

What If There Were No Resurrection?

1 Corinthians 15:12-19

The Theme

The historical, bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is not only *central* to our faith; it is *essential* to Christianity.

1 Corinthians 15:12-19

¹²Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised;

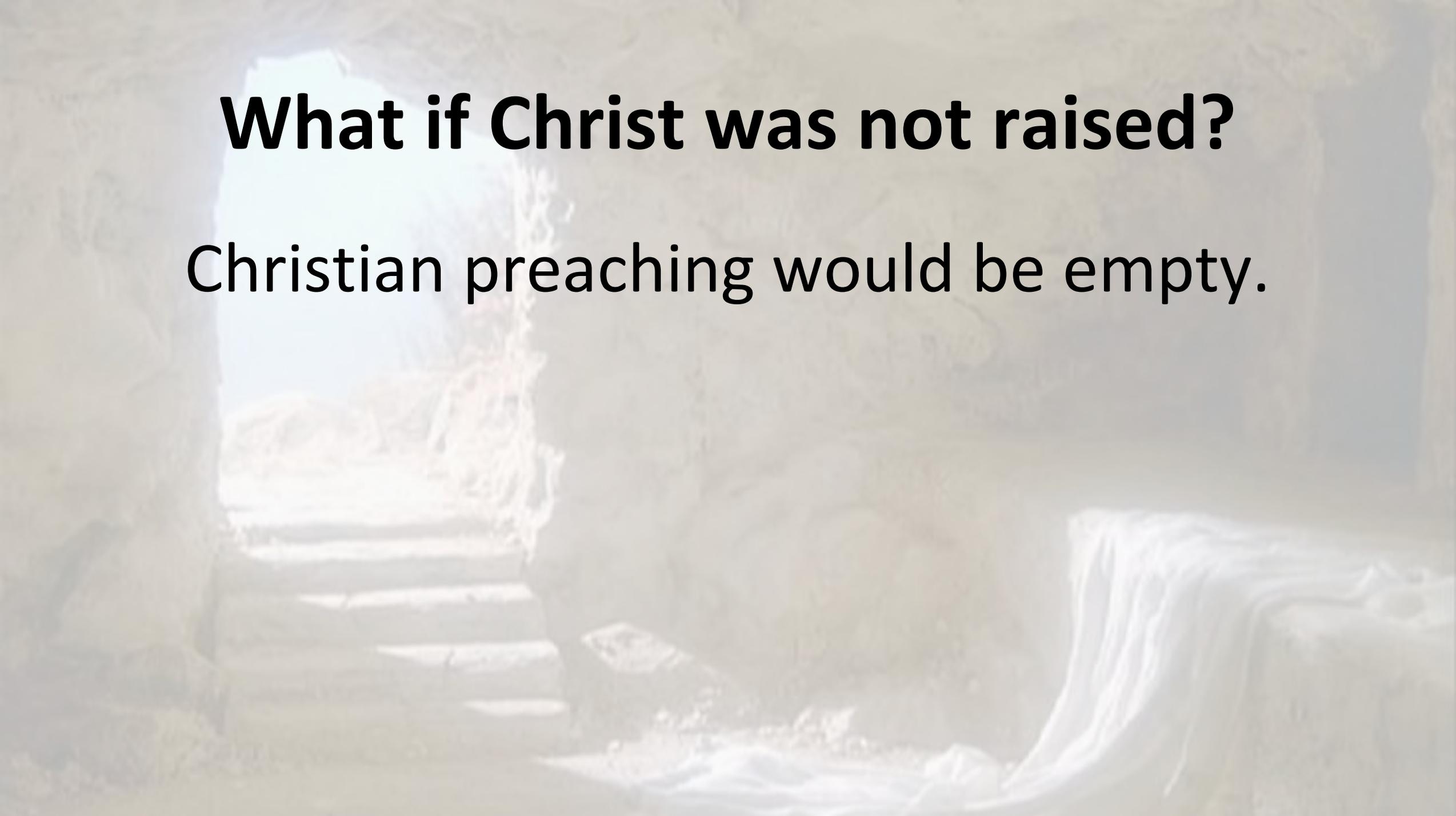
¹⁴and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.

1 Corinthians 15:12-19

¹⁵Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.

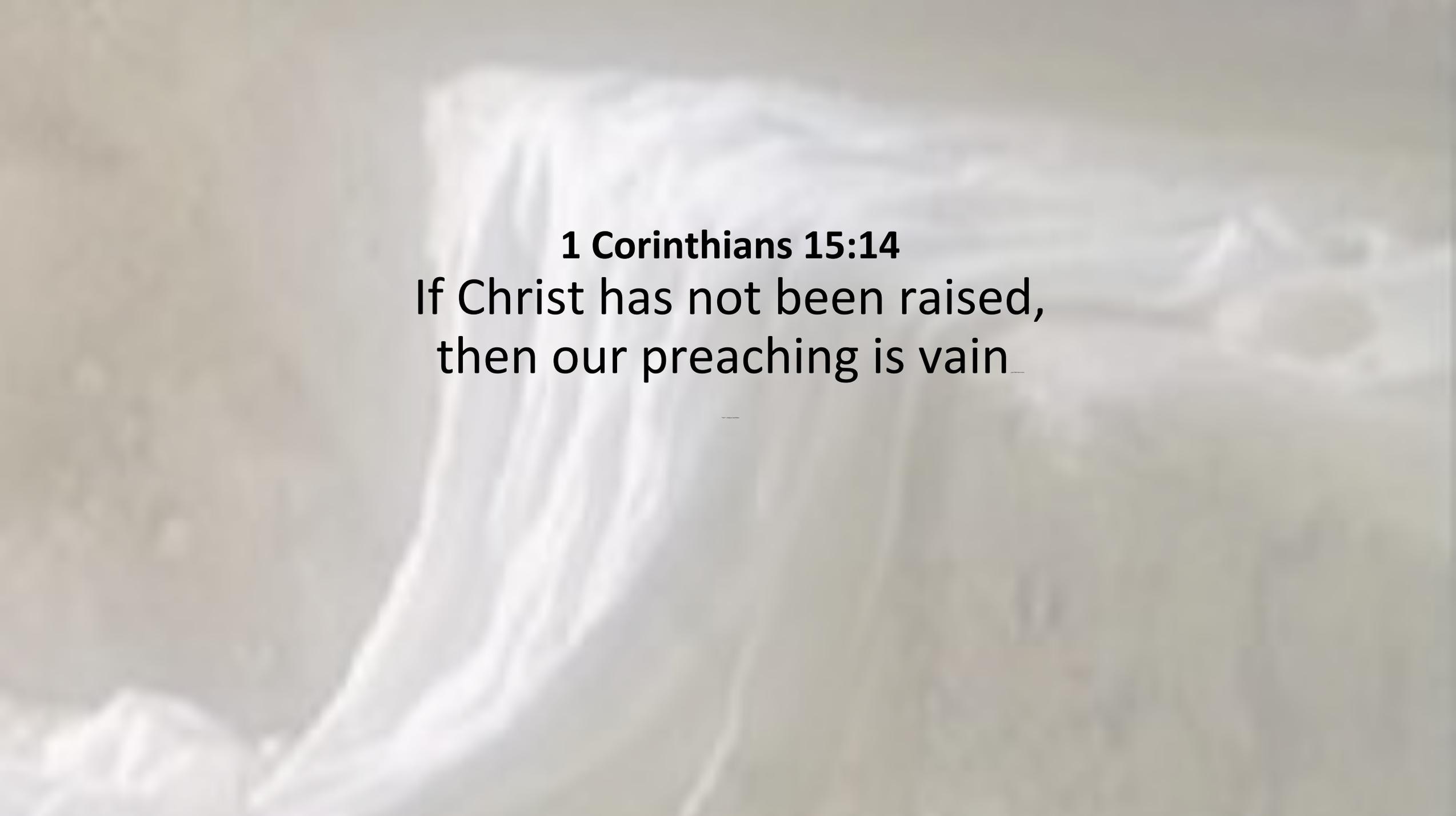
¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁷and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

¹⁹If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

An artistic rendering of an empty tomb. The tomb is a simple, rectangular stone structure with a large, irregular opening on the left side. A large, smooth, light-colored stone has been rolled away from the entrance. Inside the tomb, a white, heavy cloth lies on the floor, partially covering a wooden structure that appears to be a bed or a resting place. The walls of the tomb are made of rough, textured stone. The lighting is soft and even, highlighting the textures of the stone and the white cloth.

What if Christ was not raised?

Christian preaching would be empty.

A photograph of a white sheet draped over a stone in a tomb, symbolizing resurrection. The sheet is crumpled and hangs down, with the stone visible in the background.

1 Corinthians 15:14
If Christ has not been raised,
then our preaching is vain.

A photograph of a white sheet draped over a stone in a tomb, symbolizing resurrection. The sheet is wrinkled and covers the stone completely. The background is a light, textured surface.

1 Corinthians 15:14

If Christ has not been raised,
then **our preaching is vain**

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“Vain” = Empty or worthless

Peter Preached the Resurrection

Acts 2:22-24

Men of Israel, listen to these words:
Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know-- this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

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...and its effect.

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And God raised Him up again, **putting an end to the
agony of death**, since it was impossible for Him
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The Apostles Preached Resurrection

Acts 4:1-2

And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

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Paul Preached the Resurrection

Acts 17:18

And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him.

And some were saying, “What would this idle babbler wish to say?” Others, “He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,” -- because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

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What did Paul preach about it?

Romans 6:4

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

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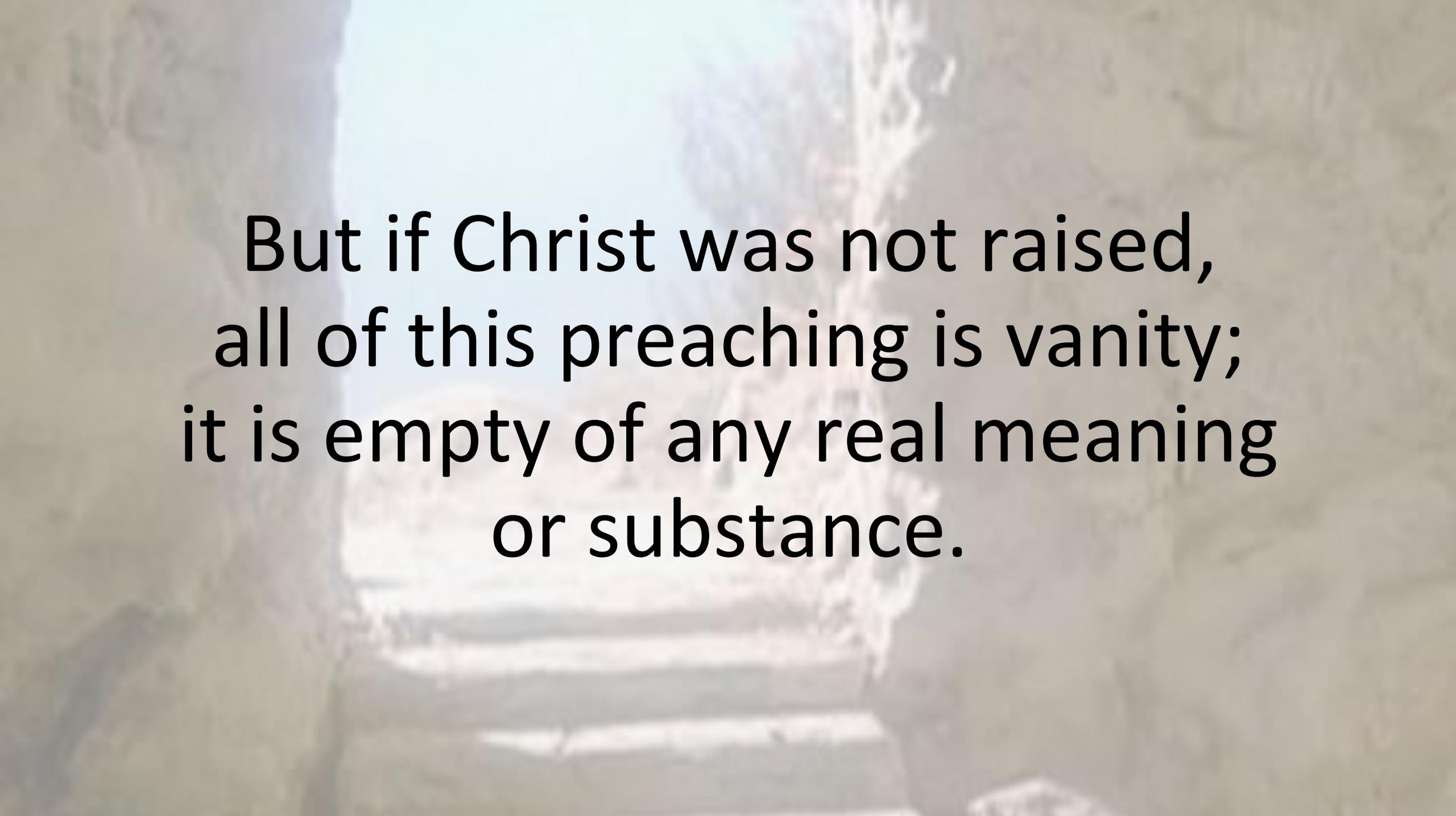
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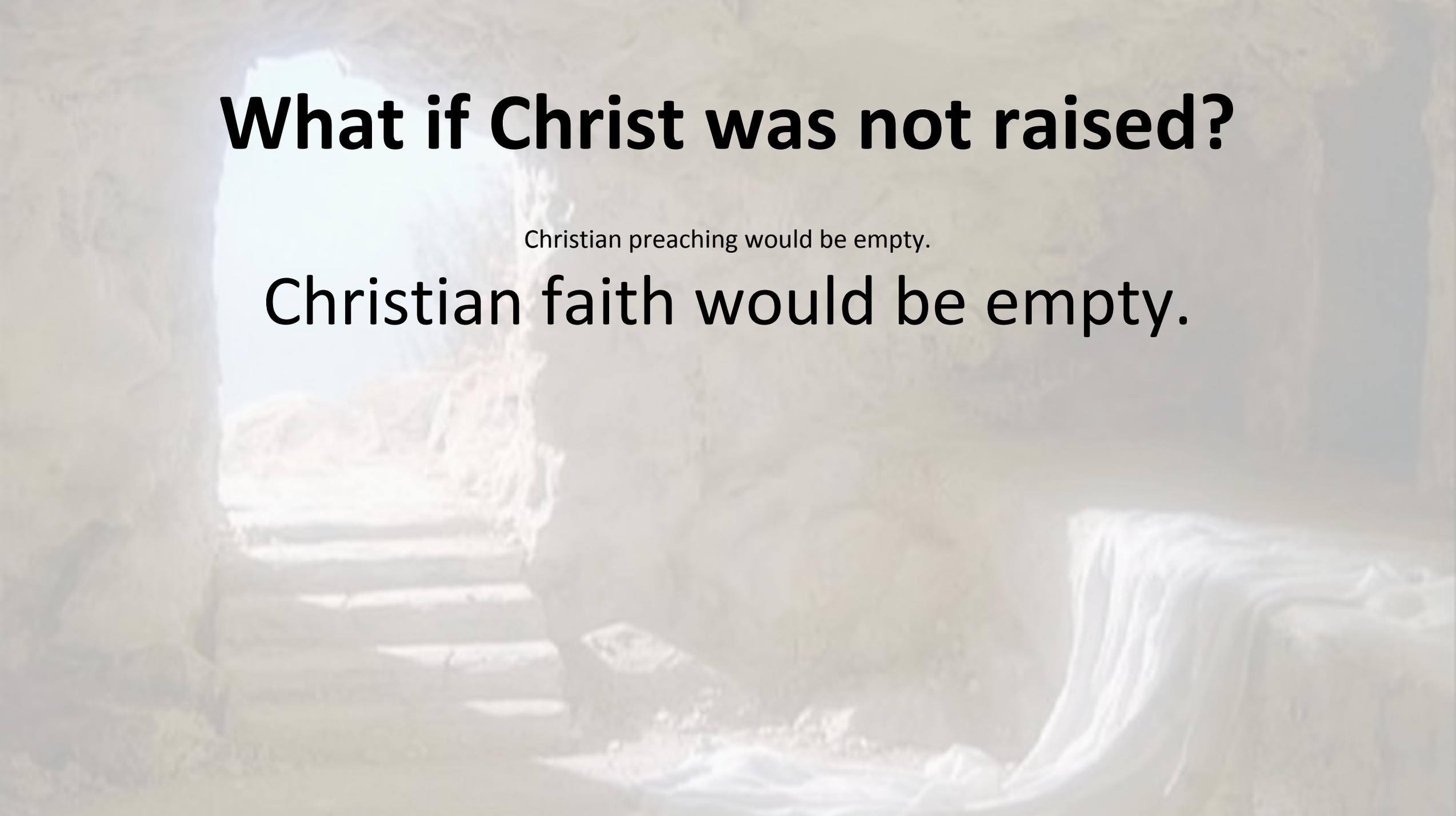
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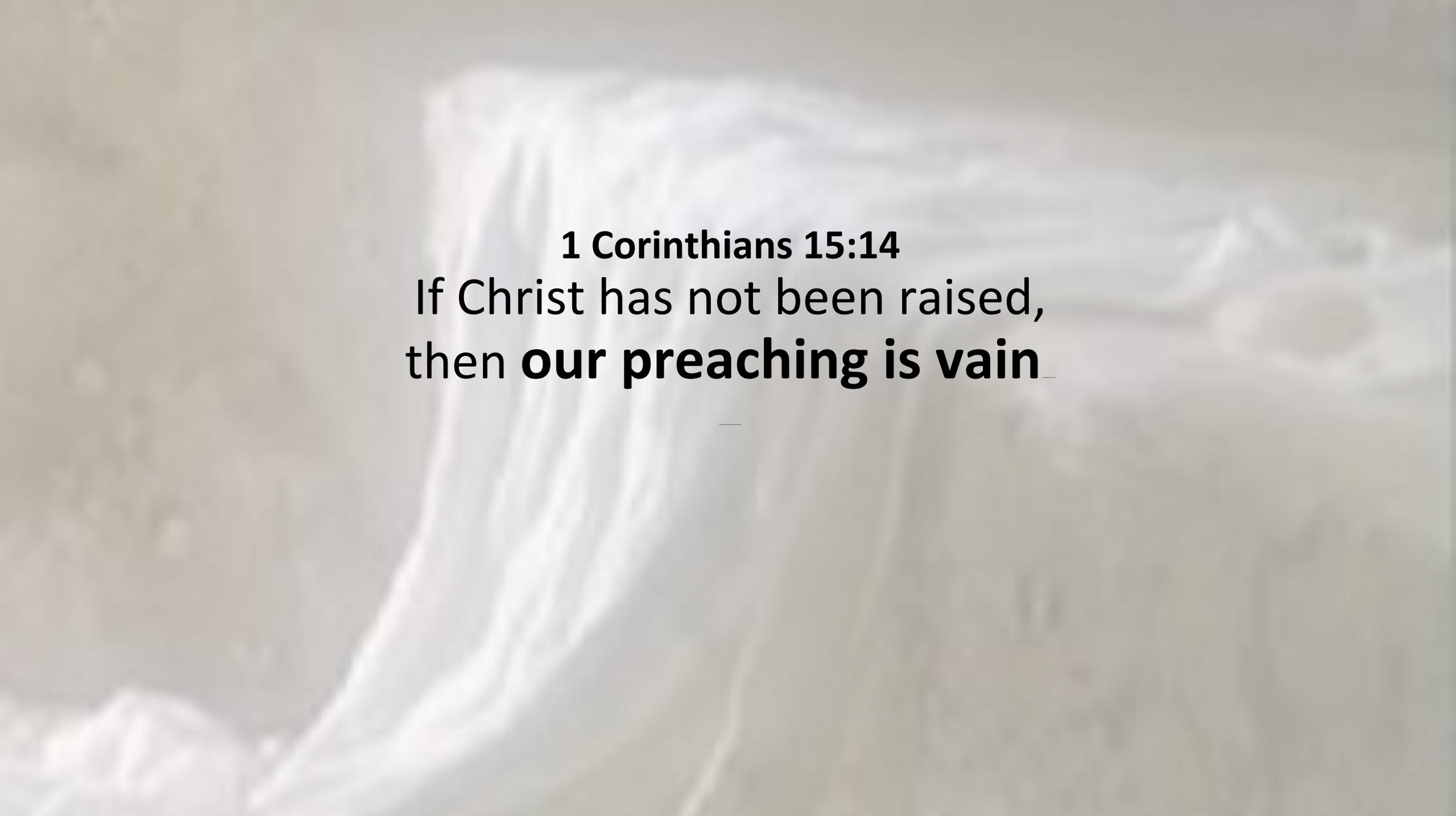
But if Christ was not raised,
all of this preaching is vanity;
it is empty of any real meaning
or substance.

An empty tomb with a white cloth on the floor and a rolled-up stone on the steps leading to an opening in the wall.

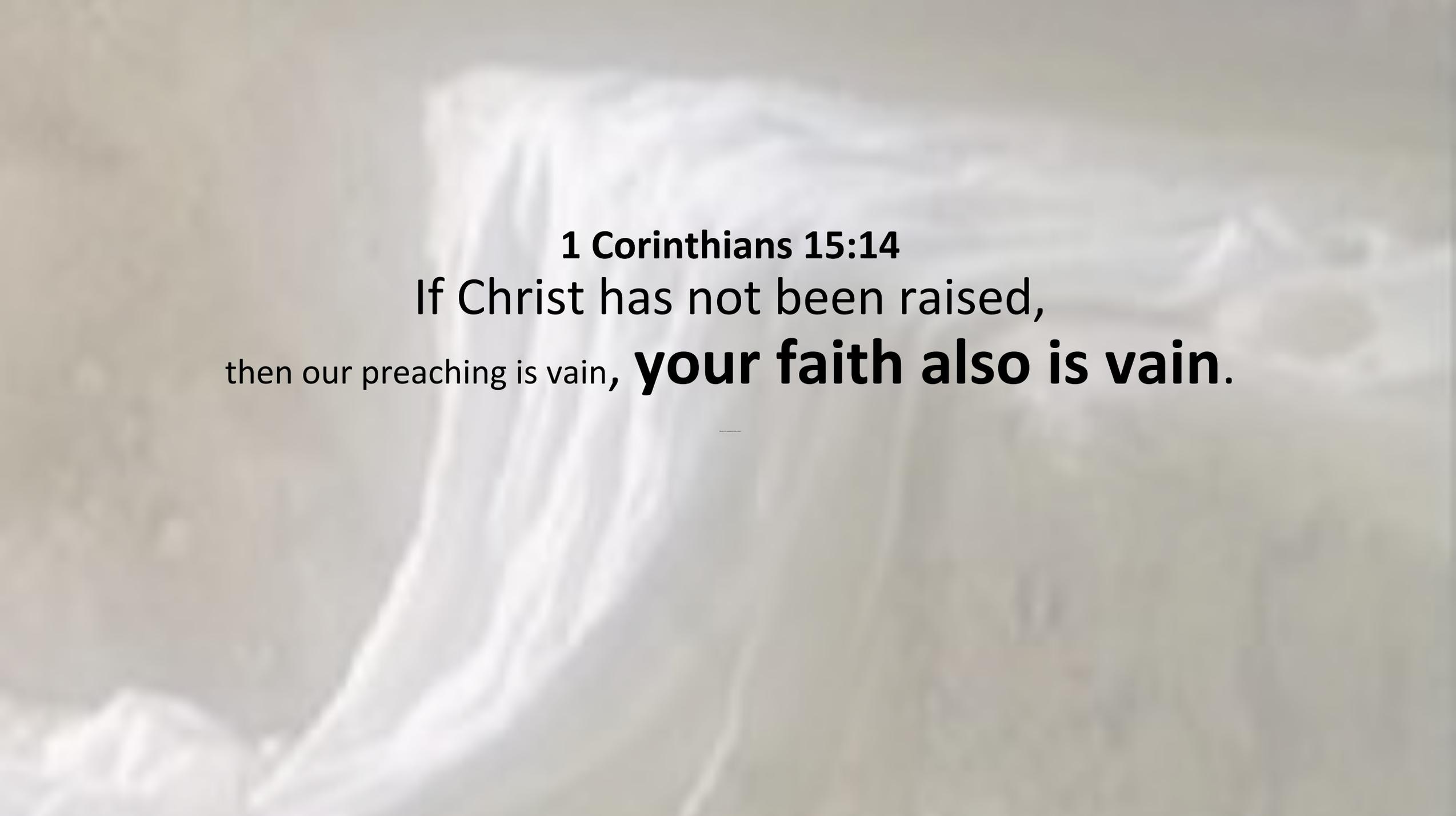
What if Christ was not raised?

Christian preaching would be empty.

Christian faith would be empty.

A photograph of a white sheet draped over a stone in a tomb, symbolizing resurrection. The sheet is wrinkled and hangs down, with the stone visible at the top. The background is a light, textured surface.

1 Corinthians 15:14
If Christ has not been raised,
then **our preaching is vain**.

A white sheet is draped over a surface, creating deep folds and shadows. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey. The text is centered over the sheet.

1 Corinthians 15:14

If Christ has not been raised,
then our preaching is vain, **your faith also is vain.**

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What is the substance of our faith?

Romans 10:8-9

But what does it say? “The word is near you,
in your mouth and in your heart” –
that is, the message of faith which we are preaching,
that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord,
and believe in your heart that God raised Him
from the dead, you shall be saved.

The call to believe

Romans 10:8-9

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that is, **the message of faith which we are preaching,**
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The content of confession

Romans 10:8-9

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The substance of faith

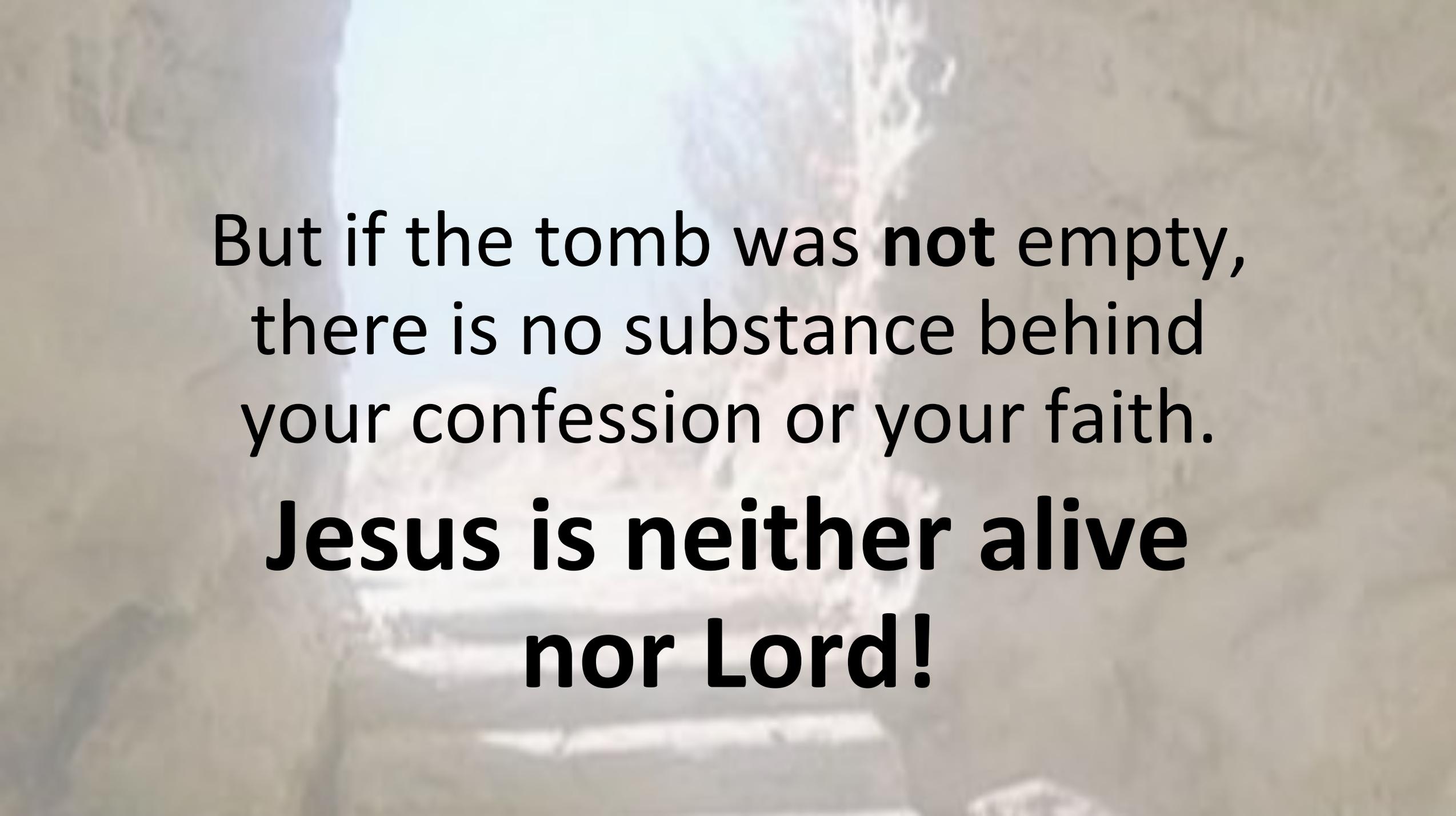
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The promise of faith

Romans 10:8-9

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in your mouth and in your heart” –
that is, the message of faith which we are preaching,
that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord,
and believe in your heart that God raised Him
from the dead, **you shall be saved.**



But if the tomb was **not** empty,
there is no substance behind
your confession or your faith.

**Jesus is neither alive
nor Lord!**

What if Christ was not raised?

Christian preaching would be empty.

Christian faith would be empty.

The Apostles themselves would be
untrustworthy as false witnesses.

1 Corinthians 15:15-16

Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.

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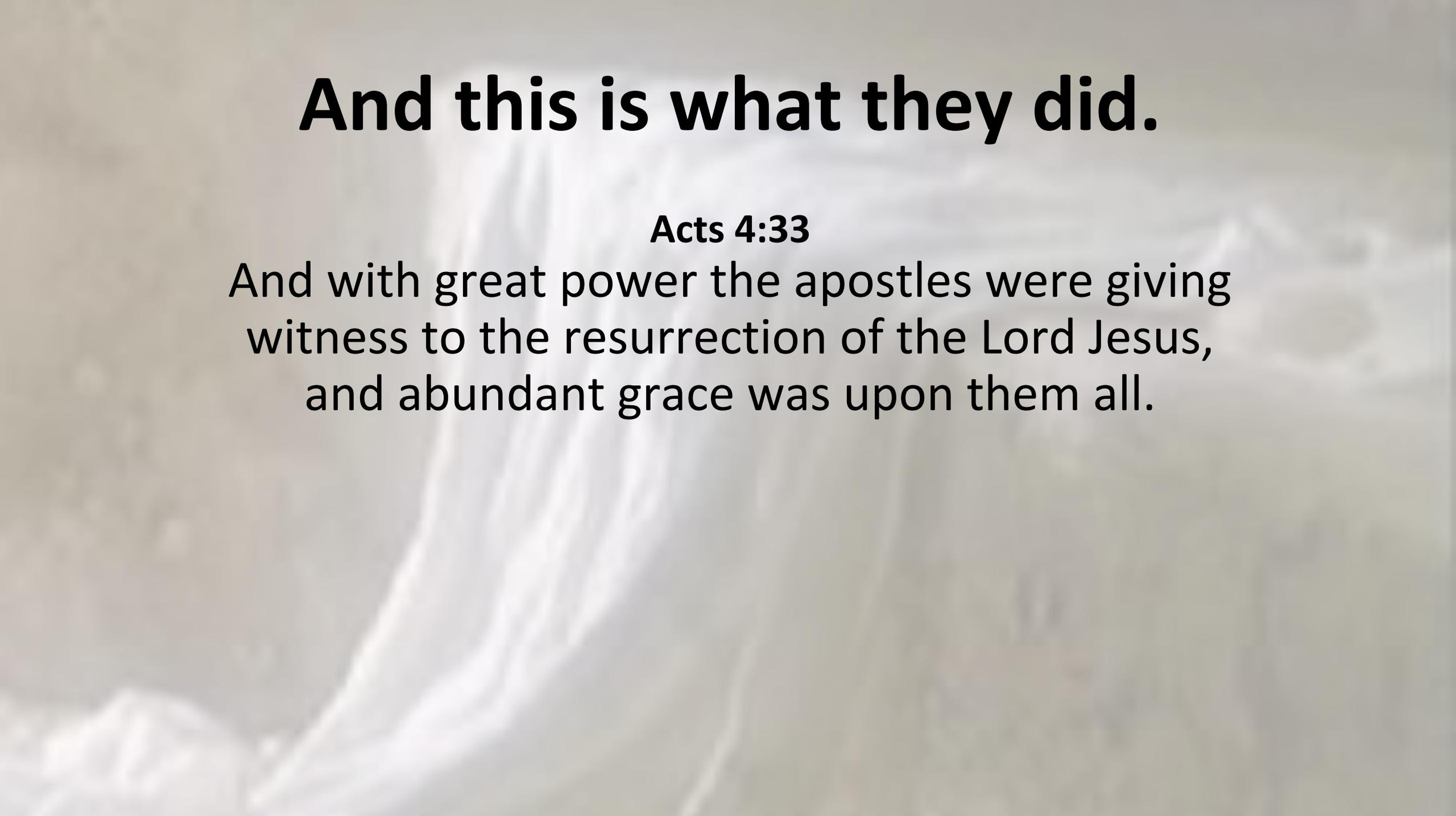
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**Testimony to the resurrection of Christ
was an *expectation* of Apostleship.**



And this is what they did.

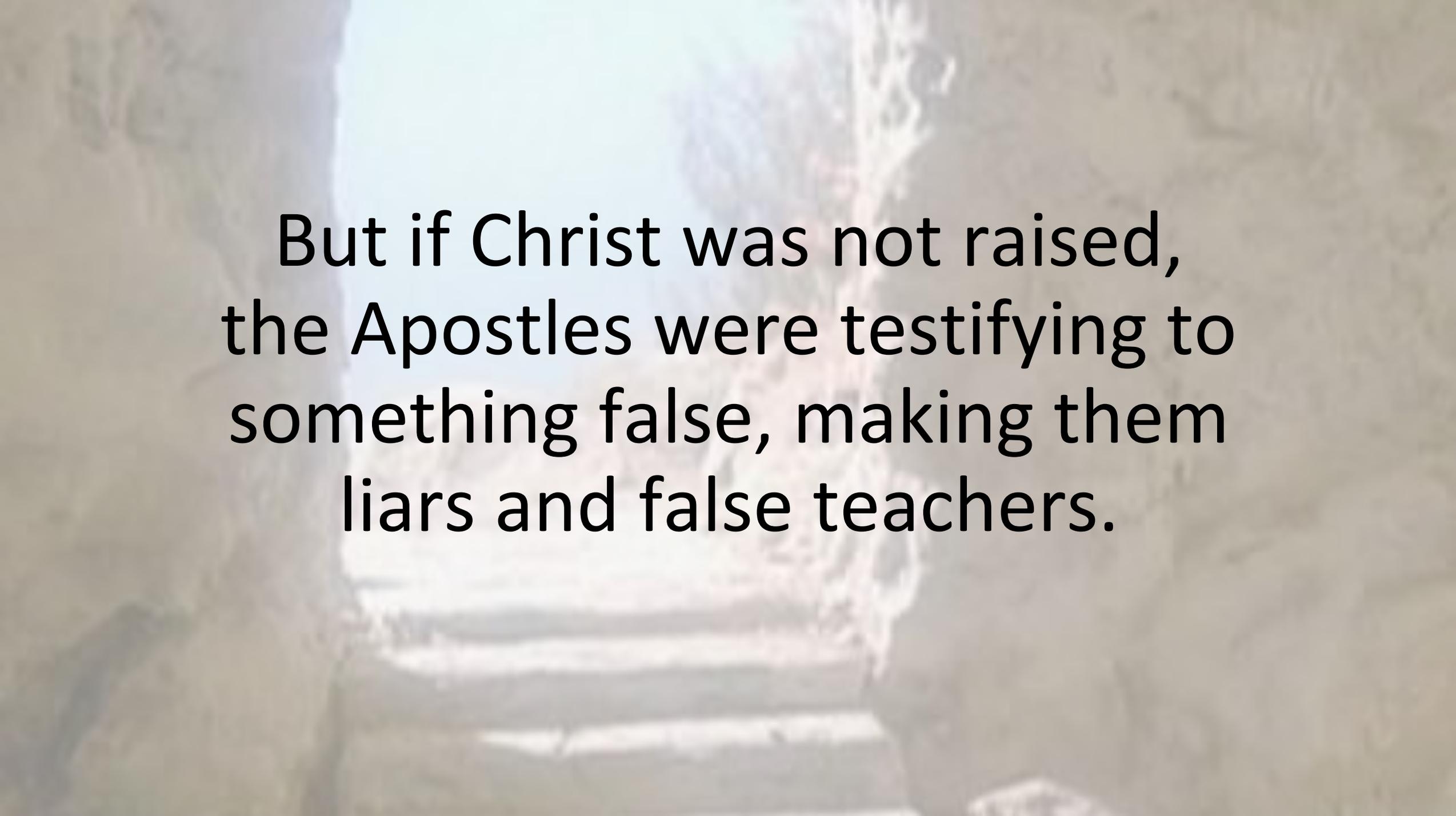
Acts 4:33

And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.

And this is what they did.

Acts 4:33

And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.



But if Christ was not raised,
the Apostles were testifying to
something false, making them
liars and false teachers.

What if Christ was not raised?

Christian preaching would be empty.

Christian faith would be empty.

The Apostles themselves would be untrustworthy as false witnesses.

There would be no forgiveness of sin.

1 Corinthians 15:17

...and if Christ has not been raised,
your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.

1 Corinthians 15:17

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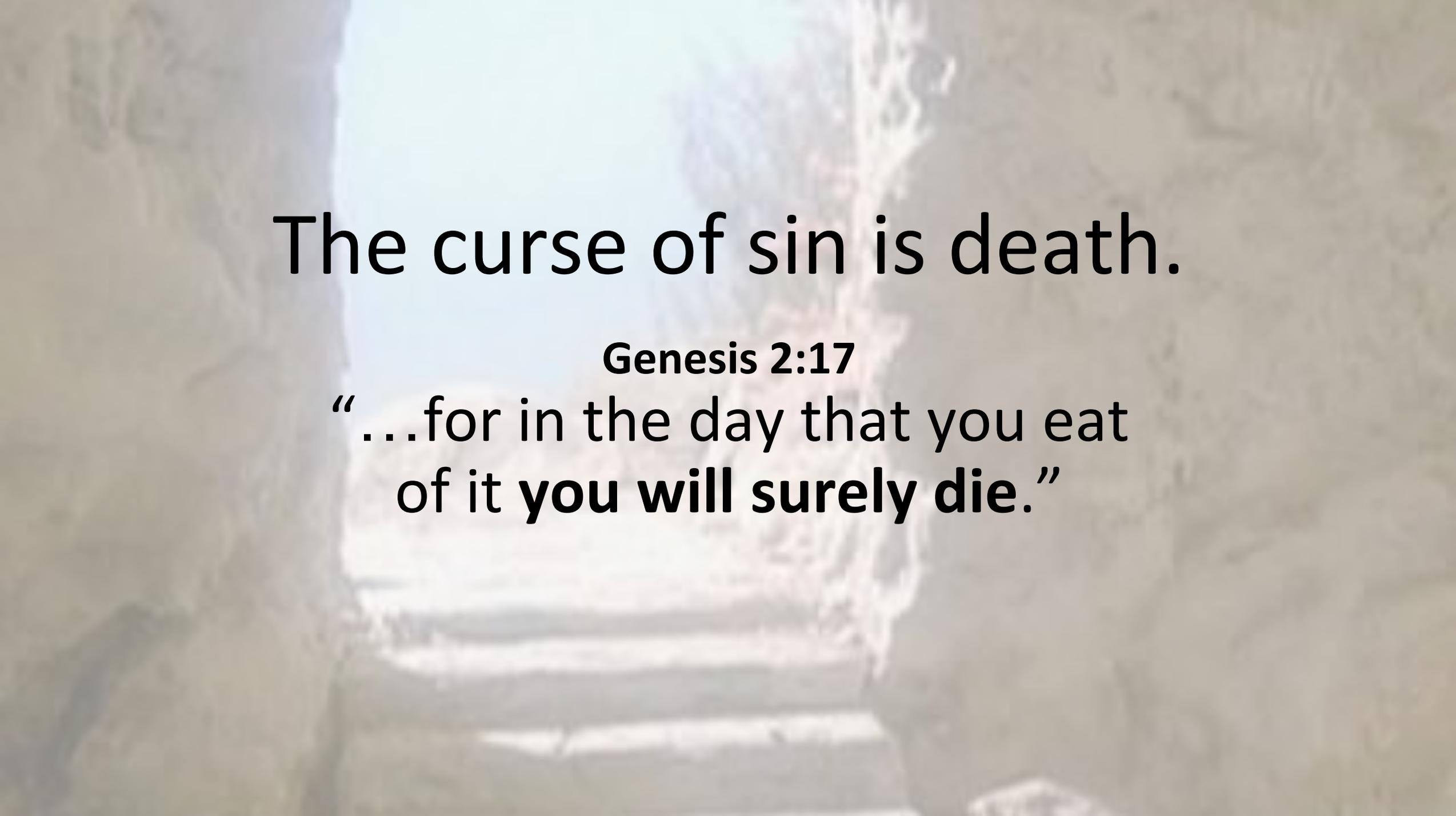
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1 Corinthians 15:17

...and if Christ has not been raised,

your faith is worthless; **you are still in your sins.**



The curse of sin is death.

Genesis 2:17

“...for in the day that you eat
of it **you will surely die.**”

Deuteronomy 30:19

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse.

Deuteronomy 30:19

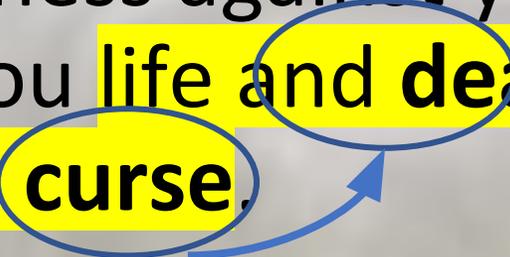
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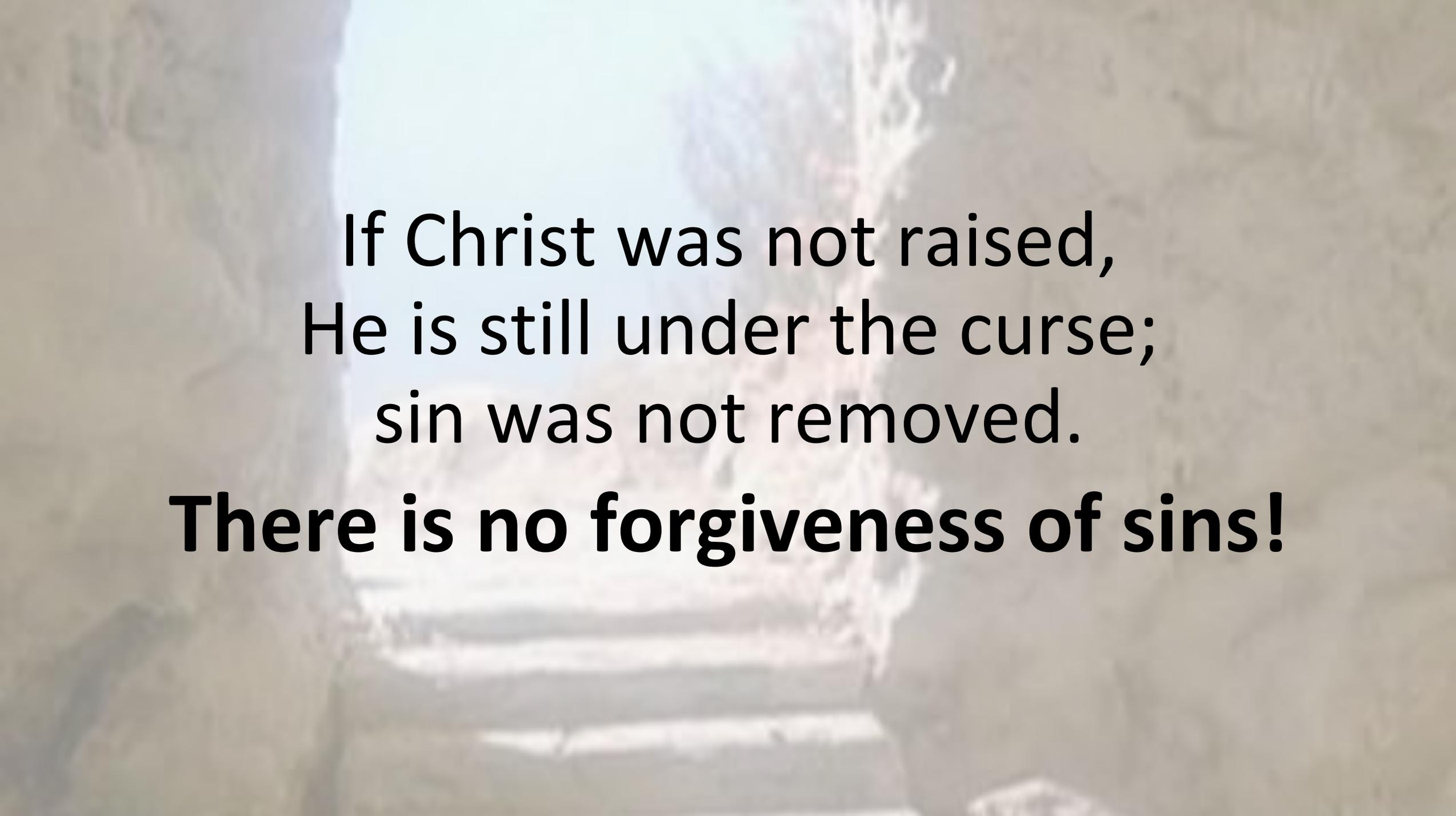
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A blue arrow originates from the word 'curse' in the second line of text and points to the word 'death' in the first line of text. Both words are circled in blue.

But this is the Gospel!

Galatians 3:13

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law,
having become a curse for us-- for it is written,
“Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.”



If Christ was not raised,
He is still under the curse;
sin was not removed.

There is no forgiveness of sins!

What if Christ was not raised?

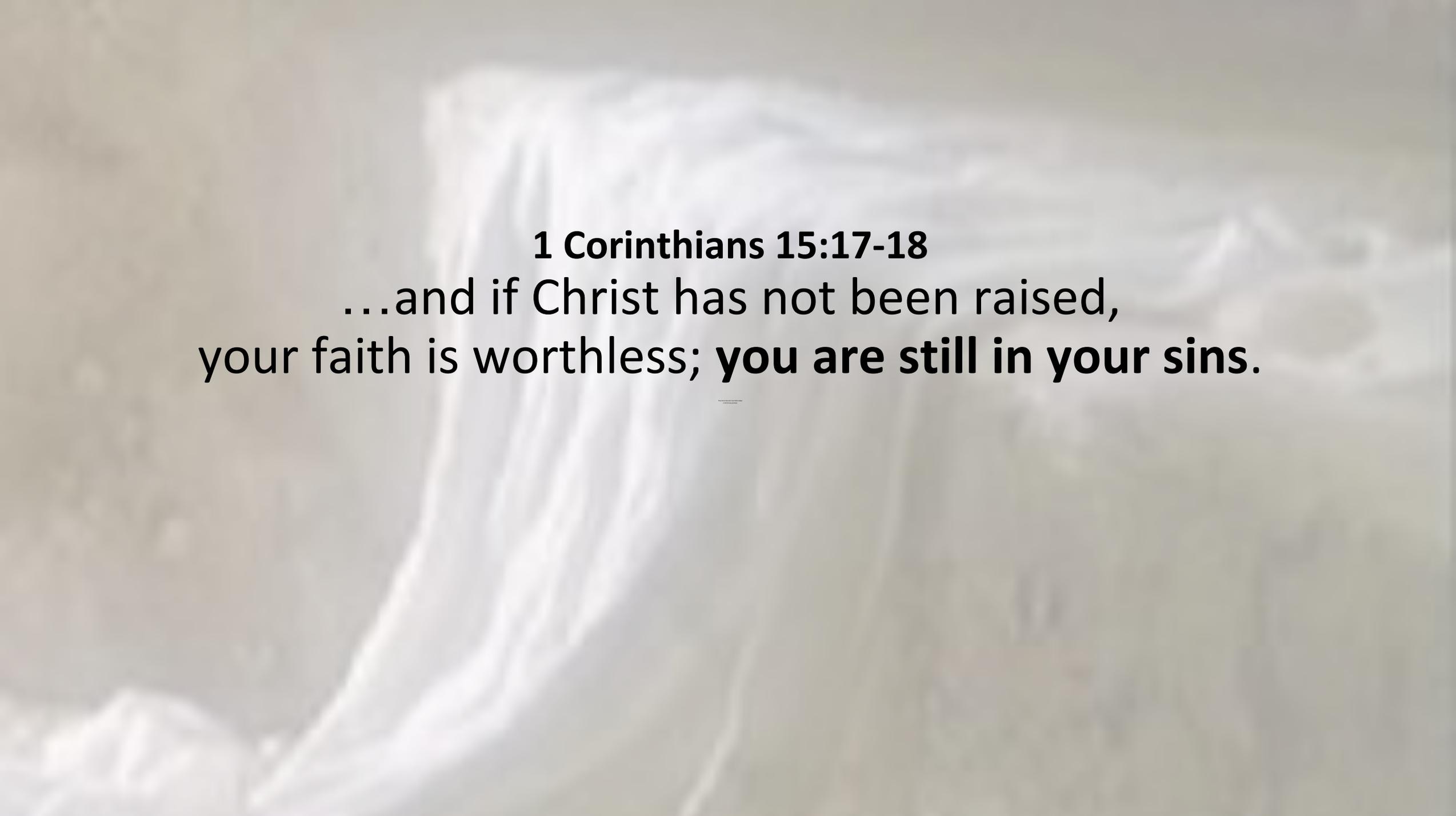
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Those who have died in Christ
would still be lost.

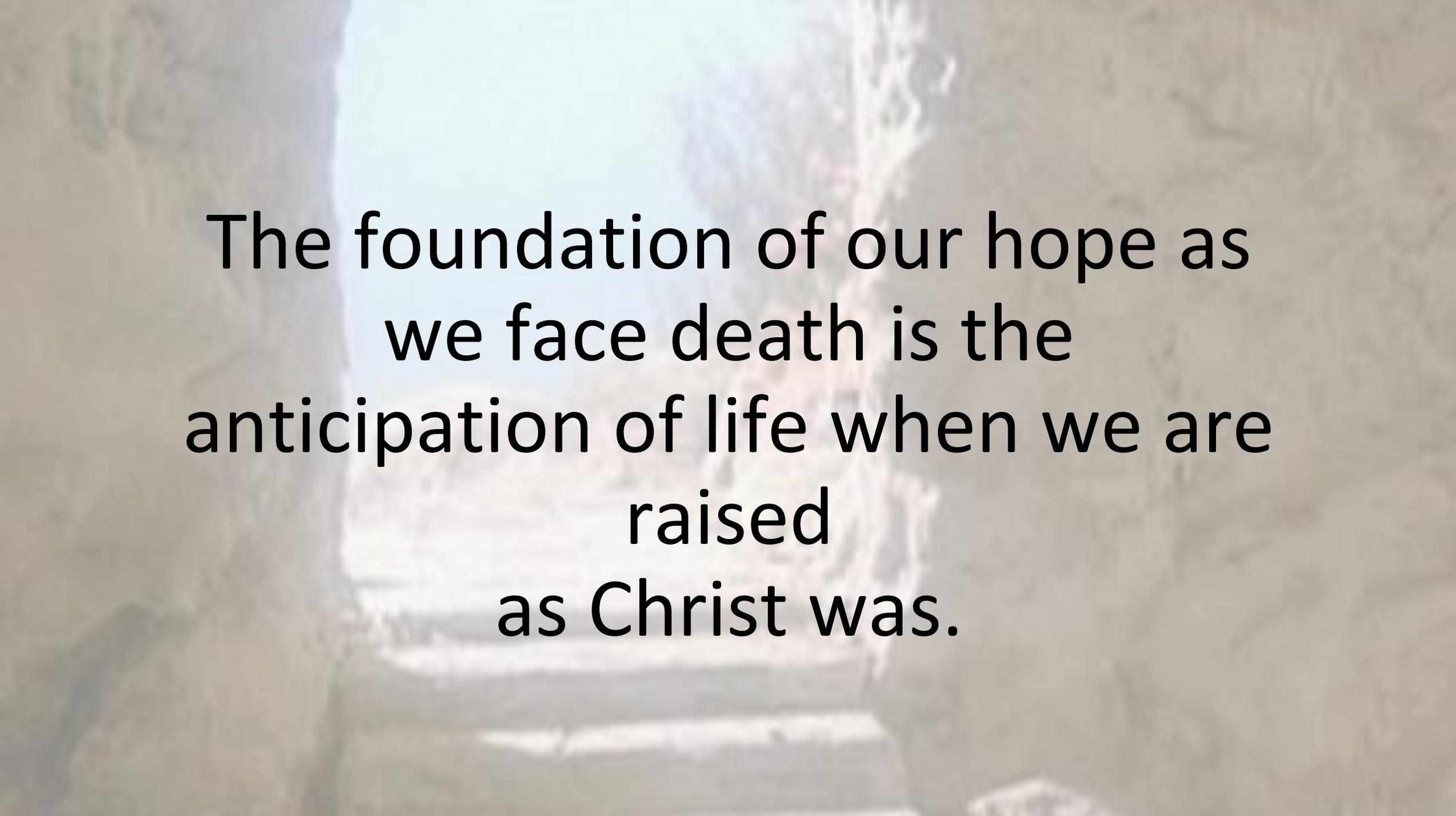
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1 Corinthians 15:17-18

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...and if Christ has not been raised,
your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.
Then those also who have fallen asleep
in Christ have perished.

A photograph of an open stone tomb, likely the tomb of Jesus, with a white cloth inside. The tomb is set against a background of a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

The foundation of our hope as
we face death is the
anticipation of life when we are
raised
as Christ was.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope.

Those who have died

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about **those who are asleep**, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope.

Grief based in hope

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest **who have no hope.**

The basis of our hope!

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope.

For **if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,** even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

The basis of our hope!

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Are you “in Jesus”?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

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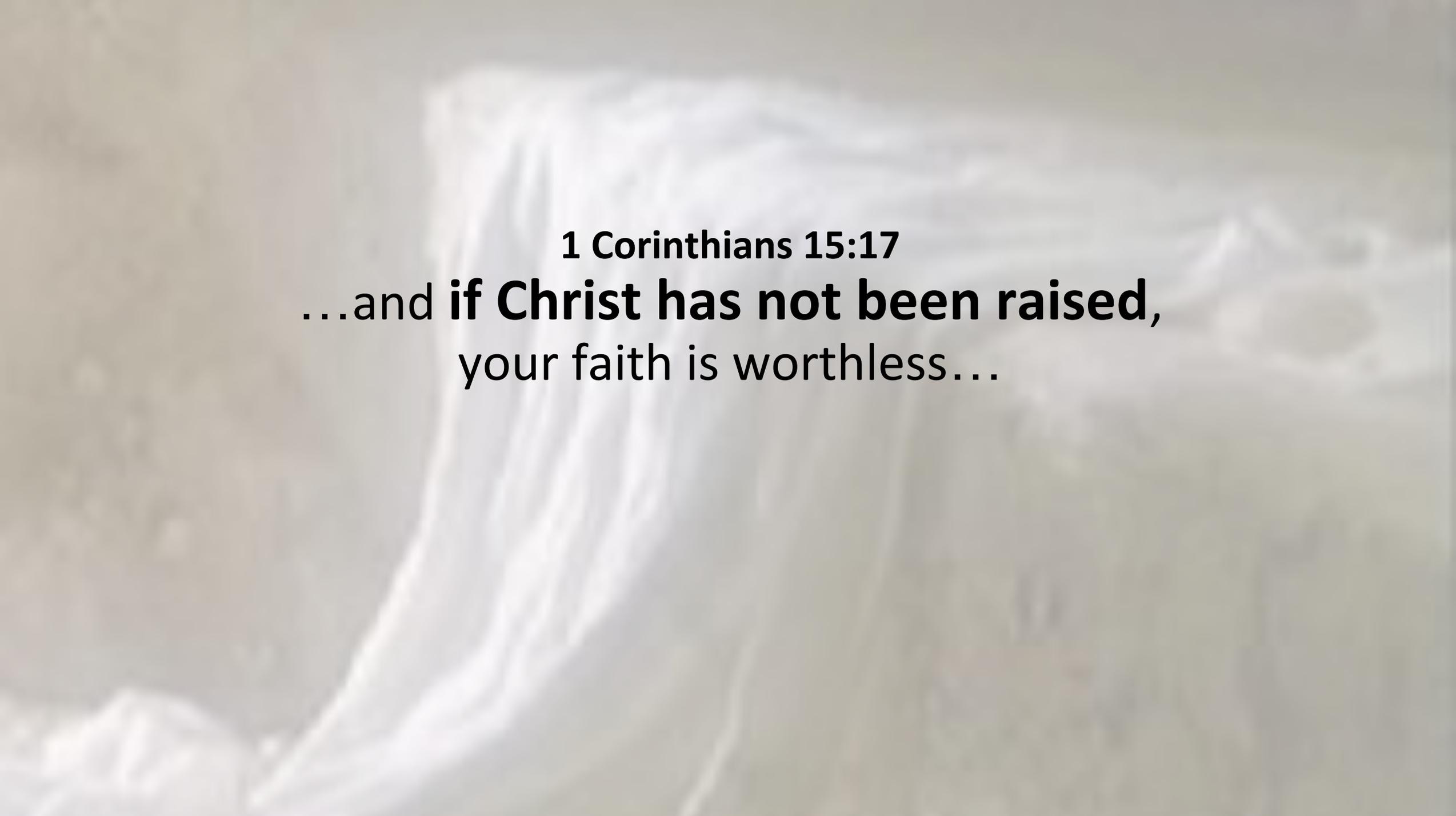
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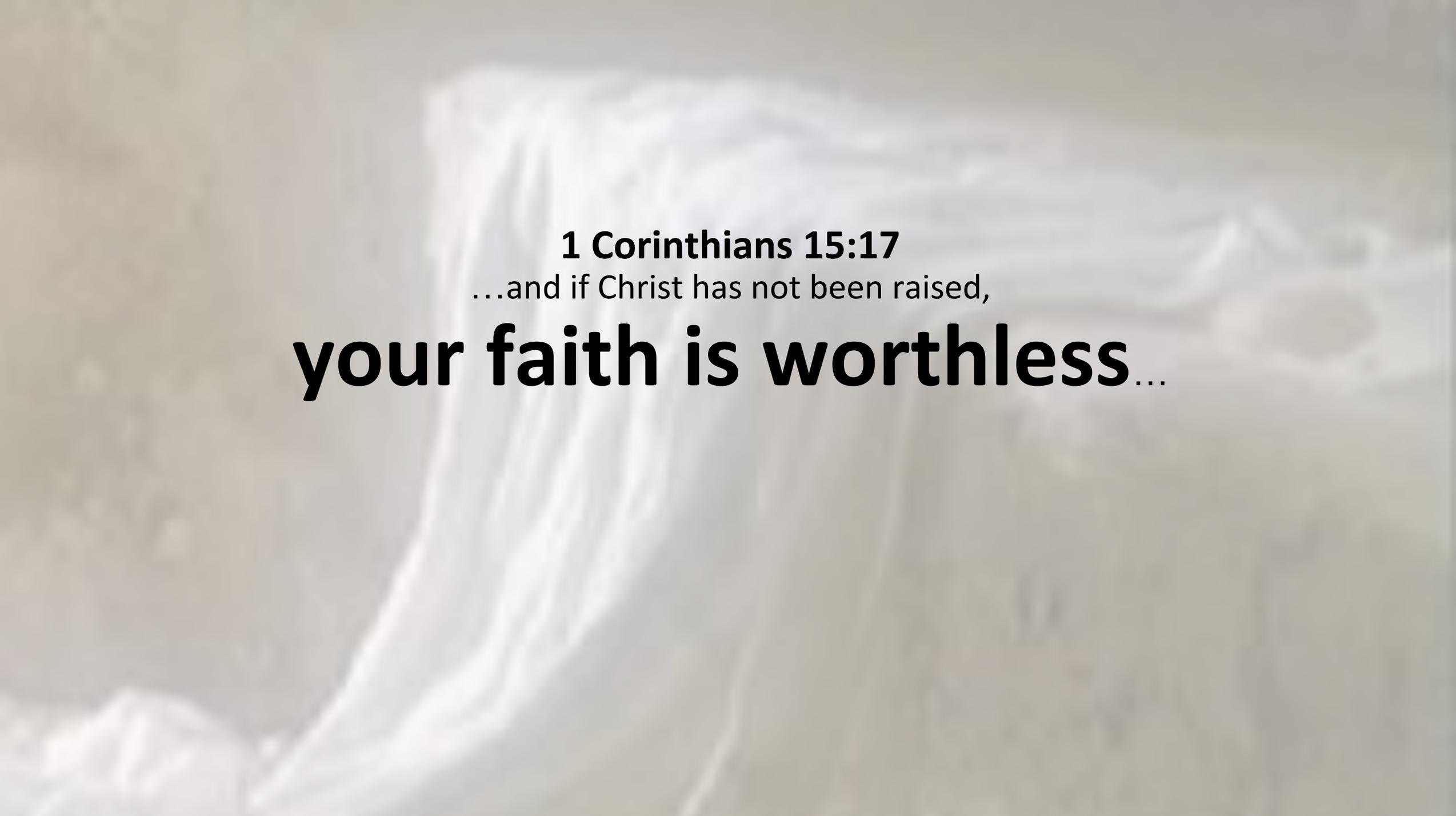
Those who have died in Christ would still be lost.

**Christianity would be a worthless,
hopeless, pitiful religion.**

A white sheet is draped over a stone surface, symbolizing the empty tomb. The sheet is wrinkled and hangs down, with the stone surface visible in the background.

1 Corinthians 15:17

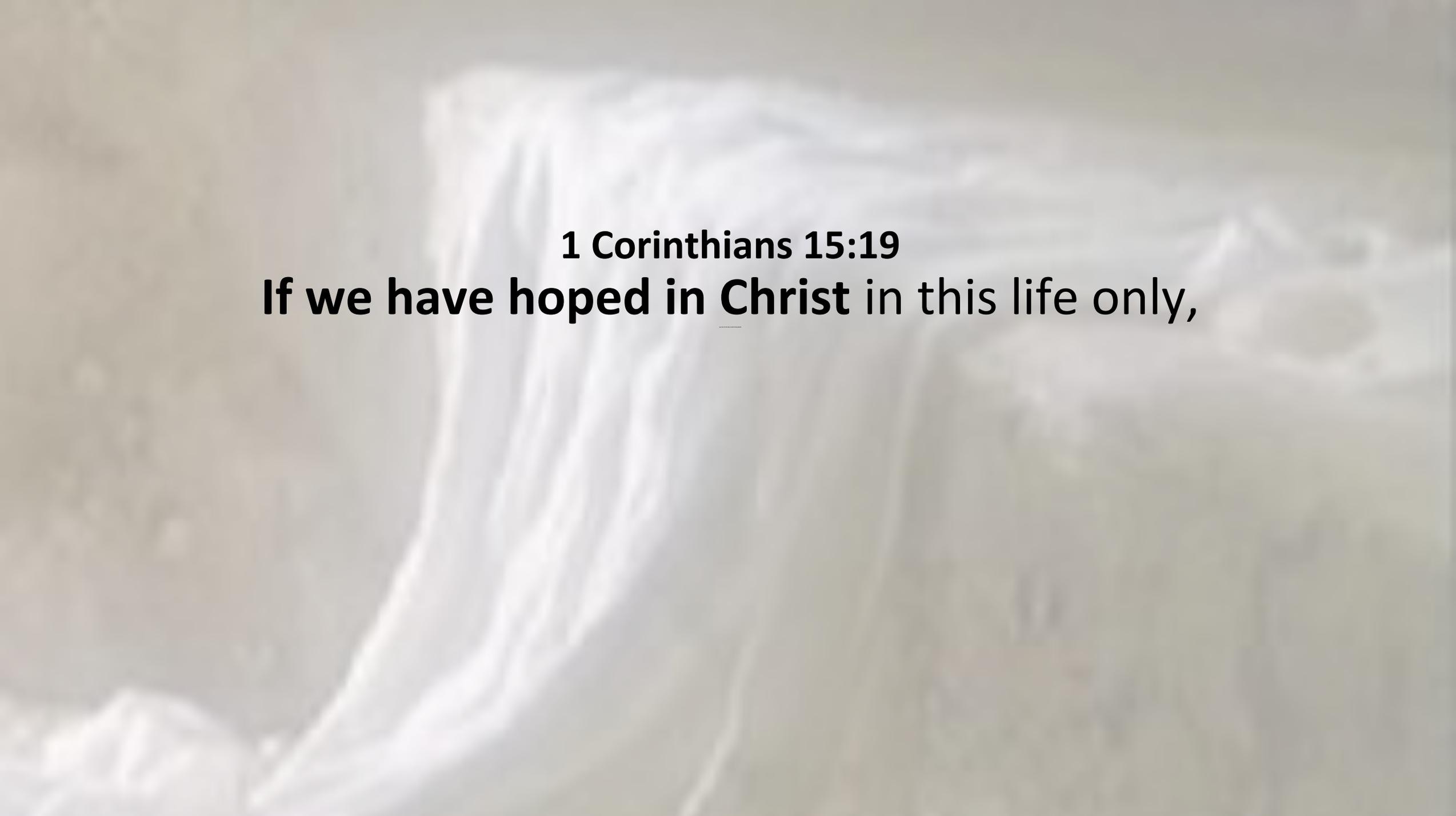
...and **if Christ has not been raised,**
your faith is worthless...

A white sheet is draped over a surface, creating deep folds and shadows. The background is a neutral, light gray color. The sheet is the central focus, symbolizing the empty tomb and the resurrection of Christ.

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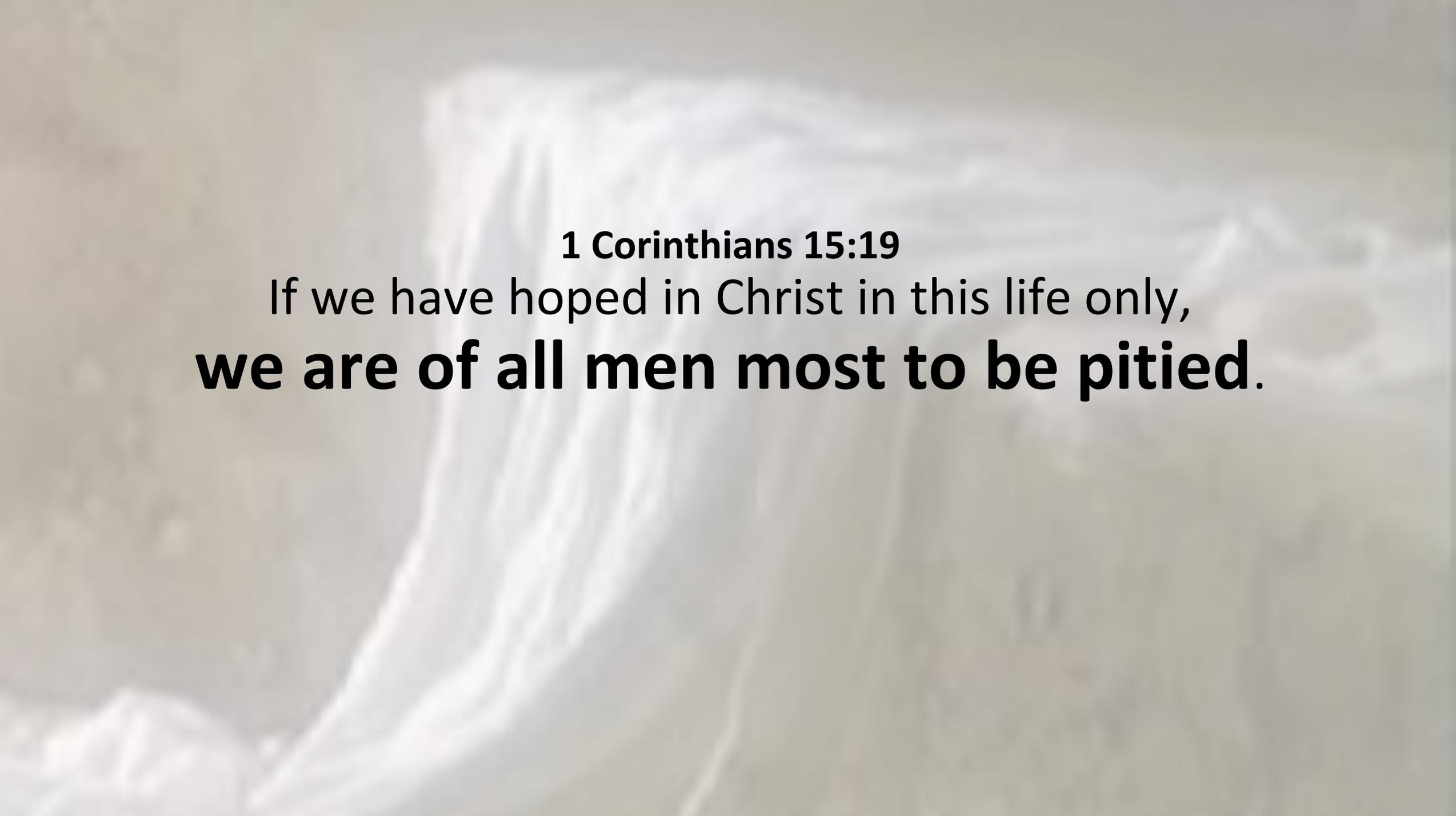
A photograph of a white sheet draped over a stone slab in a tomb, set against a background of a sandy or rocky ground. The sheet is wrinkled and hangs down, with the stone slab visible behind it. The lighting is soft, creating gentle shadows and highlights on the fabric.

1 Corinthians 15:19

If we have hoped in Christ in this life only,

1 Corinthians 15:19

If we have hoped in Christ **in this life only,**

A white cloth is draped over a stone, symbolizing the empty tomb. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light gray.

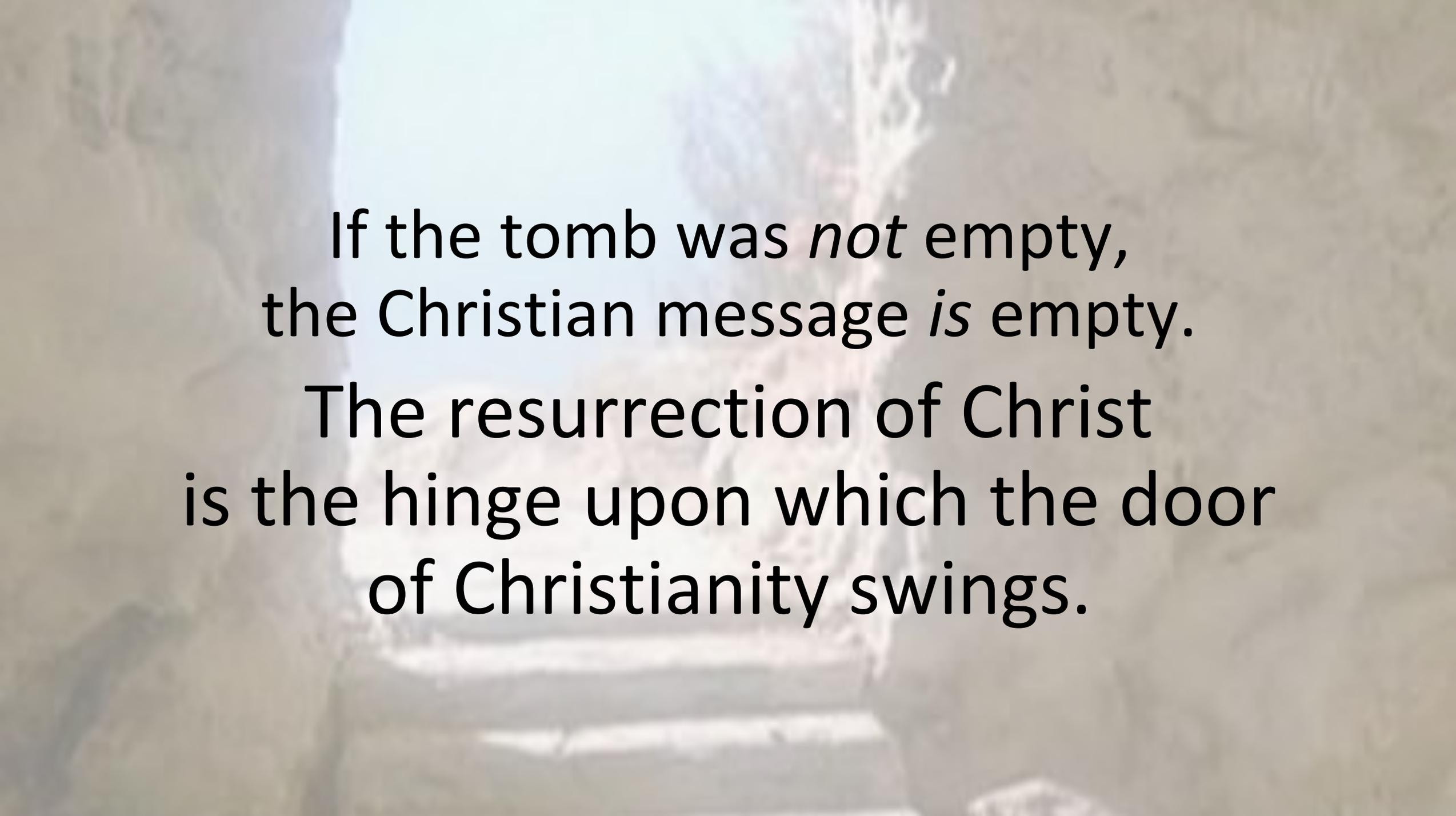
1 Corinthians 15:19

If we have hoped in Christ in this life only,
we are of all men most to be pitied.

If Christ was not raised, what is the
only rational life philosophy?

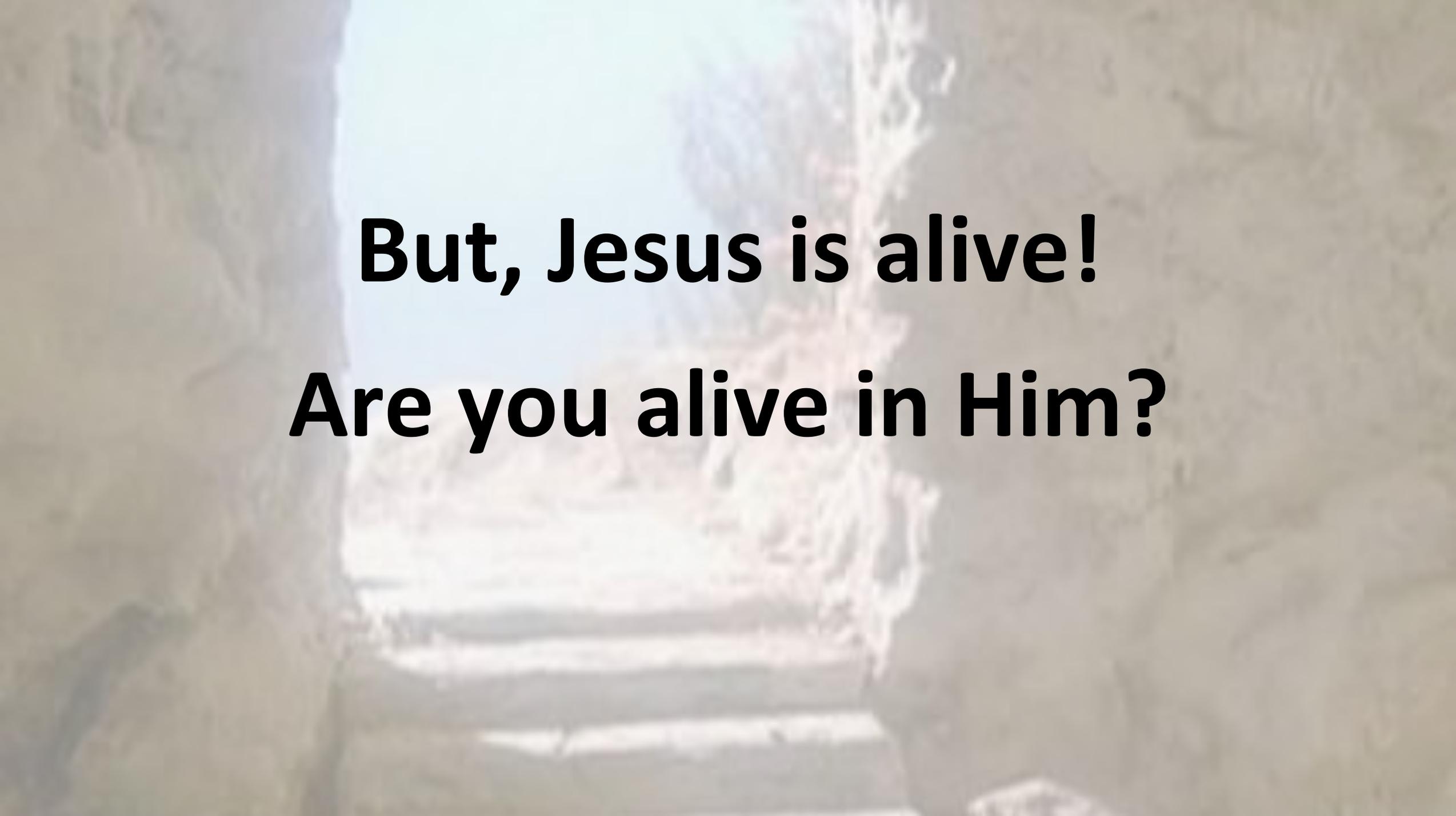
1 Corinthians 15:32

If the dead are not raised,
“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”

A stone tomb with a large, irregular opening, set against a background of a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

If the tomb was *not* empty,
the Christian message *is* empty.

The resurrection of Christ
is the hinge upon which the door
of Christianity swings.

A photograph of a stone tomb with a large, rectangular opening. The stone is light-colored and shows signs of weathering. The opening is dark, suggesting a passage to another place. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with greenery and a bright sky.

But, Jesus is alive!
Are you alive in Him?