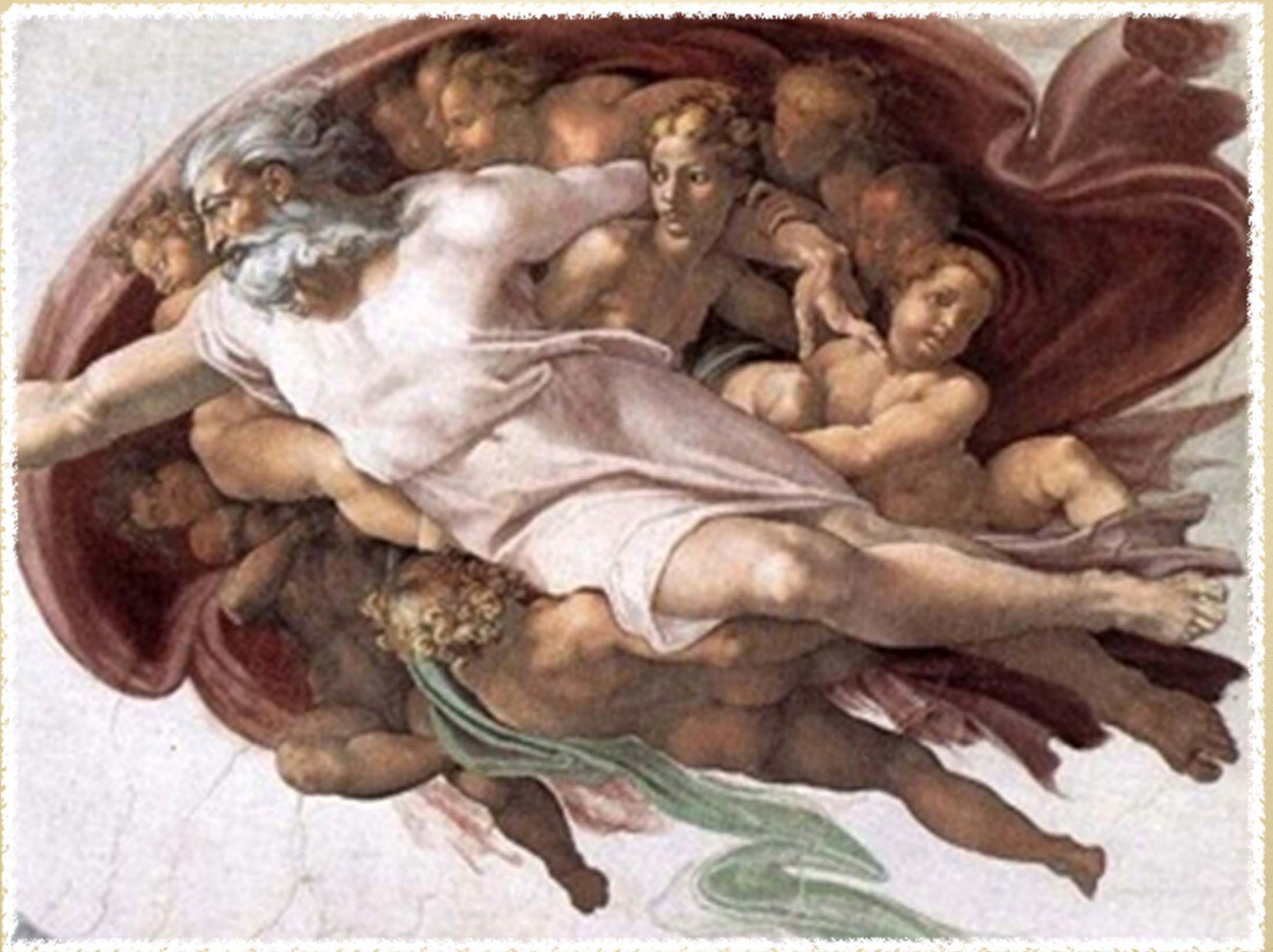


# God's Heart for you







Last week we talked about how the ways our parents treated us and how we reacted to that treatment affects our view of God



We struggled last week over the confusion  
brought by "parental authority."  
What kind of father do we perceive God to be?

Santa Claus Father?

Child Abuser Father?

n Absent Father?



# If our perception is a Santa Claus Father:



- Always says yes
- Always blesses your agenda
- Always makes you healthy, wealthy & wise



**You have a problem!**



Many Christians live with discouragement, bitterness, and anger simply because they worship a god who is not the Father revealed in the Bible.



# Our perception is a Child Abusing Father:

Makes everything we enjoy  
either sinful or fattening. He  
never says yes and takes  
great delight in messing up  
our life -- all for our own good.  
This god gives AIDS to those  
who are sexually immoral,  
cancer to those who displease  
him and failure to those who  
step out of line...



gives others the power to  
manipulate us through guilt

You'll live in perpetual fear of  
offending him

You won't laugh much

You'll hesitate to dance and  
sing

You'll never risk anything

You'll never be free...to yell,  
scream, free to move to joyous  
acceptance, and free to get  
on with your life.





# If our perception is an Absent Father:

Cannot be pleased...we often create a god that's absent. This is deism.

At least believers in a Santa Claus god can laugh and sing

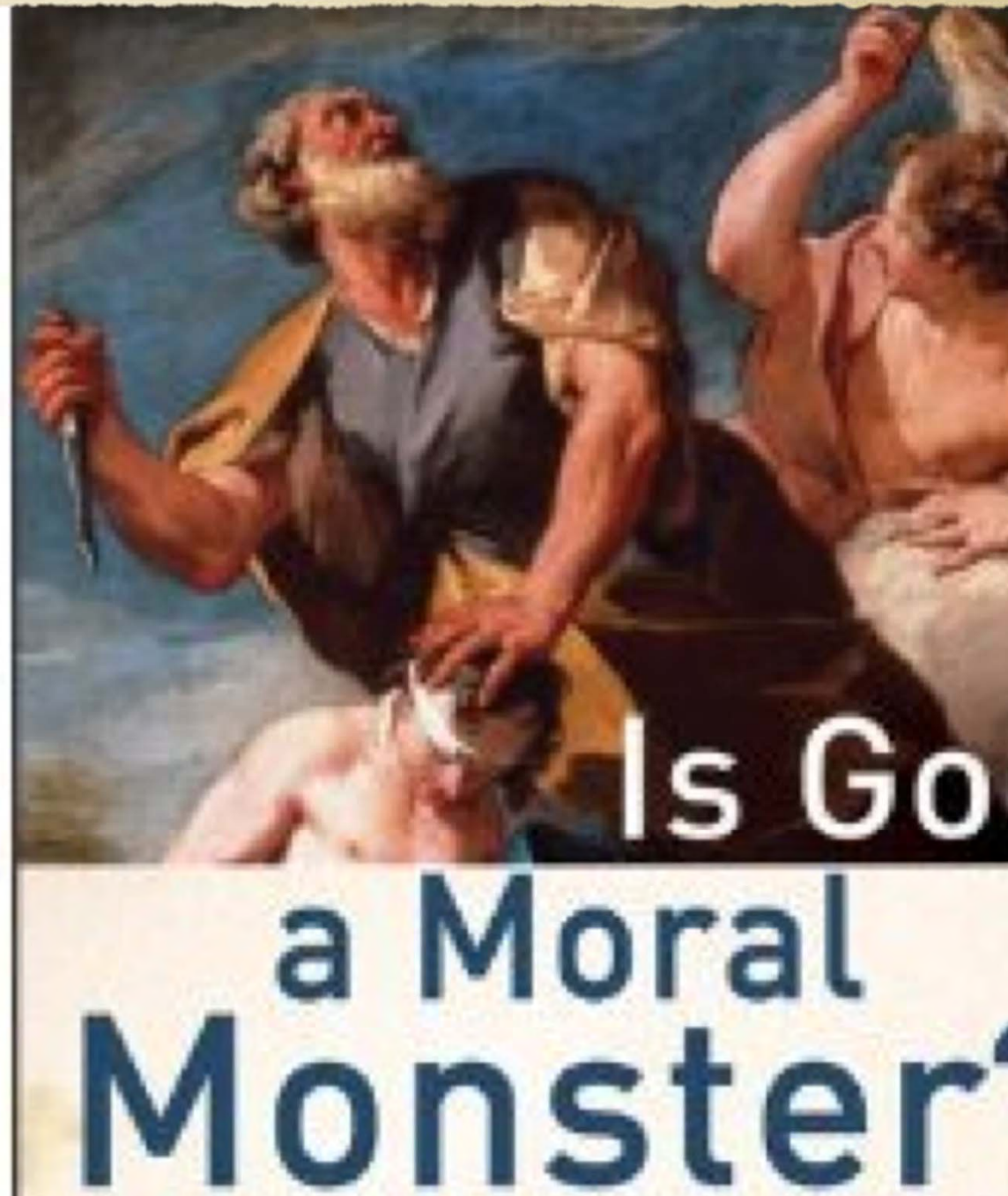
At least the child abuser god solicits some kind of action

Sadly, believers in the deist idol, do nothing.





If the bad stuff  
in life comes  
from a monster  
Father, I will  
continue to  
seethe with  
anger.



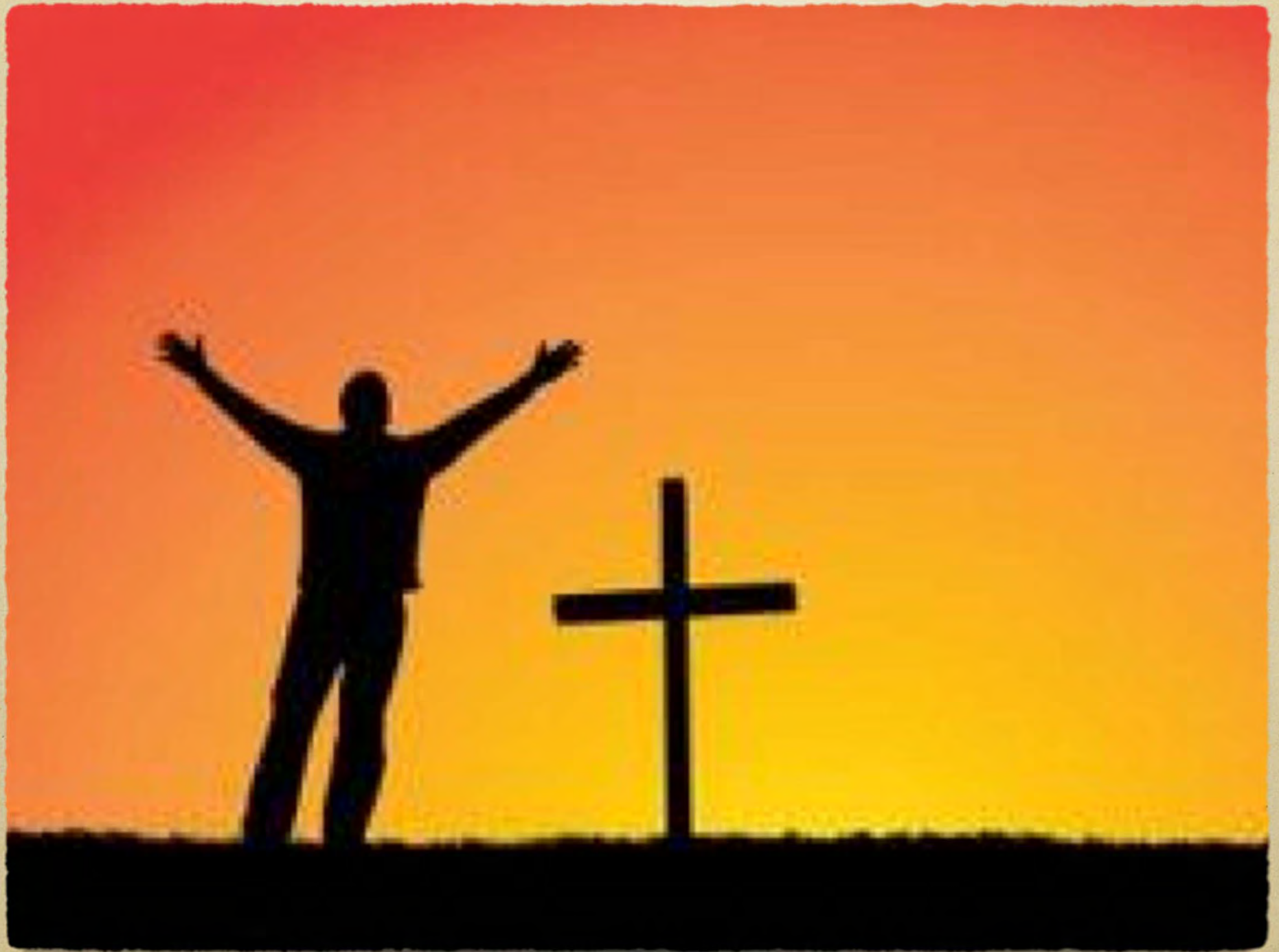


➤ If the bad stuff in life comes from a weenie Father, I will tell him he is wrong and have nothing to do with him anymore.





But if our Father is a LOVING and GENEROUS  
Father, at some point I will rejoice and be free.







Don't expect freedom to come without a struggle. Until a Christian struggles with the issue of freedom, he or she will remain frightened, obsessive, and bound.



Did you hear about the astronomer and the pastor who flew on a plane together? The astronomer asked the pastor what he did. When the pastor told him, he replied, "Pastor, I keep my religion simple: Jesus loves me this I know."



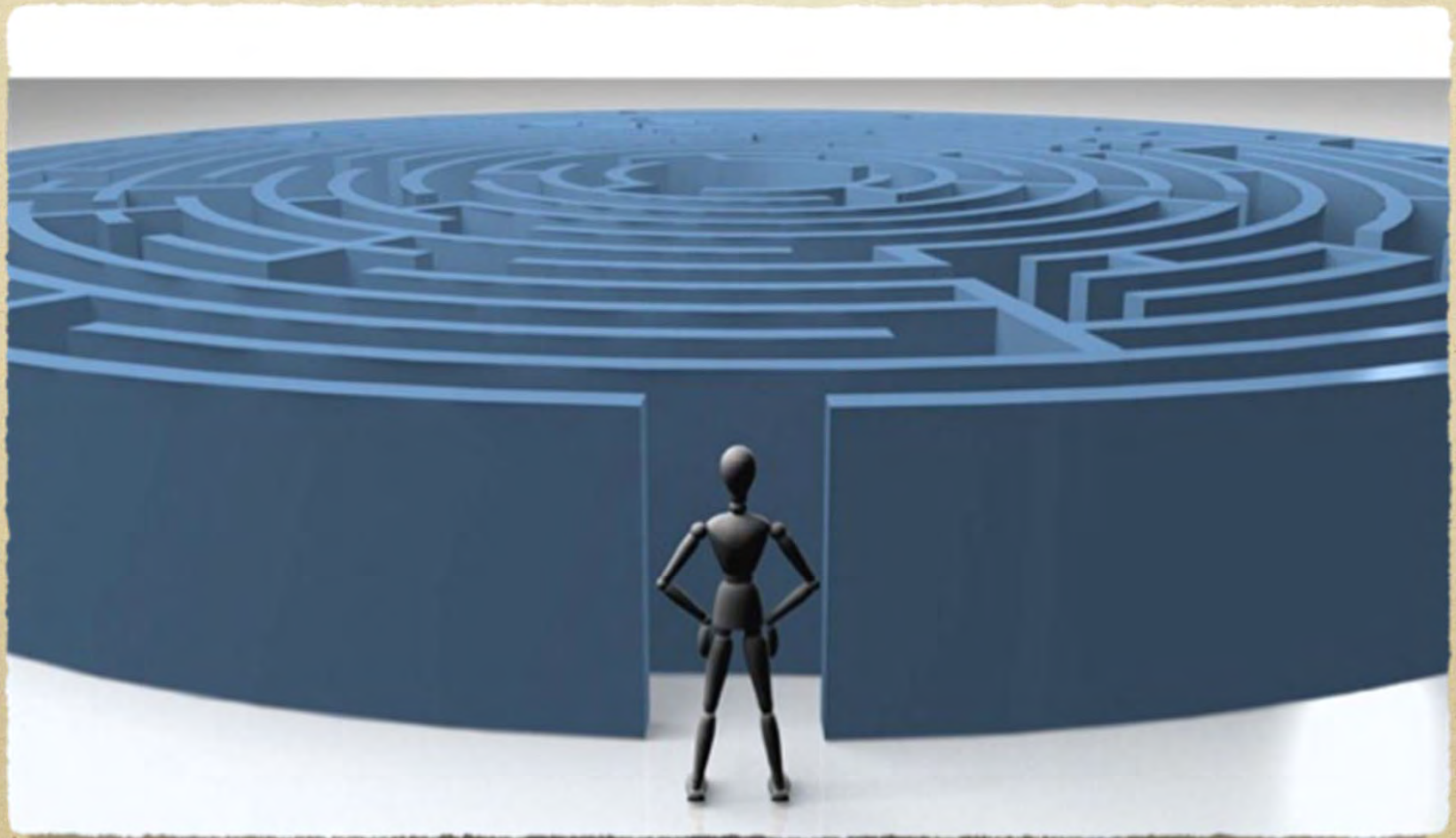




The pastor then asked the astronomer what he did. Upon finding out, he replied, "Oh, I keep my astronomy simple, Twinkle, twinkle little star."



Someone once said, simplicity on this side of complexity is worthless, but simplicity on the other side of complexity is worth whatever you have to pay to get there.







Jesus  
Loves  
Me





A multitude of intellectual and rational justifications support the premise that a good God remains in charge of the mess.





our experience has highlighted pain, unless we have  
another experience of the heart, we will believe in a  
abusive god who has inflicted that pain.



my name is

JESUS

Christians should find out about the Father from JESUS. Jesus is the standard for everything a Christian should think about the Father. If something we think about the Father violates what we know of JESUS, what He taught, and how He acted, then that thought is a LIE







He is kind and good





# What about the Father's Judgment?

Jesus talked about a “narrow way” that leads to life and a broad and easy one that leads to destruction. His anger at hypocrisy and religious manipulation know no bounds. He taught clearly about God’s judgment, hell and the wrath of God.

*The Son of Man will send his angels, they will gather out of his kingdom all uses of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace.*

➤ *In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*







At the same time  
Jesus showed an  
incredible  
understanding of  
human weakness  
and sin.





Is God Confused?







# Activation

Get in a small group

Discuss perceptions you may have had of the Father that were not Biblical

Replace those image with a biblical one

Pray for each other