



THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Mt. 5:17-20

*“The Righteousness Pleasing to God”*



Mt. 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, That **except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.**



Review: Several weeks ago, we began the exegesis of this great sermon preached by the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BLESSINGS, 5:1-16

A. The Setting, 5:1-2

B. The Sayings, 5:3-12

C. The Sequel, 5:13-16

1. Resisting Decay, 5:13

2. Removing Darkness, 5:14-16

a. The Position of the Light, 5:14

b. The Purpose of the Light, 5:15

c. The Potential of the Light, 5:16



## II. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BELIEFS, 5:17-20

### A. A Personal Appreciation of God's Law, 5:17-18

1. The Law and Its Fulfillment, 5:17

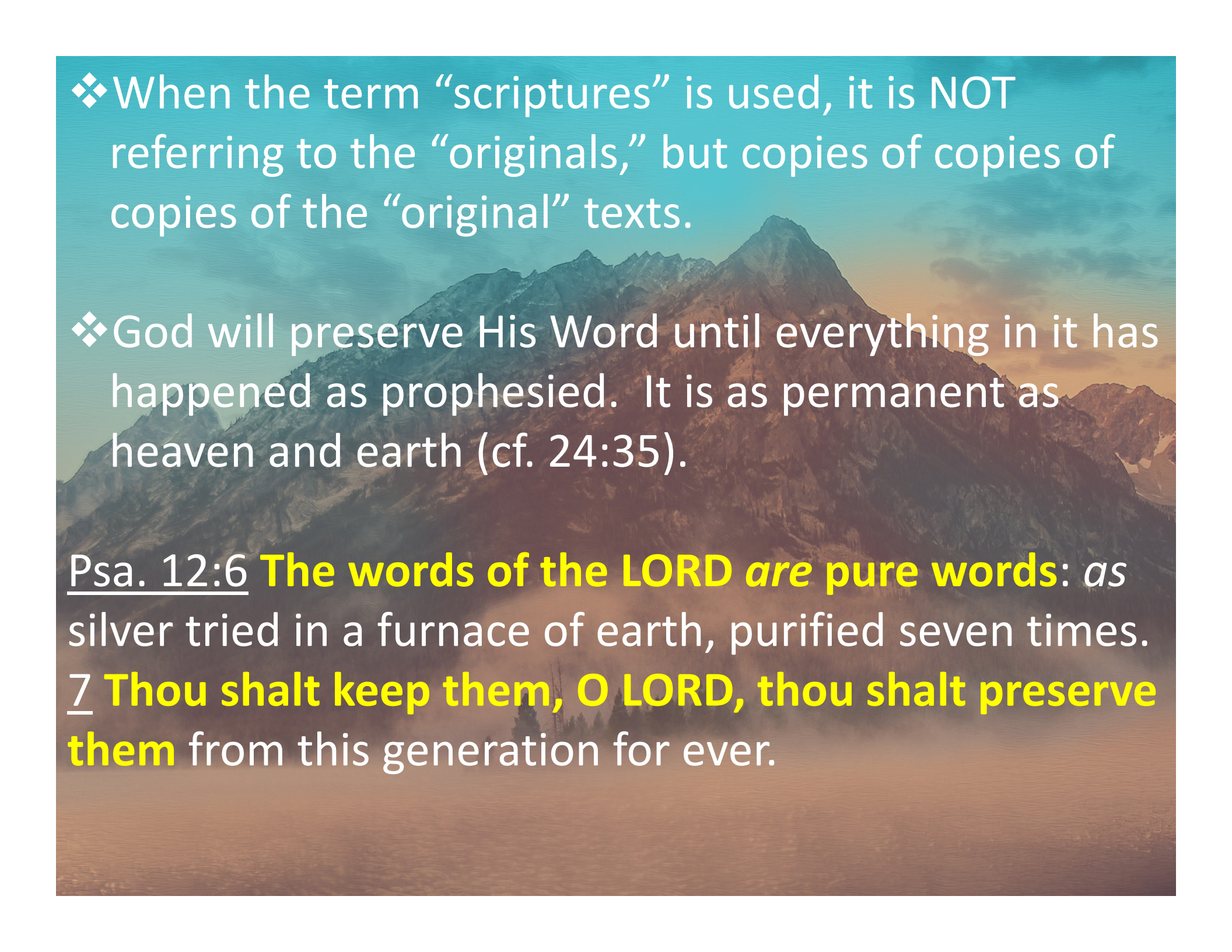
2. The Law and Its Future, 5:18

❖ The phrase "verily I say unto you" indicates that what follows is extremely important.

❖ This verse is a strong testimony to the verbal inspiration of Scripture.

Jn. 5:39 Search **the scriptures**; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and **they are they which testify of me.**



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- ❖ When the term “scriptures” is used, it is NOT referring to the “originals,” but copies of copies of copies of the “original” texts.
  - ❖ God will preserve His Word until everything in it has happened as prophesied. It is as permanent as heaven and earth (cf. 24:35).

Psa. 12:6 **The words of the LORD are pure words:** *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.  
7 **Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them** from this generation for ever.



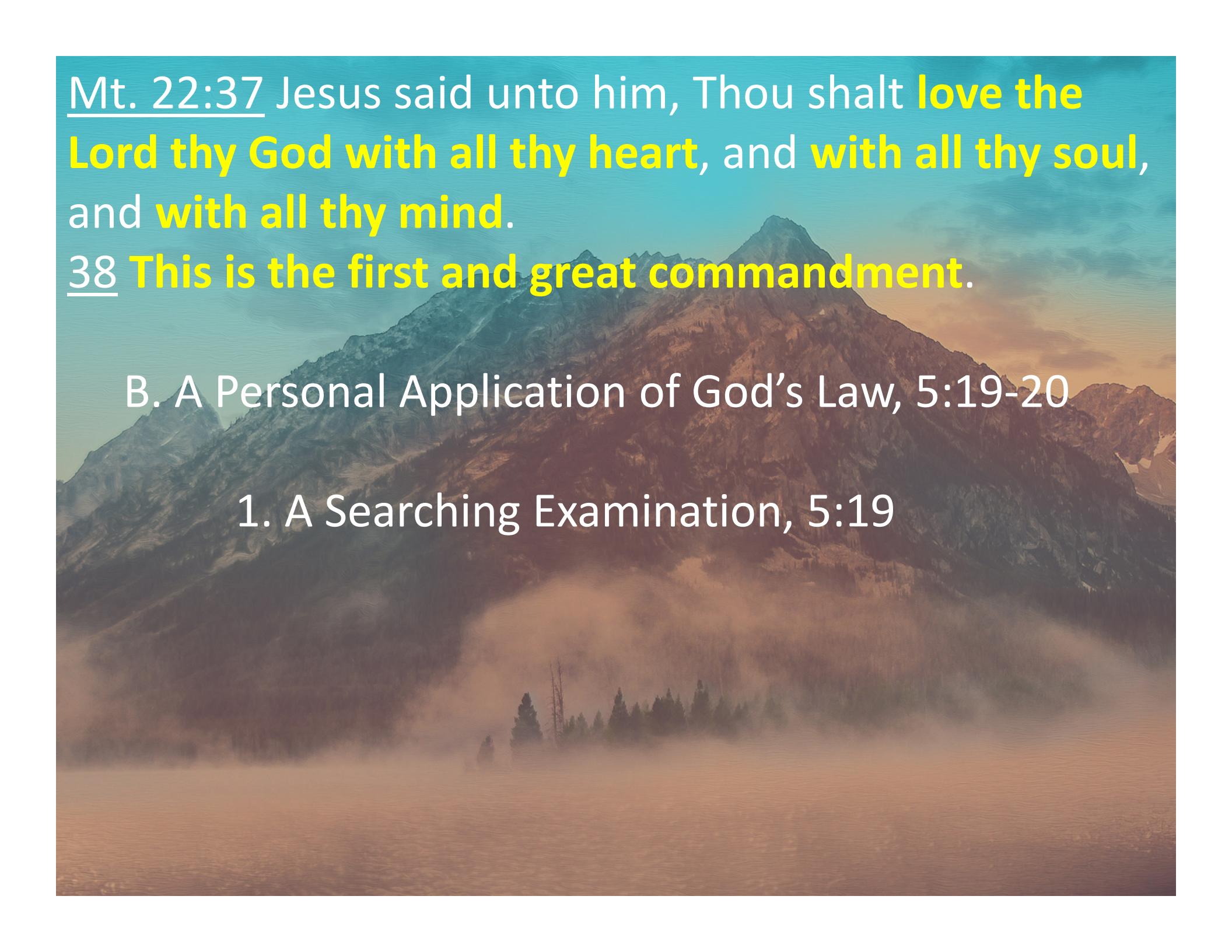


❖ The Word of God is the final, absolute authority for faith = *sola scriptura*.

Sola scriptura means that Scripture alone is authoritative for the faith and practice of the Christian. The Bible is complete, authoritative, and true. <https://www.gotquestions.org/sola-scriptura.html>

❖ The scribes and Pharisees taught that the Law was external “deeds.” Jesus taught that fulfillment of the Law originated in the heart – love for the “Lord thy God:”





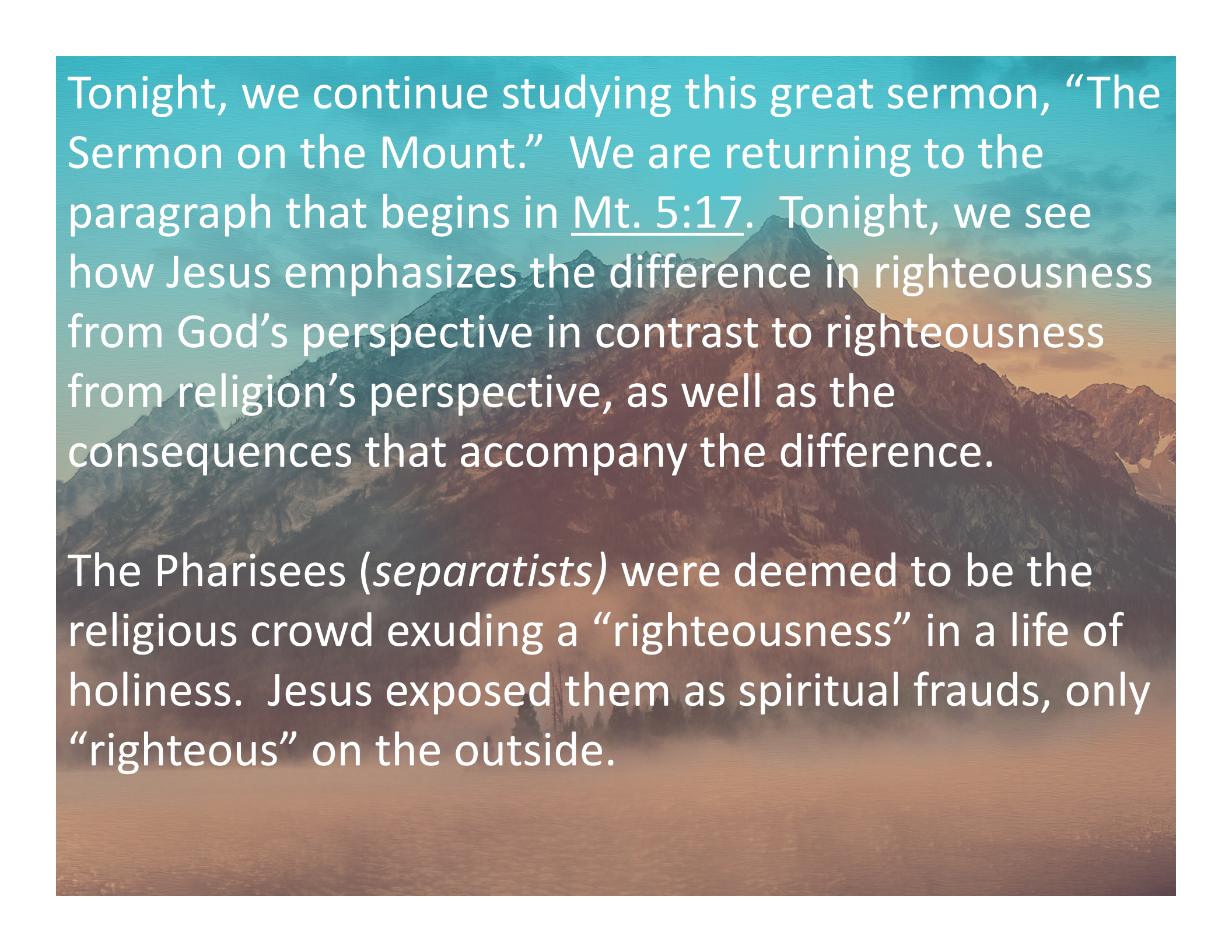
Mt. 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt **love the Lord thy God with all thy heart**, and **with all thy soul**, and **with all thy mind**.

38 **This is the first and great commandment.**

B. A Personal Application of God's Law, 5:19-20

1. A Searching Examination, 5:19

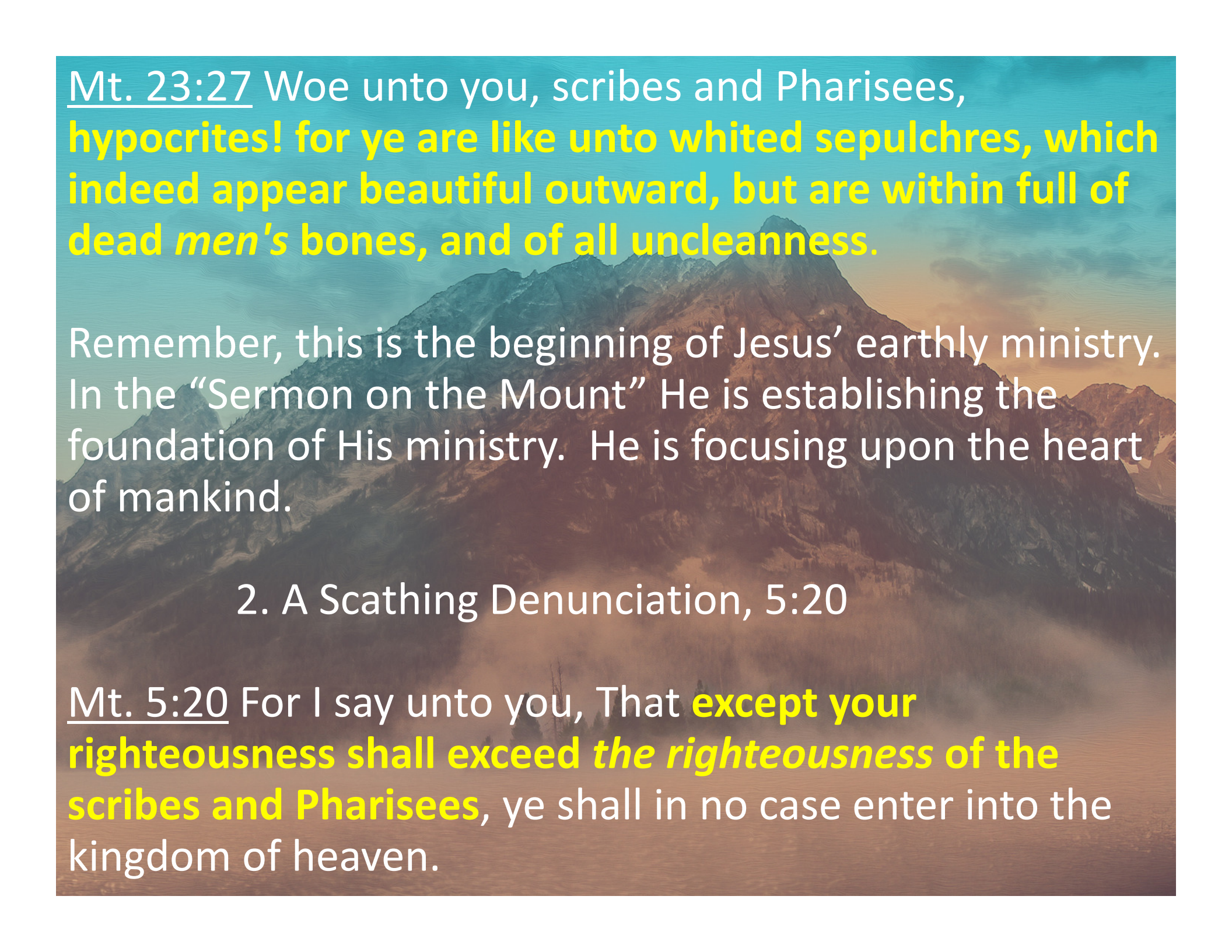




Tonight, we continue studying this great sermon, “The Sermon on the Mount.” We are returning to the paragraph that begins in Mt. 5:17. Tonight, we see how Jesus emphasizes the difference in righteousness from God’s perspective in contrast to righteousness from religion’s perspective, as well as the consequences that accompany the difference.

The Pharisees (*separatists*) were deemed to be the religious crowd exuding a “righteousness” in a life of holiness. Jesus exposed them as spiritual frauds, only “righteous” on the outside.





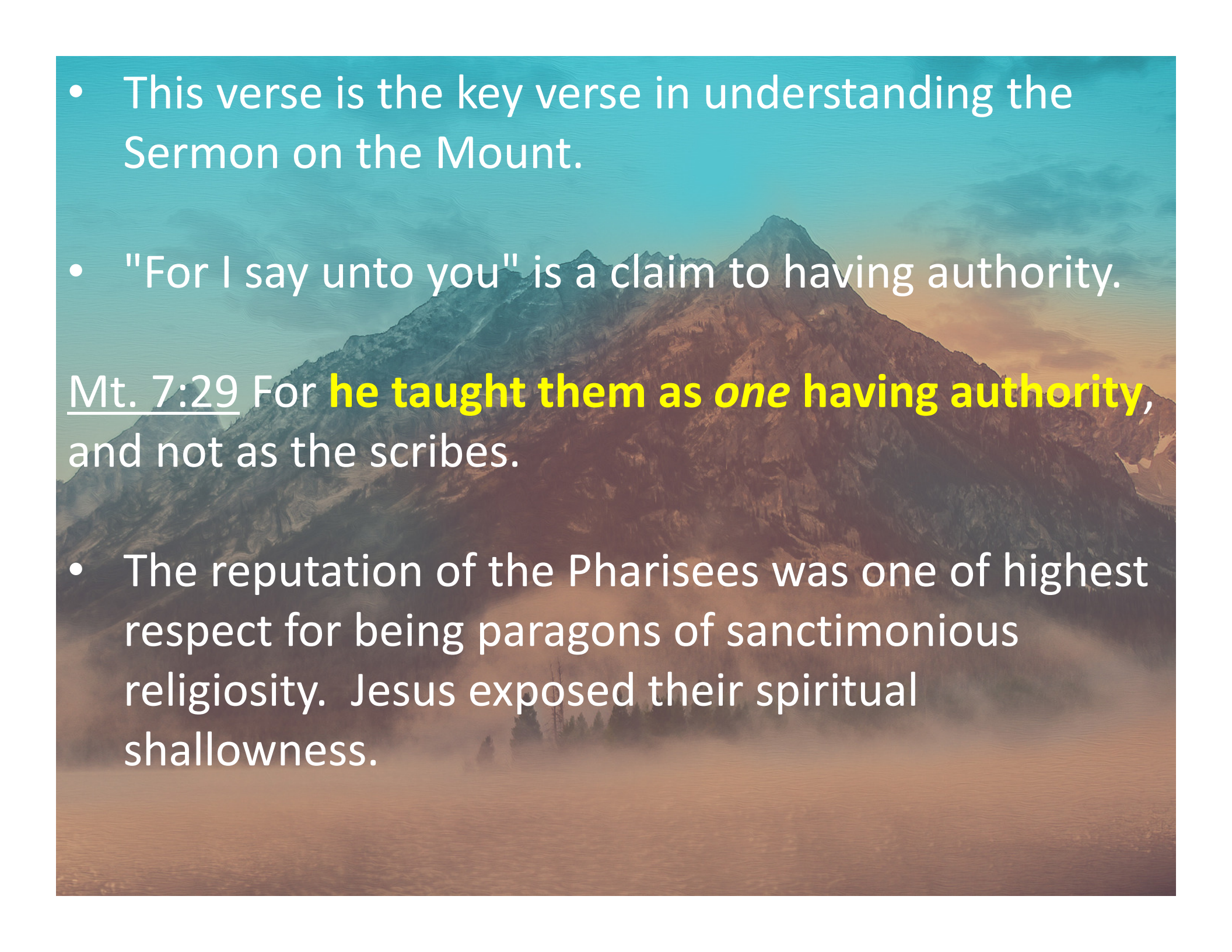
Mt. 23:27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness.**

Remember, this is the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry. In the "Sermon on the Mount" He is establishing the foundation of His ministry. He is focusing upon the heart of mankind.

## 2. A Scathing Denunciation, 5:20

Mt. 5:20 For I say unto you, That **except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees***, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.



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- This verse is the key verse in understanding the Sermon on the Mount.
  - "For I say unto you" is a claim to having authority.

Mt. 7:29 For **he taught them as *one having authority***, and not as the scribes.

- The reputation of the Pharisees was one of highest respect for being paragons of sanctimonious religiosity. Jesus exposed their spiritual shallowness.



Luke 18:10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that **I am not as other men are**, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 **I fast twice in the week**, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 **I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other:** for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.



- The Pharisees had codified the “Scriptures” into 365 negative commandments and 250 positive commandments.
- The relativistic view of the "scribes and Pharisees" led them to accept some Scriptural injunctions and to reject others.

Mt. 15:5 But **ye say**, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

6 And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*.

**Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.**

7 **Ye hypocrites**, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but **their heart is far from me**.

9 But **in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men**.

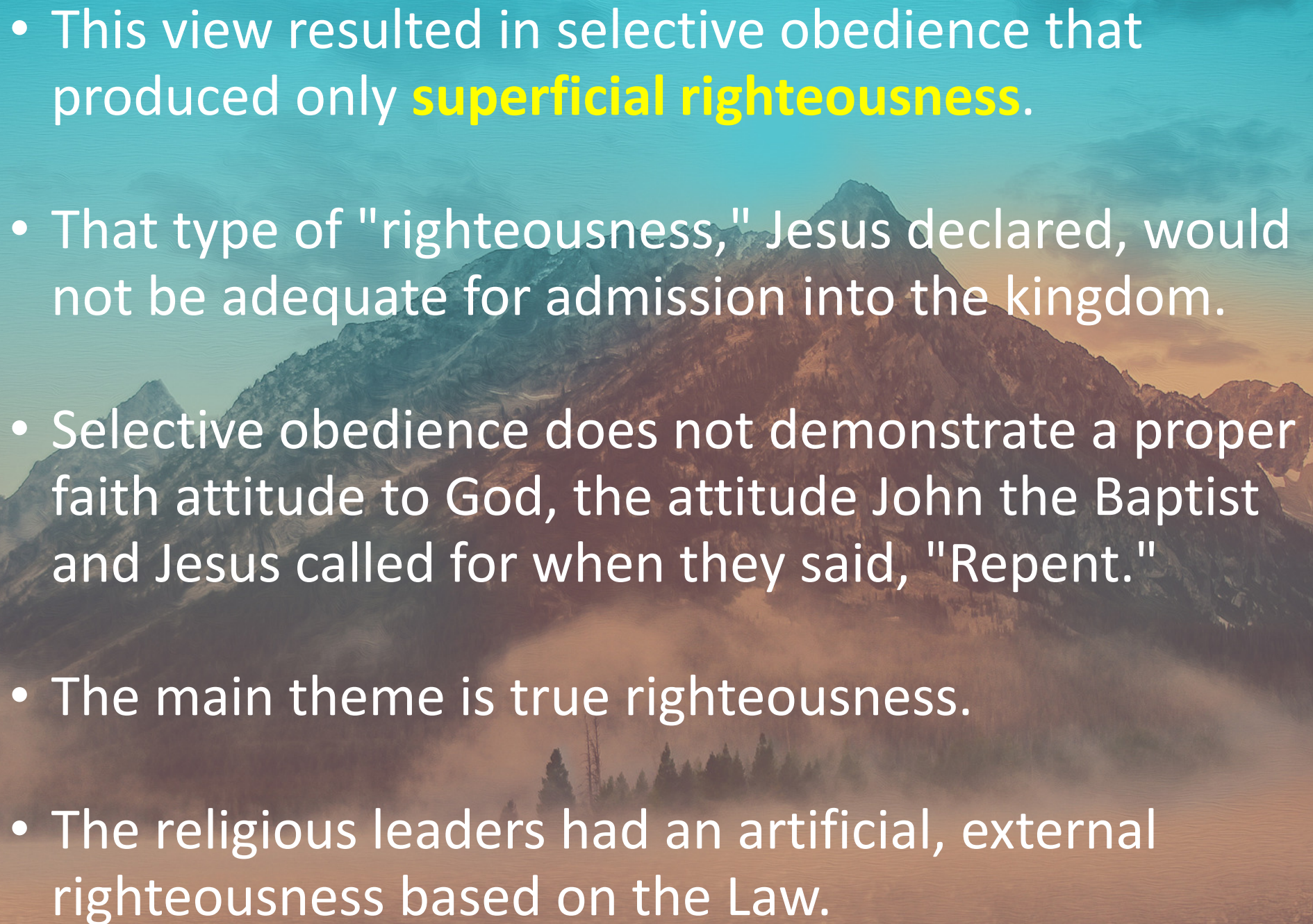


- Jesus taught His disciples that the source of His concern was the HEART!

Mark 7:21 For from within, **out of the heart** of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23 **All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.**

Luke 16:15 And he said unto them, **Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.**



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- A scenic landscape of mountains and a lake with a teal overlay. The image shows a range of mountains with some snow or light-colored patches, and a lake in the foreground. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The text is overlaid on the teal part of the image.
- This view resulted in selective obedience that produced only **superficial righteousness**.
  - That type of "righteousness," Jesus declared, would not be adequate for admission into the kingdom.
  - Selective obedience does not demonstrate a proper faith attitude to God, the attitude John the Baptist and Jesus called for when they said, "Repent."
  - The main theme is true righteousness.
  - The religious leaders had an artificial, external righteousness based on the Law.



Jas 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend **in one point, he is guilty of all.**

- The righteousness Jesus described is a true and vital righteousness that begins internally, in the heart.
- The Pharisees were concerned about the minute details of conduct, but they neglected the major matter of *character*. **Conduct flows out of character.**
- **Righteousness from within produces holiness without = true spirituality!**
- The primary issue, regarding righteousness, is who establishes the standard – God or men?



- The two critical areas of concern are propitiation and imputation:
  - “Propitiation” is achieving satisfaction of holiness according to God’s standard:

Rom. 3:25 Whom **God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness** for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

1 Jn. 2:2 And **he is the propitiation for our sins:** and not for ours only, **but also for the sins of the whole world.**

1 Jn. 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that **he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**



- **“Imputation” is the application that results from placing faith in the “Propitiator” – the Lord Jesus Christ!**

Rom. 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom **God imputeth righteousness without works, ...**

22 And therefore it was **imputed to him for righteousness.**

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 **But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;**



Jas. 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, **Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness:** and he was called the Friend of God.

- The Pharisees placed the importance of “holiness” in the outward show of religiosity while God’s perspective of holiness is derived from the heart, loving God with the entire being.



## Summary

- The Pharisees emphasized an “exterior show” of ritualistic religion.
- Jesus emphasized a “heart relationship” manifested in holiness as a result of love for God.
- The Lord Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins, and His righteousness, imputed by faith, makes us “accepted in the beloved” = empowered to represent Him on earth.
- A proper testimony to represent Him should include a life of holiness, pleasing to Him.



## Conclusion

Rom. 8:4 That **the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.**

Rom 10:4 For **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.**

Phil. 3:9 And be found in him, **not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**



Lev. 11:44 For **I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy:** neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

45 For I *am* the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: **ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.**

Eph. 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that **we should be holy and without blame before him in love:**

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

16 Because it is written, **Be ye holy; for I am holy.**