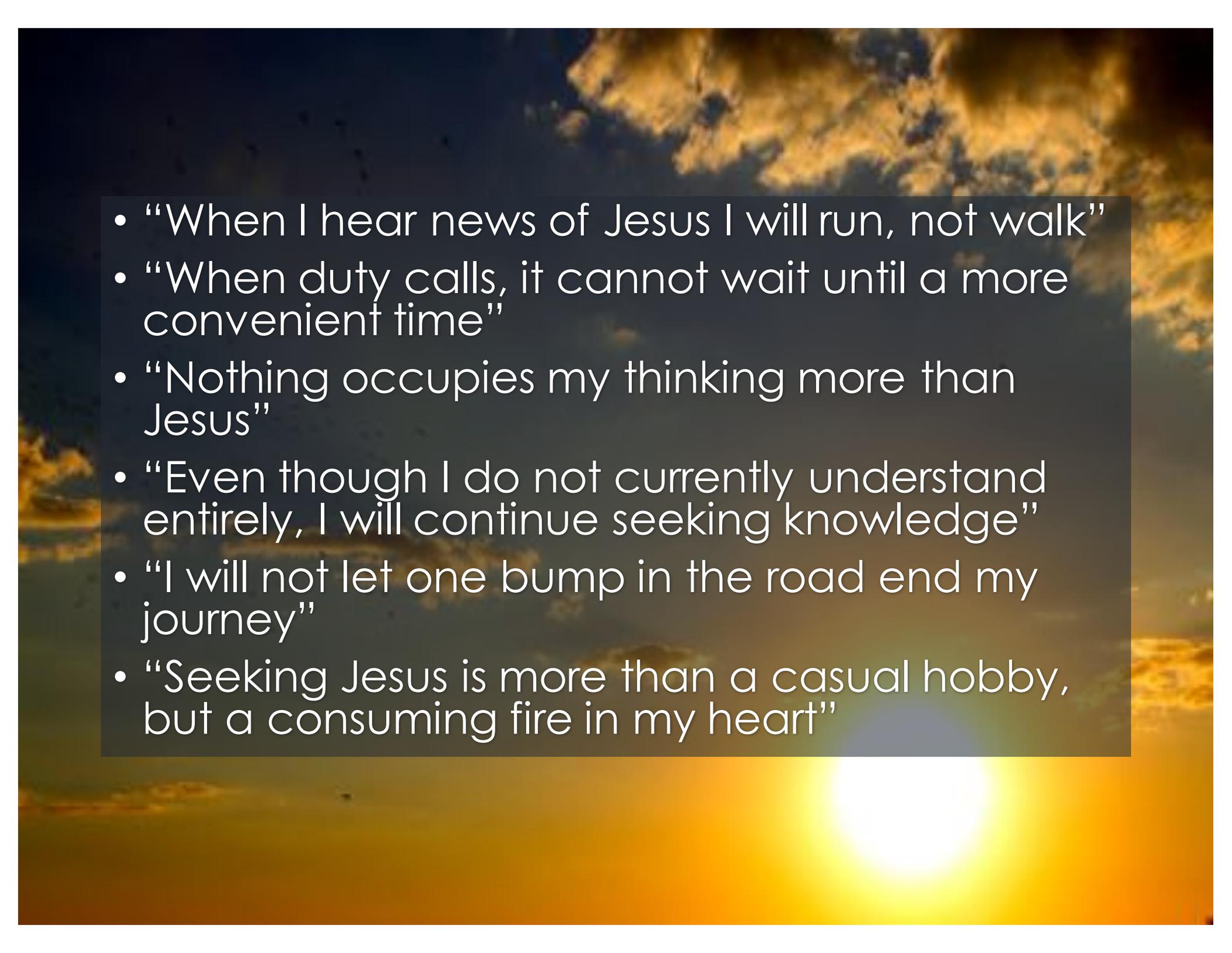


A bright sun in a blue sky with scattered clouds, serving as a background for the text.

EARLY ON THE FIRST
DAY OF THE WEEK

JOHN 20



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- “When I hear news of Jesus I will run, not walk”
 - “When duty calls, it cannot wait until a more convenient time”
 - “Nothing occupies my thinking more than Jesus”
 - “Even though I do not currently understand entirely, I will continue seeking knowledge”
 - “I will not let one bump in the road end my journey”
 - “Seeking Jesus is more than a casual hobby, but a consuming fire in my heart”

RAISED UP

- Jesus' death rocked the disciples to the point of despondency, but it should not have come as a surprise (Lk. 9:22, 18:31-33).
- He encouraged His disciples to look on His departure as a good thing (John 14:1-4).
- Plenty of prophecies also predicted that the Messiah would undergo a process of rejection, death, and resurrection (Psalm 16:9-10, 68:16-18, Zech. 12:10, Is. 53:10-12).
- The resurrection is a central (and essential) key to the gospel message (1 Cor. 15:4).

THE EMPTY TOMB

- Even the enemies of Jesus understood what an empty tomb would mean. Certainly, they did not accept the possibility that anything He said was valid or believable, but they knew what a statement it would be (Matt. 28:11-15).
- The resurrection continued to be the most controversial element of the faith, leading to ridicule (Acts 17:32) and scoffing (Acts 26:22-24). It ignited open conflict from those who could not tolerate it (Acts 23:6).

A photograph of a sunset or sunrise sky. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the lower right quadrant, casting a warm, golden light across the scene. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a bright orange and yellow near the horizon. Scattered, wispy clouds are illuminated by the sun, appearing in shades of orange and gold. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

SO WHAT'S
THE POINT?

WHAT DOES THE EMPTY TOMB MEAN?

- If Jesus had not been raised, what would we be left with? A martyr? A fraud? The disciples would have been dispersed, like the followers of every other false messiah and Jesus of Nazareth would have been a footnote in history.
- Yet His death, burial, and resurrection paved the way for my salvation. I share in the process, become one with Him, and experience it tangibly through baptism!

RESURRECTION FOR ALL

- Romans 6:1 ff – We experience a foretaste of the resurrection in our renewed life after baptism. This spiritual rebirth makes it possible for us to be literally raised on the last day.
- 1 Corinthians 15:12ff – Death is the great equalizer, the one thing we cannot defeat – until Jesus comes along, that is.
- Before the resurrection comes the suffering, though! Just as Jesus had to die first, we also face a life filled with pain and loss before the resurrection (Phil. 3:8-11).