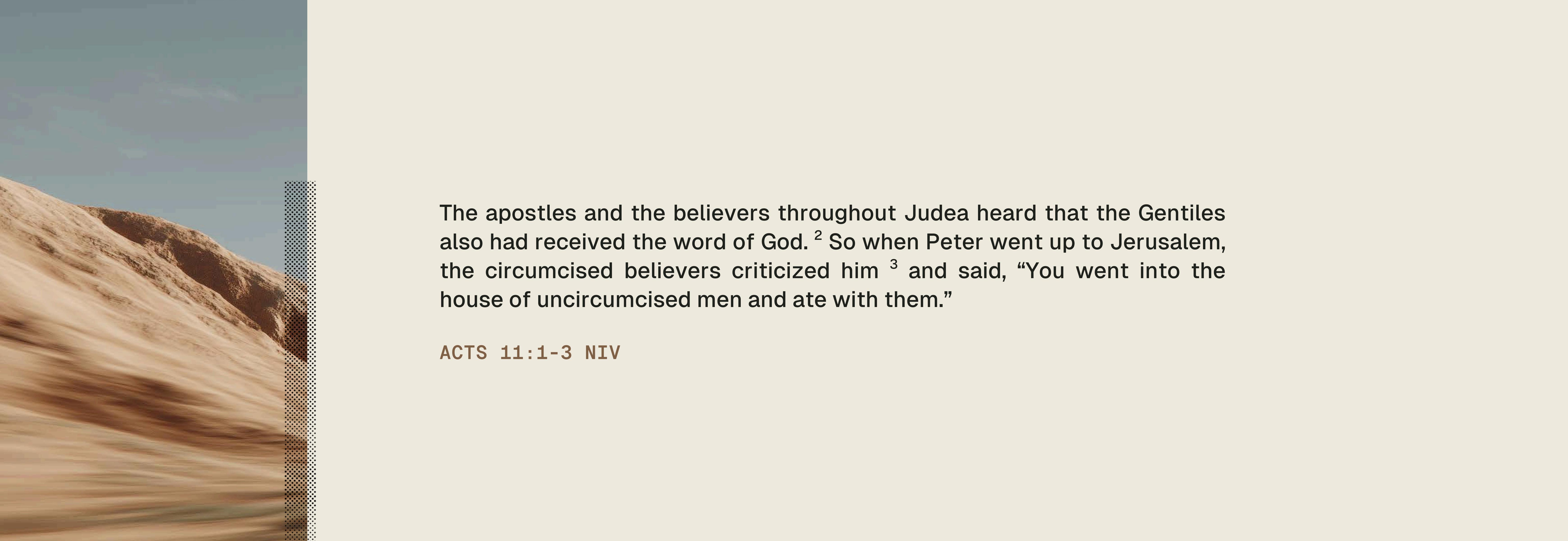


Acts.



The apostles and the believers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him³ and said, “You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.”

ACTS 11:1-3 NIV



Starting from the beginning, Peter told them the whole story: ⁵ “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. ⁶ I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles and birds. ⁷ Then I heard a voice telling me, ‘Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.’”

ACTS 11:4-7 NIV



“I replied, ‘Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’

⁹ “The voice spoke from heaven a second time, ‘Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.’ ¹⁰ This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.”

ACTS 11:8-10 NIV



“Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying.¹² The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man’s house.¹³ He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter.¹⁴ He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.’”

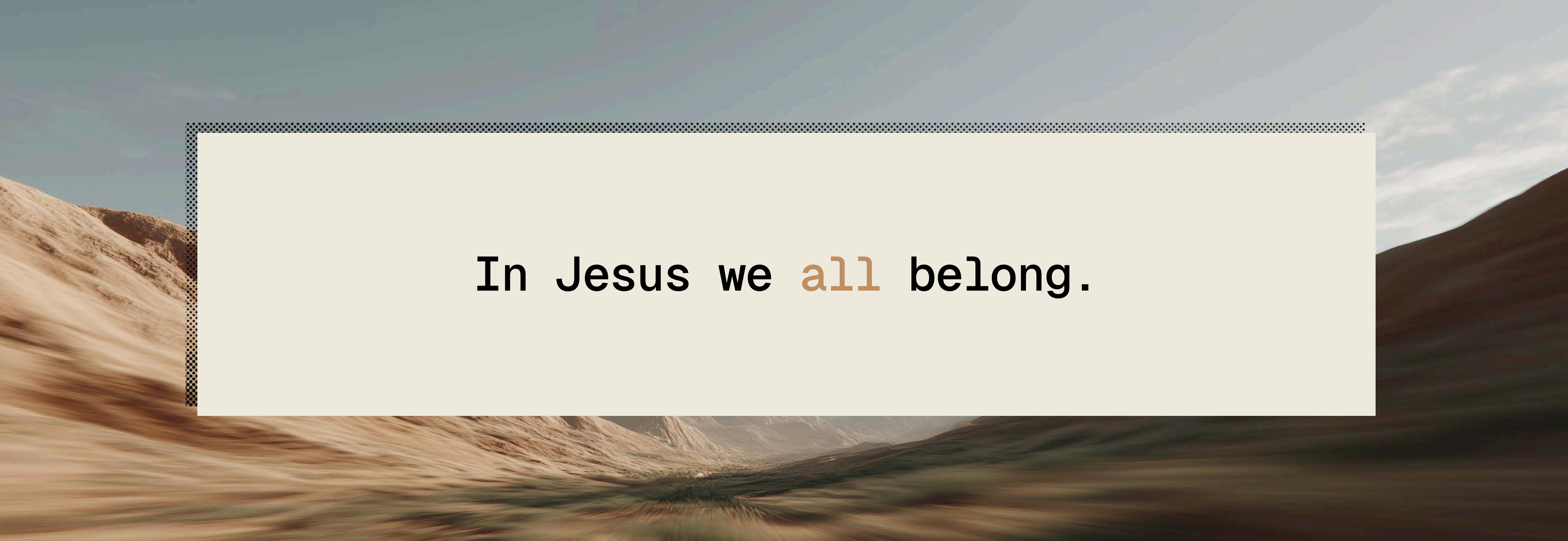
ACTS 11:11-14 NIV



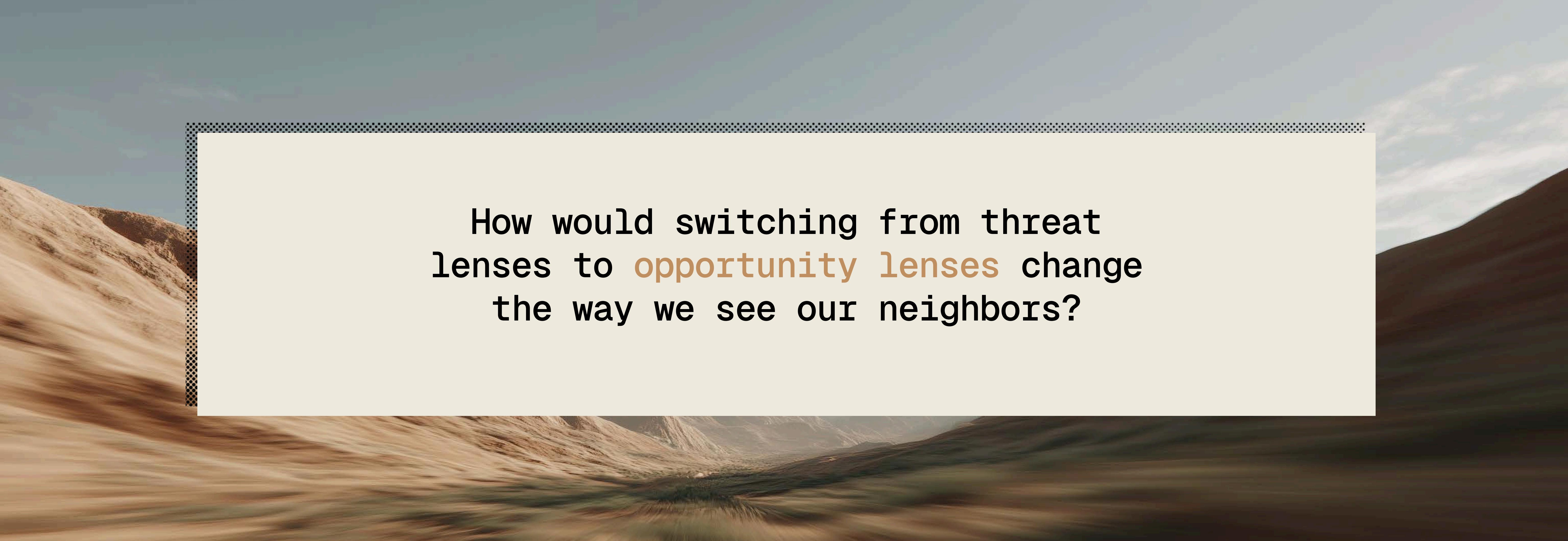
“As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning.¹⁶ Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’¹⁷ So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?”

¹⁸ When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

ACTS 11:15-18 NIV



In Jesus we **all** belong.

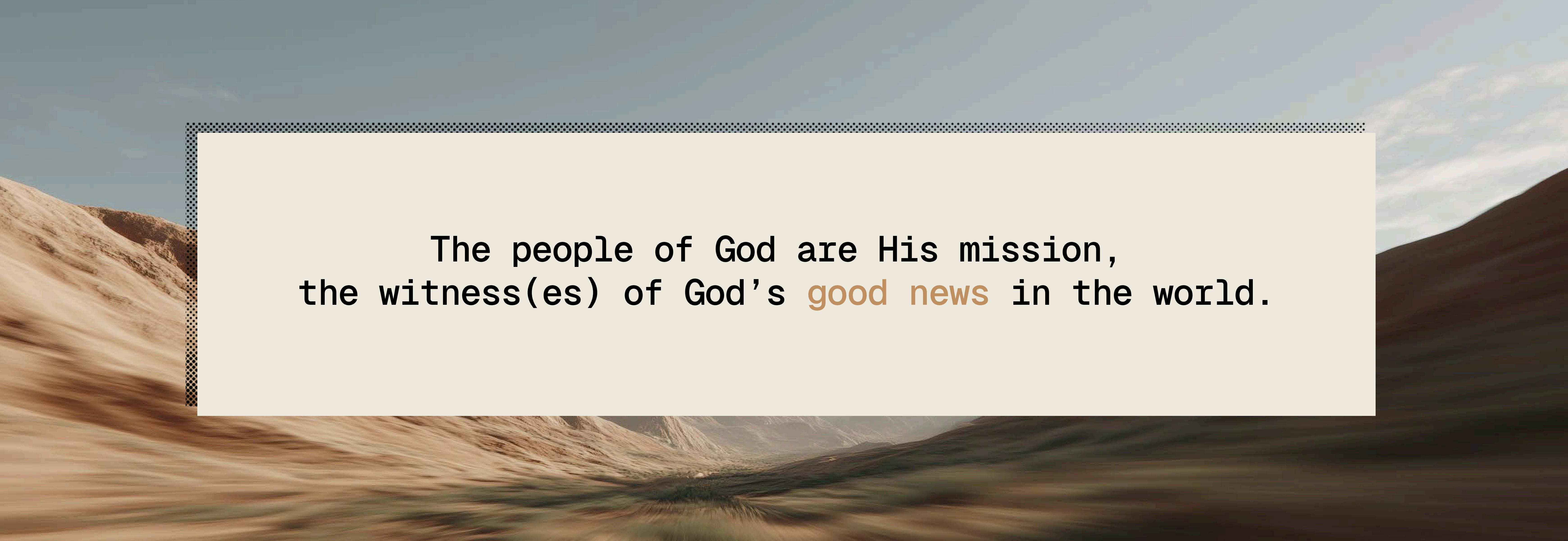


How would switching from threat
lenses to opportunity lenses change
the way we see our neighbors?



Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”

GALATIANS 3:8 NIV



The people of God are His mission,
the witness(es) of God's **good news** in the world.



Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

GENESIS 11:4 NIV

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“Our sheets easily fill with educational, racial, cultural, and spiritual rejects, and we cry, ‘By no means, Lord—they are not my type!’ The result, of course, is a Christianity that grows solely on homogeneous lines. We then only seek to win our own kind, and thousands never come to grace who, humanly speaking, would have if they were given the chance.”

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Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism³⁵ but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.”

ACTS 10:34-35 NIV



And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.”

REVELATION 21:3 NIV

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PEOPLE YOU ARE ROOTING AGAINST

People with political identities different from ours

Immigrants, refugees, and Muslims

The formerly incarcerated, or addicted

The wealthy and the powerful

The poor who don't fix their lives fast enough

The “deconstructed” or the skeptical

The people who hurt us
THE COWORKER, THE EX,
THE FAMILY MEMBER, OR
THE CHURCH THAT WOUNDED US.

People who look like they “don't belong” at church
THEIR PAST, TATTOOS, LANGUAGE,
PARENTING, CLOTHING, OR VIBE



After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

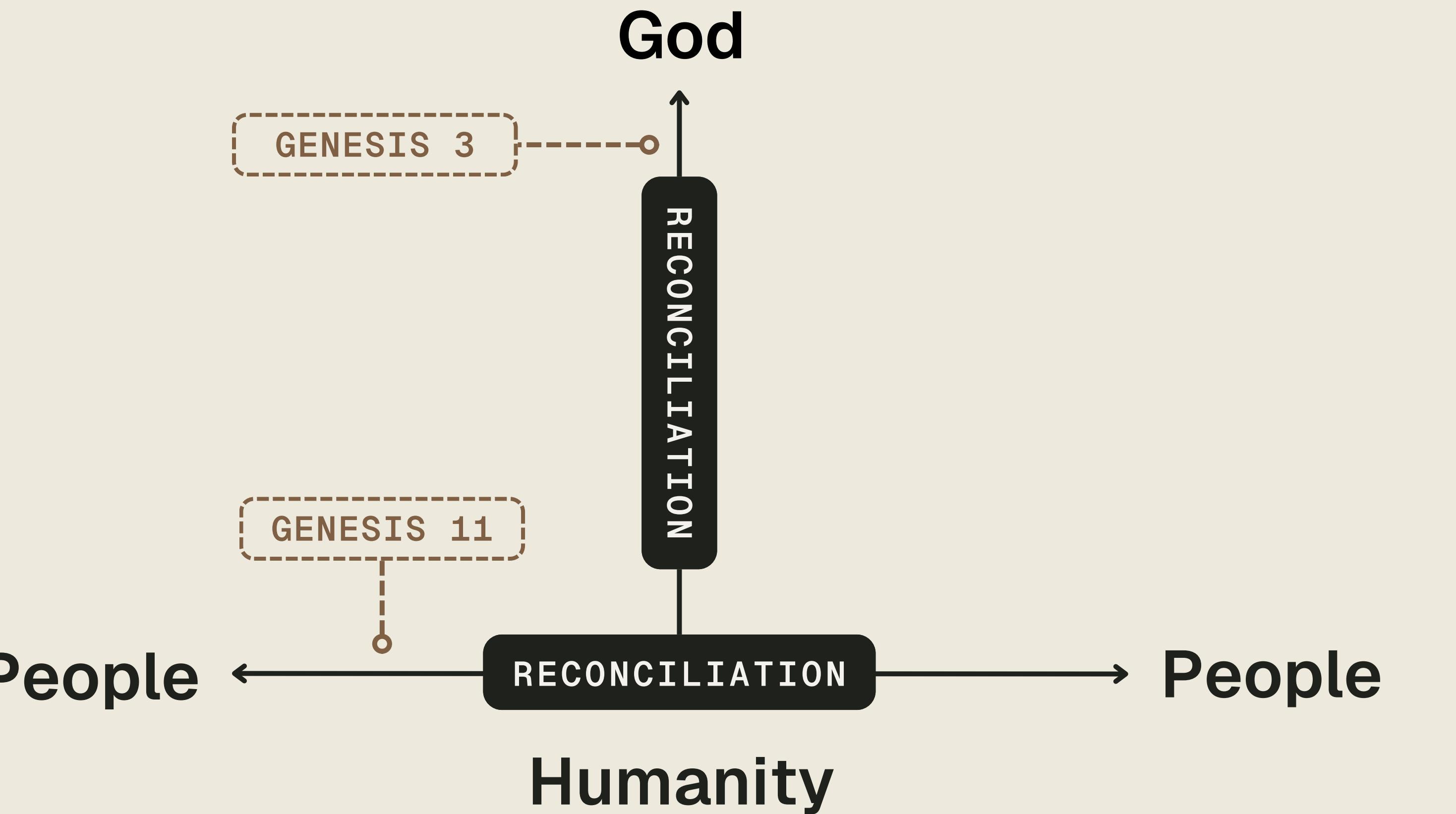
REVELATION 7:9 NIV



**“I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”**

GENESIS 12:3 NIV

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“Can a gospel that reconciles people
to God, and not people to people,
be the gospel of Jesus Christ?”

JOHN PERKINS

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SPECTRA: RITA WILEY

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- + What does God have for His Church?
- + Who are you rooting against?
- + What new story might God want to write through someone you've already written off?