



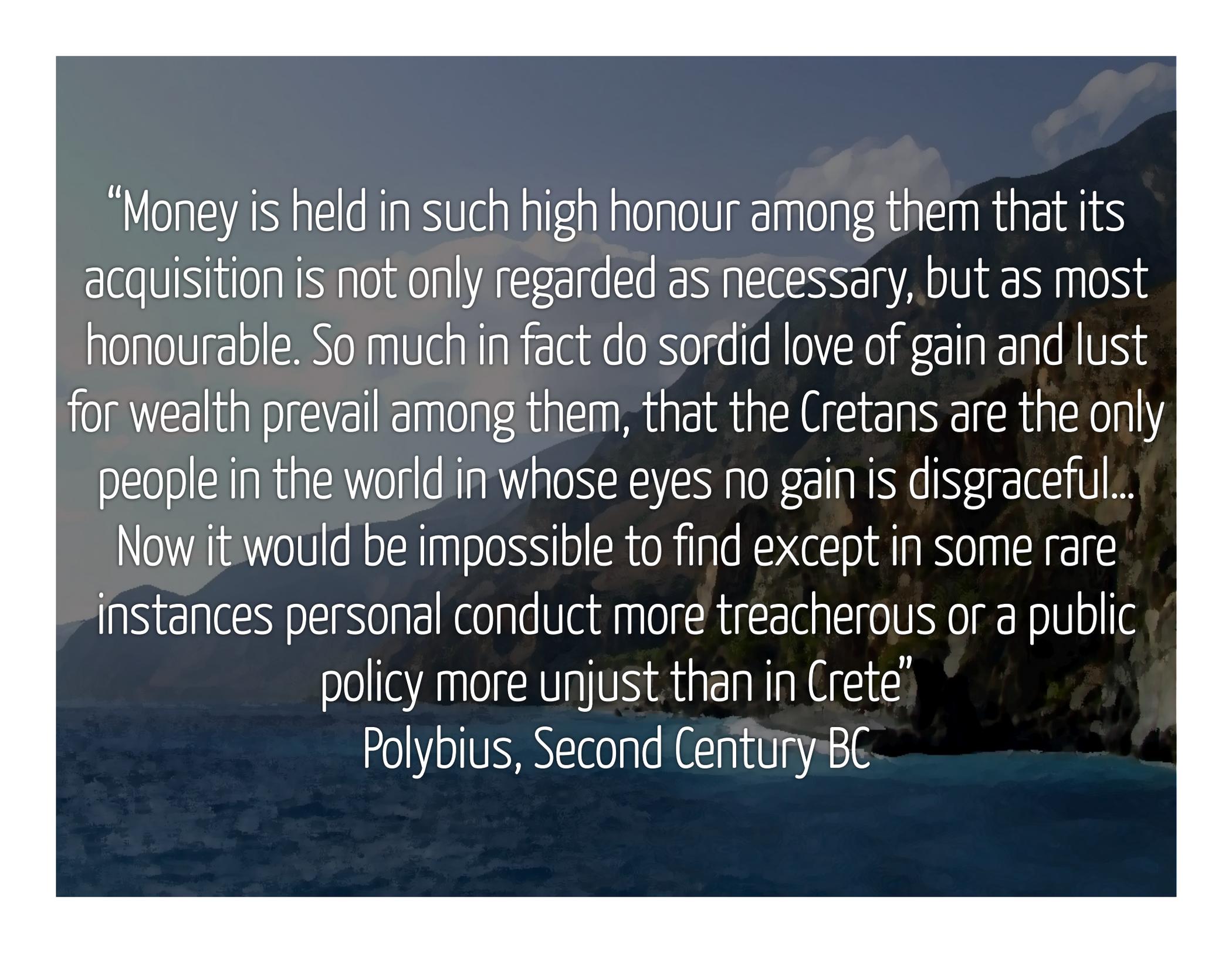
# CRETANS

# THE ISLAND OF CRETE

- Crete is a large island in the Mediterranean that was once part of a Roman province called Cyrenaica, encompassing part of modern-day Libya.
- The island is rocky and mountainous, with some peaks reaching as high as 8,000 feet. The mountains dropped off precipitously on the southern coast, so most of the population lived on the northern side of the island.
- Under Roman rule it was a relatively unimportant place, but known throughout the empire as a haven for unscrupulous characters (pirates, mercenaries, and criminals).



**“Cretans are always liars, evil  
beasts, lazy gluttons.”**

A scenic view of a coastline with mountains and a blue sea. The text is overlaid on this background.

“Money is held in such high honour among them that its acquisition is not only regarded as necessary, but as most honourable. So much in fact do sordid love of gain and lust for wealth prevail among them, that the Cretans are the only people in the world in whose eyes no gain is disgraceful...

Now it would be impossible to find except in some rare instances personal conduct more treacherous or a public policy more unjust than in Crete”

Polybius, Second Century BC

# THE CRETANS AND *TITUS*

- The epistle to Titus is as much about the Cretans themselves as it is about Titus or his preaching. It serves as a commentary on evangelism, leadership, and righteous living in the midst of a predominantly wicked civilization.
- Our lesson today will focus on what the Cretans were expected to learn from Titus, and how we face surprisingly similar circumstances in our own work.

# EVANGELISTIC DEAD ZONE?

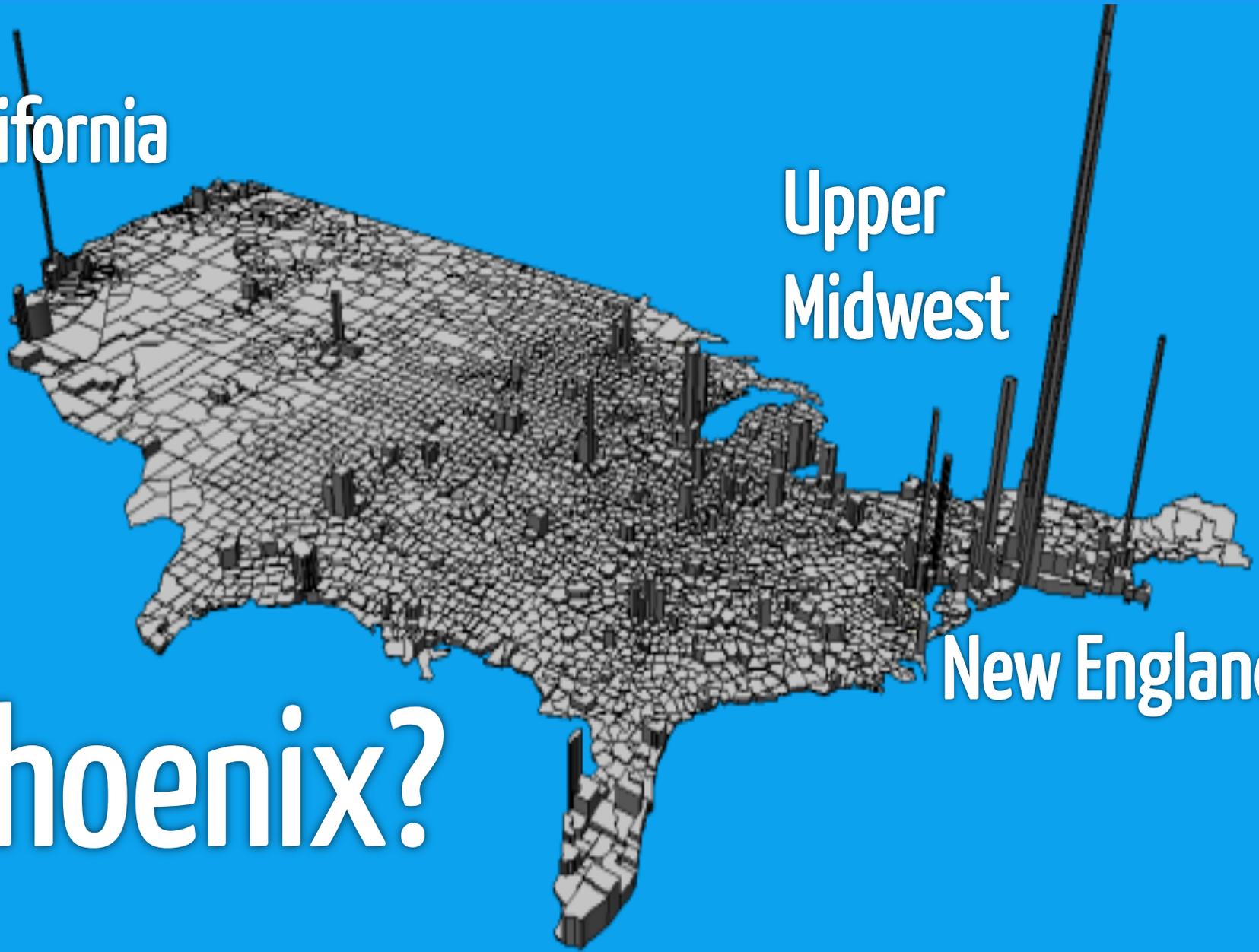
- Even on an island so renowned for its wickedness and greed, there were multiple congregations (1:5). Christians might have been thriving there since just after the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11).
- There were people who “believed” and just needed encouragement to stay the course (3:8).
- Be careful about deciding for God how successful the Gospel can be in our community, or elsewhere. There is no such thing as an evangelistic “dead zone”, and Crete proves this.

California

Upper  
Midwest

New England

Phoenix?



Strong leadership doesn't need  
ideal circumstances (1:5-9).



# TRUTH IS NEVER OUTMATCHED

- If Titus was not up to the task of evangelizing and preaching in Crete, Paul certainly did not believe it!
- As long as he was equipped with the truth, Titus did not need to be flashy, rich, or scholarly to win people's hearts to Jesus Christ:
  - 2:1
  - 2:7-8
  - 2:15

A piece of white, crumpled paper is centered against a solid black background. The paper is heavily wrinkled and folded, giving it a textured, three-dimensional appearance. In the center of the paper, the word "REPUTATION" is written in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are thick and blocky, with a slightly irregular, hand-drawn quality. The word is oriented horizontally and is the central focus of the image.

**REPUTATION**

# REPUTATION

- While it might feel like a “double effort” is required to rehab a bad reputation, nothing more is needed than the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- The advice that Paul gives in 2:2-14 could change anybody’s life, no matter how bad it was before conversion.
- There is no dark past, seedy history, or damaged goods that cannot be eternally solved by God. Of course, this applies to the person born under ideal circumstances, as well. WE ALL NEED the same washing (3:1-7).

