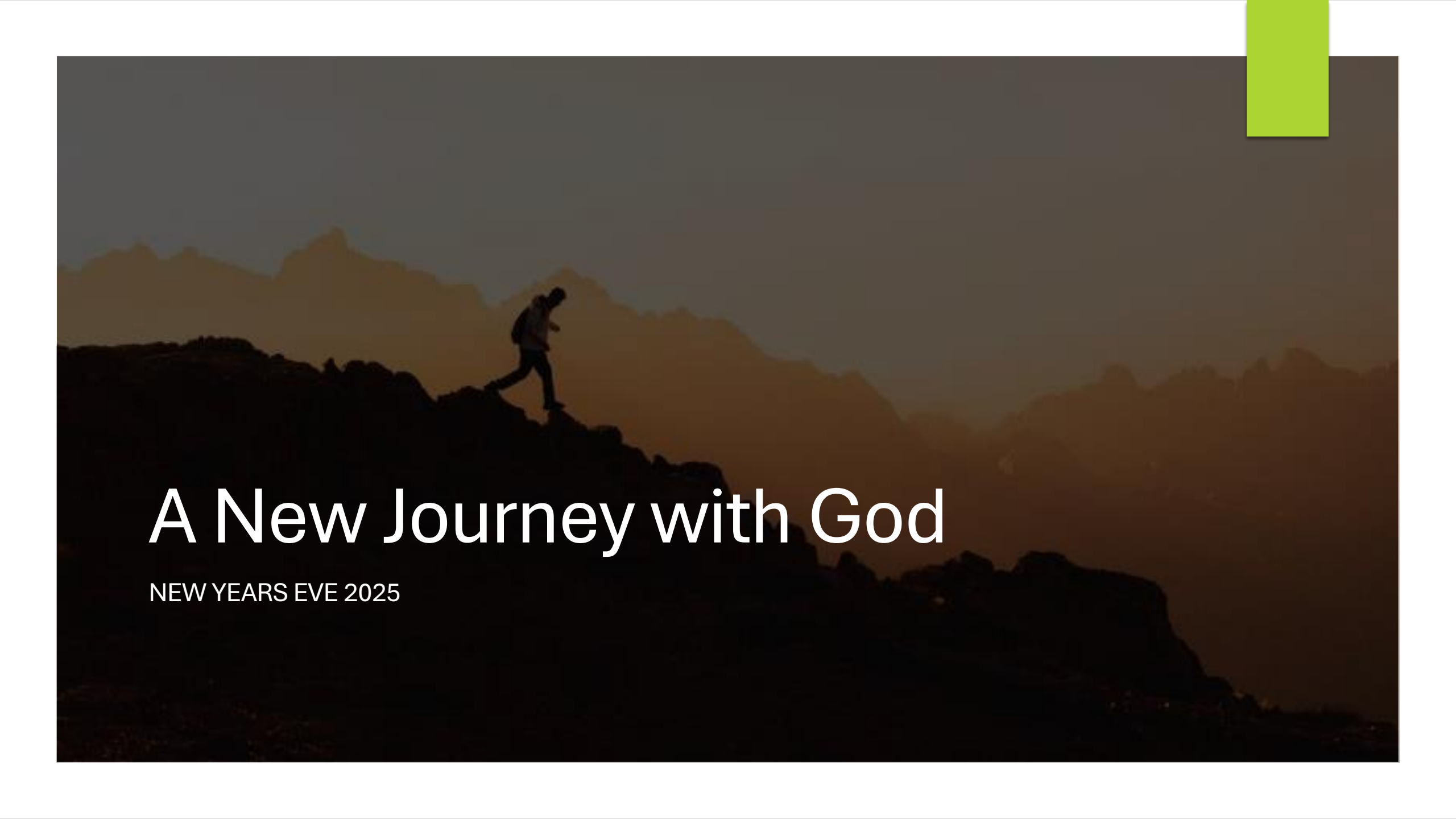


A person is silhouetted against a warm, orange-hued sky as they hike along a dark, rocky mountain ridge. The background shows more mountain peaks in the distance, also silhouetted against the sunset. The overall mood is contemplative and adventurous.

A New Journey with God

NEW YEARS EVE 2025

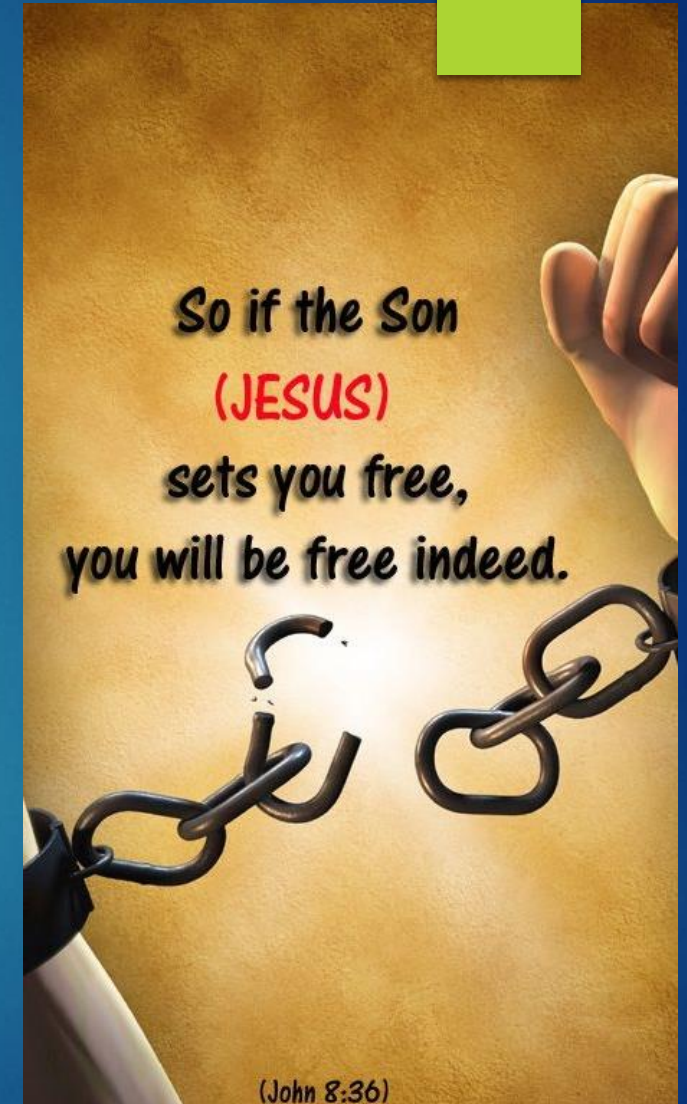


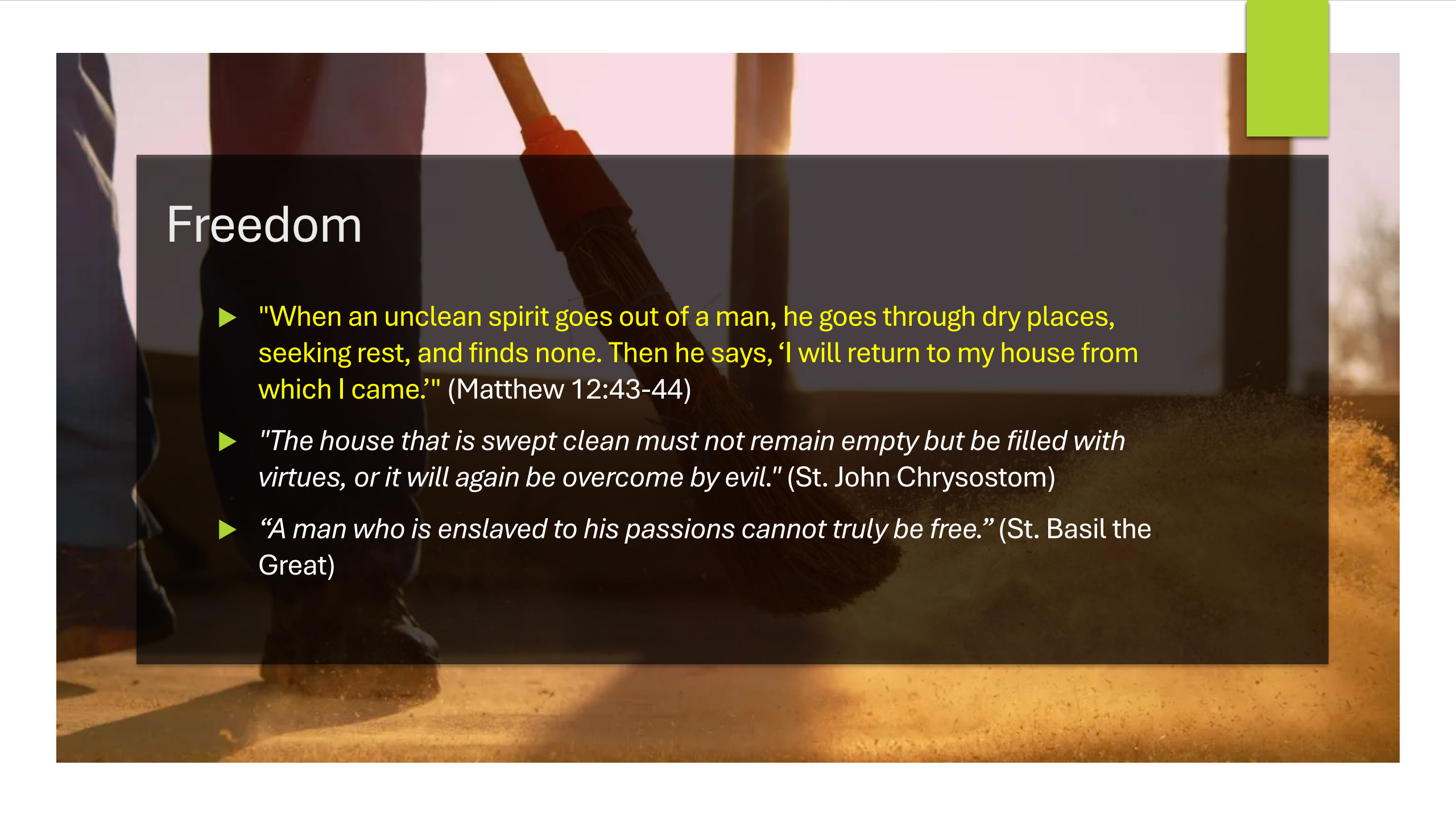
Introduction

THE EXODUS AND THE INCARNATION

Freedom

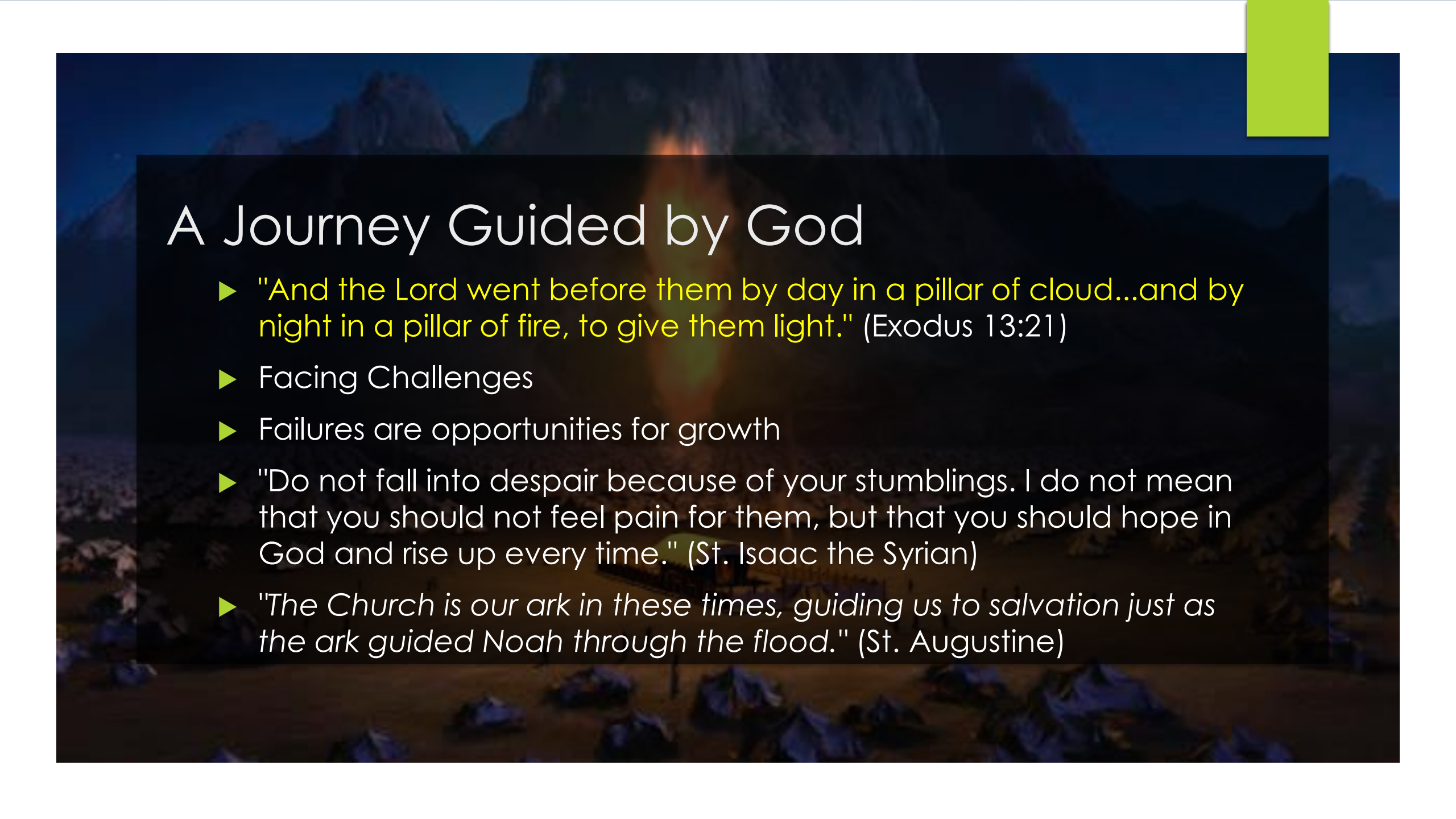
- ▶ "Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." (Exodus 16:3)
- ▶ "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." (John 8:36)
- ▶ *"The Word became flesh to undo the corruption of sin and to set us free from the bondage to the devil."* (St. Athanasius)



A person is sweeping dust with a broom. The broom has a wooden handle and a red grip. The dust is being swept into a pile. The background is a warm, golden-brown color, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall image has a soft, ethereal quality.

Freedom

- ▶ "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'" (Matthew 12:43-44)
- ▶ *"The house that is swept clean must not remain empty but be filled with virtues, or it will again be overcome by evil."* (St. John Chrysostom)
- ▶ *"A man who is enslaved to his passions cannot truly be free."* (St. Basil the Great)

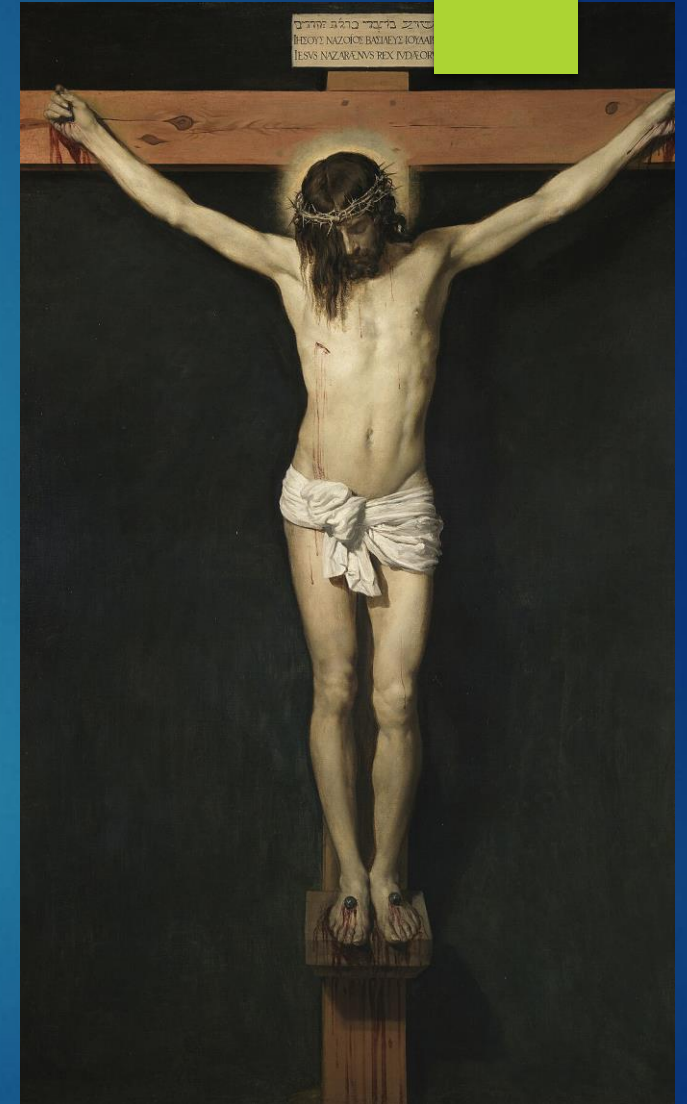
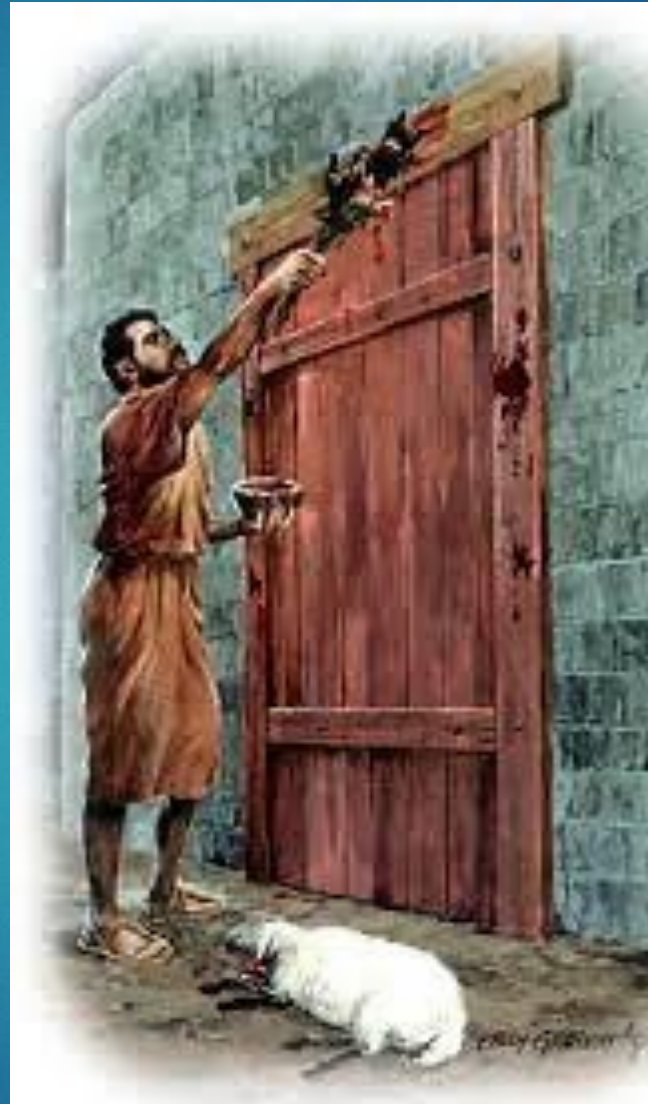


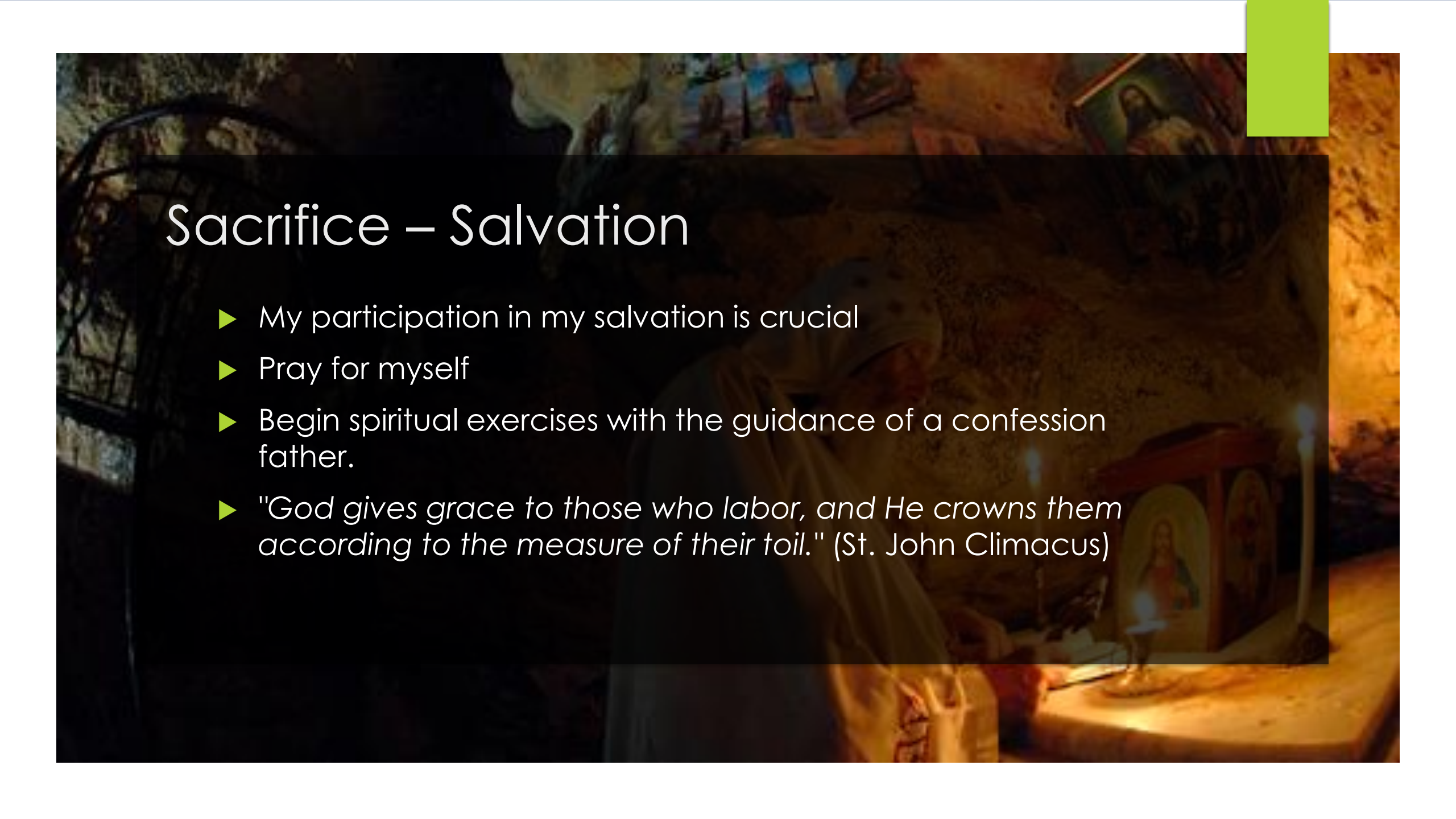
A Journey Guided by God

- ▶ "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud...and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light." (Exodus 13:21)
- ▶ Facing Challenges
- ▶ Failures are opportunities for growth
- ▶ "Do not fall into despair because of your stumblings. I do not mean that you should not feel pain for them, but that you should hope in God and rise up every time." (St. Isaac the Syrian)
- ▶ *"The Church is our ark in these times, guiding us to salvation just as the ark guided Noah through the flood."* (St. Augustine)

Sacrifice – Salvation

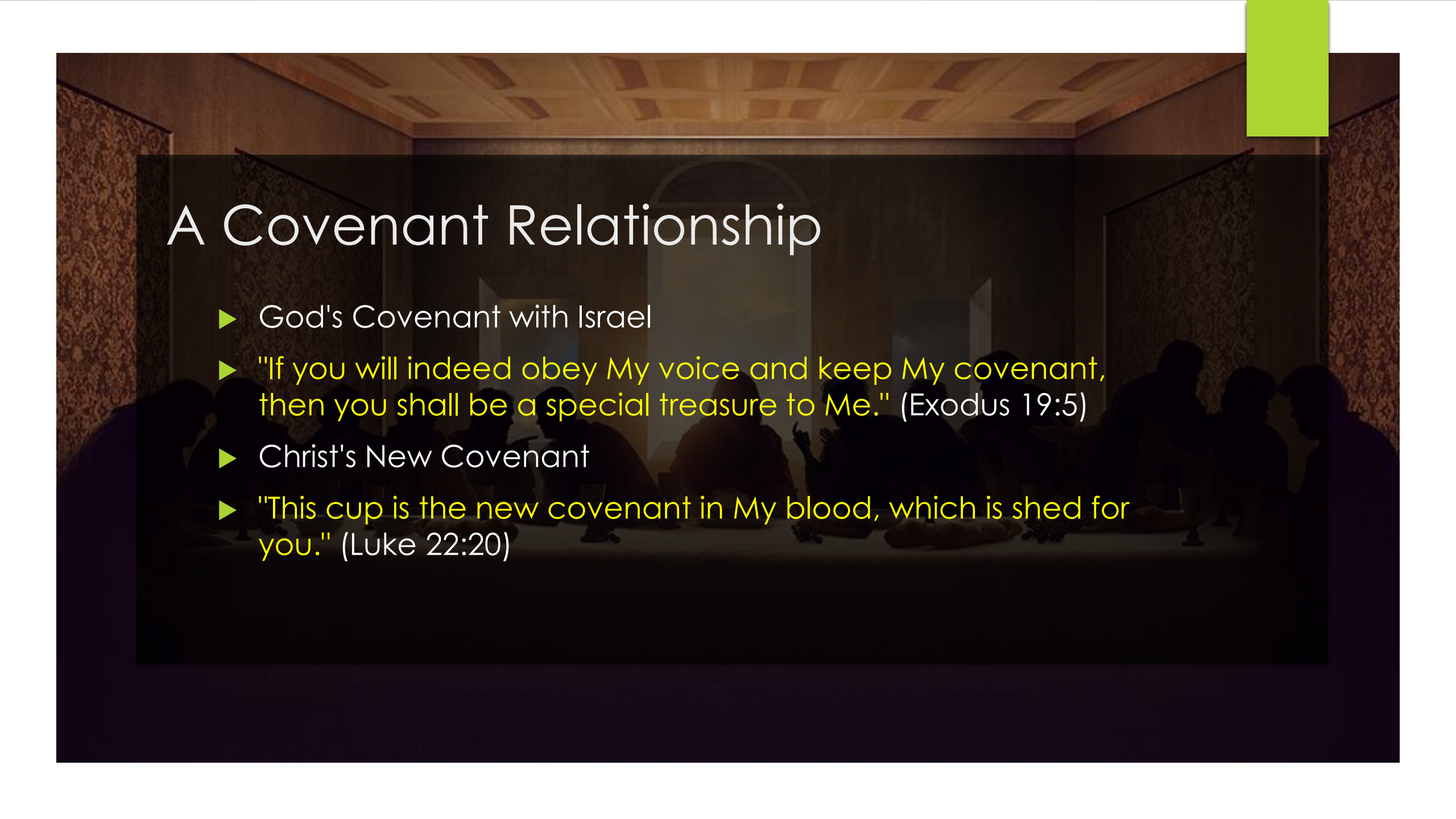
- ▶ The Sacrificial Lamb in the Exodus
- ▶ "Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you." (Exodus 12:13)
- ▶ "The Passover lamb prefigures Christ, whose blood spares us from eternal death." (St. Cyril of Alexandria)



A monk in a white habit is shown from the side, performing a religious rite at an altar. The altar is lit with several candles, and there are icons on the wall behind him. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source being the candles. The monk is wearing a white habit and is focused on his task. The background features a wall with religious paintings or icons, and the overall atmosphere is solemn and sacred.

Sacrifice – Salvation

- ▶ My participation in my salvation is crucial
- ▶ Pray for myself
- ▶ Begin spiritual exercises with the guidance of a confession father.
- ▶ *"God gives grace to those who labor, and He crowns them according to the measure of their toil."* (St. John Climacus)

A group of people are silhouetted against a large, arched window in a room with patterned wallpaper. The scene is dimly lit, with light coming from the window. A bright green rectangular shape is visible in the top right corner of the image.

A Covenant Relationship

- ▶ God's Covenant with Israel
- ▶ "If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me." (Exodus 19:5)
- ▶ Christ's New Covenant
- ▶ "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you." (Luke 22:20)

A Covenant Relationship

- ▶ How can we be faithful to this covenant with God?
- ▶ Abide by His commandments
- ▶ "If you love Me, keep My commandments." (John 14:15)
- ▶ Daily struggle to remain faithful
- ▶ *"When you arise each morning, remind yourself that the covenant of God is renewed with you each day." (St. Anthony the Great)*

