



THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT
Mt. 5:1-12

Mt. 5:1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

Introduction

The Sermon on the Mount is the first of five major discourses that Matthew included in his Gospel. Each one follows a narrative section, and each one ends with the same formula statement concerning Jesus' authority (cf. 7:28-29).

Mt. 7:28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, **the people were astonished at his doctrine:**

29 For **he taught them as one having authority**, and not as the scribes.

❖ There are four features of all five of Jesus' major discourses to His disciples, that Matthew recorded, that are worthy of note.

○ First, they did not provoke conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders.

○ Second, the reason for this is that Jesus gave them to His disciples and the crowds, not to the religious leaders.

Original Word: μαθητής

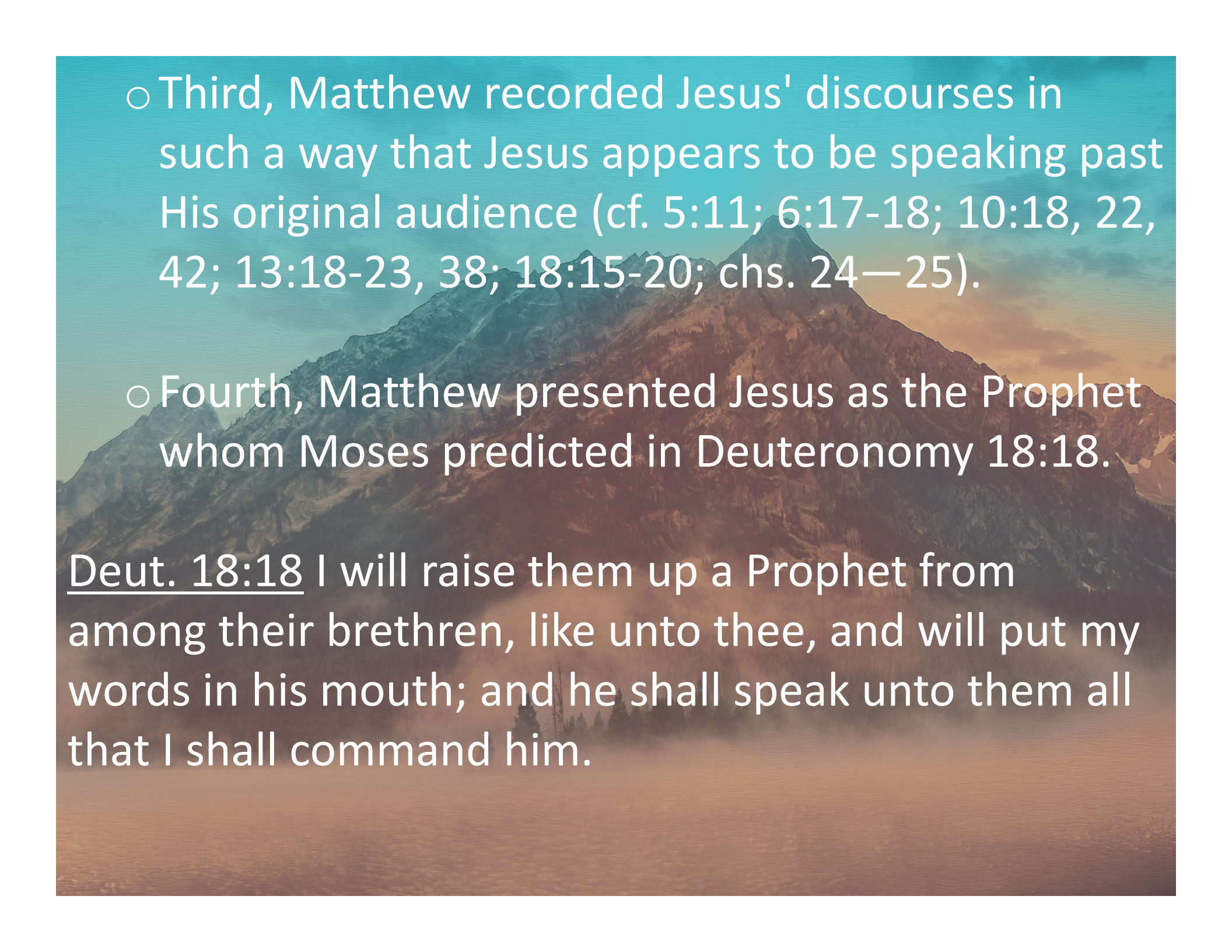
Transliteration: mathétés

Definition: a disciple

Usage: a learner, disciple, pupil.

mathētēs (from *math-*, the "mental effort needed to think something through") – properly, a *learner*; a *disciple*, a *follower of Christ* who *learns the doctrines of Scripture and the lifestyle* they require; someone catechized with proper instruction from the Bible with its necessary follow-through (life-applications). See also *mathēteúō* ("to disciple").

<https://biblehub.com/greek/3101.htm>

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- Third, Matthew recorded Jesus' discourses in such a way that Jesus appears to be speaking past His original audience (cf. 5:11; 6:17-18; 10:18, 22, 42; 13:18-23, 38; 18:15-20; chs. 24—25).
 - Fourth, Matthew presented Jesus as the Prophet whom Moses predicted in Deuteronomy 18:18.

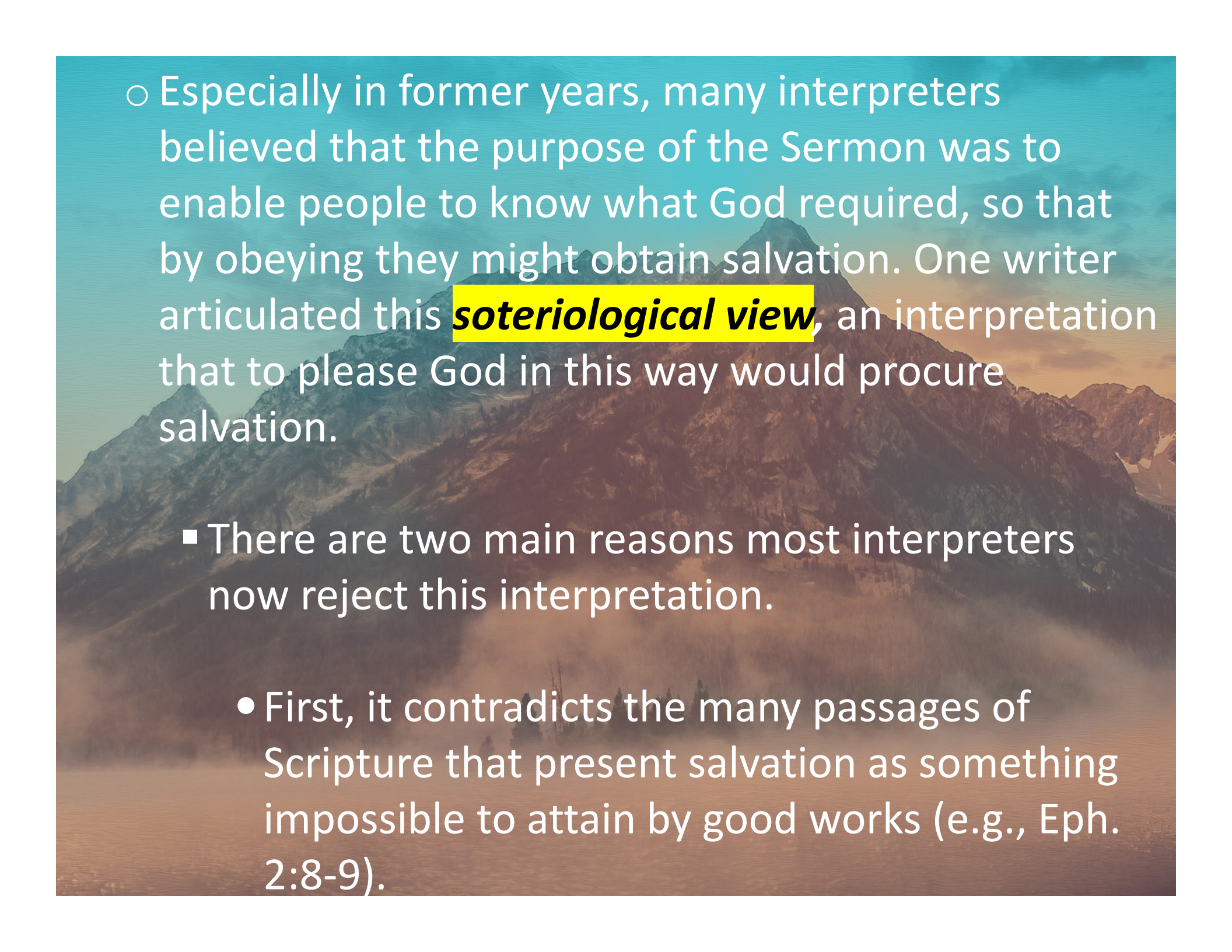
Deut. 18:18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.



❖ The Sermon on the Mount has probably attracted more attention than any discourse in history.

"He who has thirsted and quenched his thirst at the living fount of Christ's Teaching, can never again stoop to seek drink at the broken cisterns of Rabbinism."
Edersheim, Alfred. *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971. 1:525, 526.

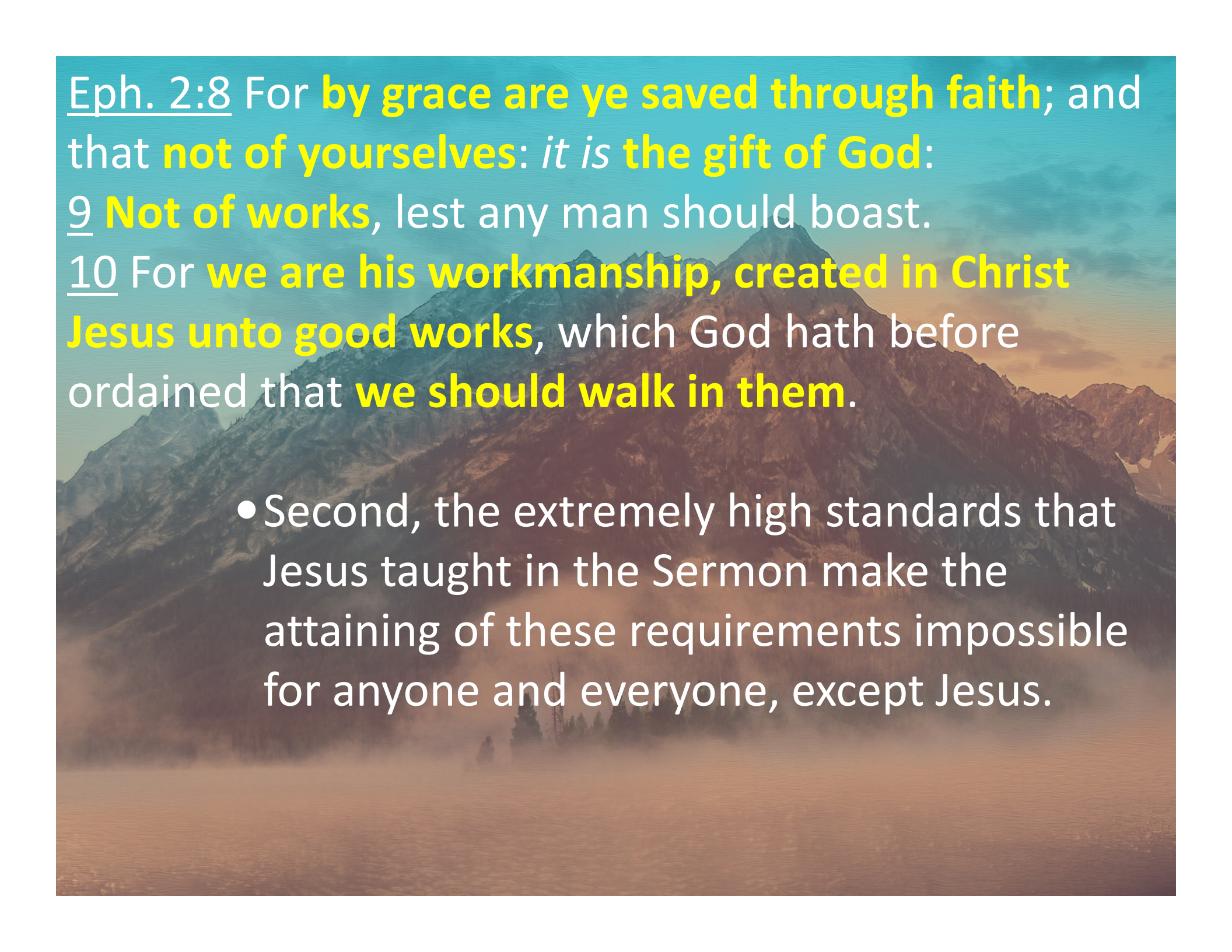
❖ There is still much debate about this sermon's interpretation. A brief review of the basic interpretations of this discourse follows:



○ Especially in former years, many interpreters believed that the purpose of the Sermon was to enable people to know what God required, so that by obeying they might obtain salvation. One writer articulated this **soteriological view**, an interpretation that to please God in this way would procure salvation.

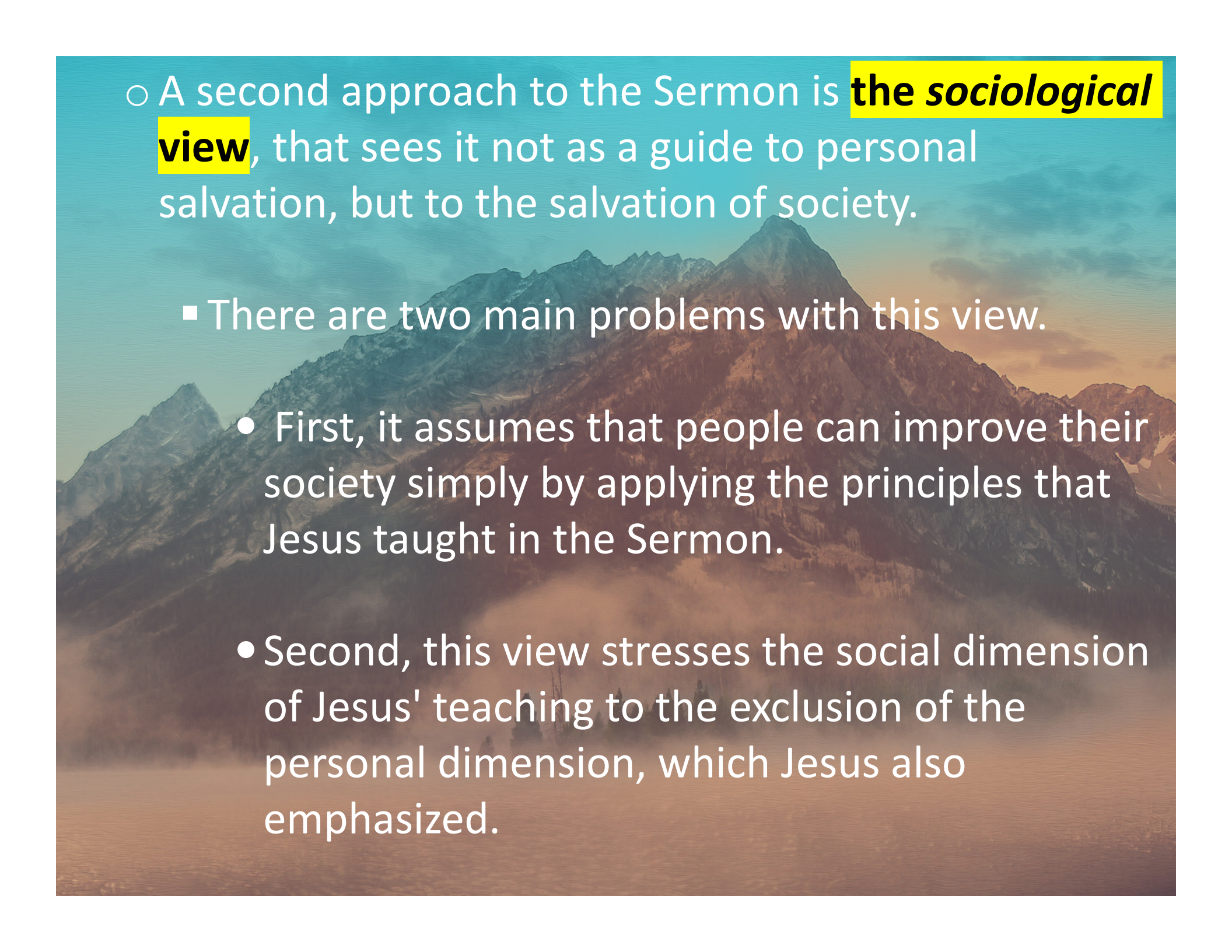
■ There are two main reasons most interpreters now reject this interpretation.

● First, it contradicts the many passages of Scripture that present salvation as something impossible to attain by good works (e.g., Eph. 2:8-9).



Eph. 2:8 For **by grace are ye saved through faith**; and that **not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:**
9 **Not of works**, lest any man should boast.
10 For **we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that **we should walk in them.**

- Second, the extremely high standards that Jesus taught in the Sermon make the attaining of these requirements impossible for anyone and everyone, except Jesus.

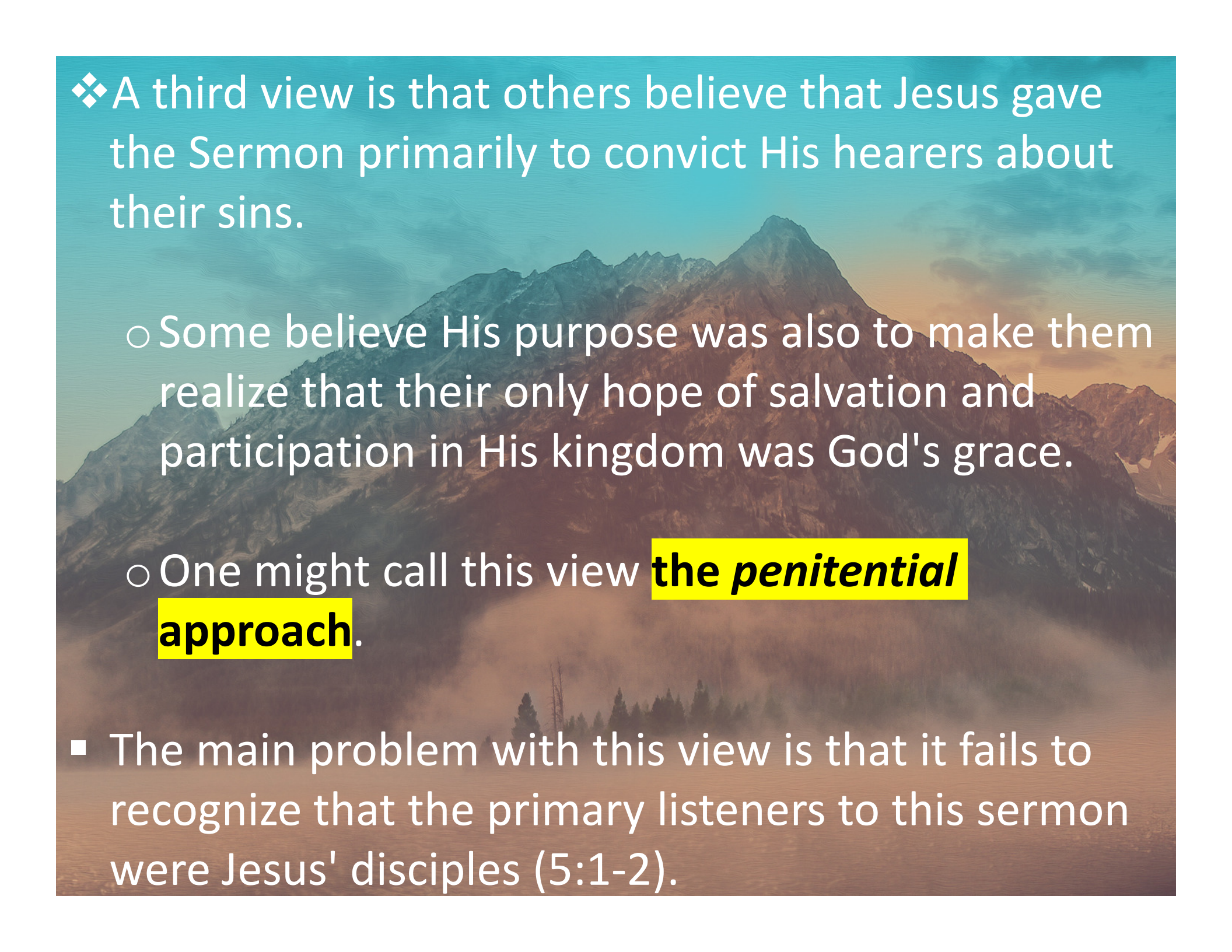


○ A second approach to the Sermon is **the sociological view**, that sees it not as a guide to personal salvation, but to the salvation of society.

▪ There are two main problems with this view.

• First, it assumes that people can improve their society simply by applying the principles that Jesus taught in the Sermon.

• Second, this view stresses the social dimension of Jesus' teaching to the exclusion of the personal dimension, which Jesus also emphasized.

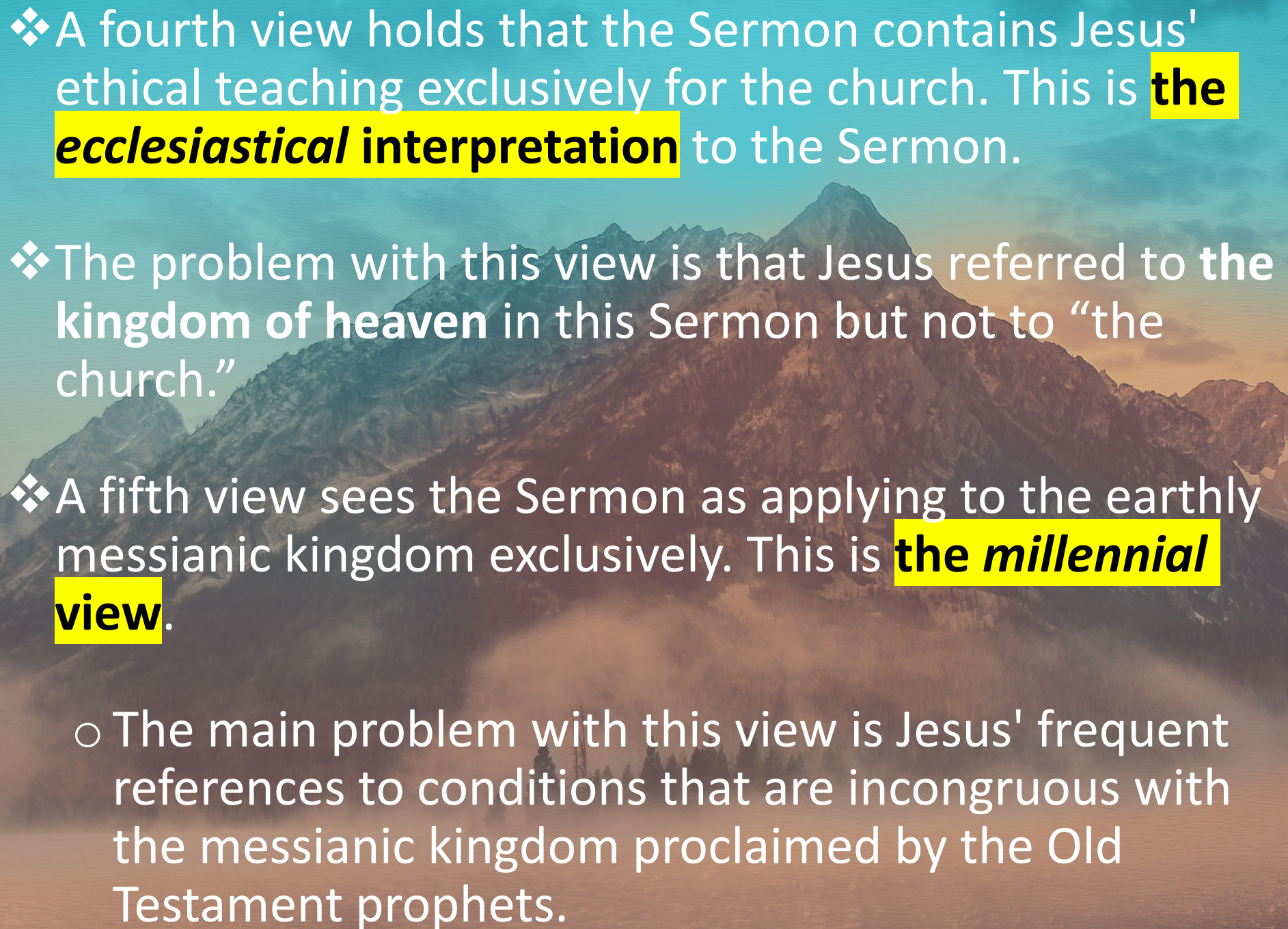


❖ A third view is that others believe that Jesus gave the Sermon primarily to convict His hearers about their sins.

○ Some believe His purpose was also to make them realize that their only hope of salvation and participation in His kingdom was God's grace.

○ One might call this view **the penitential approach**.

■ The main problem with this view is that it fails to recognize that the primary listeners to this sermon were Jesus' disciples (5:1-2).

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- ❖ A fourth view holds that the Sermon contains Jesus' ethical teaching exclusively for the church. This is **the ecclesiastical interpretation** to the Sermon.
 - ❖ The problem with this view is that Jesus referred to **the kingdom of heaven** in this Sermon but not to “the church.”
 - ❖ A fifth view sees the Sermon as applying to the earthly messianic kingdom exclusively. This is **the millennial view**.
 - The main problem with this view is Jesus' frequent references to conditions that are incongruous with the messianic kingdom proclaimed by the Old Testament prophets.

❖ The sixth view is that the Sermon presents ethical instructions for Jesus' disciples that apply from the time Jesus gave them until the beginning of the kingdom. This is the **interim approach** to interpreting the Sermon.

○ It is called "interim" because it views **the primary period of time in view in the Sermon as between the first and second advents of the Lord, which includes the Church Age.**

❖ Jesus' descriptions of His disciples fit disciples who will live during the kingdom age as well as those who live in the inter-advent age. This is the seventh view, **the end times view.**



1 Tim. 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in **the latter times** some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

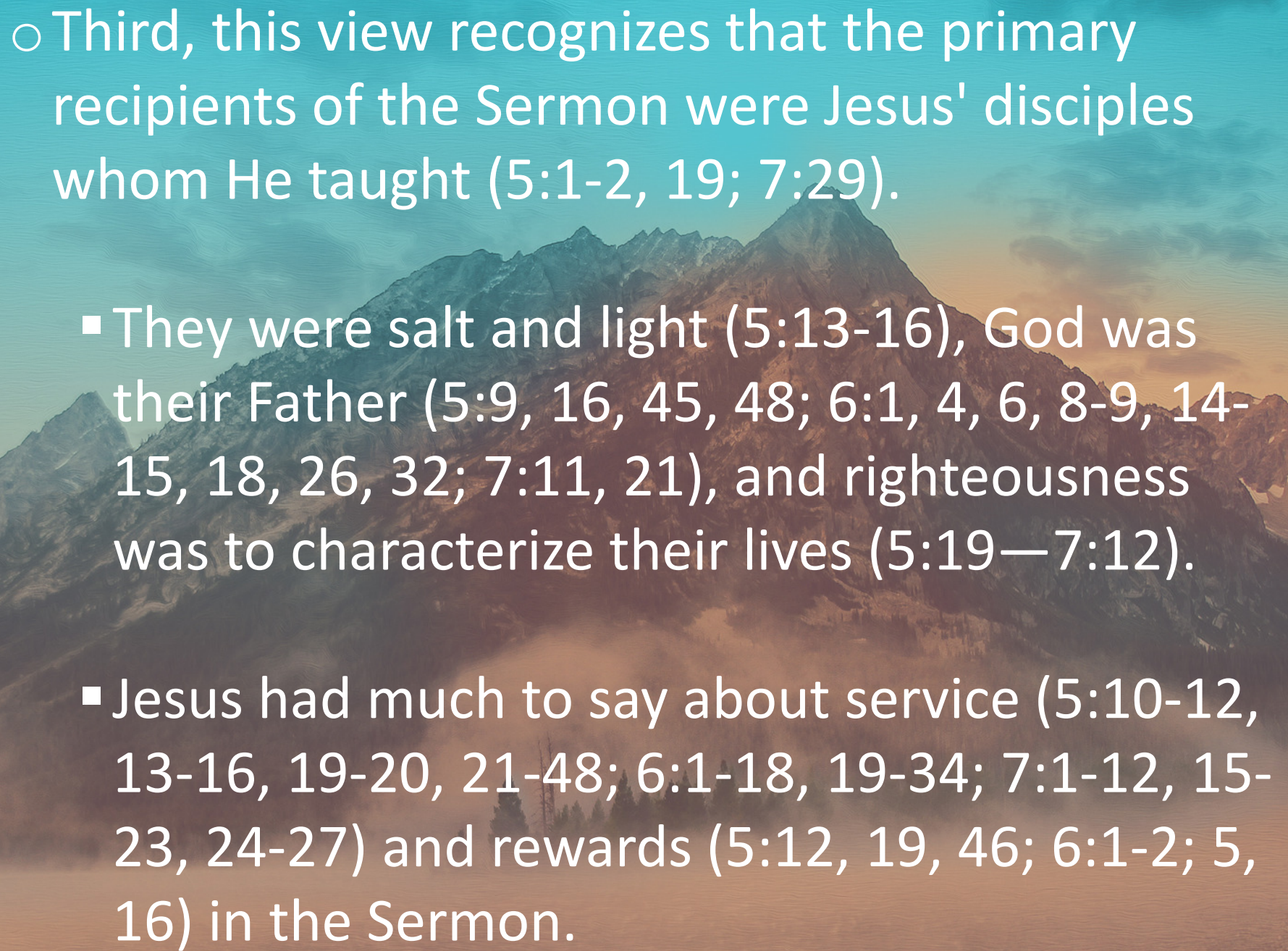
2 Tim. 3:1 This know also, that in **the last days** perilous times shall come.

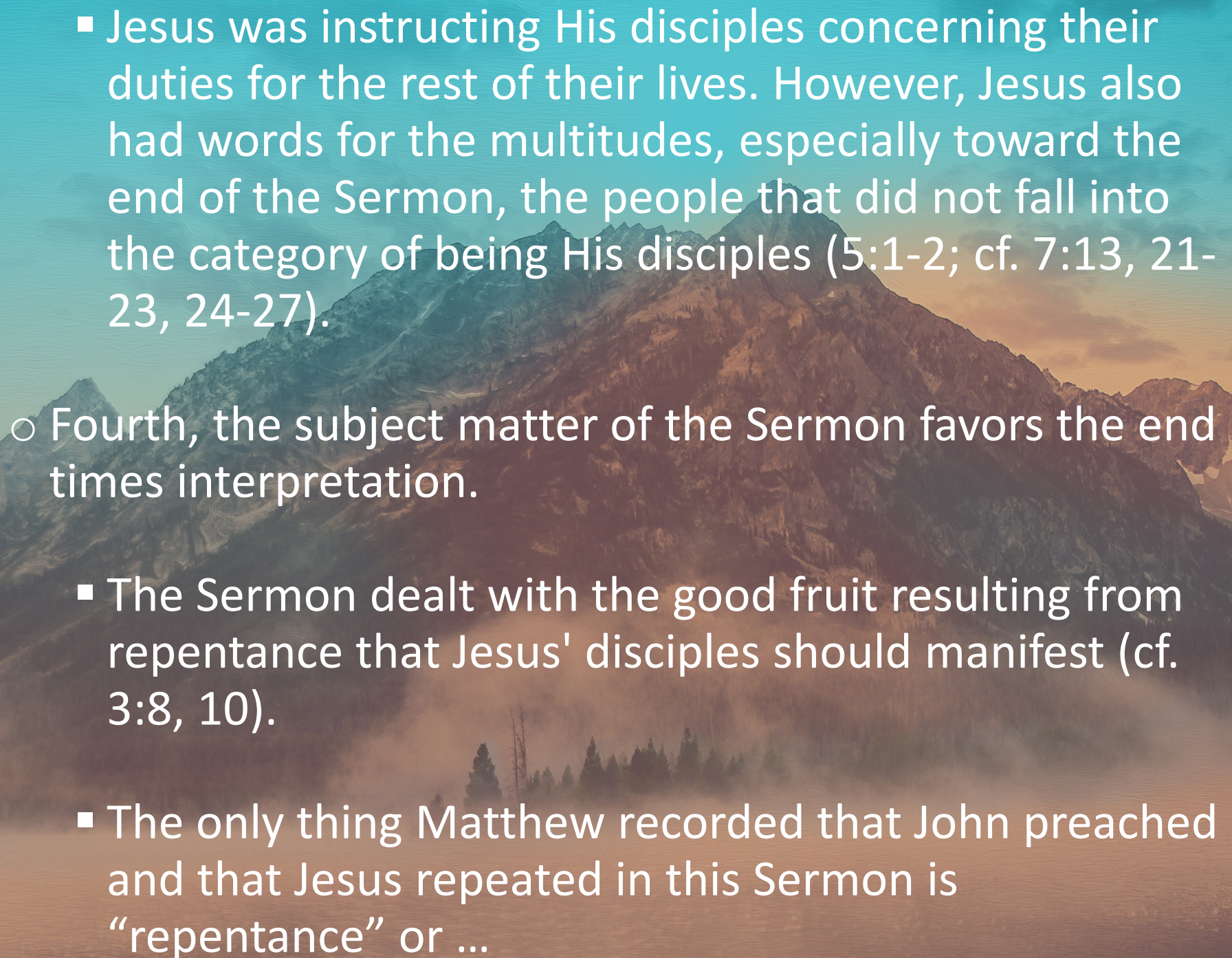
Heb. 1:2 Hath **in these last days** spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

1 Pet. 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest **in these last times** for you,

❖ Several factors commend this view.

- First, it fits best into the historical situation that provided the context for the giving of the Sermon. John and then Jesus had announced that the kingdom was at hand. Jesus next instructed His disciples about preparing for its inauguration.
- Second, the message of the Sermon also anticipates the inauguration of the kingdom. This is obvious in the attitude that pervades the discourse (cf. 5:12, 19-20, 46; 6:1-2, 4-6, 10, 18; 7:19-23). Moreover there is prediction about persecution and false prophets arising (5:11-12; 7:15-18). The abundant use of the future tense also anticipates the coming of the kingdom (5:4-9, 19-20; 6:4, 6, 14-15, 18, 33; 7:2, 7, 11, 16, 20-22).

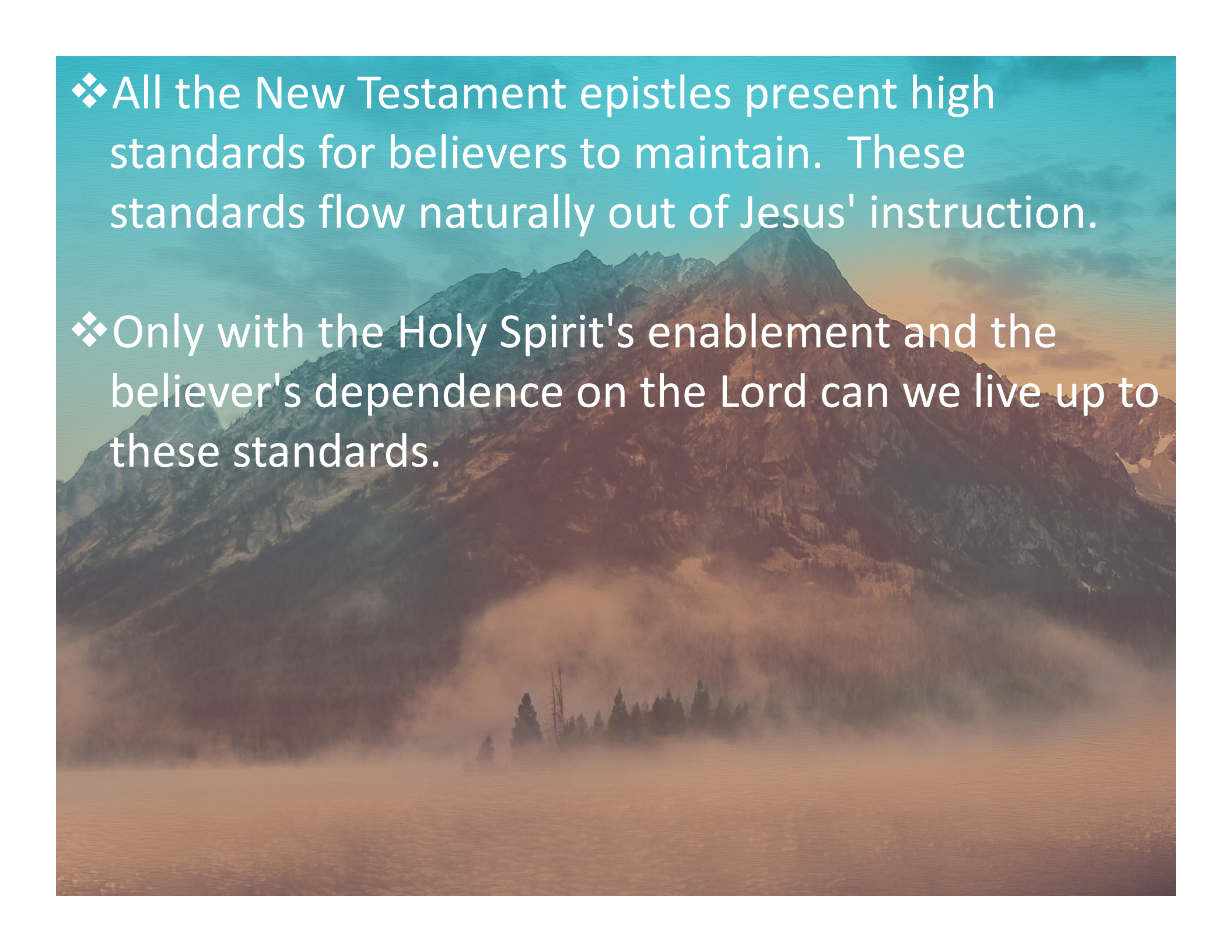
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- Third, this view recognizes that the primary recipients of the Sermon were Jesus' disciples whom He taught (5:1-2, 19; 7:29).
 - They were salt and light (5:13-16), God was their Father (5:9, 16, 45, 48; 6:1, 4, 6, 8-9, 14-15, 18, 26, 32; 7:11, 21), and righteousness was to characterize their lives (5:19—7:12).
 - Jesus had much to say about service (5:10-12, 13-16, 19-20, 21-48; 6:1-18, 19-34; 7:1-12, 15-23, 24-27) and rewards (5:12, 19, 46; 6:1-2; 5, 16) in the Sermon.

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- Jesus was instructing His disciples concerning their duties for the rest of their lives. However, Jesus also had words for the multitudes, especially toward the end of the Sermon, the people that did not fall into the category of being His disciples (5:1-2; cf. 7:13, 21-23, 24-27).
 - Fourth, the subject matter of the Sermon favors the end times interpretation.
 - The Sermon dealt with the good fruit resulting from repentance that Jesus' disciples should manifest (cf. 3:8, 10).
 - The only thing Matthew recorded that John preached and that Jesus repeated in this Sermon is “repentance” or ...

Mt. 7:19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

❖ Jesus, too, wanted His hearers to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, and He described that fruit in this address.

- **Fifth, Jesus was picturing how His disciples should live in the Messianic kingdom as well as how they should live leading up to its establishment at His return Second Coming.**

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- ❖ All the New Testament epistles present high standards for believers to maintain. These standards flow naturally out of Jesus' instruction.
 - ❖ Only with the Holy Spirit's enablement and the believer's dependence on the Lord can we live up to these standards.

Conclusion

Phil. 3:12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Col. 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

1 Pet. 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

1 Jn. 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: