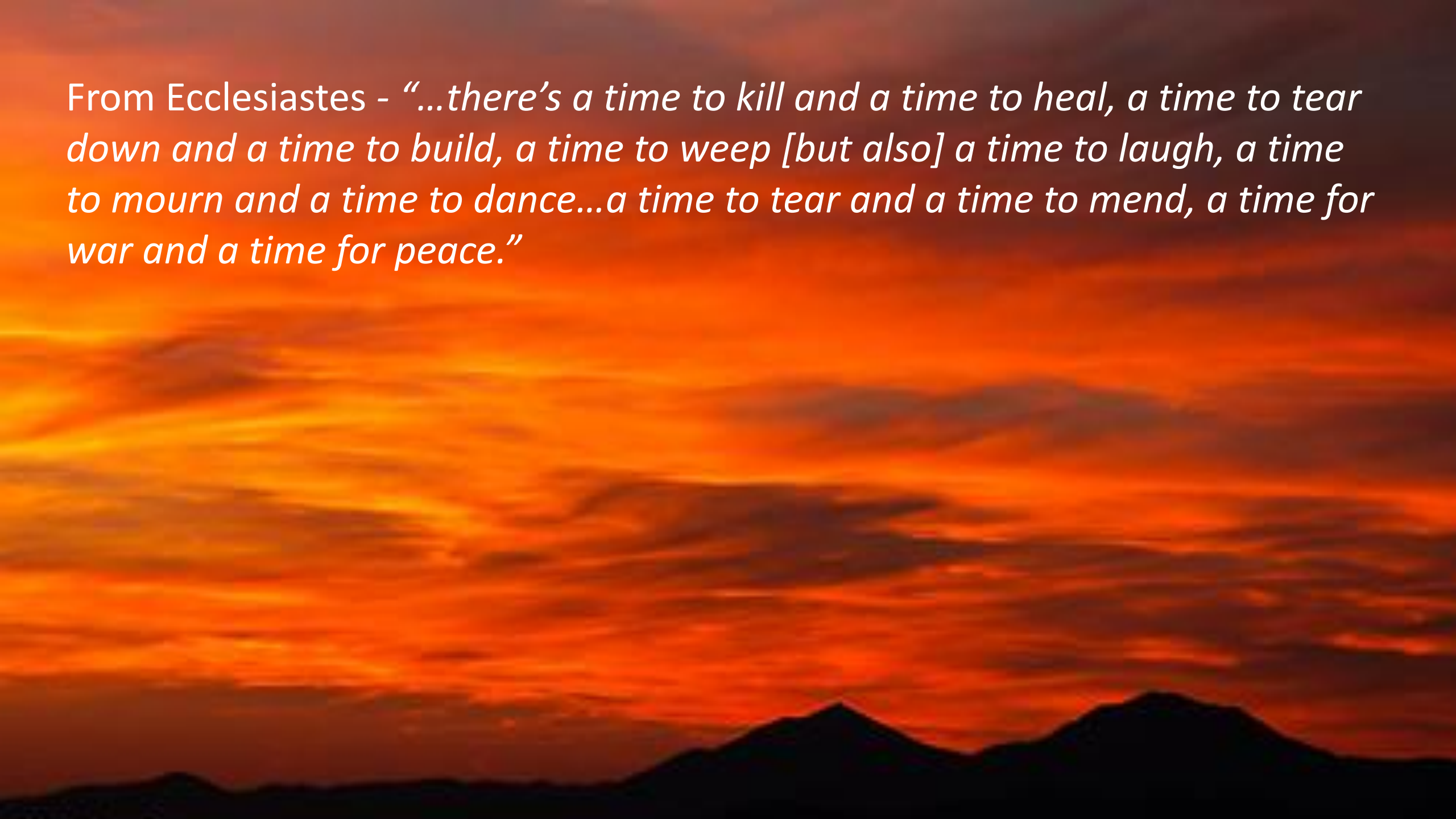
From John 20 - *Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed.*

John 20:14-16 - ...*she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."* Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!"





From Ecclesiastes - *“...there’s a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep [but also] a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance...a time to tear and a time to mend, a time for war and a time for peace.”*

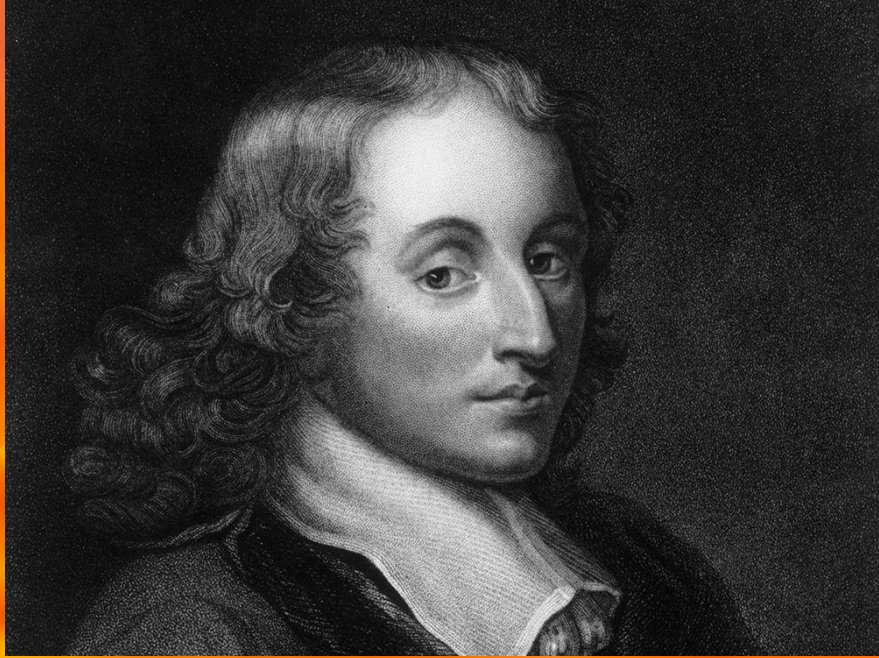
A sunset or sunrise over a mountain range. The sky is filled with vibrant orange and red hues, with some darker clouds. The mountains in the foreground are silhouetted against the bright sky.



A vibrant sunset or sunrise scene with a mountain range silhouette in the foreground. The sky is filled with horizontal bands of orange, red, and yellow, transitioning to a darker purple at the top. The mountains are dark and silhouetted against the bright sky.

Temptation: We choose to stay in the minor theme long past its usefulness.

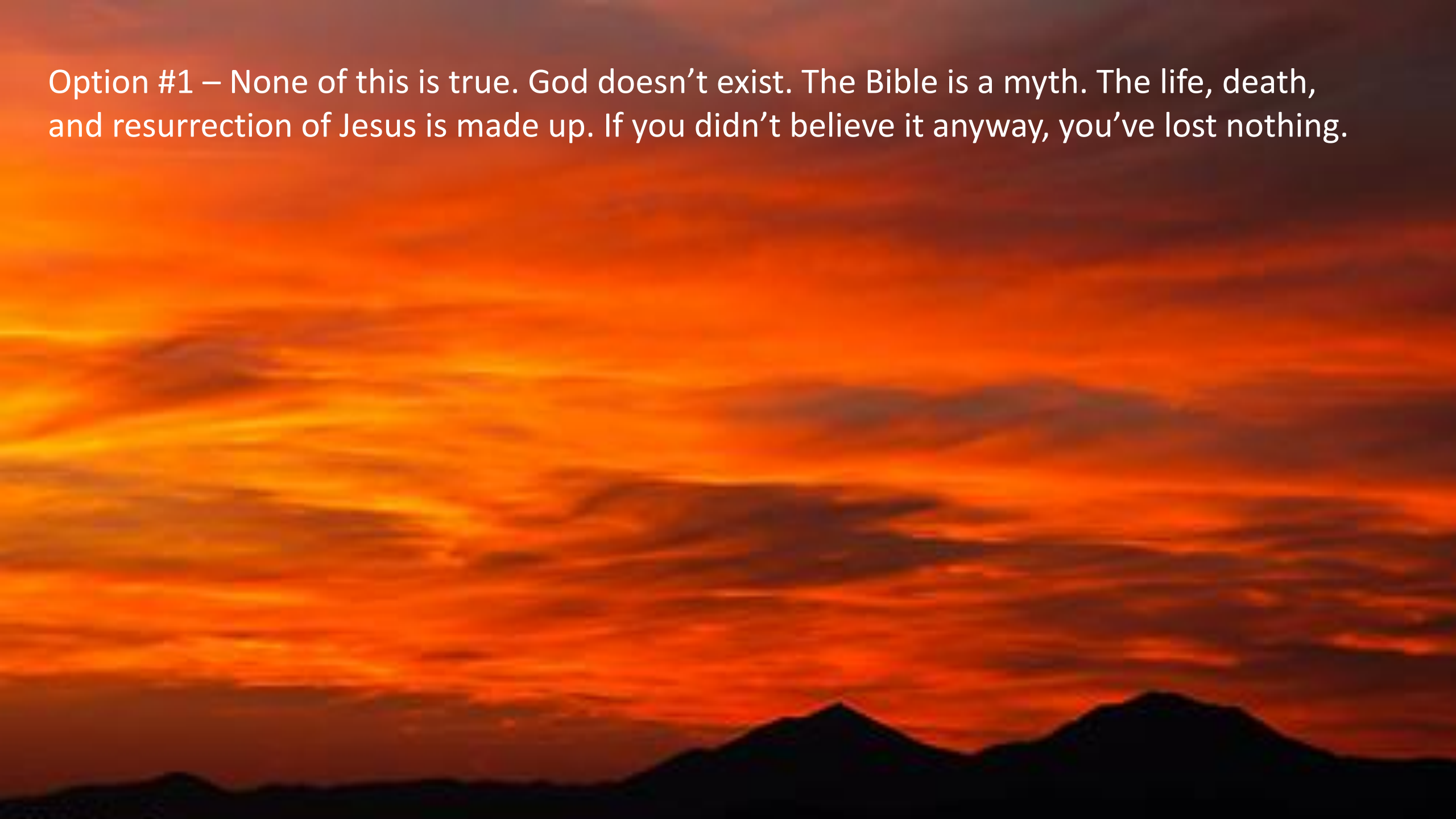




Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

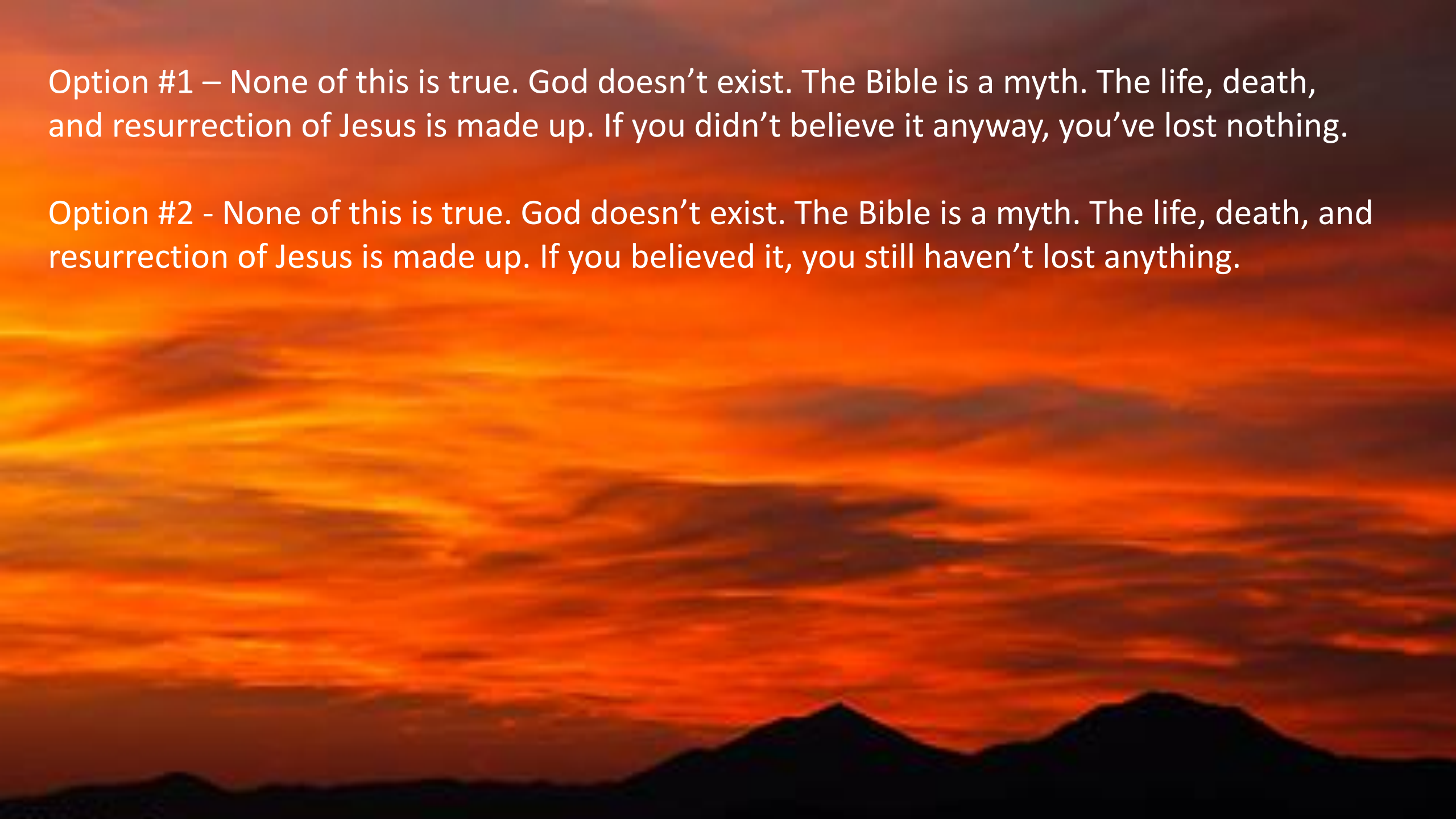
“What else does [our] craving, and [our] helplessness proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him...though none can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; [namely] God himself.”

Option #1 – None of this is true. God doesn't exist. The Bible is a myth. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is made up. If you didn't believe it anyway, you've lost nothing.



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Option #3 – It's all true. God exists. The Bible is God's revelation to us. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is absolutely true and without doubt matters to our life now and after we breathe our last on this earth. If you believe it by grace through faith, you've gained everything.

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Option #4 - It's all true. God exists. The Bible is God's revelation to us. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is absolutely true and without doubt matters to our life now and after we breathe our last on this earth. If you don't believe it, you've lost everything.

