

A BELIEVER? A FOLLOWER? OR WHAT?

Christianity is *not* a religion. Christianity is centered on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Its **Christ**—nothing more, nothing less. For people who trust in Christ's finished work at the Cross, *Christianity* is a life relationship of love, obedience and faith in Him. This relationship occurs at the moment when a person trusts in Jesus Christ as His Lord and Savior. It's an intrusion or an invasion of an altogether different life—divine and eternal life of Jesus Christ Himself [1 John 5:11-13, 20].

- Religion comes from two Latin words, *re* = again and *ligare* = to tie or to bind or to reconnect. Religion, *Religare* = to tie again or to reconnect again.

“Religion is man's best effort to reach God. Christianity is the opposite—it is God's best attempt to reach man.”

- [Dr. Bill Bright](#), founder of Campus Crusade for Christ

Christian: a special word, it appears only 3 times in the whole Bible

A. 1 Peter 4:16

However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name [NIV].

Don't be ashamed to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God that you belong to him [Contemporary English Version]

Implication:

Suffering is part of our Christian journey with our Master and Lord Jesus.

B. Acts 26:28

Agrippa said to Paul, “With a little persuasion, are you trying to make me a Christian?” [World English Bible].

Christian = a “hate” word, a derogatory word for slaves and freedmen in Rome who became believers in Jesus Christ [1st-2nd century era].

Illustration:

Earliest graffiti in Rome's Palatine Hill's Tomb - *Alexamenos worships [his] God.*” [see the graffiti at the back page]

C. Acts 11:26

When he [Barnabas] found him [Saul/Paul], he brought him back to Antioch. Both of them stayed there with the church for a full year, teaching large crowds of people. [It was at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians]. [New Living Translation](#)

In 64 B.C., Antioch of Syria was annexed by the Romans [led by Gen. Pompey] to the vast Roman Empire. Later on, it became the great and distinguished capital of the Roman province of Syria. With pride and honor, all Roman citizens in Antioch hailed themselves as *Kaisarianoi* [**belonging to Caesar**].

Meaning of the word “Christian”

Christian = [in Greek, *Khristianos* [singular]; *Khristianoι* [plural]—meaning: **belonging to Christ**] first mentioned in Acts 11:26, in the Gentile city of Antioch of Syria. Before this event, believers of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem were called followers of *The Way* [referring to Jesus]. The term *Khristianos* or *Khristianoι* connotes that we, who are believers or followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, indeed *belong to Him*. That He is our Master and Owner [*Kyrios*]. We are not our own anymore. We are bought with His own life—His death at the Cross—just for us to live a new life in Christ [Romans 14:7-8; 1 Cor. 3:23; 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19].



The earliest known pictorial presentation of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ: Alexamenos worships [his] God.

circa 150 -200 A.D.



On teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Mark in Kazakhstan CCC Staff Conference:



In a house church near Lake Issyk Kul, Karakol, Kyrgyzstan [Pastor Toktobgul, smiling, and Aigol's husband with me]

Jan. 2018: Serving in **Almaty, Kazakhstan** and in **Lake Issyk Kul, Karakol, Kyrgyzstan**

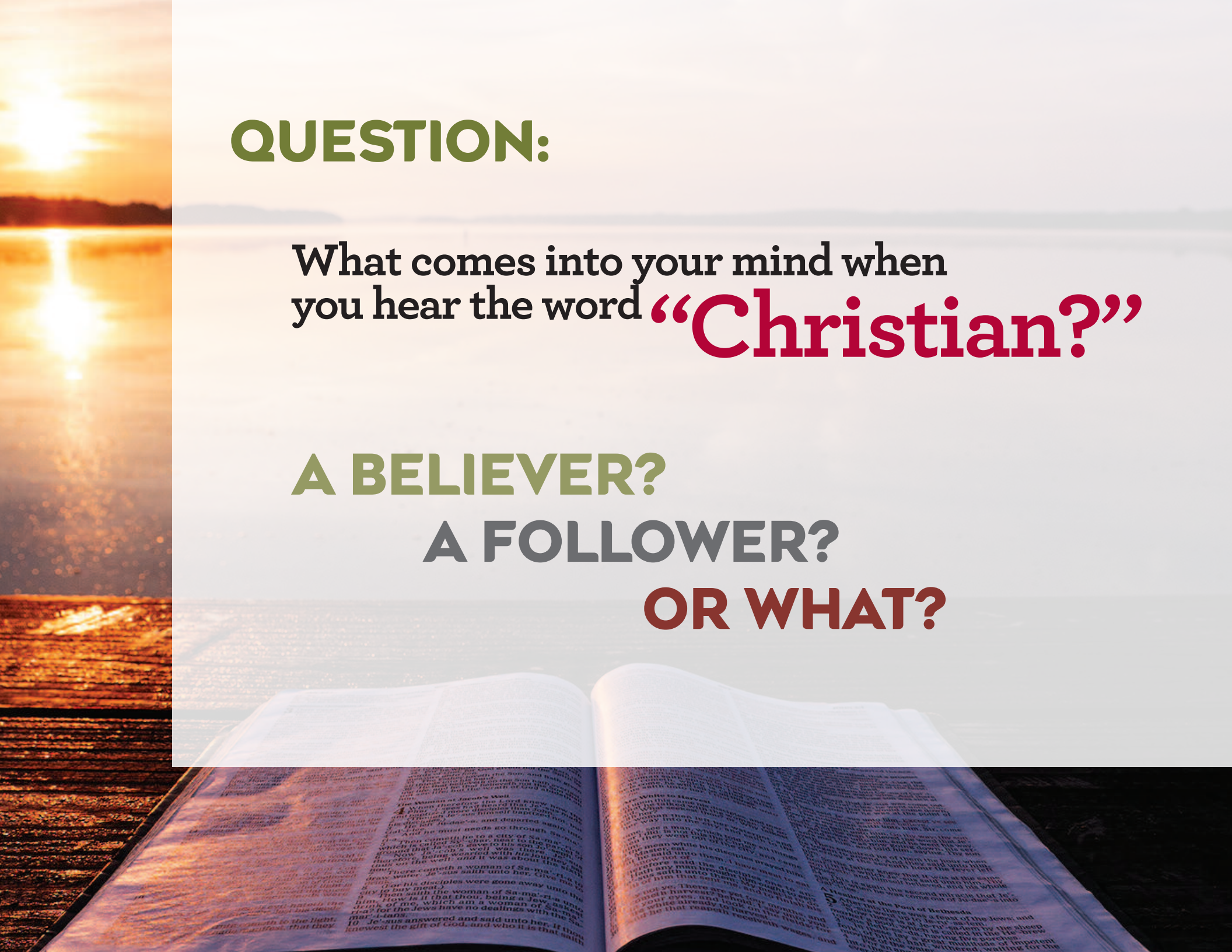
QUESTION:

What comes into your mind when
you hear the word **“Christian?”**

A BELIEVER?

A FOLLOWER?

OR WHAT?



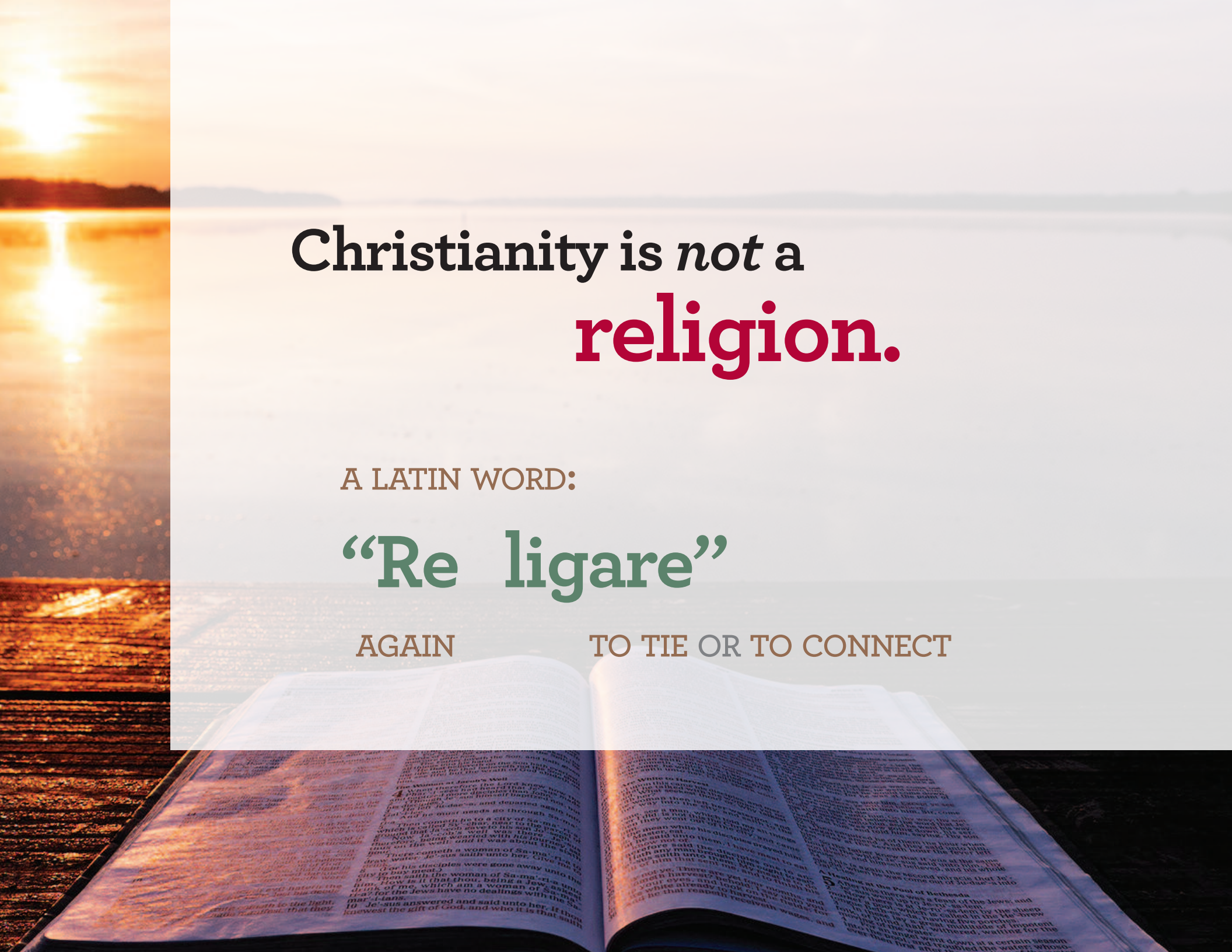
Christianity is *not* a religion.

A LATIN WORD:

“Re ligare”

AGAIN

TO TIE OR TO CONNECT



A sunset over a body of water with a Bible in the foreground. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow. The water reflects the light, and the sky is a mix of orange and blue. In the foreground, an open Bible is visible, showing text on its pages.

“RELIGION
is man’s best effort to reach God.

CHRISTIANITY is the opposite—
it is God’s best attempt to reach man.”

Dr. Bill Bright

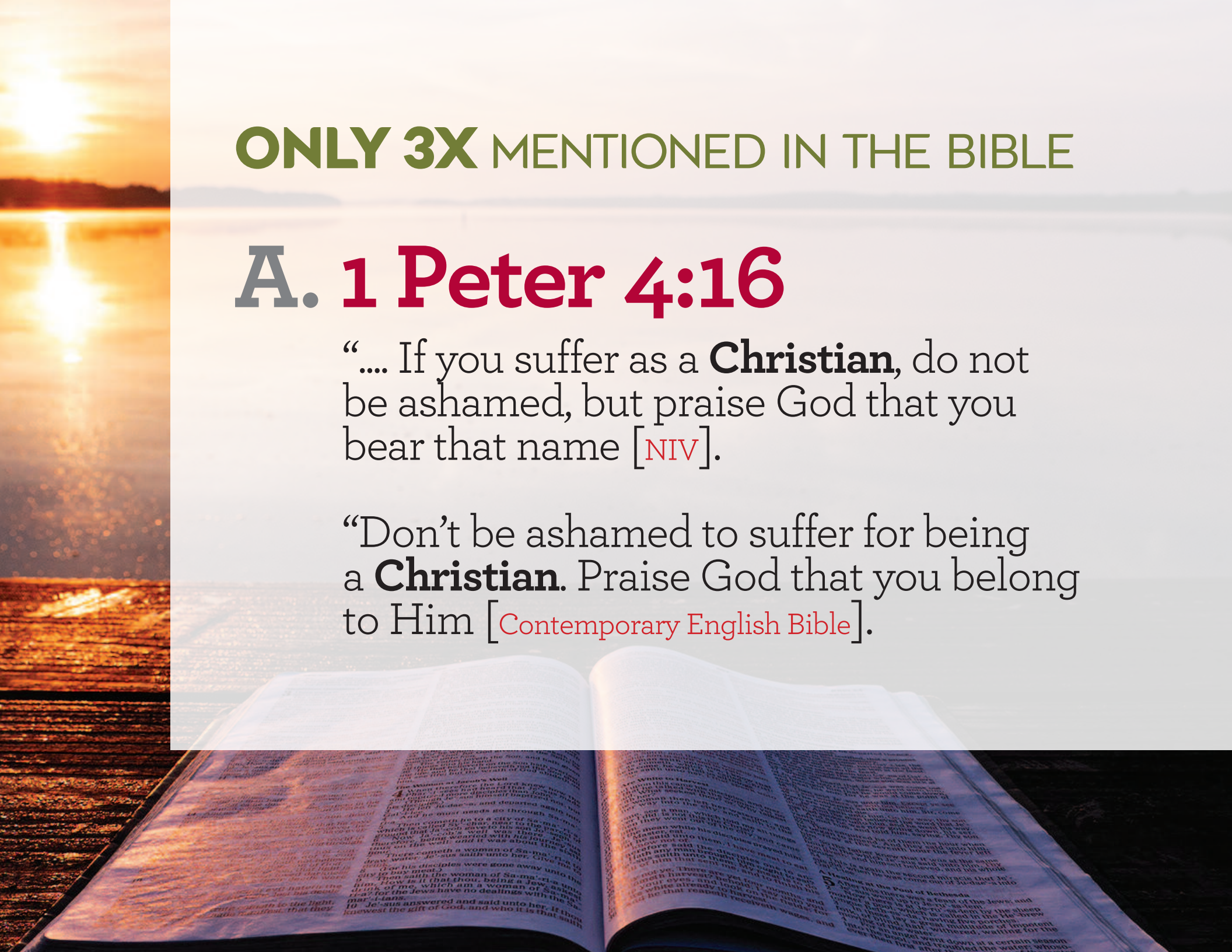
Founder of Campus Crusade for Christ

ONLY 3X MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE

A. 1 Peter 4:16

“... If you suffer as a **Christian**, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name [NIV].

“Don't be ashamed to suffer for being a **Christian**. Praise God that you belong to Him [Contemporary English Bible].



IMPLICATION:

Suffering is part of our Christian journey with our Master and Lord Jesus.

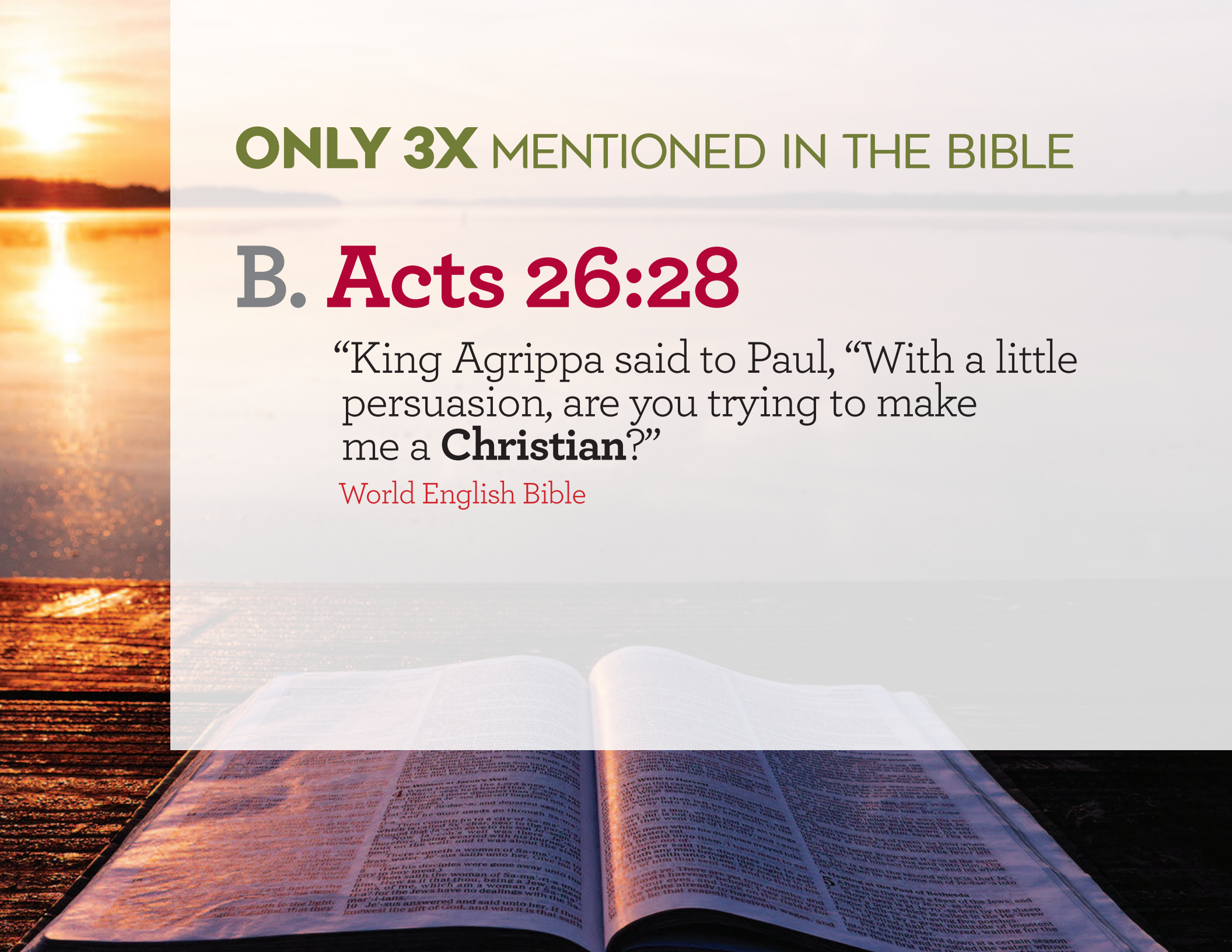


ONLY 3X MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE

B. Acts 26:28

“King Agrippa said to Paul, “With a little persuasion, are you trying to make me a **Christian**?”

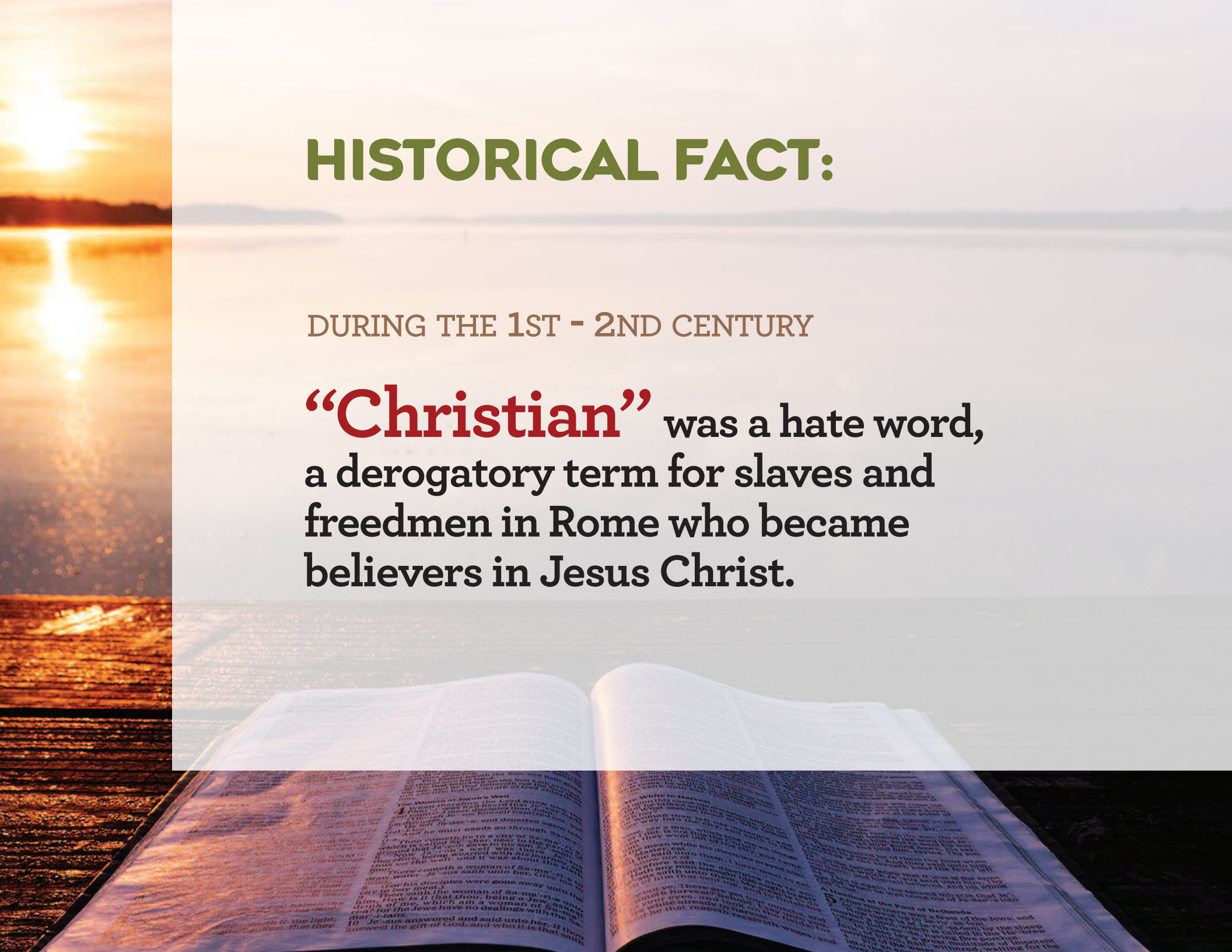
World English Bible



HISTORICAL FACT:

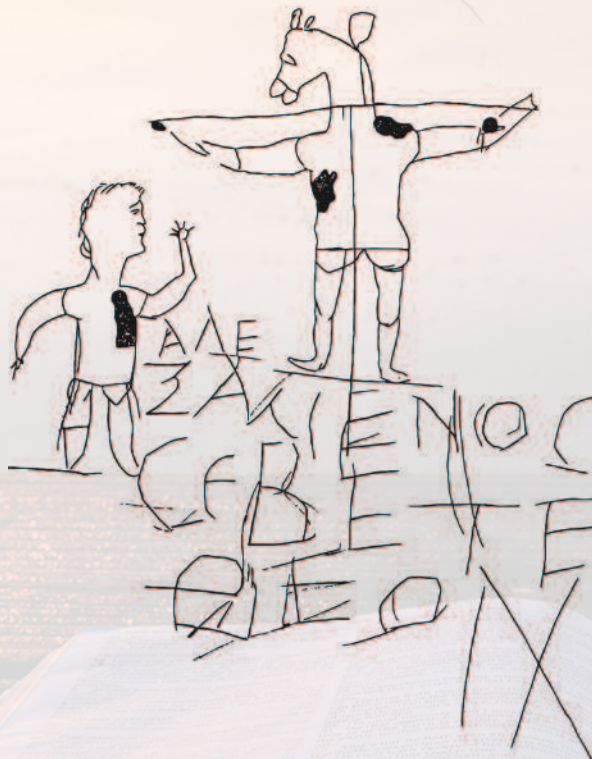
DURING THE 1ST - 2ND CENTURY

“Christian” was a hate word,
a derogatory term for slaves and
freedmen in Rome who became
believers in Jesus Christ.

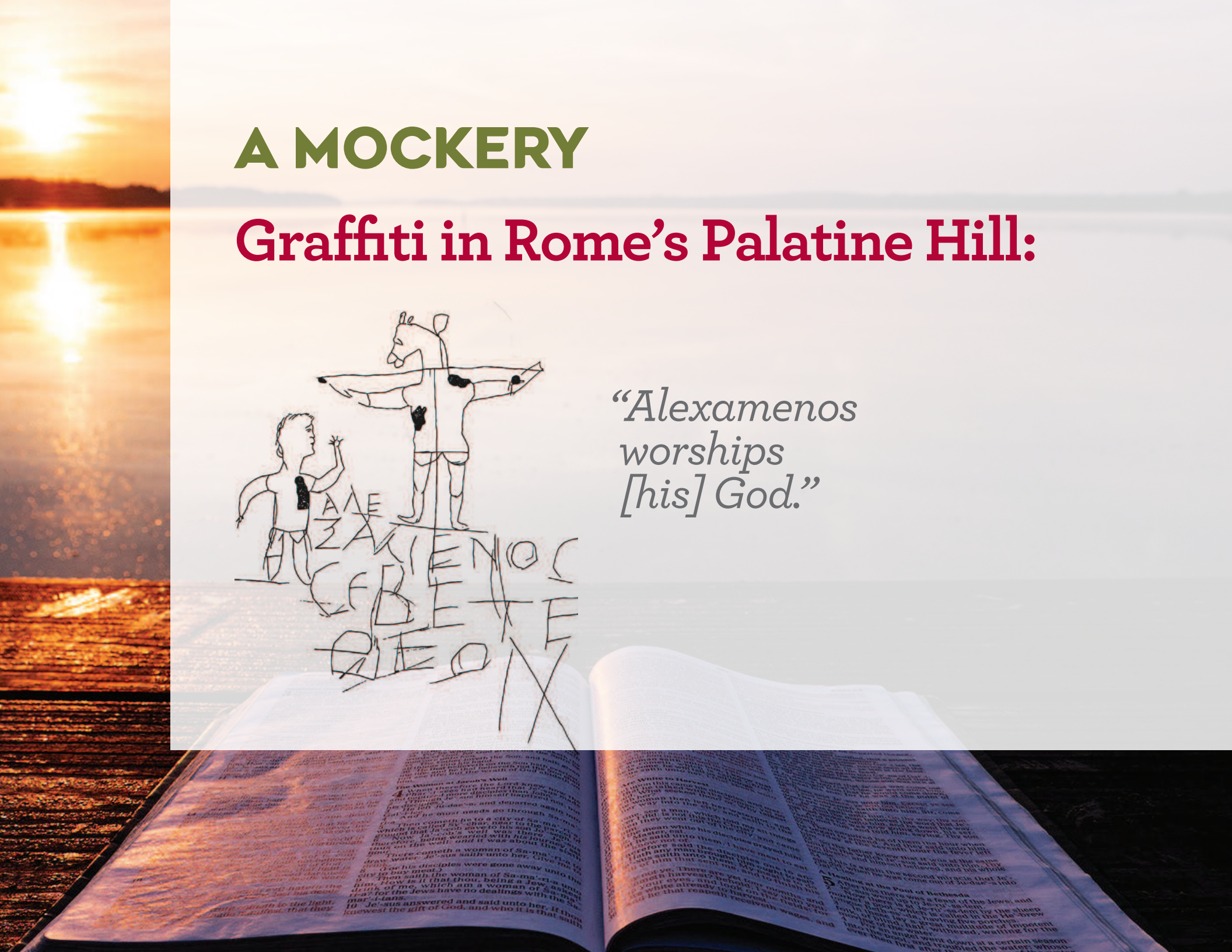


A MOCKERY

Graffiti in Rome's Palatine Hill:



*“Alexamenos
worships
[his] God.”*

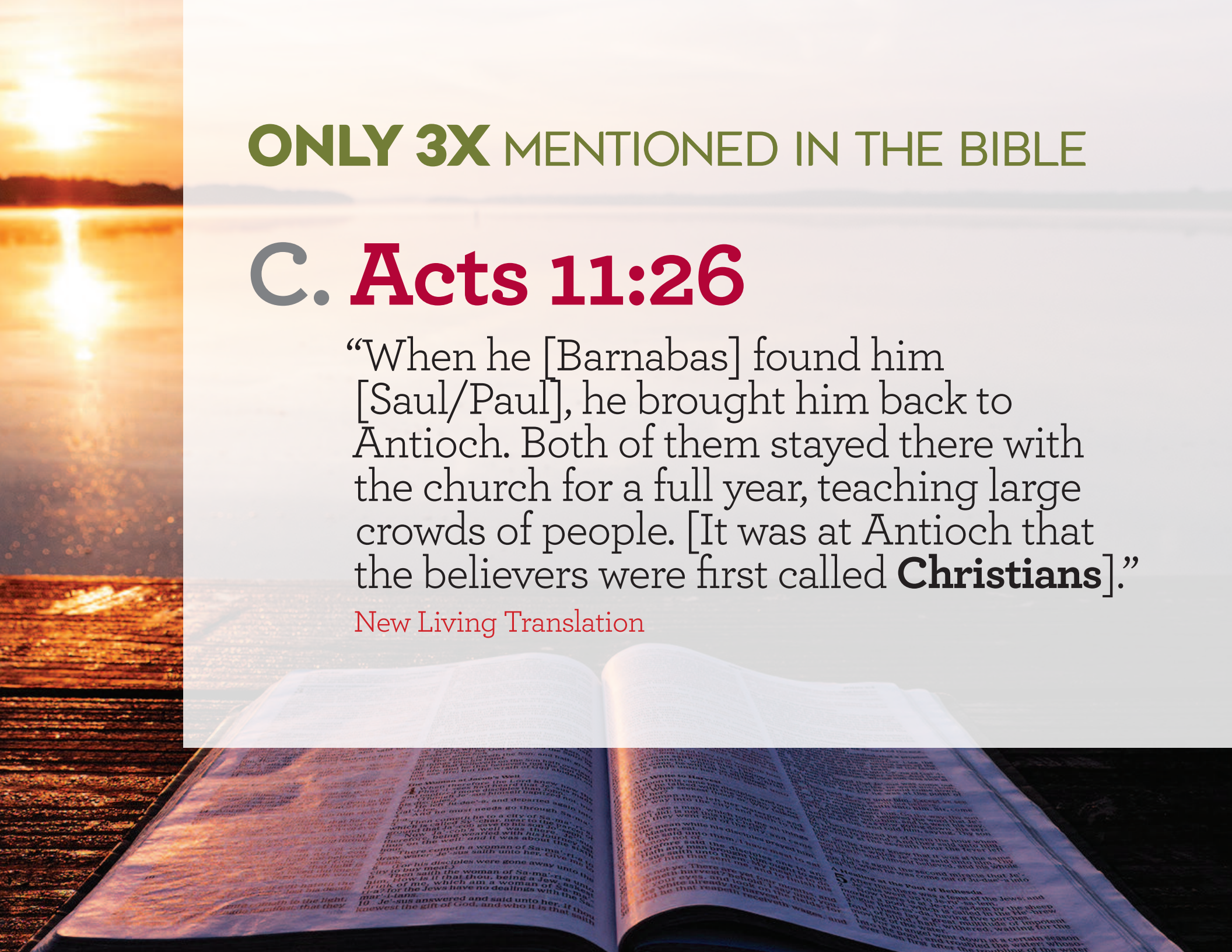


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C. Acts 11:26

“When he [Barnabas] found him [Saul/Paul], he brought him back to Antioch. Both of them stayed there with the church for a full year, teaching large crowds of people. [It was at Antioch that the believers were first called **Christians**].”

New Living Translation



HISTORICAL FACT:

IN 64 B.C.

Antioch was annexed by the Romans [led by Gen. Pompey] with the vast Roman Empire. Later on, it became the great and distinguished capital of the Roman province of Syria. With pride and honor, all Roman citizens in Antioch hailed themselves as *Kaisarianoi* [belonging to Caesar].

TRUE MEANING:

Kaisarianoi [belonging to Caesar]

Versus - in contrast with

Khristianoi [belonging to Christ]

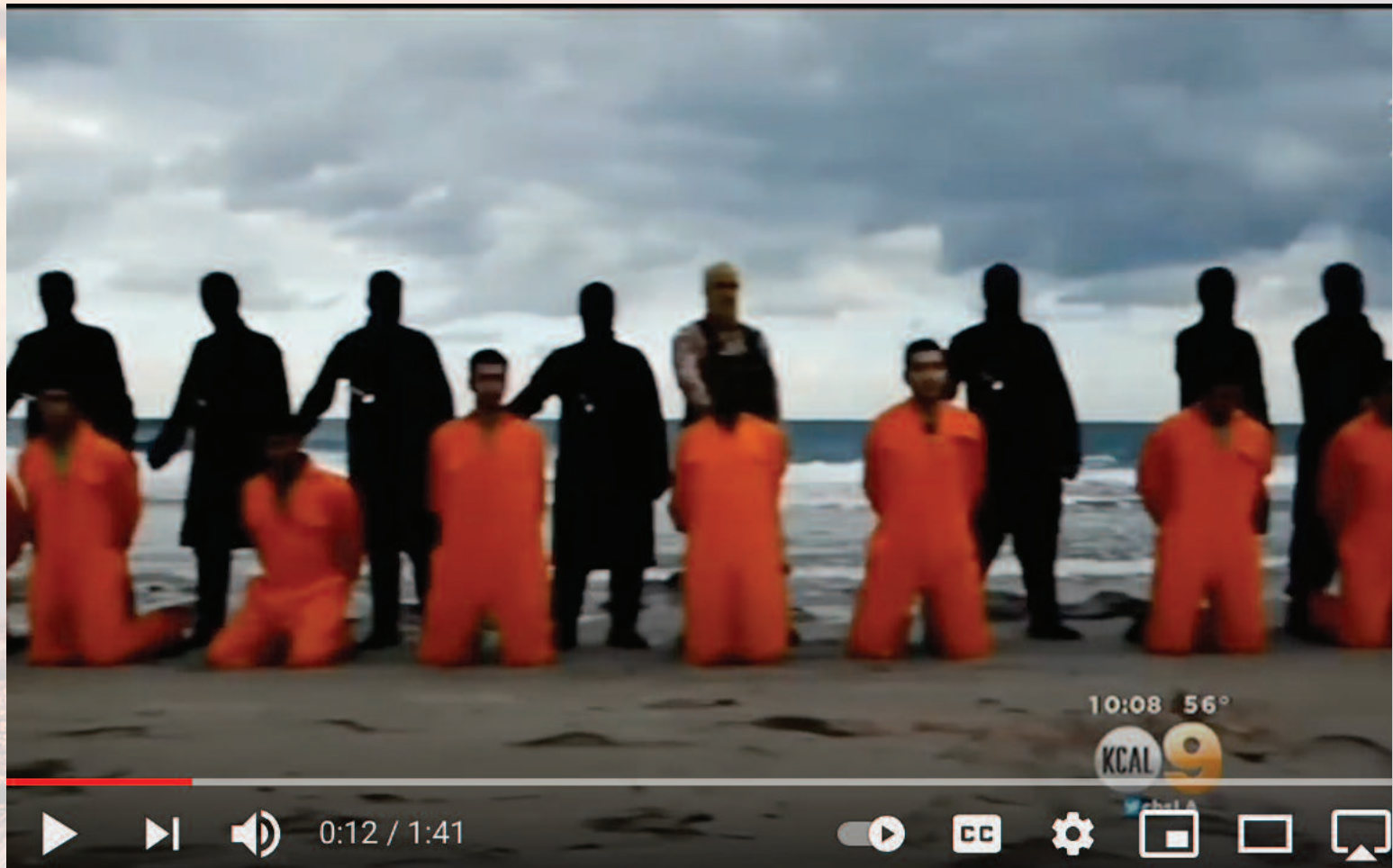


MEANING OF THE WORD

Christian = [in Greek, **Khristianos** [singular]; **Khristianoι** [plural]]—meaning: **belonging to Christ**] first mentioned in Acts 11:26, in the Gentile city of Antioch of Syria. Before this event, believers of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem were called followers of *The Way* [referring to Jesus]. The term **Khristianoι** signifies that we, who are believers or followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, indeed **belong to Him**. That **Jesus is our Master and Owner** [*Kyrios*]. We are **not our own** anymore. We are bought with His own life—His death at the Cross—just for us to live a new life in Him [Romans 14:7-8; 1 Cor. 3:23; 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19].

MARTYRS: 20 + MATTHEW AYARIGA

“THEIR GOD IS MY GOD.”



Feb. 12, 2015: 1 + 20 Egyptian Coptic Christians were beheaded by ISIL in Sirte, Libya