



Learning from Paul's Prayer

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

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Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

Main Point

Considering the theology, substance,
and reason for Paul's prayer
teaches us of the nature of God,
the need of the Church,
and the return of Jesus.

Learning from Paul's Prayer

The Theology of His Prayer:
what we learn of God's nature.

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

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What we learn of God's nature:
We learn of God's sovereignty.

1 Thessalonians 3:11

Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord
direct our way to you.

1 Thessalonians 3:11

Now **may** our **God** and Father **Himself** and Jesus our Lord
direct our way to you.

1 Thessalonians 3:11

Now **may** our **God** and Father **Himself** and Jesus our Lord
direct our way to you.

Paul's prayer teaches that
all our plans and movements,
even those aimed at fulfilling
our mission to Christ,
are subject to the will of God.

James 4:13-15

Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.”

Instead, you ought to say,
“If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.”

1 Thessalonians 3:11

Now **may** our **God** and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord
direct our way to you.

1 Thessalonians 3:11

Now **may** our **God** and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord

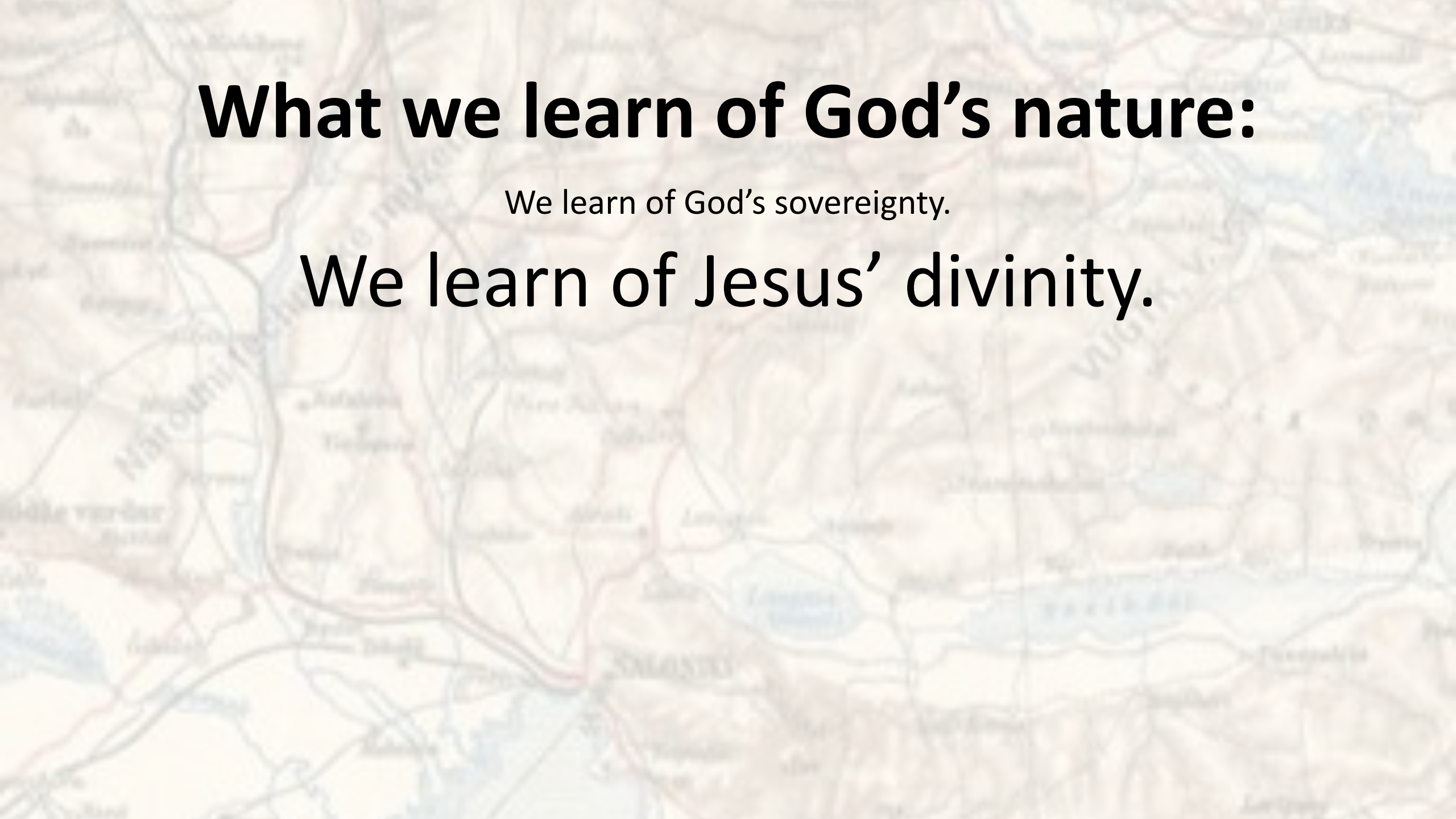
direct our way to you.

1 Thessalonians 2:18

For we wanted to come to you — I, Paul, more than once —
and yet **Satan hindered us.**

Paul's prayer teaches that God is sovereign
even over Satan's doings.

If the way was to be cleared for Paul
to go to Thessalonica, it would be
according to God's sovereign plan.



What we learn of God's nature:

We learn of God's sovereignty.

We learn of Jesus' divinity.

1 Thessalonians 3:11-12

Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people...

1 Thessalonians 3:11-12

Now **may our God and Father** Himself and Jesus our Lord

direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase
and abound in love for one another, and for all people...

1 Thessalonians 3:11-12

Now may our God and Father Himself **and Jesus our Lord**

direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase
and abound in love for one another, and for all people...

1 Thessalonians 3:11-12

Now may our **God** and Father Himself **and Jesus** our Lord

direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase
and abound in love for one another, and for all people...

1 Thessalonians 3:11-12

Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord

direct our way to you; and **may the Lord cause you
to increase**

and abound in love for one another, and for all people...

Paul frequently interchanges the Father and the Son in ways that demonstrate his assumption of essential unity.

Doctrinal Clarity:

The Father and the Son are the same in substance but different in person.

God has one nature but is three Persons:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Conversely, Jesus is one Person but with two natures, being both God and man.

Doctrinal Clarity:

The Son of God, the second Person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance and equal with him...

Two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, were inseparably joined together in one Person: without conversion, composition, or confusion: which Person is very God, and very Man.

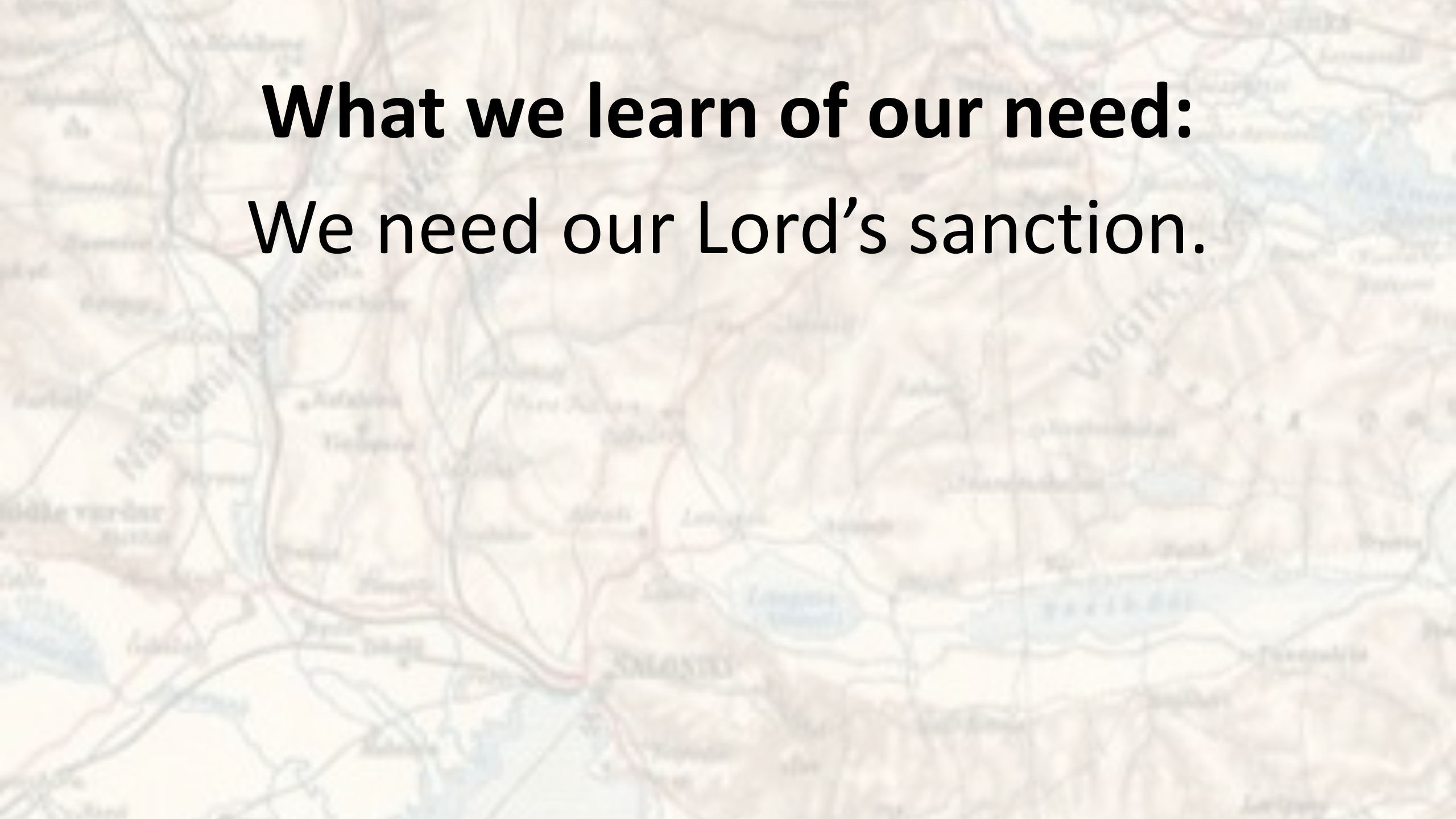
Learning from Paul's Prayer

The Theology of His Prayer

The Substance of His Prayer:
what we learn of the need
of the Lord's Church.

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.



**What we learn of our need:
We need our Lord's sanction.**

1 Thessalonians 3:11

Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord
direct our way to you.

1 Thessalonians 3:11

Now **may** our God and Father Himself and Jesus **our Lord**
direct our way to you.

1 Thessalonians 3:11

Now **may** our God and Father Himself and Jesus ***our Lord***
direct our way to you.

1 Thessalonians 3:11

Now **may** our God and Father Himself and Jesus ***our Lord***
direct our way to you.

God's sovereignty cannot be disconnected from His sanctioning authority.

Paul recognized that his desire to minister was subject to Jesus' authorization, that is, His calling.

A calling that is sure...

Matthew 28:18-19

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying,
“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...”

We have been sanctioned by our Lord to call
all peoples into relationship to Him as their
Master, turning them away from serving idols
to serve the true and living God by faith.



What we learn of our need:

We need our Lord's sanction.

We need our Lord's sanctification.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;
so that He may establish your hearts
without blame in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for
one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;
so that He may establish your hearts
without blame in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord *increase you* and abound in love for
one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;
so that He may establish your hearts
without blame in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord increase you and abound in love for
one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;
so that He may establish your hearts
without blame in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord increase ***and abound you*** in love for
one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;
so that He may establish your hearts
without blame in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord increase and abound you **in love for**
one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;
so that He may establish your hearts
without blame in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord increase and abound you in love for

one another, **and for all people**, just as we also do for you;
so that He may establish your hearts
without blame in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord increase and abound you in love for
one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;

so **that He may establish your hearts
without blame in holiness.**

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord increase and abound you in love for
one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;

so **to establish your hearts
blameless in holiness.**

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord increase and abound you in love for
one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;

so **to establish *your hearts***
blameless in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord increase and abound you in love for
one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;
so to establish your hearts

blameless in holiness.

We live in need of our Lord's sanctifying work, and we must look to Him and labor with Him, both privately and communally, to that end.

A faint, light-colored map of Europe serves as the background for the text. The map shows major landmasses and some geographical features like rivers and coastlines, though the details are subtle and the colors are muted.

Learning from Paul's Prayer

The Theology of His Prayer

The Substance of His Prayer

The Reason for His Prayer:
what we learn of Jesus' return.

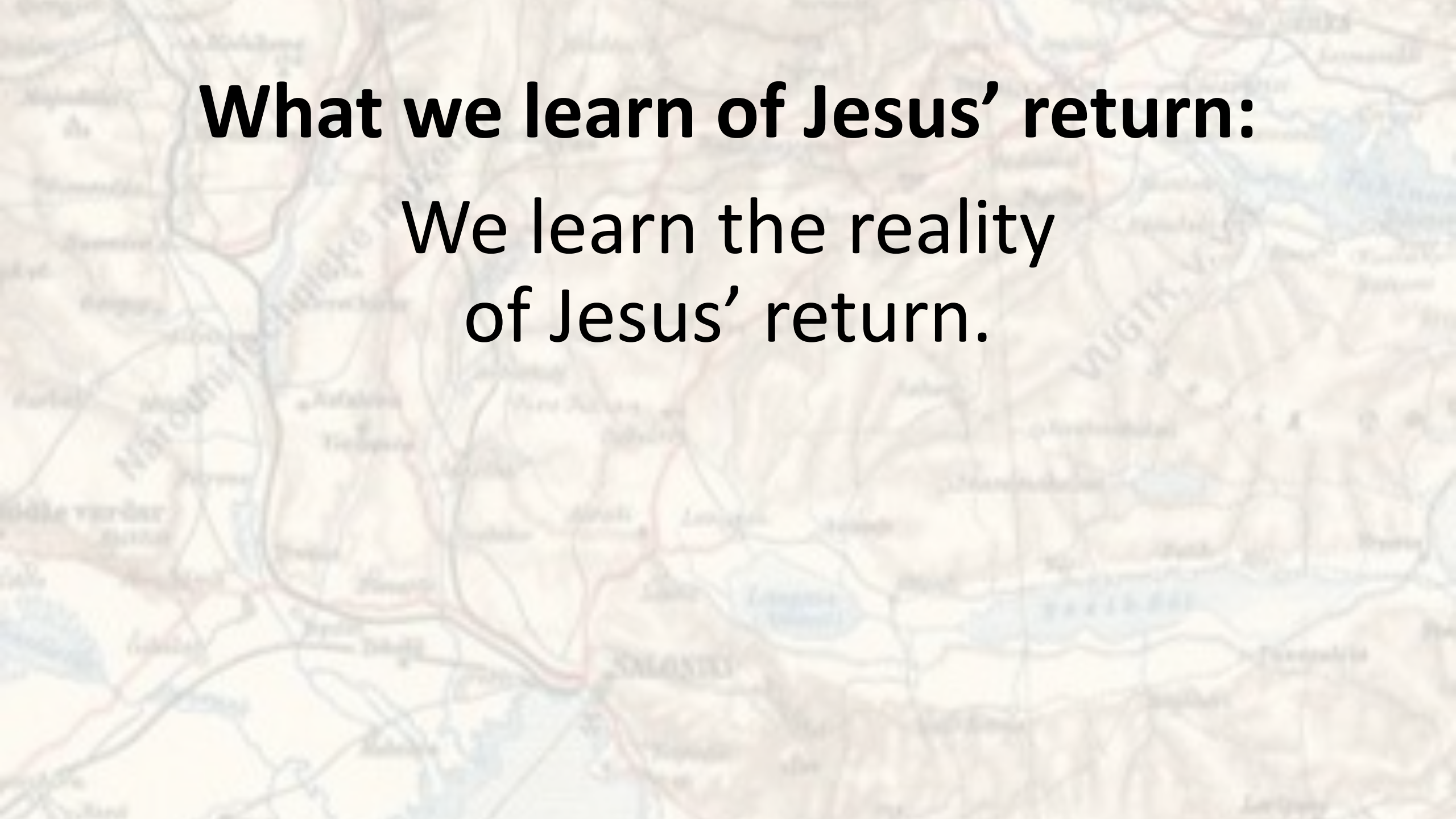
1 Thessalonians 3:13

...so that He may establish your hearts without blame
in holiness before our God and Father
at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

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...so that He may establish your hearts without blame
in holiness before our God and Father

at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.



What we learn of Jesus' return:

We learn the reality
of Jesus' return.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

...so that He may establish your hearts without blame
in holiness before our God and Father

at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

...so that He may establish your hearts without blame
in holiness before our God and Father

at **the coming** of our Lord **Jesus** with all His saints.

1 Thessalonians 2:19

For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus **at His coming**?

1 Thessalonians 4:15

We who are alive and remain until **the coming** of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at **the coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at **the coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:1

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to **the coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him...

2 Thessalonians 2:8

Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of **His coming**.

2 Thessalonians 2:1

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to **the coming**
of our Lord Jesus Christ **and our gathering together to Him...**

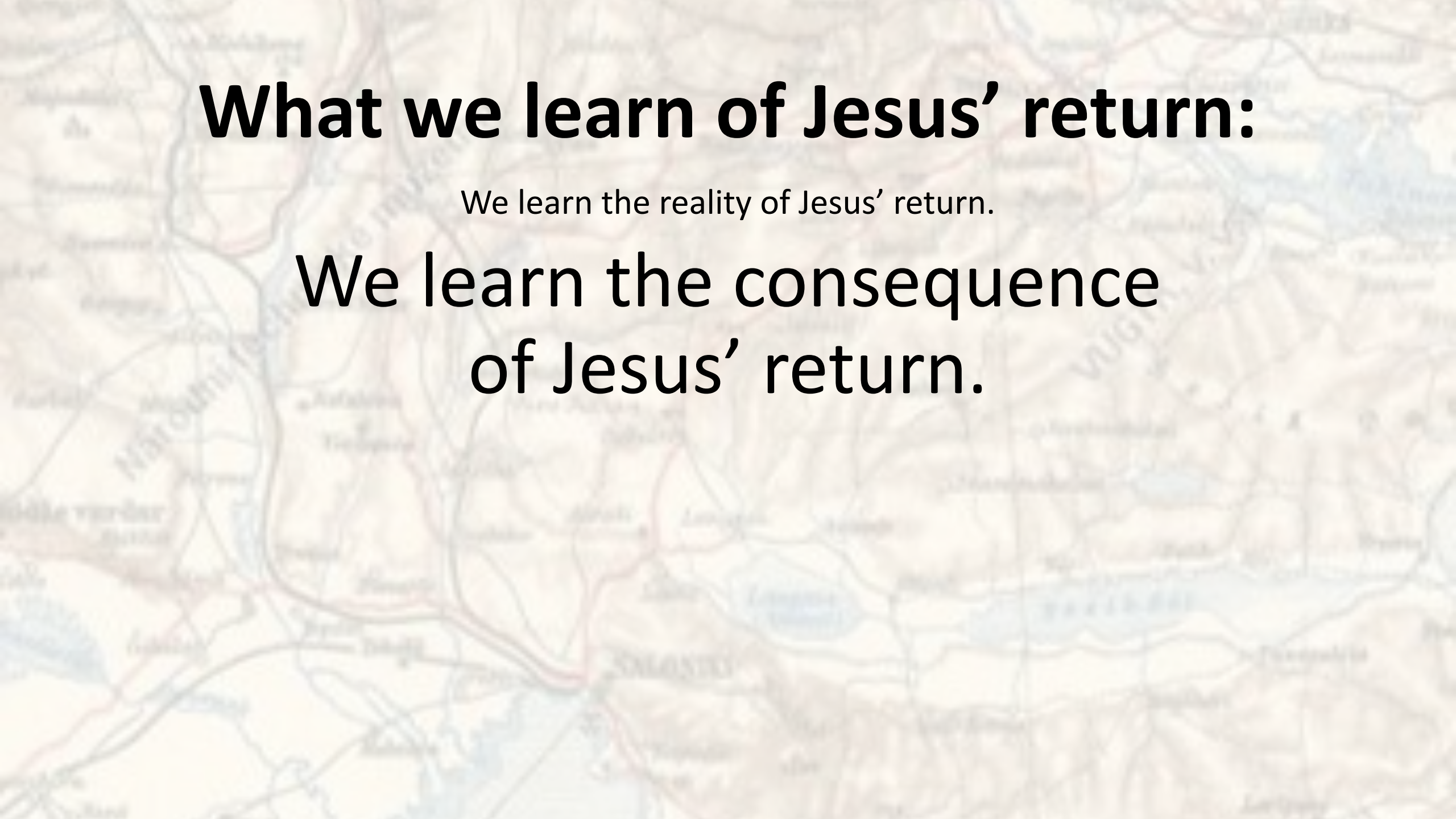
2 Thessalonians 2:8

Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord
will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end
by the appearance of His coming.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

...at the coming of our Lord Jesus
with all His saints.

Because Paul knows that Jesus will return to gather all His people to Himself and that He will present them to His Father, he prays that they be prepared.



What we learn of Jesus' return:

We learn the reality of Jesus' return.

**We learn the consequence
of Jesus' return.**

1 Thessalonians 3:13

...so that He may establish your hearts without blame
in holiness before our God and Father

at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

...so that He may establish your hearts without blame

in holiness **before our God and Father**
at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

...so that He may establish your hearts without blame

in holiness **before our God and Father**
at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

The phrase *before God* refers to the place of judgment, before *the tribunal* of God.

Romans 4:2

For if Abraham was justified by works,
he has something to boast about, but not **before God**.

1 Corinthians 1:29

...so that no man may boast **before God**.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

...so that He may establish your hearts without blame

in holiness **before our God and Father**
at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

There *is* a coming judgment, and this
judgment will be at Jesus' coming.

Paul's prayer reminds us that nothing could be more consequential than to be brought before the judgment seat of the holy, holy, holy God.

Conclusion

Ecclesiastes 7:2

It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, because that is the end of every man, and the living takes it to heart.

Are you taking your mortality to heart?

Are you prepared to stand before God?