

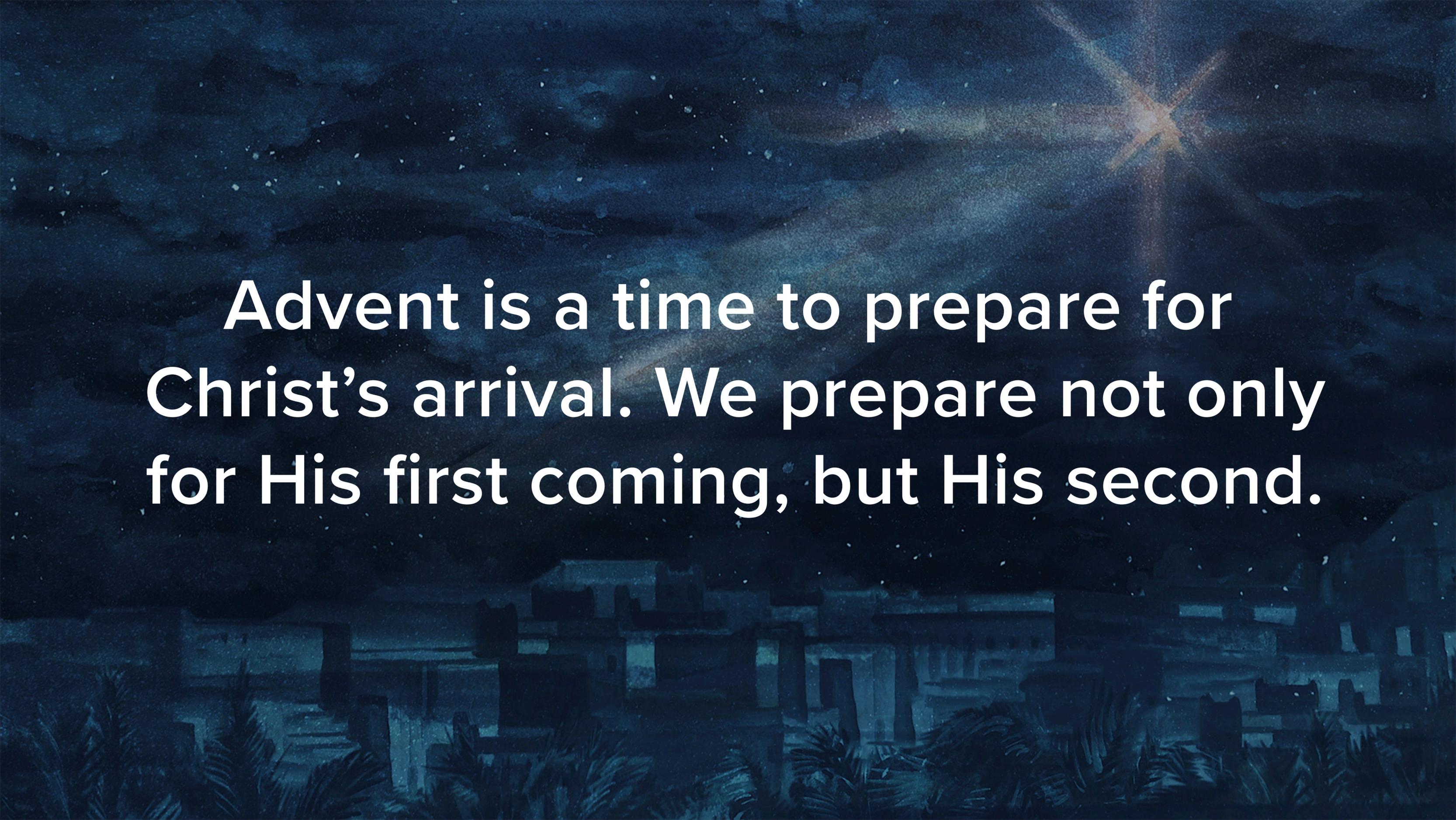
The background is a dark, atmospheric illustration of a city at night. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a bright, multi-pointed star or comet streaking across it from the upper right. The city below is rendered in dark, muted tones, with some buildings and foliage visible in the foreground. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

— DEATH —
When Life Meets Its End

SEASON'S MEETINGS: A SERIES FOR ADVENT

A dark, blue-toned illustration of a night sky. A bright, multi-pointed star with a glowing aura is positioned in the upper right quadrant. Below the star, a faint, glowing path or comet tail extends across the sky. The lower portion of the image shows a dark, silhouetted cityscape with various buildings and structures. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and serene.

Who are you meeting this Christmas?

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a bright, multi-pointed star in the upper right quadrant. Below the sky, a cityscape is visible, with buildings and palm trees silhouetted against the dark background. The overall mood is mysterious and contemplative.

Advent is a time to prepare for
Christ's arrival. We prepare not only
for His first coming, but His second.



— DEATH —
When Life Meets Its End

SEASON'S MEETINGS: A SERIES FOR ADVENT

“Day by Day remind yourself that you
are going to die.”

RULE OF ST. BENEDICT, 4:47



Three kinds of death

1. Physical Death — death of the body



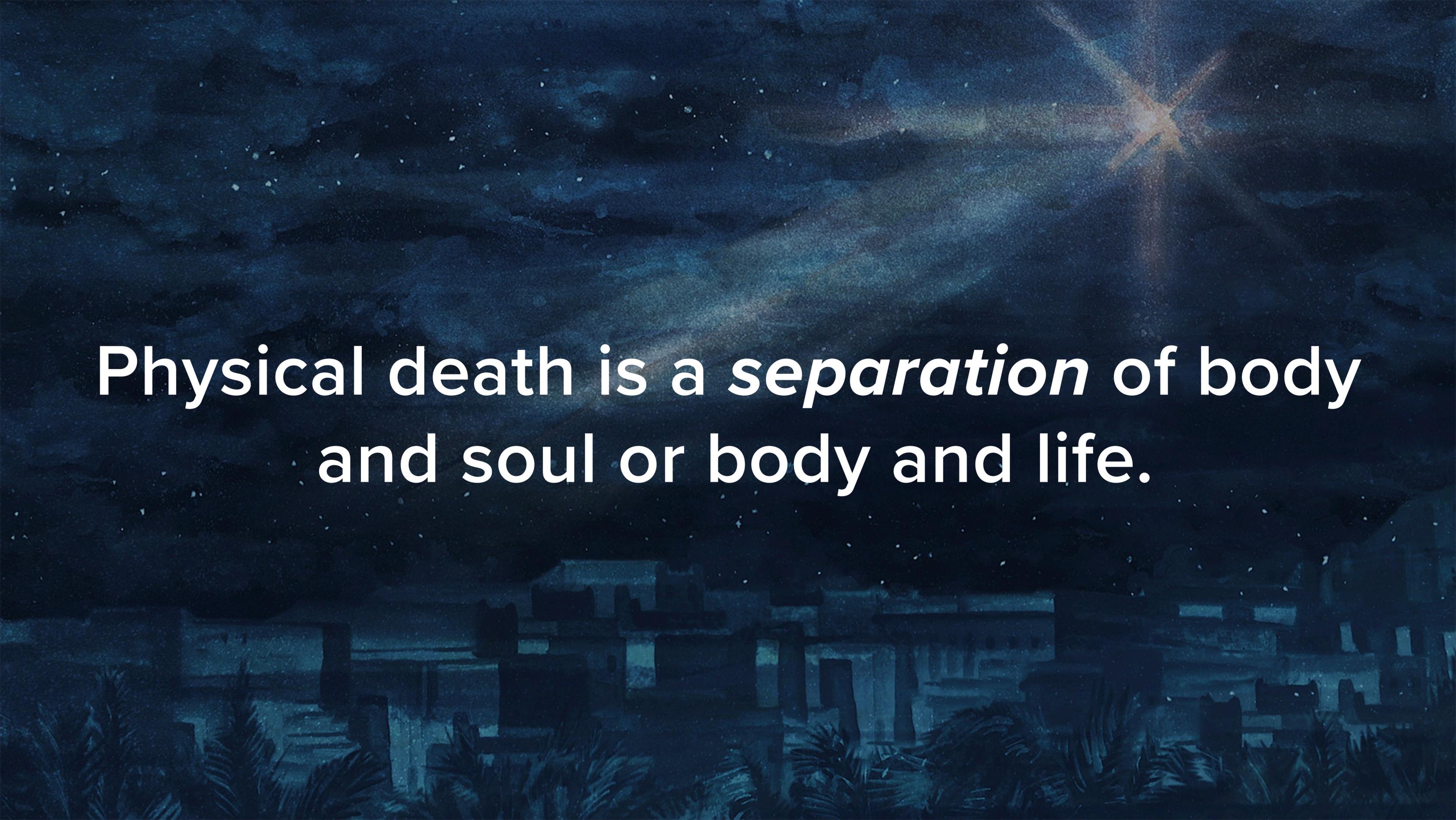
Three kinds of death

1. Physical Death — death of the body
2. Spiritual Death—separation from the favor of God by Sin and sin



Three kinds of death

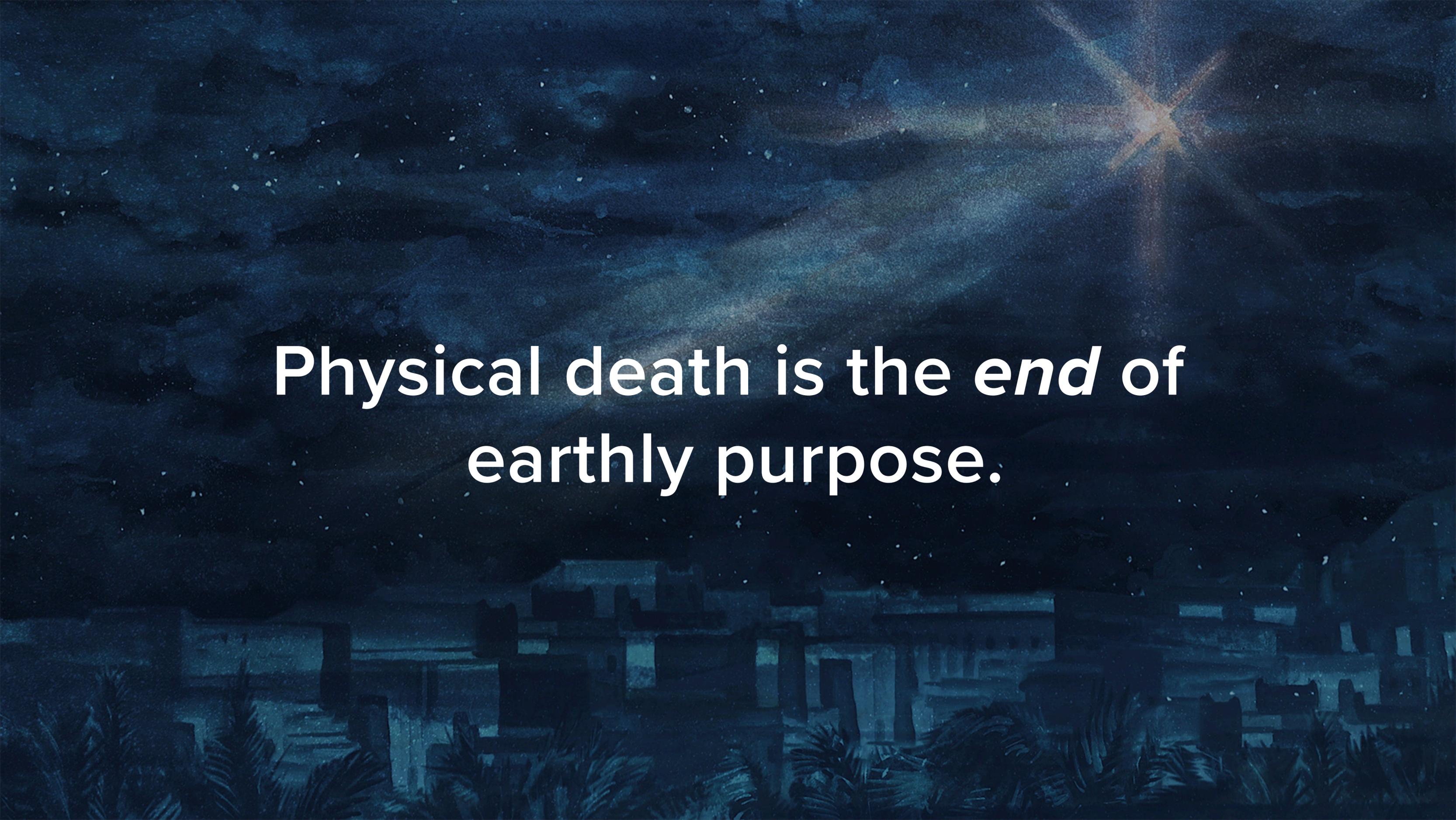
1. Physical Death — death of the body
2. Spiritual Death—separation from the favor of God by Sin and sin
3. Eternal Death / Second Death—final separation of whatever is against God from God
(2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:11-15; Rev. 21:6-8)



Physical death is a *separation* of body
and soul or body and life.

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a prominent starburst light in the upper right quadrant. Below the sky, the silhouette of a cityscape is visible, with various buildings and structures. In the foreground, there are dark, leafy plants, possibly ferns or similar foliage, adding to the moody and somber atmosphere.

Physical death is a *departure* from the
community of the living.

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a prominent starburst light in the upper right quadrant, casting a soft glow. Below the sky, the silhouette of a cityscape is visible, with various buildings and structures. In the foreground, there are dark, leafy plants, possibly ferns or similar foliage, adding to the moody and mysterious atmosphere.

Physical death is the *end* of
earthly purpose.

Psalm 115

- ¹ Not to us, Lord, not to us
but to your name be the glory,
because of your love and faithfulness.
- ² Why do the nations say,
“Where is their God?”
- ³ Our God is in heaven;
he does whatever pleases him.

Psalm 115

⁹ All you Israelites, trust in the Lord—
he is their help and shield.

¹⁰ House of Aaron, trust in the Lord—
he is their help and shield.

¹¹ You who fear him, trust in the Lord—
he is their help and shield.

Psalm 115

¹² The Lord remembers us and will bless us:

He will bless his people Israel,

he will bless the house of Aaron,

¹³ he will bless those who fear the Lord—

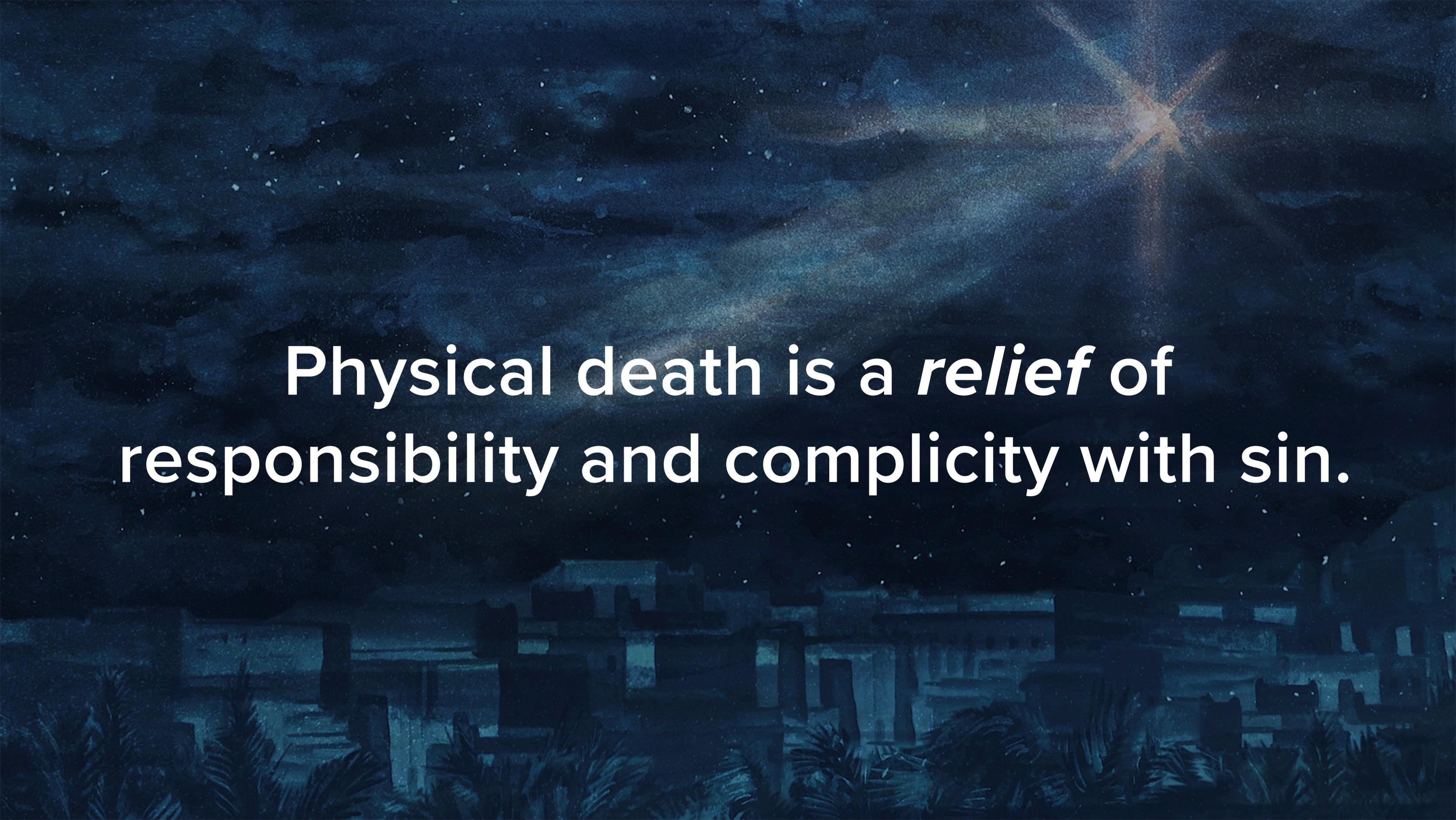
small and great alike.

Psalm 115

17 It is not the dead who praise the Lord,
those who go down to the place of silence;

18 it is we who extol the Lord,
both now and forevermore.

Praise the Lord.

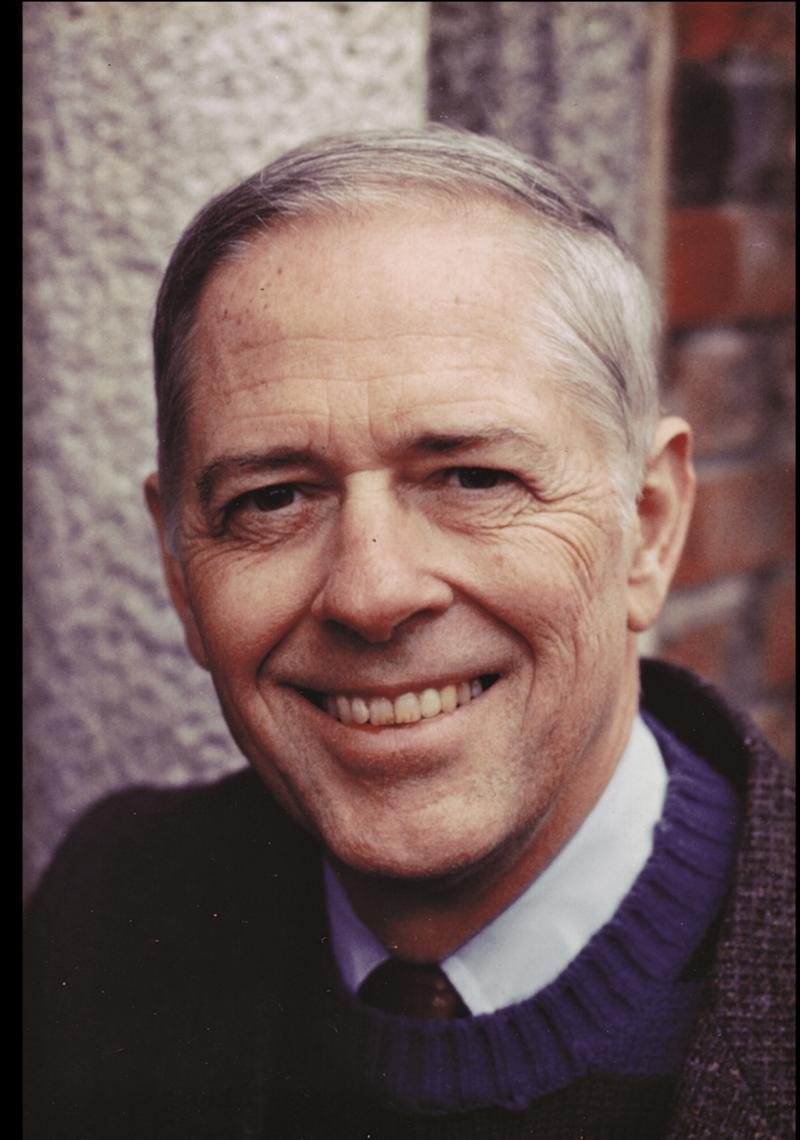
A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a bright, multi-pointed starburst light in the upper right quadrant. Below the sky, the silhouettes of a cemetery are visible, with numerous tombstones and headstones of various shapes and sizes. The foreground is filled with dark, leafy plants, possibly ferns or similar foliage, which are also silhouetted against the dark background. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

Physical death is a *relief* of
responsibility and complicity with sin.

“The burden of
freedom is lifted; the wealth of
freedom spent....

Death can be an end to suffering,
an end to decision-making, and
an end to complicity with sin.”

TOM ODEN
LIFE IN THE SPIRIT



“Therefore, it is in this life that all the merit or demerit is acquired, which can either relieve or aggravate a man's sufferings after this life. No one, then, need hope that after he is dead he shall obtain merit with God which he has neglected to secure here.”

AUGUSTINE, ENCHIRIDION, 110

Ecclesiastes 12

Remember your Creator

in the days of your youth,

before the days of trouble come

and the years approach when you will say,

“I find no pleasure in them”—

² before the sun and the light

and the moon and the stars grow dark,

and the clouds return after the rain;

³ when the keepers of the house tremble,
and the strong men stoop,
when the grinders cease because they are few,
and those looking through the windows grow dim;
⁴ when the doors to the street are closed
and the sound of grinding fades;
when people rise up at the sound of birds,
but all their songs grow faint;
⁵ when people are afraid of heights
and of dangers in the streets;
when the almond tree blossoms
and the grasshopper drags itself along
and desire no longer is stirred.

Then people go to their eternal home

and mourners go about the streets.

6 Remember him—before the silver cord is severed,

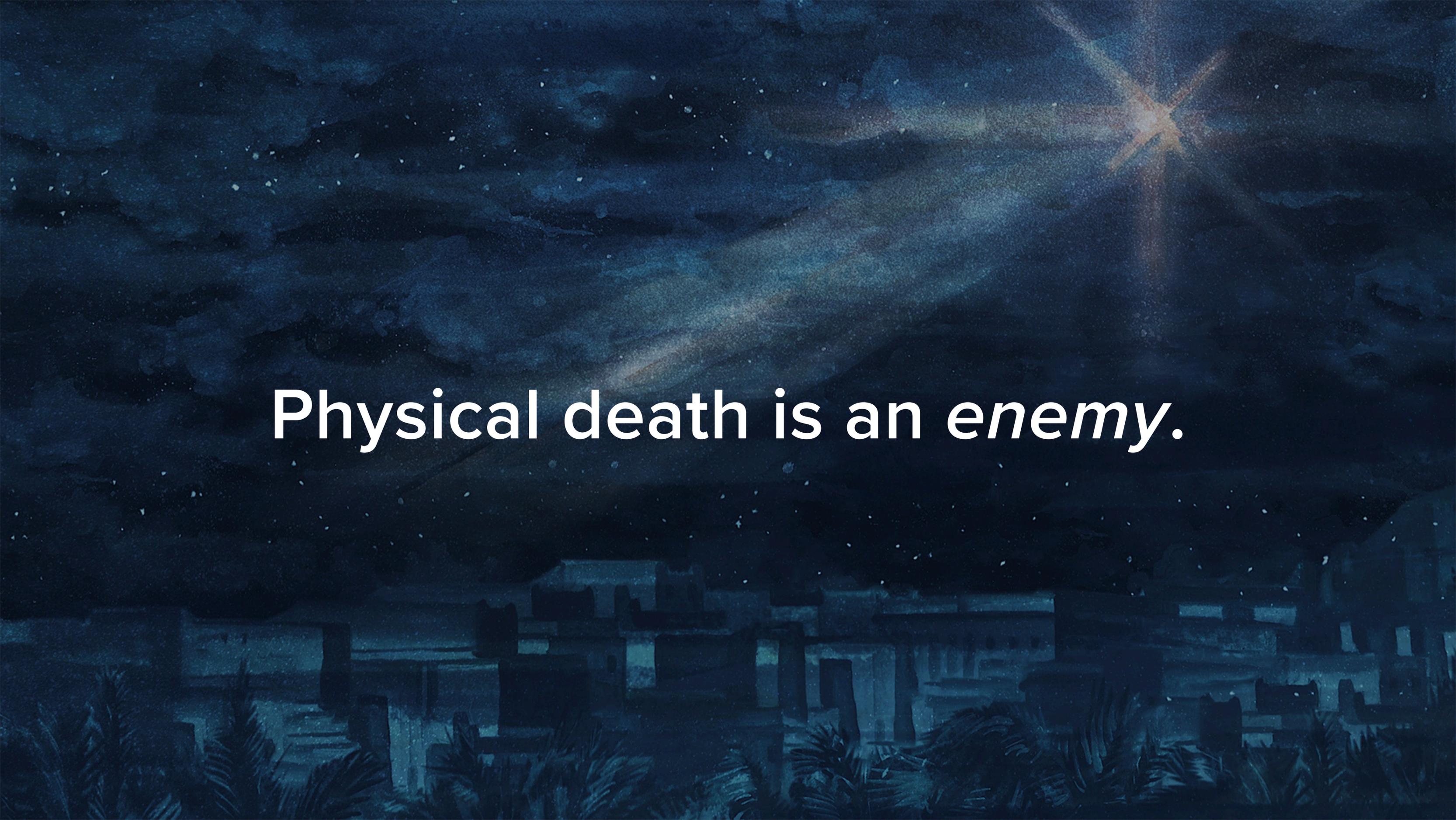
and the golden bowl is broken;

before the pitcher is shattered at the spring,

and the wheel broken at the well,

7 and the dust returns to the ground it came from,

and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a prominent starburst light in the upper right corner, casting a soft glow. Below the sky, the silhouette of a cityscape is visible, with various buildings and structures. In the foreground, there are dark, leafy plants, possibly ferns or similar foliage, adding to the moody and mysterious atmosphere.

Physical death is an *enemy*.

1 Corinthians 15:20-28

²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ... ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has **destroyed all dominion, authority and power.** ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ **The last enemy to be destroyed is death.**

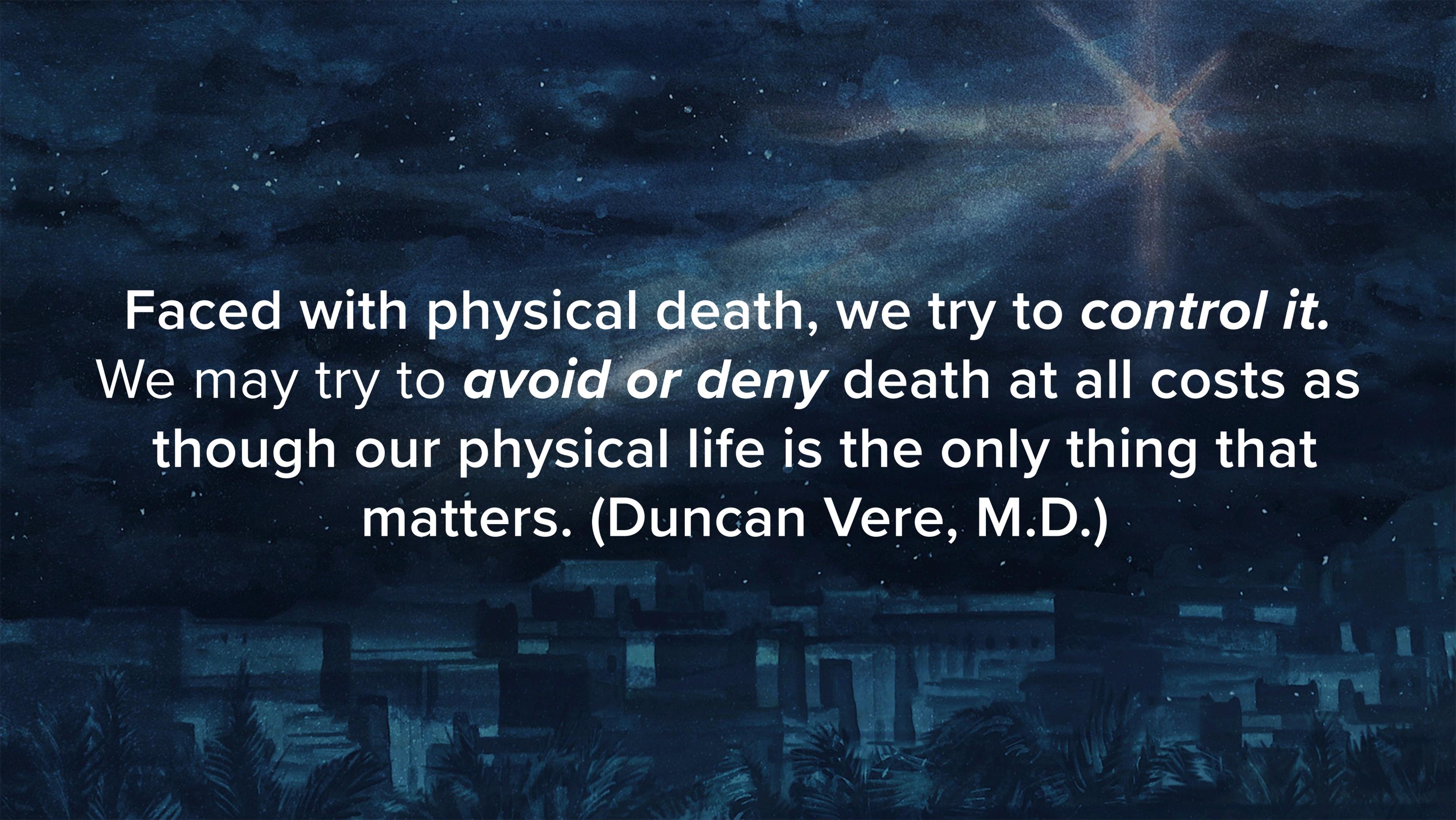


Death is a *domain where sin rules.*

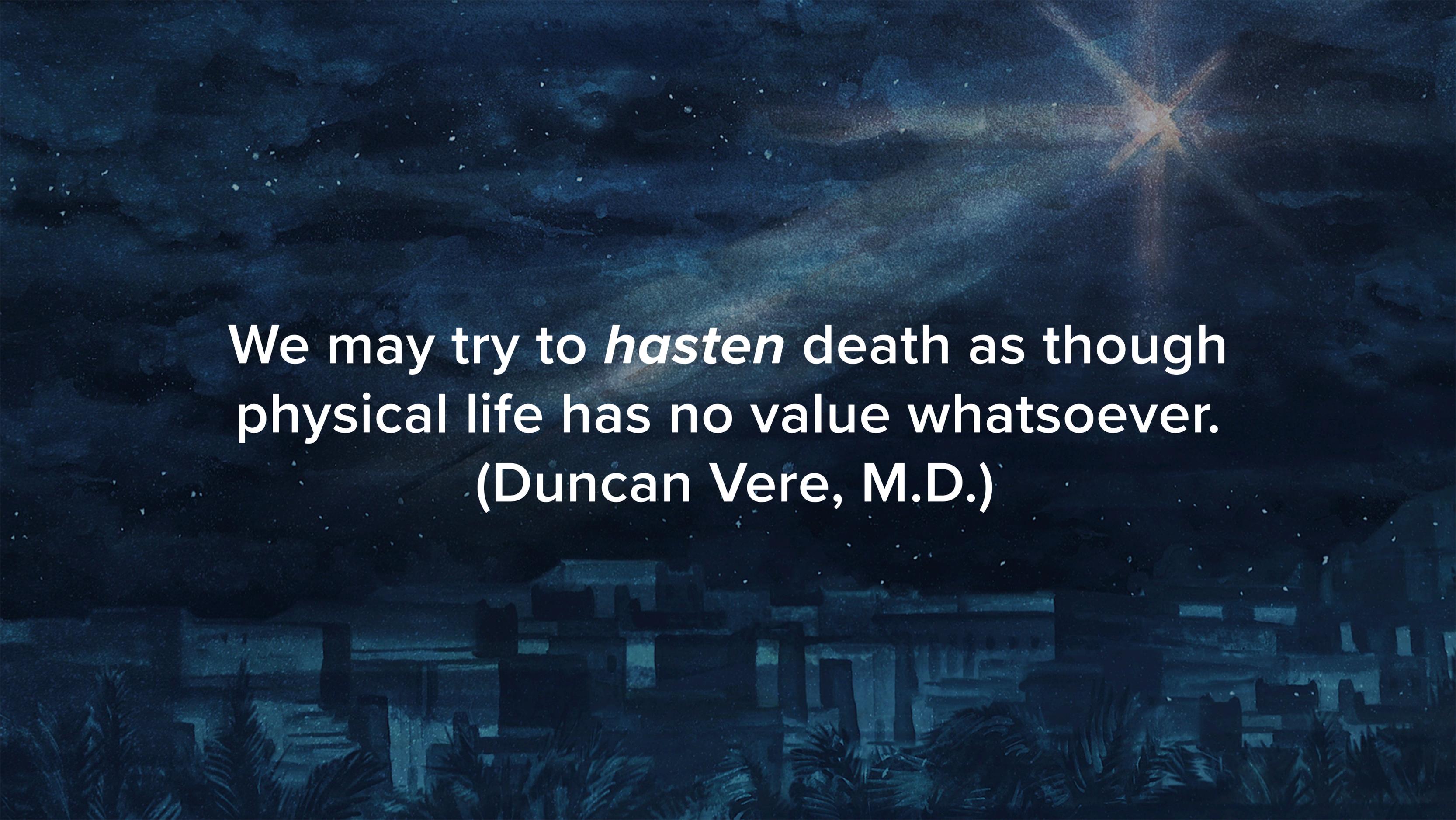
Romans 7

²¹ So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see **another law at work in me**, waging war against the law of my mind and **making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.**

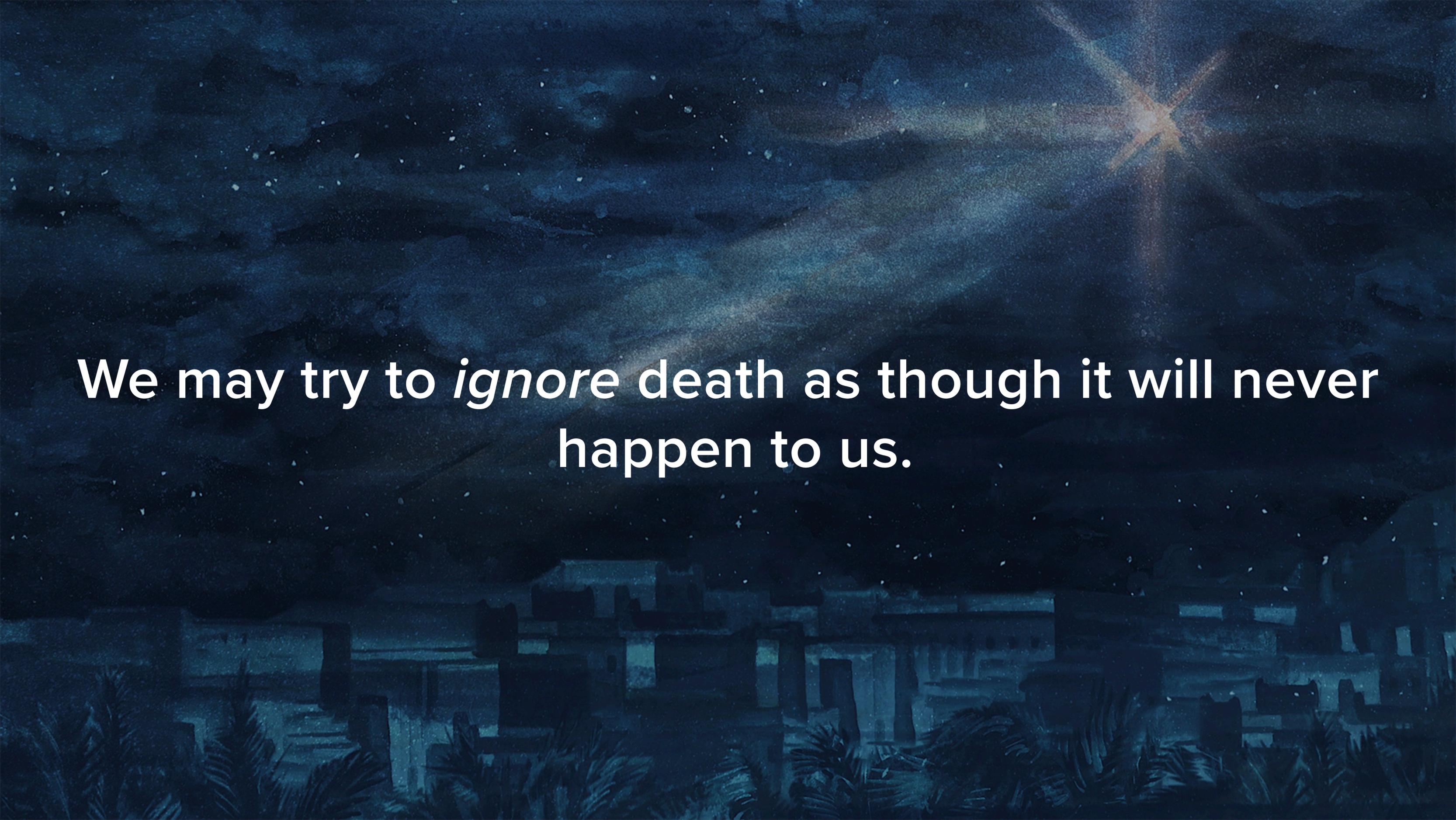
Sin makes me an agent of Death. Every act of sin is an obedience to Death's reign. I spread the dominion of Death by my sin. Yet in the domain of Death, we do not know we are its agents.

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, dark blue with a prominent starburst light in the upper right quadrant, casting a soft glow. Below the sky, a cityscape is visible, with buildings and palm trees silhouetted against the dark background. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

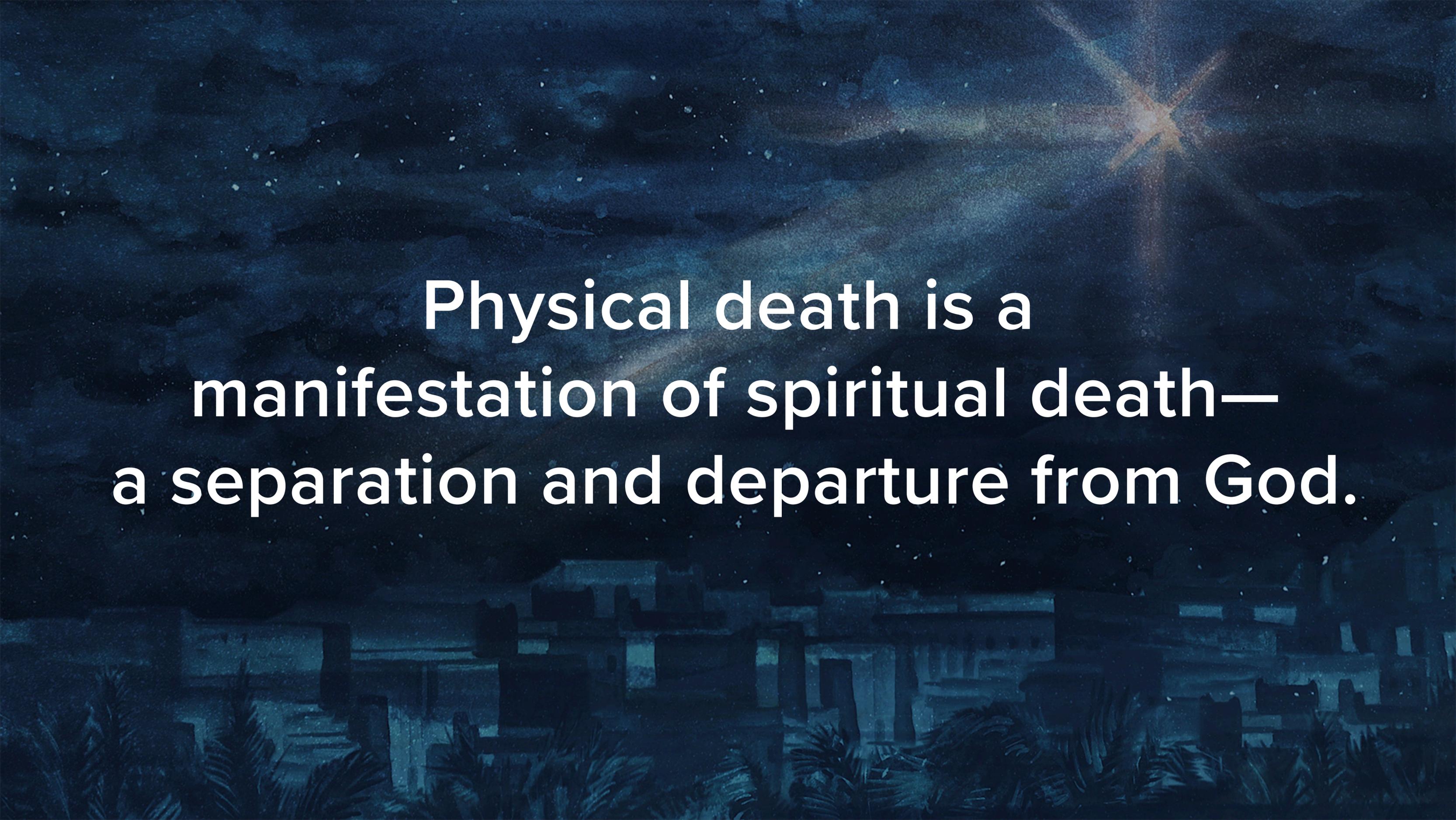
Faced with physical death, we try to *control it*.
We may try to *avoid or deny* death at all costs as
though our physical life is the only thing that
matters. (Duncan Vere, M.D.)

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, dark blue with a prominent starburst light in the upper right quadrant, casting a soft glow. Below the sky, the silhouette of a cityscape is visible, with various buildings and structures. In the foreground, there are dark, leafy plants, possibly ferns or similar foliage, adding to the moody and somber atmosphere. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues and blacks, with a touch of light from the starburst.

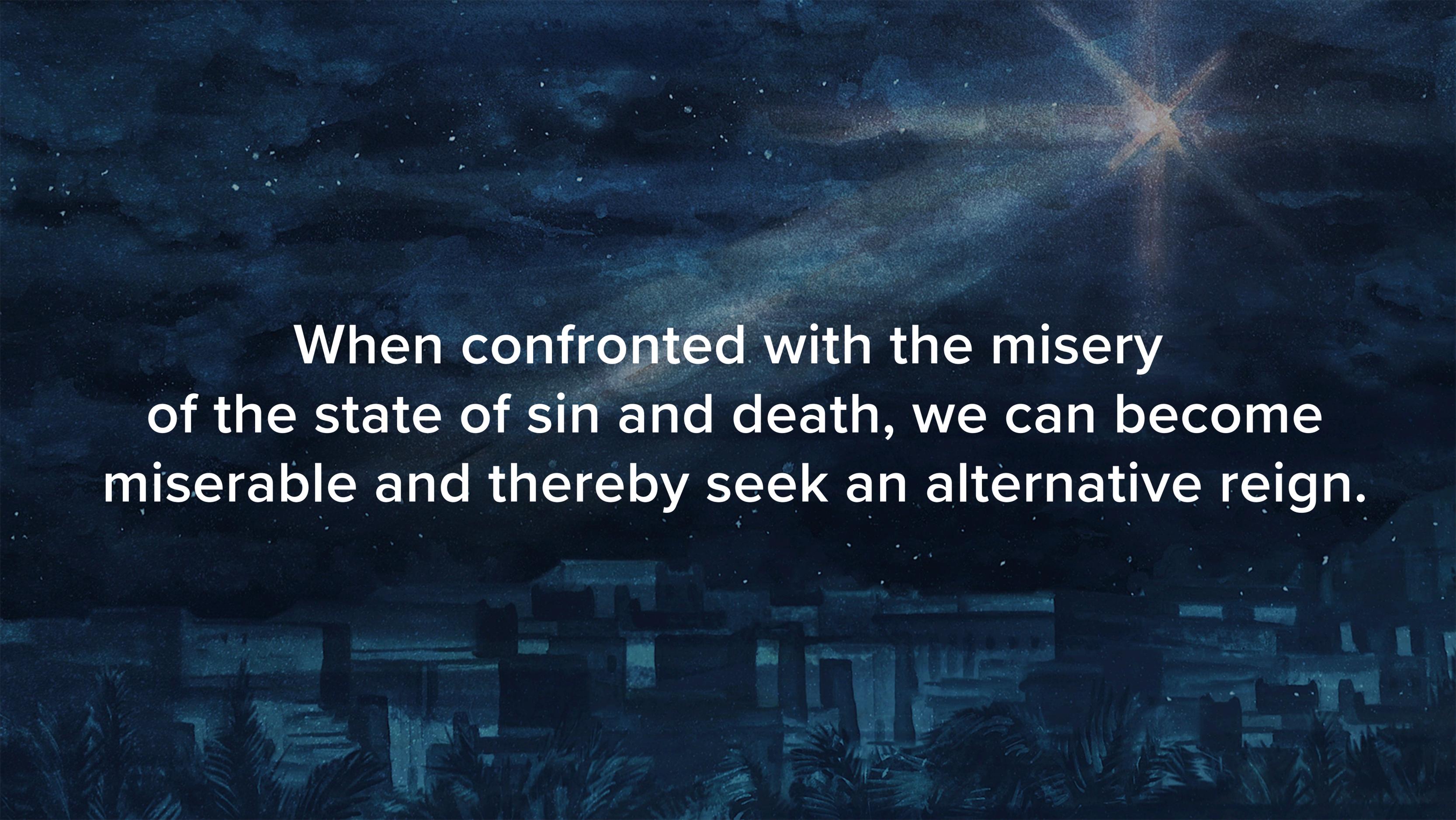
We may try to *hasten* death as though
physical life has no value whatsoever.
(Duncan Vere, M.D.)

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a prominent starburst light in the upper right quadrant, casting a soft glow. Below the sky, the silhouette of a cityscape is visible, with various buildings and structures. In the foreground, there are dark, leafy plants, possibly palm trees, adding to the moody and mysterious atmosphere. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues and blacks, with a touch of warm light from the starburst.

We may try to *ignore* death as though it will never happen to us.

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a bright, multi-pointed starburst light in the upper right quadrant. Below the sky, a dark, silhouetted landscape is visible, featuring a cemetery with numerous tombstones of various shapes and sizes. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

Physical death is a
manifestation of spiritual death—
a separation and departure from God.



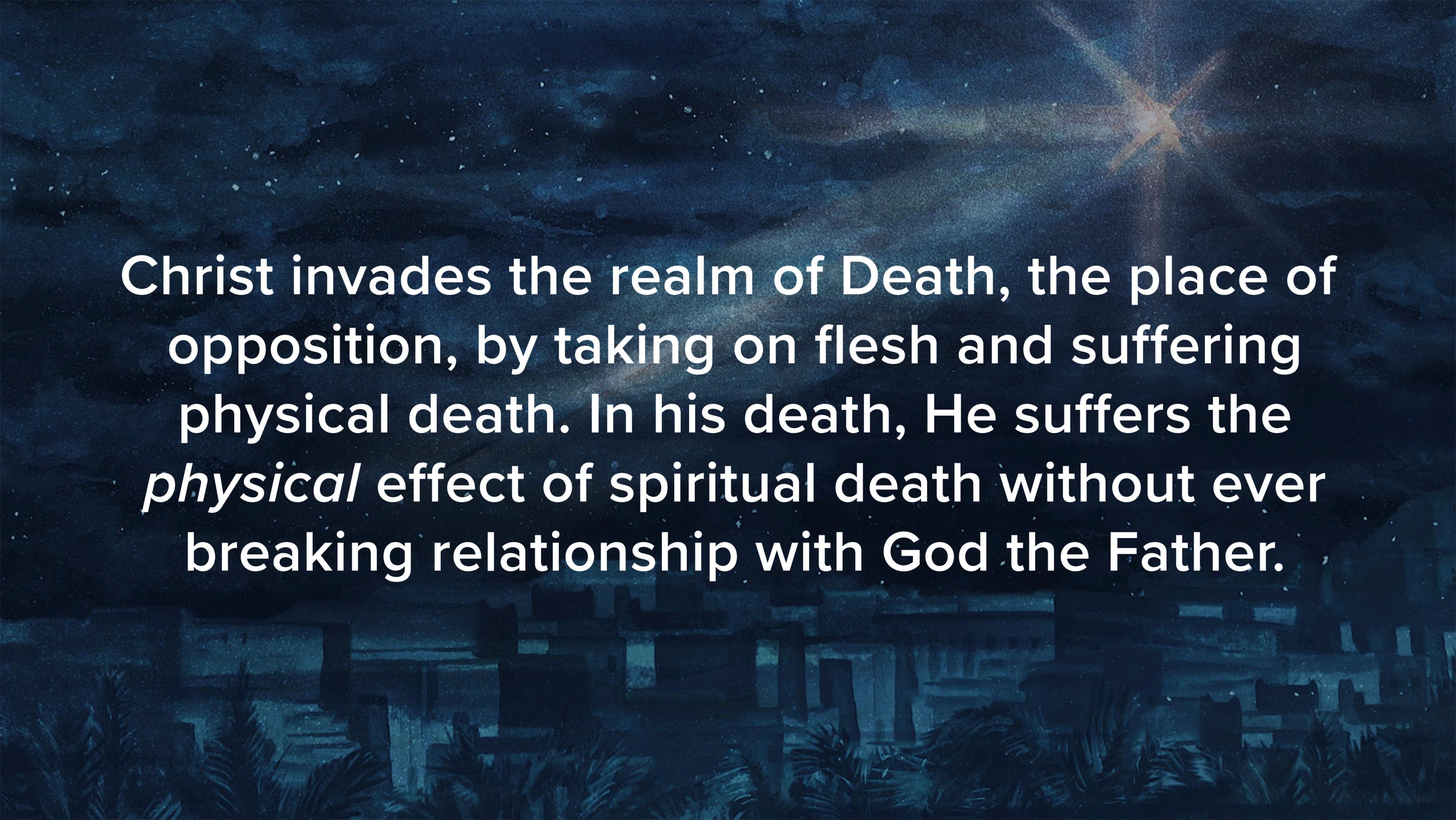
When confronted with the misery
of the state of sin and death, we can become
miserable and thereby seek an alternative reign.

Romans 7

24 What a wretched man I am! **Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?** **25** Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Matthew 26:39

³⁹ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. **Yet not as I will, but as you will.**”

The background is a dark, moody scene. The upper portion is a deep blue, almost black, sky with a bright, glowing cross in the upper right quadrant. The lower portion shows a cemetery with numerous tombstones of various shapes and sizes, some with plants growing around them. The overall tone is somber and spiritual.

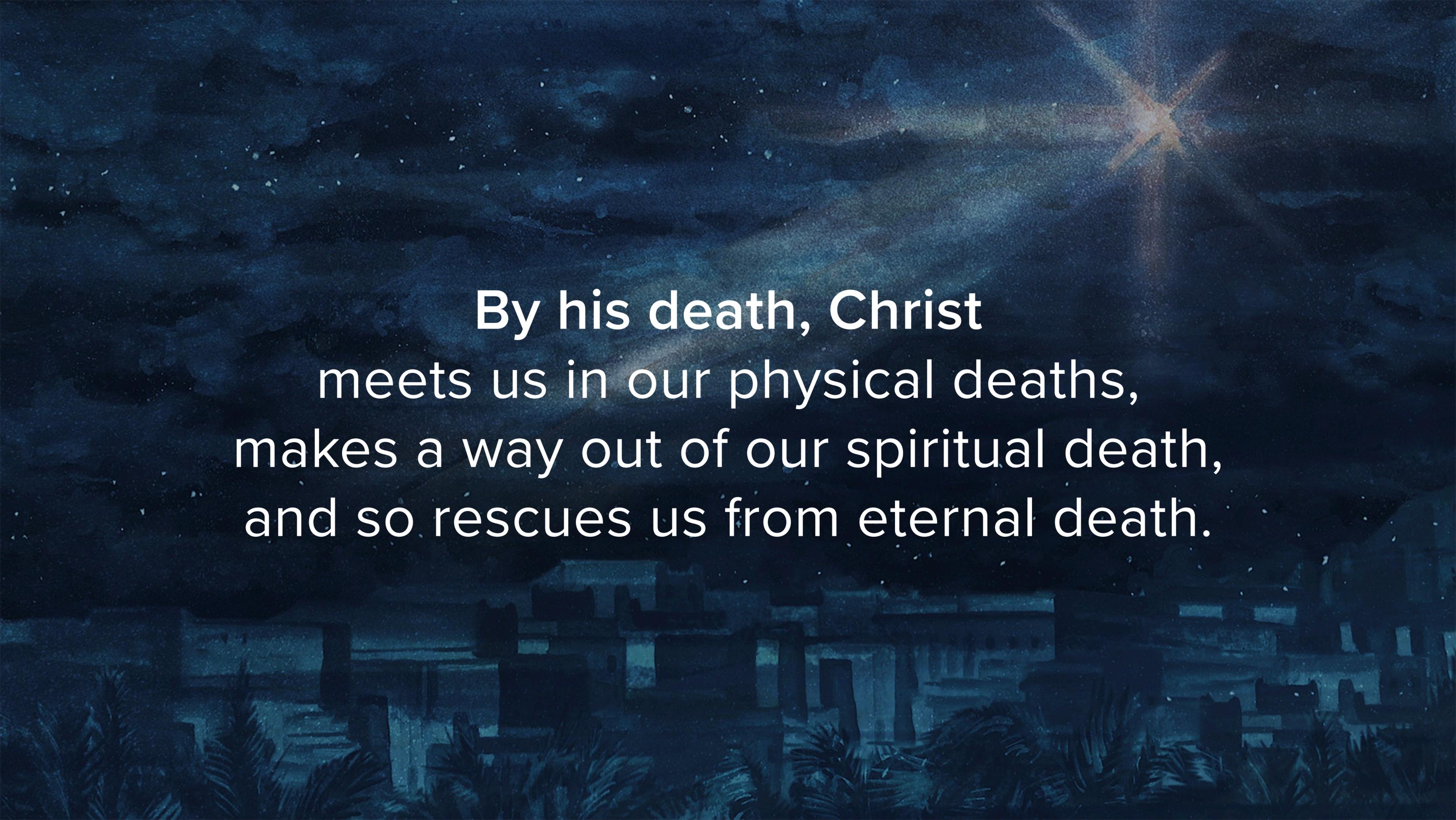
Christ invades the realm of Death, the place of opposition, by taking on flesh and suffering physical death. In his death, He suffers the *physical* effect of spiritual death without ever breaking relationship with God the Father.

Hebrews 2:9

⁹ But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor **because he suffered death**, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

“For as a physician though not needing to taste the food prepared for the sick man, yet in his care for him tastes [it] first that he may persuade the sick man with confidence to venture on the food, so since all men were afraid of death, in persuading them to take courage against death, He tasted it also Himself though He needed not.

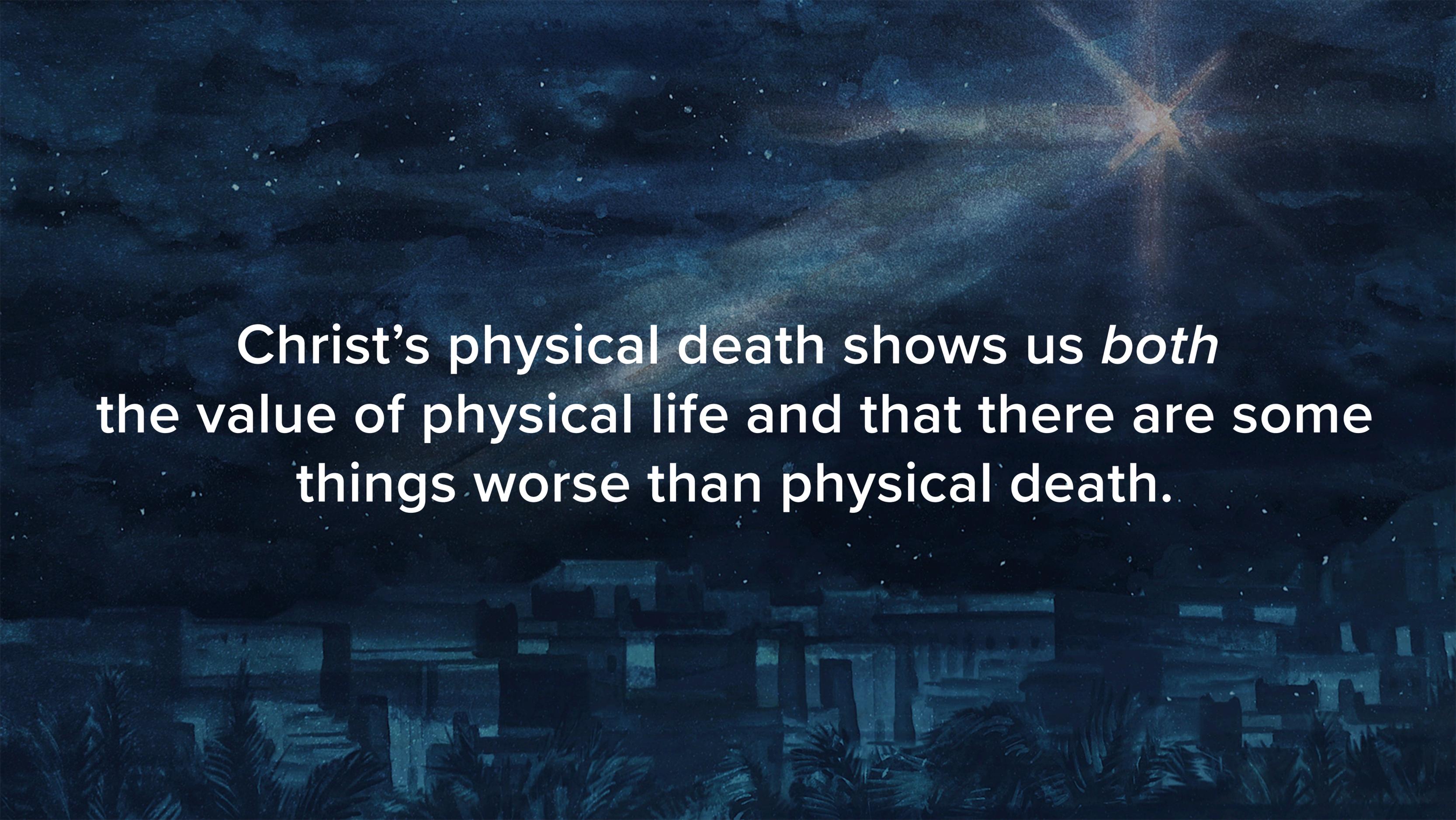
JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, dark blue with a bright, multi-pointed starburst light in the upper right quadrant. The foreground is a cemetery with numerous tombstones of various shapes and sizes, some partially obscured by dark, leafy plants. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

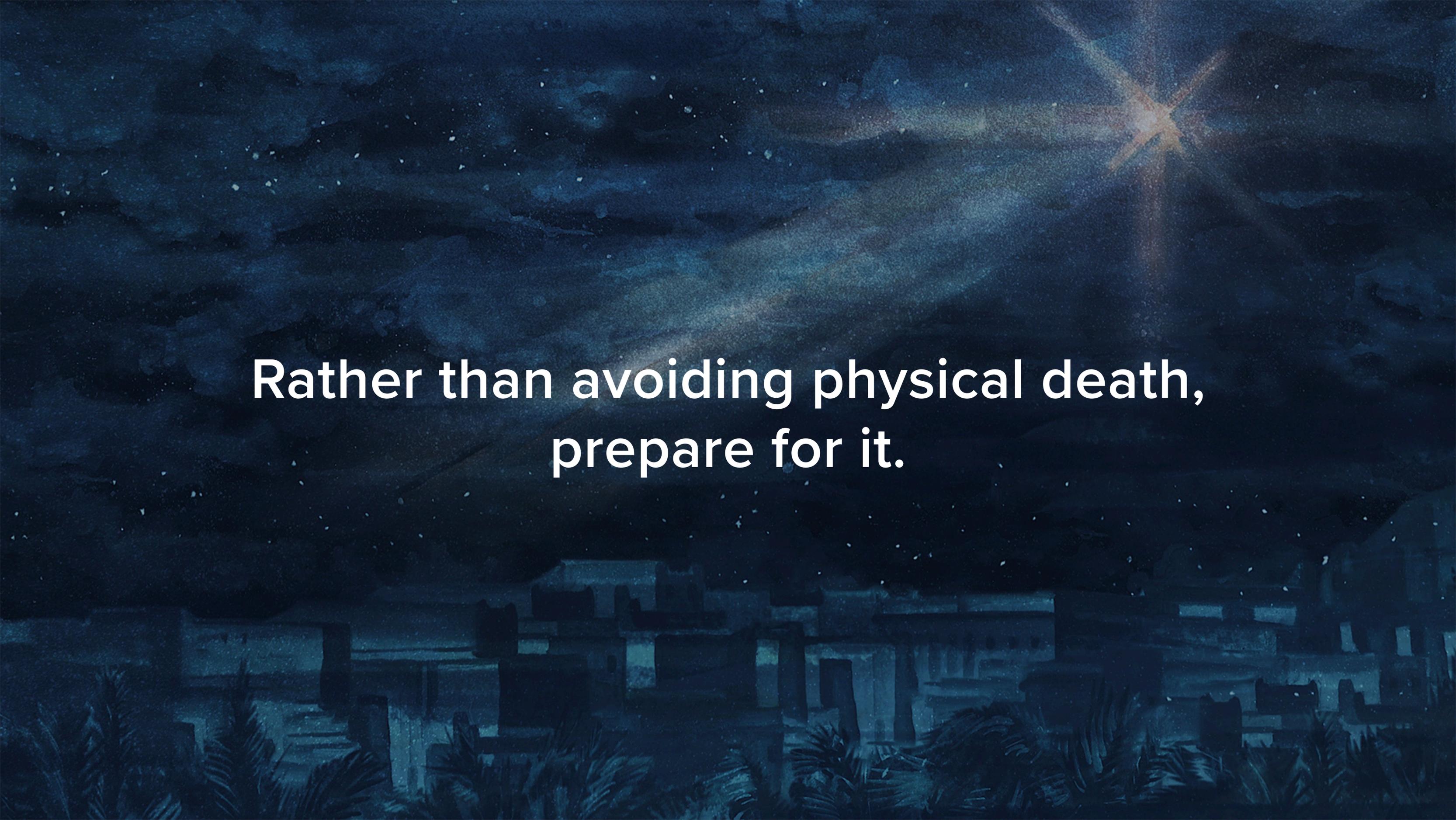
By his death, Christ
meets us in our physical deaths,
makes a way out of our spiritual death,
and so rescues us from eternal death.



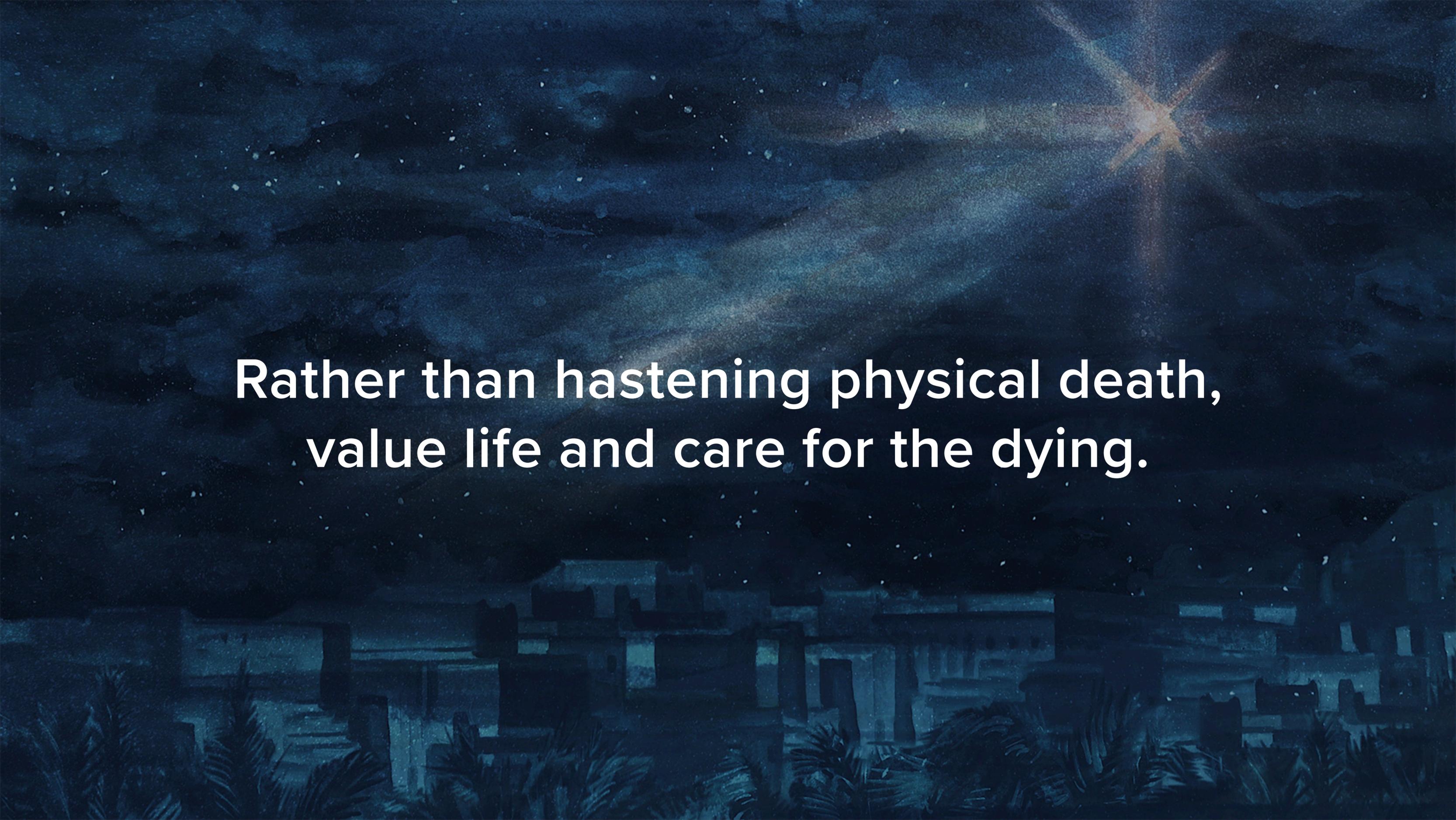
How do we face death faithfully?

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a bright, multi-pointed starburst or light flare in the upper right quadrant. Below the sky, the silhouette of a cityscape with various buildings and structures is visible against the dark background. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

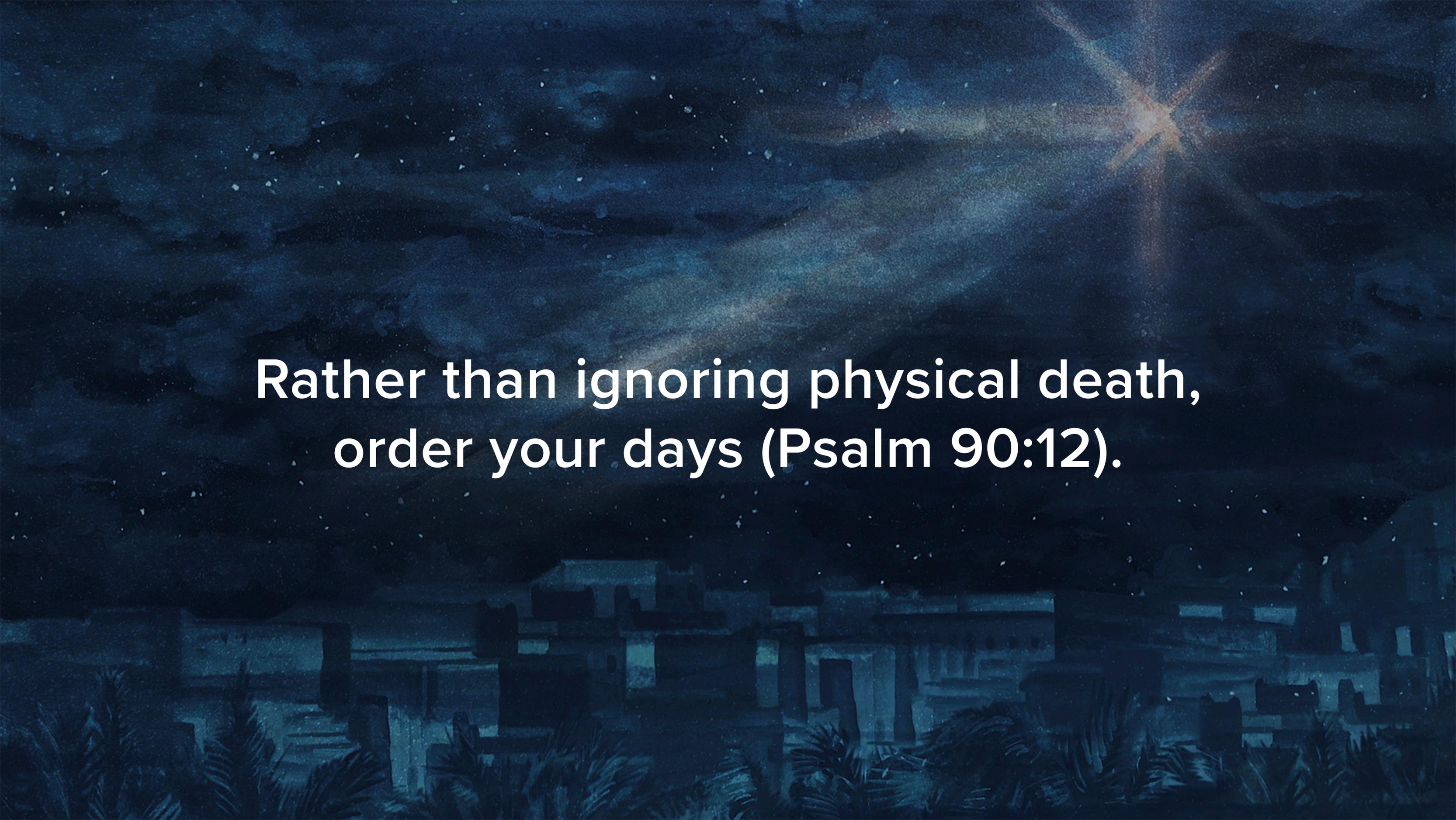
Christ's physical death shows us *both*
the value of physical life and that there are some
things worse than physical death.

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a prominent starburst light in the upper right quadrant, casting a soft glow. Below the sky, the silhouettes of a cityscape are visible, with various buildings and structures. In the foreground, there are dark, leafy plants, possibly palm trees, adding to the nocturnal and somewhat mysterious atmosphere. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

Rather than avoiding physical death,
prepare for it.

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a prominent starburst light in the upper right quadrant, casting a soft glow. Below the sky, the silhouette of a cityscape is visible, with various buildings and structures. In the foreground, there are dark, leafy plants, possibly ferns or similar foliage, adding to the moody and somber atmosphere. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues and blacks, with a touch of warm light from the starburst.

Rather than hastening physical death,
value life and care for the dying.

A dark, atmospheric night scene. The sky is a deep, textured blue with a prominent starburst light in the upper right quadrant, casting a soft glow. Below the sky, the silhouette of a cityscape is visible, with various buildings and structures. In the foreground, there are dark, leafy plants, possibly ferns or similar foliage, adding to the moody and mysterious atmosphere. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues and blacks, with a single point of light providing contrast.

Rather than ignoring physical death,
order your days (Psalm 90:12).