

Living Between Redemption Accomplished and Redemption Perfected

Singapore Youth For Christ

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Mark Catchpoole

Focus

Being a people living between the first and second comings of Jesus Christ – between redemption accomplished and redemption perfected – a time of living in the “wilderness”



Last week

- Where the people were
- Who the people were
- What the people did
- The Lord's response (to what the people did)
- The people's responses
- The Lord's faithfulness – grace, justice, faithfulness

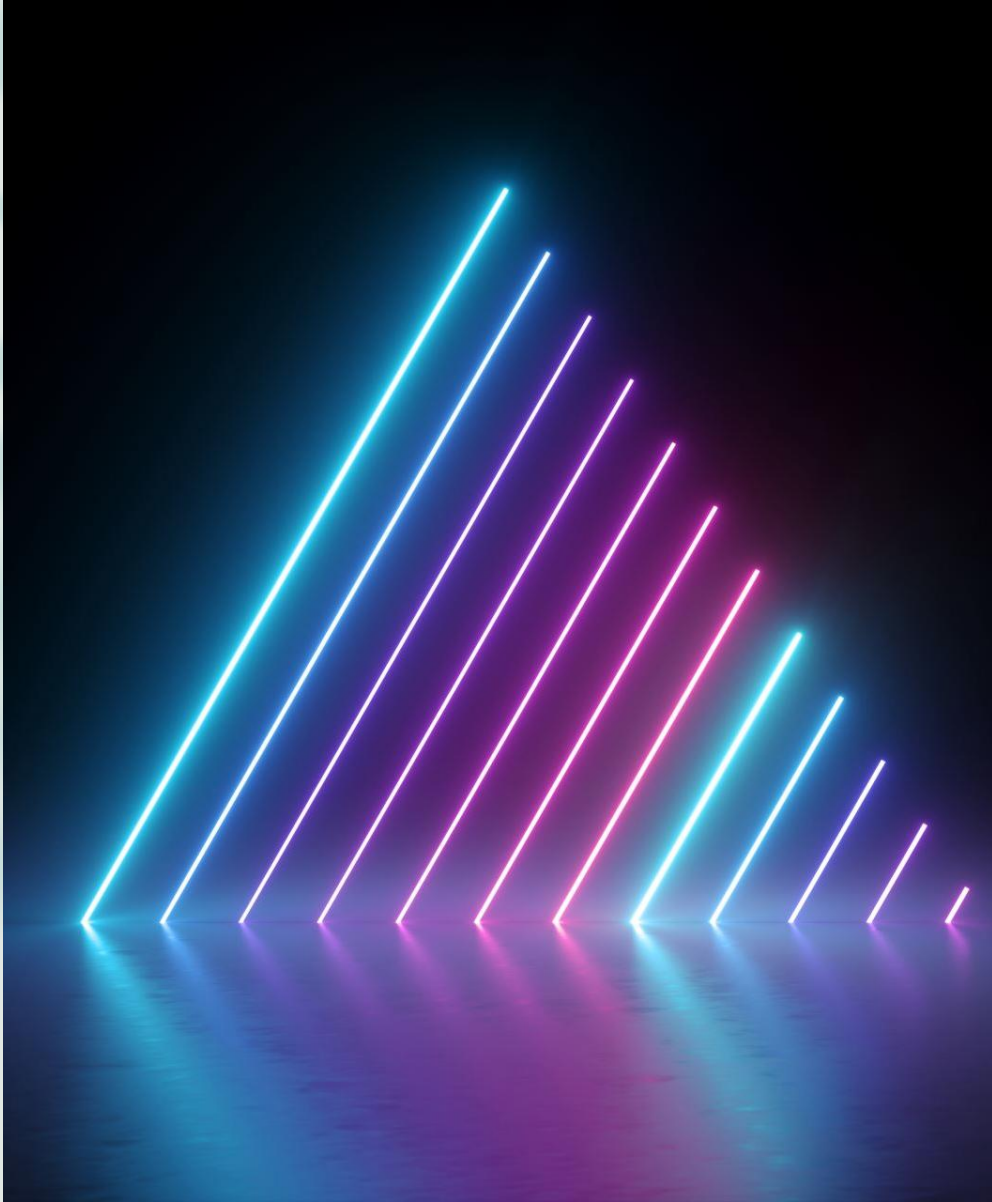


The wilderness a
picture of the church



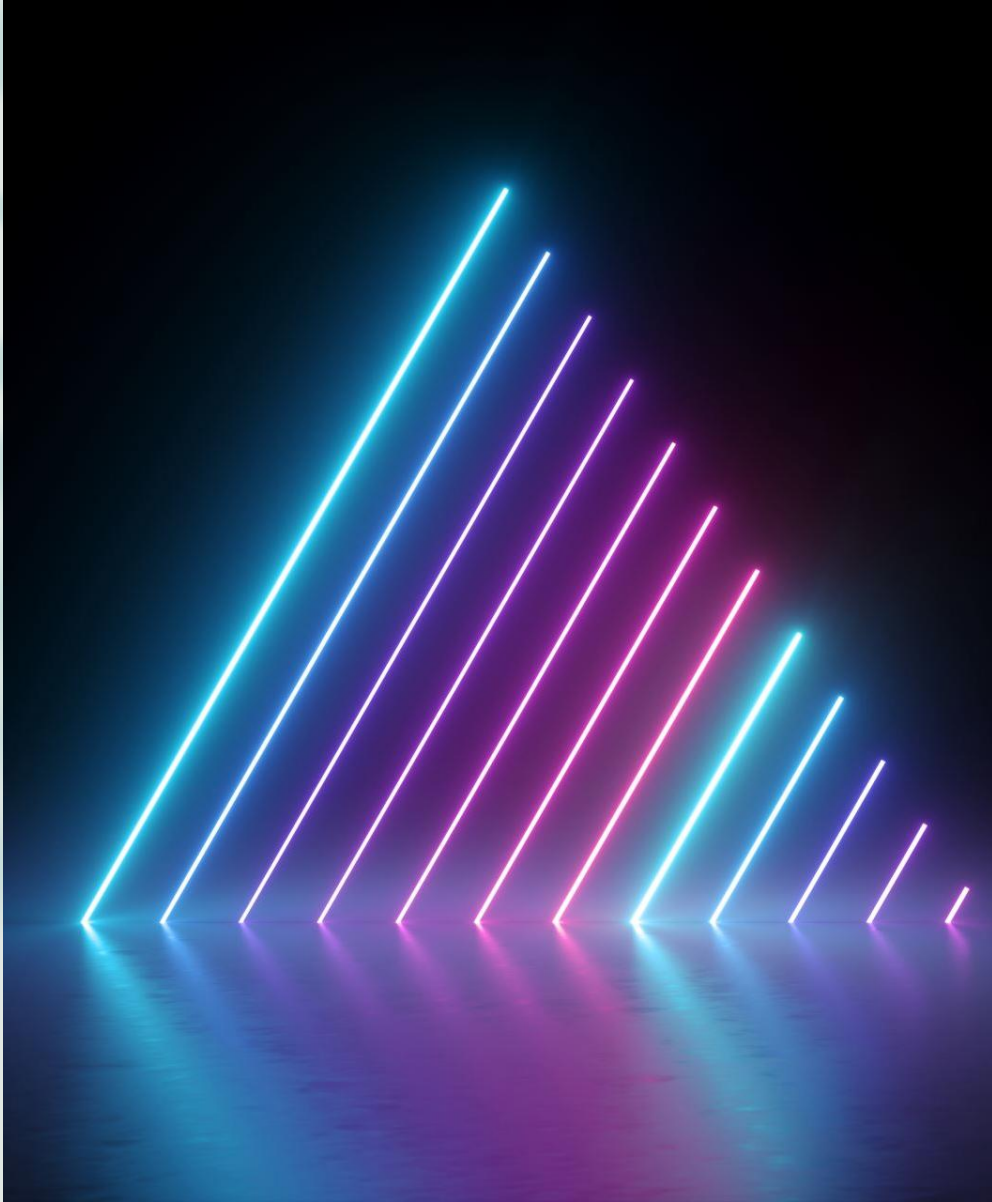
The wilderness and the church – some parallels


- Wilderness a “type” or foreshadowing of the church
- Some parallels
 - “Two generations” – the faithful and the unfaithful – those who will enter the Lord’s rest and those who will not
 - In this world live as exiles and strangers, “sojourners” – 1 Peter 1:1, 2:11
 - Living between “Exodus” – deliverance – and the Promised Land – rest
 - Waiting for our full inheritance and taking possession of the “land” – being in our rightful place



The wilderness and the church – some parallels (2)

- Some parallels (cont.)
 - But even in this world still receive many of our Lord's covenant blessings:
 - The descending of the glory of God - Acts 2
 - Living water of the Holy Spirit - Jn 4:7-15
 - True bread of life - Jn 6:22-59
 - We are organized as the Lord's people around the presence of the Lord
 - Live in a world of tribulation and difficulty - Jn 15:18-16:5
 - The Lord is with his people - Jn 14:15-18; Mt 28:20
 - We are led by our "warrior king"





The problem and the question

The problem

- The challenges and difficulties the Lord's people face in living in this world - a world that "hates" Jesus, his word, and his people
- The threat of being drawn into sin and idolatry.
- Failing to trust the Lord or to obey his word - of being unfaithful



The question

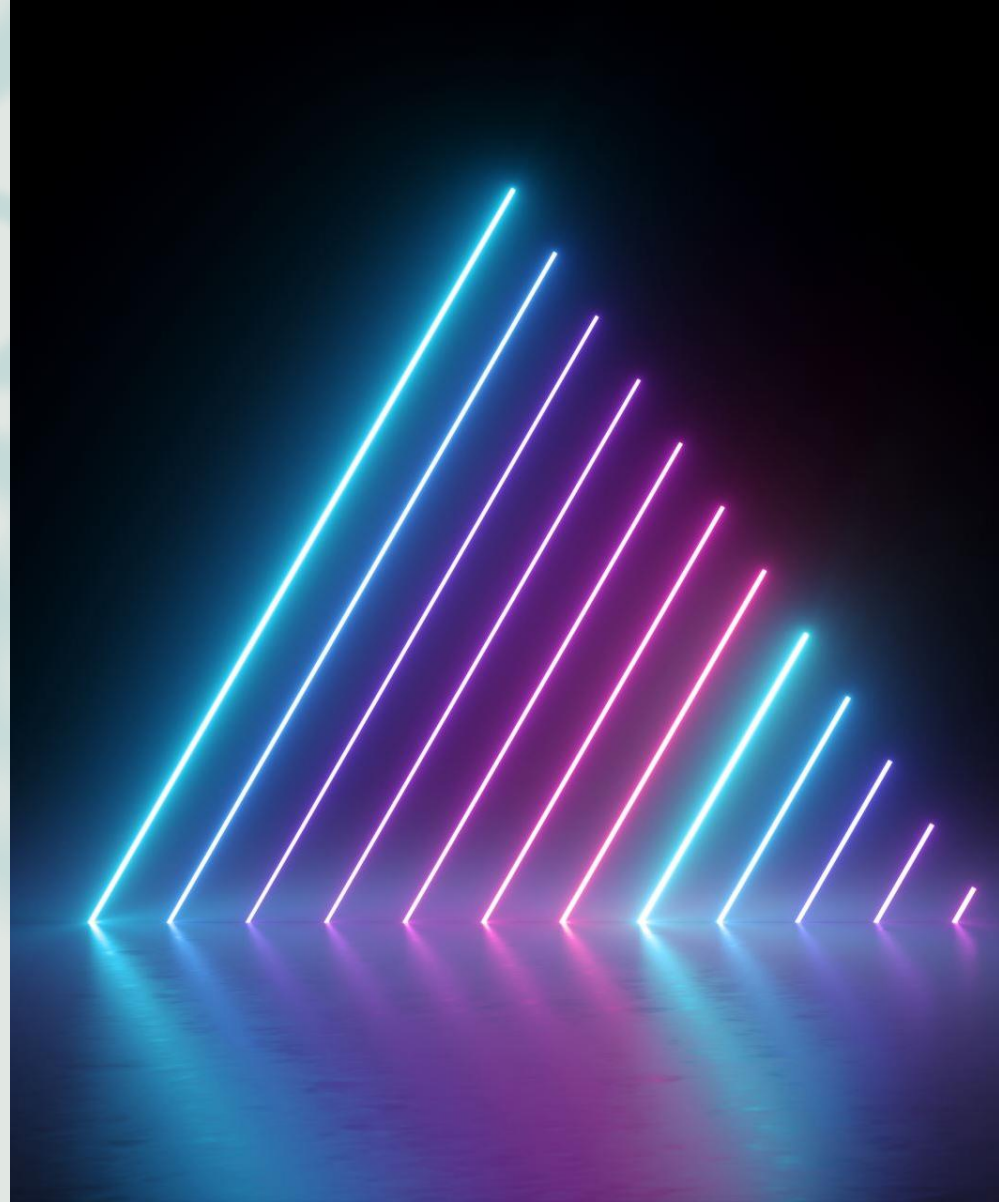
How do the Lord's people live faithfully
in an unfaithful world?



The background is dark with a series of parallel, glowing lines in shades of cyan, blue, and magenta that create a sense of depth and perspective. These lines appear to be reflecting on a surface below them. In the upper right corner, there is a very faint, stylized silhouette of a human face.

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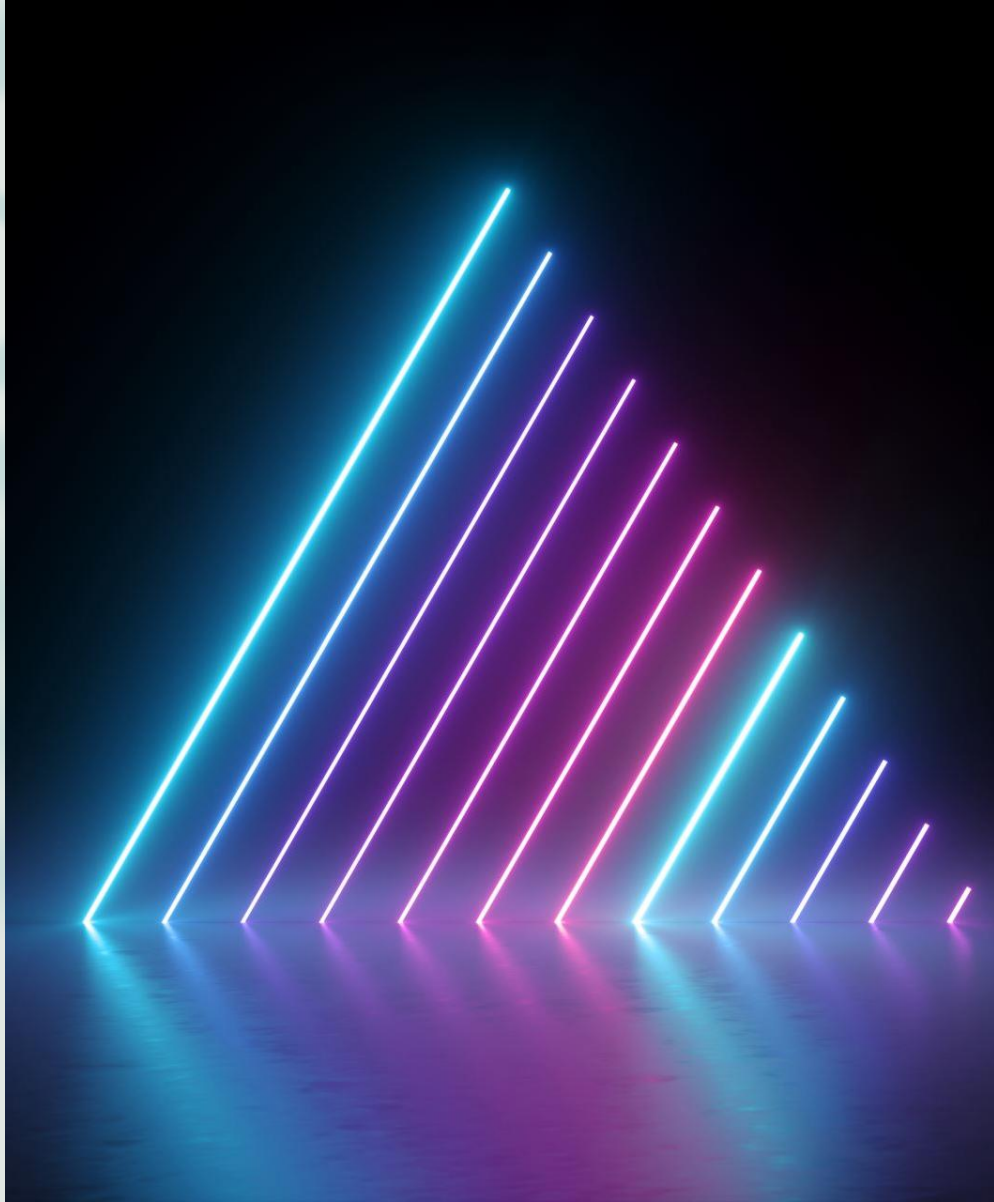
Understanding the problem



The issue of doubt

- The first generation
- Doubting the Lord's word – not trust him or his word
- So did not have a godly worldview and perspective of their situation
- Misinterpreted and misunderstood the extent and totality of reality and how they perceived and understood their life and meaning

The issue of doubt (2)



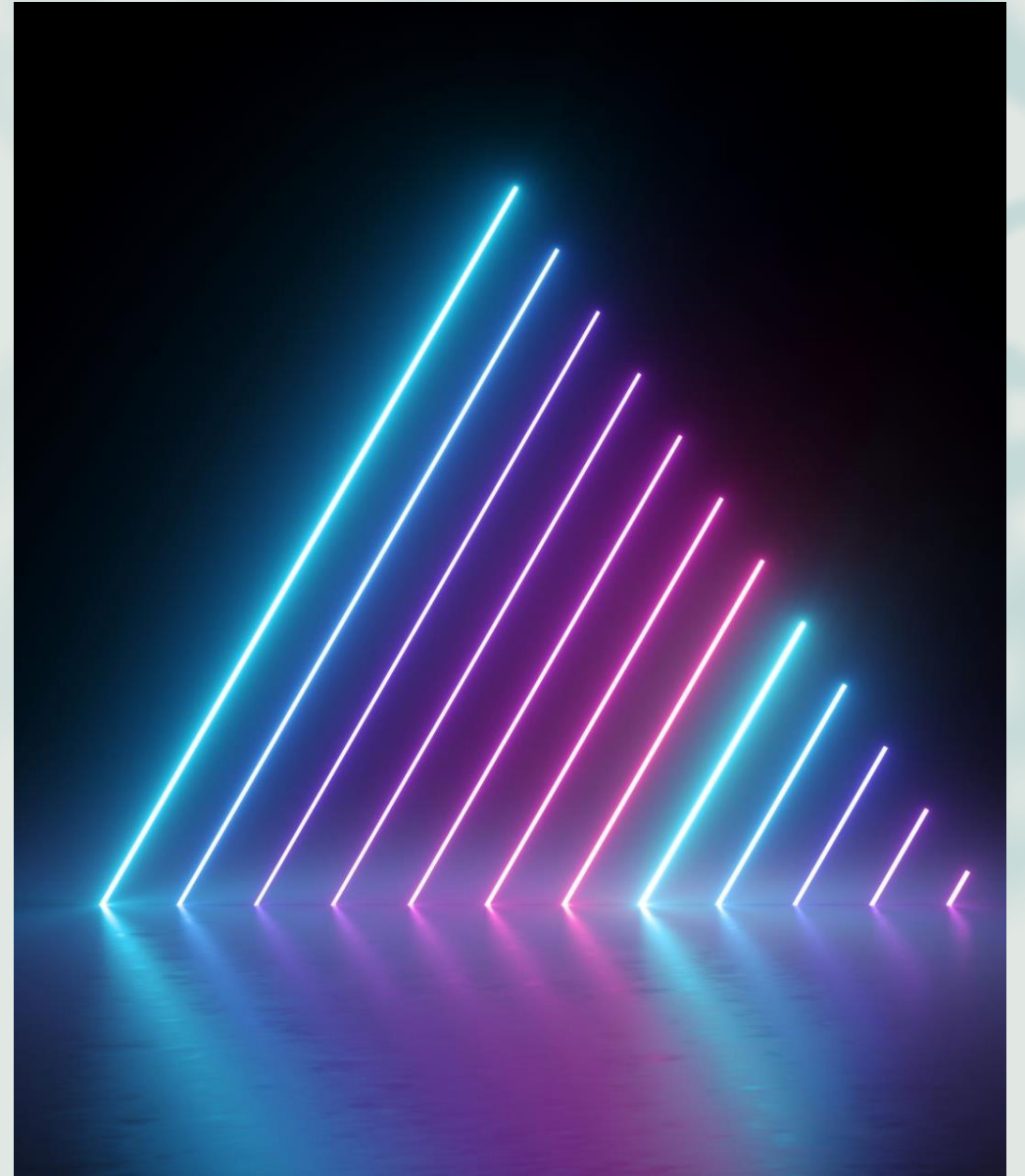
- This will be the position of many today in the church - having a "worldly" worldview
- Fail/refuse to accept and trust the Word of God and to understand their life in this world in accordance with that Word
- Challenge for the faithful - the influence of worldly thinking



Remaining faithful

Two things

- God exists and has spoken
- God is present among his people



Living by faith is essential

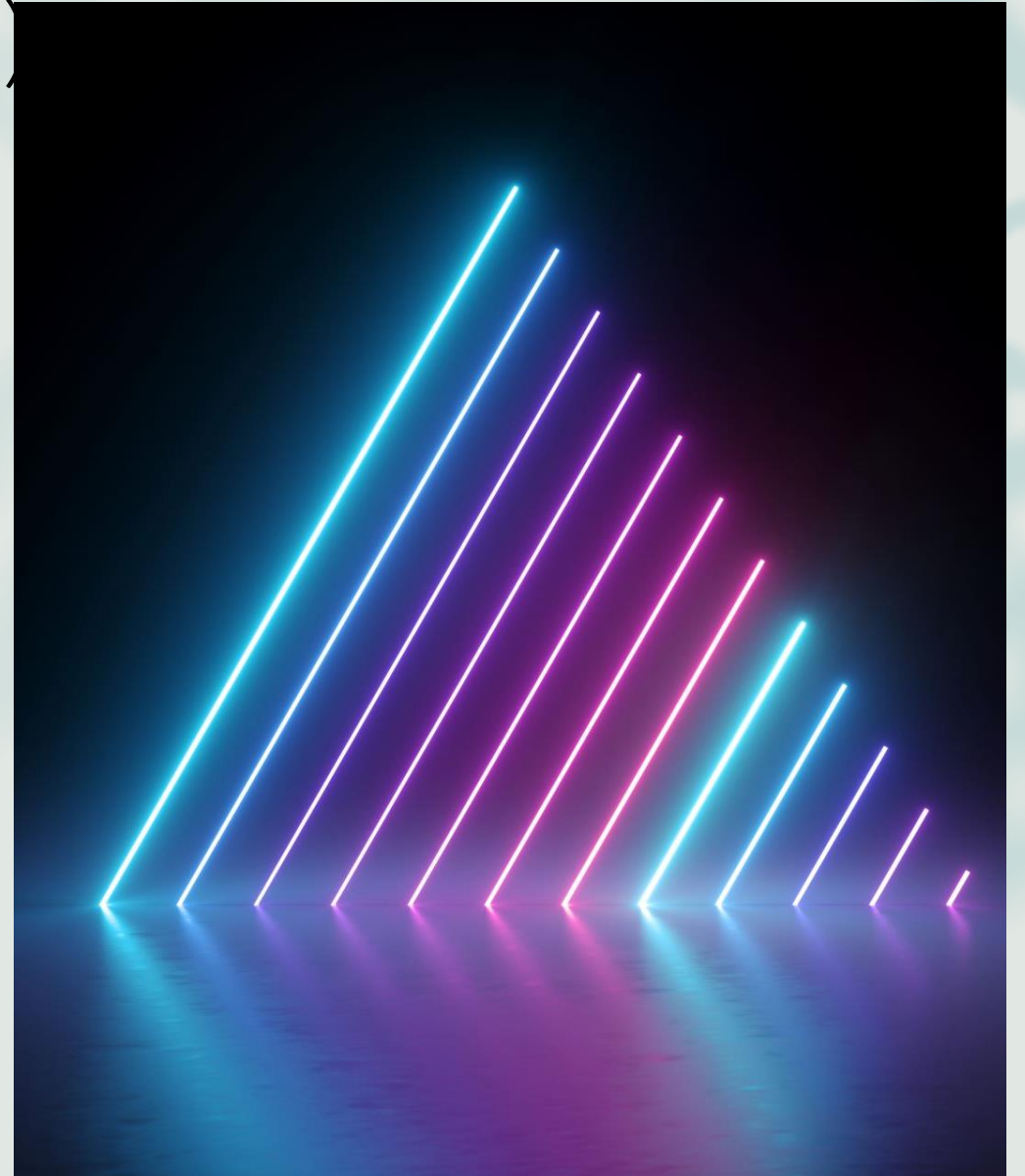
- Being faithful requires accepting that God exists, that he has spoken, and has a plan and purpose for the world and our lives even though we may not see it
 - 2 Cor:16-18; 5:6-7
 - Heb 11:1
- First generation is an example of those not living by faith; are an object lesson to us – 1 Cor 10:6



Living by faith is essential (2)

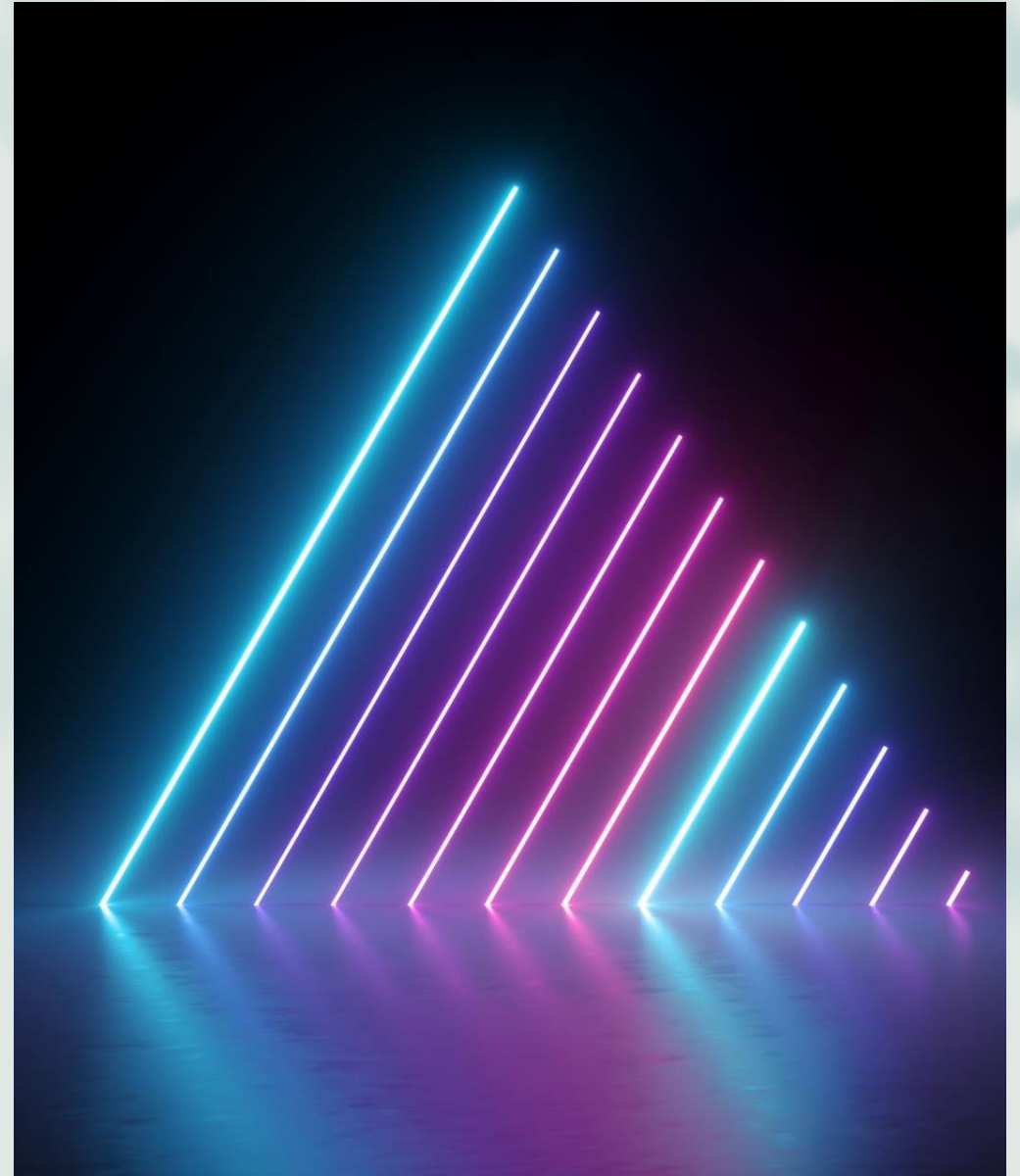
Questions:

- Do you believe the Word of God and wholeheartedly trust in it – even if there are those who don't?
- Is the Word of God the “lens” through which you seek to understand this world and your life?
- Is it your earnest desire to live fully in obedience with it?
- Does the Word of God distinguish your life from the ungodly world around you?



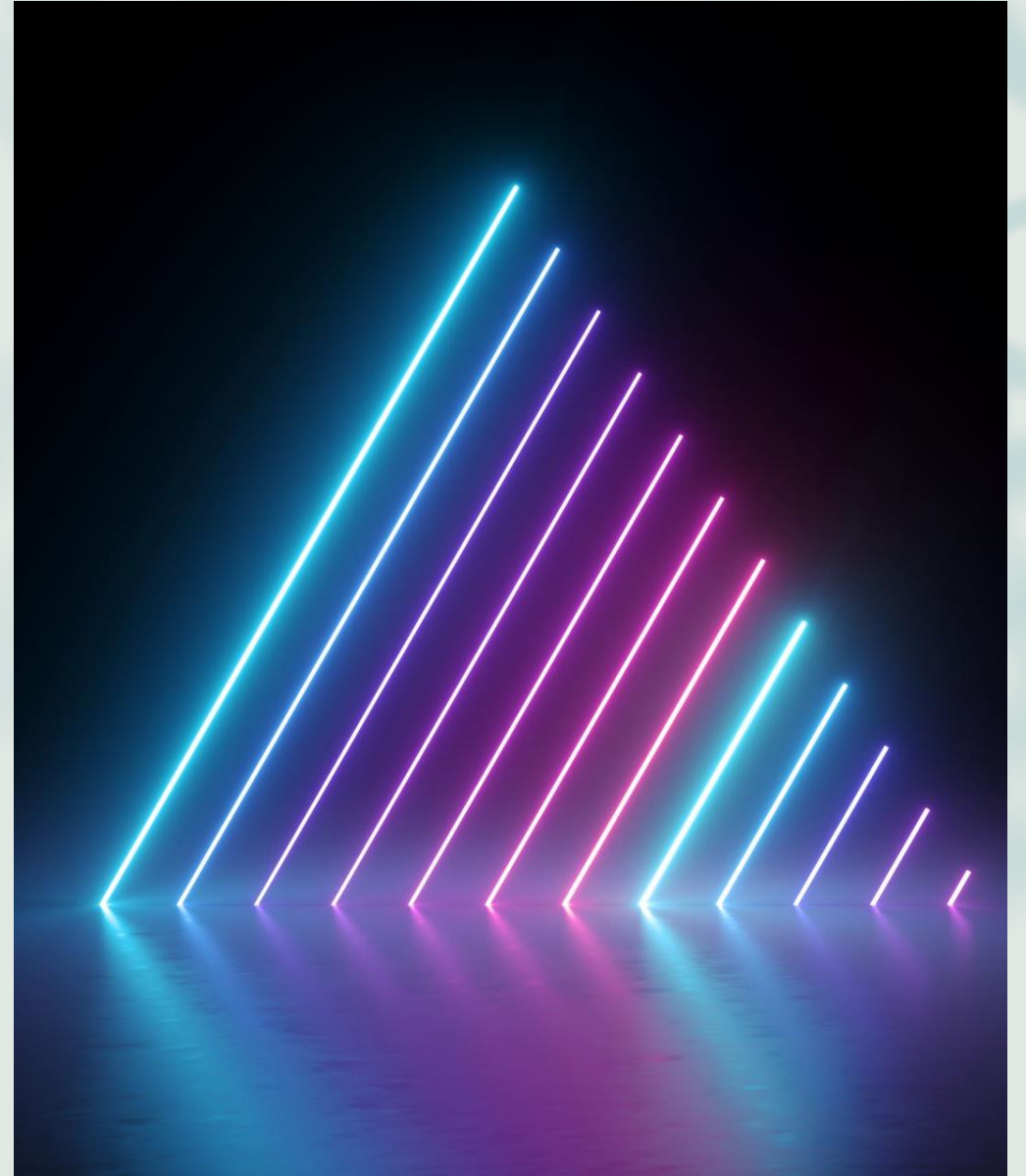
Presence of the Lord

- Remaining faithful also requires that we remember that the Lord is present among his people in the “wilderness” and we are continually to orient our lives around him
- Significance - It is by his being present among his people that the Lord is able to communicate with them - giving his law and setting out his order of things
- For Israelites - the Tabernacle; for the Church - Jesus Christ (the word made flesh - Jn 1:1-4)



Presence of the Lord (2)

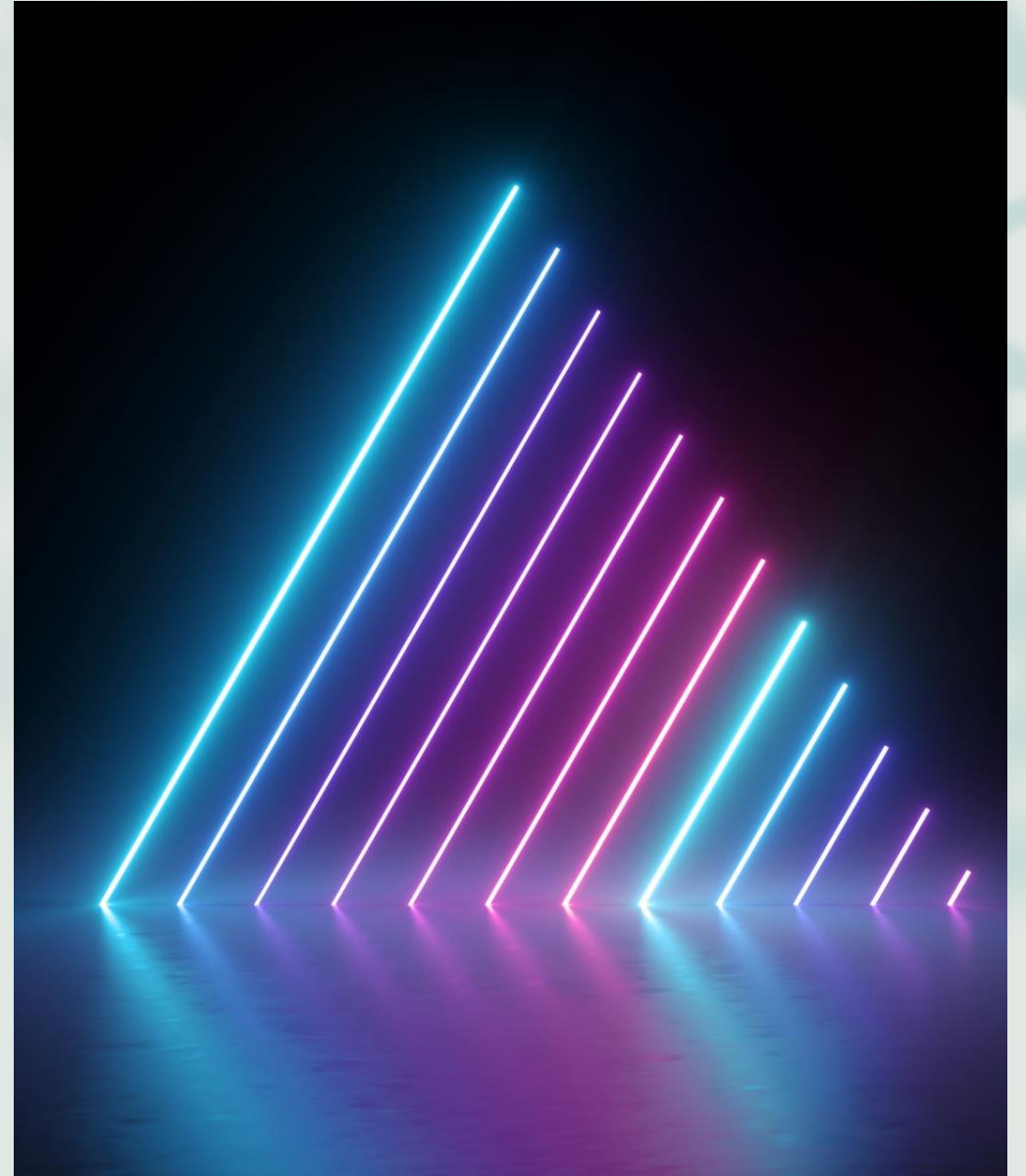
- First generation - failed to remember this - did not continually orient their lives around the presence of God and rejected or neglected his word to them
- This is also the danger that the church faces today



Presence of the Lord (3)

Questions:

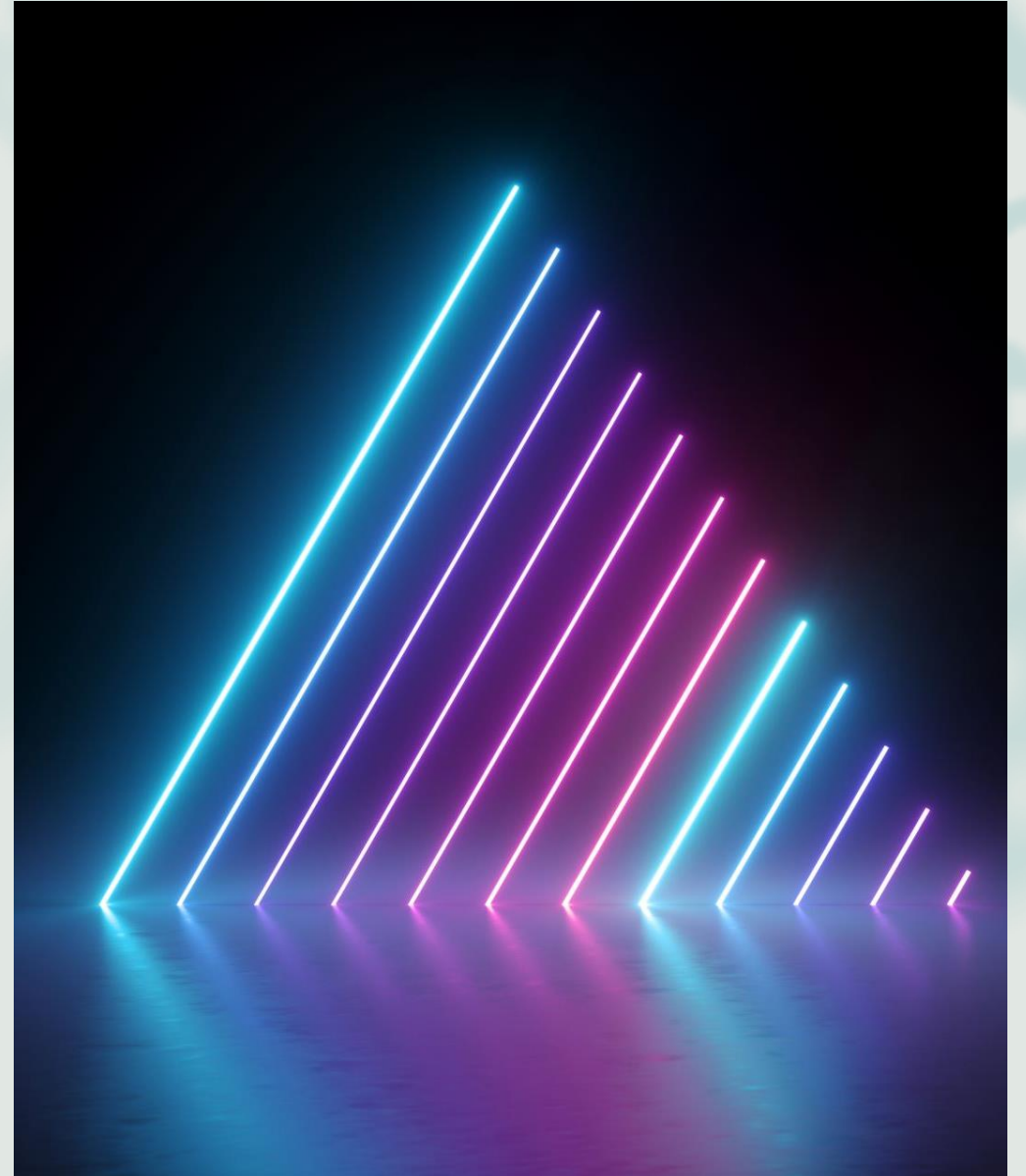
- How do we continually orient our lives around the presence of the Lord as we live in this wilderness?
- How deal with the doubts and challenges that we face as we live in this world?



Presence of the Lord (4)

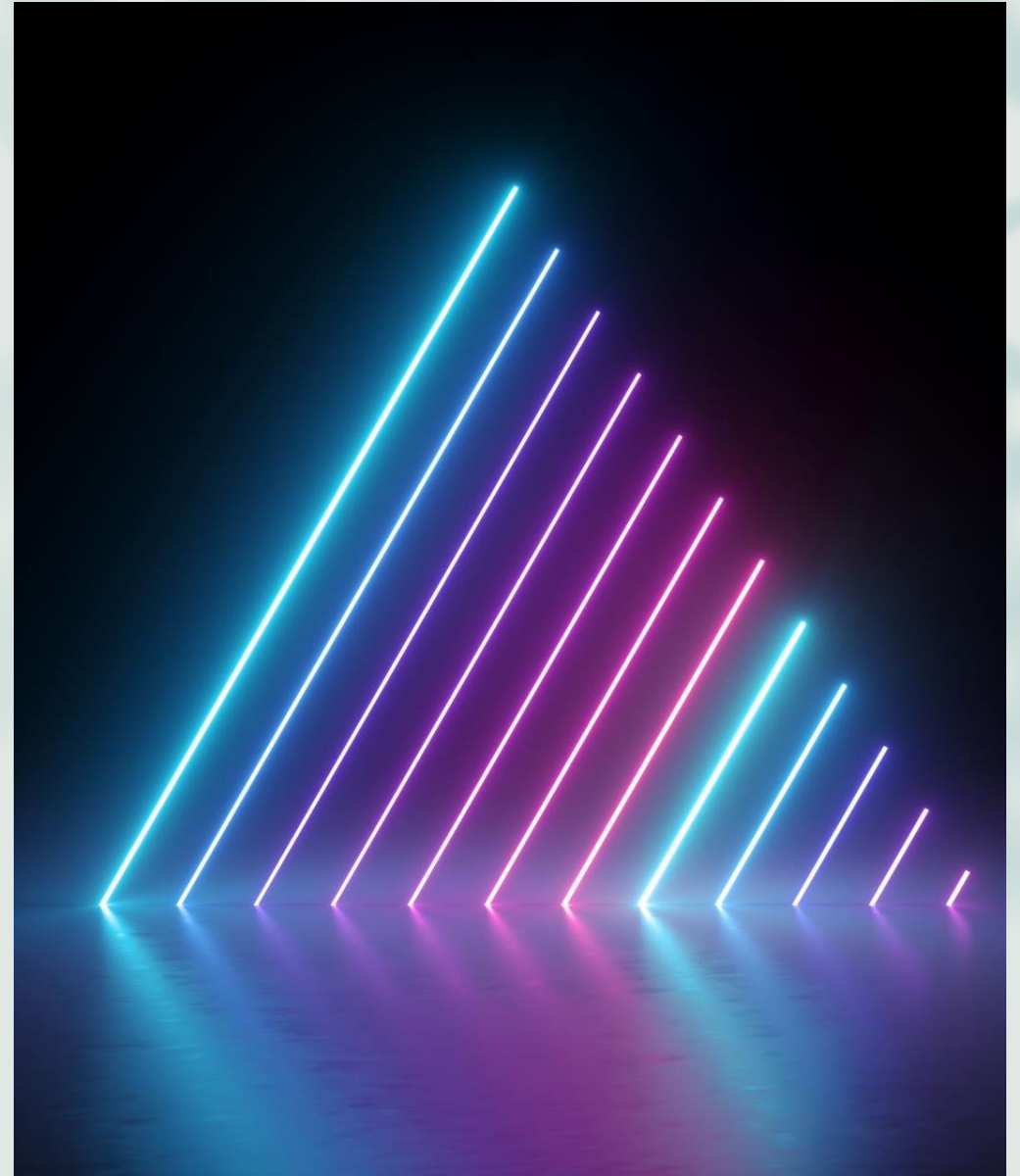
Answers:

- Discipline - to seek the Lord daily and to organise our lives around him and his word
- Come daily to the place where the Lord speaks to us - his Word
- Necessity of meeting together regularly with the Lord's people - we live as a community not as hermits - we need each other in this wilderness
- Remember that the Lord shares our wilderness wanderings with us - he is with us



Example of Phineas

- In comparison with Moses (Num 25:5)
- Trusted in the Lord's judgment and obediently followed it – he acted as the Lord directed (Num 25:7-8)
- Was faithful to the Lord and his word
- Jealous with the Lord's jealousy (Num 25:11) – jealous for God (Num 25:13)
- The people were blessed – Num 25:8, 11 (lifting of the plague and the Lord's judgment)
- This the precursor to the second census and the start of the people (second generation) being able to occupy the land

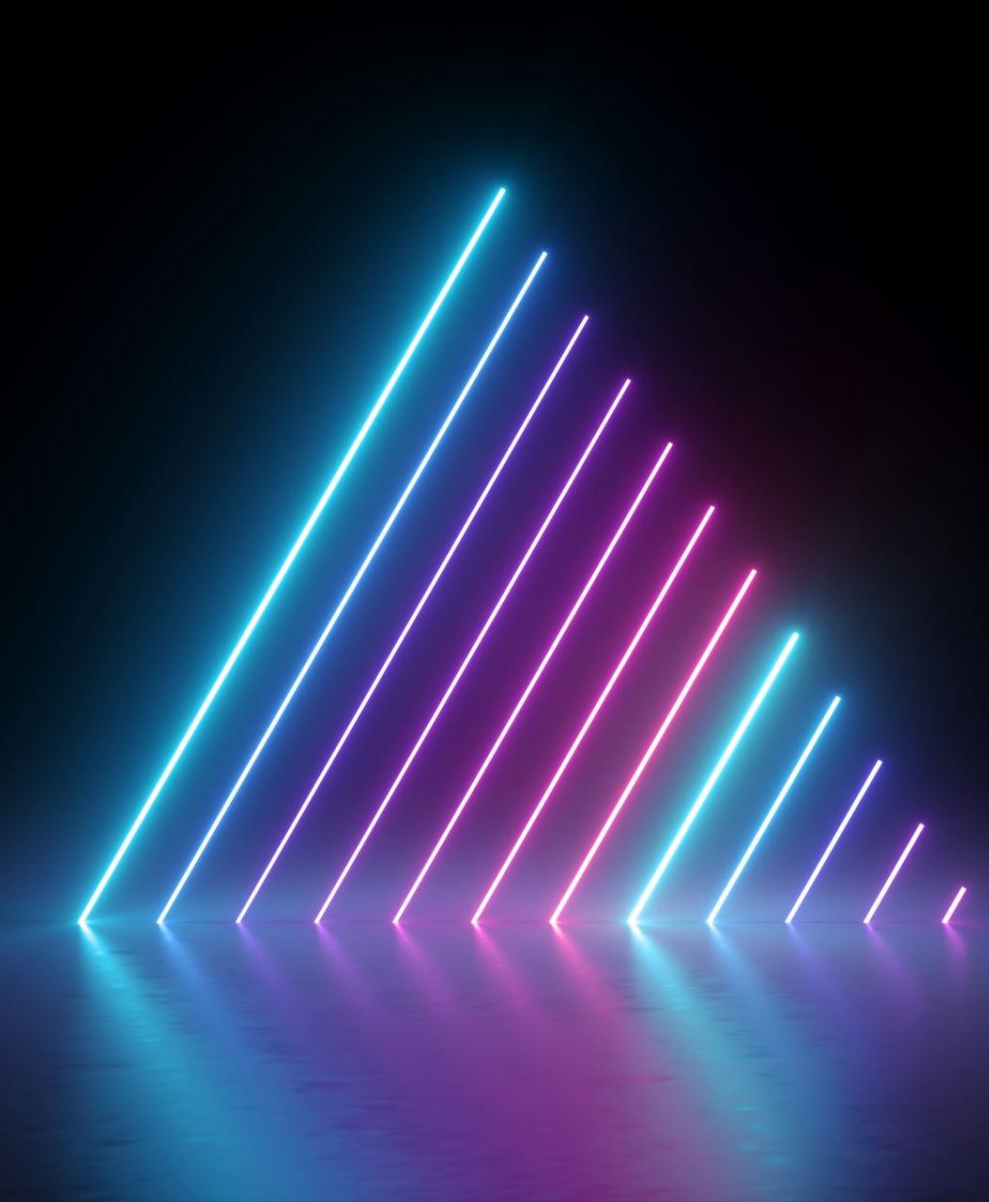


Closing quote



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The question for us, therefore, is: "Do we believe the Word of God, and are we consistently willing to act upon it, whether or not it makes sense to those around us?" The lives of faithful pilgrims show the indelible marks of their faith. Their lives are utterly inexplicable unless the Word of God is true and Heaven is their ultimate destination. Everyone around them can see that they have staked everything on the faithfulness of God to do what he has promised. In contrast, others live as if their lives are simply tied to eking out the best existence they can in the wilderness, as if this really is all there is.



The background features a series of parallel diagonal lines in shades of cyan, magenta, and blue, creating a sense of depth and movement. These lines are reflected on a dark, glossy surface at the bottom, enhancing the abstract, futuristic feel of the image.

To God be the Glory