

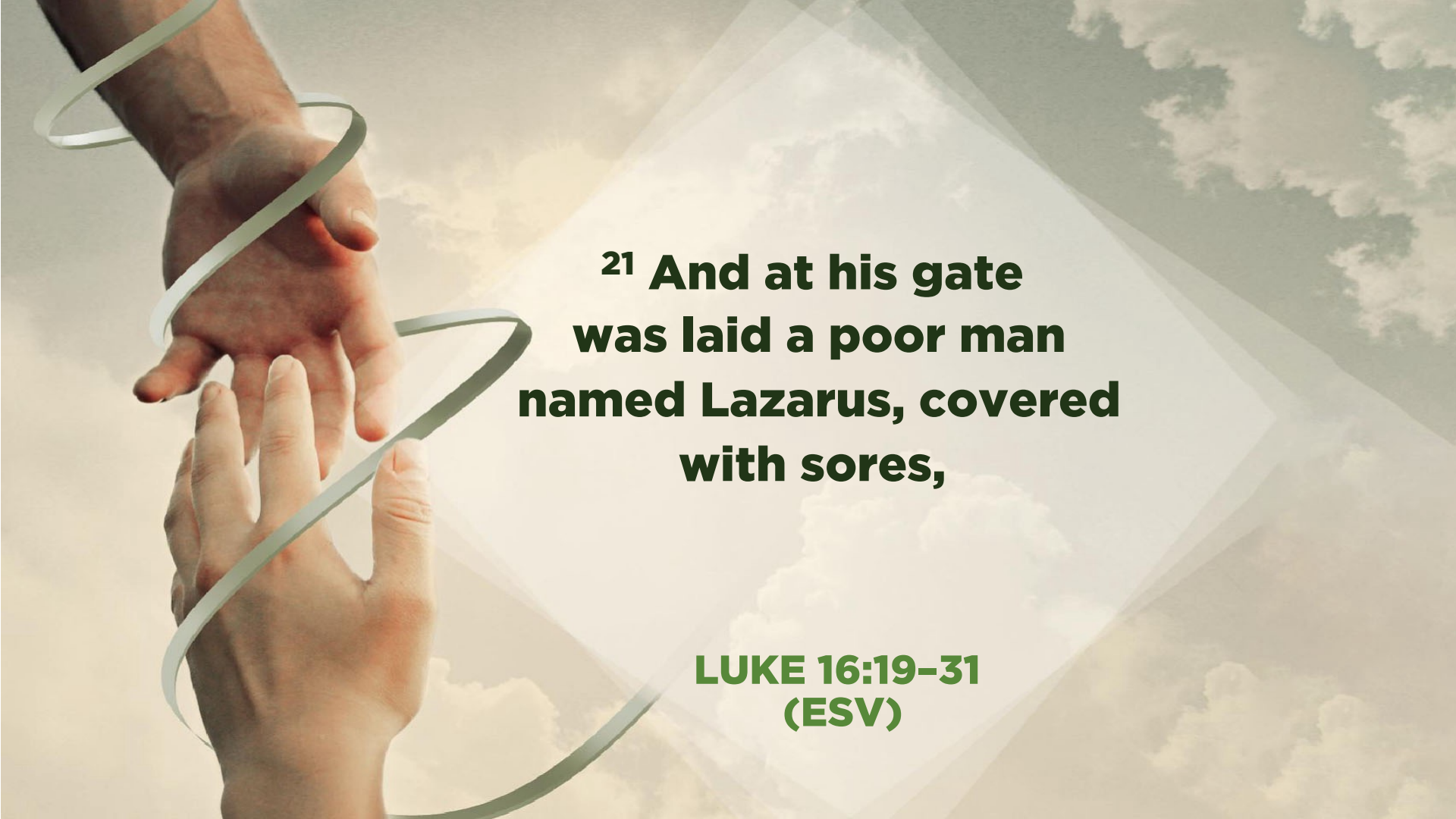
THE ONE WHOM
GOD
helps

Lee Pey Woan
6 October 2024



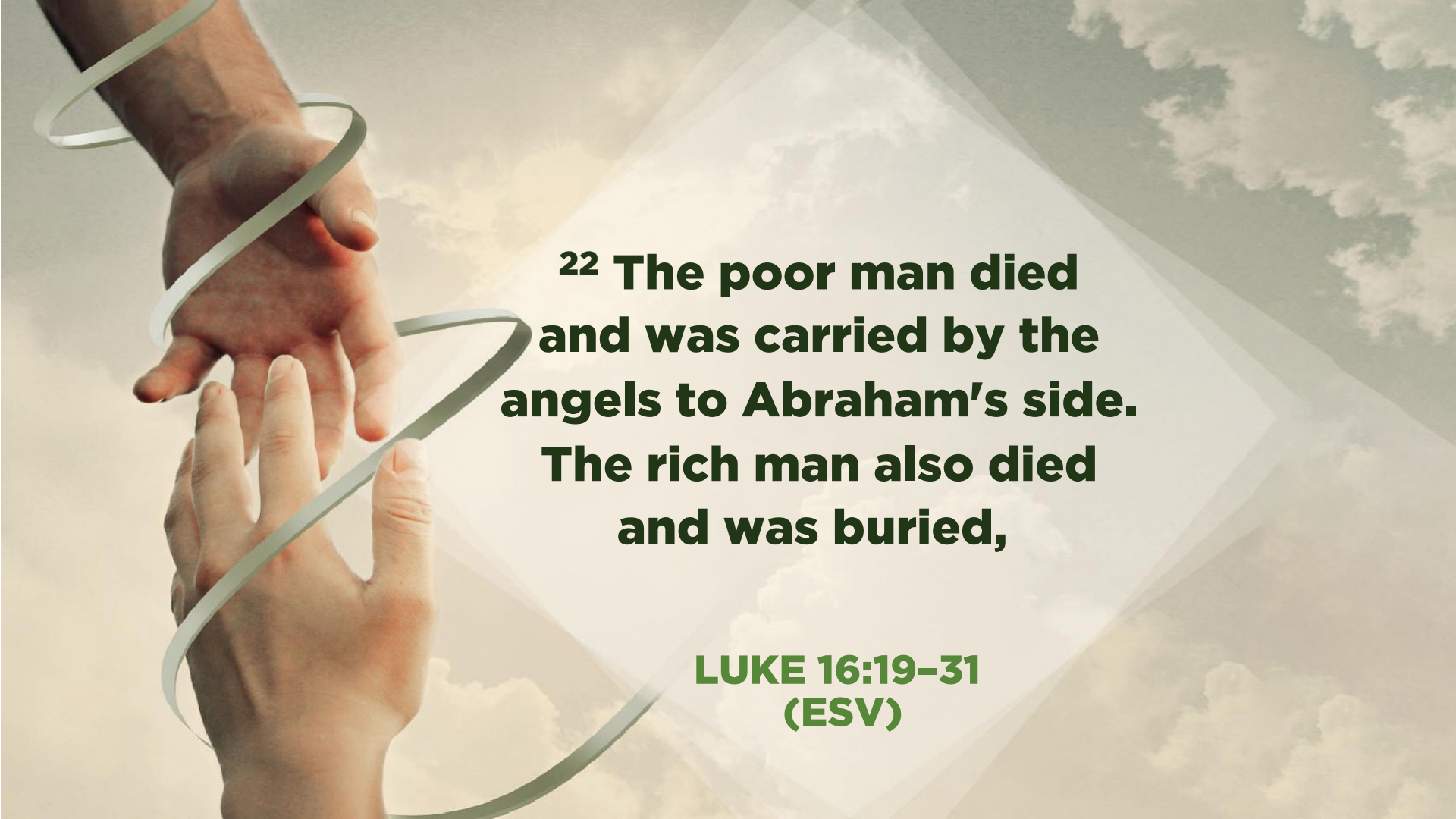
**¹⁹ “There was a
rich man who was
clothed in purple and
fine linen and who feasted
sumptuously every day.**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**



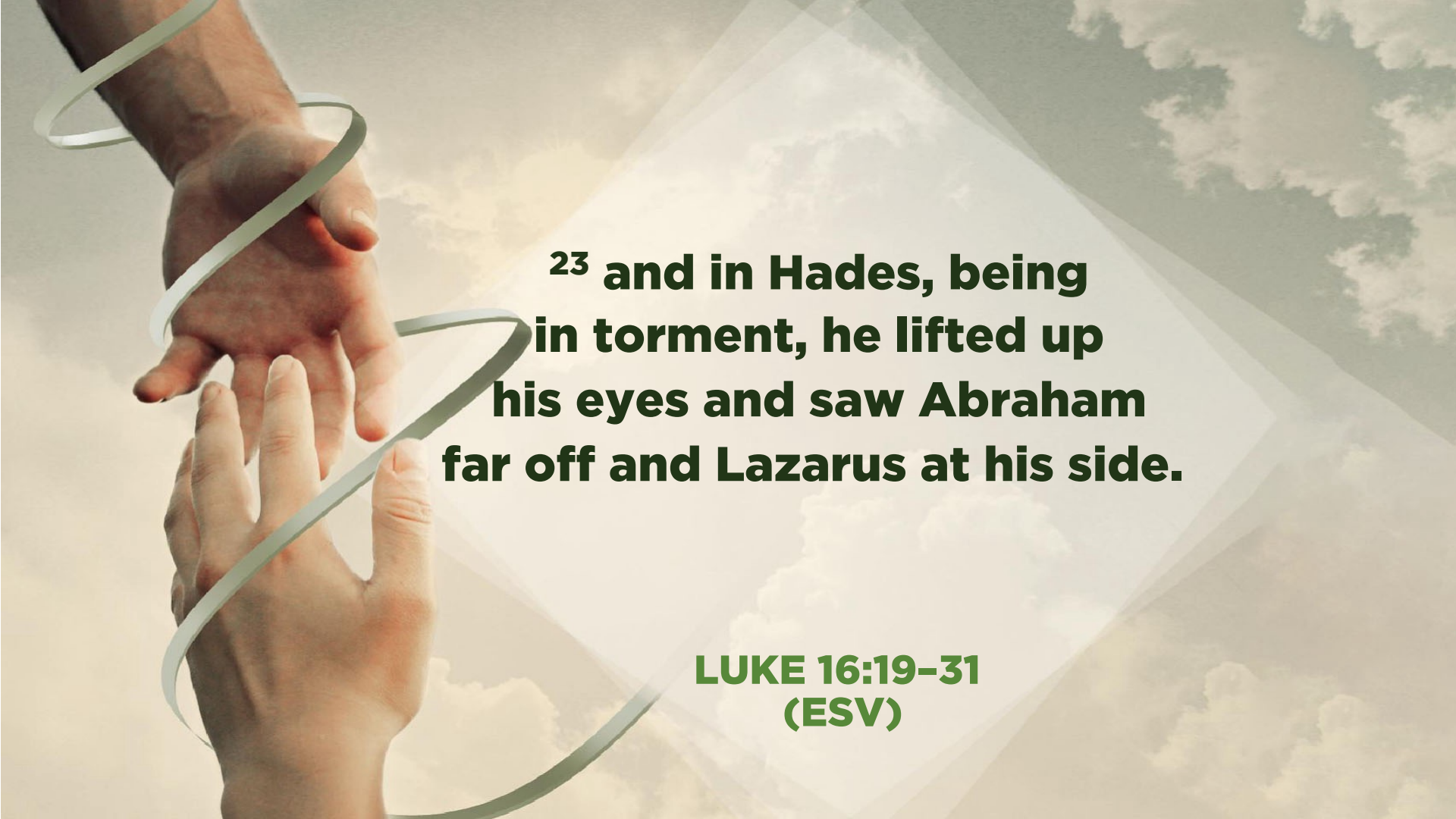
**²¹ And at his gate
was laid a poor man
named Lazarus, covered
with sores,**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**



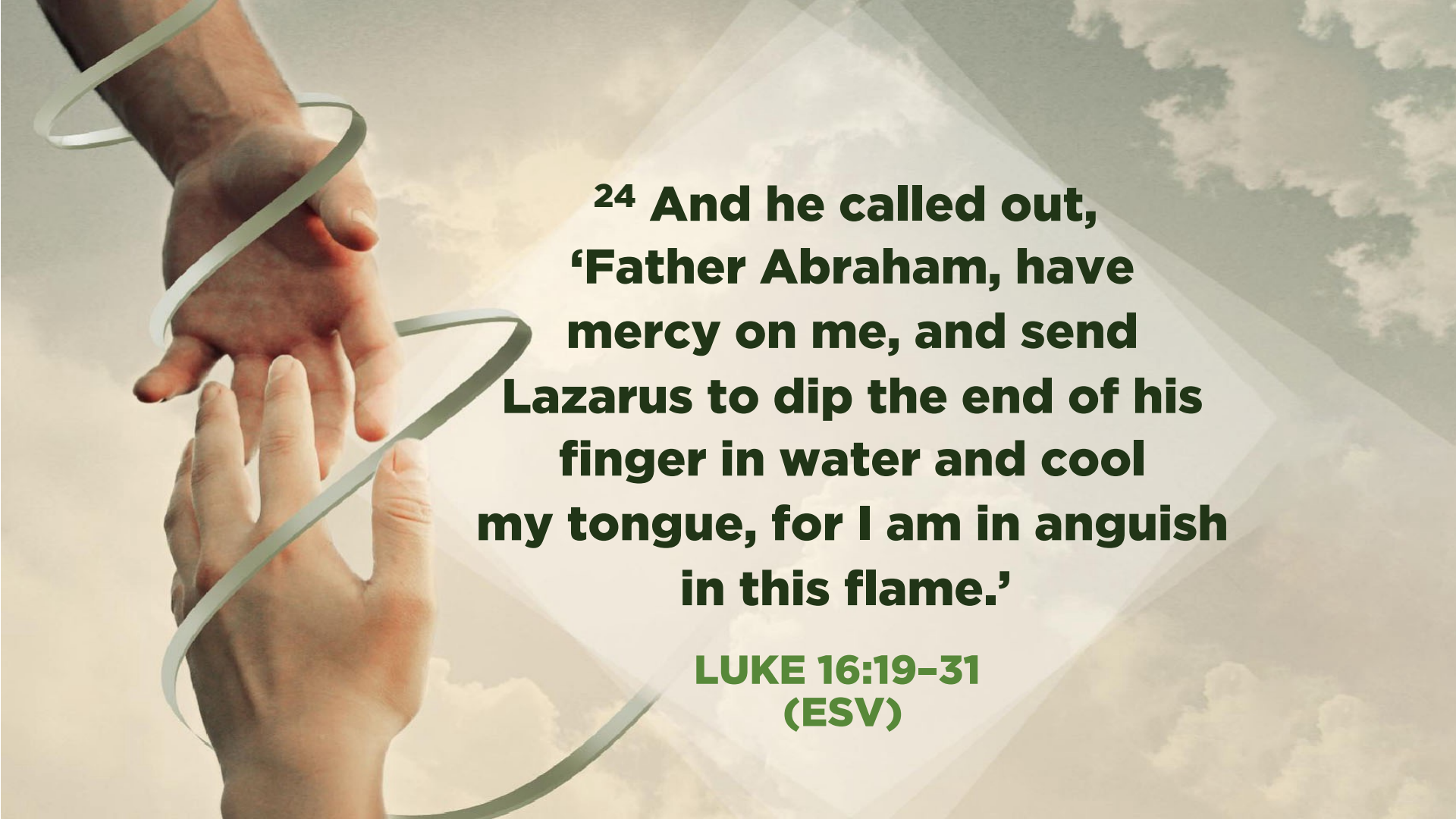
**²² The poor man died
and was carried by the
angels to Abraham's side.
The rich man also died
and was buried,**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**



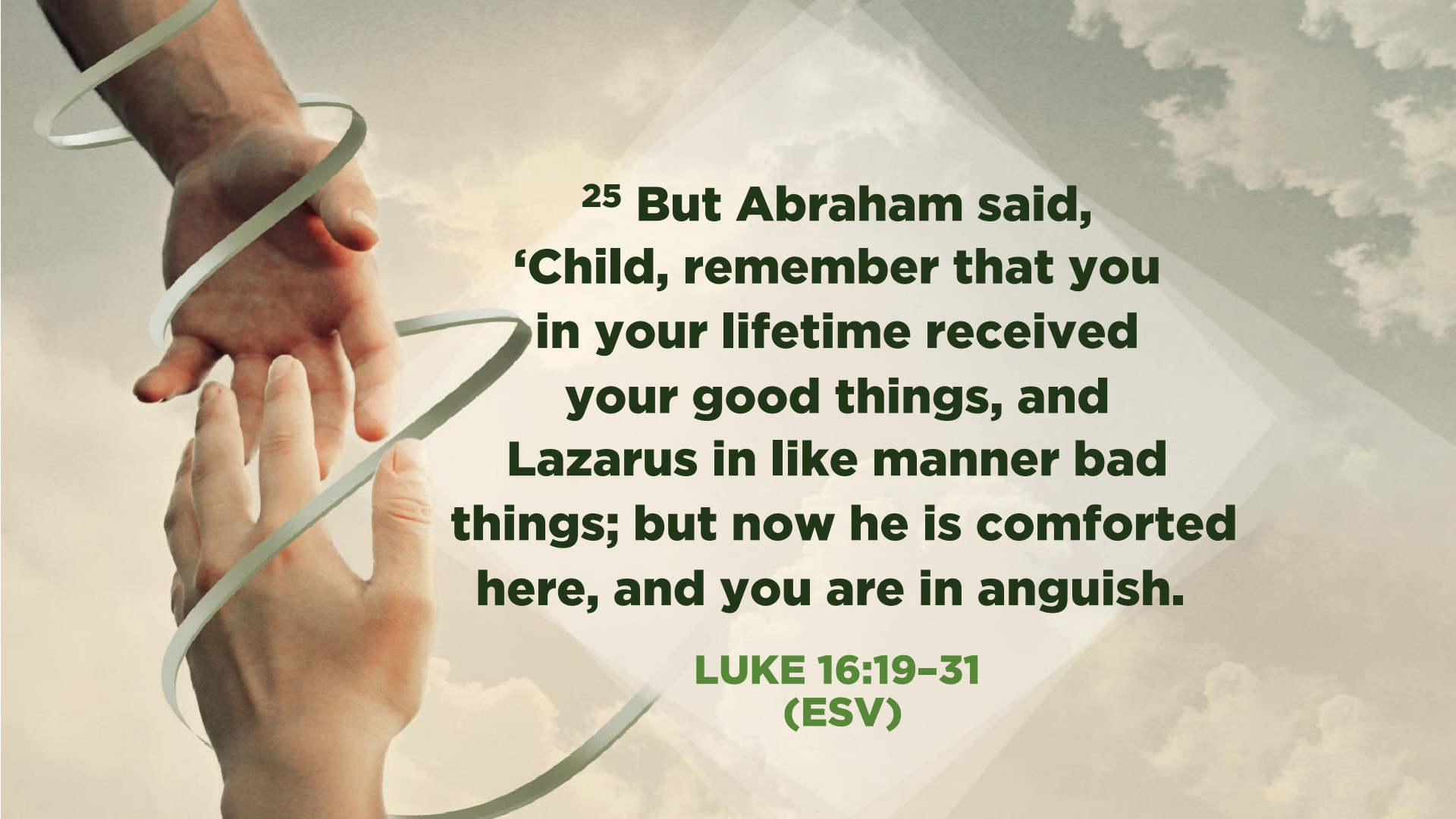
**²³ and in Hades, being
in torment, he lifted up
his eyes and saw Abraham
far off and Lazarus at his side.**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**



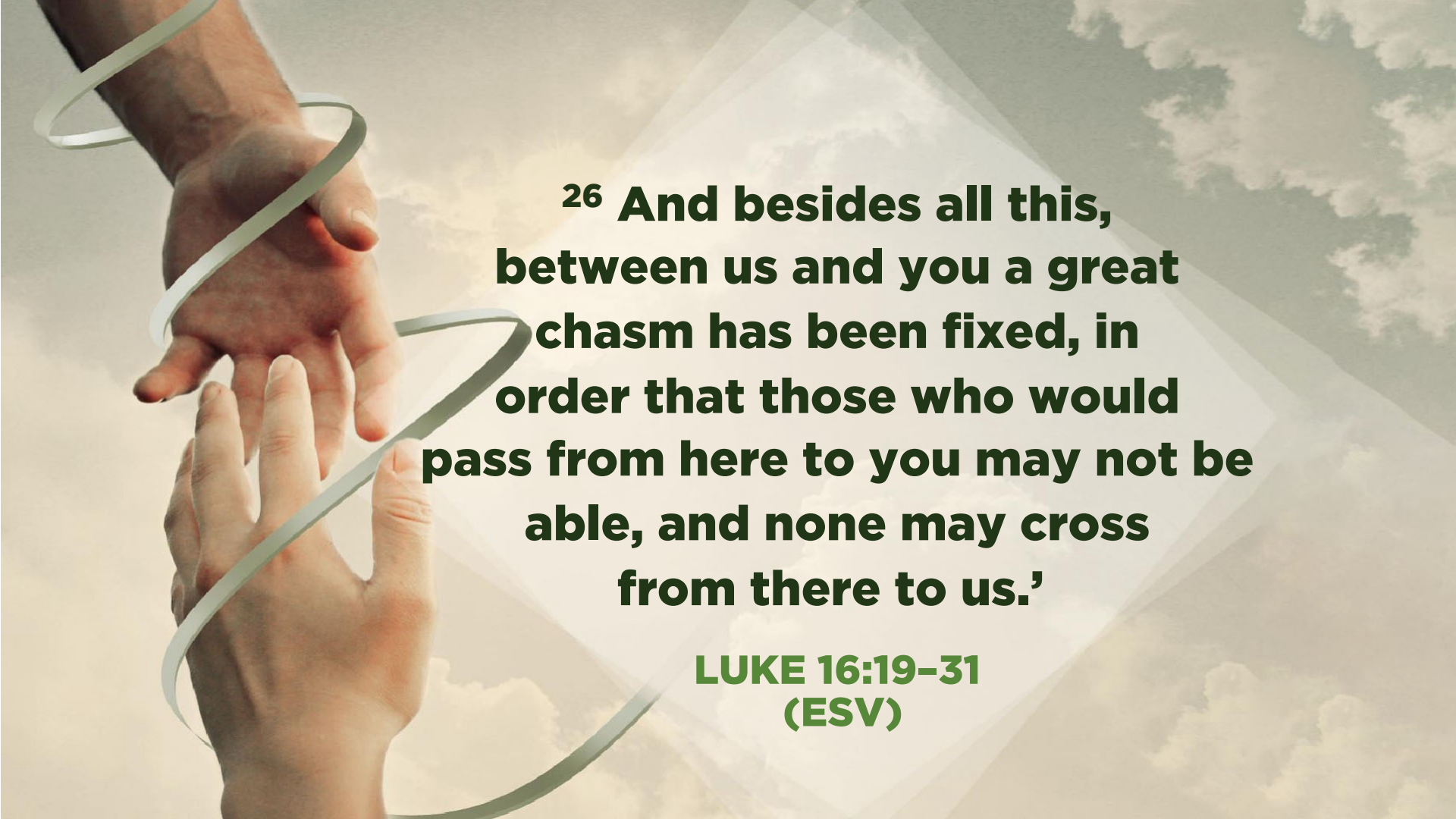
**²⁴ And he called out,
'Father Abraham, have
mercy on me, and send
Lazarus to dip the end of his
finger in water and cool
my tongue, for I am in anguish
in this flame.'**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**



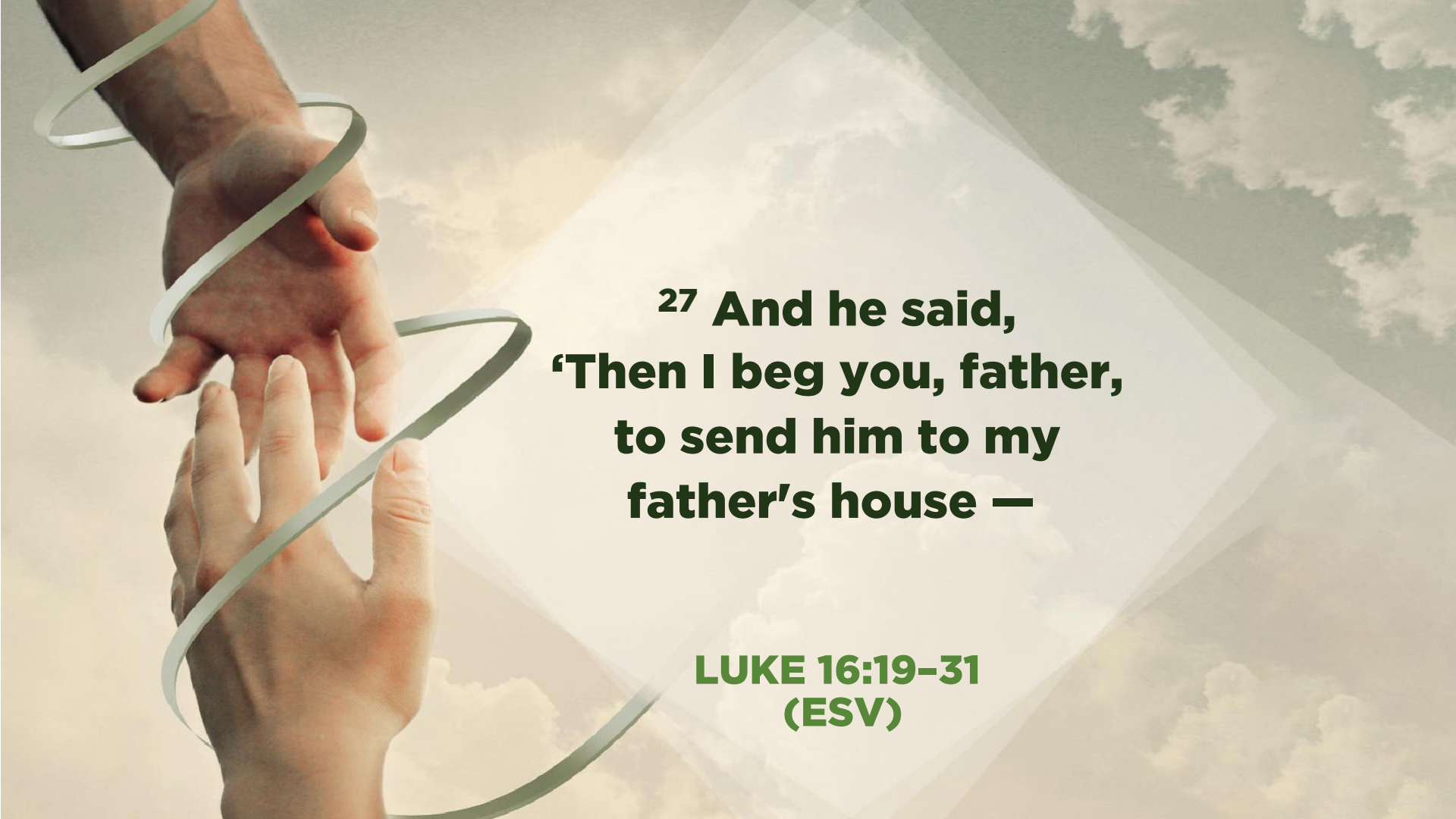
**²⁵ But Abraham said,
'Child, remember that you
in your lifetime received
your good things, and
Lazarus in like manner bad
things; but now he is comforted
here, and you are in anguish.**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**

The background of the image shows two hands, one from the top left and one from the bottom left, reaching towards each other. A white ribbon is wrapped around the hands and extends across the frame. The background is a soft-focus image of a cloudy sky with a large, faint, light-colored diamond shape in the center.

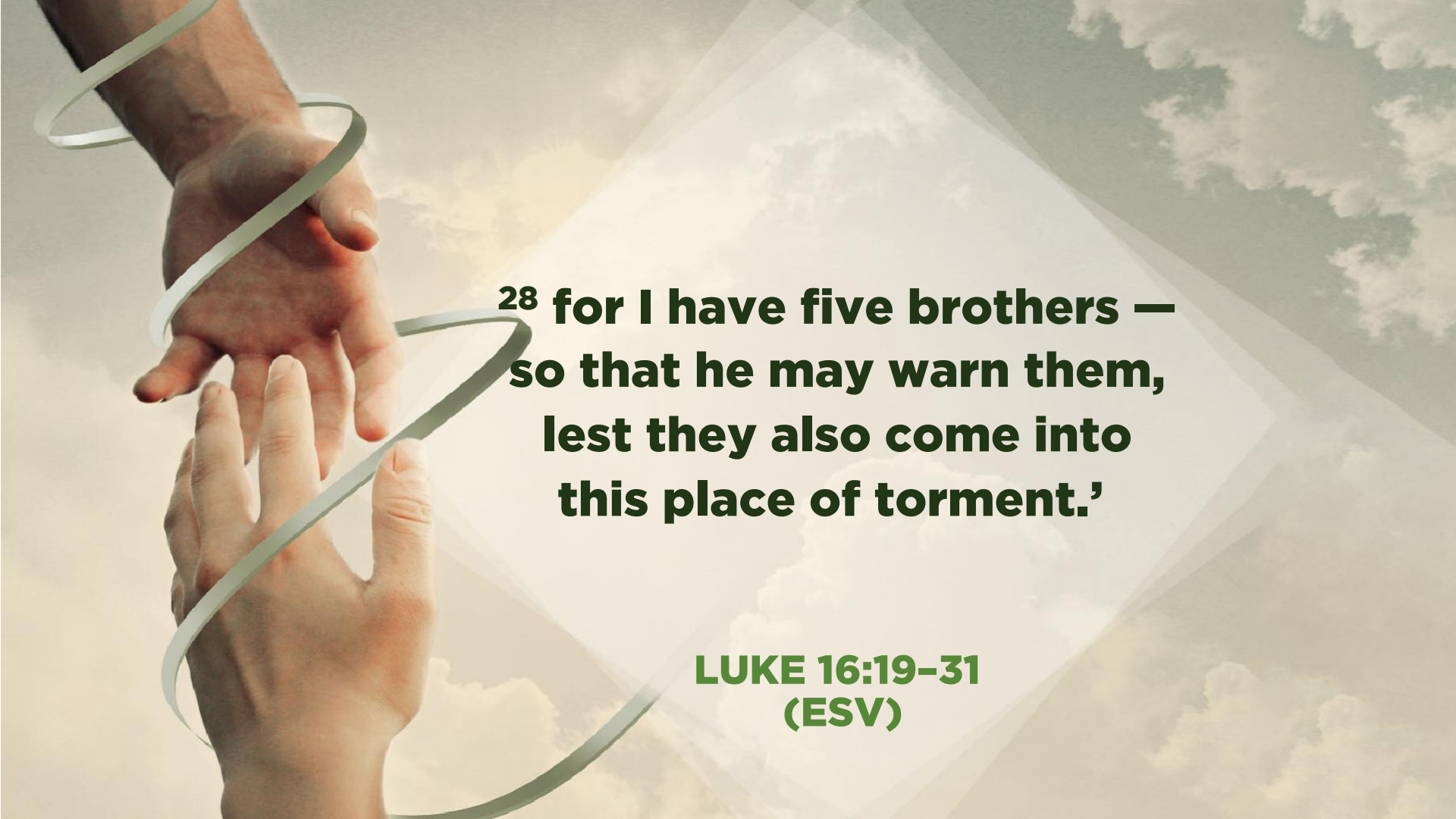
**²⁶ And besides all this,
between us and you a great
chasm has been fixed, in
order that those who would
pass from here to you may not be
able, and none may cross
from there to us.'**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**



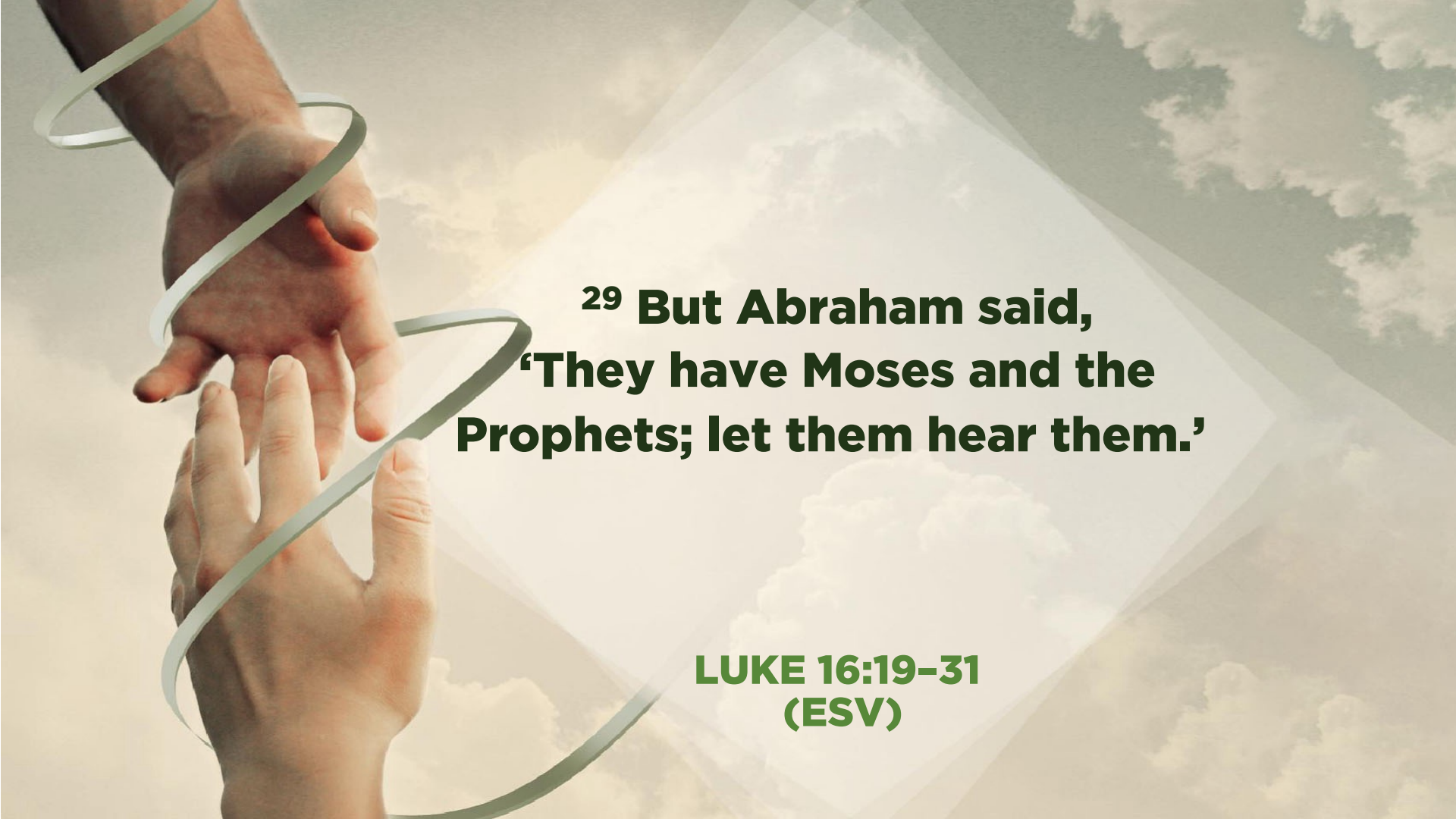
**²⁷ And he said,
'Then I beg you, father,
to send him to my
father's house —**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**



**²⁸ for I have five brothers —
so that he may warn them,
lest they also come into
this place of torment.'**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**



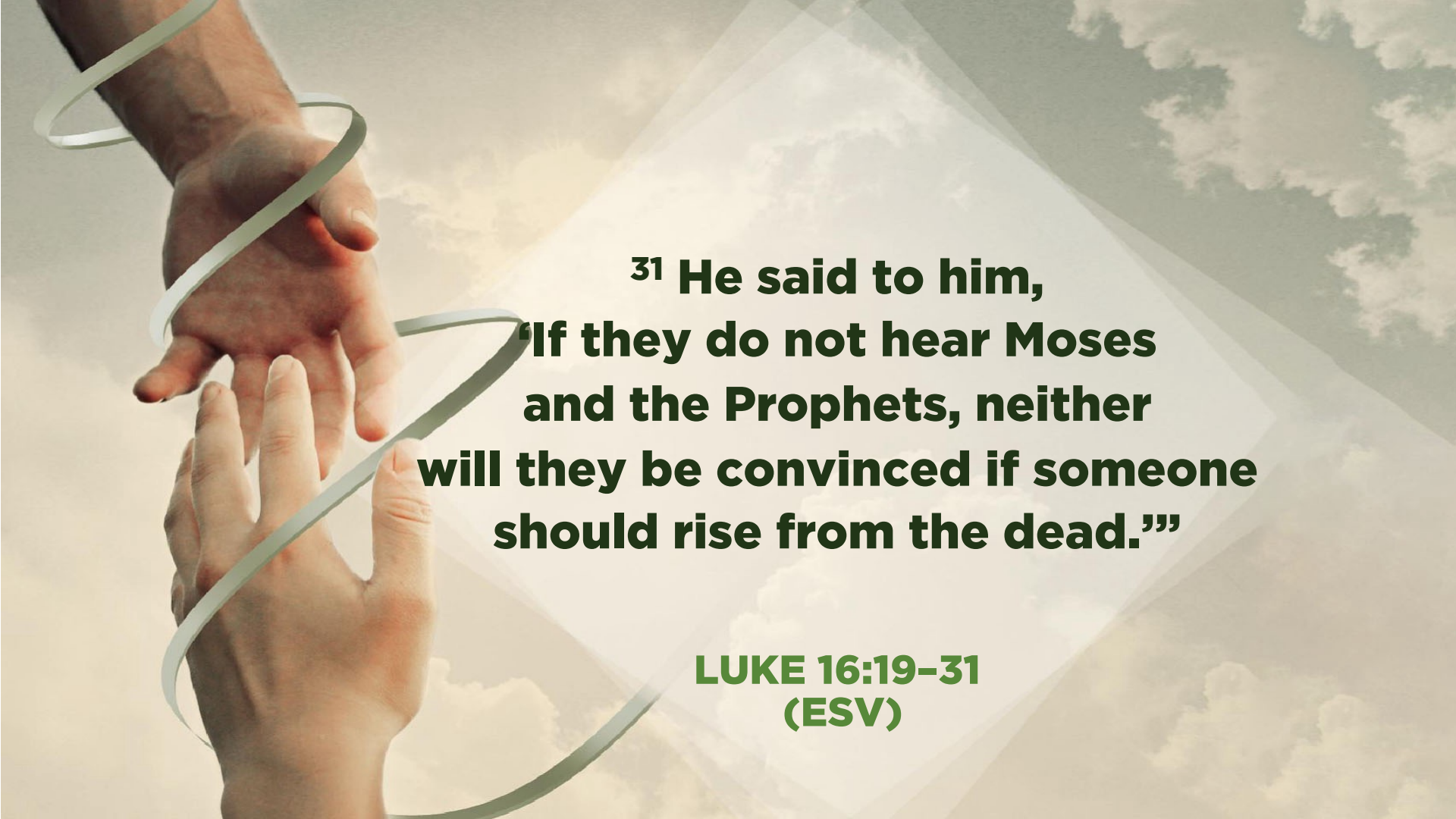
**²⁹ But Abraham said,
‘They have Moses and the
Prophets; let them hear them.’**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**



**³⁰ And he said,
'No, father Abraham,
but if someone goes to
them from the dead,
they will repent.'**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**

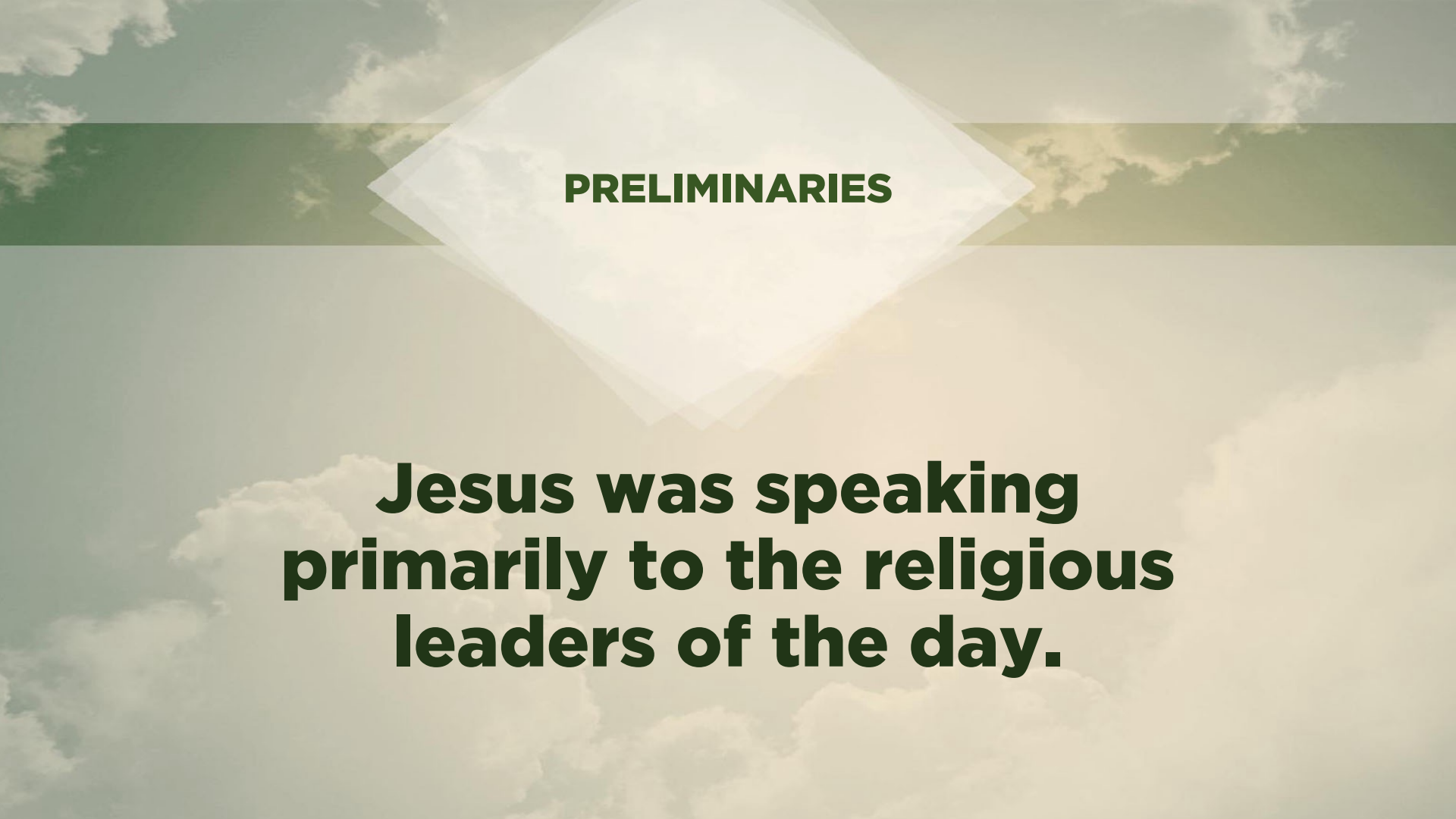


**³¹ He said to him,
“If they do not hear Moses
and the Prophets, neither
will they be convinced if someone
should rise from the dead.””**

**LUKE 16:19-31
(ESV)**

PRELIMINARIES

**Is this a real or
a fictional story?**



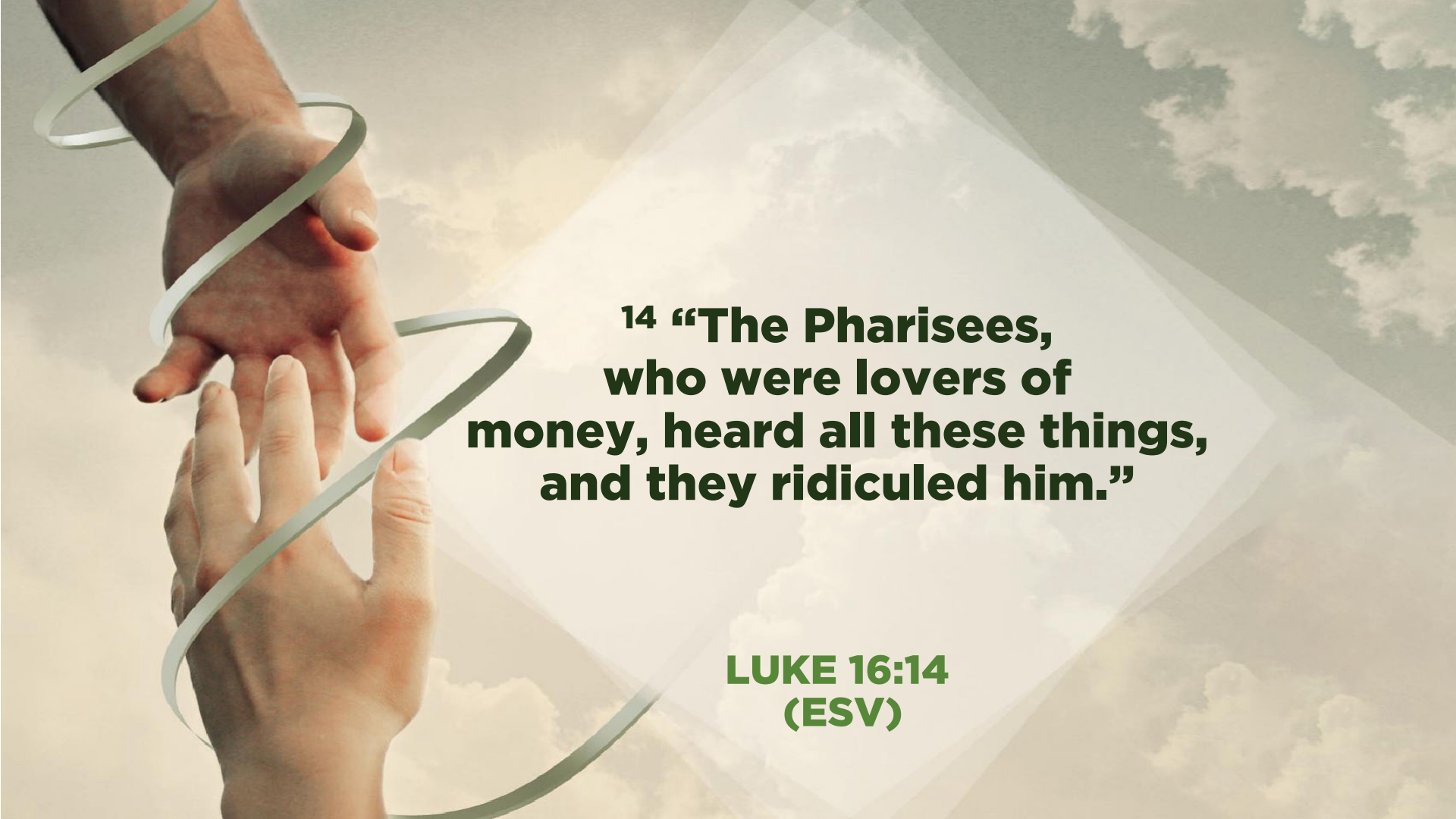
PRELIMINARIES

**Jesus was speaking
primarily to the religious
leaders of the day.**



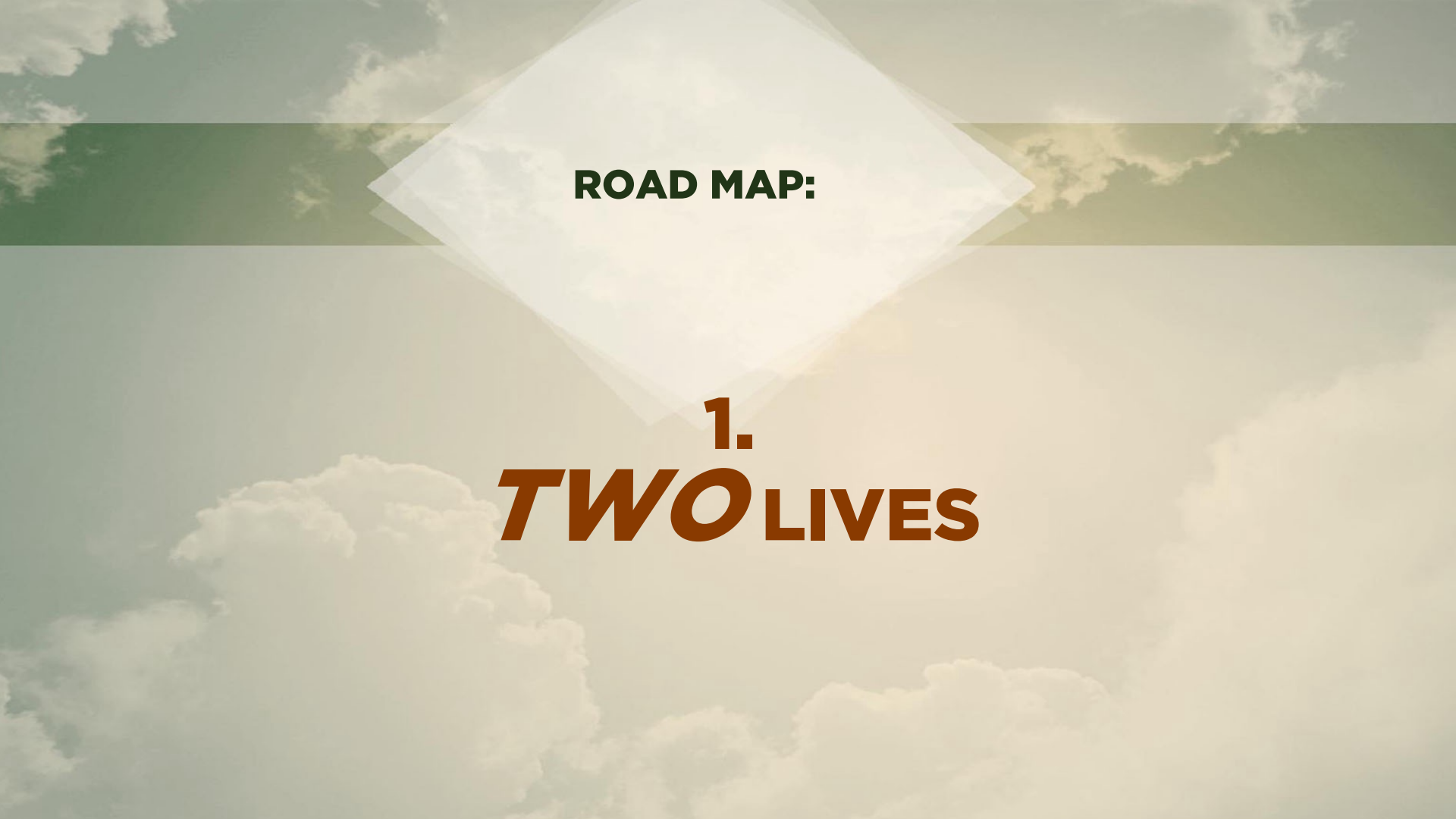
**³¹ “No servant can
serve two masters ...
You cannot serve
God and money.”**

**LUKE 16:13
(ESV)**



**14 “The Pharisees,
who were lovers of
money, heard all these things,
and they ridiculed him.”**

**LUKE 16:14
(ESV)**



ROAD MAP:

1.
***TWO* LIVES**



ROAD MAP:

2.

***TWO* DESTINIES**



ROAD MAP:

3.
***TWO* Pleas**



ROAD MAP:

4.
***TWO*spirits**



ROAD MAP:

5.
***ONE*Response**

1. **TWO LIVES**

(a) The Rich Man

An impressive rich man clothed in purple and fine linen and feasted sumptuously everyday.



1. **TWO LIVES**

(a) The Rich Man

Luxurious and ostentatious living was not just an occasional treat but a lifestyle for him.



1. **TWO LIVES**

(b) Lazarus

- **Lazarus was extremely poor.**
- **Lazarus was always hungry.**
- **Lazarus longed to be fed by the crumbs that fell off the rich man's table.**

1. **TWO LIVES**

(b) Lazarus

- **In ancient biblical times, dogs were mostly working dogs or strays which survived as scavengers.**

1. **TWO LIVES**

(b) Lazarus

- **Equating a person with a dog was most certainly to imply that the person was the lowest of the lowly in society.**

1. **TWO LIVES**

(b) Lazarus

- **Lazarus was clearly in a very helpless, desperate state.**



**4 “Wealth makes
many ”friends”; poverty
drives them away.”**

**PROVERBS 19:4
(NLT)**

1. **TWO LIVES**

(b) Lazarus

- **Poverty meant not only deprivation in material resources but also social and emotional isolation.**



1. **TWO LIVES**

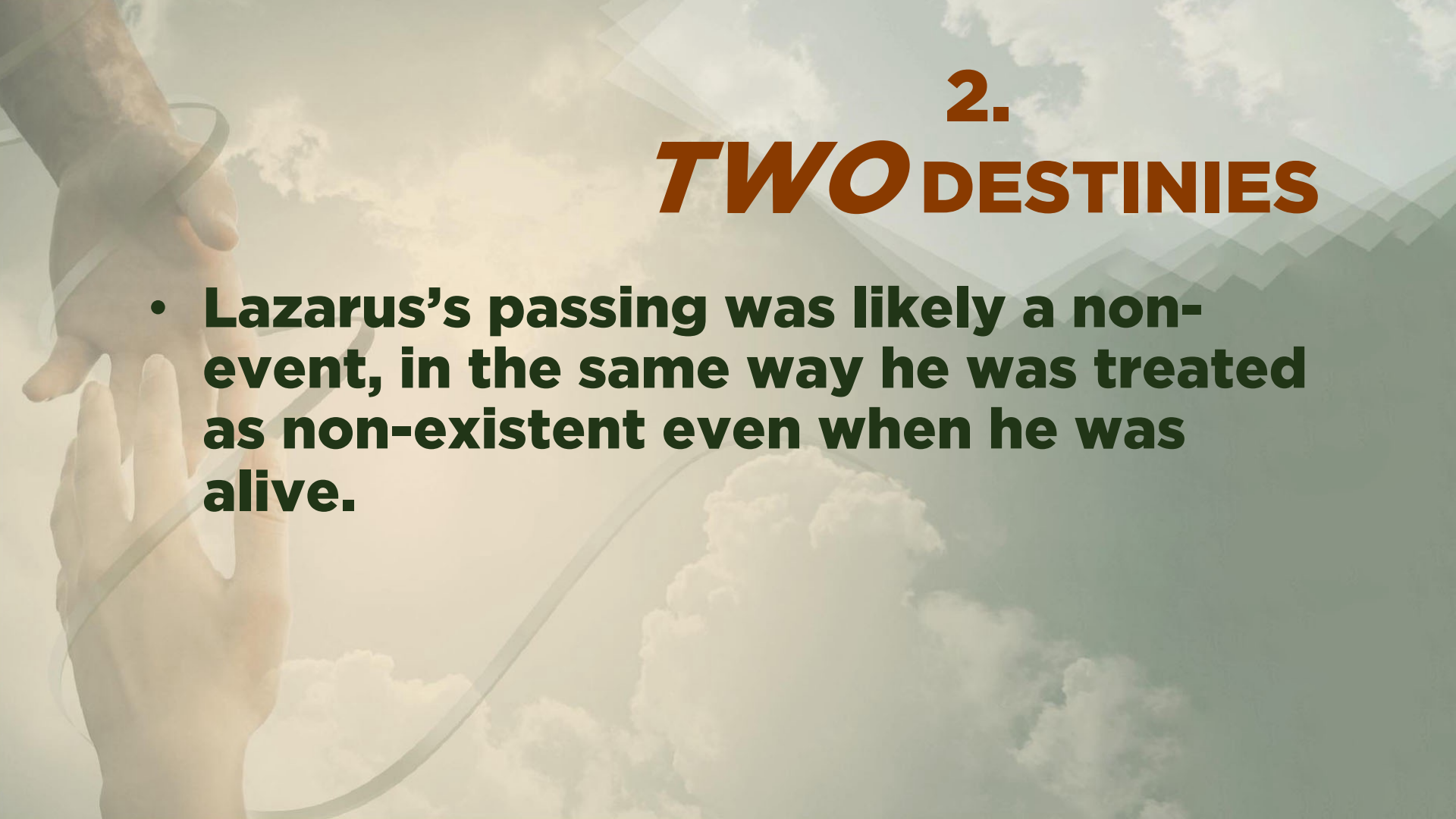
(b) Lazarus

- **The rich man in the parable represented a state of blessedness.**
- **Lazarus represented life devoid of blessings.**

1. **TWO LIVES**

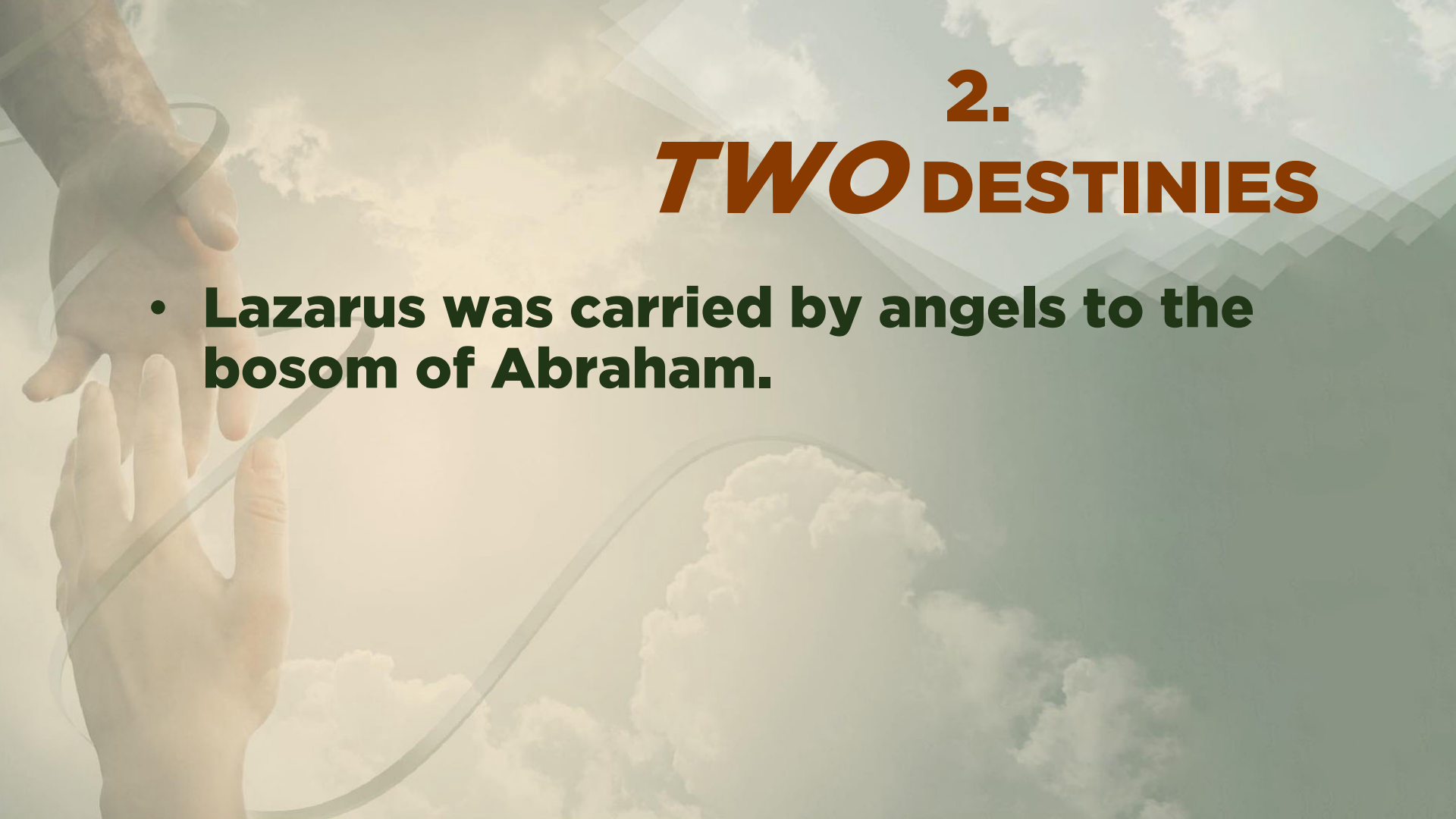
(b) Lazarus

- **Who would you rather be, Lazarus or the rich man?**



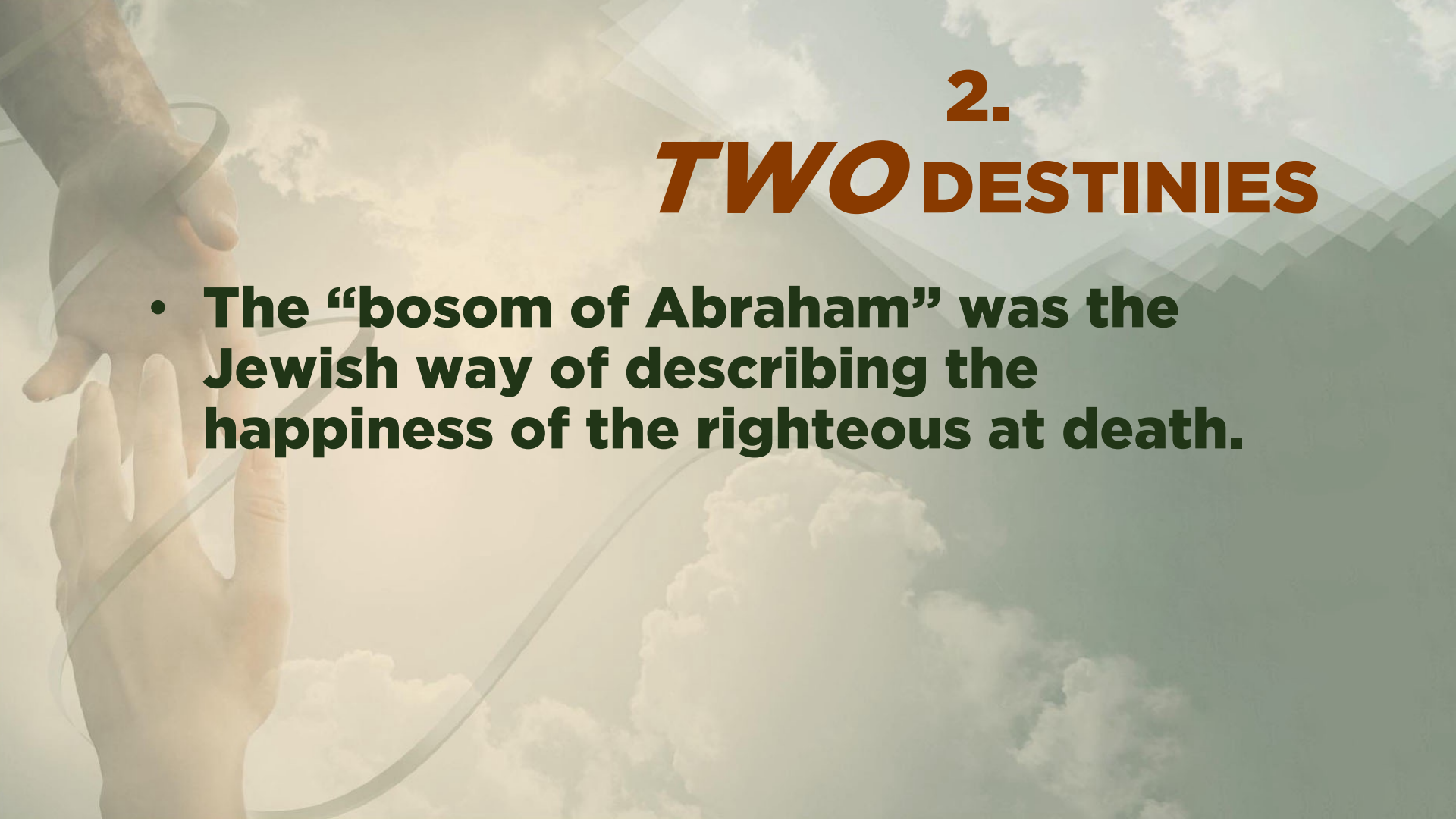
2. *TWO* DESTINIES

- **Lazarus's passing was likely a non-event, in the same way he was treated as non-existent even when he was alive.**



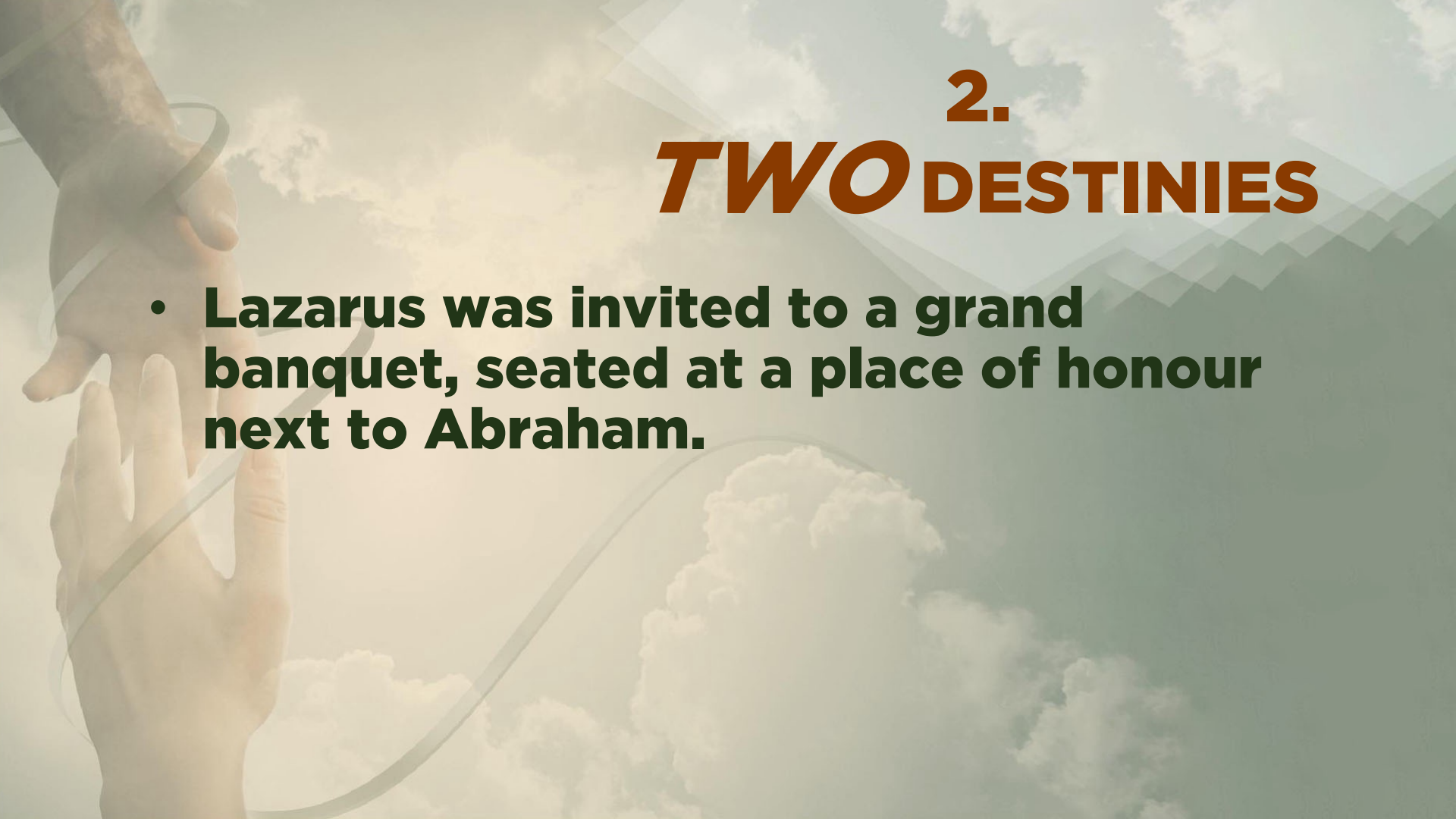
2. ***TWO*** DESTINIES

- **Lazarus was carried by angels to the bosom of Abraham.**



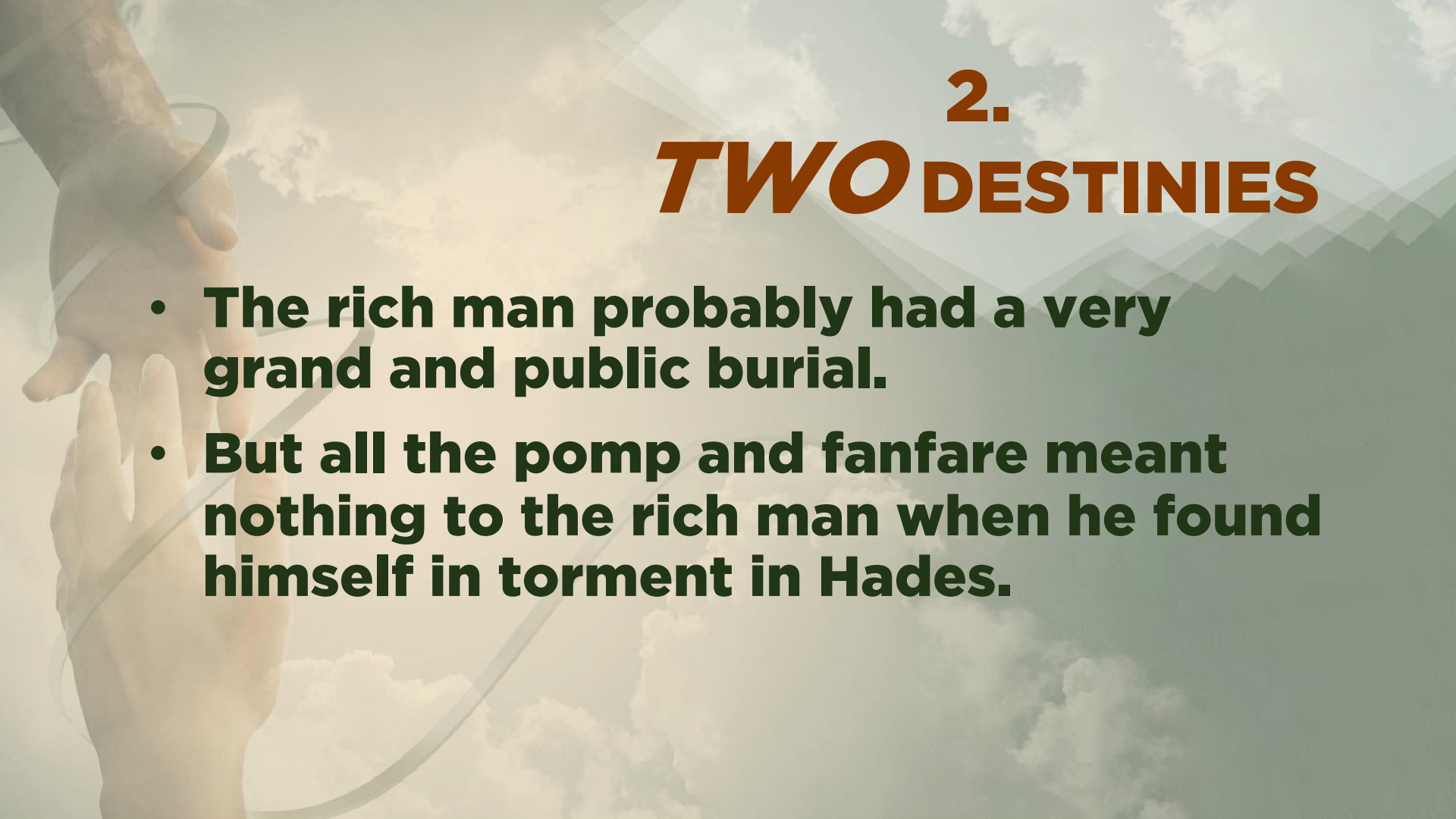
2. ***TWO*** DESTINIES

- **The “bosom of Abraham” was the Jewish way of describing the happiness of the righteous at death.**



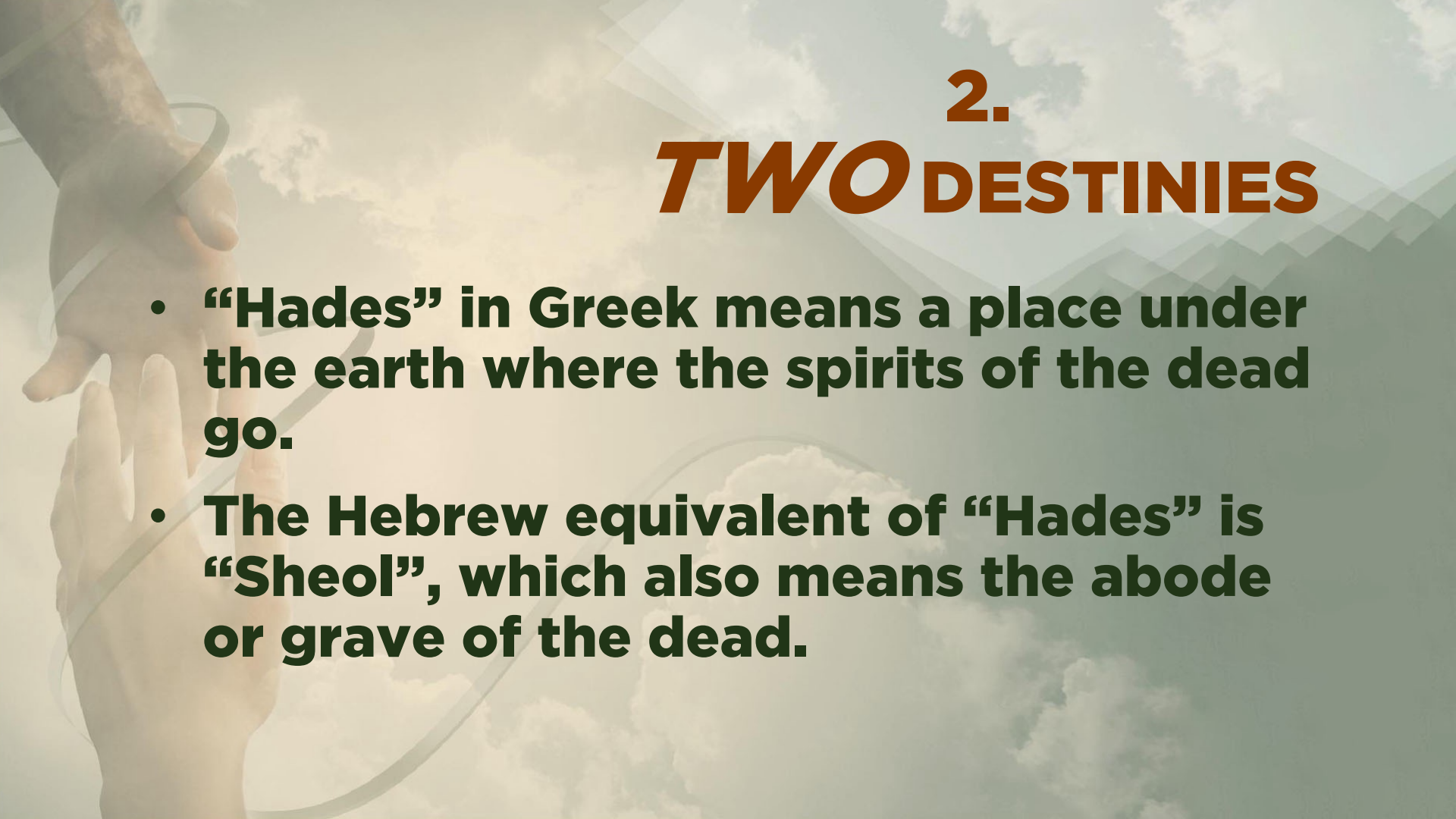
2. ***TWO*** DESTINIES

- **Lazarus was invited to a grand banquet, seated at a place of honour next to Abraham.**



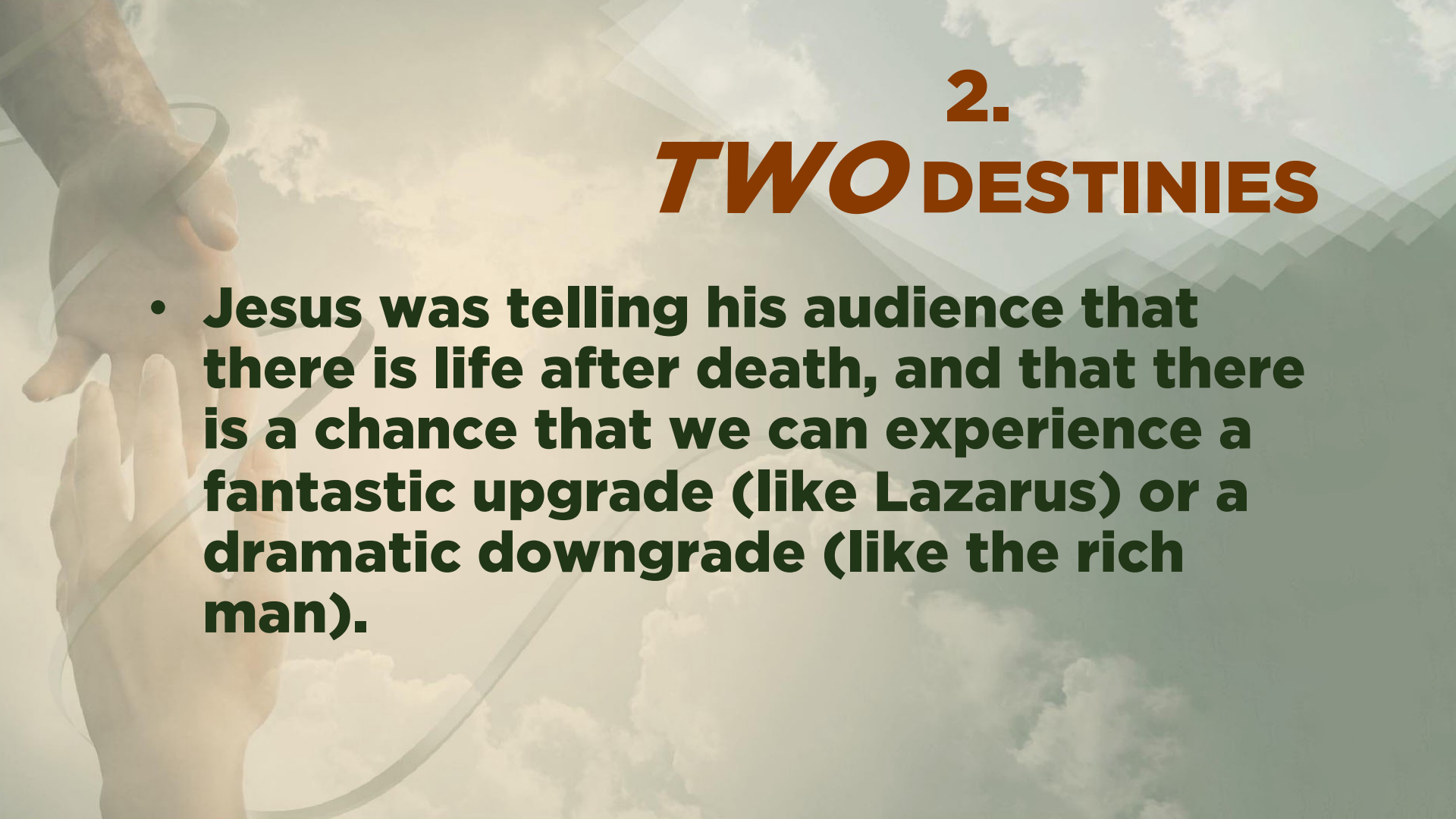
2. ***TWO*** DESTINIES

- **The rich man probably had a very grand and public burial.**
- **But all the pomp and fanfare meant nothing to the rich man when he found himself in torment in Hades.**



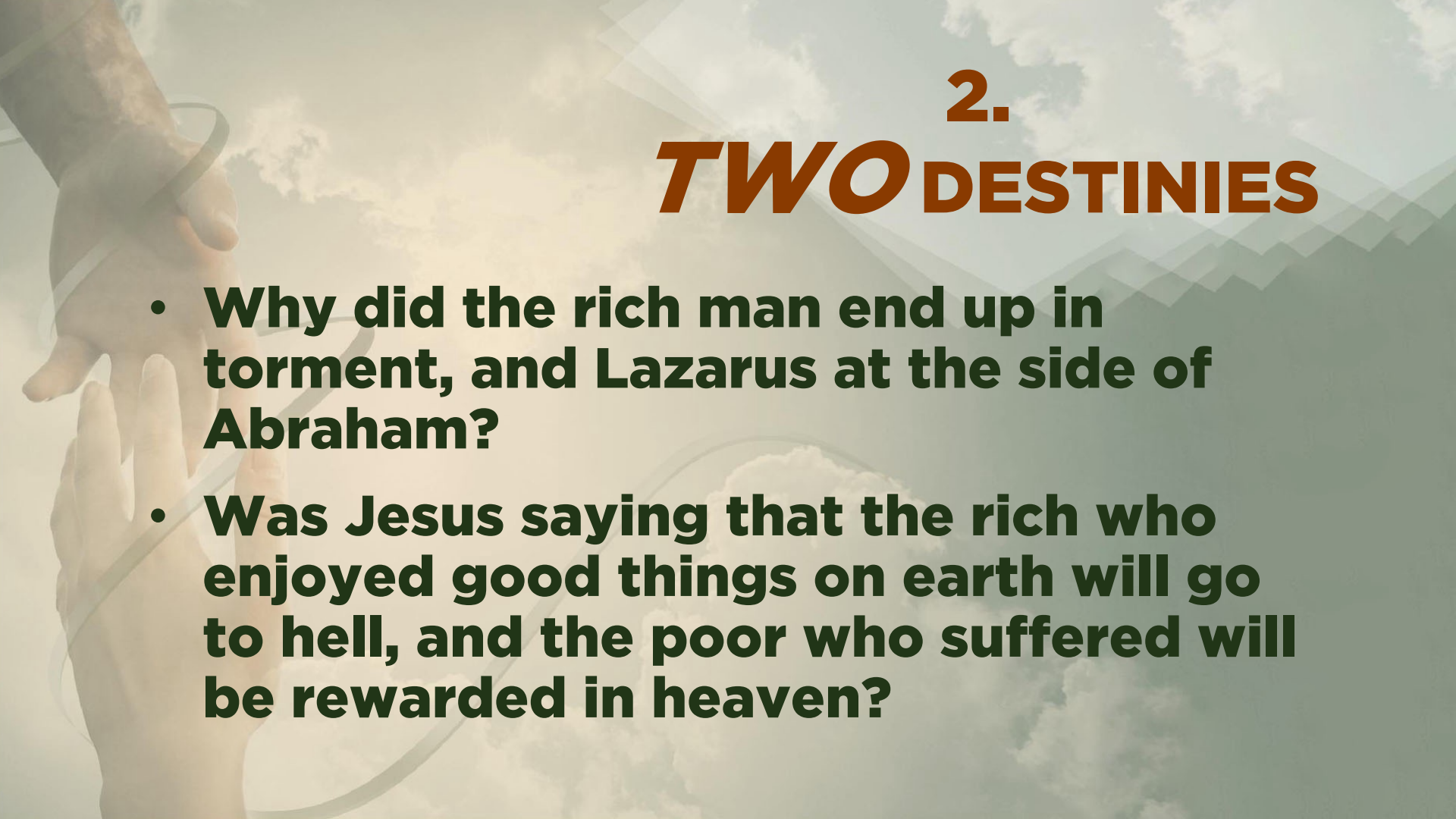
2. ***TWO*** DESTINIES

- **“Hades” in Greek means a place under the earth where the spirits of the dead go.**
- **The Hebrew equivalent of “Hades” is “Sheol”, which also means the abode or grave of the dead.**



2. *TWO* DESTINIES

- **Jesus was telling his audience that there is life after death, and that there is a chance that we can experience a fantastic upgrade (like Lazarus) or a dramatic downgrade (like the rich man).**



2. ***TWO*** DESTINIES

- **Why did the rich man end up in torment, and Lazarus at the side of Abraham?**
- **Was Jesus saying that the rich who enjoyed good things on earth will go to hell, and the poor who suffered will be rewarded in heaven?**



2. ***TWO*** DESTINIES

- **Scripture neither extols poverty as virtue nor condemns wealth as evil.**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **Verses 23 and 24: “Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.”**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **The rich man was clearly surprised to find himself in torment and to see Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham.**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **What has Lazarus done to deserve a seat next to Abraham?**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **The rich man addressed Abraham as “Father”. This was a direct appeal to his superior status as a descendant of Abraham – that he belonged to God’s favoured and covenanted people.**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **The rich man recognised Lazarus, and even knew his name.**

3. ***TWO*** Pleas

**send
Lazarus**



3. **TWO** Pleas

- **Even in Hades, in unbearable torment, he was still totally convinced that he was important and superior, and Lazarus useless and inferior.**

3. ***TWO*** Pleas



**Child,
remember ...**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- Son, you made a choice in your lifetime to live *exclusively* for the “good things” of the earthly life.

3. ***TWO* Pleas**

- **You have received all that you wanted,
and there's nothing in this (after)life
that you really want.**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **Luke 16:26 - 'And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **Abraham was saying that the choice he made was irreversible, there is now no chance to change the choice he made.**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **‘Then *I beg you*, father, to *send him* to my father’s house — for I have five brothers — so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **He was still treating Lazarus as a lackey, a lowly servant who must do all that the master bids.**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’**
- **‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’.**

3. **TWO** Pleas

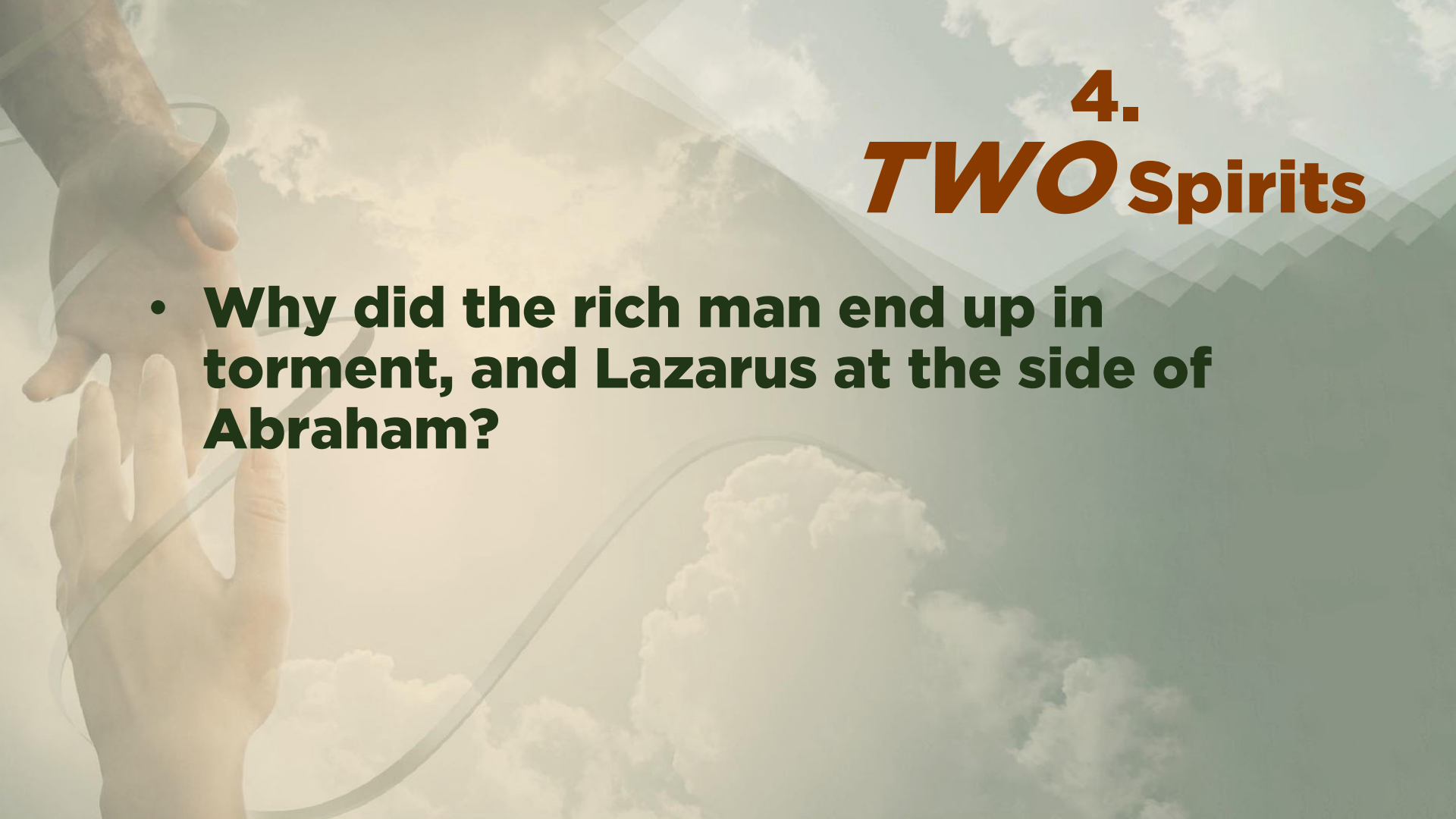
- **Three takeaways from the dialogue:**
 - # **The choices we make in this life will have serious and irreversible consequences in the next life.**

3. **TWO** Pleas

- **Three takeaways from the dialogue:**
 - # **We have been given sufficient revelation through God's word to make the right choice.**

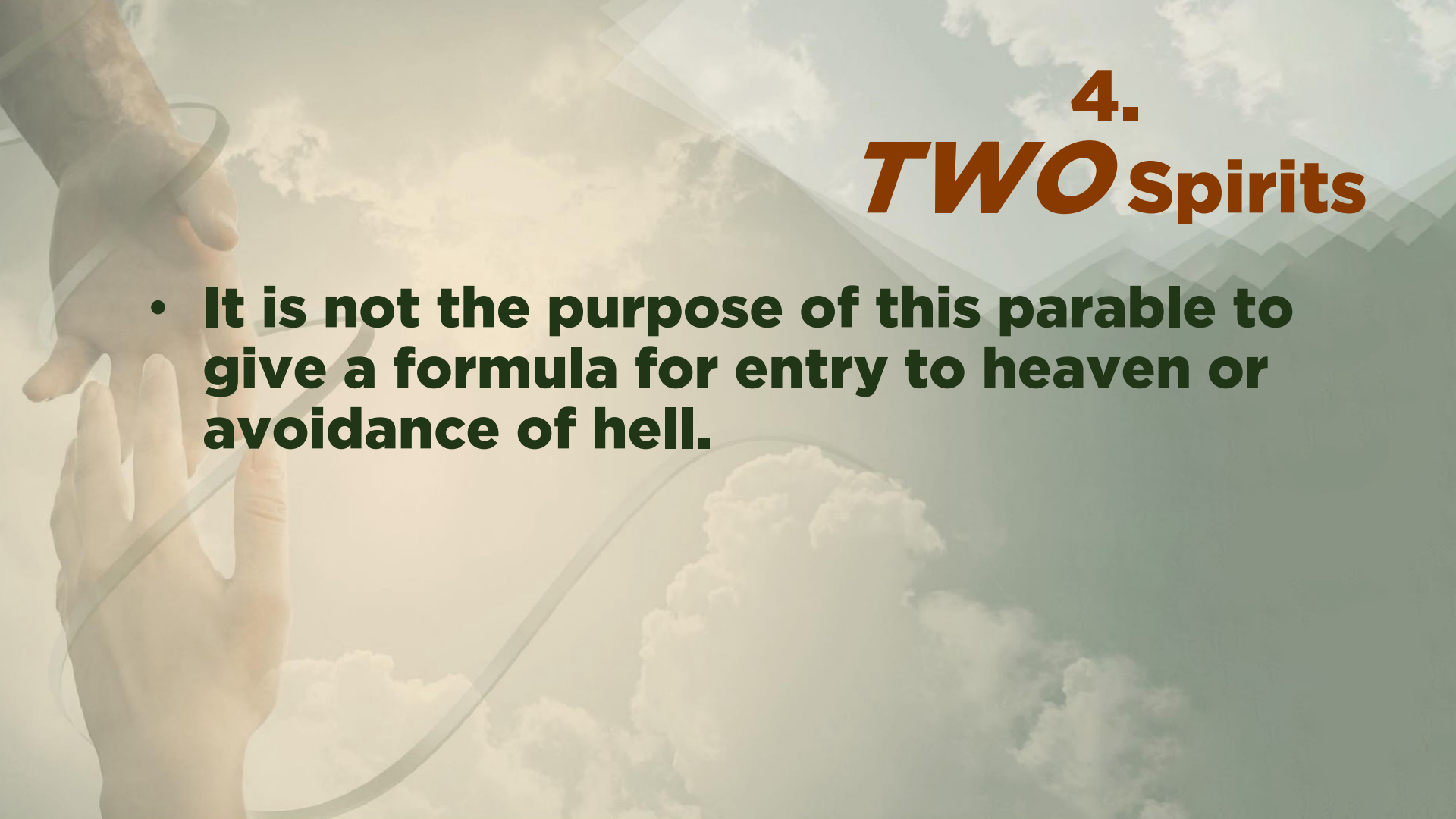
3. **TWO** Pleas

- **Three takeaways from the dialogue:**
 - # **God's word is more important than miracles. We must pay heed to God's word, to live in a way that responds to the truth revealed to us.**



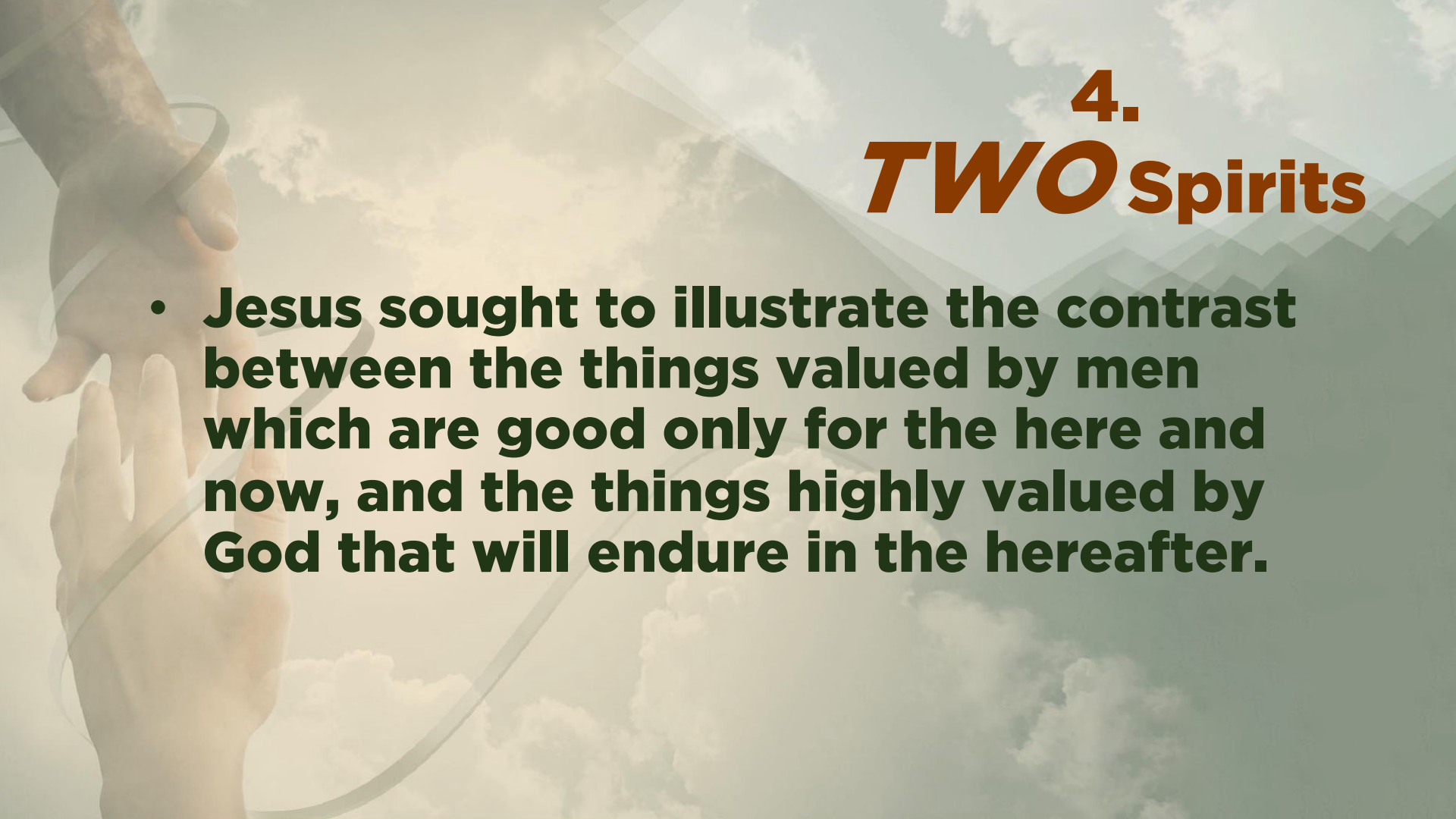
4. ***TWO***spirits

- **Why did the rich man end up in torment, and Lazarus at the side of Abraham?**



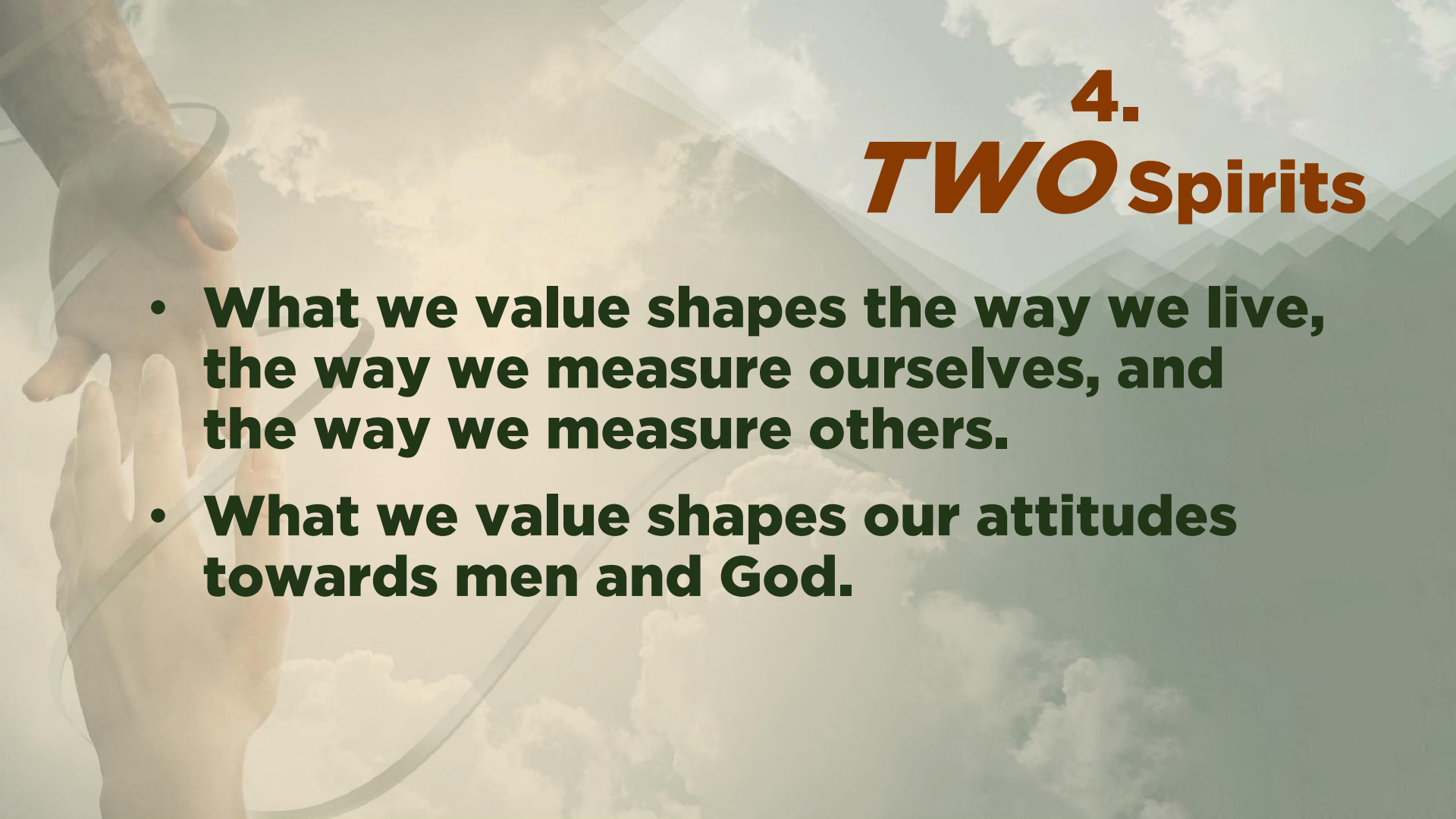
4. ***TWO***spirits

- **It is not the purpose of this parable to give a formula for entry to heaven or avoidance of hell.**



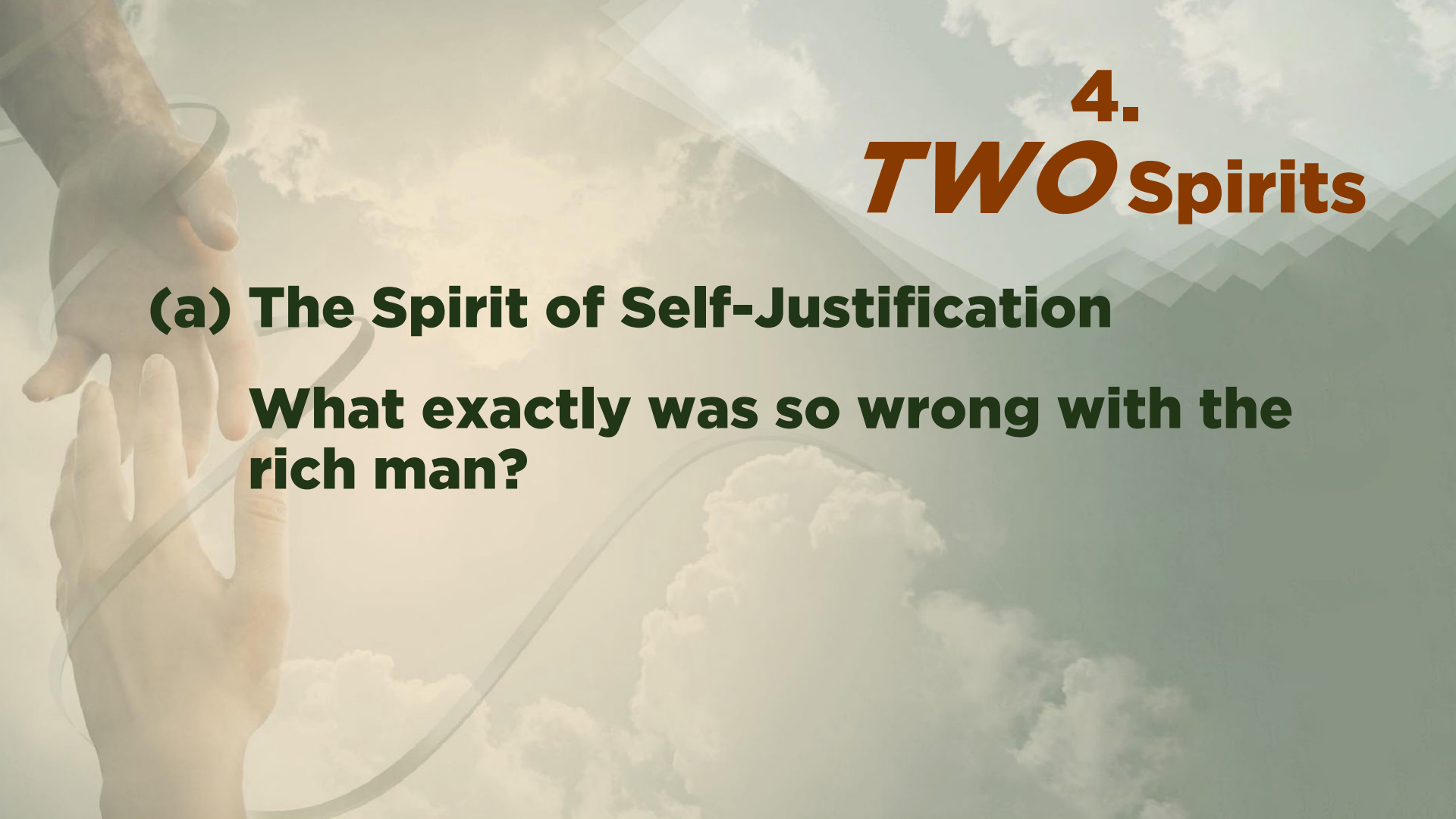
4. ***TWO***spirits

- **Jesus sought to illustrate the contrast between the things valued by men which are good only for the here and now, and the things highly valued by God that will endure in the hereafter.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

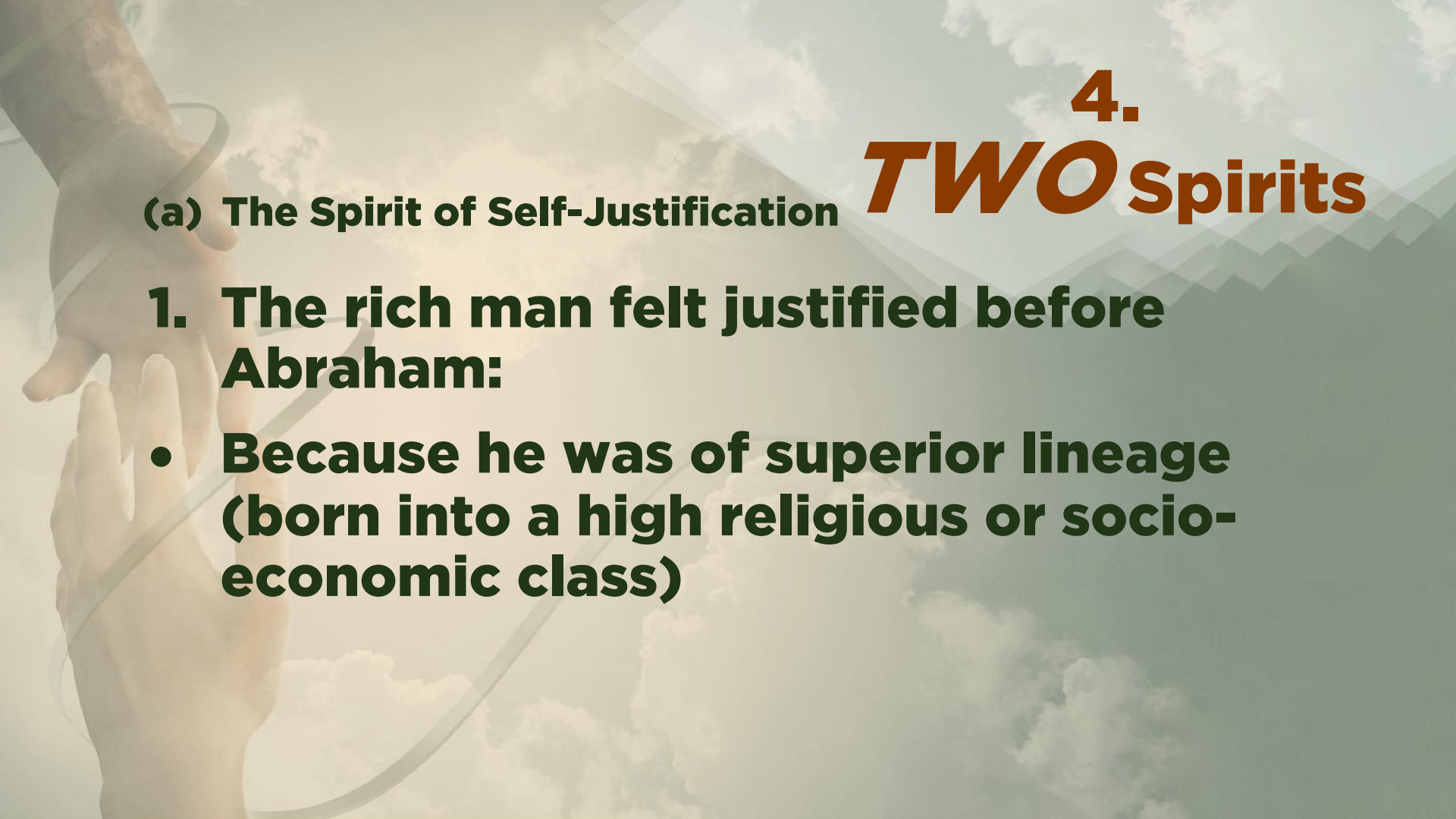
- **What we value shapes the way we live, the way we measure ourselves, and the way we measure others.**
- **What we value shapes our attitudes towards men and God.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

What exactly was so wrong with the rich man?

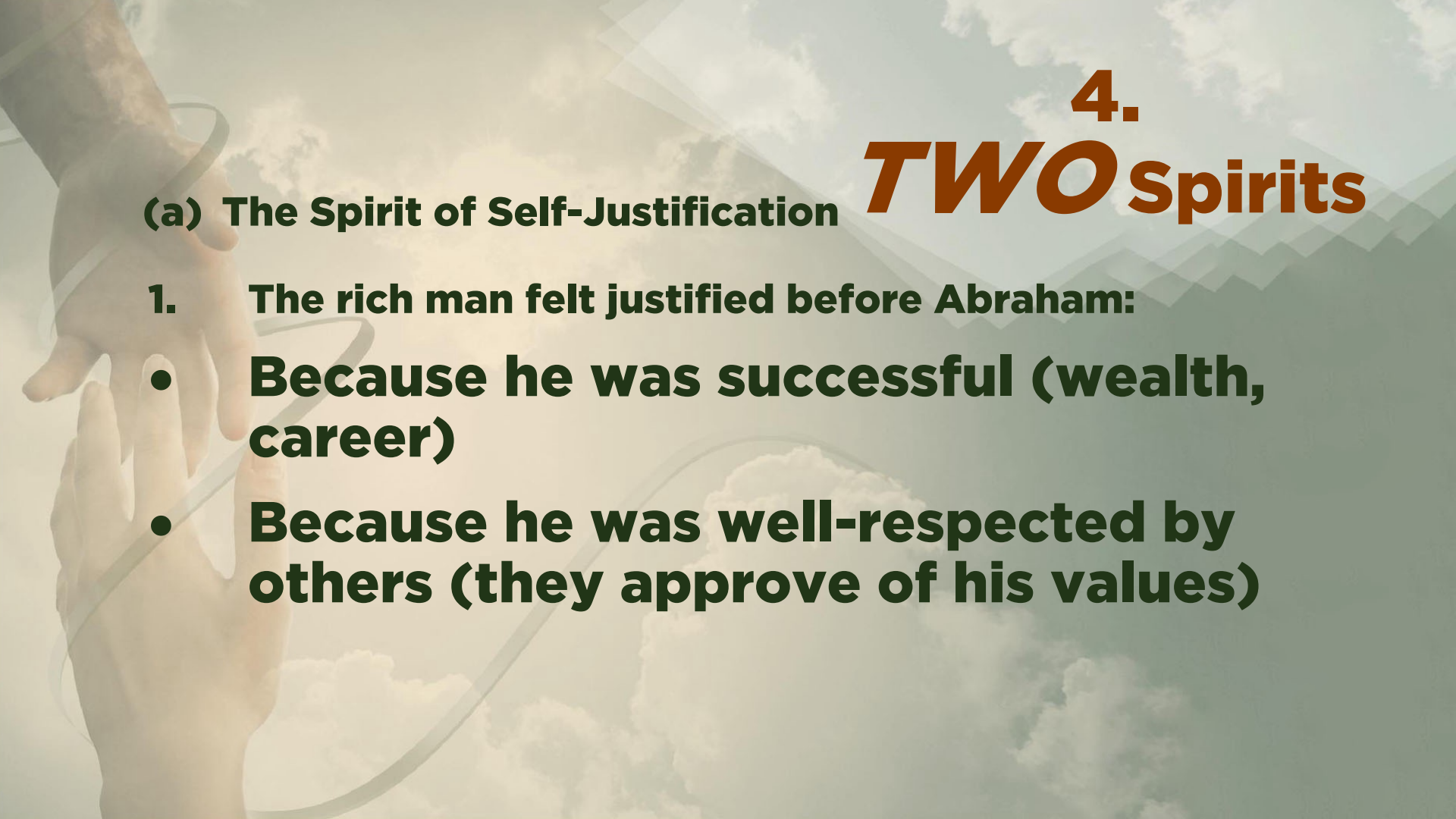


4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

1. The rich man felt justified before Abraham:

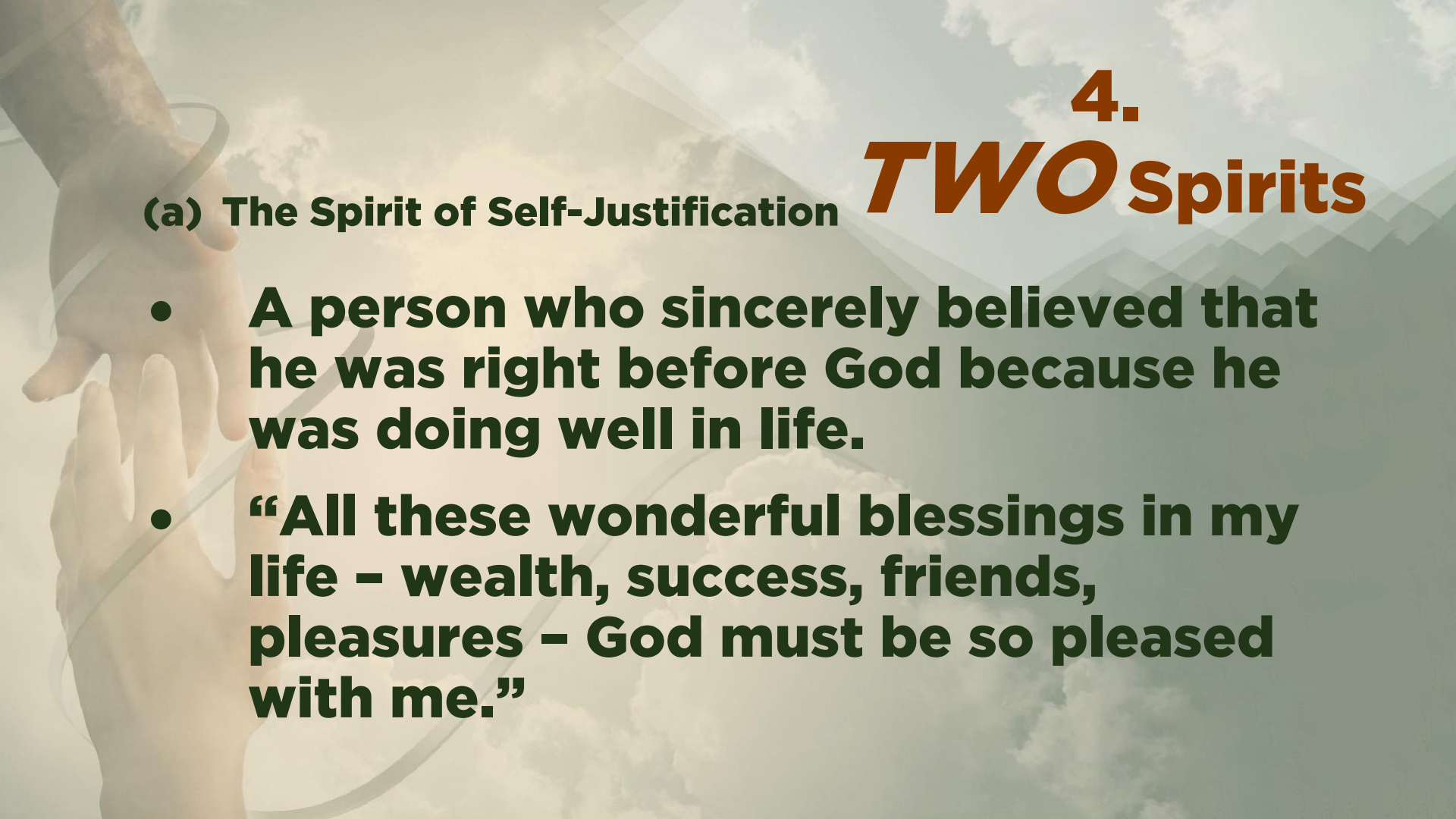
- **Because he was of superior lineage (born into a high religious or socio-economic class)**



4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

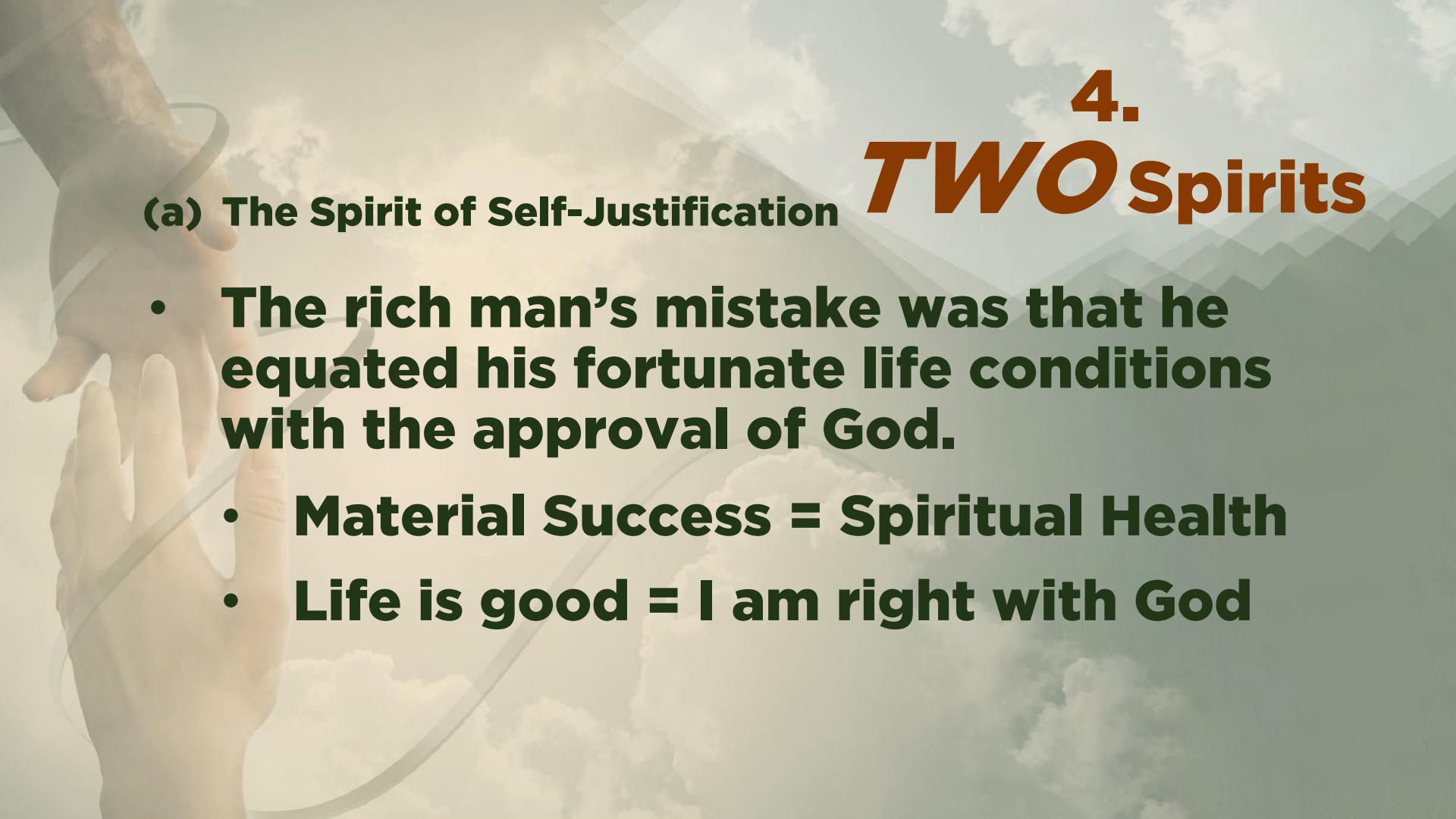
- 1. The rich man felt justified before Abraham:**
 - **Because he was successful (wealth, career)**
 - **Because he was well-respected by others (they approve of his values)**



4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

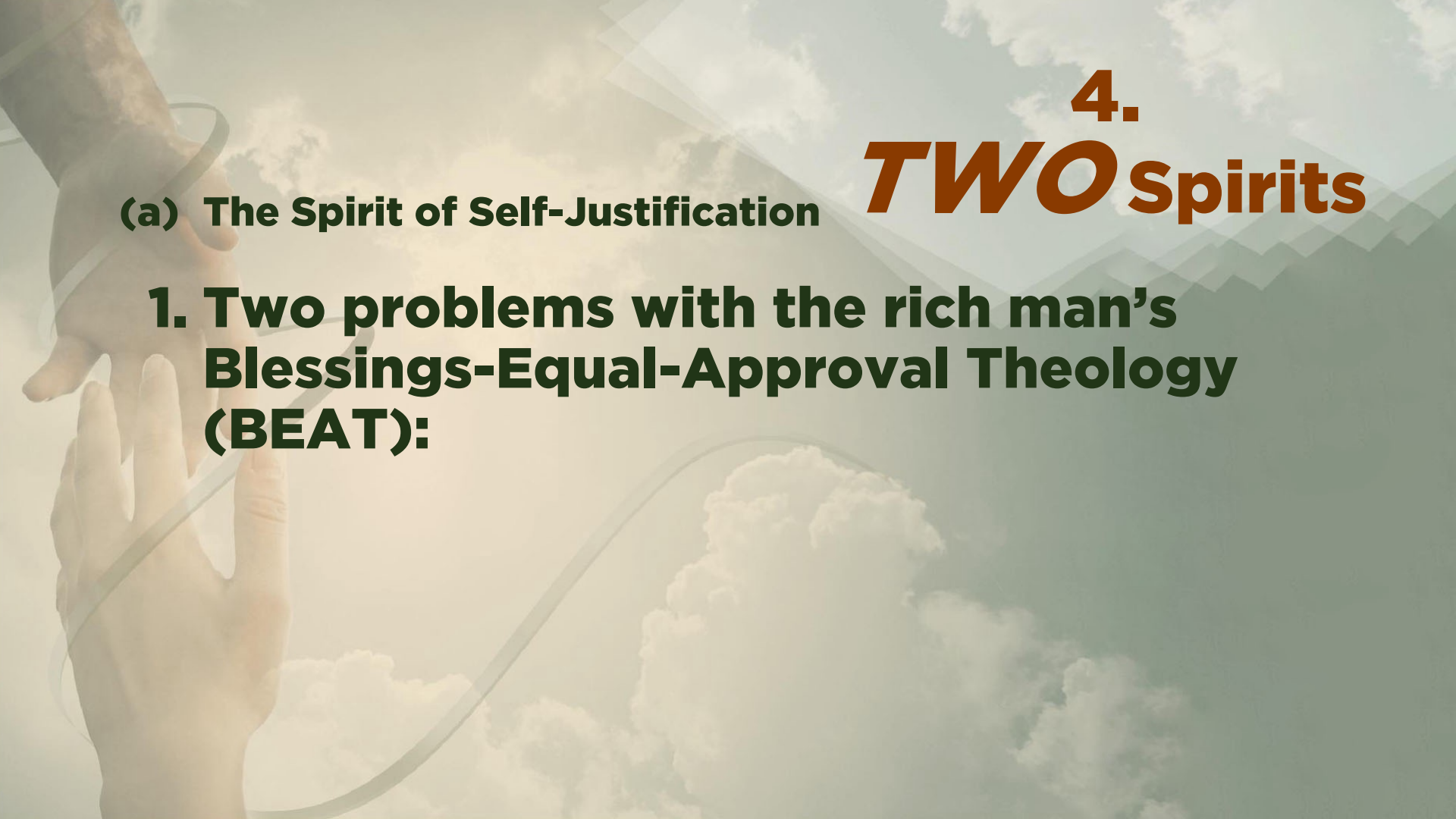
- **A person who sincerely believed that he was right before God because he was doing well in life.**
- **“All these wonderful blessings in my life – wealth, success, friends, pleasures – God must be so pleased with me.”**



4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

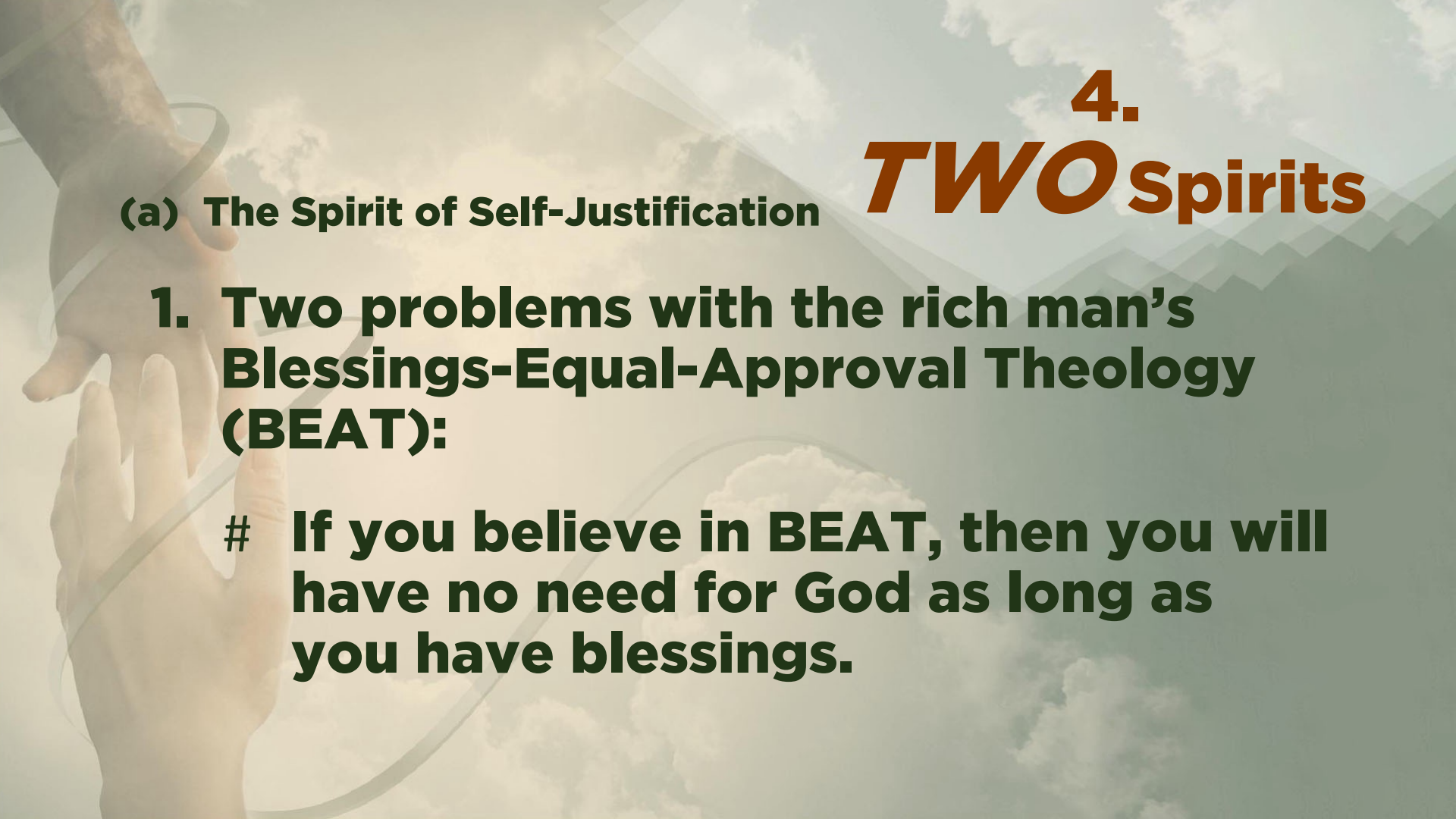
- **The rich man's mistake was that he equated his fortunate life conditions with the approval of God.**
- **Material Success = Spiritual Health**
- **Life is good = I am right with God**



4. ***TWO***spirits

(a) **The Spirit of Self-Justification**

**1. Two problems with the rich man's
Blessings-Equal-Approval Theology
(BEAT):**

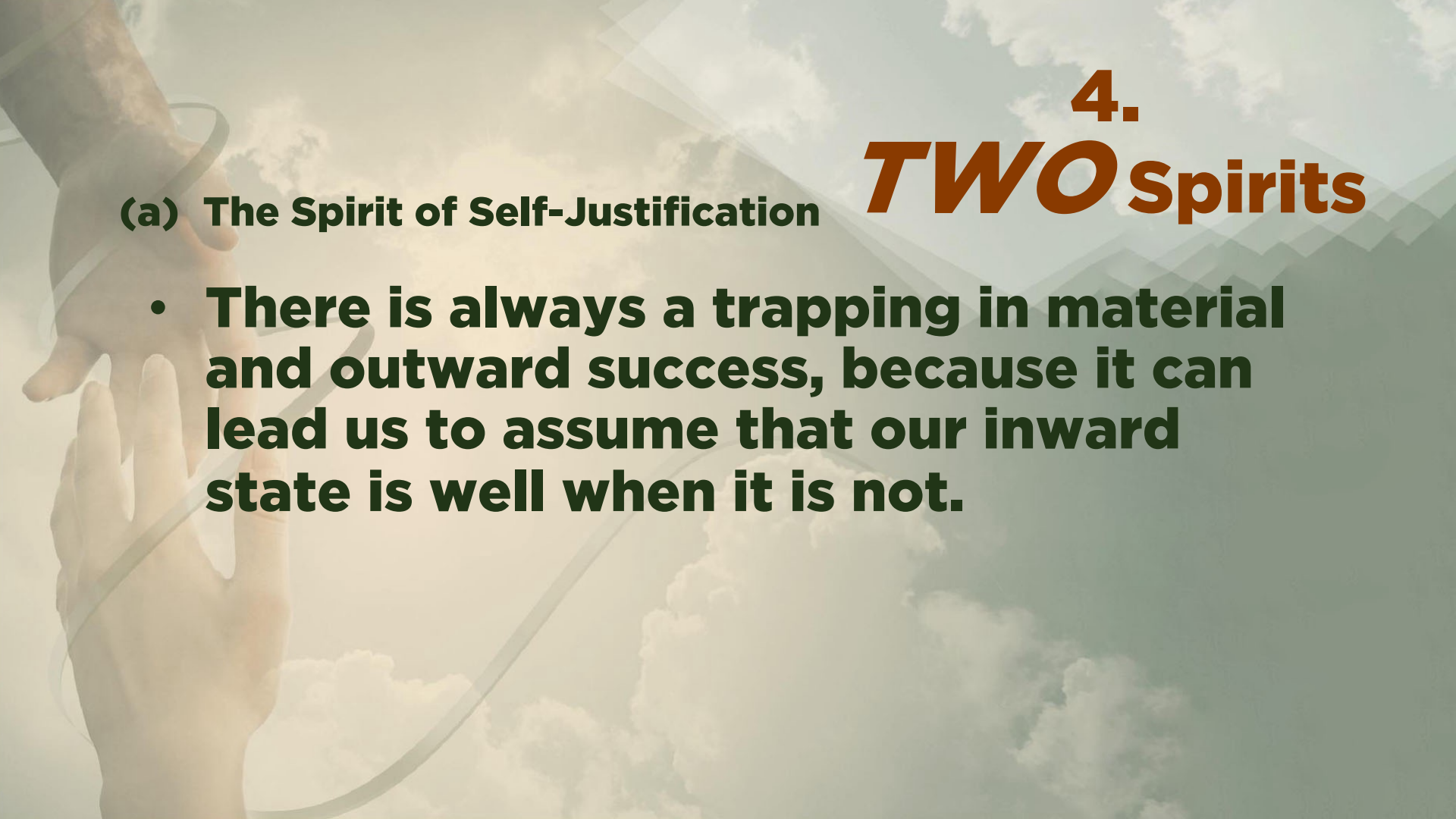


4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

1. Two problems with the rich man's Blessings-Equal-Approval Theology (BEAT):

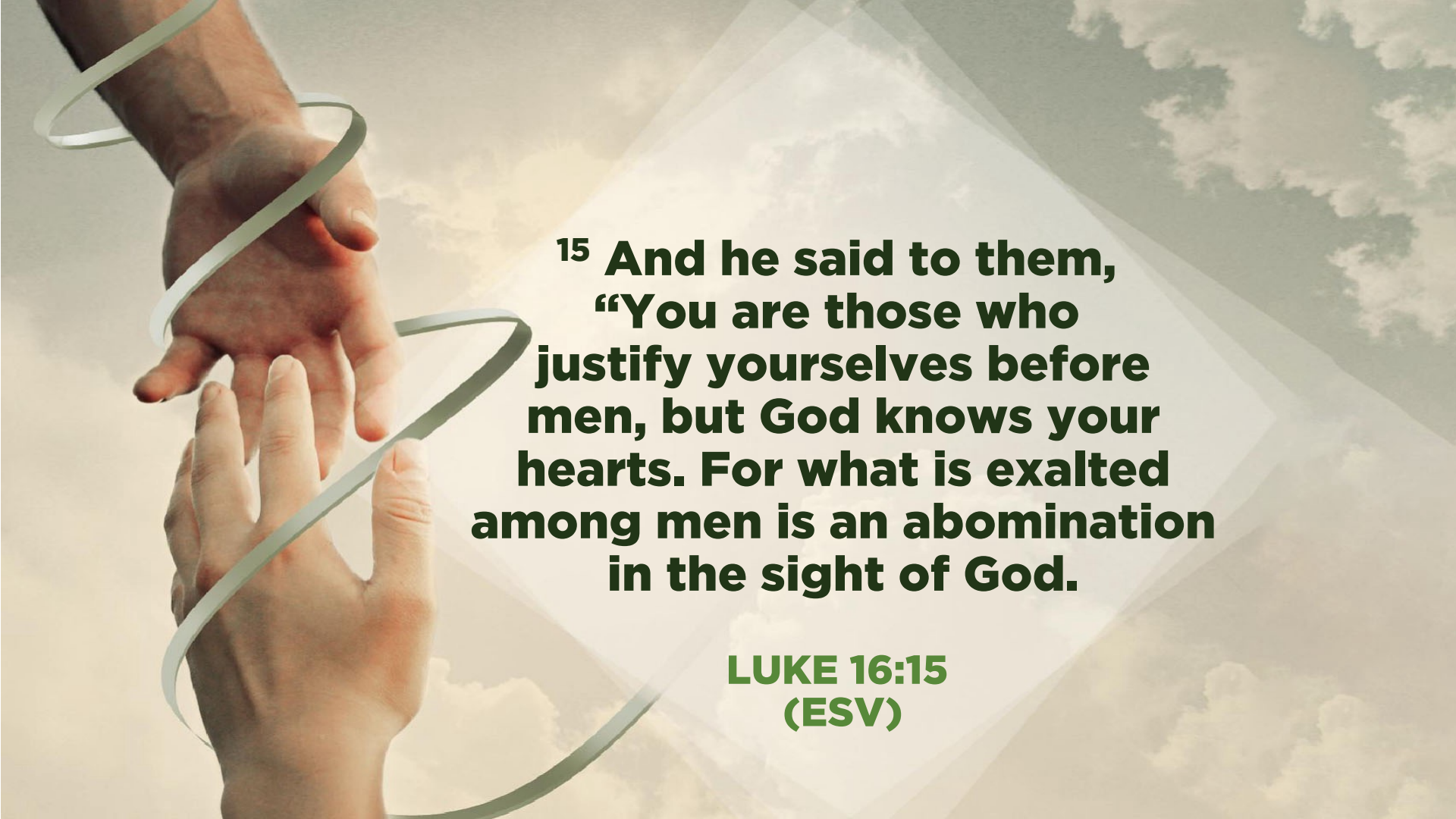
**# If you believe in BEAT, then you will
have no need for God as long as
you have blessings.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

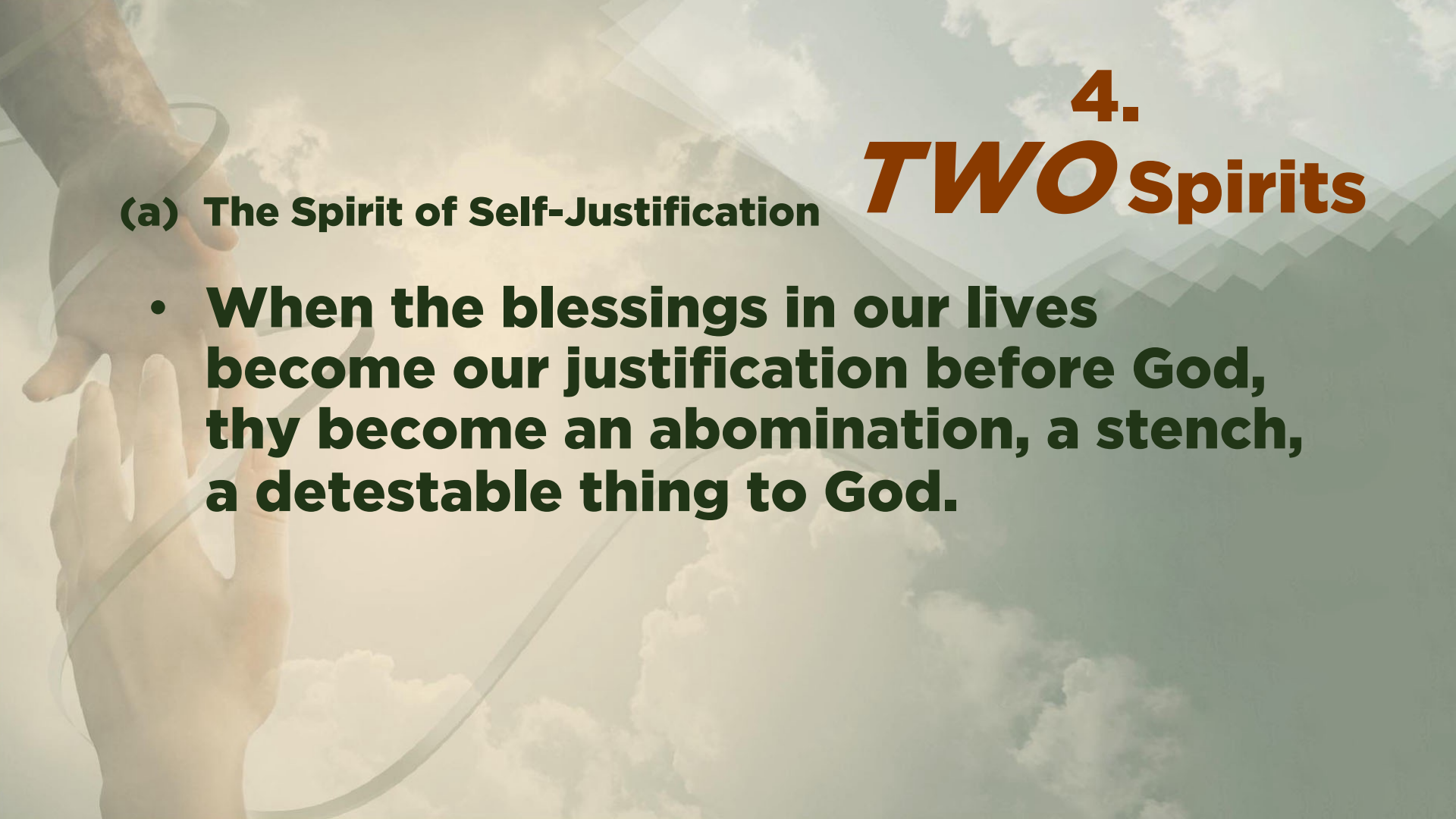
(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

- **There is always a trapping in material and outward success, because it can lead us to assume that our inward state is well when it is not.**



**¹⁵ And he said to them,
“You are those who
justify yourselves before
men, but God knows your
hearts. For what is exalted
among men is an abomination
in the sight of God.**

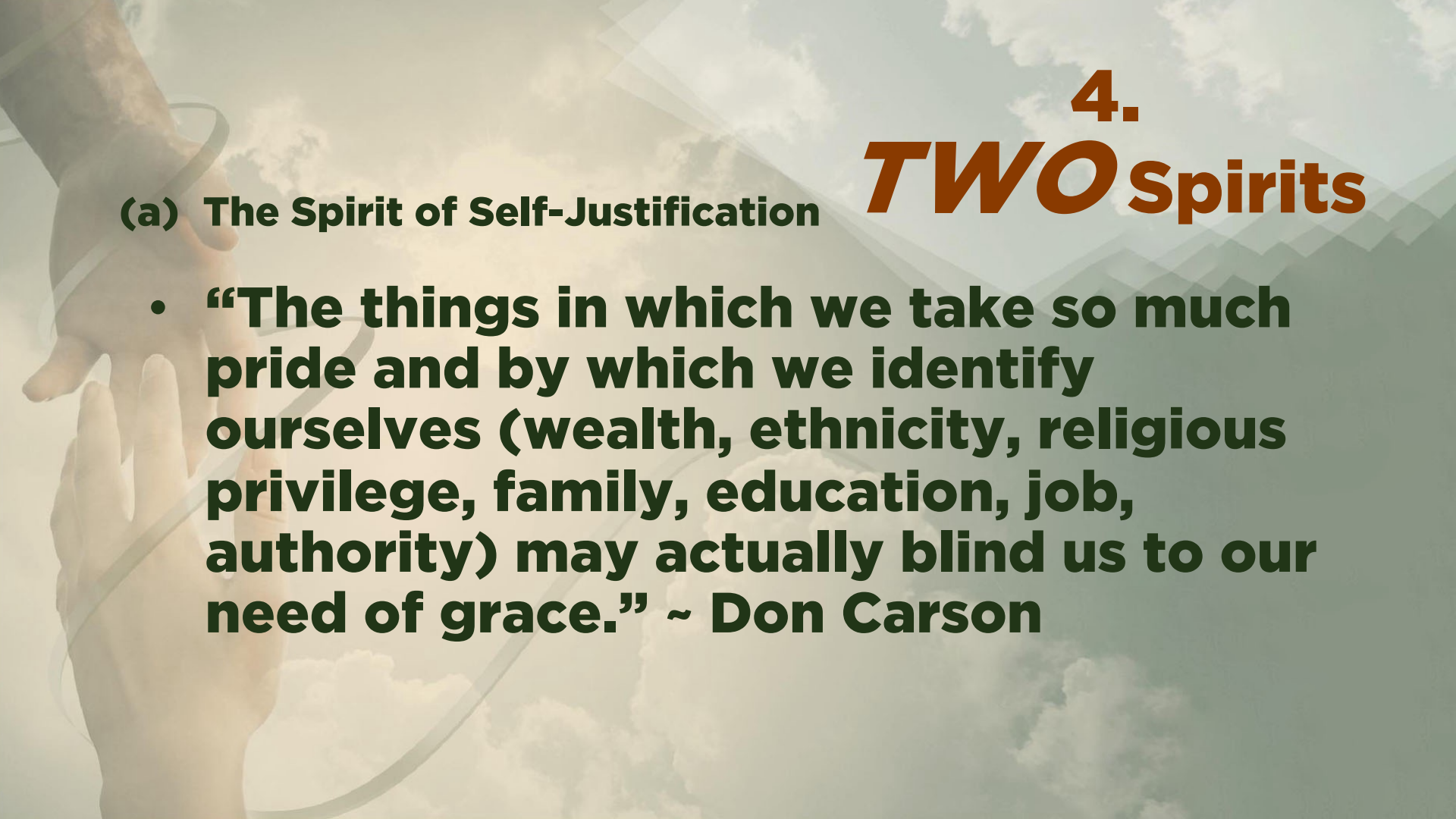
**LUKE 16:15
(ESV)**



4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

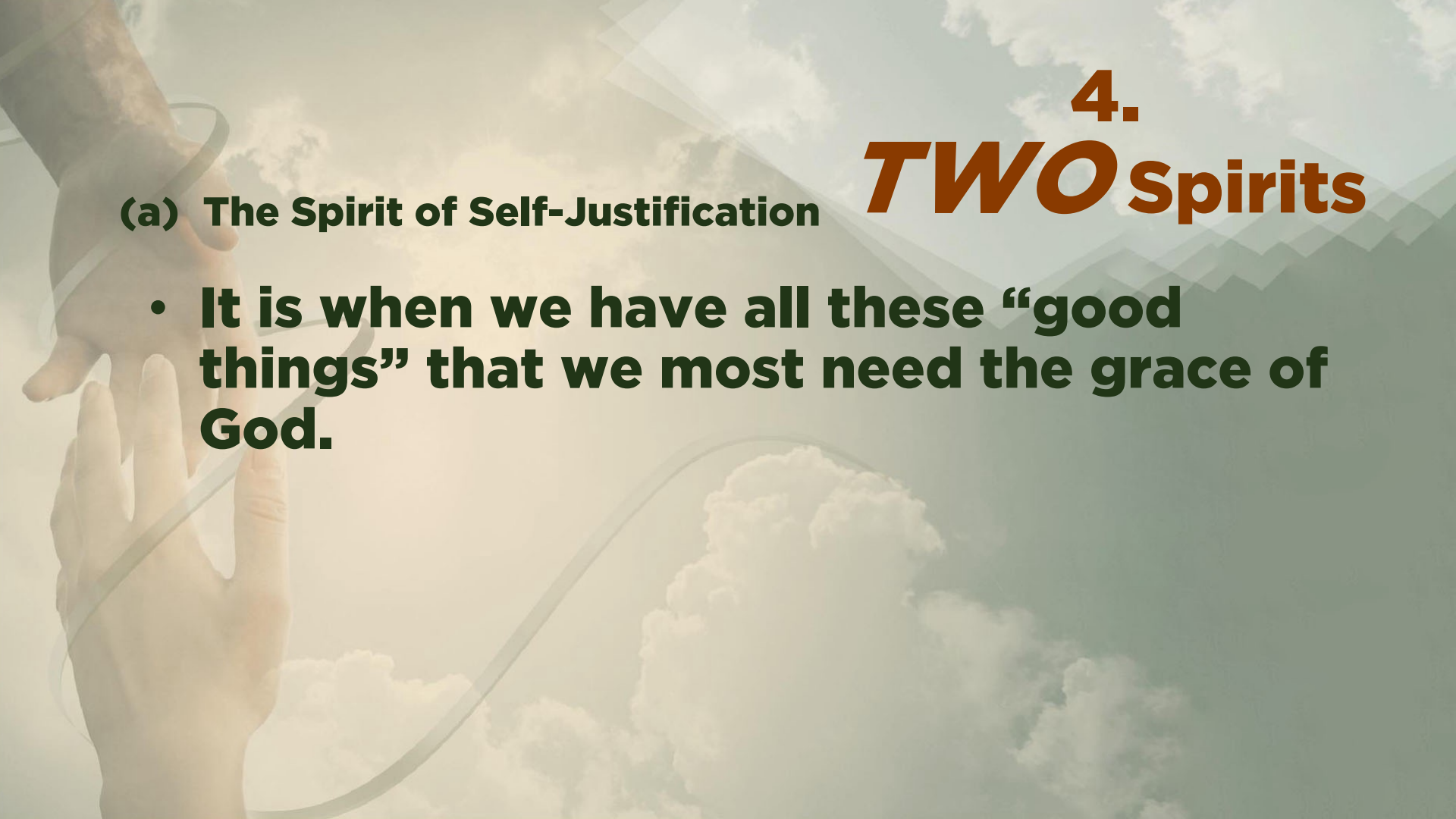
- **When the blessings in our lives become our justification before God, they become an abomination, a stench, a detestable thing to God.**



4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

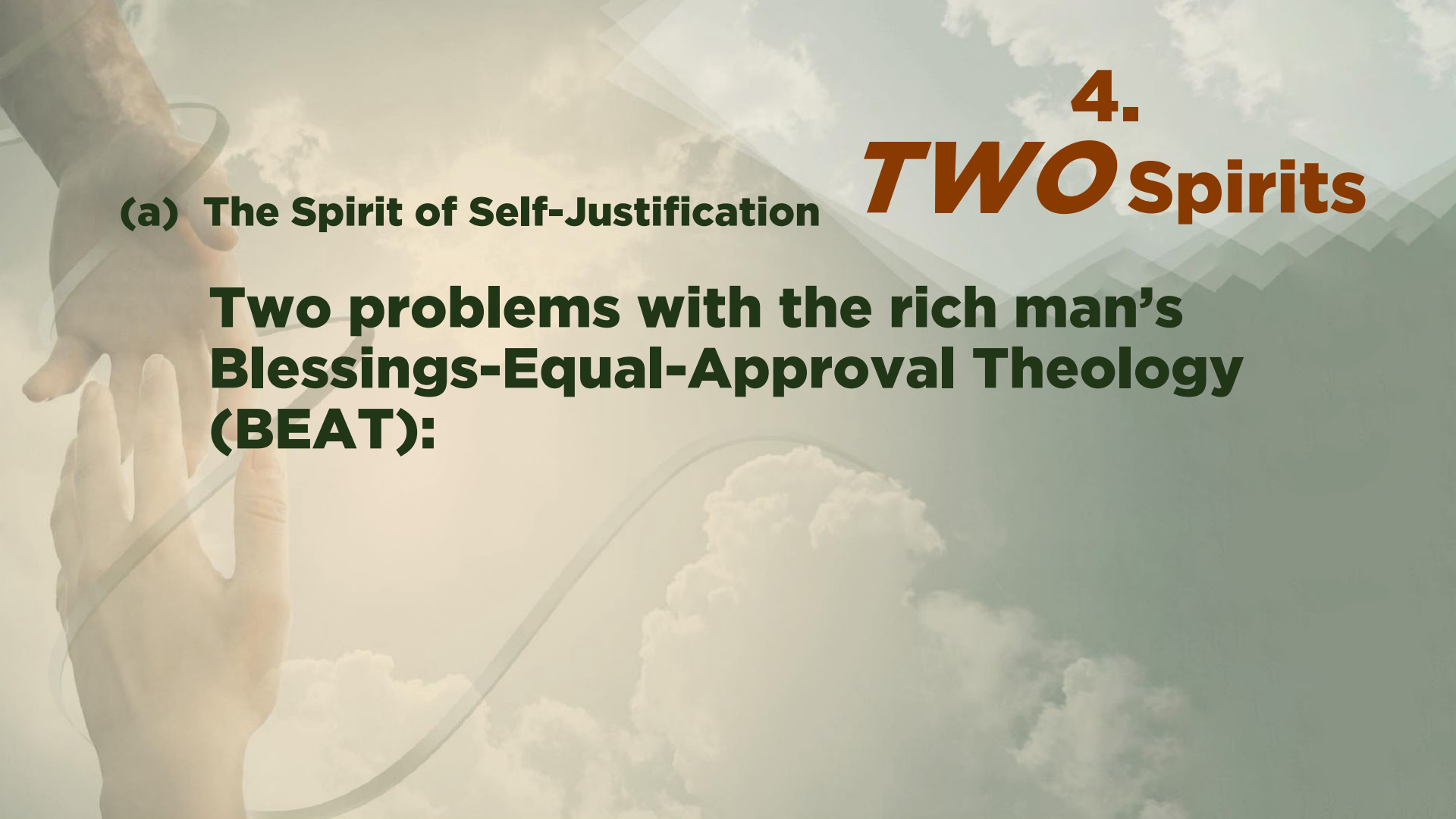
- **“The things in which we take so much pride and by which we identify ourselves (wealth, ethnicity, religious privilege, family, education, job, authority) may actually blind us to our need of grace.” ~ Don Carson**



4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

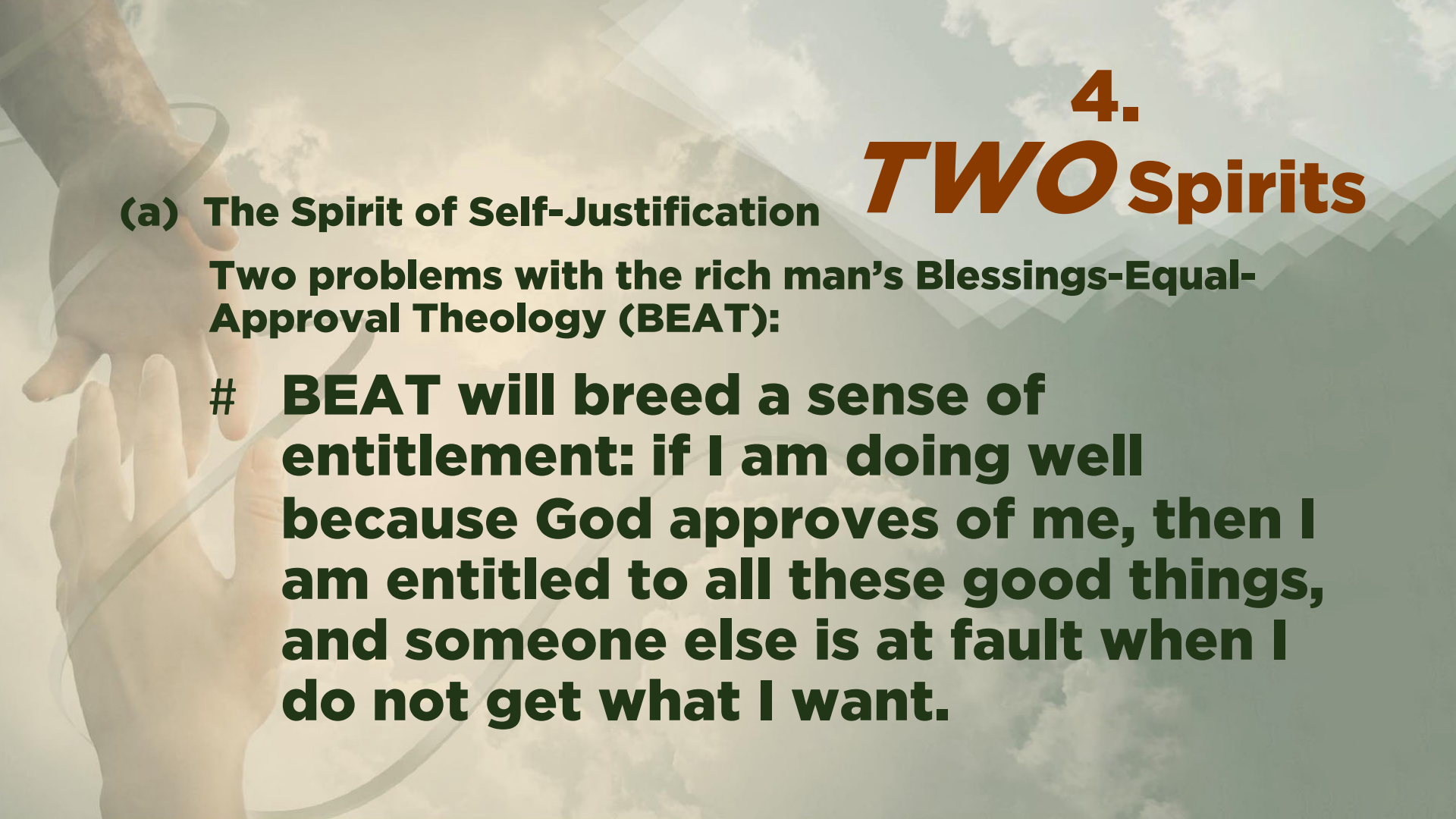
- **It is when we have all these “good things” that we most need the grace of God.**



4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

**Two problems with the rich man's
Blessings-Equal-Approval Theology
(BEAT):**

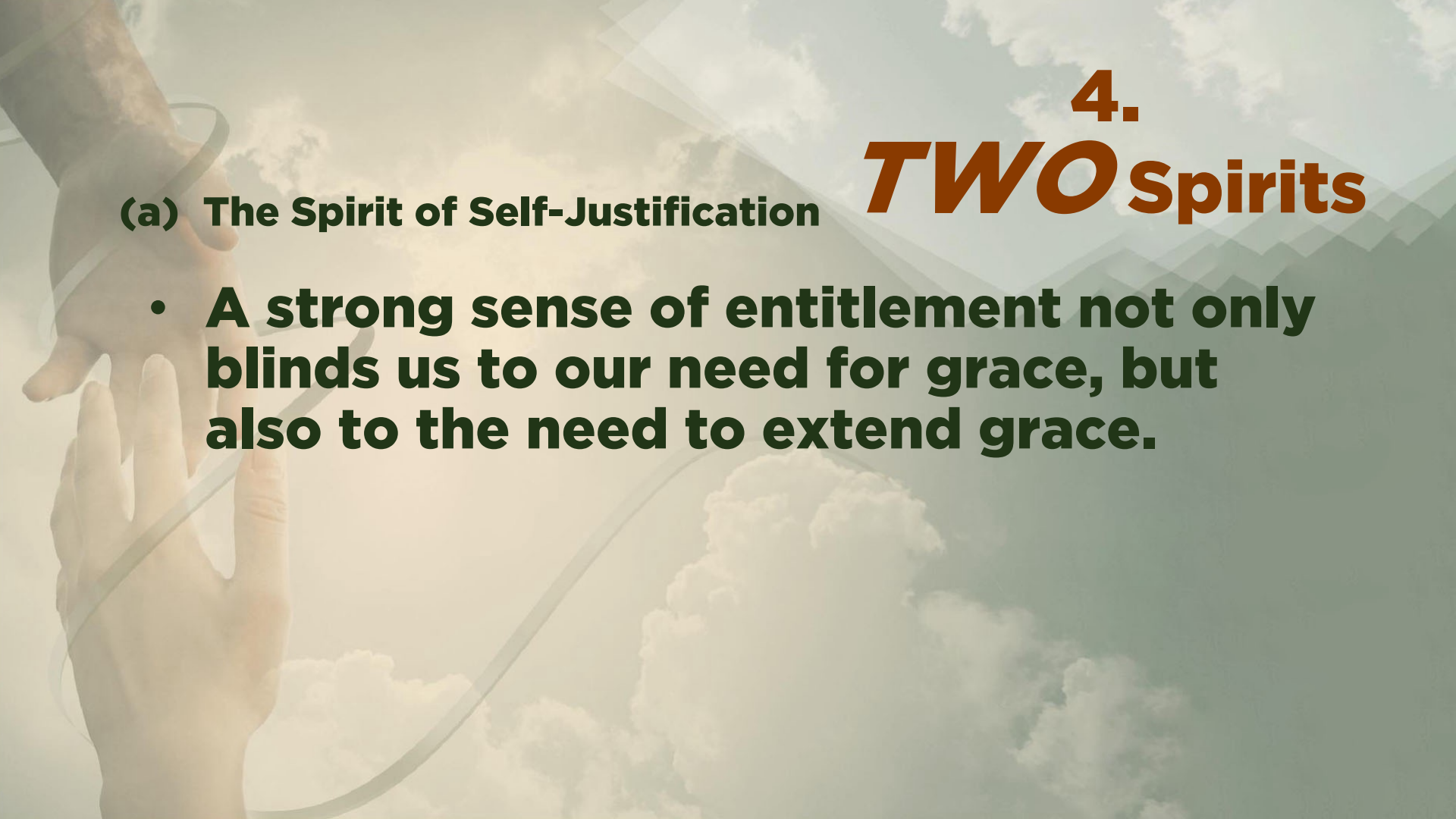


4. **TWO**spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

Two problems with the rich man's Blessings-Equal-Approval Theology (BEAT):

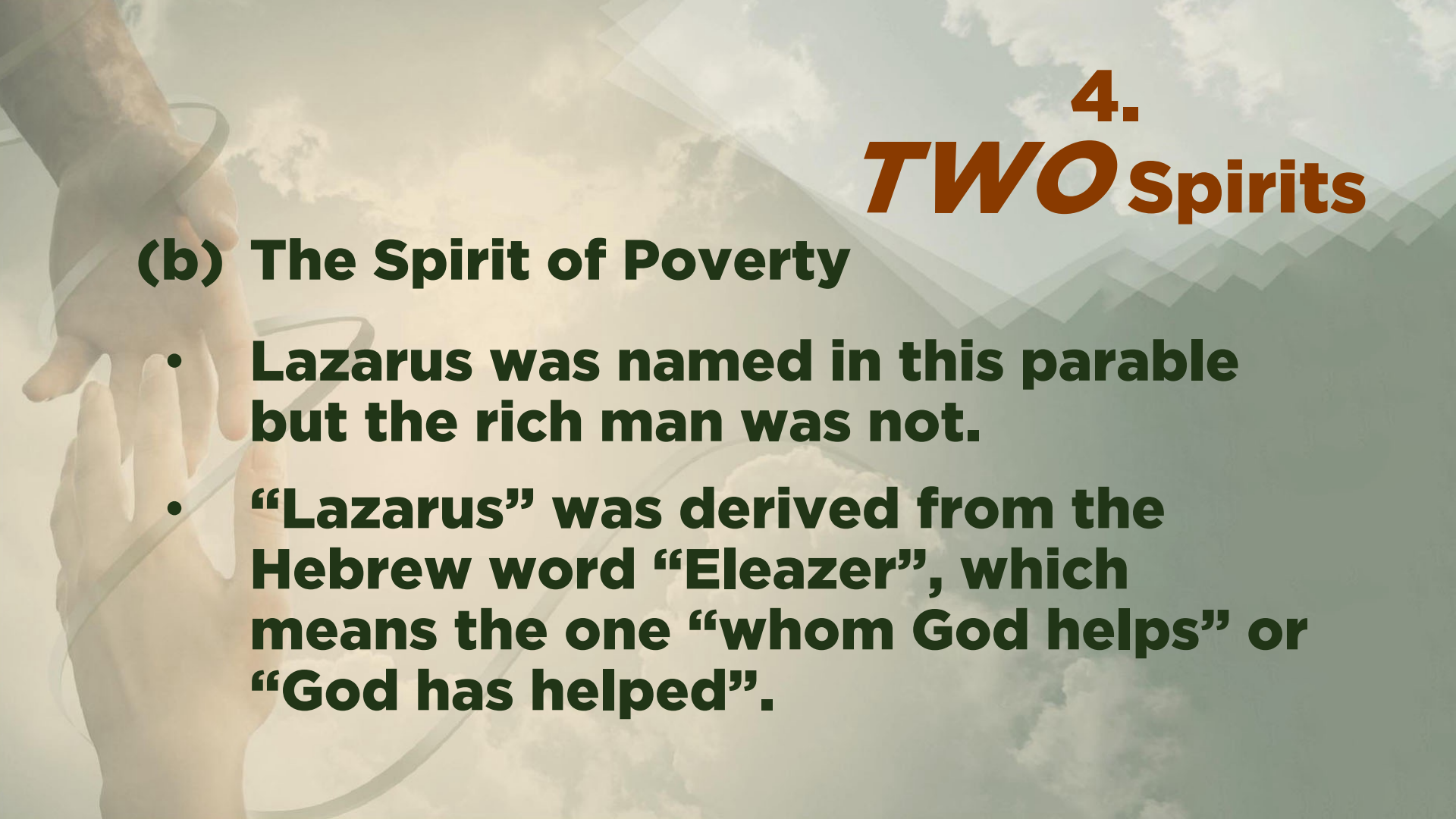
BEAT will breed a sense of entitlement: if I am doing well because God approves of me, then I am entitled to all these good things, and someone else is at fault when I do not get what I want.



4. ***TWO***spirits

(a) The Spirit of Self-Justification

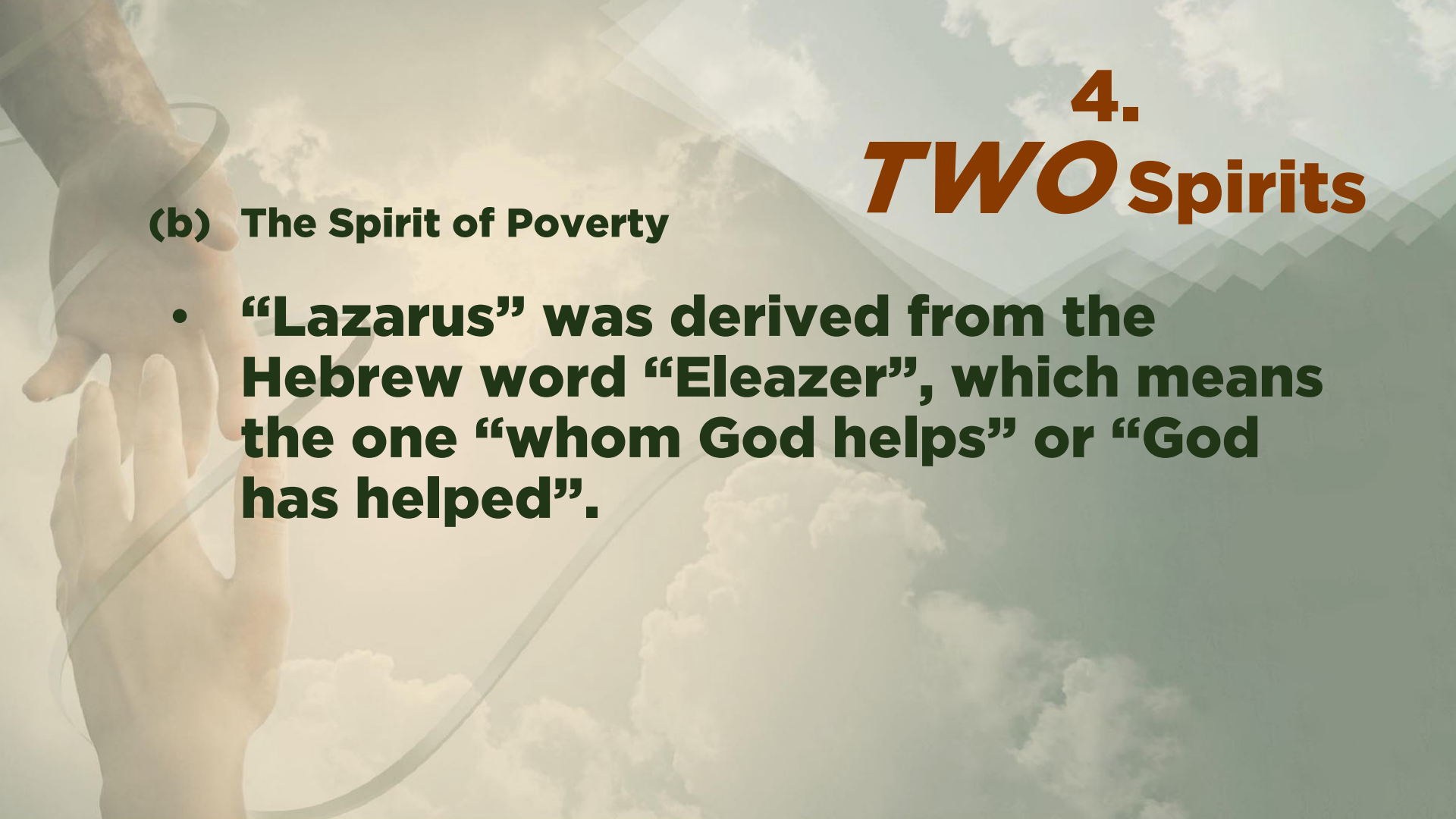
- **A strong sense of entitlement not only blinds us to our need for grace, but also to the need to extend grace.**



4. **TWO**spirits

(b) The Spirit of Poverty

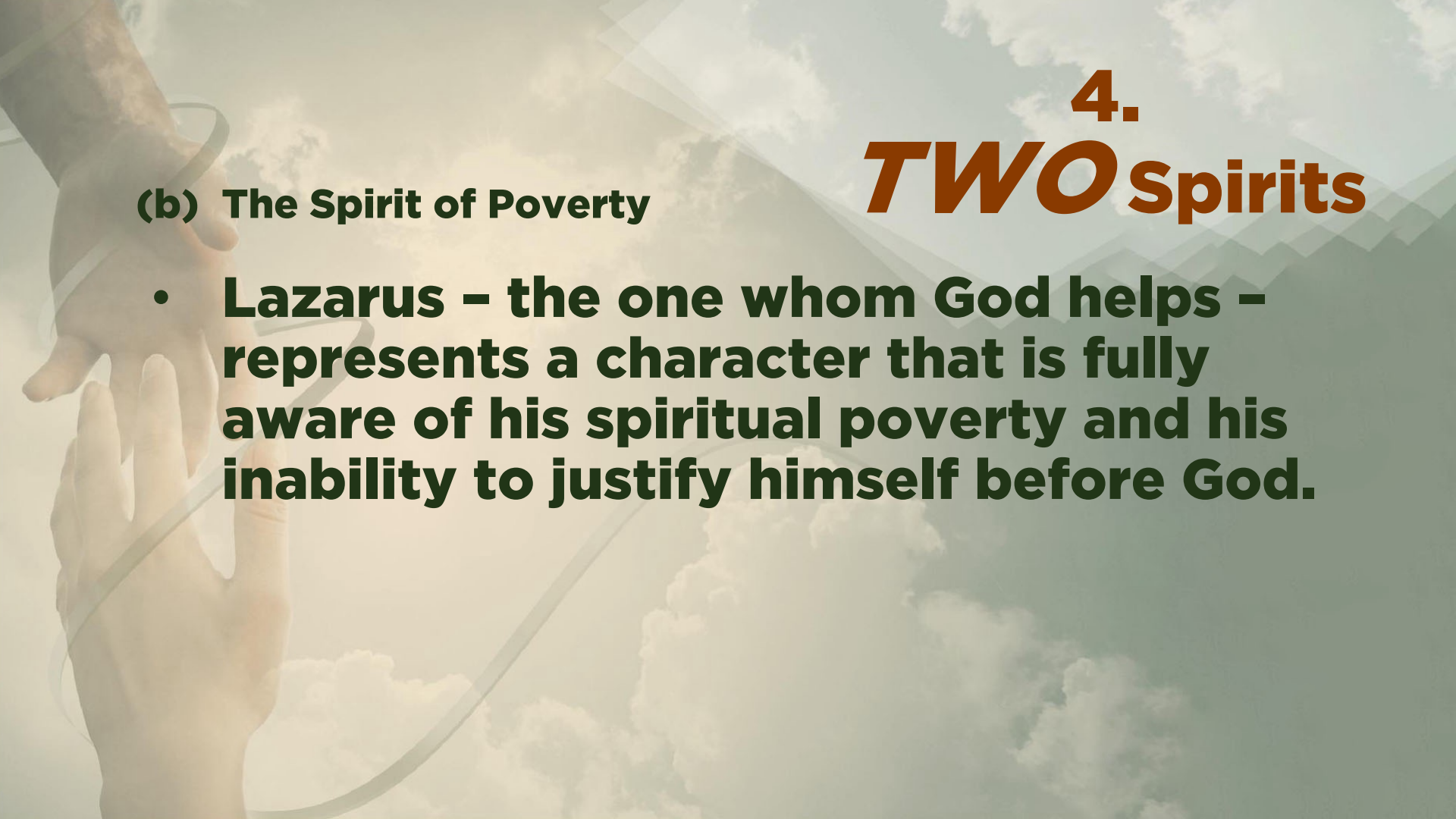
- **Lazarus was named in this parable but the rich man was not.**
- **“Lazarus” was derived from the Hebrew word “Eleazer”, which means the one “whom God helps” or “God has helped”.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

(b) The Spirit of Poverty

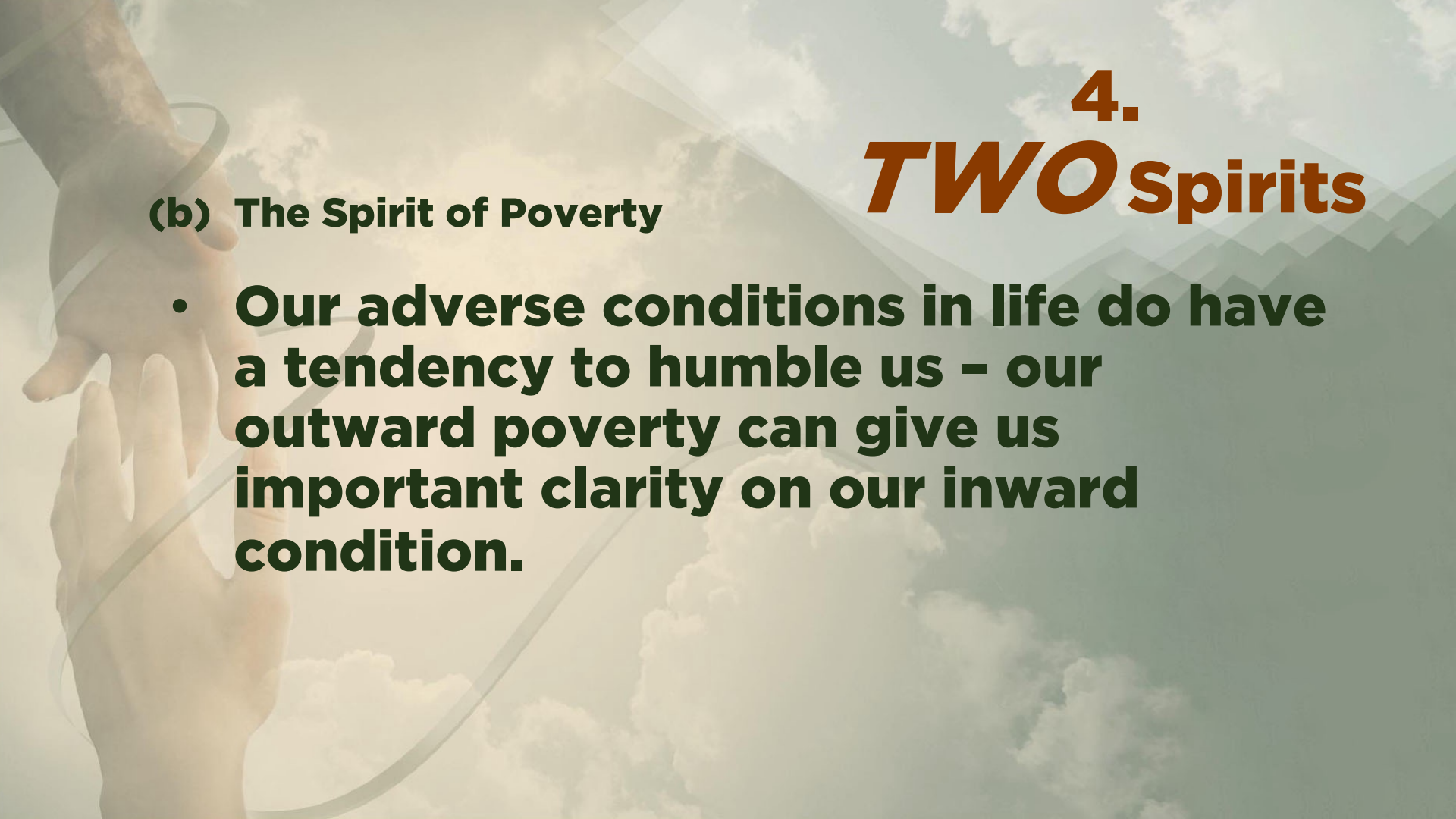
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4. **TWO**spirits

(b) The Spirit of Poverty

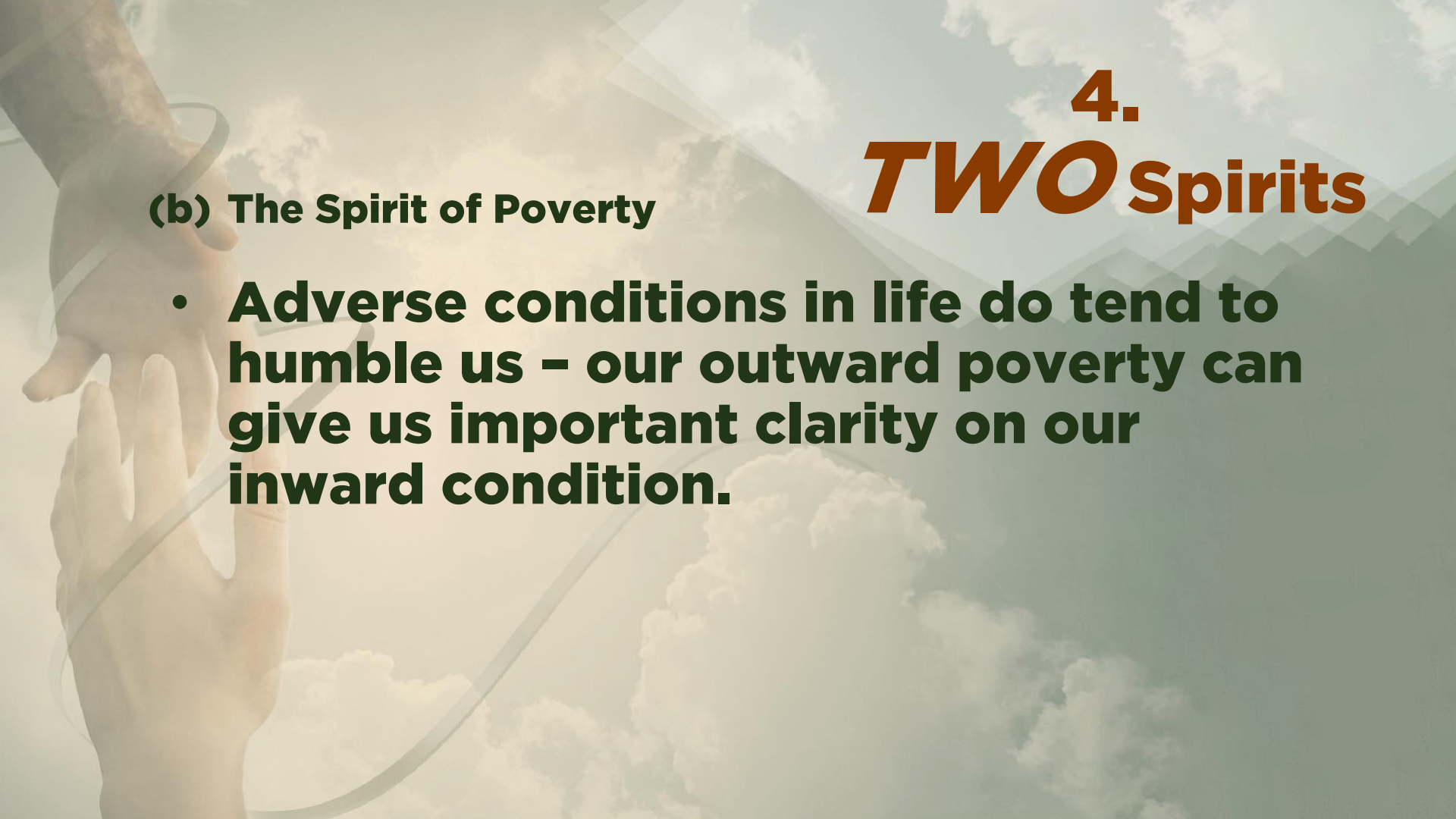
- **Lazarus – the one whom God helps – represents a character that is fully aware of his spiritual poverty and his inability to justify himself before God.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

(b) The Spirit of Poverty

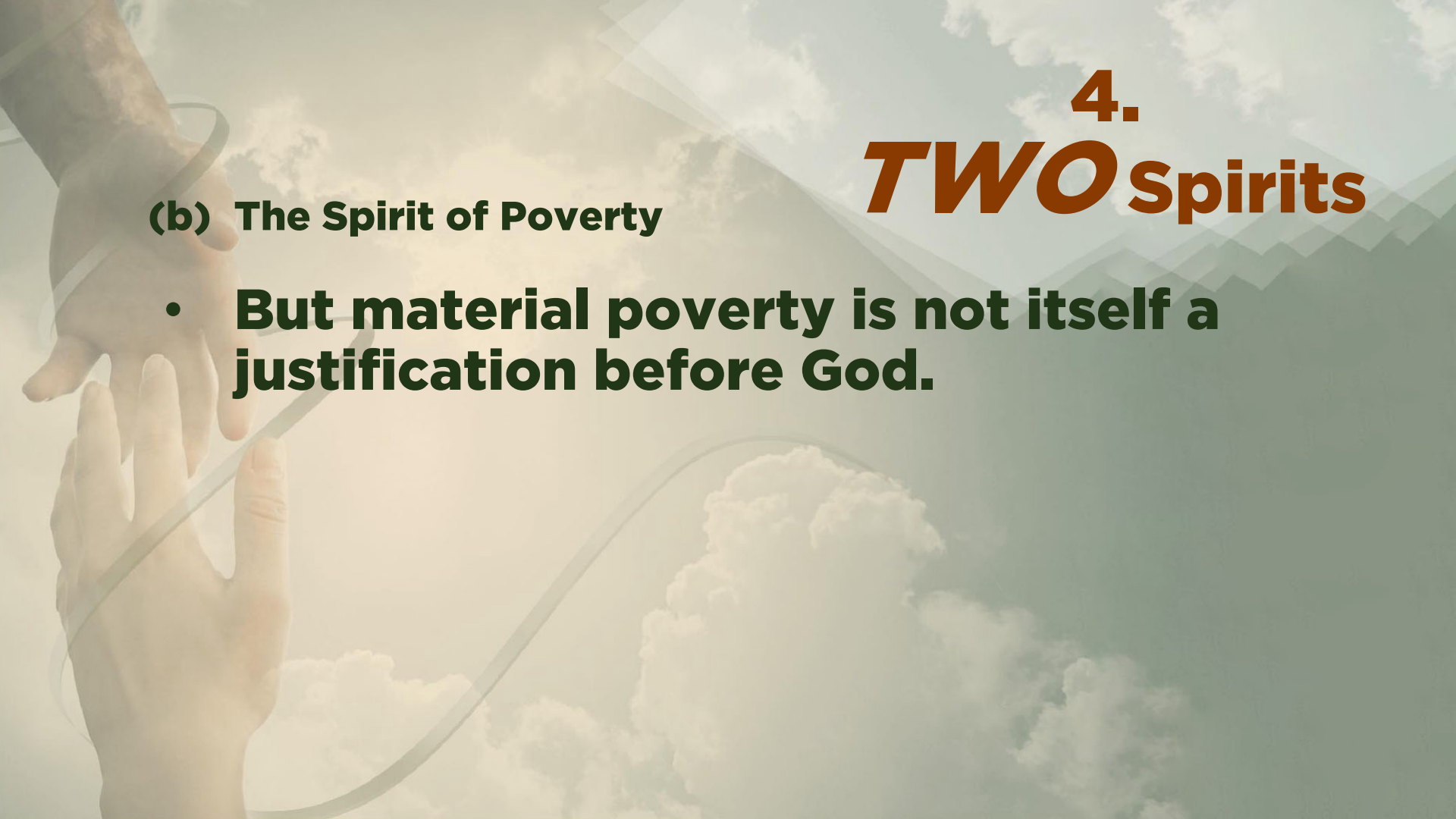
- **Our adverse conditions in life do have a tendency to humble us – our outward poverty can give us important clarity on our inward condition.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

(b) The Spirit of Poverty

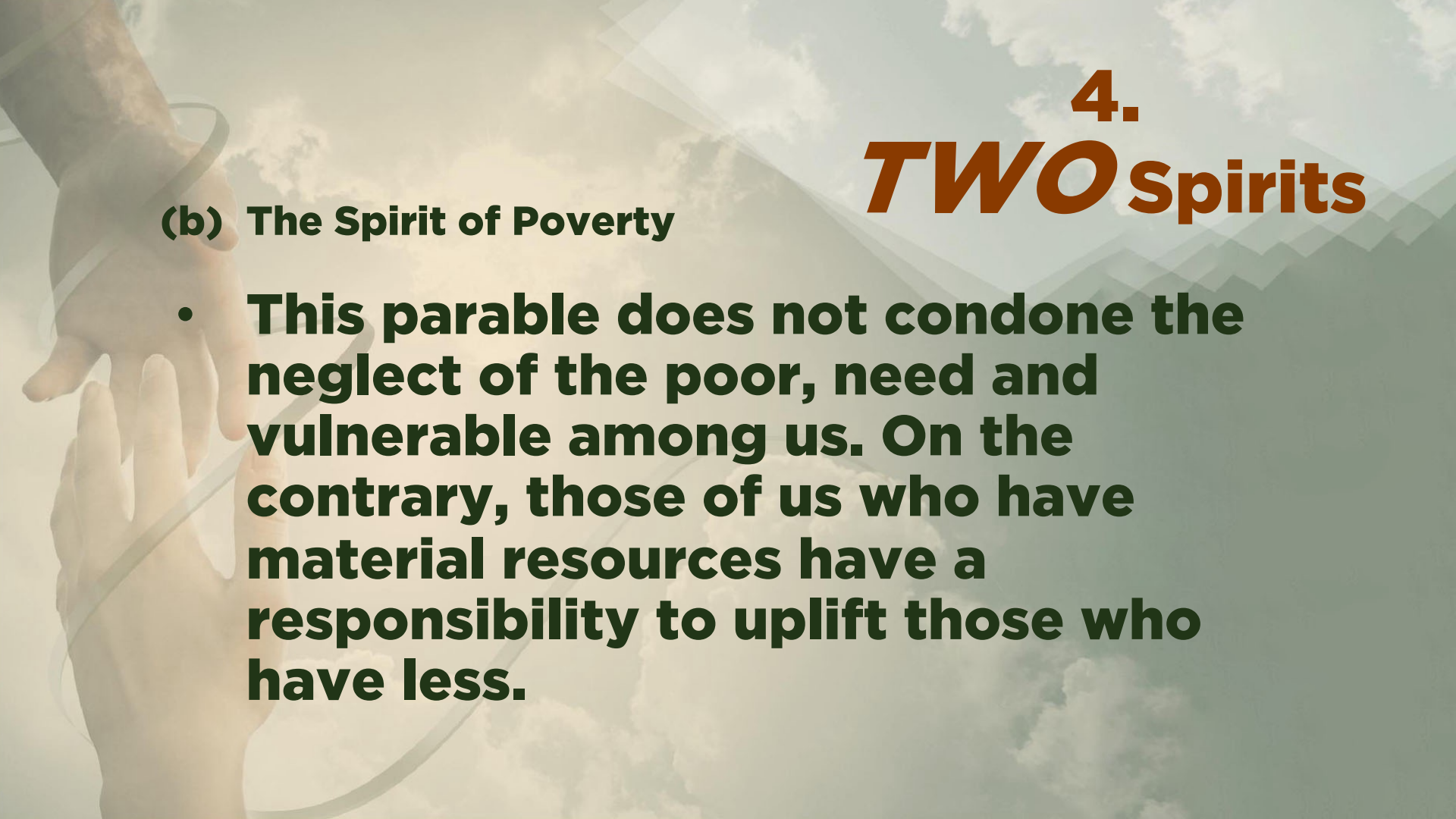
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(b) The Spirit of Poverty

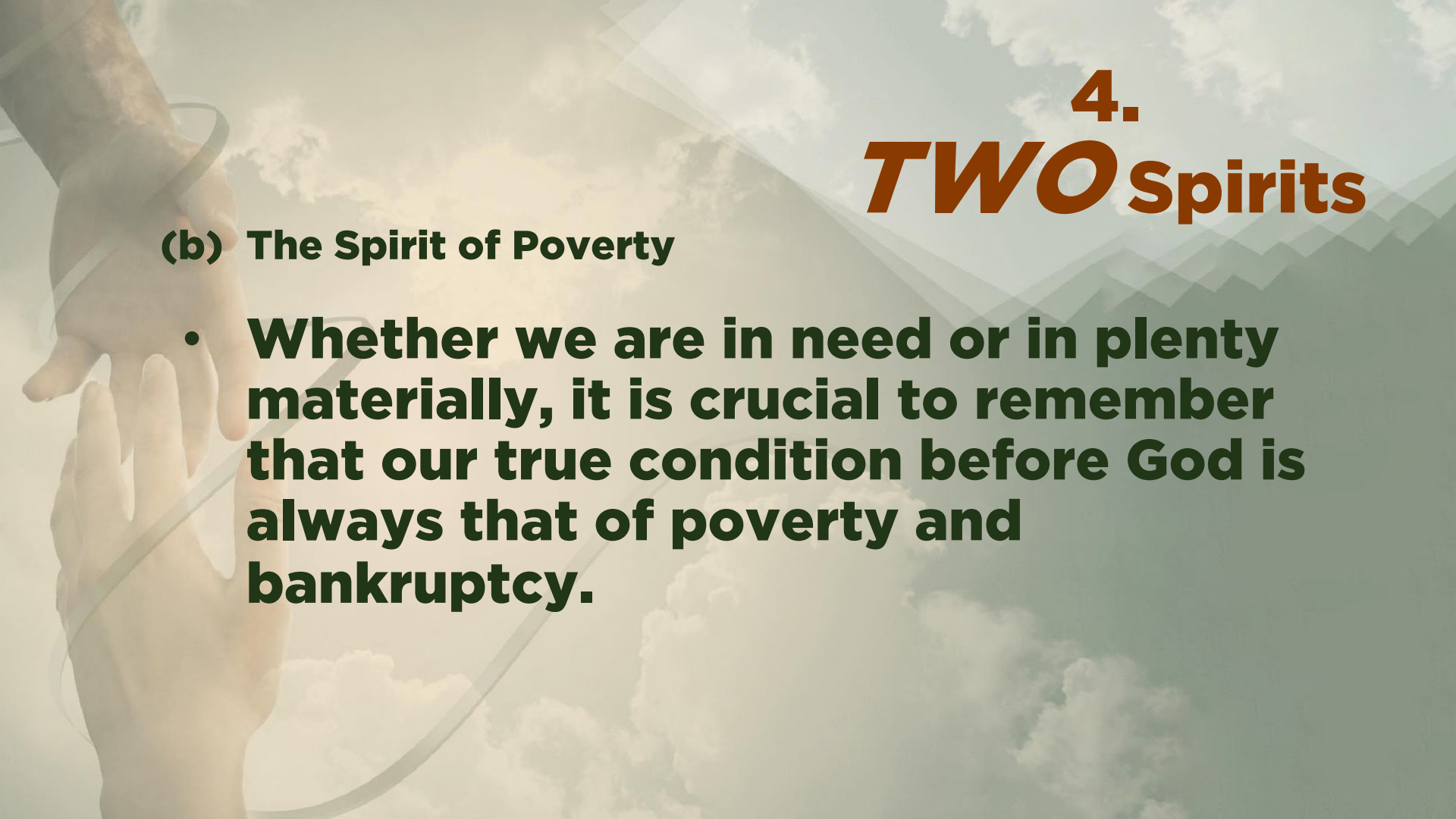
- **But material poverty is not itself a justification before God.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

(b) The Spirit of Poverty

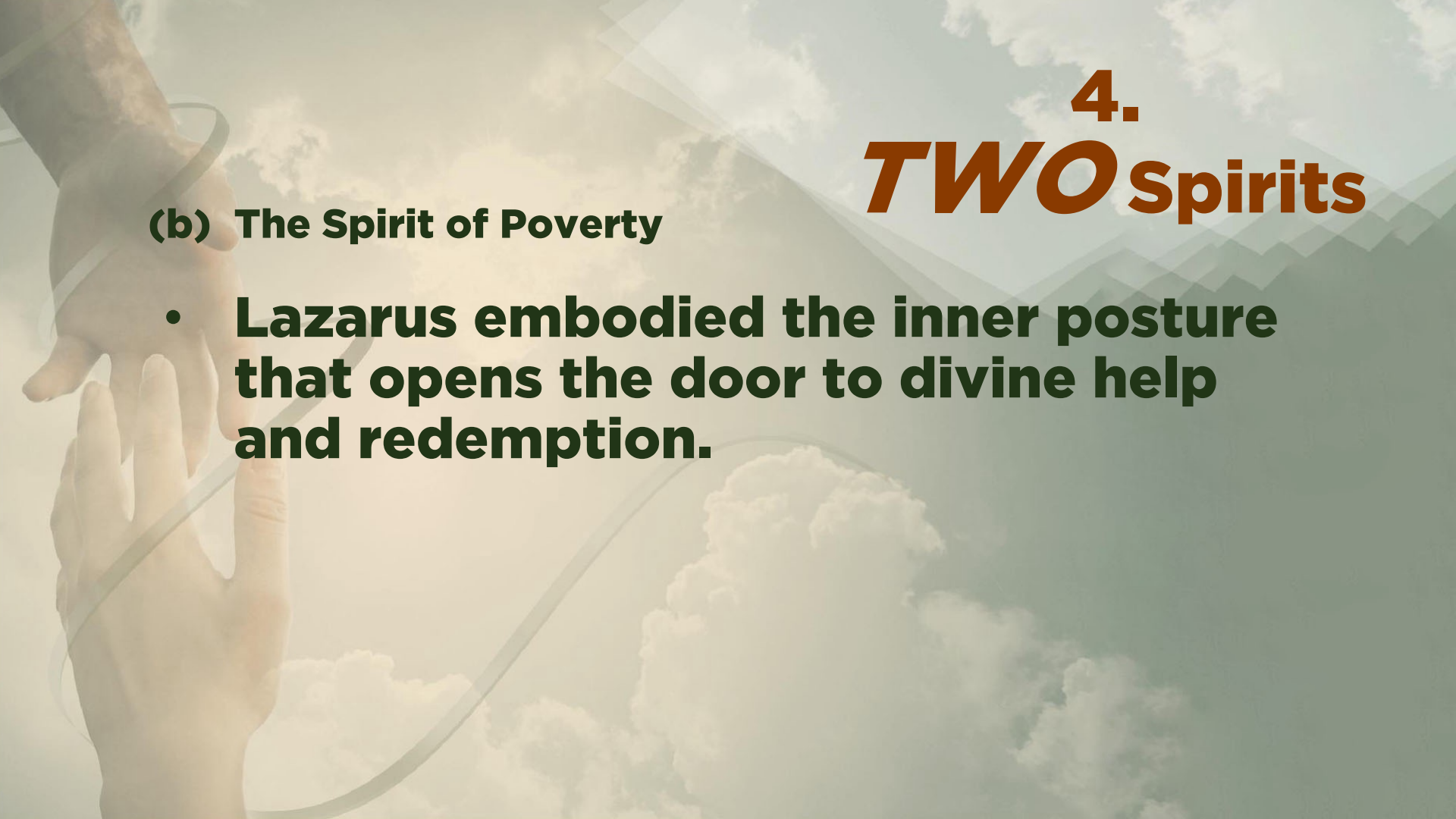
- **This parable does not condone the neglect of the poor, need and vulnerable among us. On the contrary, those of us who have material resources have a responsibility to uplift those who have less.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

(b) The Spirit of Poverty

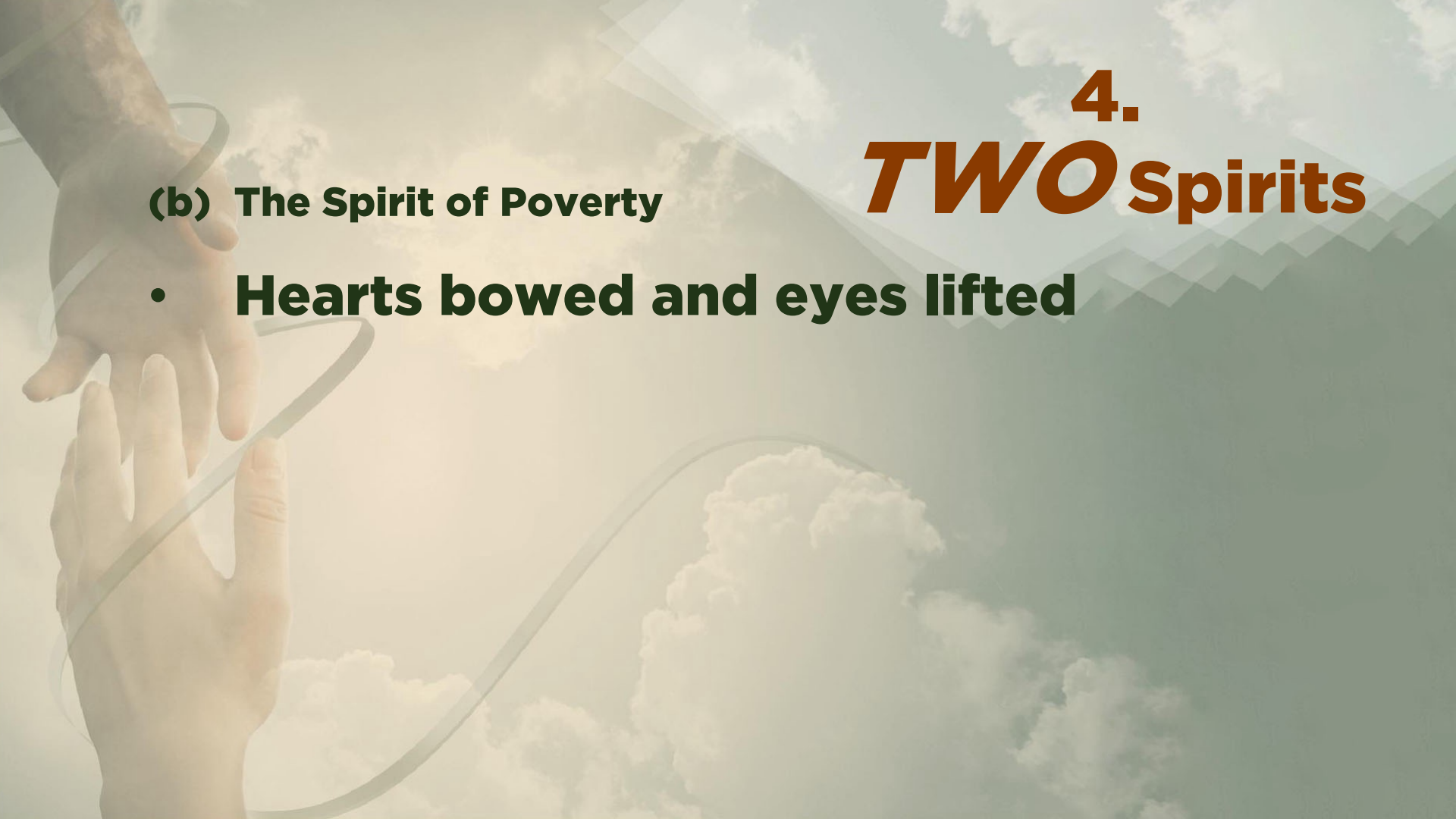
- **Whether we are in need or in plenty materially, it is crucial to remember that our true condition before God is always that of poverty and bankruptcy.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

(b) The Spirit of Poverty

- **Lazarus embodied the inner posture that opens the door to divine help and redemption.**



4. ***TWO***spirits

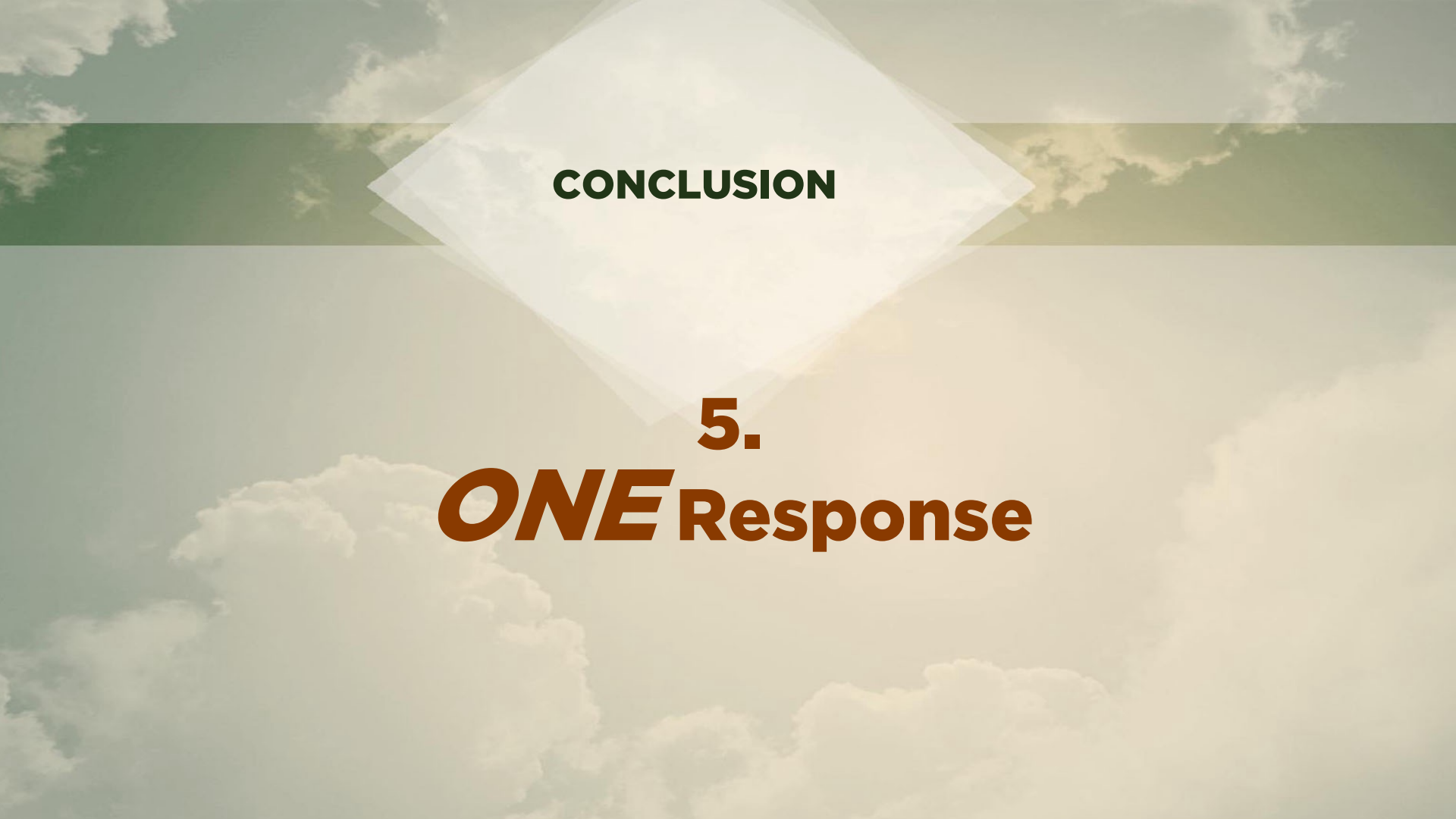
(b) The Spirit of Poverty

- **Hearts bowed and eyes lifted**



**³ “Blessed are the poor
in Spirit, for theirs is the
kingdom of God.”**

**MATTHEW 5:3
(ESV)**



CONCLUSION

5.
***ONE*Response**



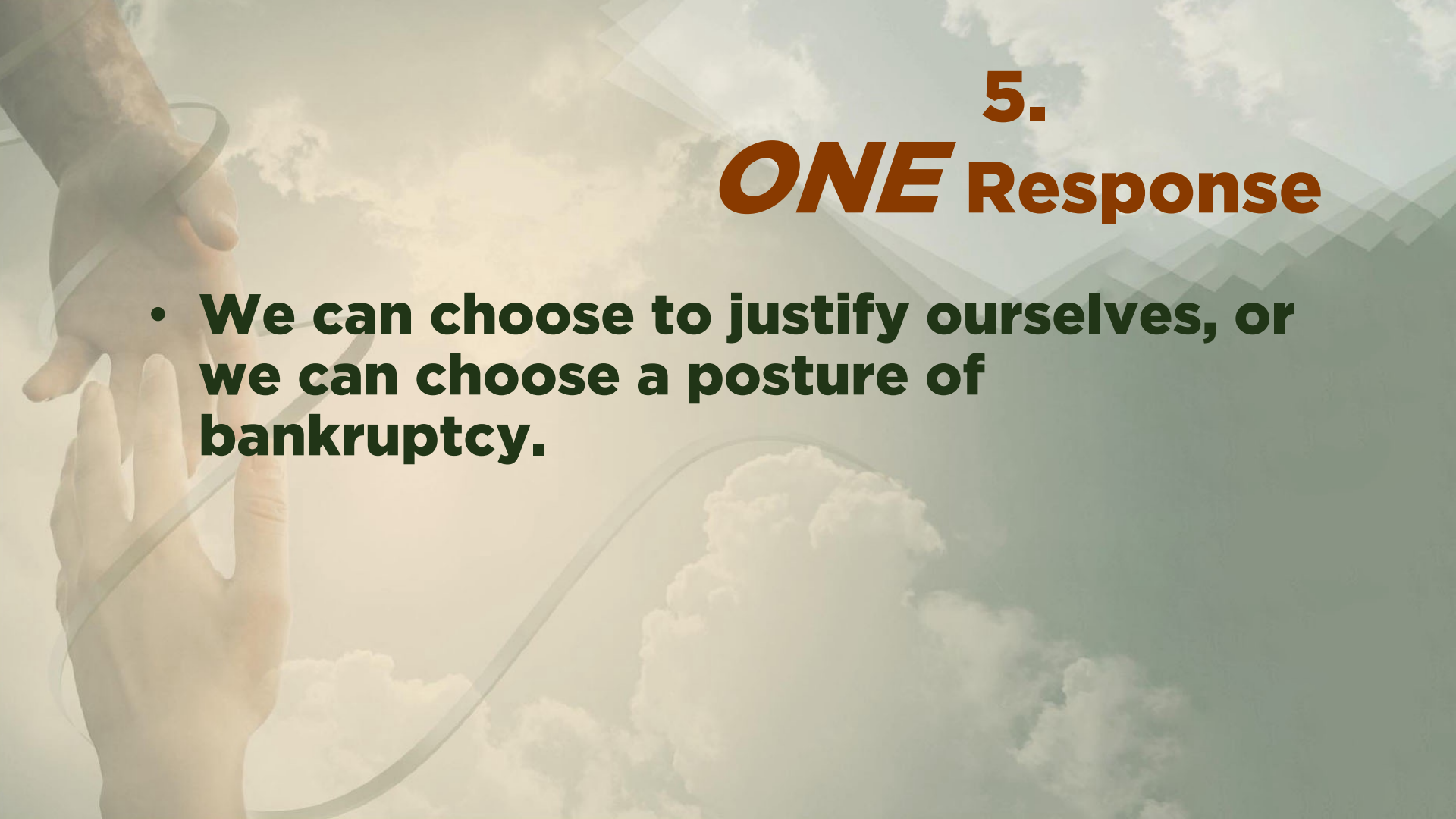
5. ***ONE*** Response

- **Lazarus embodied the inner posture that opens the door to divine help and redemption.**



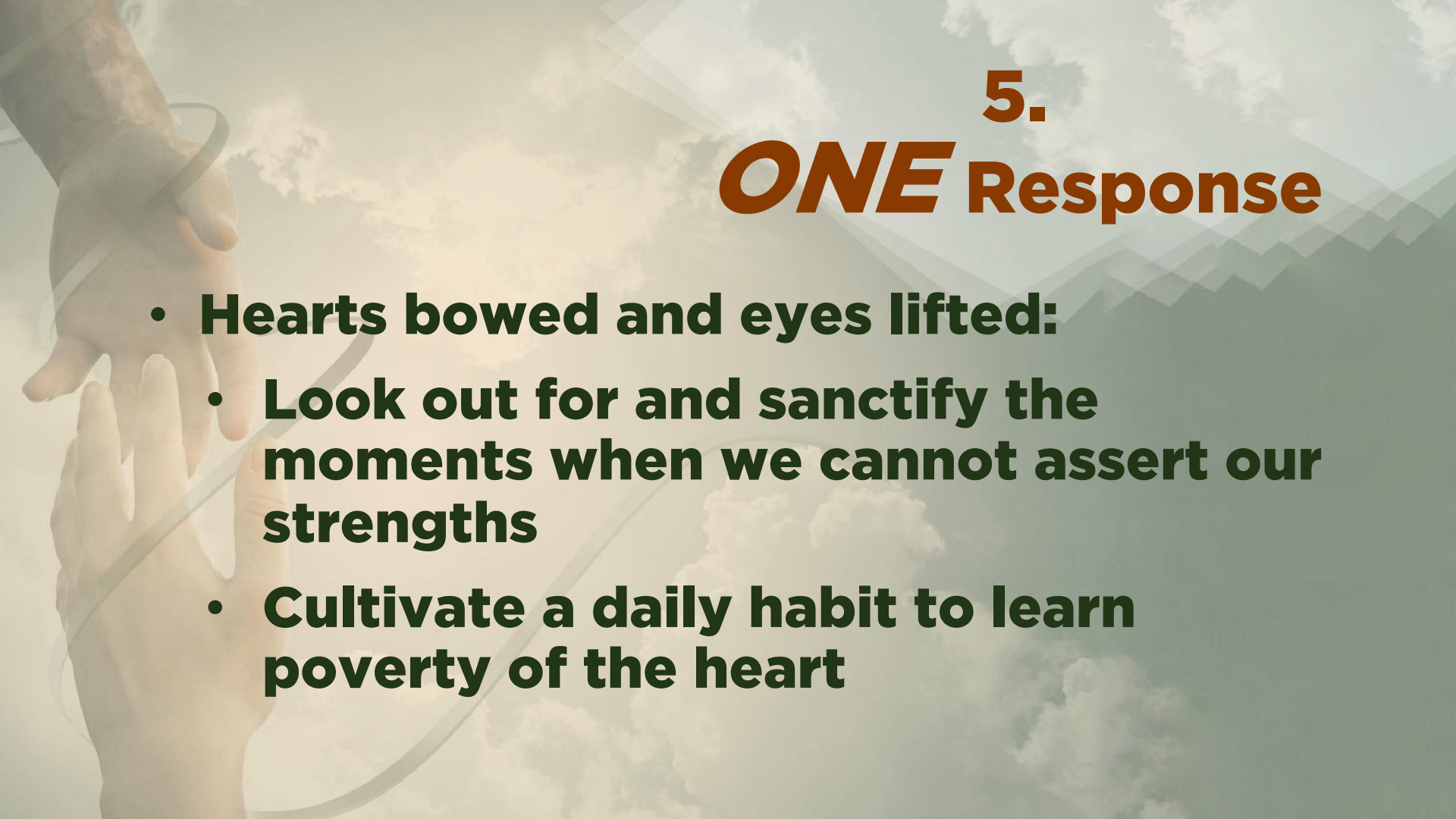
5. ***ONE*** Response

- **The choices we make in our lifetime have consequences in the life after.**



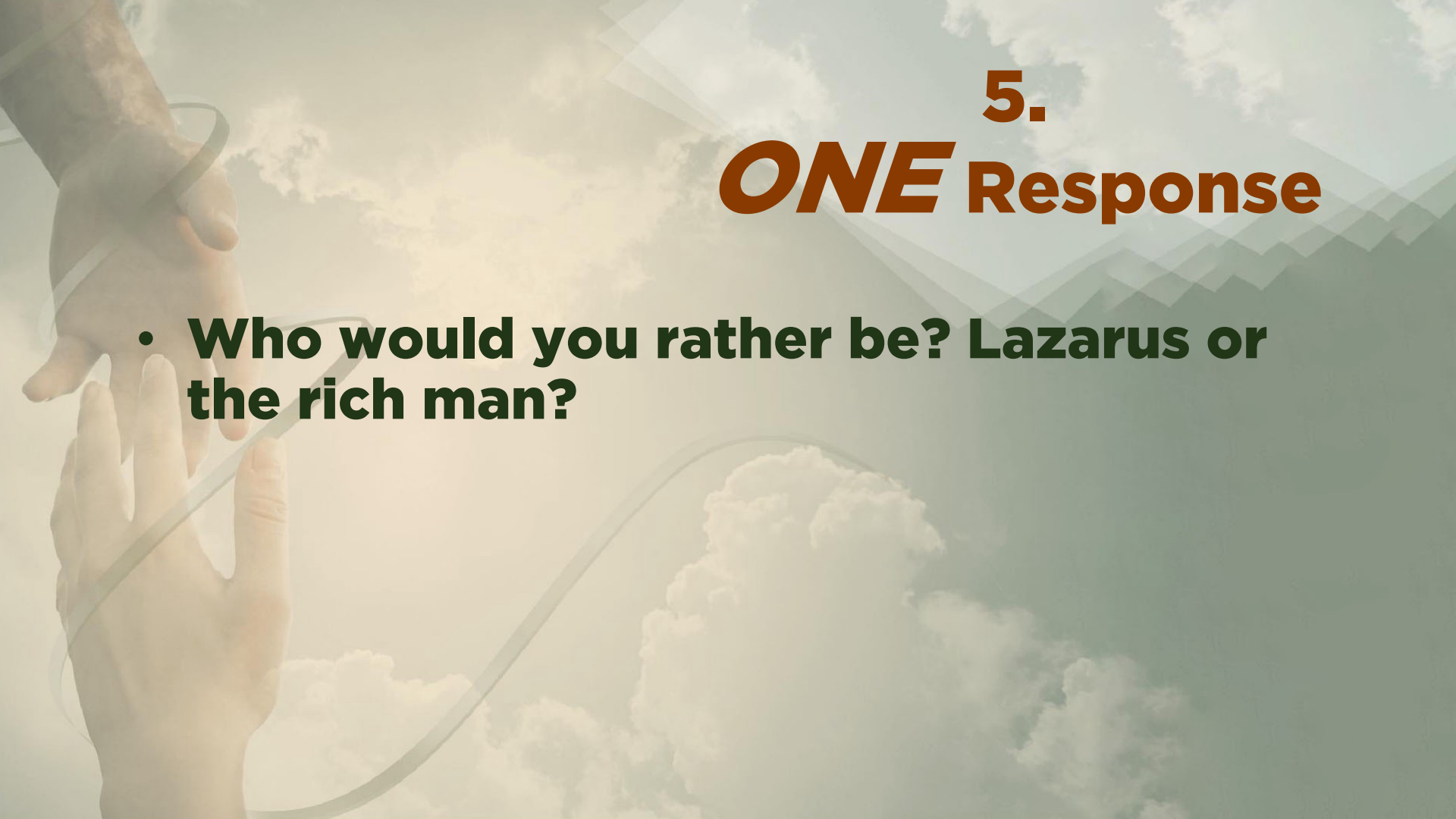
5. ***ONE*** Response

- **We can choose to justify ourselves, or we can choose a posture of bankruptcy.**



5. ***ONE*** Response

- **Hearts bowed and eyes lifted:**
 - **Look out for and sanctify the moments when we cannot assert our strengths**
 - **Cultivate a daily habit to learn poverty of the heart**



5. ***ONE*** Response

- **Who would you rather be? Lazarus or the rich man?**