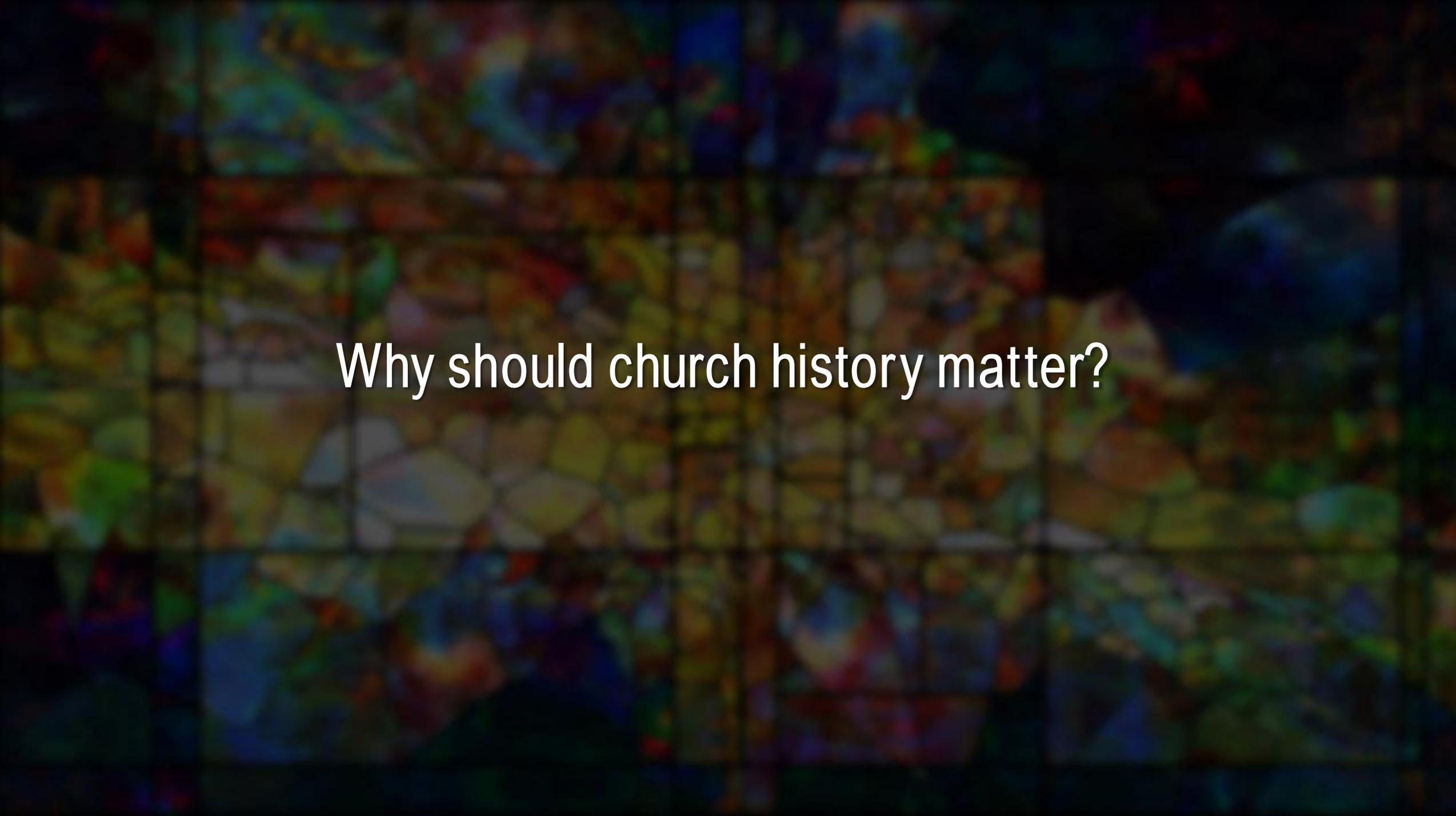


A graphic design featuring a silhouette of a church with a cross on top. The silhouette is filled with a colorful, abstract stained glass pattern. The text 'THE CHURCH' is integrated into the design, with 'THE' in a simple font and 'CHURCH' in large, bold letters that are filled with the same stained glass pattern. Below this, the phrase 'WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER...' is written in a smaller, bold font, also filled with the stained glass pattern.

THE
CHURCH
WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER...



the
CHURCH
through the ages
HEBREWS 11-12



Why should church history matter?

LOCAL CHURCH

ACTS 9:31

So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

UNIVERSAL CHURCH

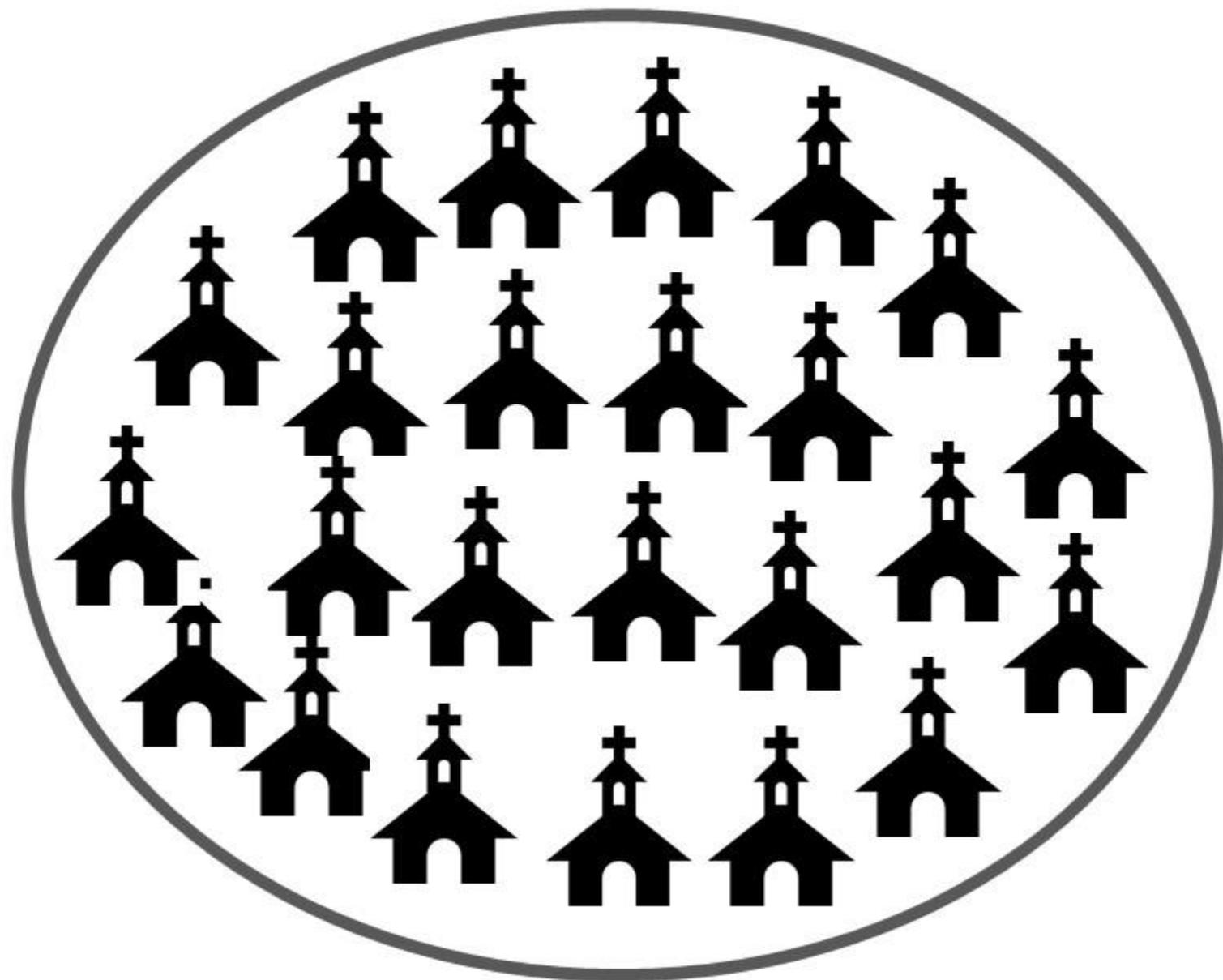
All Christians, in all times and all places, are connected through Christ.

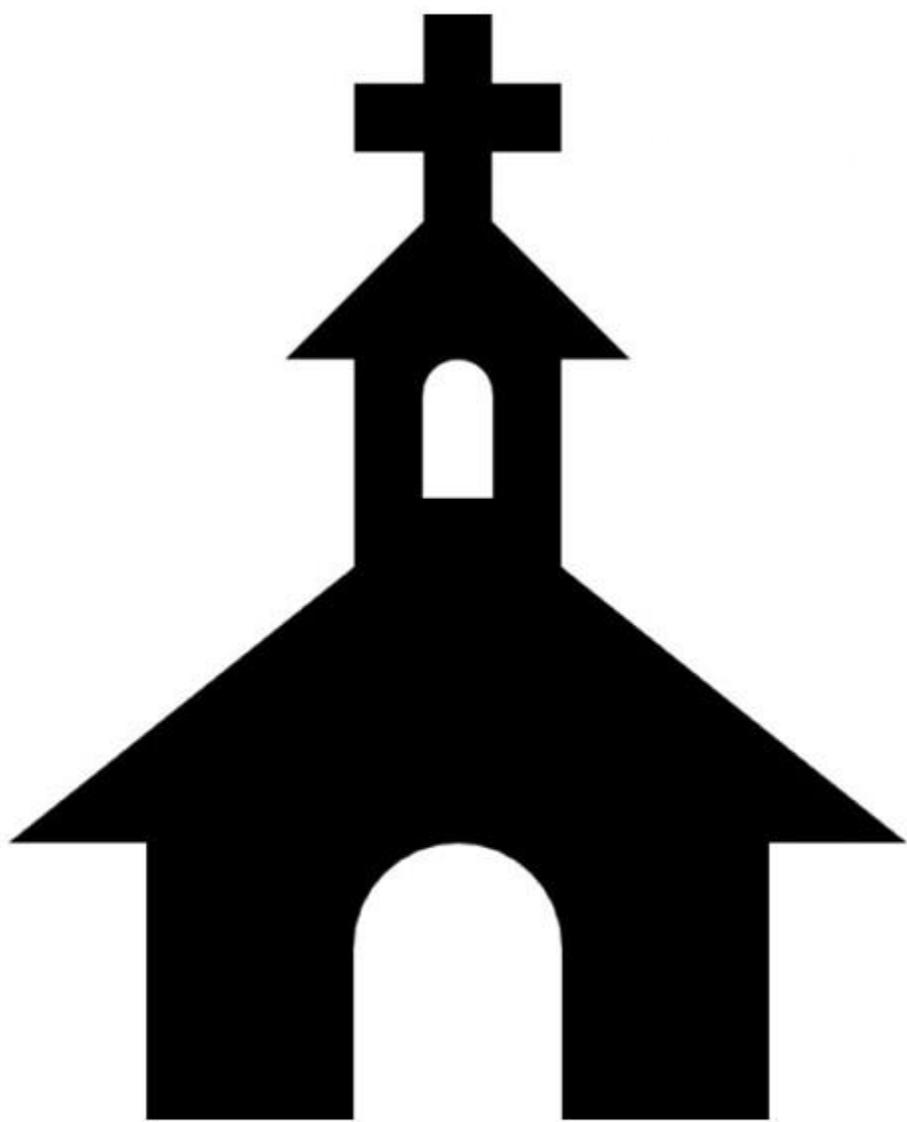
UNIVERSAL CHURCH

MATTHEW 16:18

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

UNIVERSAL CHURCH





UNIVERSAL CHURCH



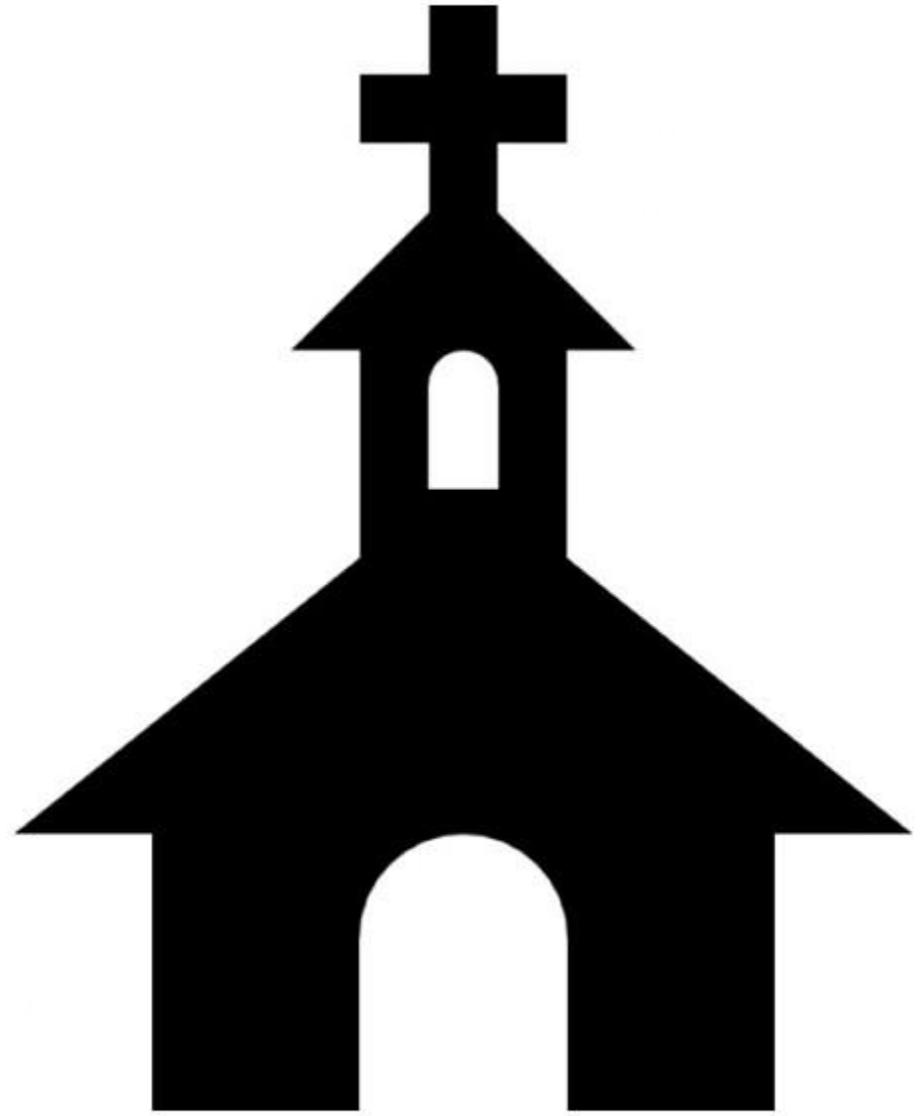
LOCAL CHURCH

"At her best and at her worst, Jesus loves his church. He laid down his life for her. He will never leave or forsake her. He will complete the work he started in her. In other words, Jesus never looked for more of God by having less of the church. Instead, he married her. The church is the chosen, beloved Bride of Christ. What does it say about us if the church is good enough for the Father to adopt, for the Spirit to inhabit, and for Jesus to marry, but not good enough for us to join?"

SCOTT SAULS



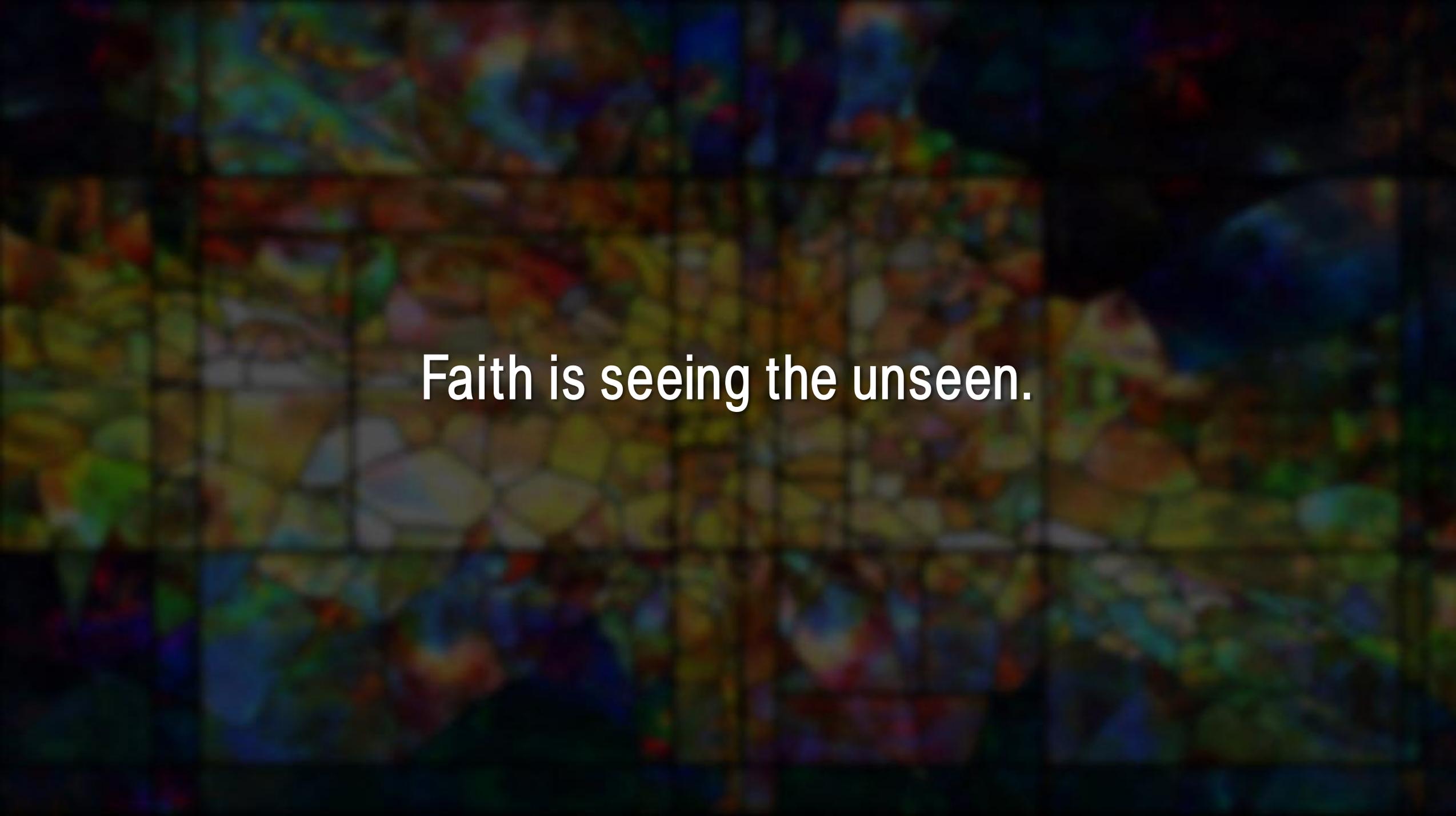
UNIVERSAL CHURCH



LOCAL CHURCH

HEBREWS 11:1

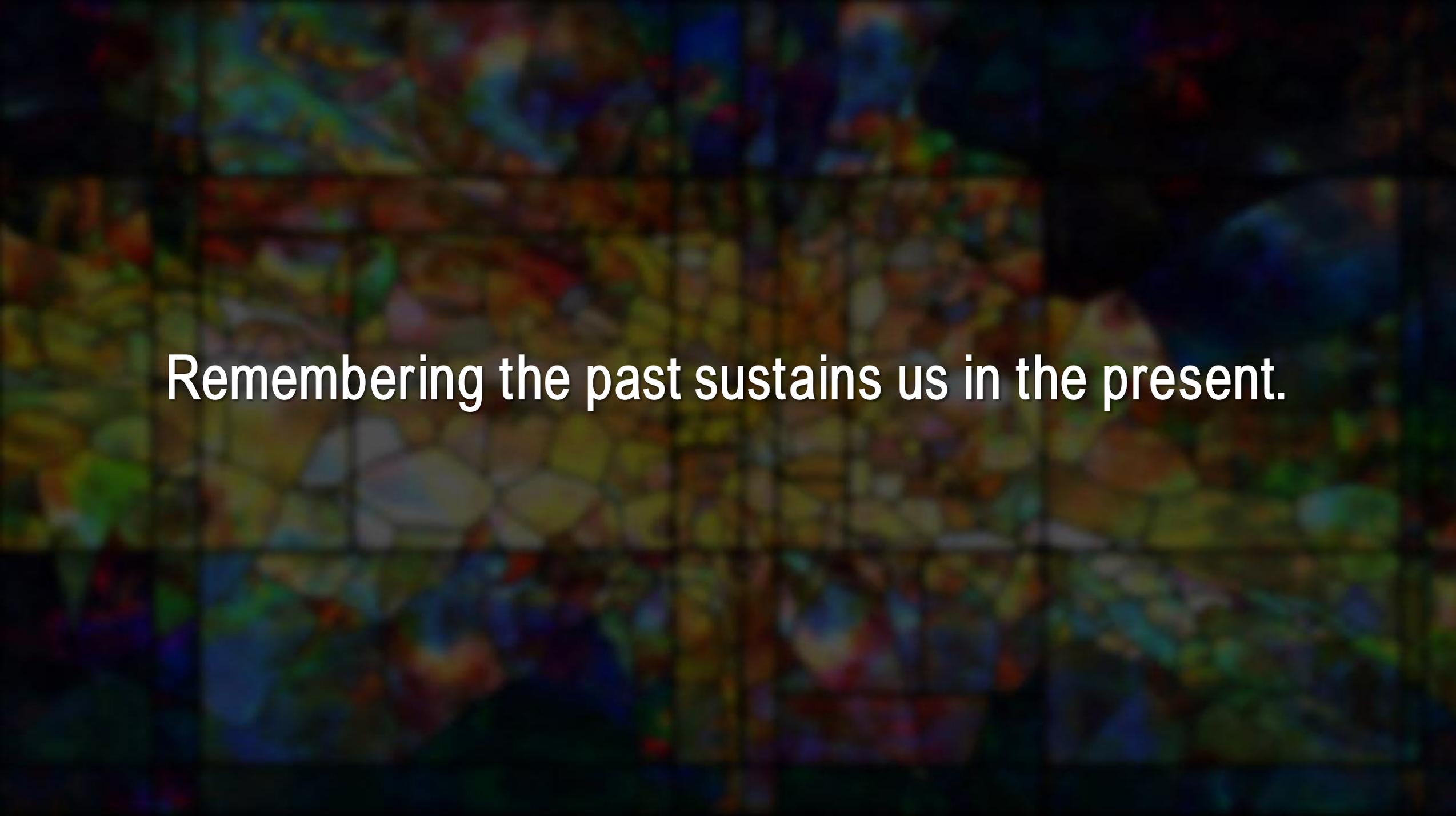
Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.



Faith is seeing the unseen.

HEBREWS 11:36-40

36 Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— 38 of whom the world was not worthy— wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, 40 since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

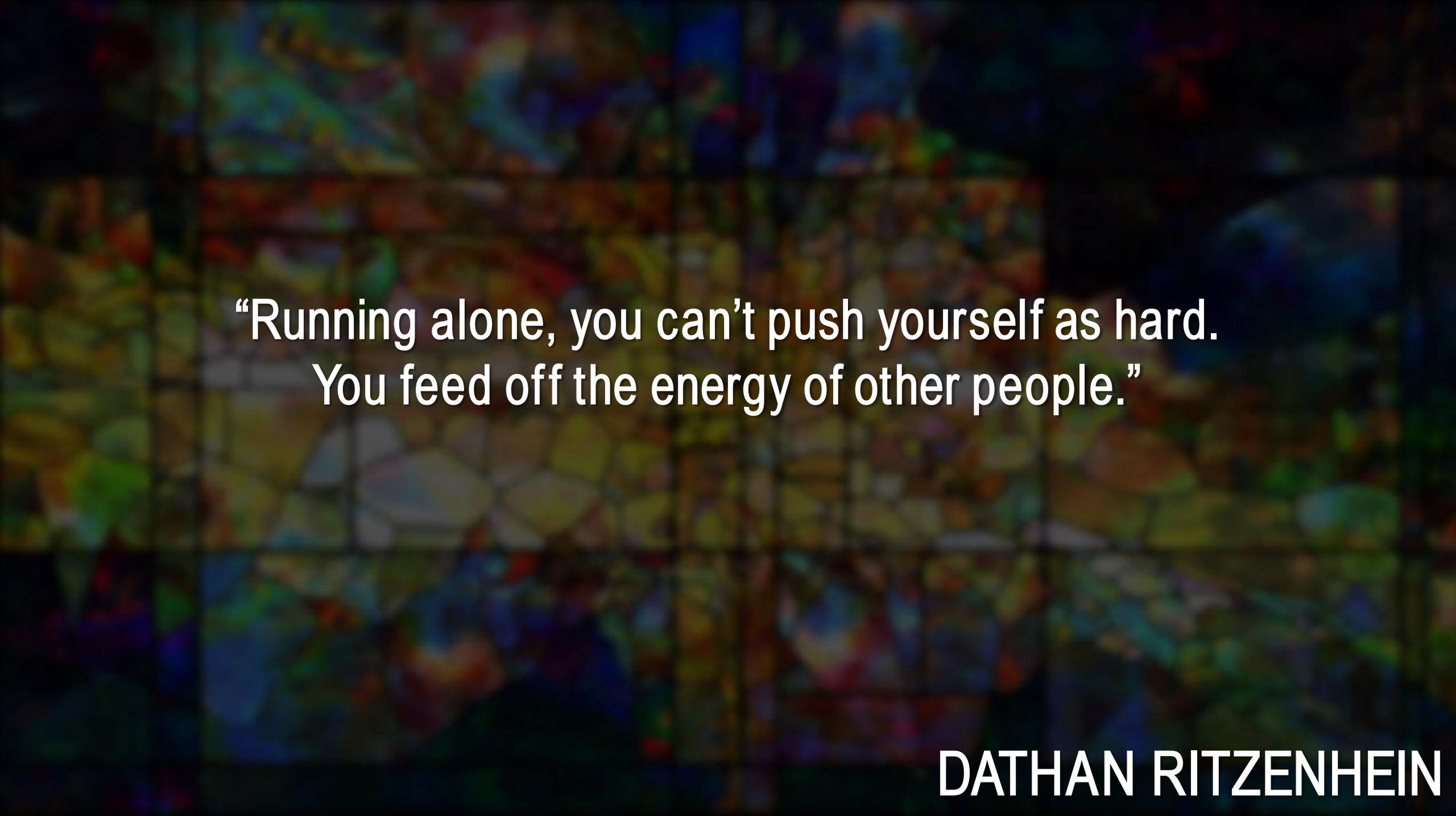
The background is a dark, almost black, grid of approximately 10x10 squares. Each square contains a different, blurred, and colorful pattern, creating a mosaic-like effect. The colors are muted and somewhat desaturated, with shades of blue, green, yellow, and purple. The overall texture is soft and out-of-focus.

Remembering the past sustains us in the present.

HEBREWS 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.





“Running alone, you can’t push yourself as hard.
You feed off the energy of other people.”

DATHAN RITZENHEIN

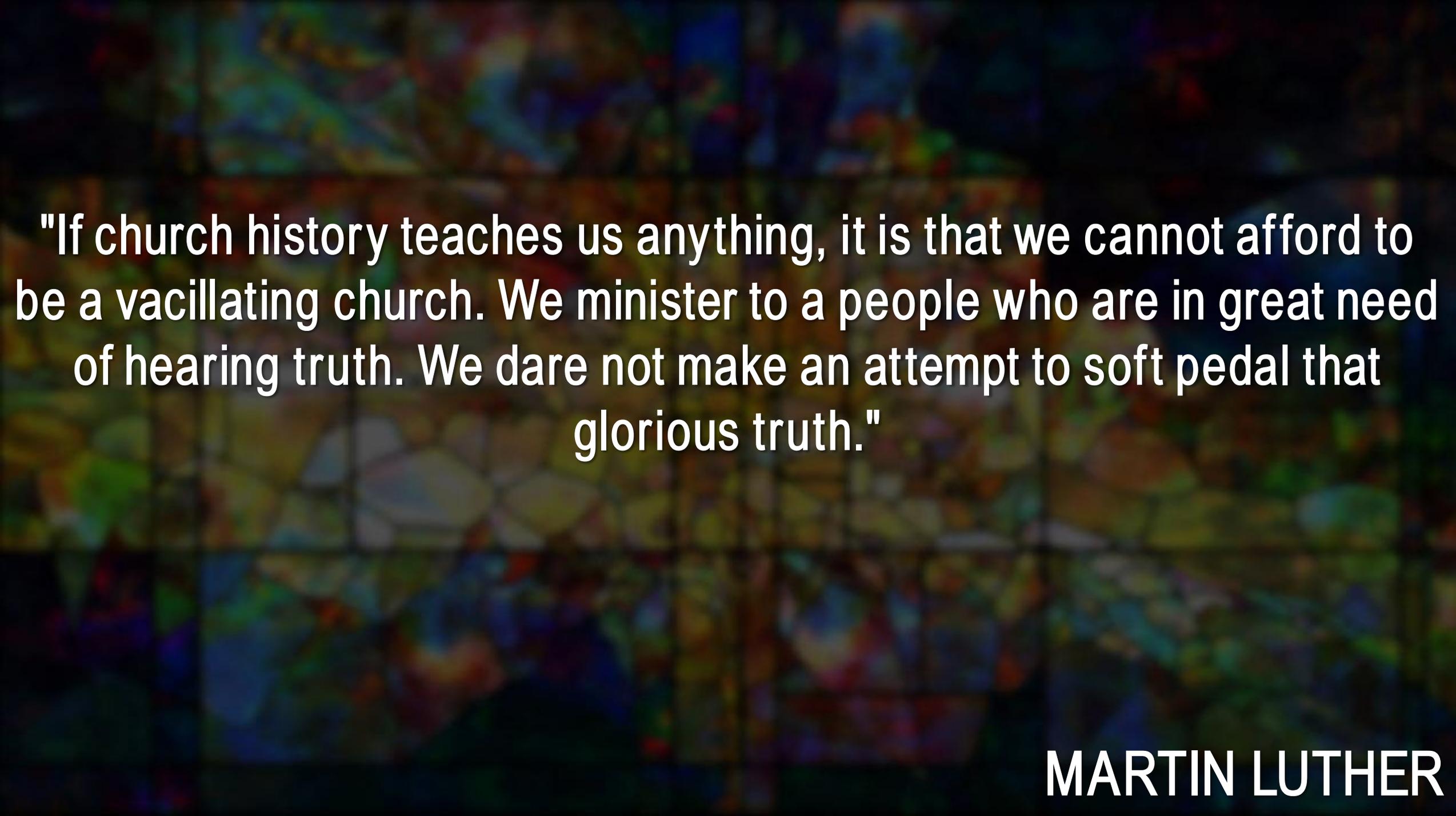
The background is a dark, blurred mosaic of various colors including blue, green, yellow, and red, arranged in a grid-like pattern. The overall effect is abstract and textured.

Where are we now?

From Tim Keller, *Center Church*

Church relationship to culture

- Winter-culture is hostile to the church and there's little fruit
- Spring-church is persecuted by the culture but there's some growth
- Summer-church is highly regarded by the culture
- Autumn-church is increasingly marginalized in a post-Christian culture



"If church history teaches us anything, it is that we cannot afford to be a vacillating church. We minister to a people who are in great need of hearing truth. We dare not make an attempt to soft pedal that glorious truth."

MARTIN LUTHER