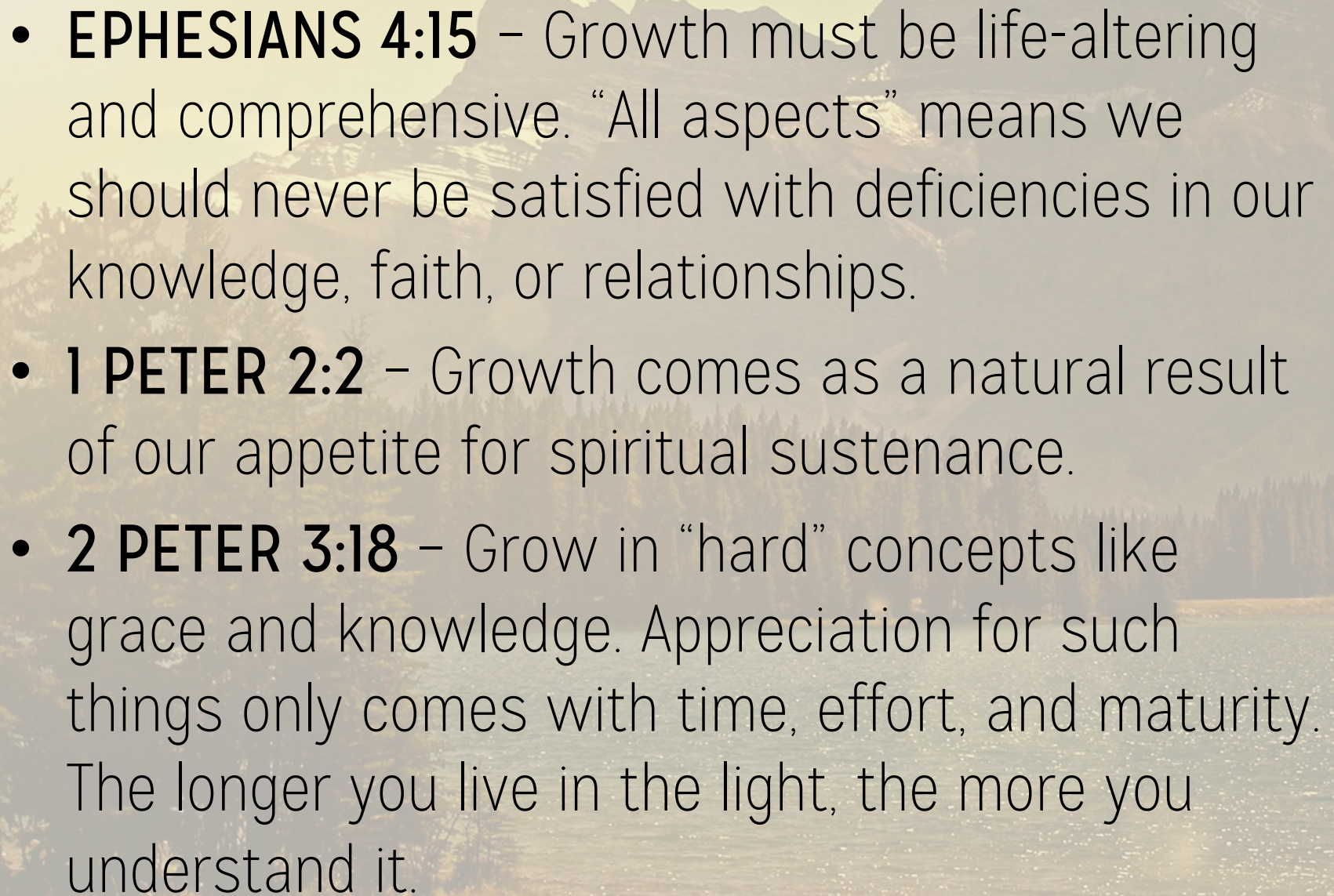
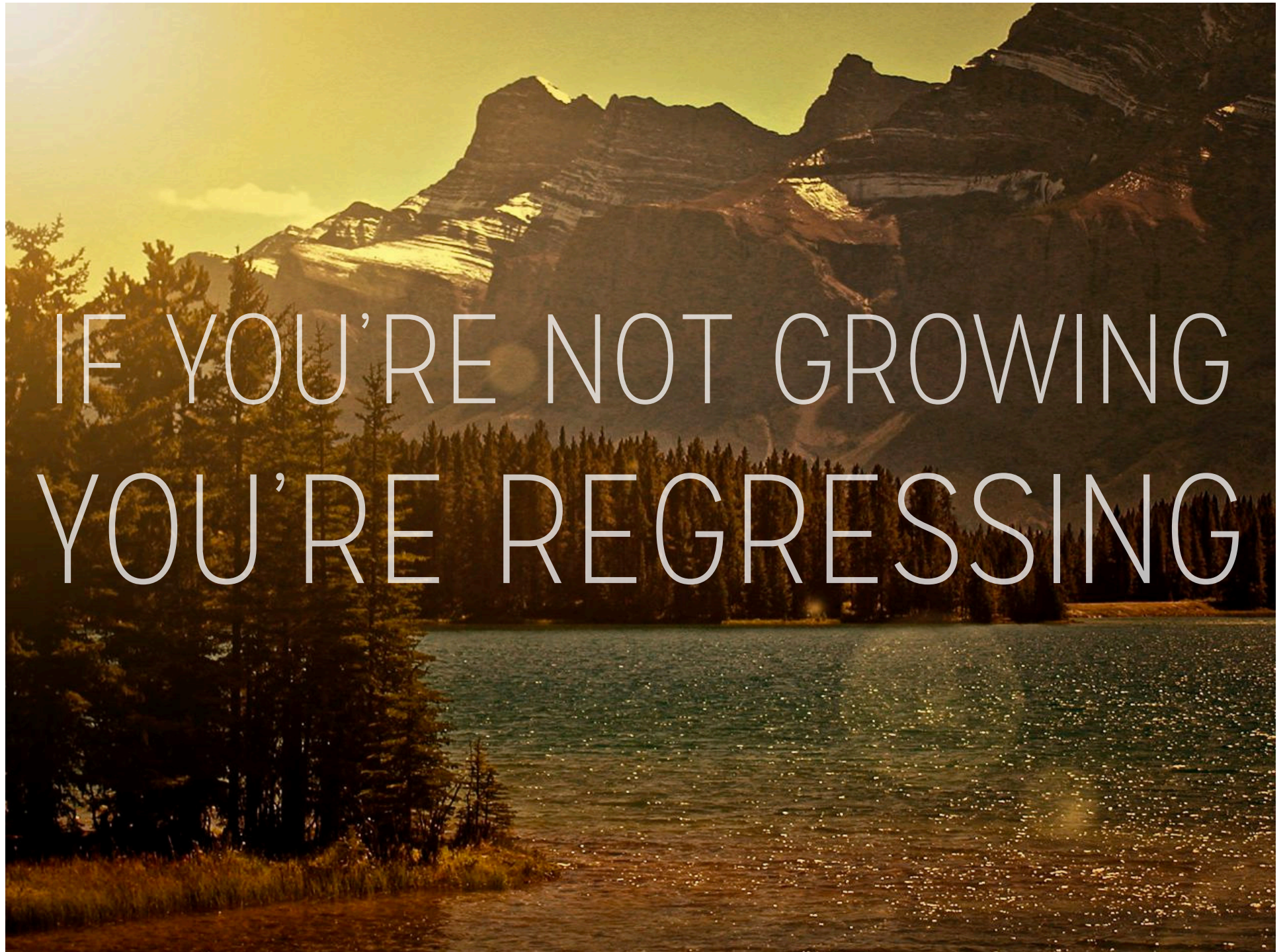


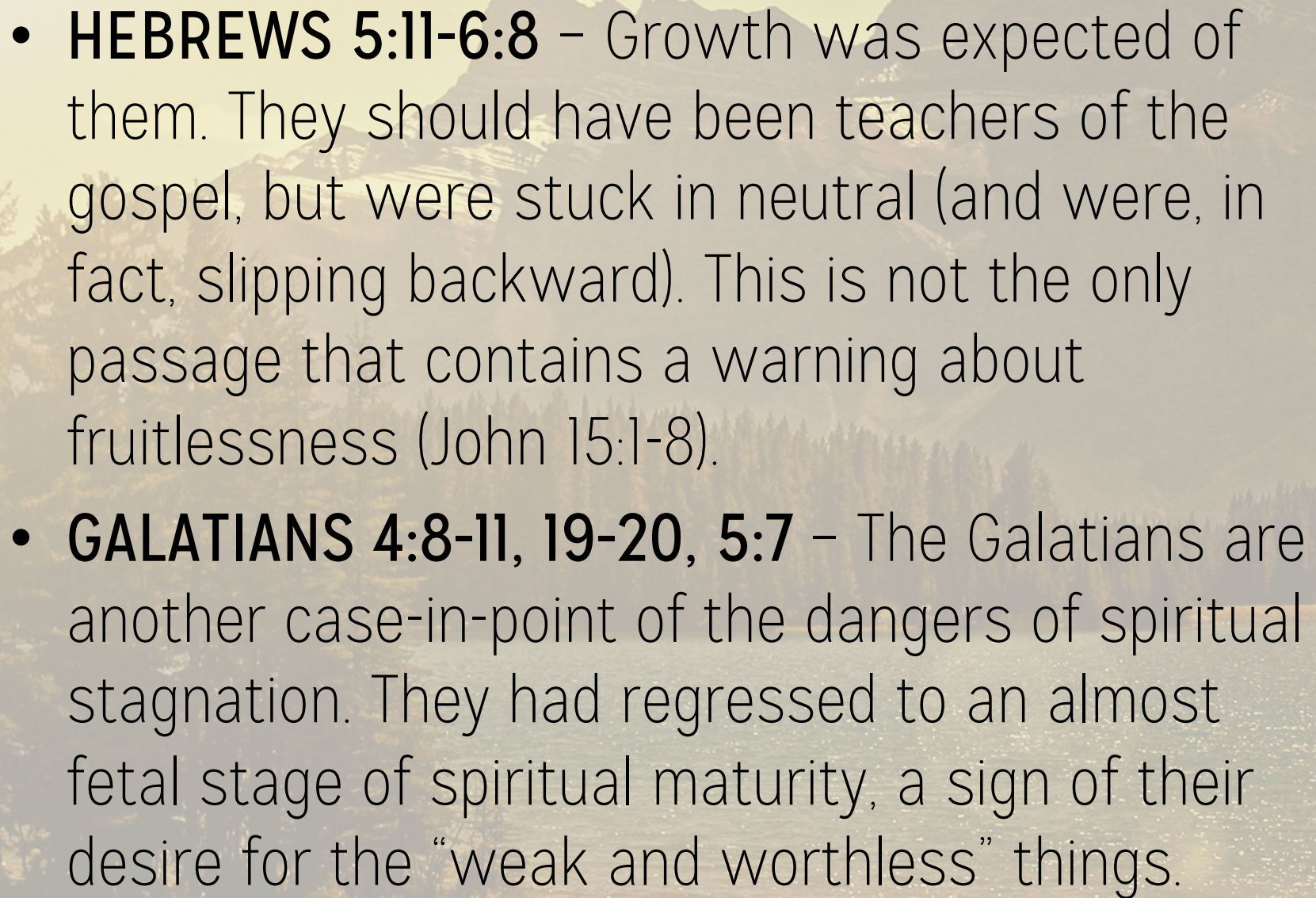


GROWING UP

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- **EPHESIANS 4:15** – Growth must be life-altering and comprehensive. “All aspects” means we should never be satisfied with deficiencies in our knowledge, faith, or relationships.
 - **1 PETER 2:2** – Growth comes as a natural result of our appetite for spiritual sustenance.
 - **2 PETER 3:18** – Grow in “hard” concepts like grace and knowledge. Appreciation for such things only comes with time, effort, and maturity. The longer you live in the light, the more you understand it.



IF YOU'RE NOT GROWING
YOU'RE REGRESSING

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- **HEBREWS 5:11-6:8** – Growth was expected of them. They should have been teachers of the gospel, but were stuck in neutral (and were, in fact, slipping backward). This is not the only passage that contains a warning about fruitlessness (John 15:1-8).
 - **GALATIANS 4:8-11, 19-20, 5:7** – The Galatians are another case-in-point of the dangers of spiritual stagnation. They had regressed to an almost fetal stage of spiritual maturity, a sign of their desire for the “weak and worthless” things.

DID THE PROBLEM START AT BIRTH?

Some die to sin without ever pursuing life with Christ (Romans 6:11). They want to feel better about sin without actually changing anything or seeking deeper understanding. Like Lazarus, they are still wearing their burial clothes (John 11:43-44).

A scenic landscape photograph of a lake at sunset. The sky is a warm, golden yellow, and the sun is low on the horizon, casting a shimmering reflection on the water's surface. In the background, dark, rugged mountains rise against the sky, with some snow patches visible on their slopes. The foreground is dominated by a dense forest of evergreen trees, their silhouettes dark against the bright light. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

Matthew 13:18-23

Everybody has potential, like the seed that is sown. We hear the Word, but we must undergo a change. Jesus also pointed out that a seed must go through a process before it can become anything more (John 12:24-26). Growth is a choice, and many refuse (John 12:42-43).

Baptism is the beginning/end of new/old. Some grow to this point, but have no desire or resolve to go any further (Matt. 13:20-21). This might be the point where you “got what you came for” (Lk. 17:11ff).

Others grow, but are eventually swallowed up by the weeds of distraction, wealth, or self-imposed ignorance (Matt. 13:22).

Still others actually want to grow and produce fruit. They are not satisfied with lazy answers or half-hearted devotion. They press on to maturity (Hebrews 6:1). Growth fails due to a lack of understanding, lack of preparedness, and a lack of focus – or, more succinctly, a lack of desire. The Christian who wants to grow, will grow.

