

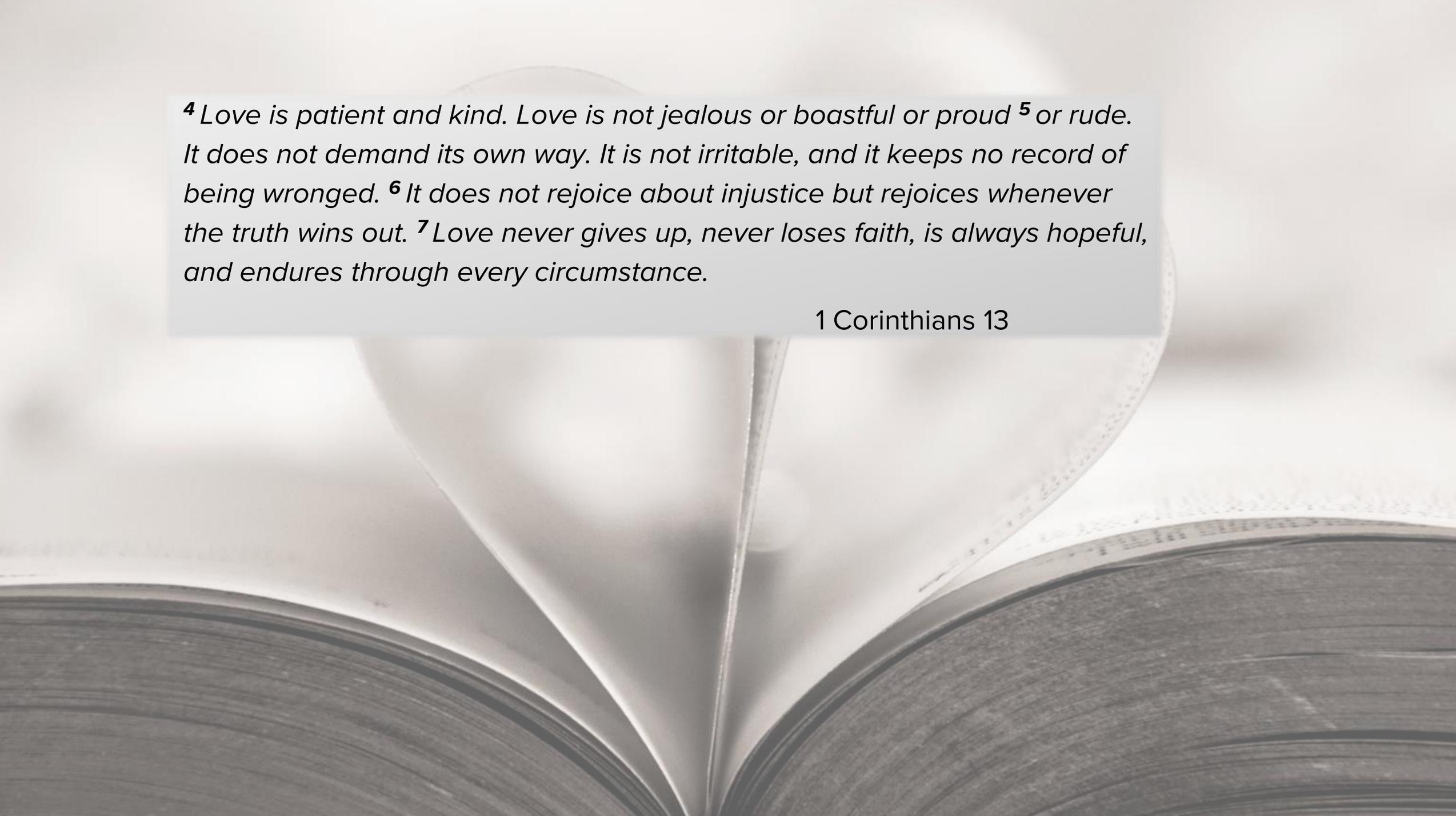
A Walk Through

the

Love

of

GOD

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, with its pages fanned out. A white bookmark is placed in the center, creating a V-shape. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the upper part of the image, containing text.

⁴ Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶ It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷ Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

1 Corinthians 13

1 Corinthians 12:

- Paul is teaching the Christians of Corinth that they have each received supernatural abilities, called *spiritual gifts*.

“Now about spiritual gifts, I do not want you to be uniformed.” (12:1)

- he assures them that no one is left out.
- he describes the gifts ... comparing them to parts of the human body.
- he reminds them that God has done this ... Father, Son & Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:

- *“Now about spiritual gifts, I do not want you to be uniformed.” (12:1)*

1 Corinthians 14:

- Paul instructs them in the proper exercise of their *spiritual gifts*.

“When you meet together, everything should be done in a orderly way, so that the congregation may be built up.” (14:26)

- desire the gifts that the Spirit gives.
- encourage each other in their use.
- be orderly in your worship and communication ... because God is not a God of disorder.

1 Corinthians 12.

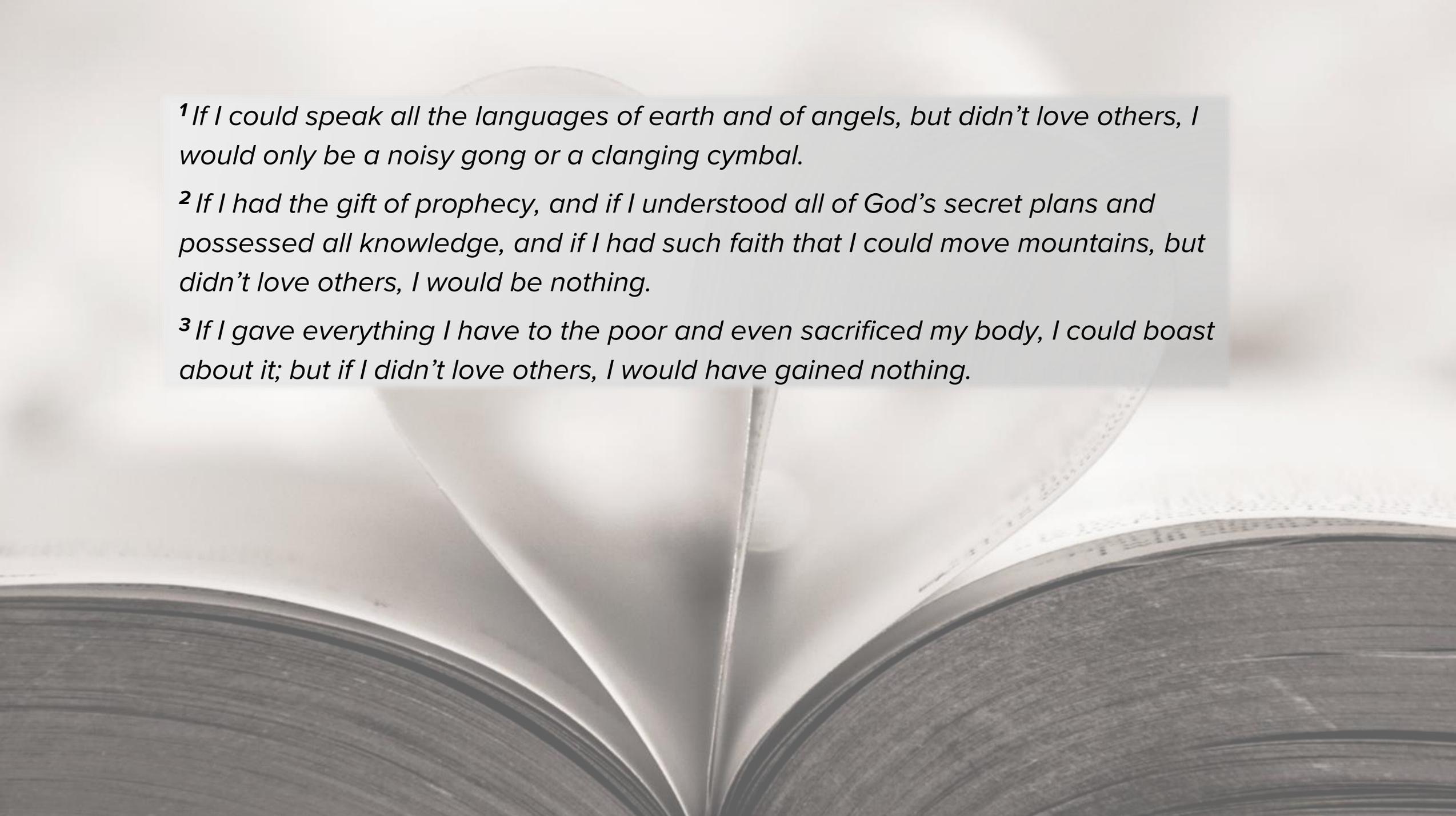
- *“Now about spiritual gifts, I do not want you to be uniformed.” (12:1)*

1 Corinthians 13

- *“Now I will show you the way of living that is best of all.” (12:31)*

1 Corinthians 14

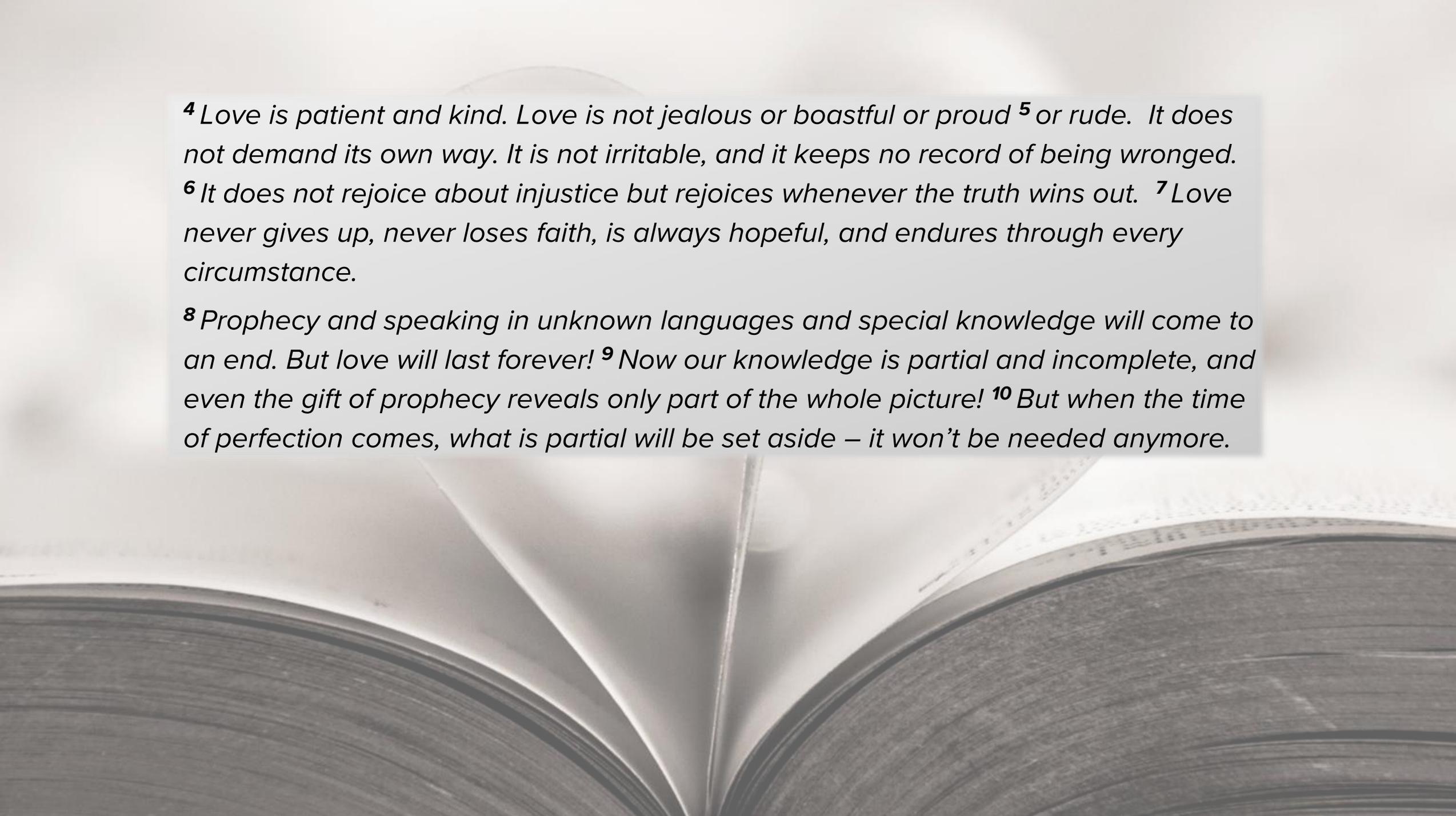
- *“When you meet together, everything should be done in a orderly way, so that the congregation may be built up.” (14:26)*



¹ If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

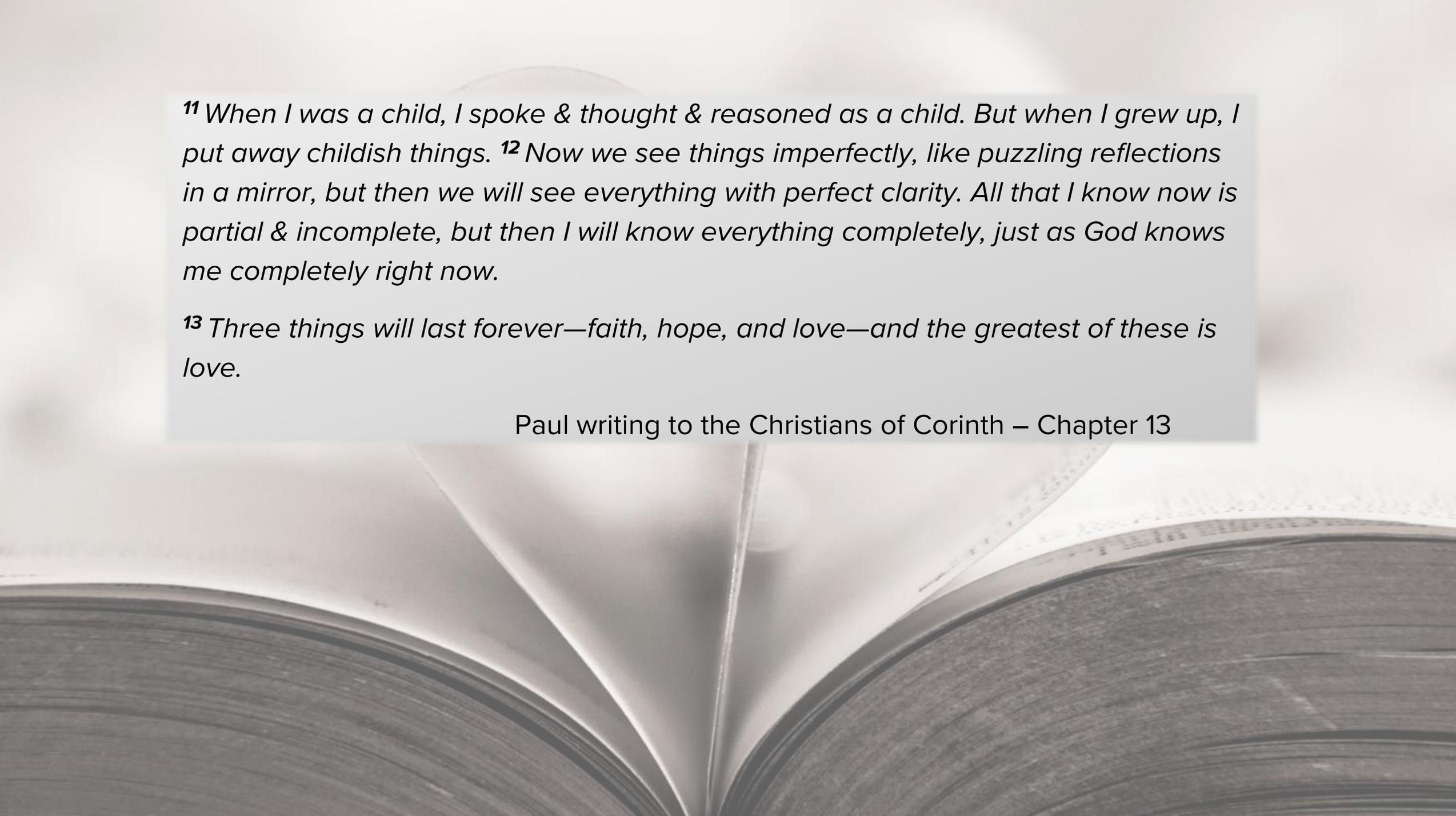
² If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing.

³ If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.



⁴ Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶ It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷ Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

⁸ Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will come to an end. But love will last forever! ⁹ Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete, and even the gift of prophecy reveals only part of the whole picture! ¹⁰ But when the time of perfection comes, what is partial will be set aside – it won't be needed anymore.



¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke & thought & reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. ¹² Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial & incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God knows me completely right now.

¹³ Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.

Paul writing to the Christians of Corinth – Chapter 13

Issue: The Christians of Corinth had everything they needed to follow Jesus effectively.

- they had all the gifts ... they were lacking in nothing. (12:27)
- they had the Holy Spirit ... they were filled with His presence. (12:13)

What they were missing was Love ... God's supernatural, irrational, selfless, unending Love - *Agape*.

3 Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. **2** I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. **3** You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans?

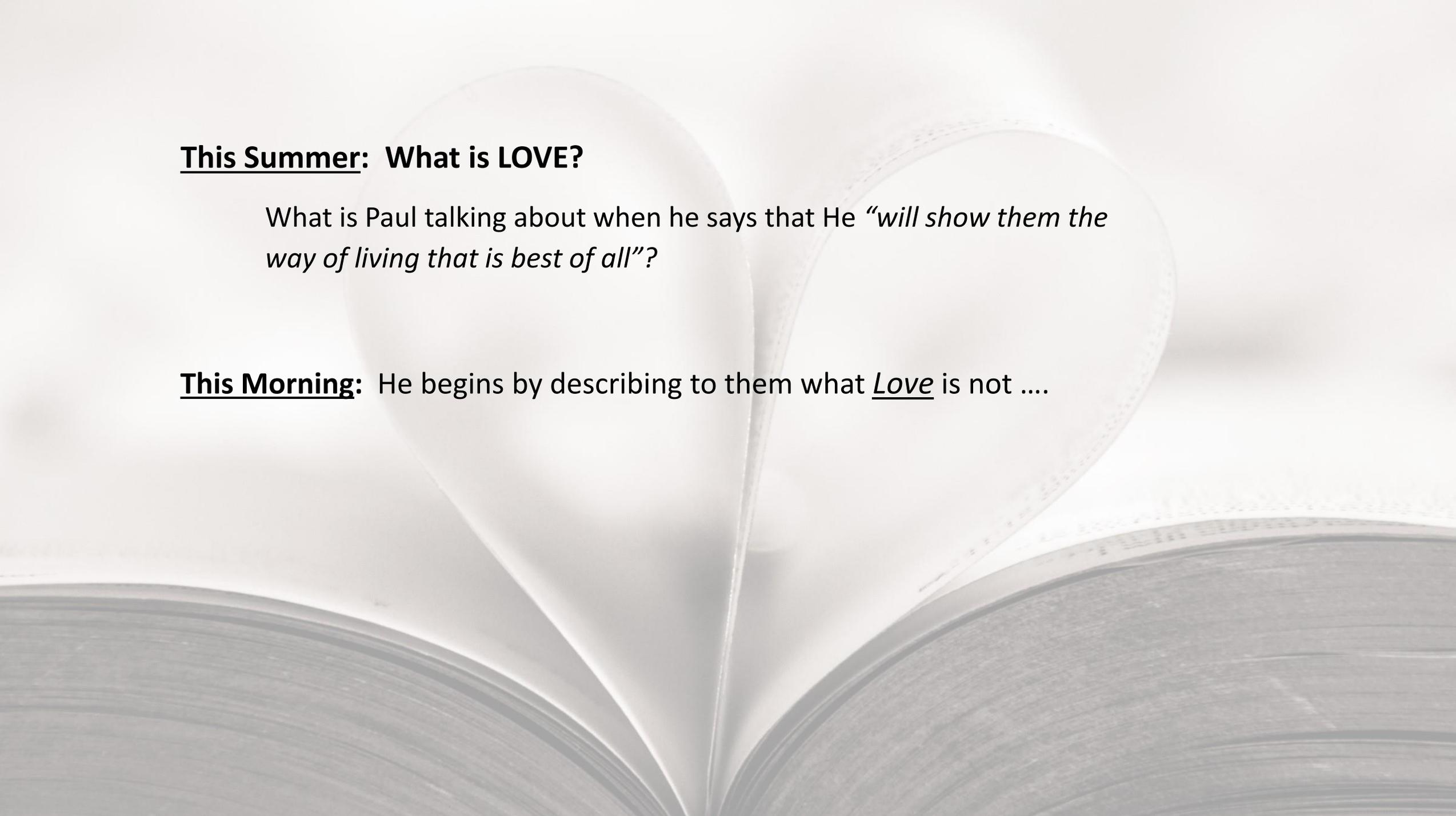
1 Corinthians 3

Truth: Love is what validates & empowers who a Christian is and what they do.

- It is possible to be obviously gifted by God, yet have no heavenly impact on anyone ... including myself.
 - to have obvious *spiritual gifts*, but produce no *spiritual fruit*.

This is what was plaguing the Corinthian Christians – they were in love with many things, including themselves, but not Jesus.

The only environment in which following Jesus works is that of love ... it is the air that we breathe in, speak in, proclaim in and serve in ... just like our Savior.



This Summer: What is LOVE?

What is Paul talking about when he says that He *“will show them the way of living that is best of all”*?

This Morning: He begins by describing to them what Love is not

1. Love is not **Words** ... it's not what I say.

¹ If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

- human languages ... angelic languages ... only noise without love.

1. Love is not **Words** ... it's not what I say. (v. 1)

2. Love is *not* **Knowledge** ... it's not what I know. (v. 2)

² If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing.

- our ability to communicate truth means nothing without love ...
 - *“Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up”* (1 Corinthians 8:1)

1. Love is not **Words** ... it's not what I say. (v. 1)
2. Love is not **Knowledge** ... it's not what I know. (v. 2)
3. Love is not **Self-sacrifice** ... it's not what I do. (v. 3)

³ If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

- Generosity ... even martyrdom ... does not matter without love.

Summary:

1. Love is not **Words** ... it's not what I say. (v. 1)
2. Love is not **Knowledge** ... it's not what I know. (v. 2)
3. Love is not **Self-sacrifice** ... it's not what I do. (v. 3)

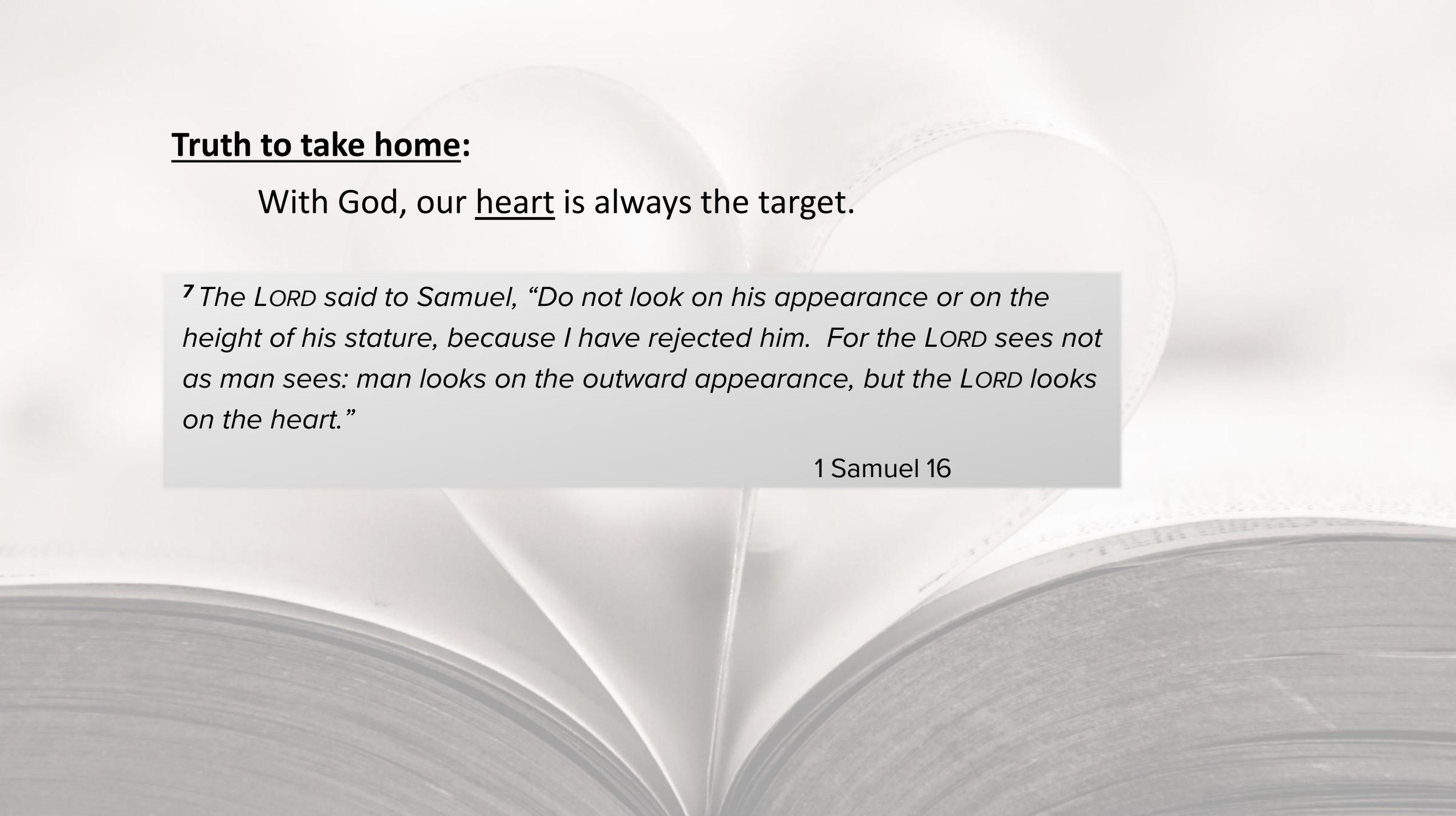
Note: None of these by themselves are bad or evil ... just worthless.

- When God measures them, they are burned off like dross.

⁸ Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will come to an end. But love will last forever!

⁹⁻¹⁰ Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete ... but when the time of perfection comes, what is partial will be set aside – it won't be needed anymore.

¹² Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity.



Truth to take home:

With God, our heart is always the target.

7 The LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”

1 Samuel 16