



Christlikeness Is To Preserve Unity



Paul opens this section appealing to the highest possible spiritual motives (Phil. 2:1–4).

Since the believers at Philippi are “in Christ,” this ought to encourage them to work toward unity and love, not division and contention.

- Graciously, Paul is saying to the church, “Your disagreements reveal that there is a spiritual problem in your fellowship.
- It isn’t going to be solved by rules or threats; it’s going to be solved when your hearts are right with Christ and with each other.”

- Paul wanted them to see that the primary cause was selfishness, and the cause of selfishness is pride.

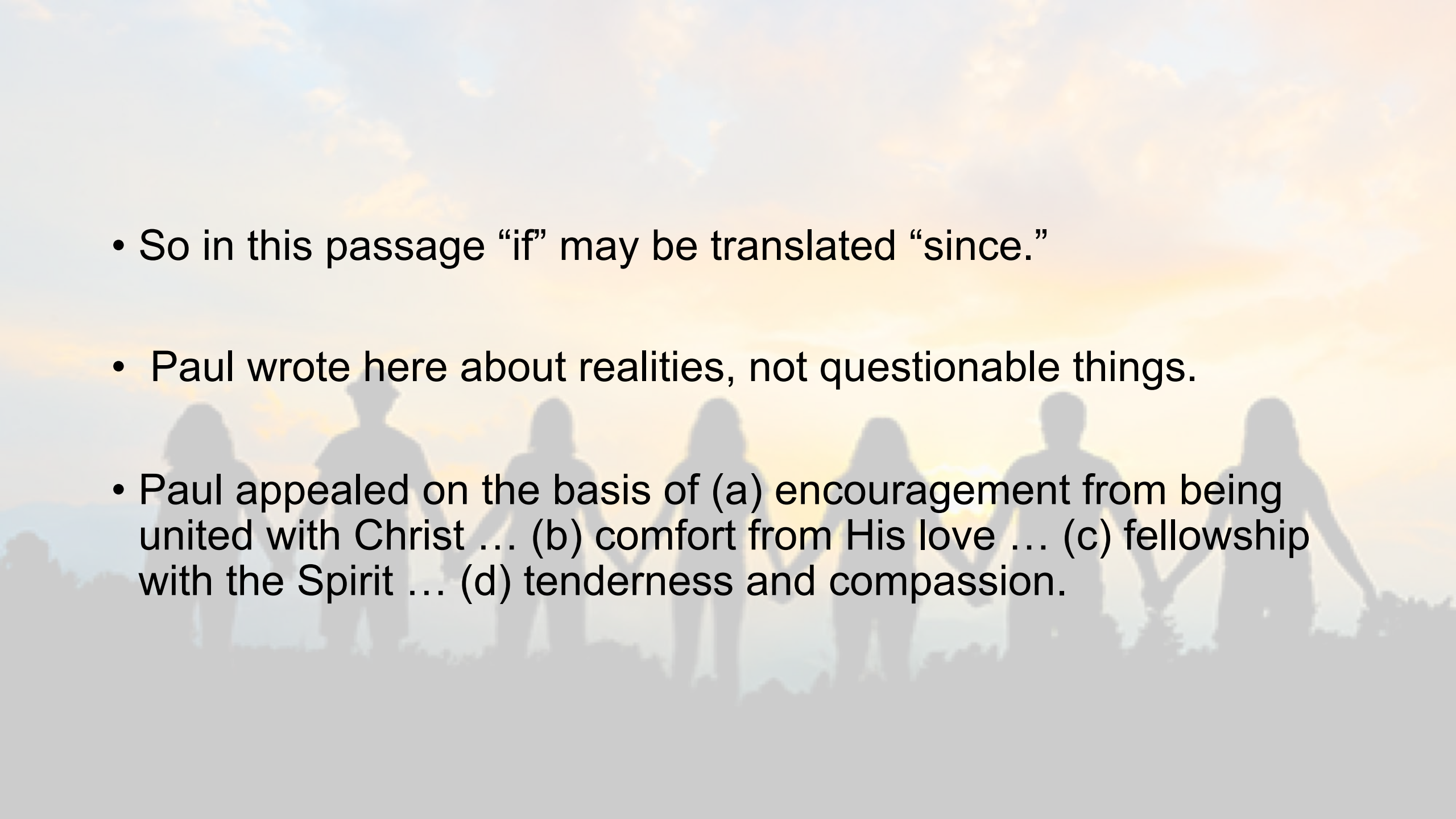
- There can be no joy in the life of the Christian who puts himself above others.



Christ Like Attributes Give Birth To Unity

Philippians 2:1 (NKJV) Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,

- The basis of Christian unity is expressed in conditional clauses (if . . . if . . . if).
- In Greek, these clauses do not convey doubt but instead are used for emphasis. Each “if” could be translated “since.”

- 
- So in this passage “if” may be translated “since.”
 - Paul wrote here about realities, not questionable things.
 - Paul appealed on the basis of (a) encouragement from being united with Christ ... (b) comfort from His love ... (c) fellowship with the Spirit ... (d) tenderness and compassion.

Encouragement From Being United With Christ

- Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ...
- “Consolation - Encouragement” is from a Greek word related to the one Christ used in referring to the Holy Spirit as “the Counselor.”



Encouragement From Being United With Christ

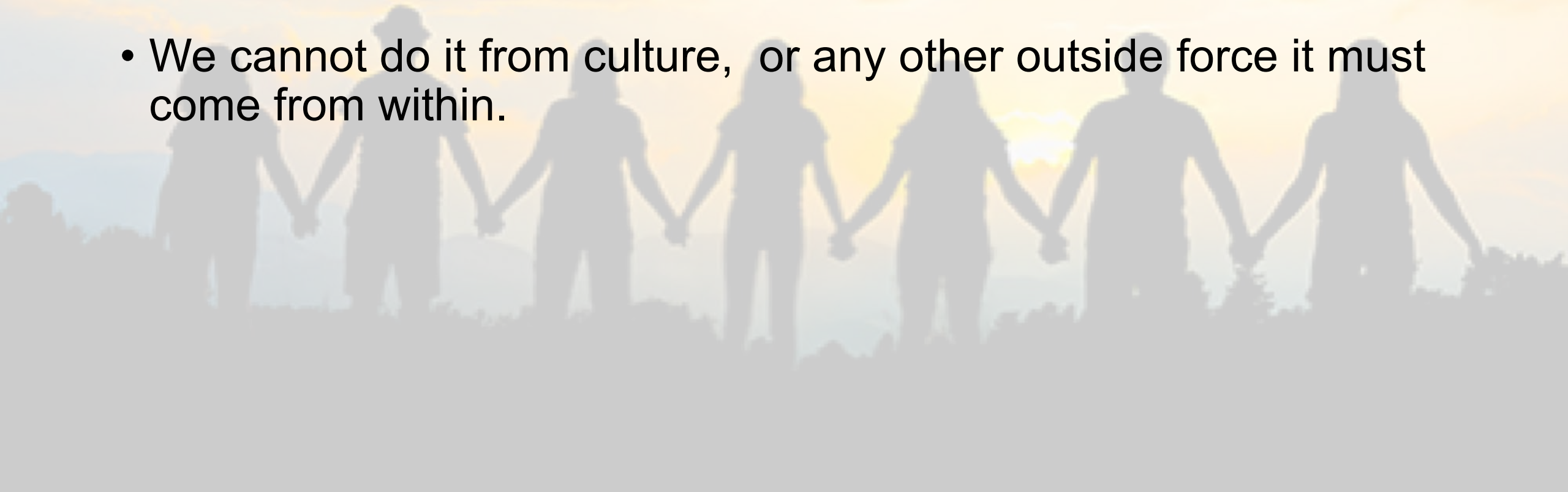
John 14:15–17 (NKJV)

15 “If you love Me, keep My commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

- When we are saved it is the Holy Spirit who encourages and helps us to live out the call of Christ for unity.
- We cannot do it from culture, or any other outside force it must come from within.



Comfort From His Love ...

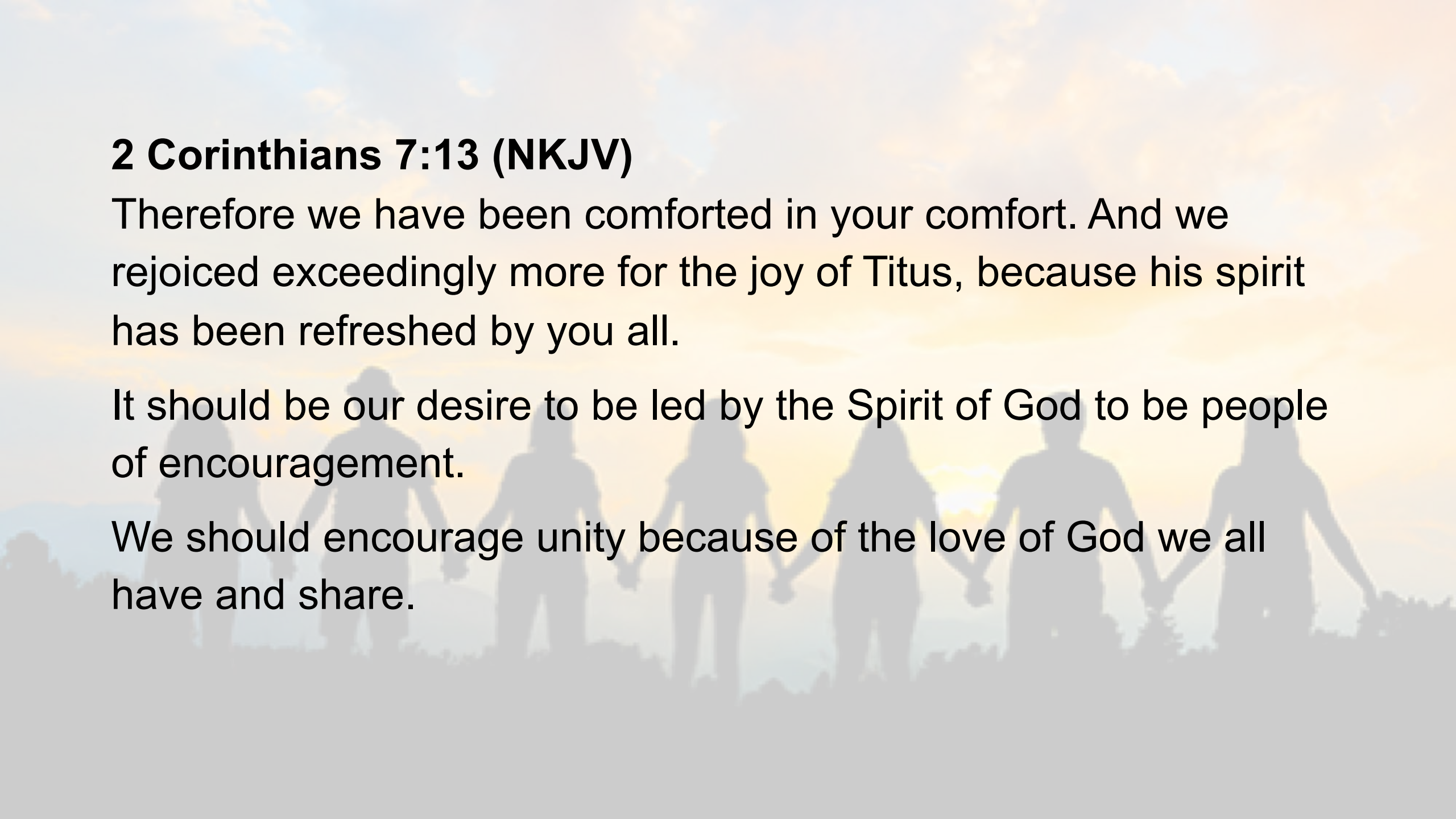
- “Comforter,” (KJV). It may also be translated “exhortation” in the sense of either encourage or comfort.
- Since each believer had received this work of the Spirit, Paul used it as a basis to appeal for their spiritual unity.
- Also, they each had “comfort from His [God’s] love.” God’s love in people’s hearts produces spiritual unity in their lives.

2 Corinthians 7:13 (NKJV)

Therefore we have been comforted in your comfort. And we rejoiced exceedingly more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

It should be our desire to be led by the Spirit of God to be people of encouragement.

We should encourage unity because of the love of God we all have and share.



Fellowship With The Spirit...

- “Fellowship with the Spirit” results from the Spirit’s permanent indwelling ministry.

1 Corinthians 6:19 (NKJV) Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

- However, this refers to the fellowship that comes from the Holy Spirit, just as encouragement comes from Christ, and comfort comes from love.

Tenderness & Compassion...

- Paul also spoke of “tenderness, compassion, mercy or affection “.

Colossians 3:12 (NKJV) Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

- One of the Spirit’s ministries is to produce within each believer a concern and love for other members of God’s family.
- The Spirit’s work is one of genuineness and is a basis for spiritual unity.

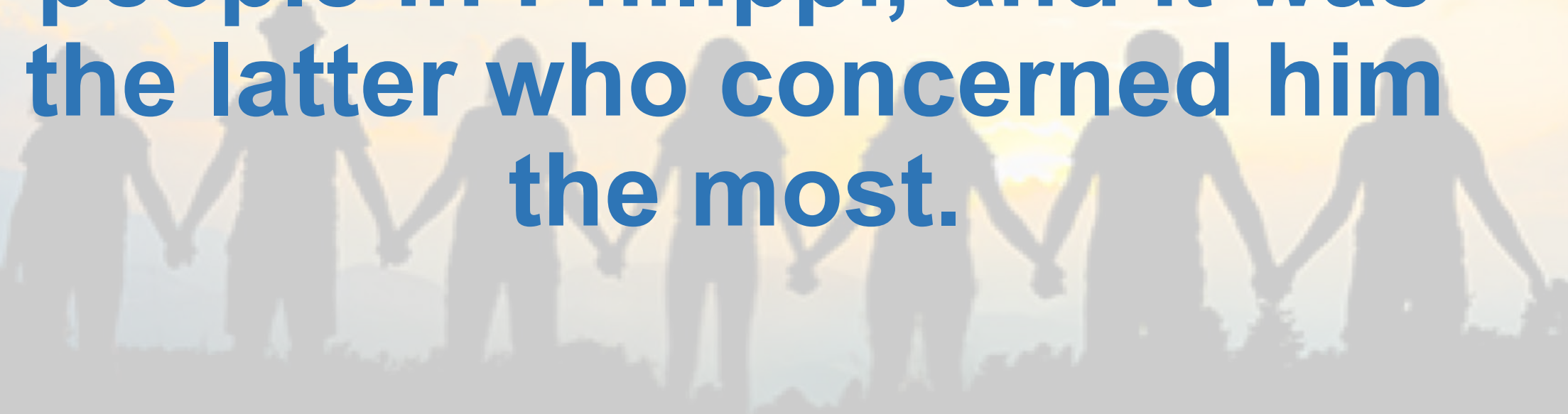
Disunity Causes A Breach In Joy

Philippians 2:2 (NKJV) fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

- The secret of joy despite circumstances is the single mind.

People can rob us of our joy.

**Paul was facing his problems
with people in Rome and
people in Philippi, and it was
the latter who concerned him
the most.**



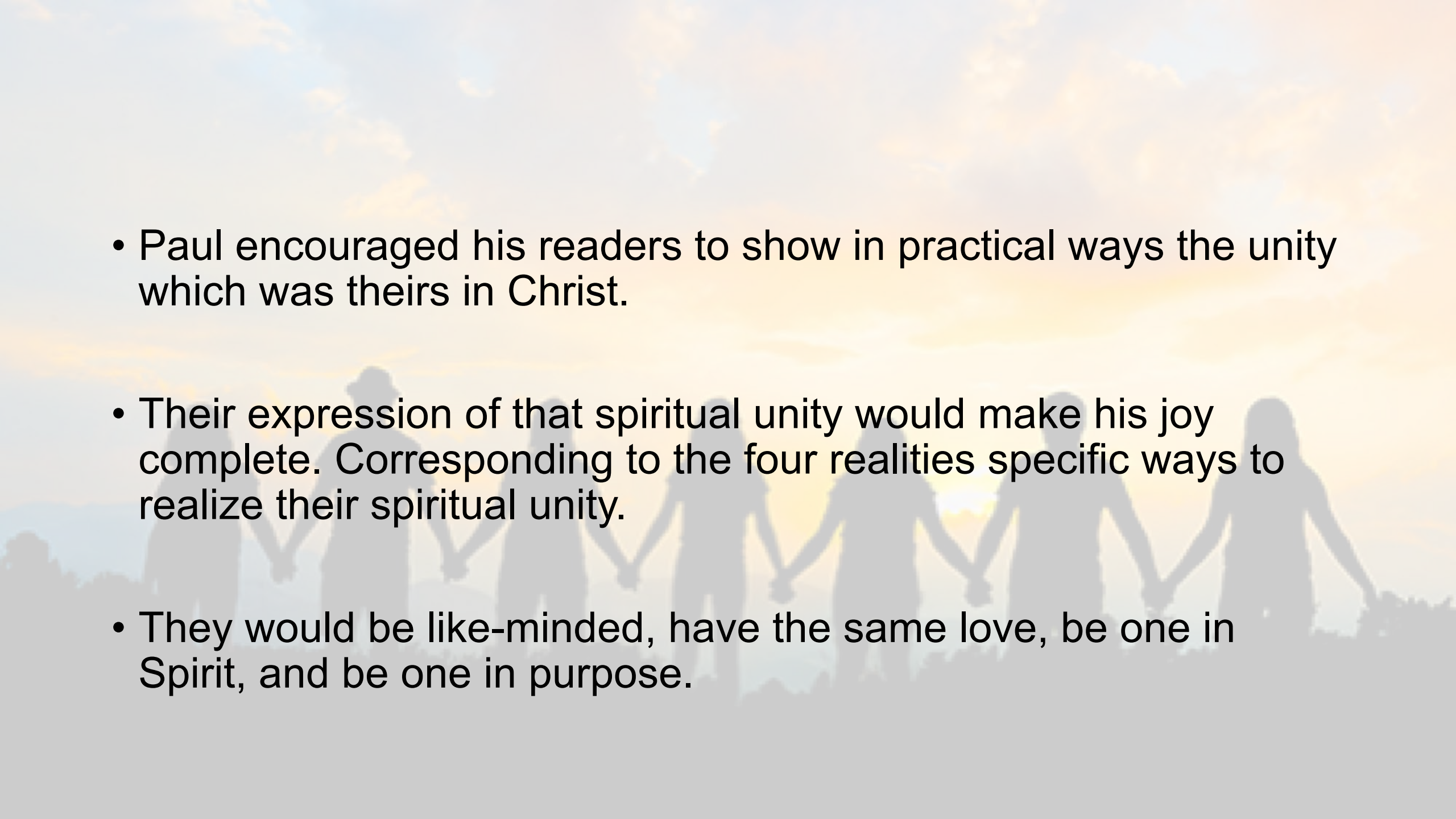
Philippians 1:15–18 (NKJV)

15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill:

16 The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains;

17 but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.

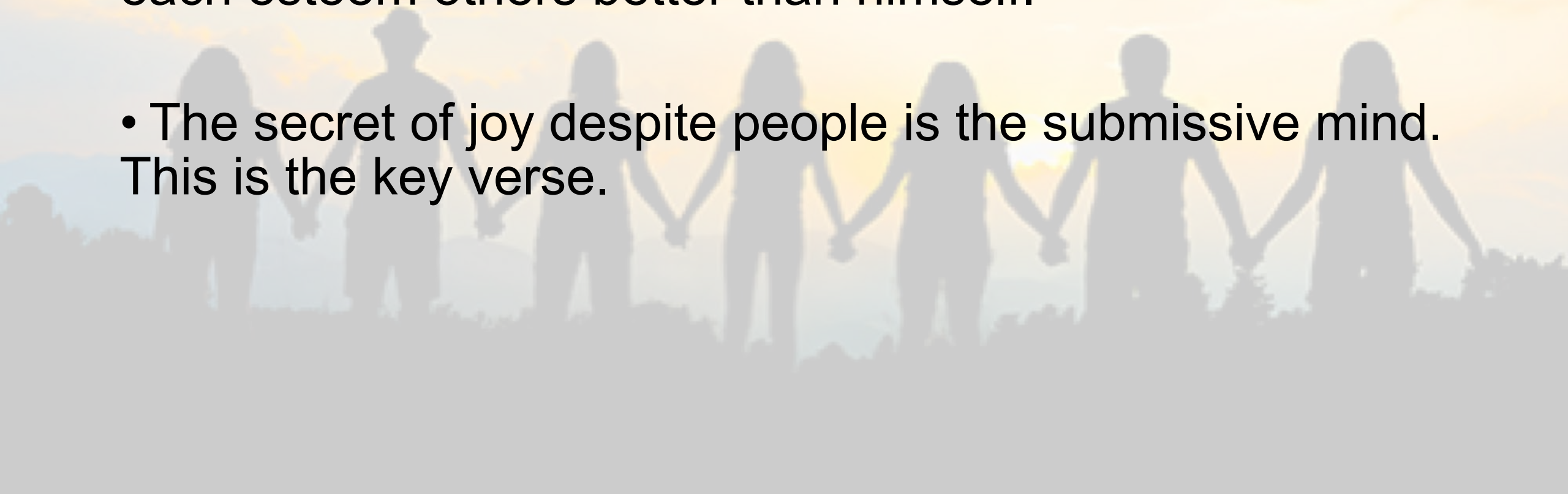
18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

- 
- Paul encouraged his readers to show in practical ways the unity which was theirs in Christ.
 - Their expression of that spiritual unity would make his joy complete. Corresponding to the four realities specific ways to realize their spiritual unity.
 - They would be like-minded, have the same love, be one in Spirit, and be one in purpose.

Unity Requires Humility

Philippians 2:3 (NKJV) Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

- The secret of joy despite people is the submissive mind. This is the key verse.

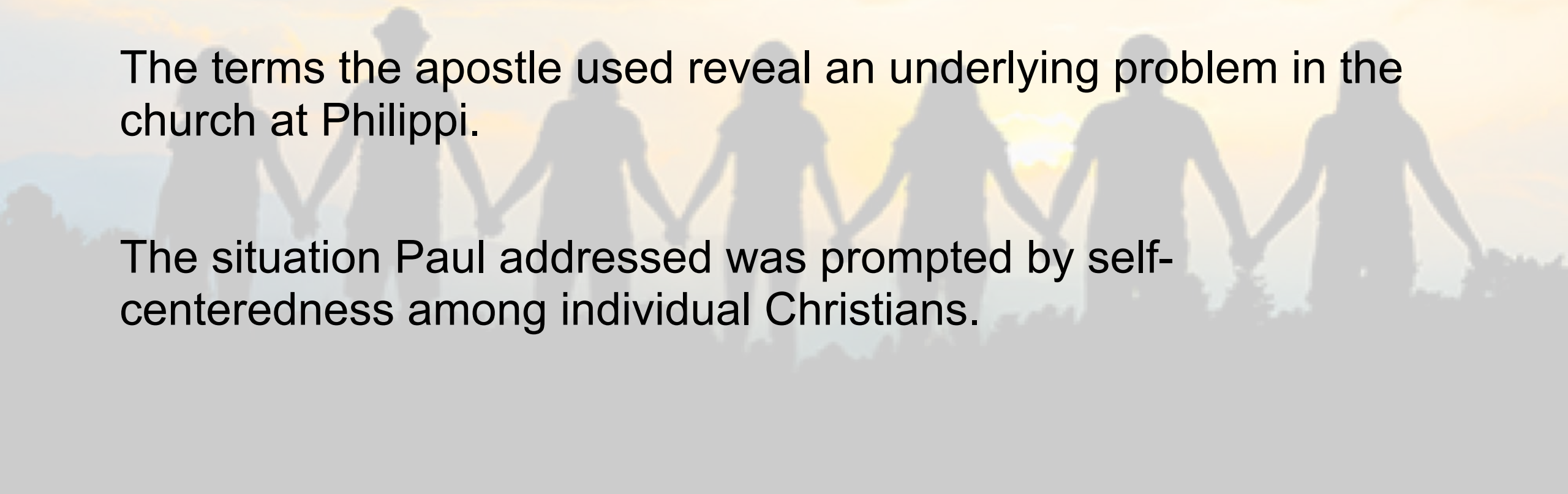


Unity Requires Humility

Paul gave further exhortations, also based on the declaration of the fourfold reality expressed in verse 1.

The terms the apostle used reveal an underlying problem in the church at Philippi.

The situation Paul addressed was prompted by self-centeredness among individual Christians.



We Must Understand What The Bible Means By “Humility”

- The humble person is not one who thinks meanly of himself; he does not think of himself at all!

Andrew Murray said that “Humility is that grace that, when you know you have it, you have lost it.”

The Truly Humble Person Knows Himself And Accepts Himself And Others Differences

Romans 12:3–5 (NKJV)

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

Nothing Is To Be Done Out Of Selfish Ambition

- Selfish behavior is of the flesh and not the Spirit.

Galatians 5:19–21 (NKJV)

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,
20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,
21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Nothing Is To Be Done Out Of Selfish Ambition

- Vain conceit, meaning “empty glory,” is probably the root cause of their selfish ambition.

κενοδοξία [kenodoxia /ken·od·ox·ee·ah/] n f. 1 vain glory, groundless, self esteem, empty pride. 2 a vain opinion, error.

Proverbs 13:10 (NKJV) By pride comes nothing but strife, But with the well-advised is wisdom.

Pride produces nothing good.

A positive exhortation follows the two negatives: in humility, consider others better than yourselves.

- Humility before God and man is a virtue every child of God needs to strive to have.

Psalm 18:26–27 (NKJV)

26 With the pure You will show Yourself pure; And with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.

27 For You will save the humble people, But will bring down haughty looks.

- A spirit of pride in human relations indicates a lack of humility before God.

Your Decisions Should Be In The Best Interests Of Others

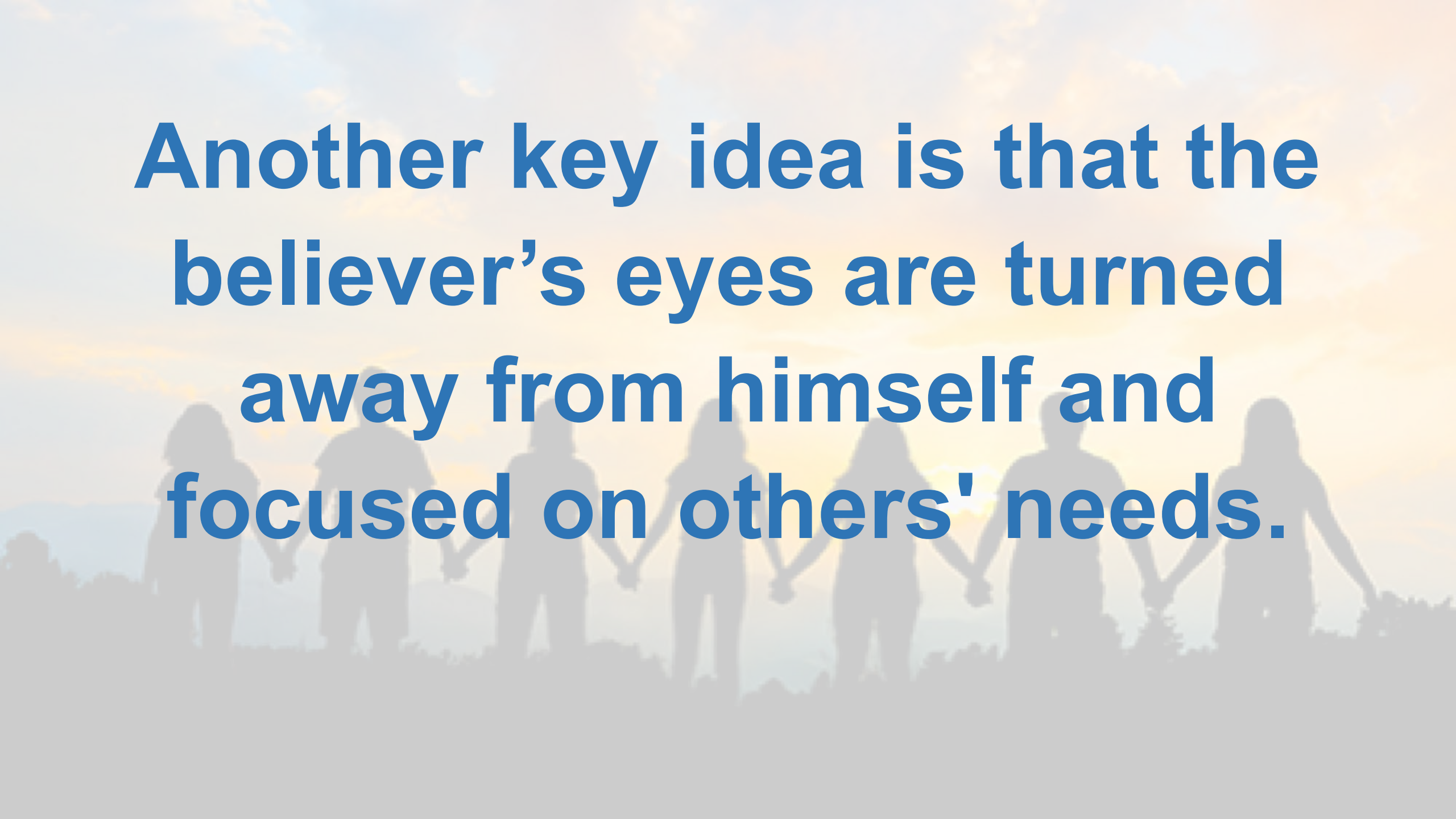
Philippians 2:4 (NKJV) Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

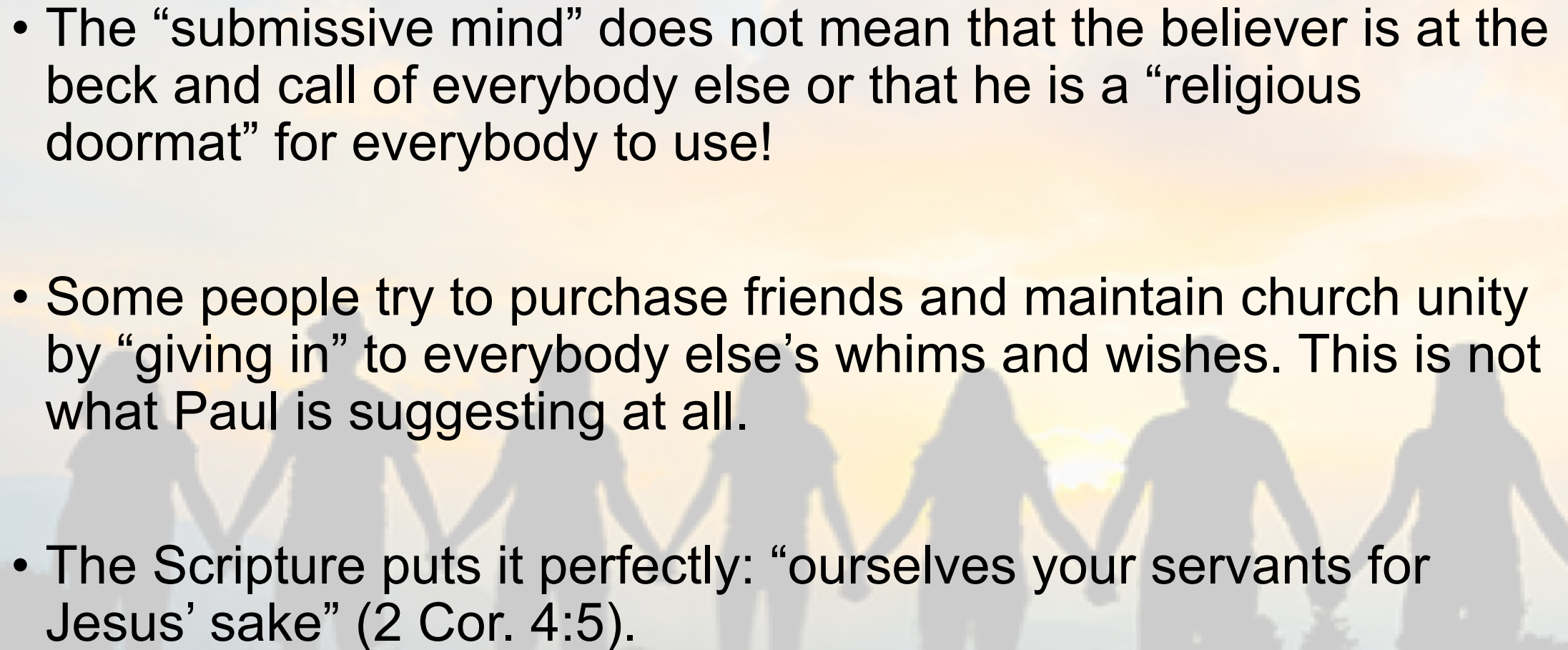
- He yields himself to Christ to be a servant, uses what he is, and has for God's glory and others' good.

1 Corinthians 8:9 (NKJV) But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.

- We should desire to win others with our actions.

Another key idea is that the believer's eyes are turned away from himself and focused on others' needs.

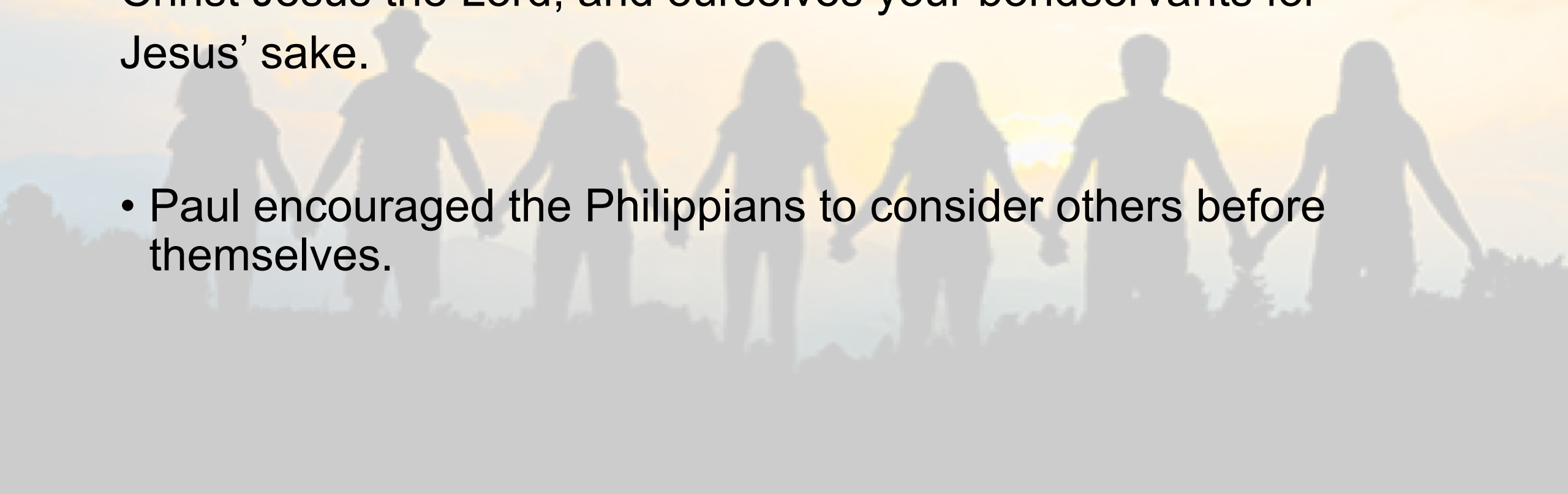


- 
- The “submissive mind” does not mean that the believer is at the beck and call of everybody else or that he is a “religious doormat” for everybody to use!
 - Some people try to purchase friends and maintain church unity by “giving in” to everybody else’s whims and wishes. This is not what Paul is suggesting at all.
 - The Scripture puts it perfectly: “ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor. 4:5).

As We Humble Ourselves We Must See Ourselves As Servants

2 Corinthians 4:5 (NKJV) For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

- Paul encouraged the Philippians to consider others before themselves.



As We Humble Ourselves We Must See Ourselves As Servants

1 Peter 5:5–6 (NKJV)

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

“This will go far toward removing disharmony.”

- Paul explained how humility can be expressed. Instead of concentrating on self, each believer should be concerned for the interests of others in the household of faith.

Romans 12:9–10 (NKJV)

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

- Preoccupation with oneself is sin. We cannot have unity with love and humility. Let's work towards unity.