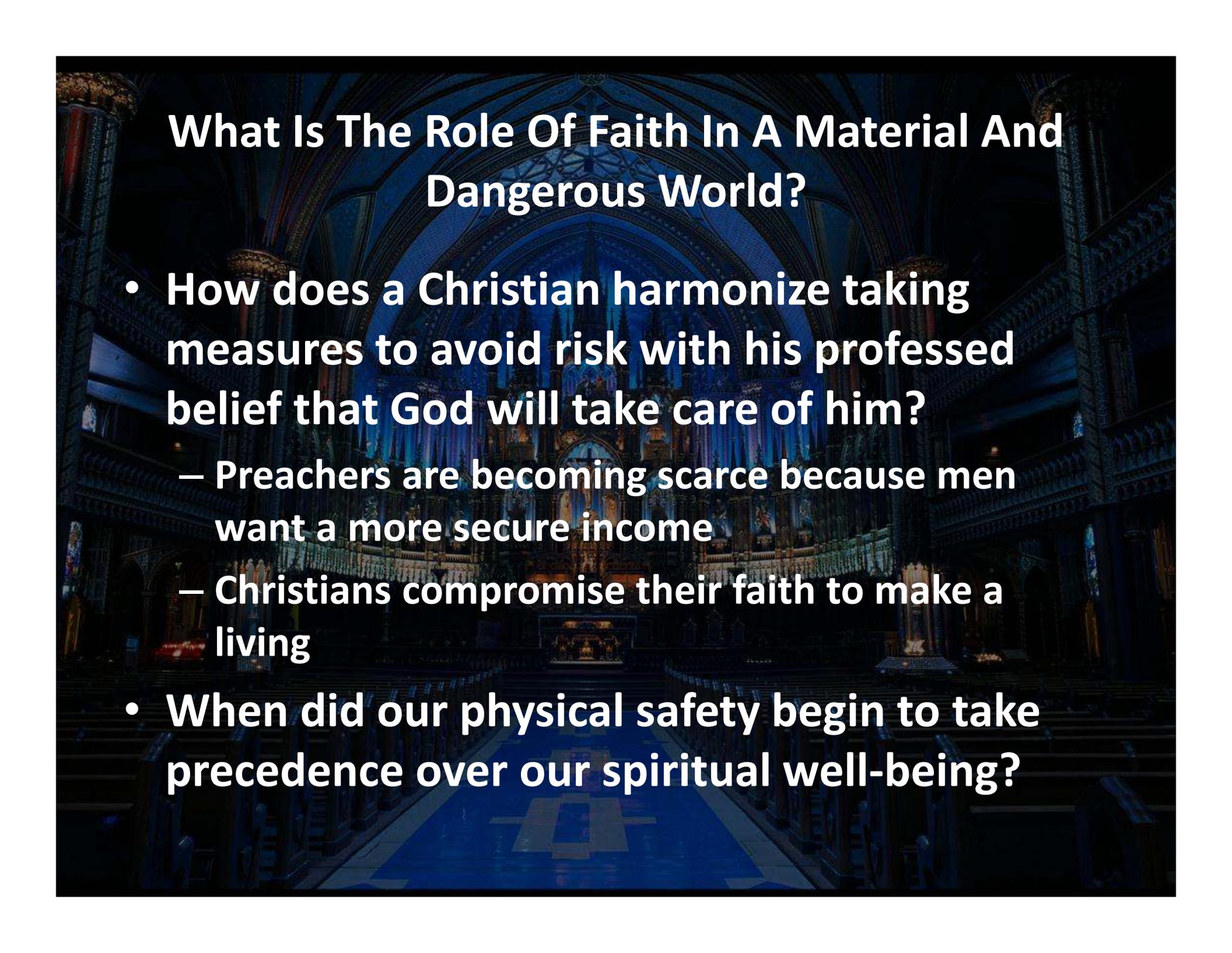




The Idol of Safety

Judges 12



What Is The Role Of Faith In A Material And Dangerous World?

- How does a Christian harmonize taking measures to avoid risk with his professed belief that God will take care of him?
 - Preachers are becoming scarce because men want a more secure income
 - Christians compromise their faith to make a living
- When did our physical safety begin to take precedence over our spiritual well-being?

The Idol of Safety

- Who taught you to believe that it was possible, by being careful enough, to protect you and your own from all risk of loss?
- Who told you it is acceptable to put the will of God aside in order to save what is important to you?

The Idol of Safety

- **Matt. 14:28-31 - “And Peter answered Him and said, ‘Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.’ 29 So He said, ‘Come.’ And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, ‘Lord, save me!’ 31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’”**

The Idol of Safety

- Heb. 11:35-39 - “Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. 36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented-- 38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise”

The Idol of Safety

- **Christians live in a balance regarding risk and faith**
 - **On one side, an overabundant concern for safety that leads to little willingness to expose oneself to risk to manifest faith**
 - **Some Christians are not tried because they refuse to risk going where the trials may be found**

The Idol of Safety

- Acts 20:22-24 - “And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”

The Idol of Safety

- On the other hand, a complete lack of concern for risk can lead to recklessness or poor stewardship



Risk: Count The Cost

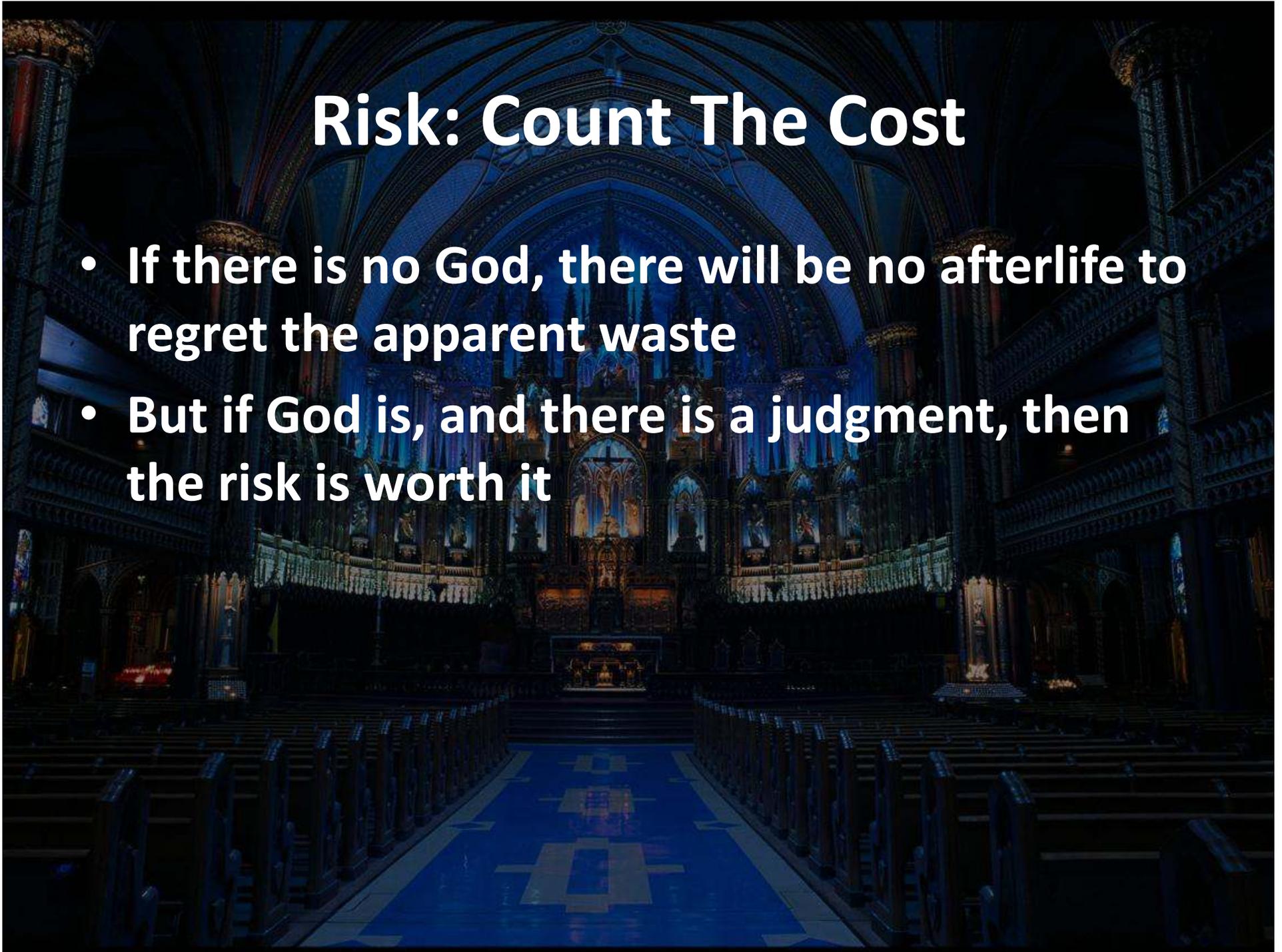
- **Everything we do in life involves risk at some level**
 - Love, get married, have children, have any kind of relationship, are employed, get into a car... et al
- **We are always engaging in a cost-benefit analysis with risk**

Risk: Count The Cost

- **Counting the cost important in the decision to follow Christ**
 - **Luke 14:26-33 - “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it 29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”**

Risk: Count The Cost

- If there is no God, there will be no afterlife to regret the apparent waste
- But if God is, and there is a judgment, then the risk is worth it



Risk: Count The Cost

- **Acts 17:30-31** - “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”
- **2Thes. 1:8-9** - “In flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power”

Risk: Count The Cost

- There is a great danger in attempting to put trust in the idol of safety
 - Worldly wisdom would tell us that there is benefit in playing it safe
 - Ecc. 11:4 - “He who observes the wind will not sow, And he who regards the clouds will not reap.”
 - What did the safe choice get the one talent servant? - Matt. 25:14-30
 - “The unriskened life is not worth living"! (Socrates)

Faith: Truly Trust God

- It is one thing to believe that God exists, and even to believe that God is able to act in miraculous ways
- It is quite another to listen to God and place your complete trust in Him no matter how the situation may appear to your senses

Faith: Truly Trust God

- Abraham - Gen. 12:1-3, 22:1-2
- Jonathan - 1Sam. 14:6, 8-12, 14:13-23
- Faith's Hall of Fame - Hebrews 11
- These men were not successful because of their own strength; they were successful because they trusted God, and He gave them what they needed to win

Faith: Truly Trust God

- We confess that God is able to do all things and give all help, but we act as if He will not do so for us
 - Rom. 8:32 - “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”
 - Eph. 3:20 - “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us”

Godly Balance in Reasoning

- We must renounce all that we have to follow Jesus, and still provide for our own family
 - Luke 14:33 - “So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”
 - 1Tim. 5:8 - “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

Godly Balance in Reasoning

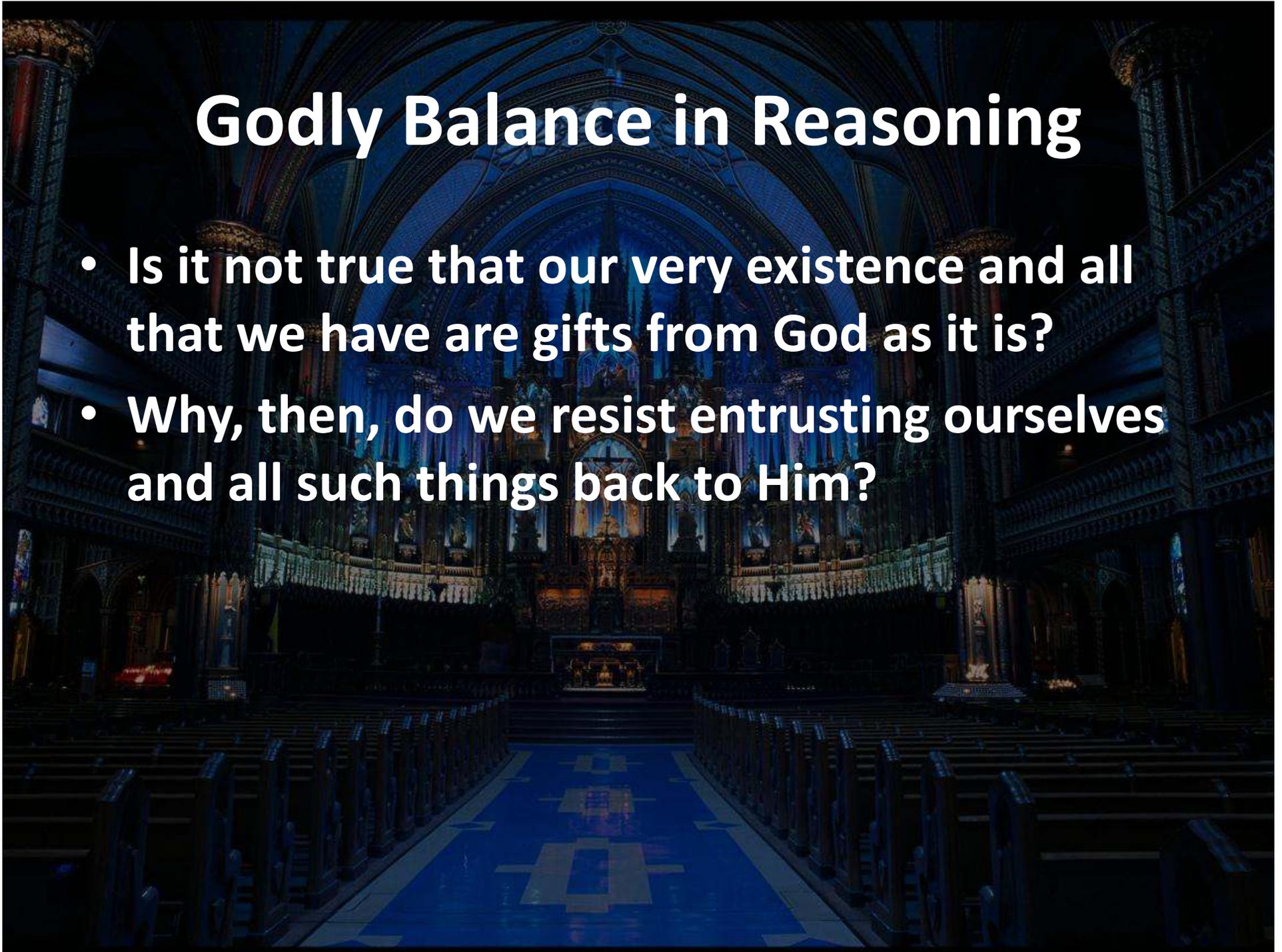
- We must not expect to receive anything from the Lord if we are seeking to advance our own carnal desires
 - James 4:1-3
- We must make sure that we are not going beyond our God-given abilities and what is truly possible in the faith
 - 1Peter 4:10-11

Godly Balance in Reasoning

- It may be that we trusted in the Lord and were disappointed in the past
 - Self-examination:
 - Were our motives honest?
 - Were we really trusting in God?
 - Did we confuse our carnal will with God's holy will?
 - Perhaps God's plans were going in a different direction than ours
 - Perhaps it was but one piece in a larger puzzle
 - Perhaps our timeframe was not God's timeframe

Godly Balance in Reasoning

- Is it not true that our very existence and all that we have are gifts from God as it is?
- Why, then, do we resist entrusting ourselves and all such things back to Him?



Godly Balance in Reasoning

- Risk is part of life, and there is value in risk
 - But God has not called us to safe living with moderate, sensible, worldly ideals
 - We are called to entrust ourselves to God and His purposes
 - Gal. 2:20 - “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Godly Balance in Reasoning

- Perhaps the reason we are not reaping the harvest of Bible times is that we are afraid of stepping out and taking the risks they accepted
 - 1Cor. 3:5-7 - “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.”

Godly Balance in Reasoning

- Let us be willing to get beyond the safe life that really doesn't exist in this world, and live the true life of faith in Jesus Christ
 - 1Cor. 4:9-13 - "For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! 11 To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. 12 And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; 13 being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now."