

A Hope Worth Asking About

#5 of Rippling Hope in a Watching World

Text: 1 Peter 3:13–4:11

Dave Geldart | 3/22/26 | Tru Community Church

1. [1] INTRO — SERIES RECAP

- a. We're in week five of our study through 1 Peter: *Rippling Hope in a Watching World*.
 - i. Each week we've been asking: What does it look like when ordinary believers live with genuine hope in a watching world?
 - ii. Small, ordinary acts of faithful living, rippling outward with divine power far beyond what we could manufacture on our own.
- b. [2] Today Peter gives us the most direct answer yet to that question:
 - i. Live in such a way that hope becomes **visible** — so visible that someone eventually asks about it.
- c. Have you ever had a moment like that?
 - i. Maybe you were doing the asking. Maybe you were being asked.
- d. That's the moment Peter is describing.
 - i. A moment where someone **asks**: "Why are you like this?"
- e. And Peter says every believer should be ready for that moment.

2. VISIBLE HOPE:

3. [3] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 3:13–14

- a. ¹³ Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened."
- b. Who is going to harm you if you're eager to do good?
 - i. Most of the time the answer is: no one.
 1. Most people appreciate kindness.
 2. Integrity.
 3. Generosity.
- c. But Peter acknowledges something we all know.
 - i. Sometimes goodness is misunderstood.
 - ii. Sometimes kindness is mocked.
 - iii. Sometimes faithfulness actually costs something.
- d. And Peter says something rather strange:
 - i. Even if you suffer for doing what is right... you are blessed.
- e. That sounds strange to our ears.

- i. Because our cultural assumption is that blessing equals comfort.
 - 1. Happiness. Enjoyment.
- f. But Peter says blessing can exist even in the midst of hardship.
 - i. Why?
- g. Because the presence of God does not disappear when life becomes difficult.
 - i. And that leads Peter into the central command of this passage.

4. [4] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 3:15–16

- a. ¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.
- b. This is one of the most quoted verses about evangelism in the entire Bible.
 - i. But it's also one of the most misunderstood.
- c. When many Christians hear the word apologetics or defending the faith, they imagine something like a debate stage.
 - i. Two podiums.
 - ii. Microphones.
 - iii. Someone trying to win an argument.
 - iv. Knowing all the facts and counterarguments.
- d. But that's not the picture Peter paints.
- e. Always be prepared to give an answer to **anyone who asks you** for the reason for the hope you have.
- f. And here's something worth noting about our cultural moment.
 - i. For a generation, Christian apologetics focused on intellectual arguments-
 - 1. God and science, origin of the universe, the problem of evil.
 - ii. And those questions still matter. But they're not the primary questions most people around us are asking anymore.
- g. Today the questions are more like:
 - i. Is Christianity actually good for the world?
 - ii. Is it good for people? For me?
- h. Those aren't primarily intellectual questions. They're relational and experiential.
 - i. Which means the most effective apologetic today isn't an argument.
 - ii. It's a life. It's a community. It's **you**.
- i. He's describing a Christian living in such a hopeful, compelling way that eventually someone becomes curious.

- i. And they ask you.
- ii. In other words, evangelism in this passage is **relational**.
 - 1. It grows out of real life.
 - a. Friendships.
 - b. Conversations.
 - c. People observing your life long enough to notice something different.
- j. In fact, the whole letter of 1 Peter assumes that.
- k. Back in chapter 2 Peter said believers should live such good lives among their neighbors that people **notice**.
 - i. And he says eventually those neighbors will start asking questions:
 - 1. Why are you so hopeful?
 - 2. Why are you calm when everything feels uncertain?
 - 3. Why are you so generous?
 - 4. Why do you forgive like that?
 - 5. Why do you live this way?
- l. Peter says when that moment comes, be ready.
 - i. He does **not** say be ready to answer every philosophical question in the universe.
 - ii. He says be ready to explain **your hope**.
 - 1. “Here’s why I have hope.”
 - iii. **SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW WITH WHO YOU KNOW**
- m. That alone sets Christian witness apart from a lot of what we see today.
- n. We talked last Sunday about how our current cultural moment is defined by outrage — people shouting past each other, political tribes in constant conflict, social media arguments spiraling instantly into contempt.
- o. And sometimes Christians get pulled into the same posture:
 - i. louder, harsher, more aggressive, as if the goal is to fight fire with fire.
- p. But Peter gives us a completely different strategy: gentleness, respect, and integrity — not weakness, but strength under control.
 - i. A posture that says: “I believe this deeply. But I also care deeply about you.”
- q. **Because the goal for Christians is not to win arguments.**
 - i. The goal is to live in such a way that hope becomes **visible**.

5. GROUNDED HOPE

6. [5] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 3:17–18

- a. ¹⁷ For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.
- b. That line alone tells us something about the early church.
 - i. They were not suffering because they were obnoxious.
 - ii. They weren’t suffering because they were combative.
 - iii. They were suffering **for doing good**.
- c. Peter always anchors our hope in **the story of Jesus**.
 - i. Because the gospel tells us something profound about suffering.
 - 1. Suffering does not have the final word.
 - 2. The worst thing that ever happened in human history—the crucifixion of Jesus—became the very event through which God rescued the world.
 - ii. Which means the resurrection reframes everything.
 - 1. It also tells us evil **does not win**.
 - 2. That’s the foundation of Christian hope.

7. [6] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 3:19–22

- a. ¹⁹ After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— ²⁰ to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, ²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God.
 [7] It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.
- b. This is one of the most complex passages in the entire New Testament.
 - i. Christians have debated exactly how to interpret some of these details for centuries.
 - ii. We won’t be solving the mystery today!
- c. But Peter’s main point for our study this morning is clear:
 - i. Jesus died, rose, and now reigns at God’s right hand — with all authorities and powers in submission to him.
 - ii. And his suffering opened the door for spreading the Gospel
- d. In other words, the resurrection is not just a spiritual comfort.
 - i. It is a **cosmic victory**.
 - ii. Jesus is Lord.

- iii. And that reality changes how believers face hardship.
- iv. Because if Jesus truly reigns, then no suffering, no injustice, no opposition can ultimately derail God's purposes.
- v. Which means the Christian story is not a fragile hope.
 - 1. It is a **resurrection hope**.
- vi. And that hope shapes how we live now.
- e. Peter even connects it to baptism.
 - i. We saw this a few weeks ago with Juan and Shawna
 - ii. Baptism symbolizes passing through the waters of judgment into new life by God's willingness to suffer in our place
- f. That's the deeper reason Christians can remain hopeful even in hard seasons.

8. TRANSFORMING HOPE

9. [8] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 4:1–3

- a. Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. ² As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. ³ For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.
- b. Peter tells believers to arm themselves with the same mindset as Christ.
 - i. In other words, following Jesus means embracing a different way of life.
- c. And Peter gets specific.
 - i. He describes the kinds of behaviors that once defined life before Christ.
 - ii. And he says that chapter of life is now over.
 - iii. The old patterns don't fit anymore.
 - iv. You've spent enough time living that way.
 - v. When someone becomes a follower of Jesus, their life begins moving in a **new direction**.

10. [9] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 4:4–5

- a. ⁴ They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. ⁵ But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.
 - i. Following Jesus often means stepping out of cultural expectations, and sometimes that difference draws criticism.
 - ii. But Peter reminds the church that God ultimately sees and judges all things.

- iii. Which frees believers from the pressure of trying to win every argument or impress every critic.

11. [10] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 4:6

- a. ⁶For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.
 - i. Again, lots going on here.
 - ii. But I want us to see that the good news of Jesus is not fragile — it reaches even into places where human hope seems extinguished, because God’s purposes extend beyond what we can see.
- b. Then how should we live **right now**?
- c. Peter answers that question by describing the kind of community that naturally produces the kind of hope people ask about.

12. COMMUNAL HOPE

13. [11] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 4:7

- a. ⁷The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray.
- b. “The end of all things is near.”
 - i. That line has sometimes been misunderstood.
- c. Peter is not setting a countdown clock.
 - i. He’s reminding believers that we live in what the New Testament calls **the last days**—the era between Jesus’ resurrection and his return.
 - ii. We’re still living in them!
- d. Peter highlights two practices first.
 - i. Clear-minded thinking.
 - ii. And prayer.
- e. Hope-filled Christians are not frantic people.
 - i. They’re not panicked by every news cycle.
 - ii. They’re not consumed by anxiety about the future.
- f. Instead, they stay clear-minded because they know who holds the future.
 - i. And that clarity leads them to prayer.
- g. Because when you believe God is actually involved in history, prayer stops feeling like a ritual and starts feeling like **a lifeline**.

h. Prayer anchors the church in hope.

14. [12] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 4:8

- a. ⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.
- b. Peter says love should define the community of Jesus.
 - i. Not shallow politeness.
 - ii. Not polite Sunday interactions.
 - iii. Or Midwest Nice
- c. Deep, committed love.
 - i. The kind of love that forgives.
 - ii. The kind of love that covers offenses.
 - iii. The kind of love that keeps showing up.
- d. This is one of the most powerful evangelistic realities in the New Testament:
 - i. Christians loved each other.
 - 1. Rich and poor sharing meals.
 - 2. Former enemies calling each other brothers and sisters.
 - ii. It was so unusual that historians record outsiders talking about it.
 - 1. There's a famous line from early observers of the church:
 - a. "See how they love one another."
- e. That kind of community raises questions.
 - i. Because the world knows competition.
 - ii. The world knows rivalry.
 - iii. But radical love stands out.
 - iv. This works on both an individual and a corporate church level!
- f. Peter then adds another practical expression of that love.

15. [13] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 4:9

- a. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.
- b. Hospitality.
 - i. Open homes.
 - ii. Shared meals.
 - iii. Welcoming people into your life.
 - 1. Especially when it's not founded on the expectation of repayment or reciprocation
 - iv. Hospitality became a powerful relational bridge.
 - 1. Because meals build relationships.

2. And relationships create space for conversations that would never happen in a debate.
- c. Think about how this works today.
 - i. Most people are not persuaded by arguments.
 1. Have you ever noticed that online?
 - ii. But they are strongly influenced by relationships.
 1. A neighbor who invites them over.
 2. A coworker who genuinely cares about them.
 3. A friend who listens to their story.
 - iii. Relational trust becomes the soil where spiritual curiosity grows.
- d. Which brings us right back to **1 Peter 3:15**.
 - i. People ask about hope when they see it up close.
 - ii. And hospitality is one of the ways they see it.
 1. Meals.
 2. Backyard conversations.
 3. Late-night discussions around a kitchen table or fire pit.
 4. That's often where spiritual curiosity begins.
- e. Peter then adds one more dimension to this community life.

16. [14] SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 4:10–11

- a. ¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.
- b. Peter reminds believers that each person has received gifts — some speak, some serve, some lead — not for the spotlight, but as faithful stewards of God's grace.
- c. Every gift is meant to strengthen the community and point people toward God.
- d. And Peter says when the church functions this way, something beautiful happens.
 - i. God is glorified.
 - ii. The life of Jesus becomes visible through his people.
- e. And when that kind of community exists — hopeful, loving, hospitable, serving — **people on the outside start noticing and asking questions**, not because of pressure, but because they saw hope lived out in real life.

17. [15] A hope worth asking about.

- a. Peter assumes something.
 - i. He assumes that if Christians live this way—hopeful, gracious, hospitable, prayerful, deeply loving—**people will eventually ask about it.**
 - ii. And when they do, we should be ready.
- b. But here's where I want us to slow down for a moment.
 - i. Because many Christians carry a lot of anxiety around evangelism.
 - 1. Maybe you've felt that.
 - ii. You hear a sermon about sharing your faith and immediately your stomach tightens.
 - 1. "I don't know enough."
 - 2. "I wouldn't know what to say"
- c. But notice again what Peter actually says.
 - i. He does **not** say:
 - 1. Be ready to explain every theological doctrine perfectly.
 - ii. He does **not** say:
 - 1. Be ready to win every philosophical debate.
- d. He says something much simpler.
 - i. Be ready to explain **the reason for the hope you have.**
 - 1. Your hope.
 - 2. Your story.
 - 3. Your own words.
- e. And here's what I want you to notice: that moment rarely looks the way you might imagine it.
 - i. Almost nobody walks up and says, "Excuse me, could you explain the reason for the hope that you have?"
 - 1. It usually comes sideways.
 - 2. It comes when someone is tired or honest or caught a little off guard.
- f. **They might say: "I don't know how you do it."**
 - i. A coworker whose marriage is falling apart has been watching you navigate a hard season at work — maybe a difficult boss, a layoff scare, something grinding — and you haven't turned bitter or checked out.
 - ii. One afternoon in the break room they just say it:
 - 1. "I don't know how you do it. I'd have lost my mind by now."
 - iii. They're not asking about Jesus. But they're asking.
 - iv. That's your moment.
- g. **They might say "You seem... different."**

- i. A sibling or old friend you haven't seen in a couple of years runs into you at a family gathering.
 - ii. Somewhere over dinner they tilt their head and say, "You seem different. Like, I don't know — calmer? Something changed."
 - 1. They can't name it.
 - 2. But they noticed something they want more of.
- h. Or it might come in a 10 PM text.**
 - i. It's late. And a friend sends a message out of nowhere: "Hey random question but like... do you ever just feel like things are going to be okay? Because I really don't. How do you actually believe that?"
 - 1. Unpolished. Uncertain.
 - 2. Maybe a little embarrassed they even sent it.
 - 3. But that's the question. And you're ready.
 - i. The skill Peter's calling us to isn't a memorized answer — it's the awareness to recognize the question when it's not wearing its church clothes.
 - i. To lean in and say, "Yeah, let me tell you what that's been like for me."
 - j. Makes me think about one off my man-crushes -- an elderly Irish mathematician and apologist named John Lennox —
 - i. He says: My goal is not to **win arguments**, but to **win people**.
 - k. That's the posture Peter is describing.
 - i. And when that kind of posture is combined with relational connection, something powerful begins to happen.

18. Imagine what could happen if everyone in this church started living this way:

- a. praying regularly for the neighbors, coworkers, and family members in our lives who don't yet know Jesus, inviting people into our homes, sharing meals, having real conversations.
- b. Imagine if we became known in this community as people who listen well, love deeply, and carry hope even in hard seasons.
- c. Over time, people would begin to notice — and eventually someone would ask you about it.
- d. And in that moment you wouldn't need a script.
 - i. You would simply tell the truth of your experience.
 - 1. About Jesus.
 - 2. About the hope he's given you.
 - 3. About how he's changing your life.

- ii. It can be quite short.
 - 1. Especially to start.
 - 2. Leave them wanting more, rather than wishing you were done.
 - 3. Let their curiosity unlock more conversation.
- e. And those conversations ripple outward, from person to person, neighbor to neighbor, from friendship to friendship.

19. So let me leave you with three simple challenges this week.

a. [16] First: **Pray for one person.**

- i. One person in your life who doesn't yet know Jesus.
- ii. Ask God to give you opportunities to love them well and to share hope when the time comes.

b. [17] Second: **Invest relationally.**

- i. Initiate contact!
- ii. Invite someone to coffee or lunch.
- iii. Have a coworker over for dinner.
- iv. Help a neighbor with some yard work.
- v. Take time to listen to someone's story.
- vi. Evangelism begins with genuine care.

c. [18] Third: **Be ready.**

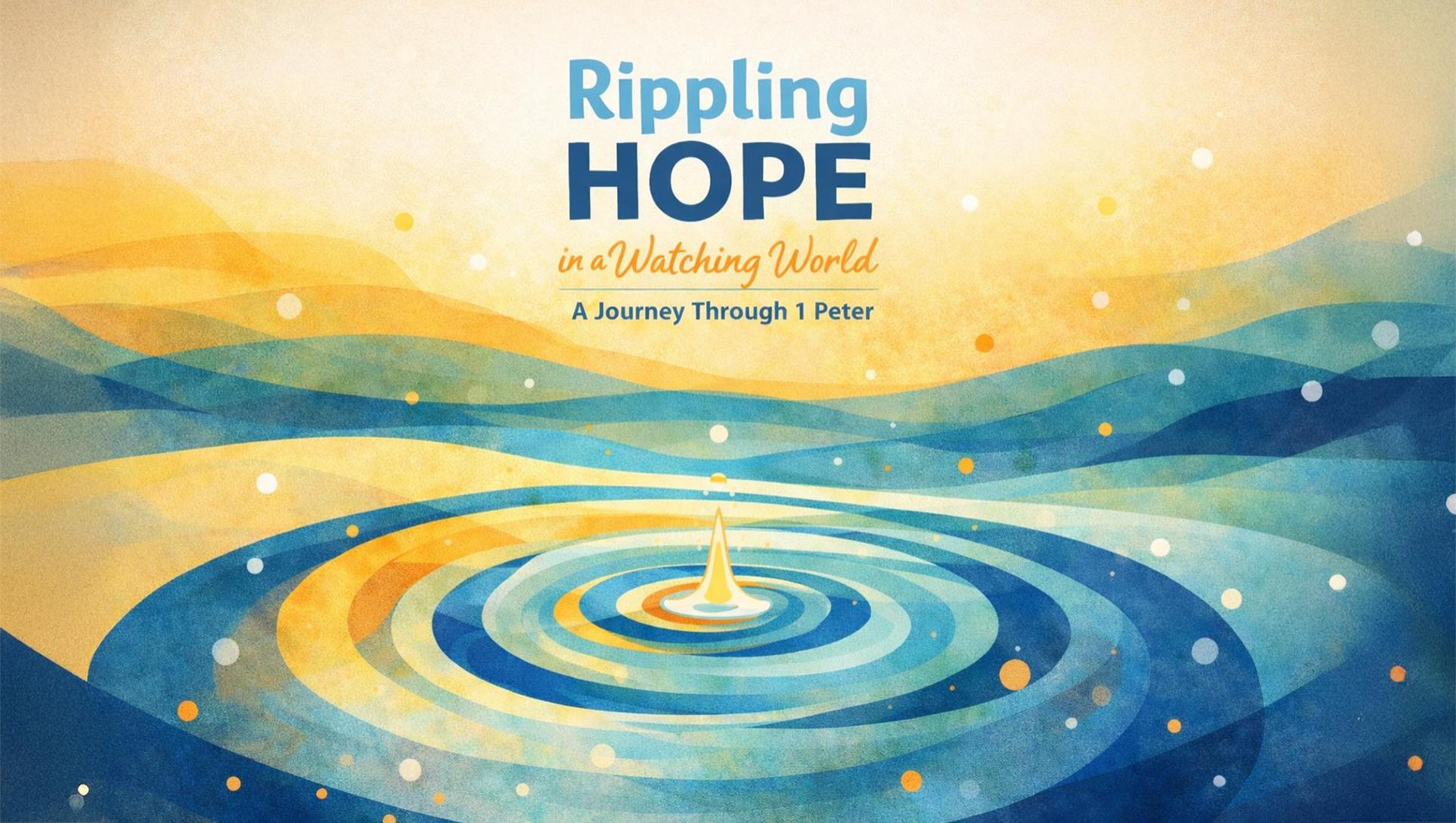
- i. Not ready with every answer.
- ii. Ready with your story.
- iii. Ready to explain why Jesus gives you hope.
- d. Because Peter's vision for the church is simple.
 - i. A community so full of hope...
 - ii. So marked by love...
 - iii. So shaped by grace...
 - iv. That people can't help but notice.
- e. And when they notice...
 - i. They ask.
 - ii. And when they ask...
 - 1. We point them to Jesus.
 - iii. That's what it looks like to live with **a hope worth asking about.**
- f. And imagine what could happen in our cities...
 - i. In St. George, Manhattan, Wamego, Westmoreland, and beyond

- g. If each of us began living that way.

20.[19] FINAL LANDING — WHEN HOPE BECOMES VISIBLE

- a. The whole letter of 1 Peter comes down to this single moment.
 - i. Someone sees something in you that makes them curious
 - ii. And they ask.
- b. Not forced. Not scripted.
 - i. Just hope that becomes visible.
 - ii. Hope that quietly shows up in workplaces, neighborhoods, classrooms, ballfields, coffee shops, and dinner tables all across this city.
- c. That ripple effect — one hopeful person, one story of Jesus at a time — goes far beyond what any of us could manufacture on our own.
- d. So church, let's commit to live this week in such a way that hope becomes visible.
 - i. And when someone eventually asks why...
 - ii. We'll be ready.
 - iii. Because He is a hope **worth asking about**.

21. PRAY



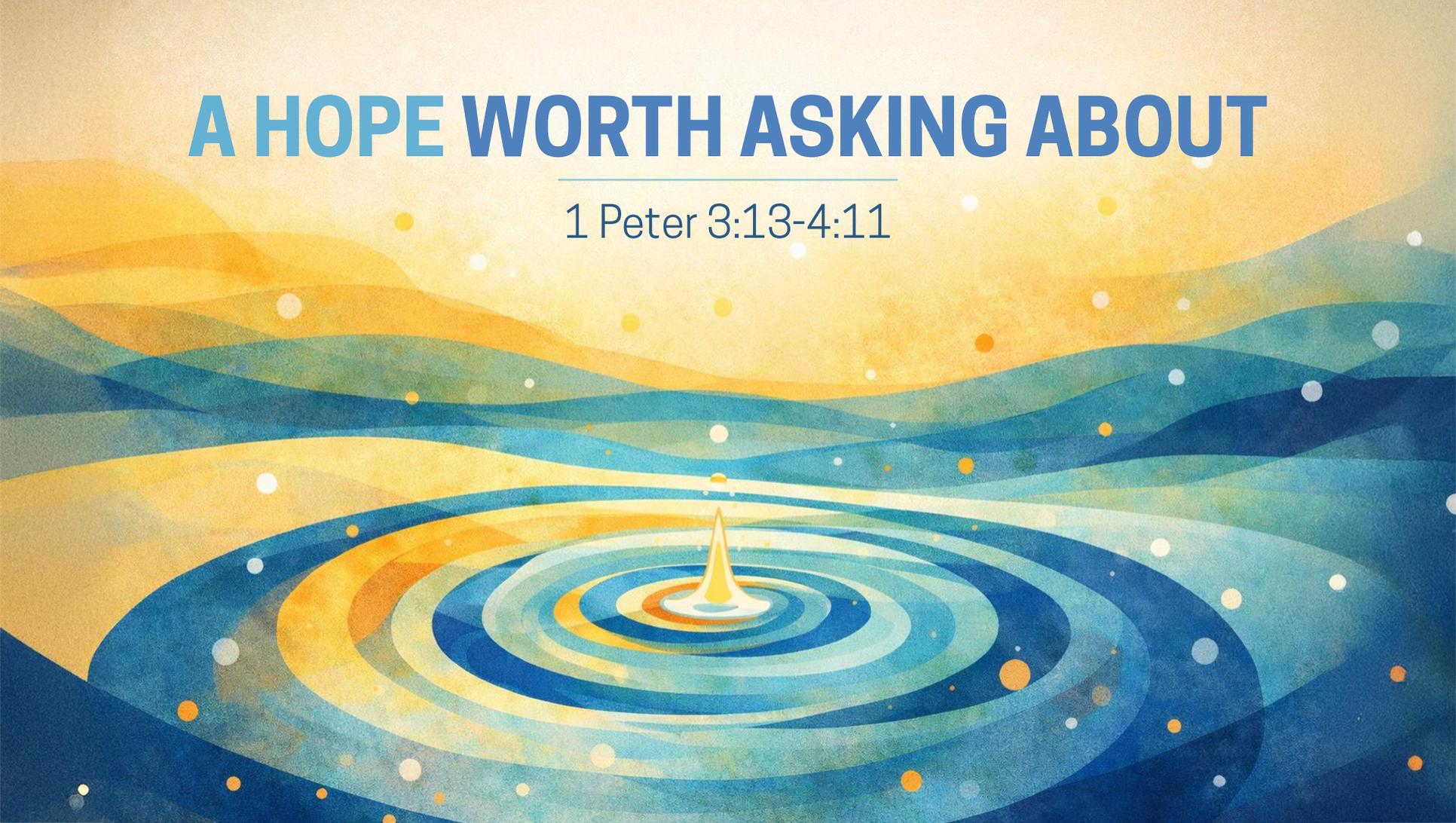
Rippling HOPE

in a Watching World

A Journey Through 1 Peter

A HOPE WORTH ASKING ABOUT

1 Peter 3:13-4:11



VISIBLE HOPE

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VISIBLE HOPE

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GROUNDED HOPE

1st PETER 3: ¹⁷ For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.



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1st PETER 3: ¹⁹ After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— ²⁰ to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, ²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also— not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God.

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1st PETER 3: It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.



TRANSFORMING HOPE

1st PETER 4: ¹ Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. ² As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. ³ For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.

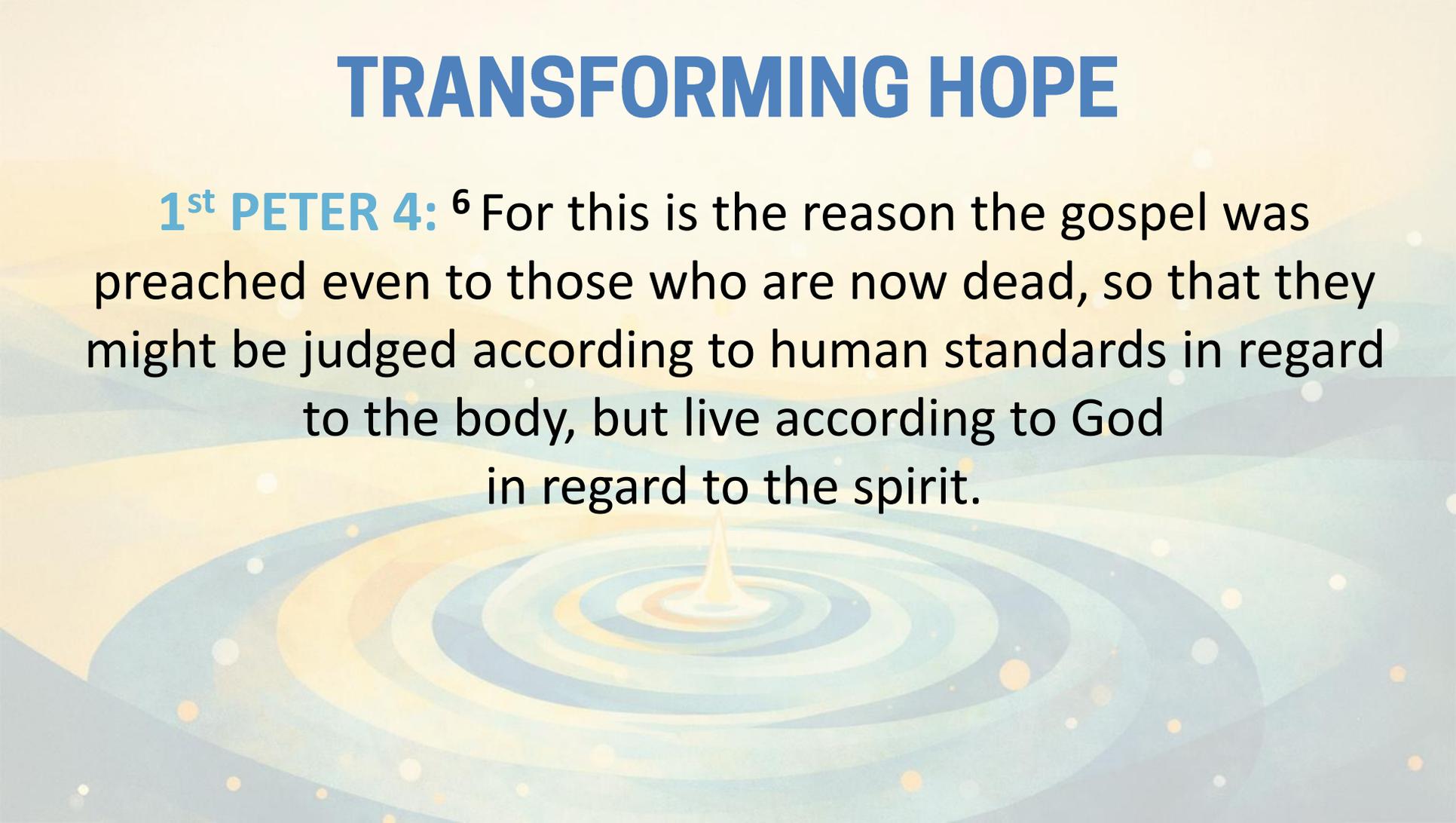
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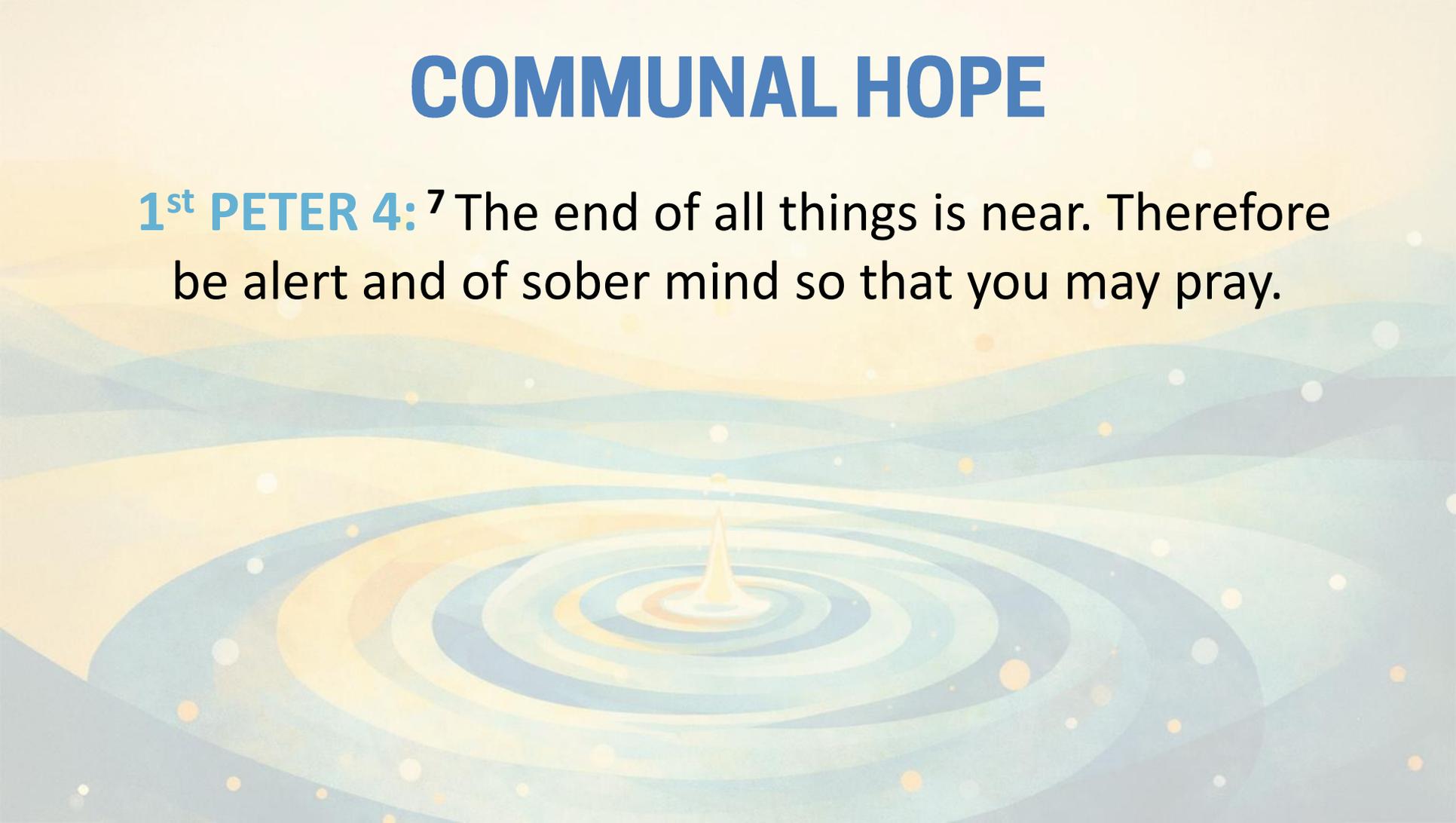
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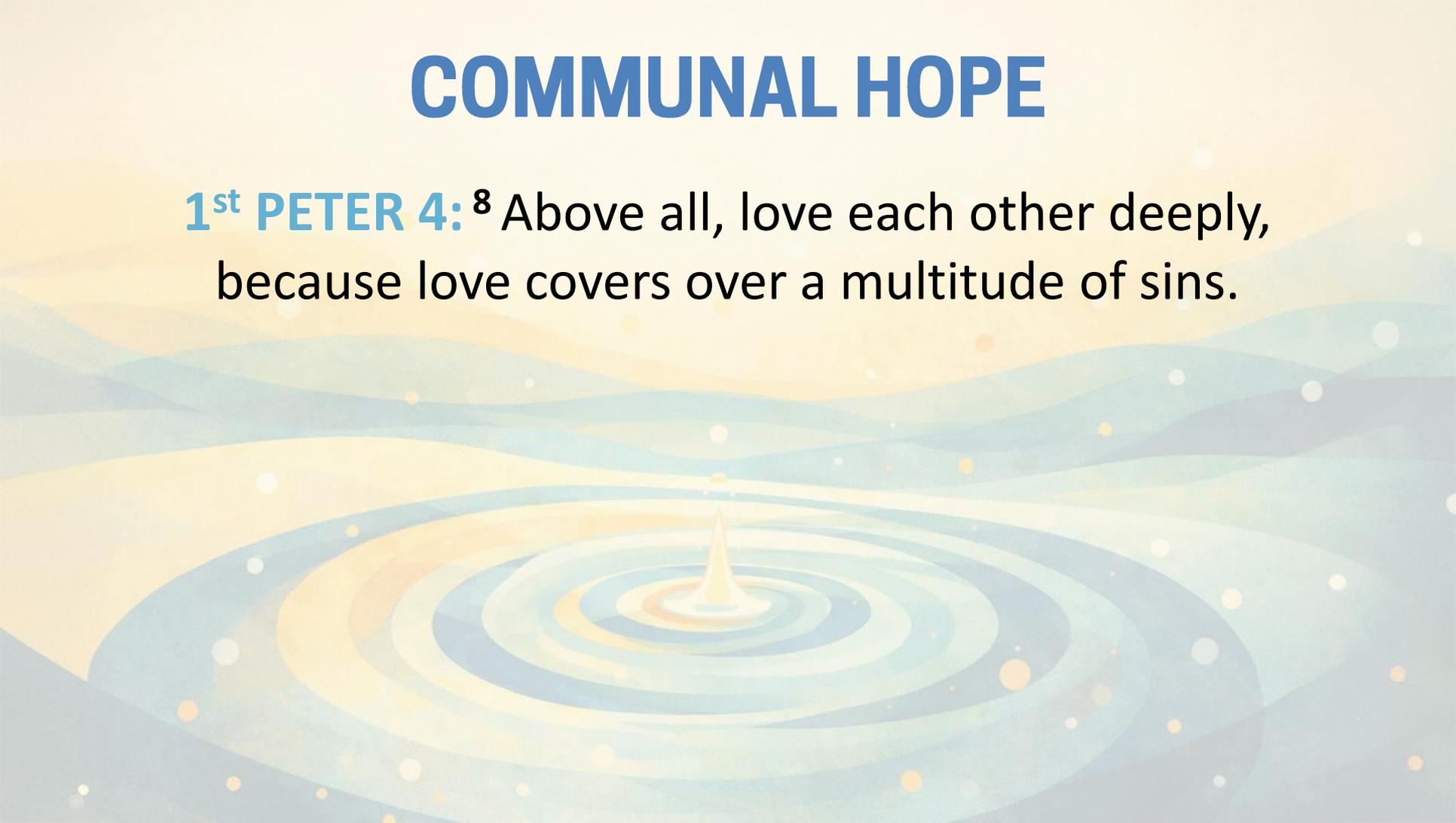
COMMUNAL HOPE

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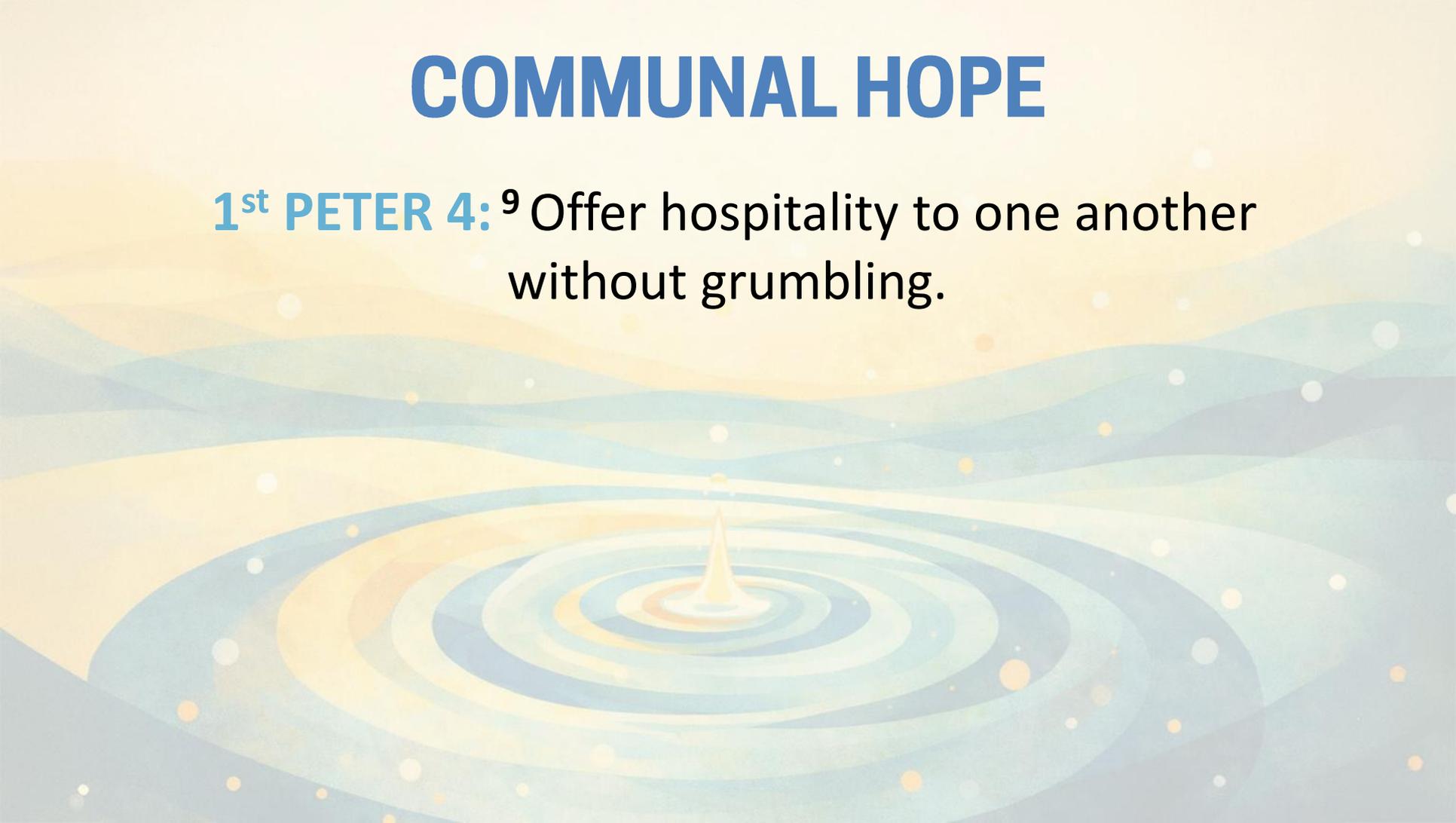
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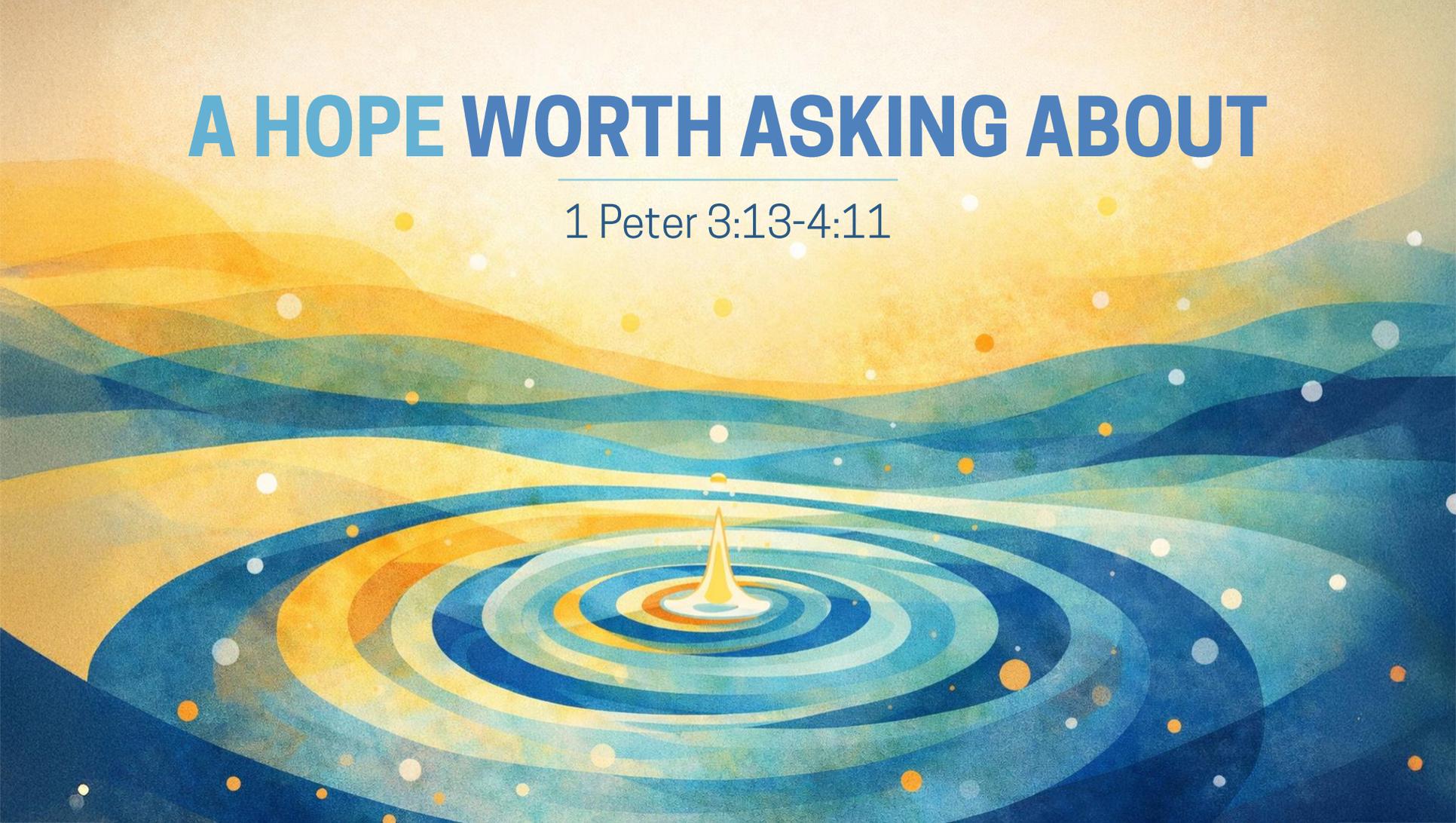


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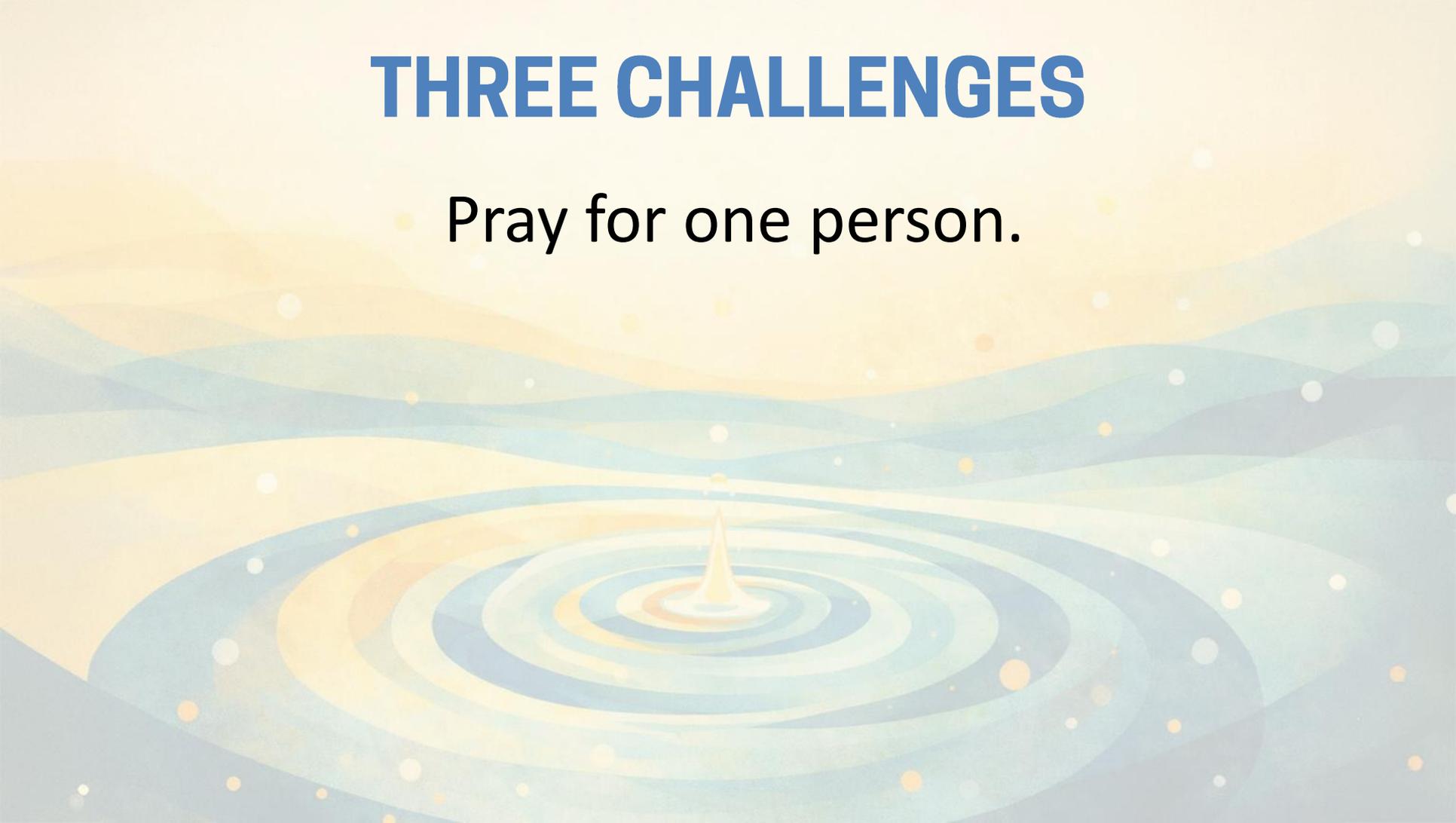
A HOPE WORTH ASKING ABOUT

1 Peter 3:13-4:11



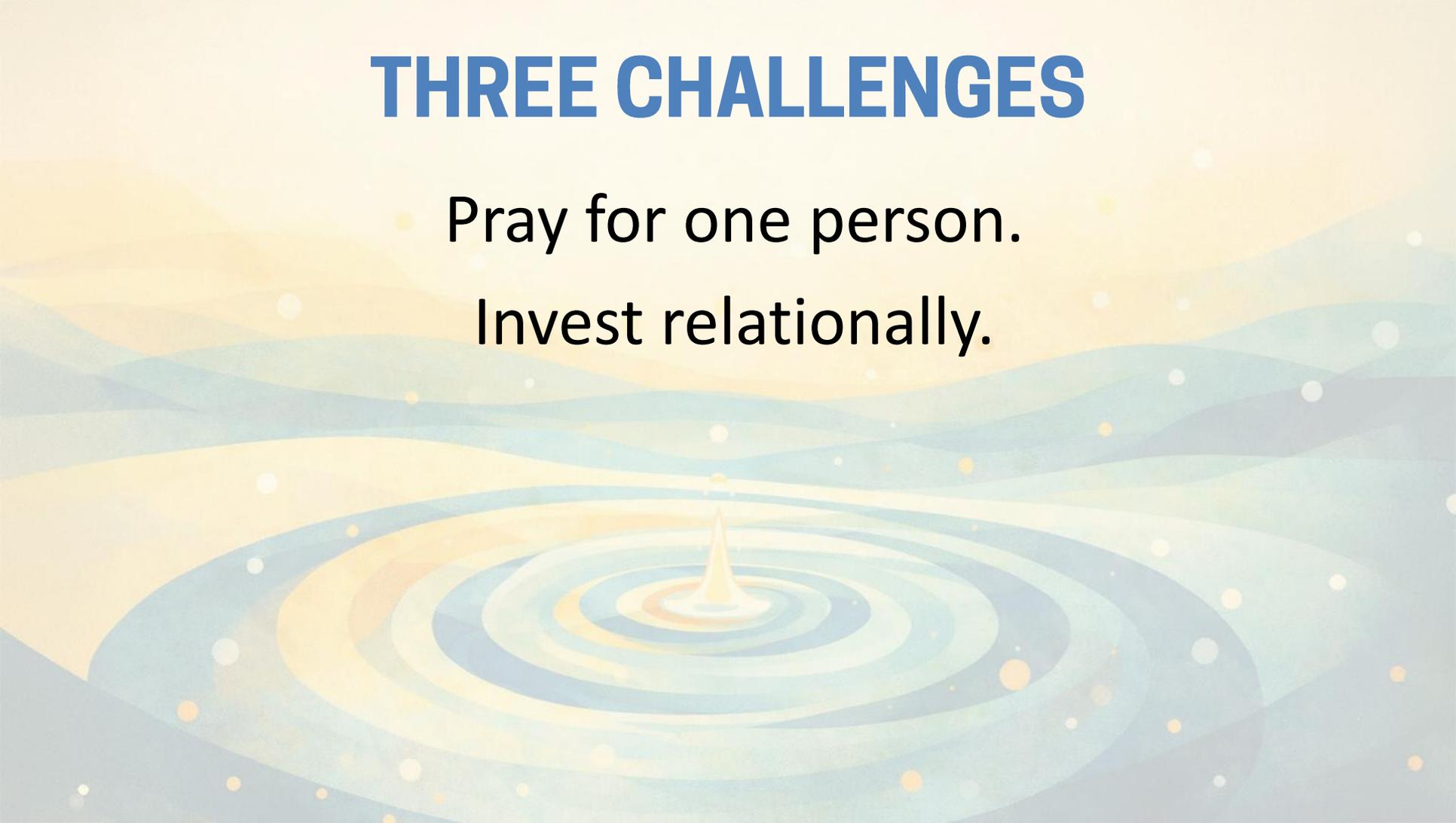
THREE CHALLENGES

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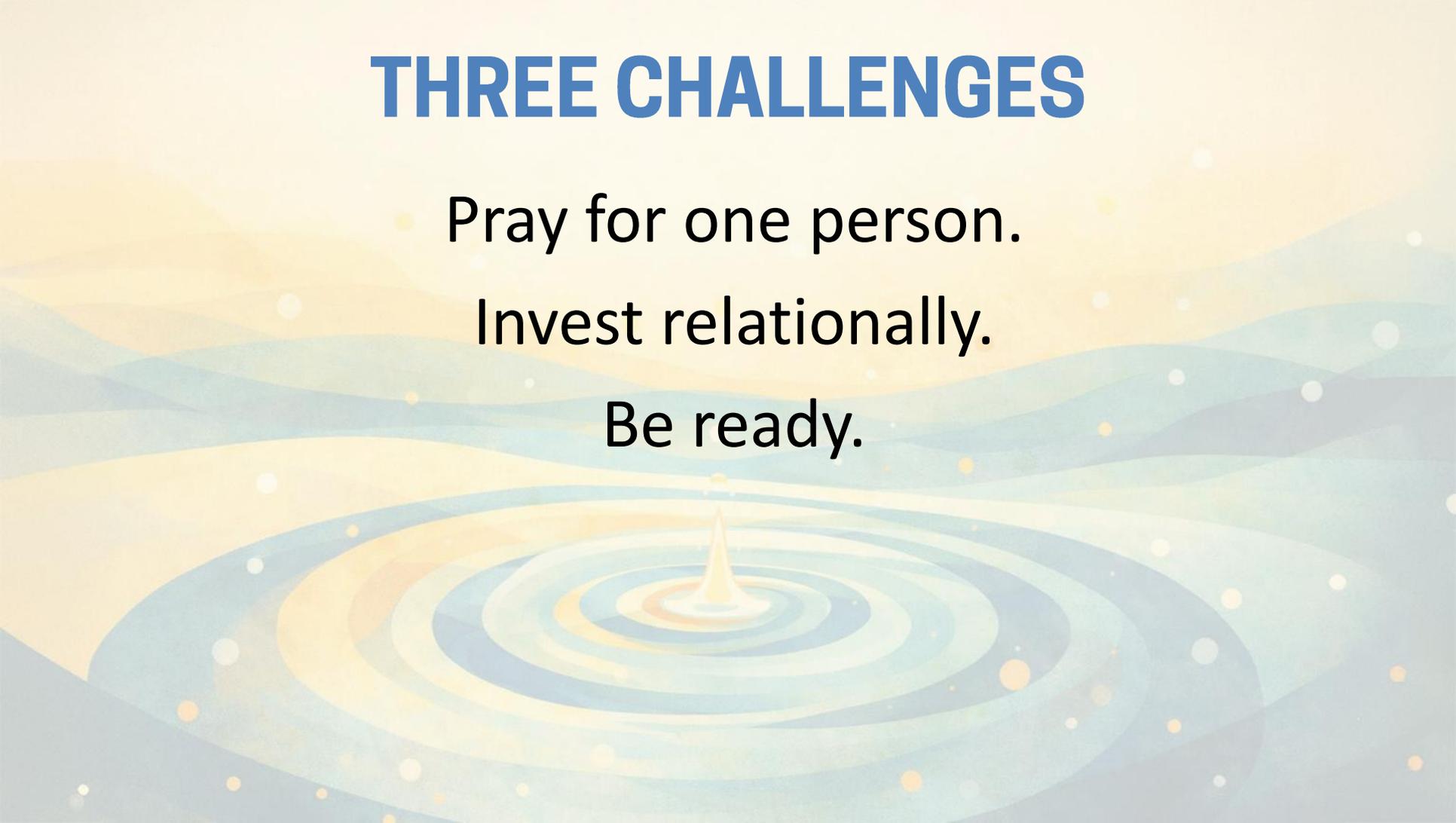
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THREE CHALLENGES

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Be ready.



A HOPE WORTH ASKING ABOUT

1 Peter 3:13-4:11

