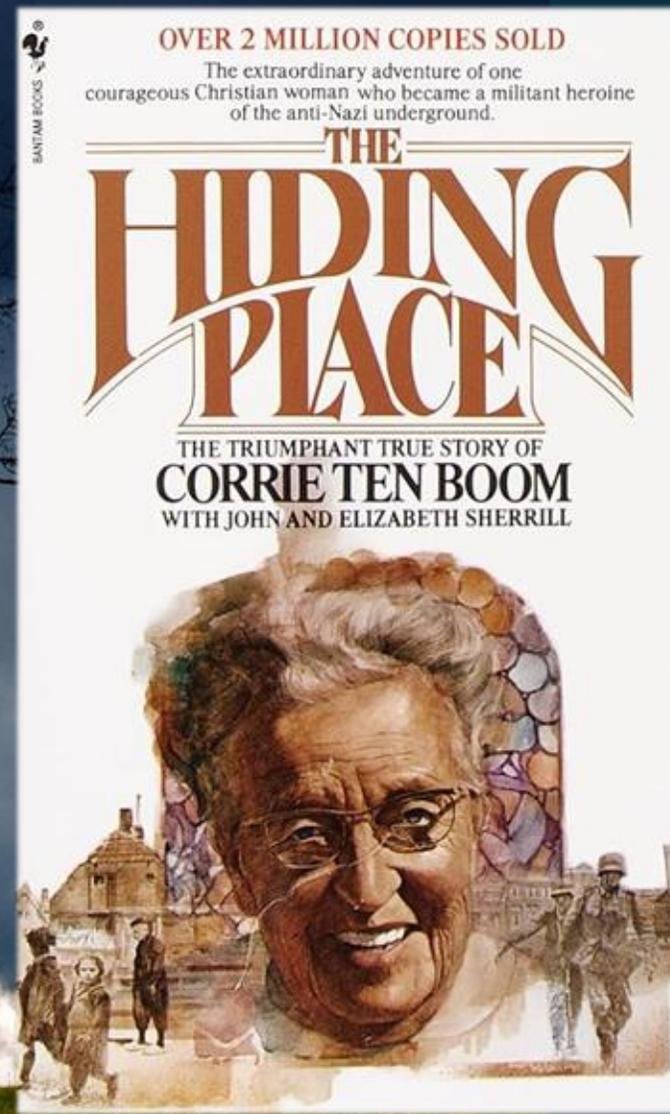


Death: *Seed of Life*

A Lenten Reflection on John 12:24-25



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THE HIDING PLACE

THE TRIUMPHANT TRUE STORY OF
CORRIE TEN BOOM
WITH JOHN AND ELIZABETH SHERRILL

**“There is no pit so deep that
God’s love is not deeper still”**

Corrie ten Boom

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit (John 12:24, ESV)



Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over (John 12:24, The Message)

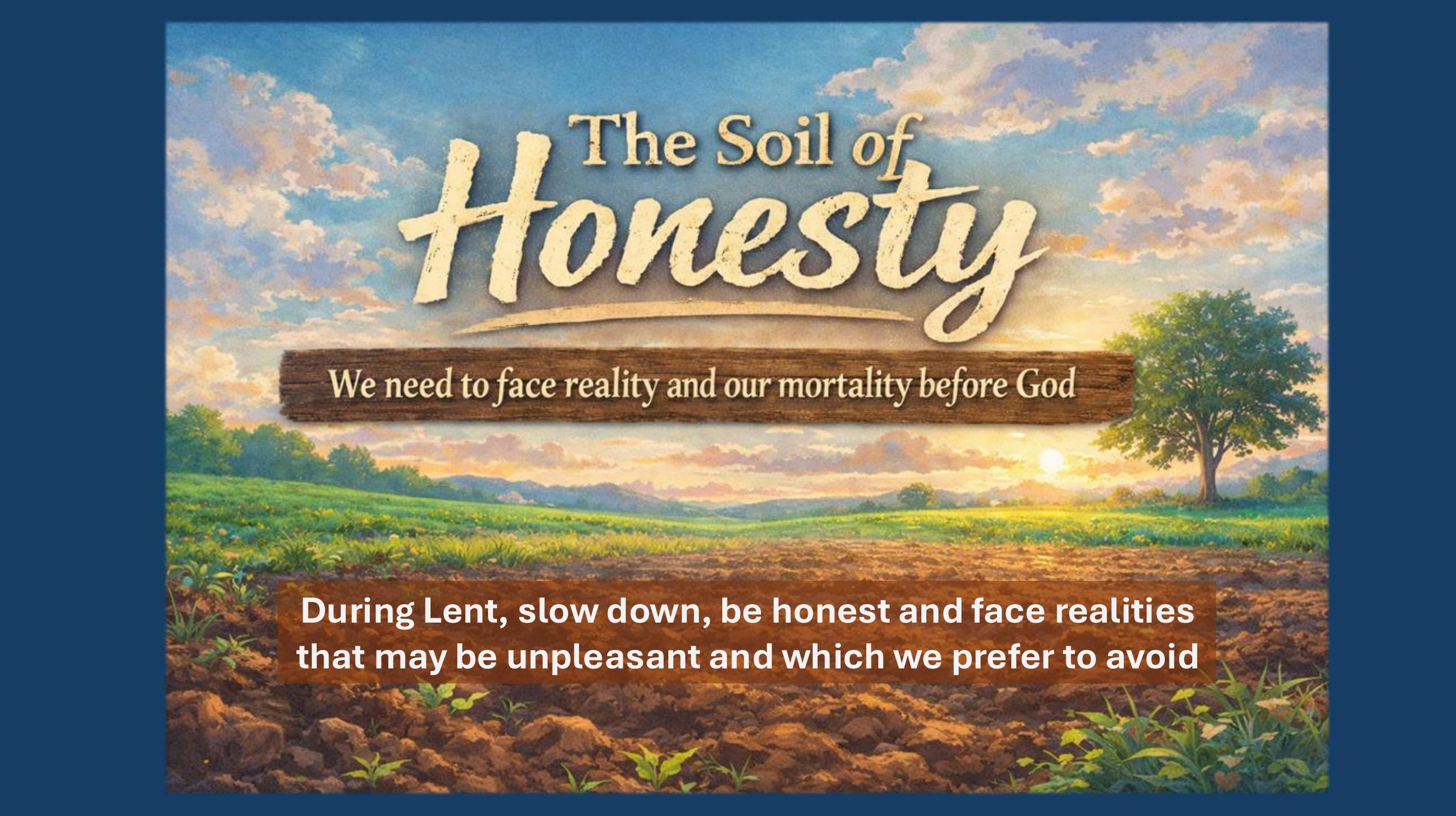


God brings new life out of apparent endings

❖ **The Soil of Honesty**

❖ **The Seed of Surrender**

❖ **The Shoot of Resurrection**



The Soil of *Honesty*

We need to face reality and our mortality before God

During Lent, slow down, be honest and face realities that may be unpleasant and which we prefer to avoid

Death is the absolute certainty for all of us

- the last enemy to be abolished (1 Cor. 15:26)
- not just a natural transition to another state

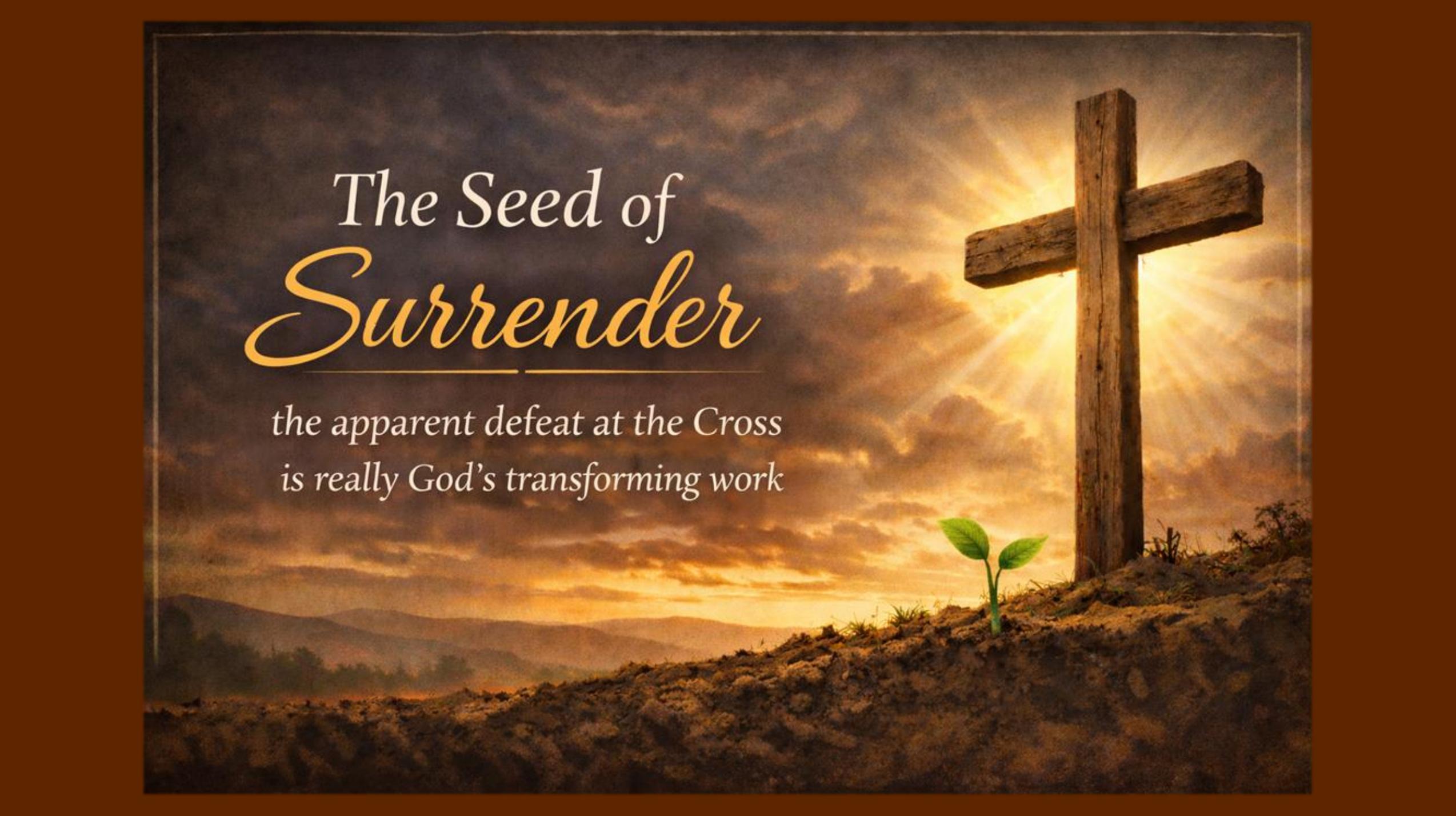
At the tomb of Lazarus “**Jesus wept**” (John 11:35)



Pain and death strip away our illusions but give us perspective and lead us to encounter God more deeply and authentically

- ❖ **Where might God be inviting deeper honesty in us?**
- ❖ **What illusions about our lives do we need to release?**

**The soil of honesty is the beginning of
change, growth and new life**

A wooden cross stands on a hillside at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a golden glow and long shadows. A small green plant with two leaves is growing in the foreground near the base of the cross. The background shows rolling hills under a cloudy sky.

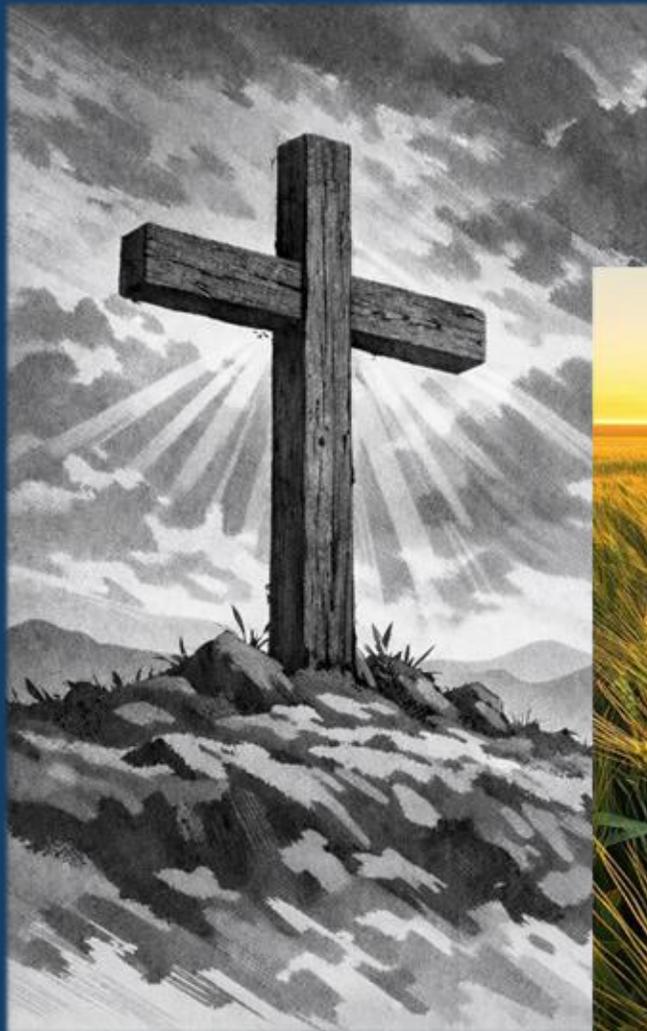
The Seed of Surrender

*the apparent defeat at the Cross
is really God's transforming work*

The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified

(John 12:23)

Time's up





Whoever loves his life loses it

(John 12:25, ESV)

Anyone who holds on to his life just as it is destroys that life.

But if you let it go, reckless in your love,

you'll have it forever, real and eternal

(John 12:25, The Message)

psychē = whole being, identity, self

Fasting

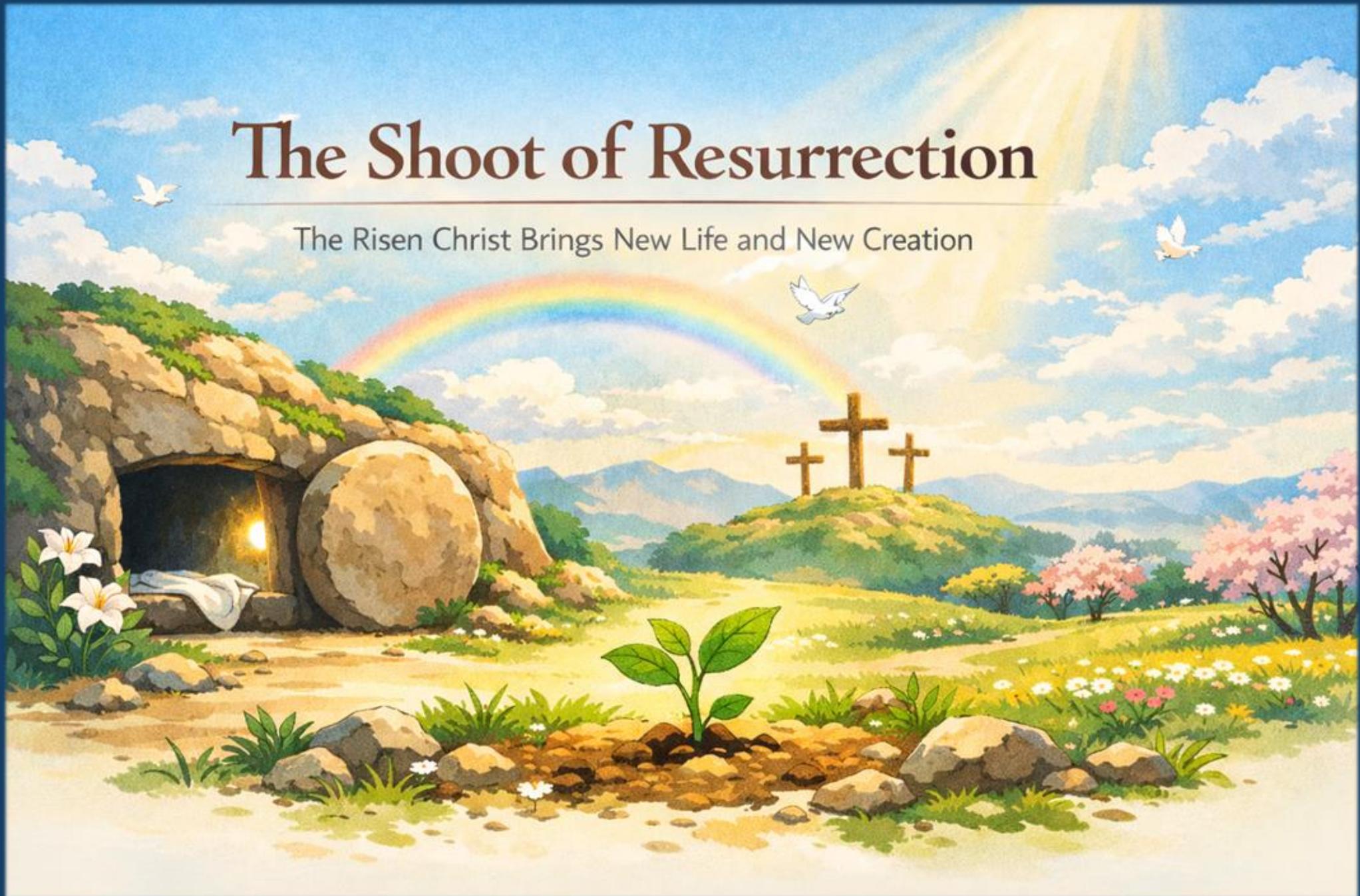
Prayer

Generosity

- ❖ **Where is our heavenly Father asking us to trust him in our lives rather than cling on to control?**
- ❖ **What might we surrender to him today that could bear fruit tomorrow?**

The Shoot of Resurrection

The Risen Christ Brings New Life and New Creation



A buried grain of wheat

“sprouts and reproduces itself many times over”

(John 12:24, The Message)

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

(Romans 6:3-5, ESV)

A scenic landscape featuring a bright sun breaking through a layer of clouds, casting a golden glow over a valley. The foreground is filled with lush green fields and scattered trees, while the background shows rolling hills and distant mountains under a hazy sky.

**We will experience the fullness of resurrection
when Christ returns and the new heaven and new
earth are revealed – but this future hope
has already begun**

**God's purpose is to restore, heal and renew
creation, so how we live now matters,
including care for the world**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." (Rev. 21:1-5a, ESV)

Can we be channels of resurrection life *now* to help wipe away *some* tears from people mourning or in pain?







**We are his *workmanship*, created in
Christ Jesus for good works**

(Eph. 2:10, ESV)

Greek *poiēma* = poem, artwork, sculpture



“We are God’s artwork. We are God’s sculpture, his poetry... by the Spirit we are called and equipped to bring new dimensions of life to the world around us. We are to be Renaissance-people, demonstrating the birth of the new world.”

NT Wright, The Vision of Ephesians

❖ **The Soil of Honest**

- Face reality and our mortality truthfully before God

❖ **The Seed of Surrender**

- Through the Cross, God secured our salvation and defeated death, so we can entrust our lives into his hands

❖ **The Shoot of Resurrection**

- We are raised with Christ so in the Spirit's power, we should live out our lives as signposts of new creation now

- ❖ **Where is God inviting honesty in our lives?**
- ❖ **What do we need to surrender into his hands?**
- ❖ **Where can we already see the shoots of resurrection?**

Lord Jesus,

**Thank you that you entered the soil of our humanity
and transformed death into the seed of life.**

**Give us honesty to face reality and our mortality before you,
courage to surrender to you what we hold onto too tightly,
and eyes of faith to see the shoots of resurrection sprouting in
our lives now as we relate authentically to one another and
the world.**

**As we journey through this season of Lent, prepare us to
share fully in the life of your new creation to your glory.**

Amen.