

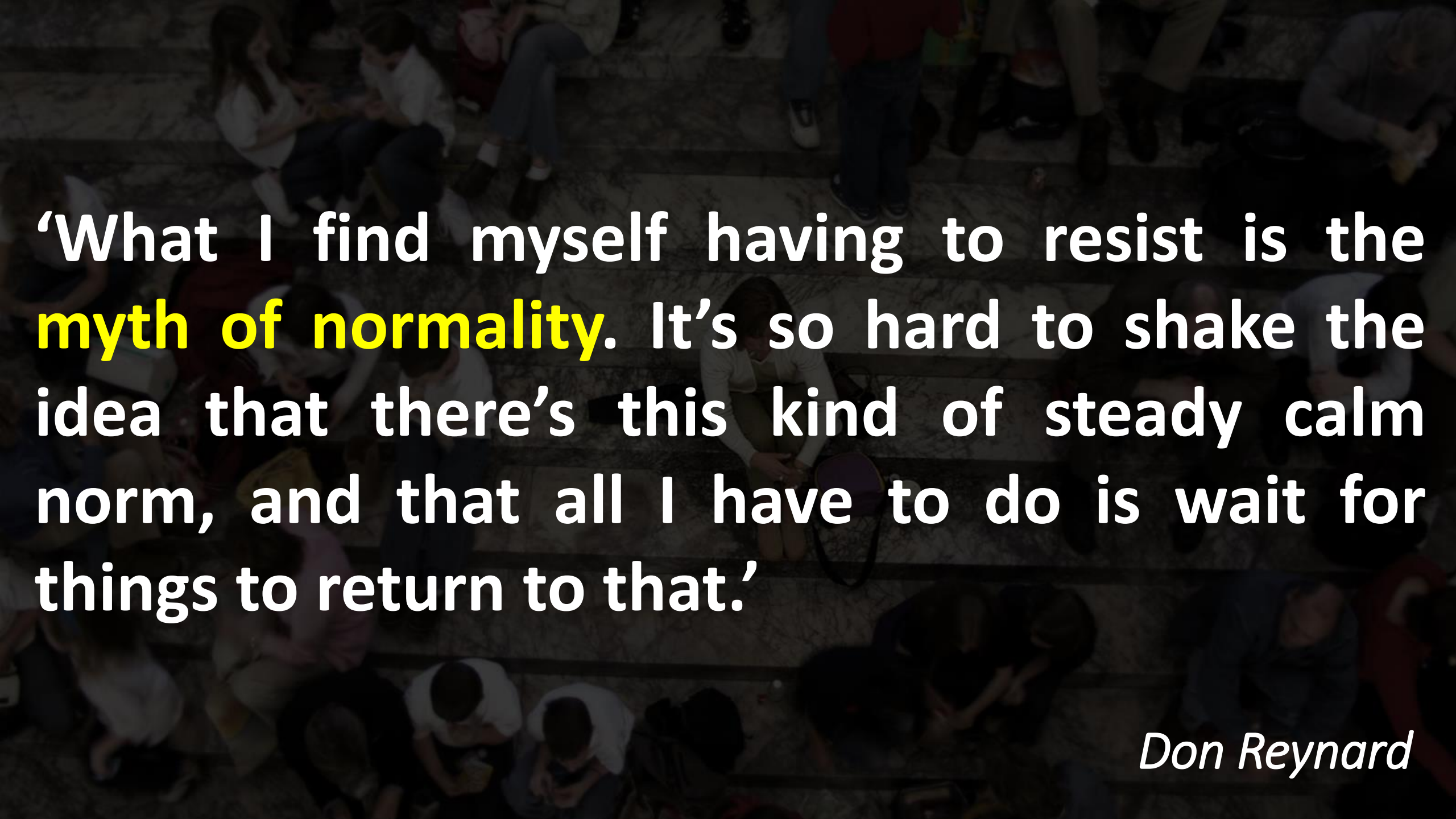
How has this year been for you?

What has been strange, or new, or challenging?





Don Reynard

A dark, high-angle photograph of a large crowd of people sitting on the ground, with a woman in the center holding a child. The image is dimly lit, with the people appearing as silhouettes or dark shapes against a slightly lighter background. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

‘What I find myself having to resist is the **myth of normality**. It’s so hard to shake the idea that there’s this kind of steady calm norm, and that all I have to do is wait for things to return to that.’

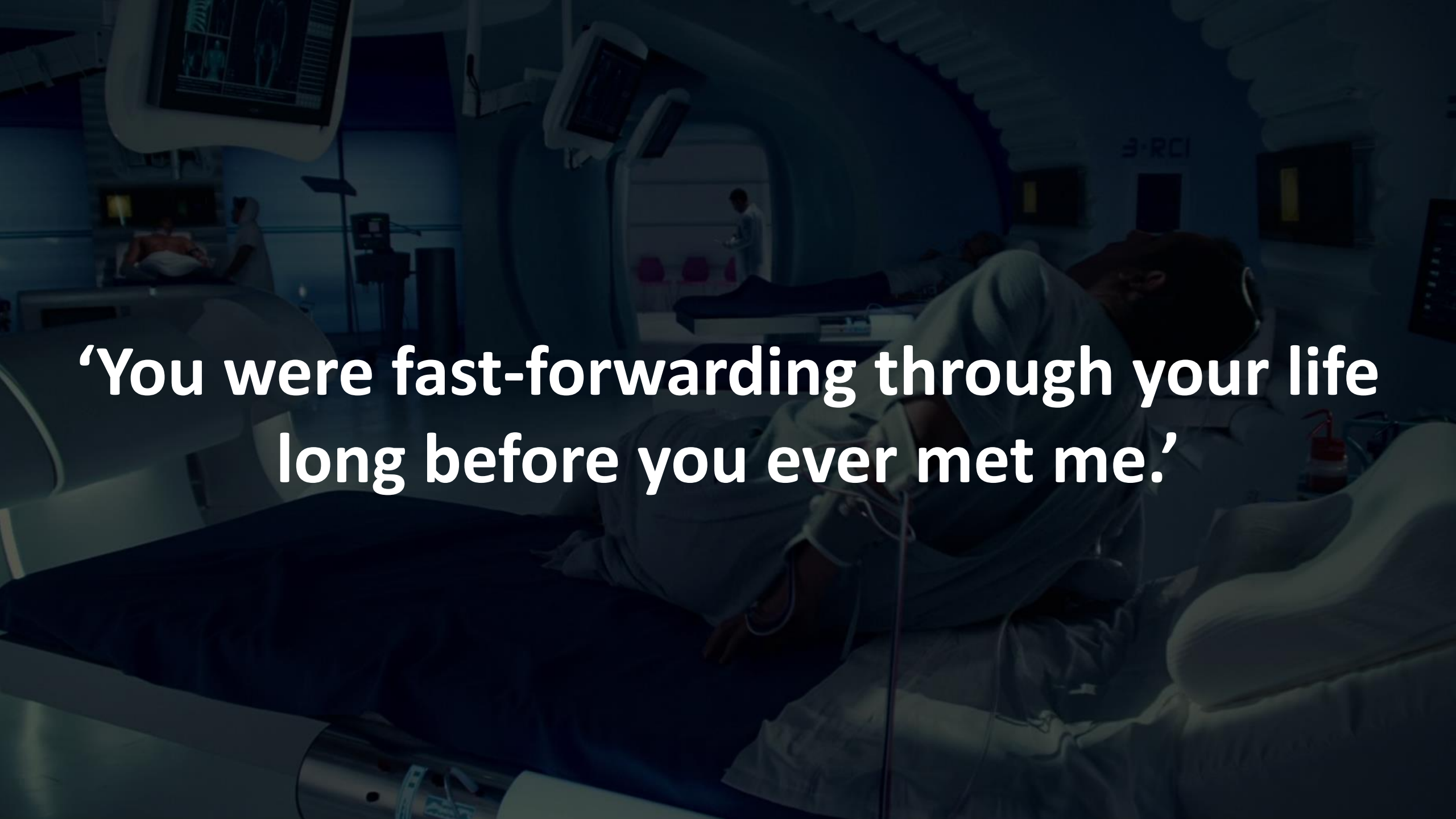
Don Reynard

CLICK





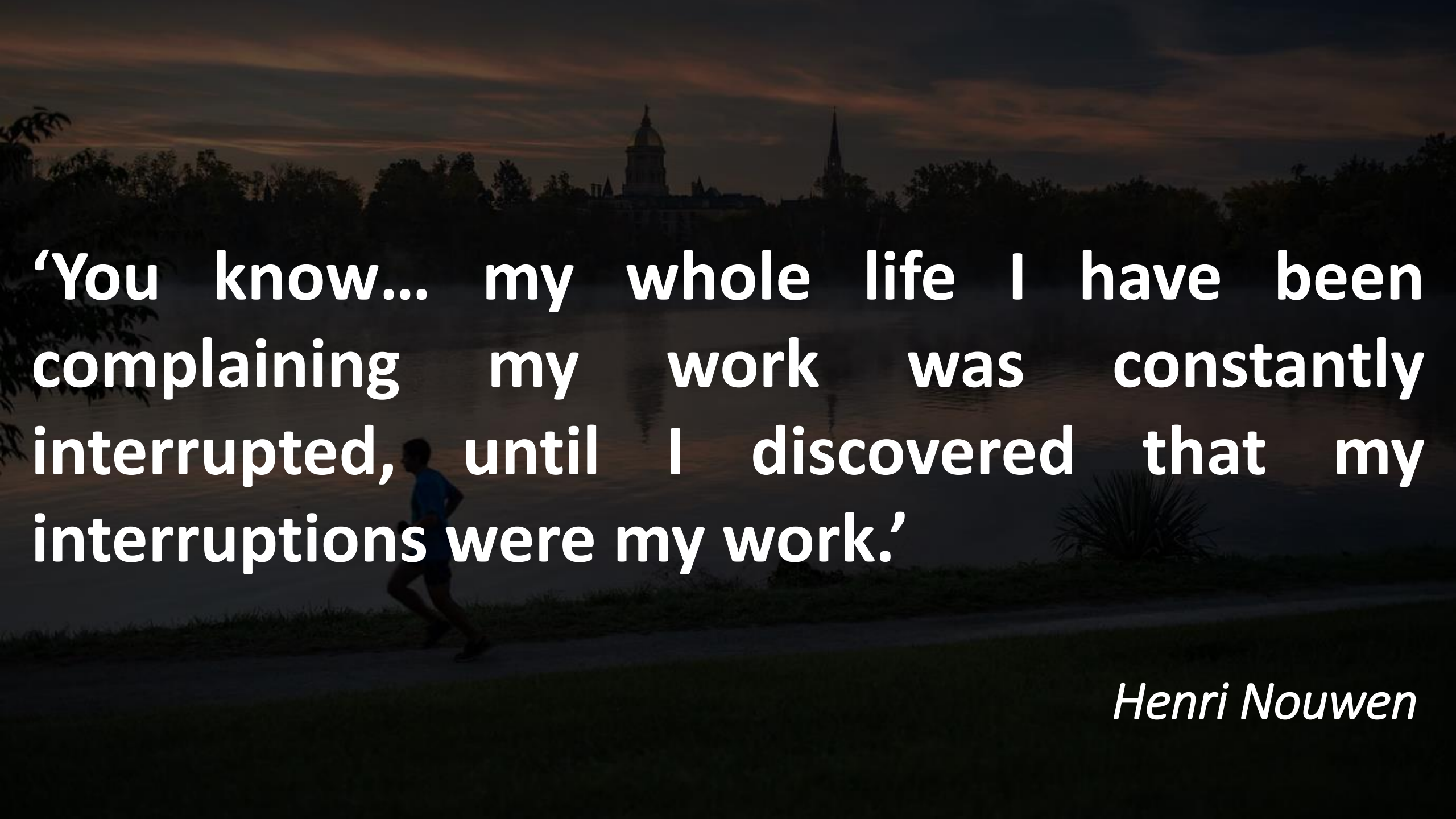


A dimly lit hospital operating room. In the foreground, a patient is lying on a table, partially covered by a white sheet. A medical professional in a white coat and mask is leaning over the patient. In the background, other medical staff and equipment are visible, including monitors and a large circular opening in the wall. The overall atmosphere is clinical and focused.

‘You were fast-forwarding through your life long before you ever met me.’



Henri Nouwen

A person is running on a path in the foreground, silhouetted against a bright, hazy sky. In the background, a city skyline is visible across a body of water, with a prominent dome and spire. The overall scene is a mix of natural and urban elements, suggesting a peaceful morning routine.

‘You know... my whole life I have been complaining my work was constantly interrupted, until I discovered that my interruptions were my work.’

Henri Nouwen

'If we were surrounded only by ugliness then we would experience little distress at its passing. But instead we find ourselves sitting among wonders. Fragile breakable things, certainly, but nevertheless dazzling and wonderful.'

Pain and difficulties highlight the reality of beauty

Pain and difficulties highlight the reality of beauty, and also the fragility of all the beautiful people and things in our lives., and

What beautiful things or people in your life have felt fragile or threatened this year, or in recent years?

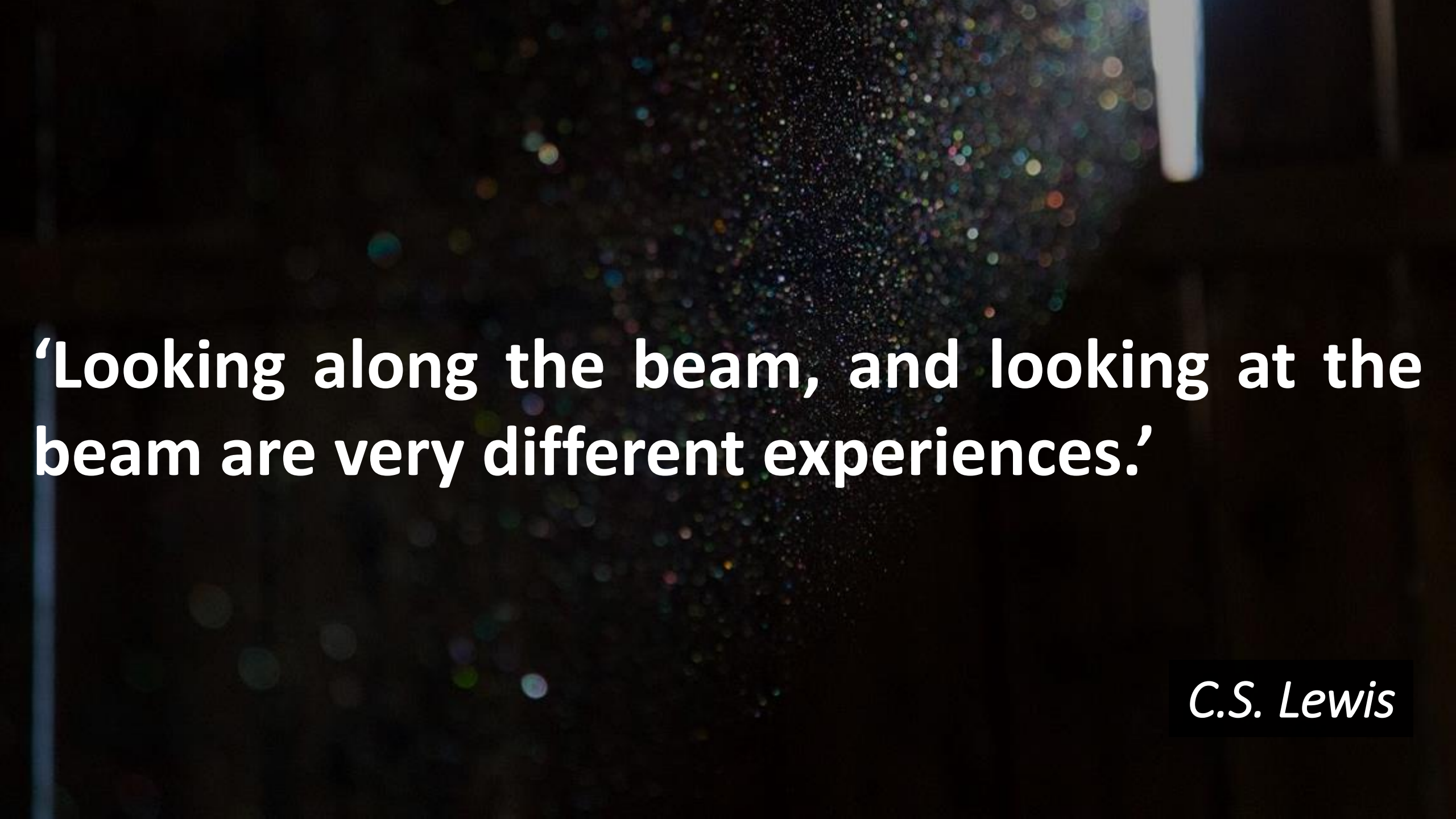


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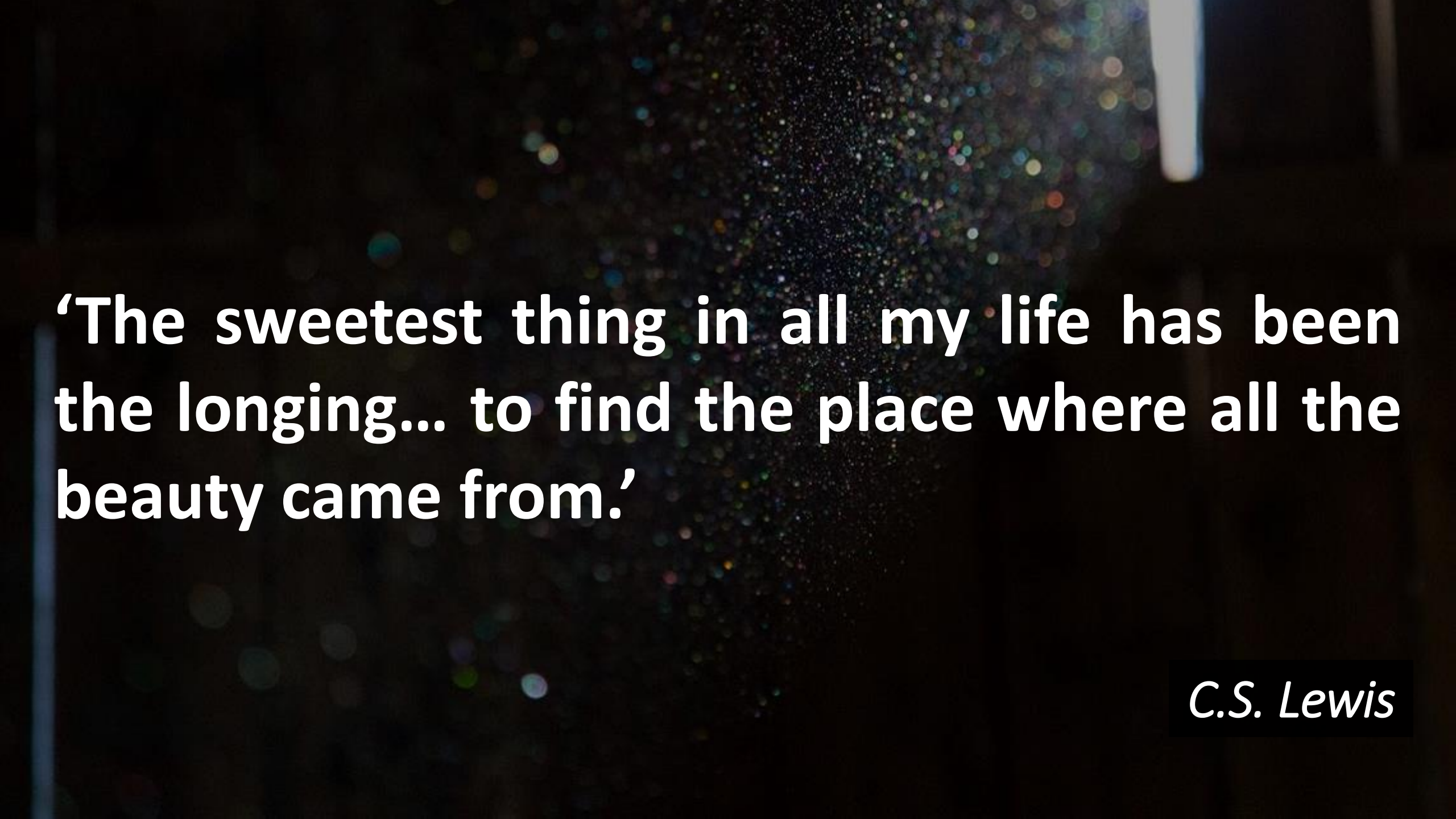
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Pain and difficulties highlight the reality of beauty, and also the fragility of all the beautiful people and things in our lives, and they raise the question of whether there is anything beautiful and not also fragile.



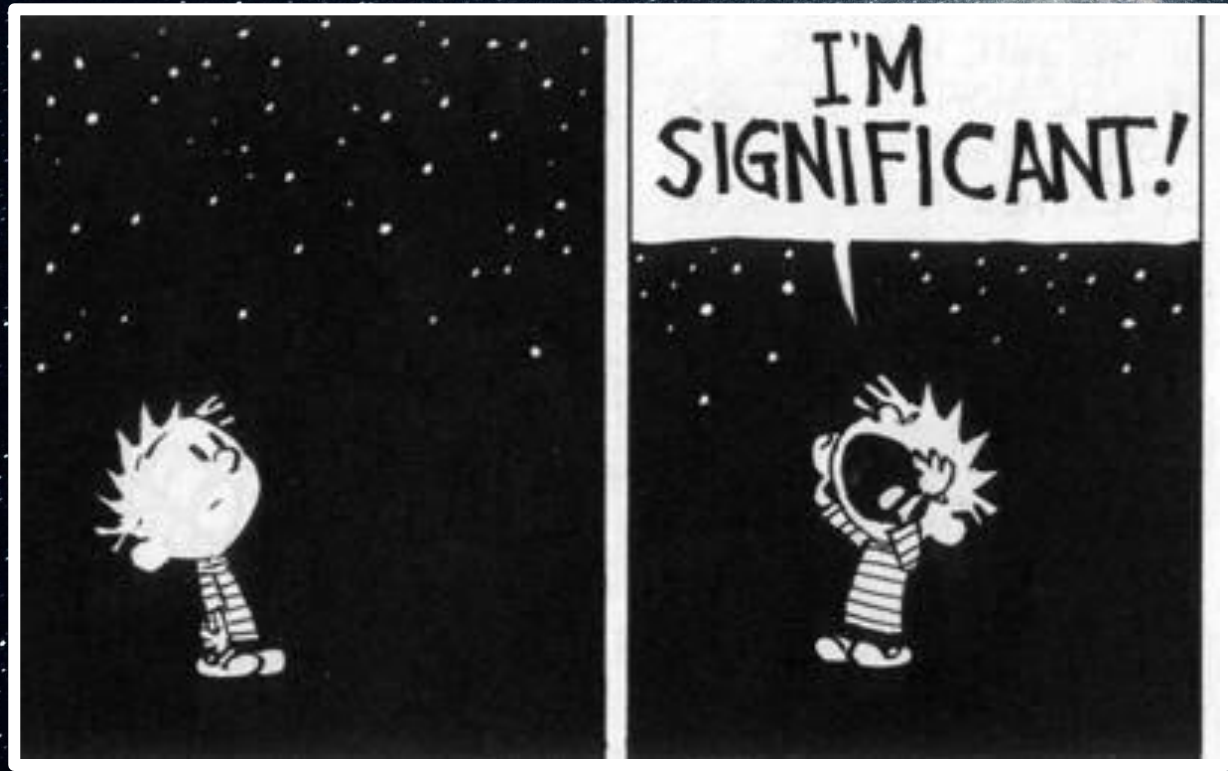
‘Looking along the beam, and looking at the beam are very different experiences.’

C.S. Lewis



**‘The sweetest thing in all my life has been
the longing... to find the place where all the
beauty came from.’**

C.S. Lewis



I'M
SIGNIFICANT!

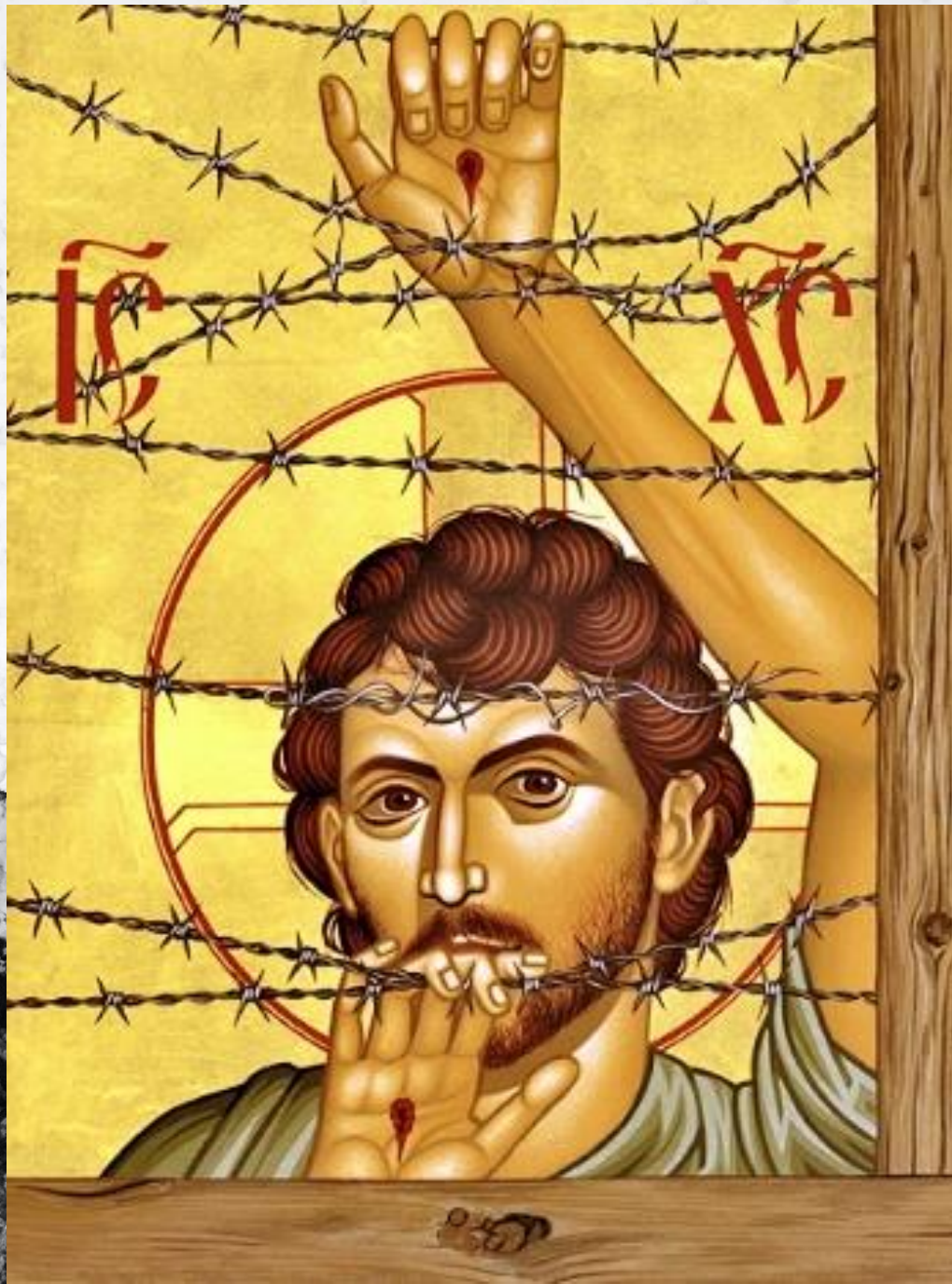


What comes to mind when you think of the word 'God' — how would you normally picture or describe 'God'?

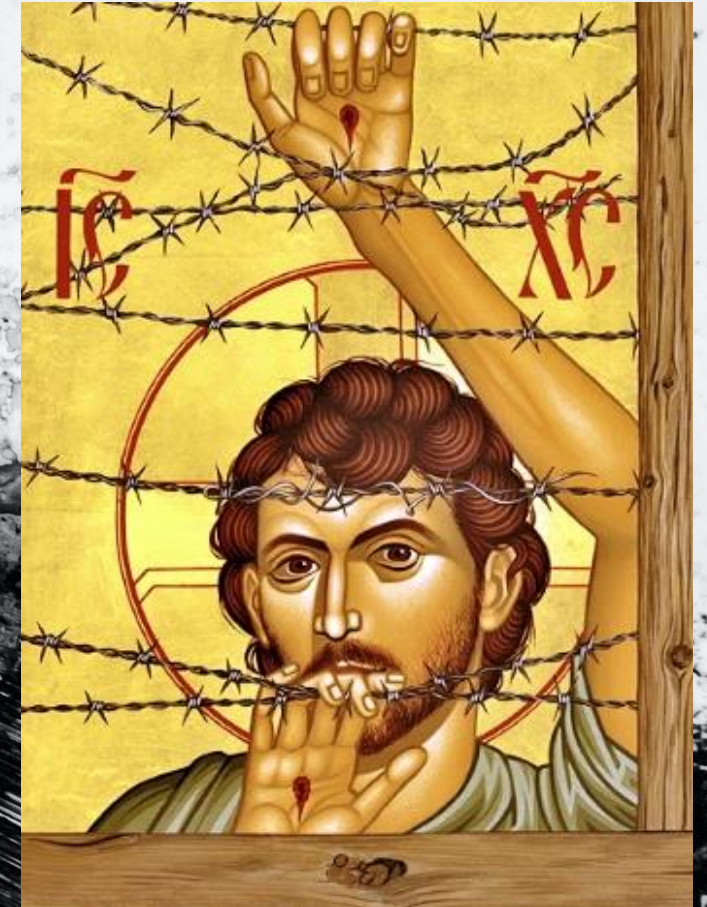








‘Anyone who has seen me has seen [God] the Father.’ — *Jesus*



'It's about finding someone whose problems complement yours. Perfectly imperfect. Everyone is a little broken inside, trying to find their band aid.'

'I like that you're broken; broken like me. Maybe that makes me a fool. I like that you're lonely; lonely like me. I could be lonely with you.'

Mitchy Collins

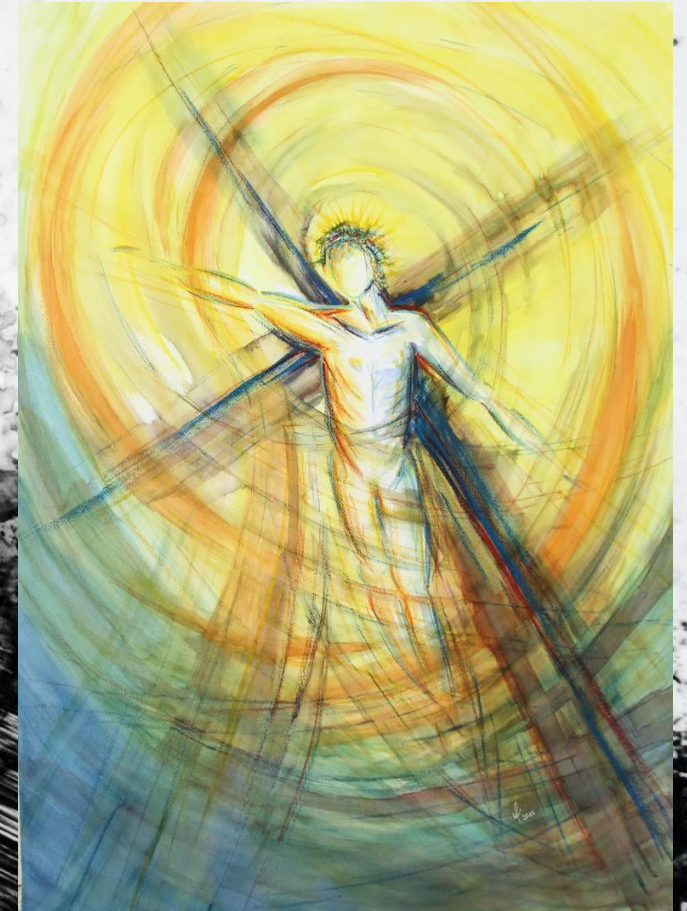


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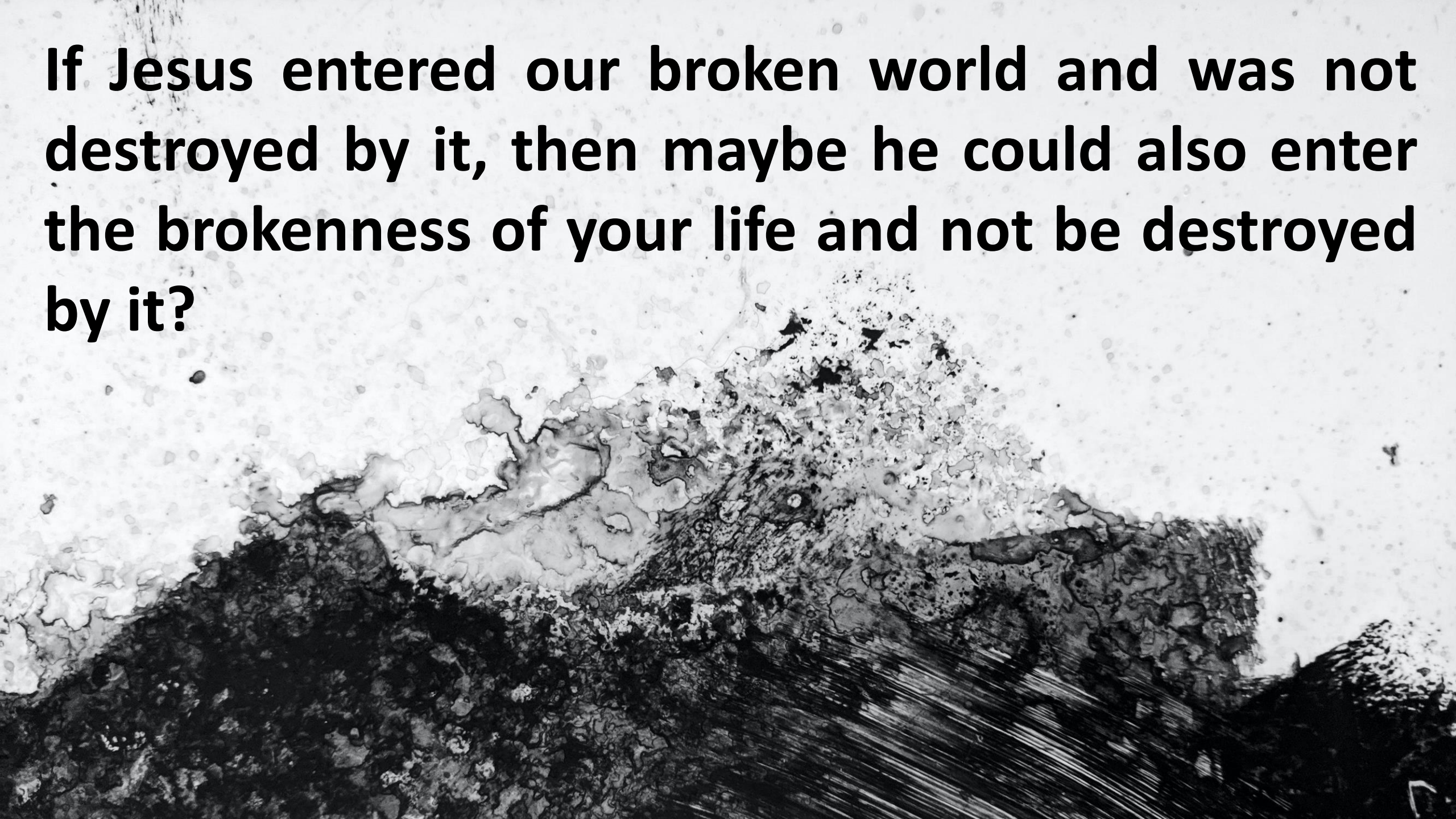
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24

‘The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.’ — *John*



If Jesus entered our broken world and was not destroyed by it, then maybe he could also enter the brokenness of your life and not be destroyed by it?



'God is with us'

'There is hope'



Have you ever thought of God being like Jesus?

What if he was like Jesus — how might that affect your view of God... and of yourself, and your difficult times?



A wide-angle photograph of a vast, flat green field under a heavy, grey, overcast sky. The field is covered in low-lying vegetation, and the horizon is flat and distant. The overall mood is somber and atmospheric.

‘A skeptic who believes’



People



A figurine of the infant Jesus is positioned in the center-left of the frame, lying in a manger. The figurine is made of a light-colored material, possibly porcelain or ceramic, and is dressed in a greyish-blue cloth. The manger is filled with brown, textured straw. The background is a dense, dark brown field of straw, creating a textured, almost abstract pattern. Overlaid on the center of the image is the word "Jesus" in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. The lighting is soft and focused on the figurine, highlighting its features against the darker background.

Jesus

What questions did this morning raise for you?

