



A Life Well Lived

Recap

What is causing the **quarrels and fights among you**? Don't they come from the evil **desires** at war within you? You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—**you want only what will give you pleasure. 4:1-3**

ηφδονη, Hedone: pursuit of pleasure

Recap

Why is God Jealous?, Mark Batterson

You can't really appreciate the mercy of God if you don't understand the wrath of God. And if you don't have a handle on the justice of God, then you aren't going to appreciate the grace of God. **In a nutshell, if you don't understand one, you can't appreciate the other.** When it comes to love and jealousy, I think many of us don't appreciate the jealousy of God because we don't understand the love of God.

So what is it that provokes His jealousy? It is anything that diverts our **attention or our affection to someone or something else.** Anything that displaces God is an idol, and it is those idols that God hates.

Recap

**Come close to God, and God
will come close to you. vs 8a**

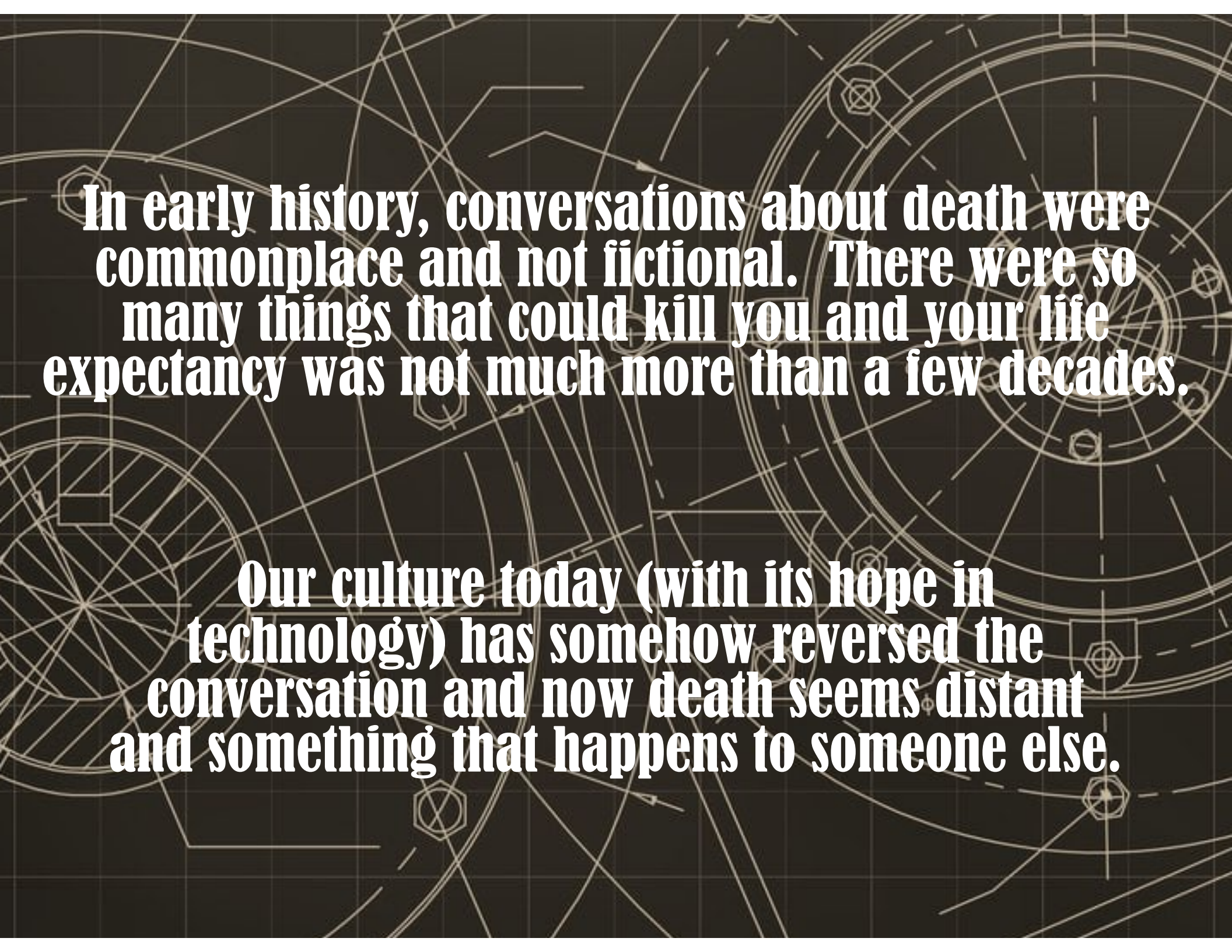
action, reaction

Lancet Commission on the Value of Death, Oct. 2018

Many people in high-income countries, and those in poorer countries who are able to access quality health care, have an **uneasy relationship with death**, unlike some traditional societies.

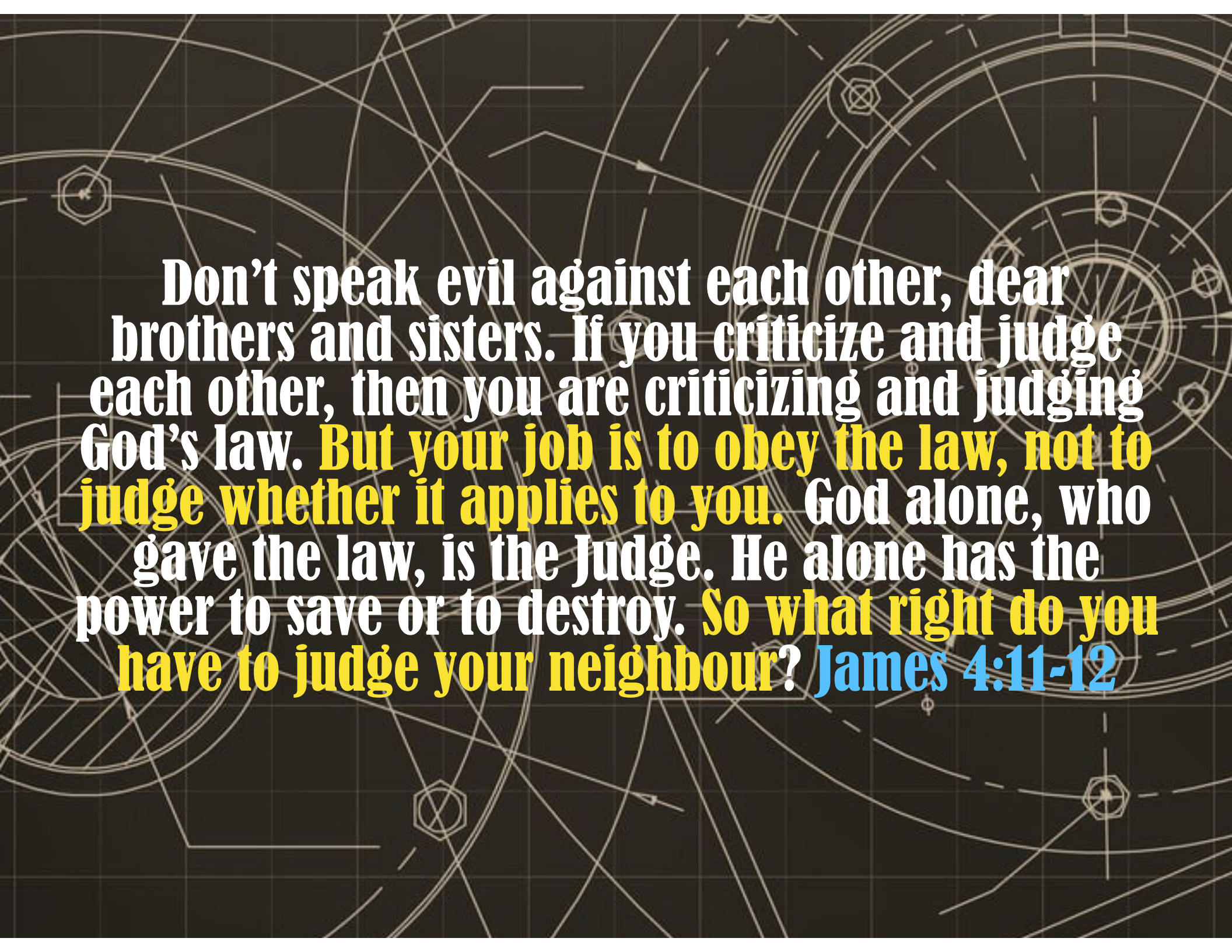
How a society responds to death is perhaps the best measure of its health. Ivan Illich, the scourge of modern medicine, argued that “A society's image of death reveals the level of independence of its people, their personal relatedness, self-reliance, and aliveness.”

Illich's core argument was that pain, sickness, suffering, and death are fundamental to being human, and that the job of culture is **to give meaning** to these inevitabilities.

The background of the image is a dark, textured surface overlaid with a complex network of thin, light-colored lines. These lines form various geometric shapes, including circles, arcs, and polygons, some of which are interconnected to resemble technical drawings or architectural plans. The overall effect is one of intricate, layered geometry.

In early history, conversations about death were commonplace and not fictional. There were so many things that could kill you and your life expectancy was not much more than a few decades.

Our culture today (with its hope in technology) has somehow reversed the conversation and now death seems distant and something that happens to someone else.

The background of the image features a dark grey grid with various white geometric lines and shapes. These include concentric circles, intersecting straight lines, and several hexagons, some of which are smaller and nested within larger shapes. The overall effect is a complex, technical, or architectural drawing style.

Don't speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God's law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you. God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge. He alone has the power to save or to destroy. So what right do you have to judge your neighbour? James 4:11-12

The Problem of Judging

James tells us to not judge, and other places in the bible we are told to judge. Which is it?

“Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.” **Matthew 7:1-2**

Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. **You can identify them** by their fruit **vs 15-16**

Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven **vs 21**

The Problem of Judging

For if the correct time for circumcising your son falls on the Sabbath, you go ahead and do it so as not to break the law of Moses. So why should you be angry with me for healing a man on the Sabbath? **Look beneath the surface so you can judge correctly.**” **John 7:23-24**

It isn't my responsibility to judge outsiders, **but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning.** God will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, “You must remove the evil person from among you.” **1 Corinthians 5:12-13**

The Problem of Judging

The most common word for “judge” in the Greek Testament is the verb **krino**, found 114 times. It is rendered into English by a variety of terms (e.g., judge, determine, condemn, call in question, etc.). The word means to “select” and then to “**come to a conclusion, make a determination.**” Sometimes the idea relates to a conclusion about a specific act or a certain person.

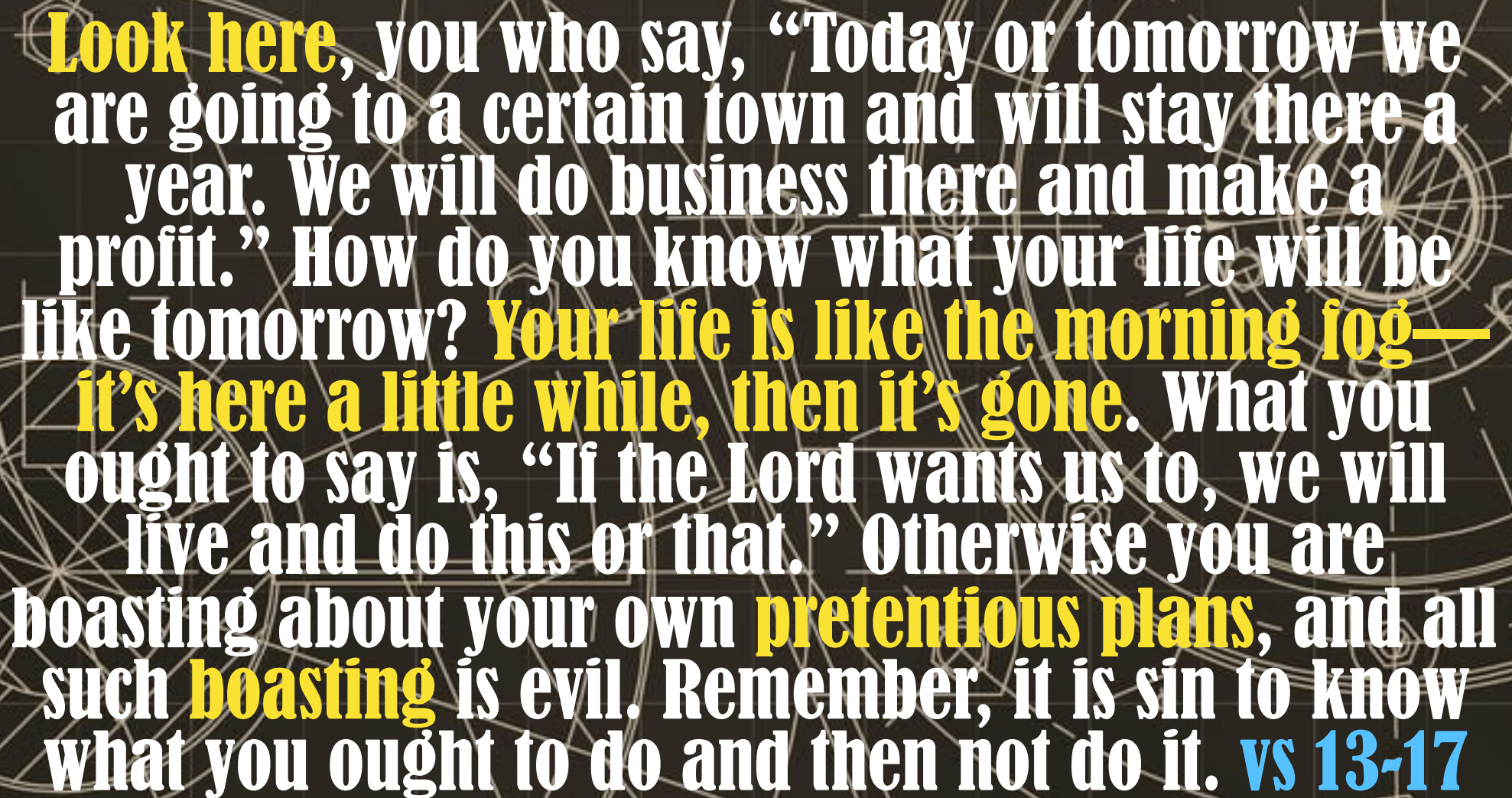
James is making sure the church does not take salvation out of God's hands

“He alone has the power to **save or to destroy**”

The Problem of Judging

“Don’t speak **evil against each other”**

What is the most evil thing you can say about another? That they are beyond God’s reach.



Look here, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit.” How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? **Your life is like the morning fog—it’s here a little while, then it’s gone.** What you ought to say is, “If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that.” Otherwise you are boasting about your own **pretentious plans**, and all such **boasting** is evil. Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it. **vs 13-17**

The background of the slide is a dark grey grid with intricate white technical drawings. These drawings include various geometric shapes like circles, hexagons, and rectangles, along with lines representing axes, radii, and construction paths. Some elements resemble architectural plans or mechanical schematics, with small circles and lines indicating specific points or features.

**Remember James has been emphasizing humility
as the proper posture of a Christ follower**

**Otherwise you are boasting about
your own **pretentious plans** vs 16**

**“God opposes the proud but
gives grace to the **humble.**” vs 6**

So **humble yourselves before God. vs 7**

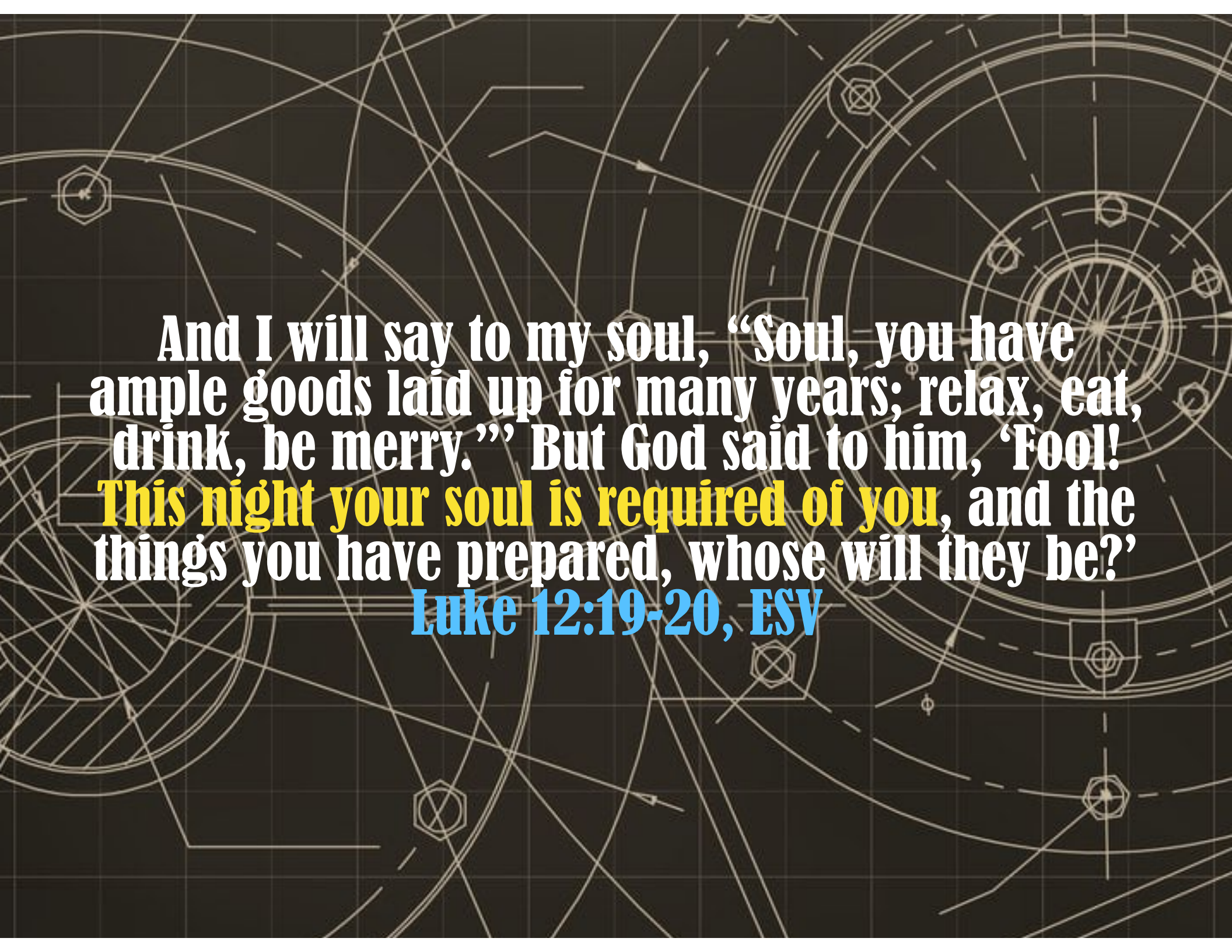
****Humble** yourselves before the Lord, and
he will lift you up in honour. vs 10**

Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, then it's **gone**

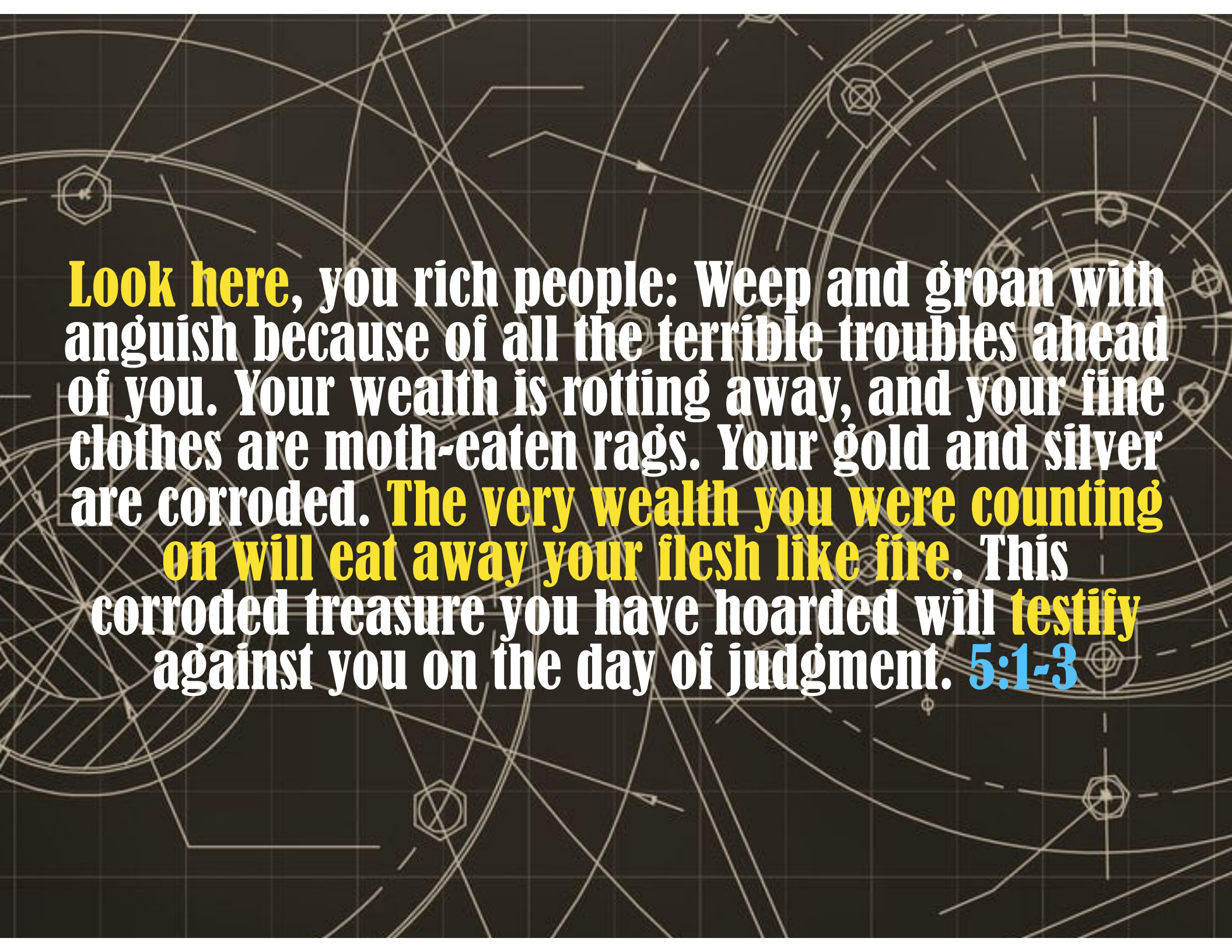
“You would think that because death is not just probable, but absolutely certain, and that it can happen at any minute, and that each person must stand before God for judgment, every person would be desperate to know how to get right with God. **But, strangely, people put it out of mind and go on about life as if they will live forever.”**

Steven J. Cole, Commentary on James

“The statistics on death are quite impressive. One out of one people die.” **George Bernard Shaw**



And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” But God said to him, ‘Fool! **This night your soul is required of you**, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’
Luke 12:19-20, ESV

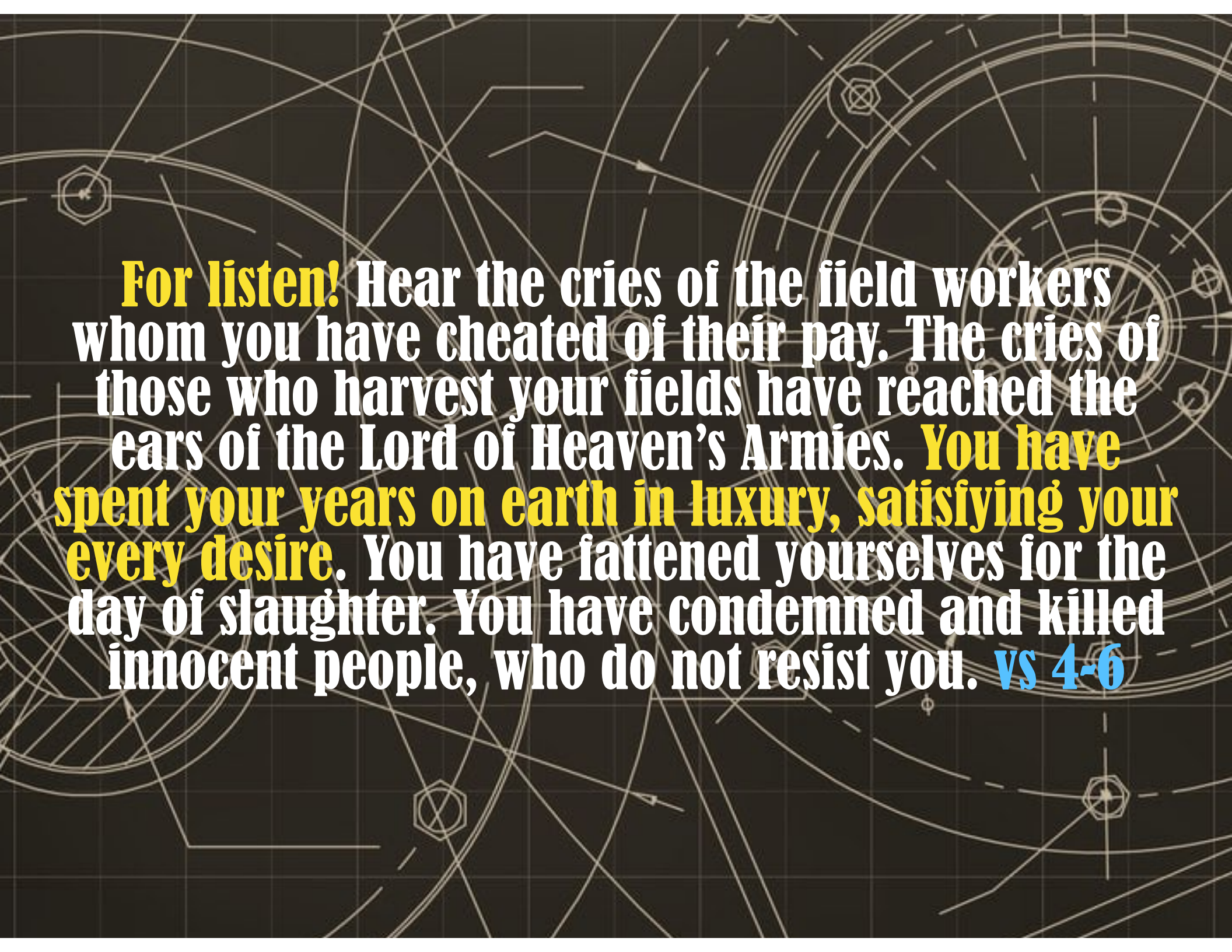
The background of the image is a dark gray grid with various white technical drawings overlaid. These include concentric circles, intersecting straight lines, and several hexagonal shapes, some of which contain smaller geometric details. The overall aesthetic is that of a complex engineering or architectural blueprint.

Look here, you rich people: Weep and groan with anguish because of all the terrible troubles ahead of you. Your wealth is rotting away, and your fine clothes are moth-eaten rags. Your gold and silver are corroded. **The very wealth you were counting on will eat away your flesh like fire.** This corroded treasure you have hoarded will **testify** against you on the day of judgment. **5:1-3**



**As the end of the letter approaches,
James shows the last area of pride that
needs to be dealt with, **our wealth****

**“God wants to give us something, but
cannot, because our hands are full – there’s
nowhere for Him to put it.” **Augustine****



For listen! Hear the cries of the field workers whom you have cheated of their pay. The cries of those who harvest your fields have reached the ears of the Lord of Heaven's Armies. **You have spent your years on earth in luxury, satisfying your every desire.** You have fattened yourselves for the day of slaughter. You have condemned and killed innocent people, who do not resist you. **vs 4-6**

The background of the slide is a dark grey or black surface covered with a complex network of thin, light-colored lines. These lines form various geometric shapes, including circles, arcs, hexagons, and rectangles, some of which are interconnected. The overall effect is reminiscent of a technical drawing, a blueprint, or a complex geometric diagram. The lines are drawn in a way that creates a sense of depth and complexity, with some lines appearing to be in the foreground and others receding into the background.

What is tempting about this passage is to assume James is talking to **someone else. But this is a trap and exactly what the proud might say.**

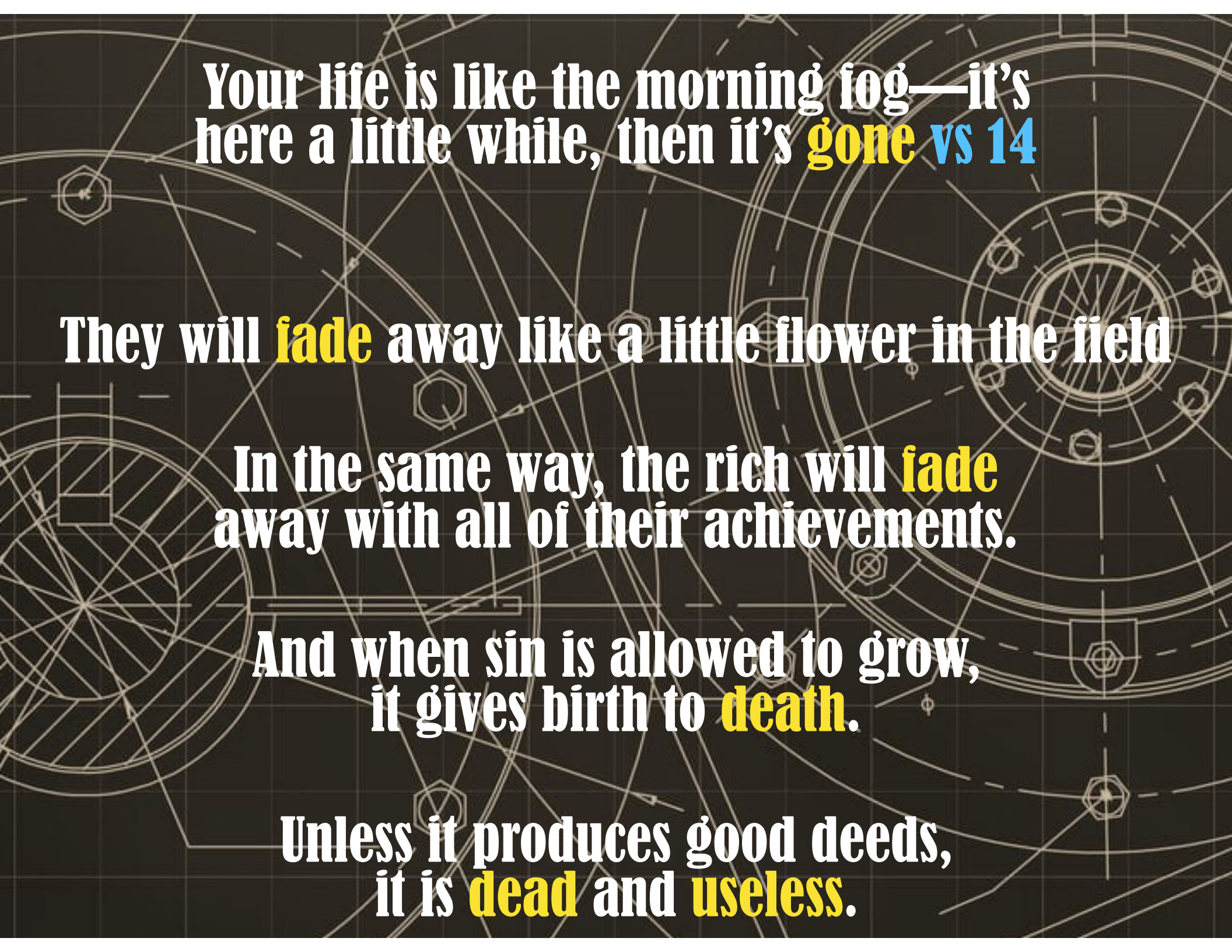
James started by lifting up humility as the proper posture of a disciple of Jesus. He has then showed three areas, judging, pretension and wealth as the opposites of humility

The Problem of Wealth

But people who long to be rich fall into **temptation** and are **trapped** by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. **1 Timothy 6:9**

No one can serve two **masters**. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money. **Matthew 6:24**

The seeds that fell among the thorns represent those who hear the message, but all too quickly the message is **crowded out** by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life. And so they never grow into maturity. **Luke 8:14**



Your life is like the morning fog—it's
here a little while, then it's **gone** vs 14

They will **fade** away like a little flower in the field

In the same way, the rich will **fade**
away with all of their achievements.

And when sin is allowed to grow,
it gives birth to **death**.

Unless it produces good deeds,
it is **dead** and **useless**.

For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive **whatever we deserve** for the good or evil **we have done in this earthly body.** **2 Corinthians 5:10**

They replied, “We want to perform God’s works, too. What should we do?” Jesus told them, “This is the only work God wants from you: **Believe (Jewish understanding of belief) in the one he has sent.**”
John 6:28-29

**I’ll show you what I believe by how I behave
(paraphrased James 2:18-19)**