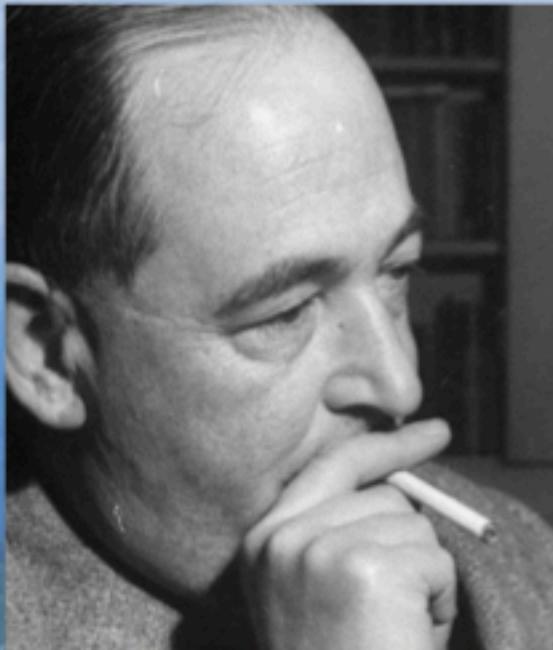




THE HIGHEST GOOD
a series in the Sermon on the Mount

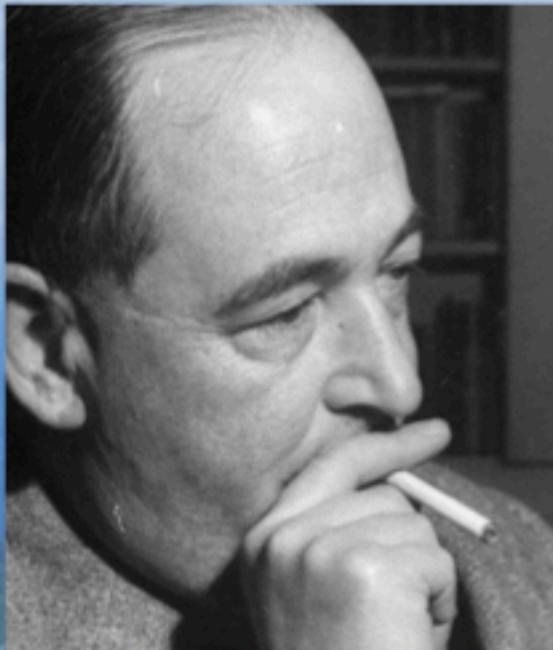
Joy comes with the Mourning



C.S. Lewis

*When you are happy, so happy
you have no sense of needing
Him, so happy that you are
tempted to feel His claims upon
you as an interruption, if you
remember yourself and turn to
Him with gratitude and praise,
you will be — or so it feels—
welcomed with open arms.*



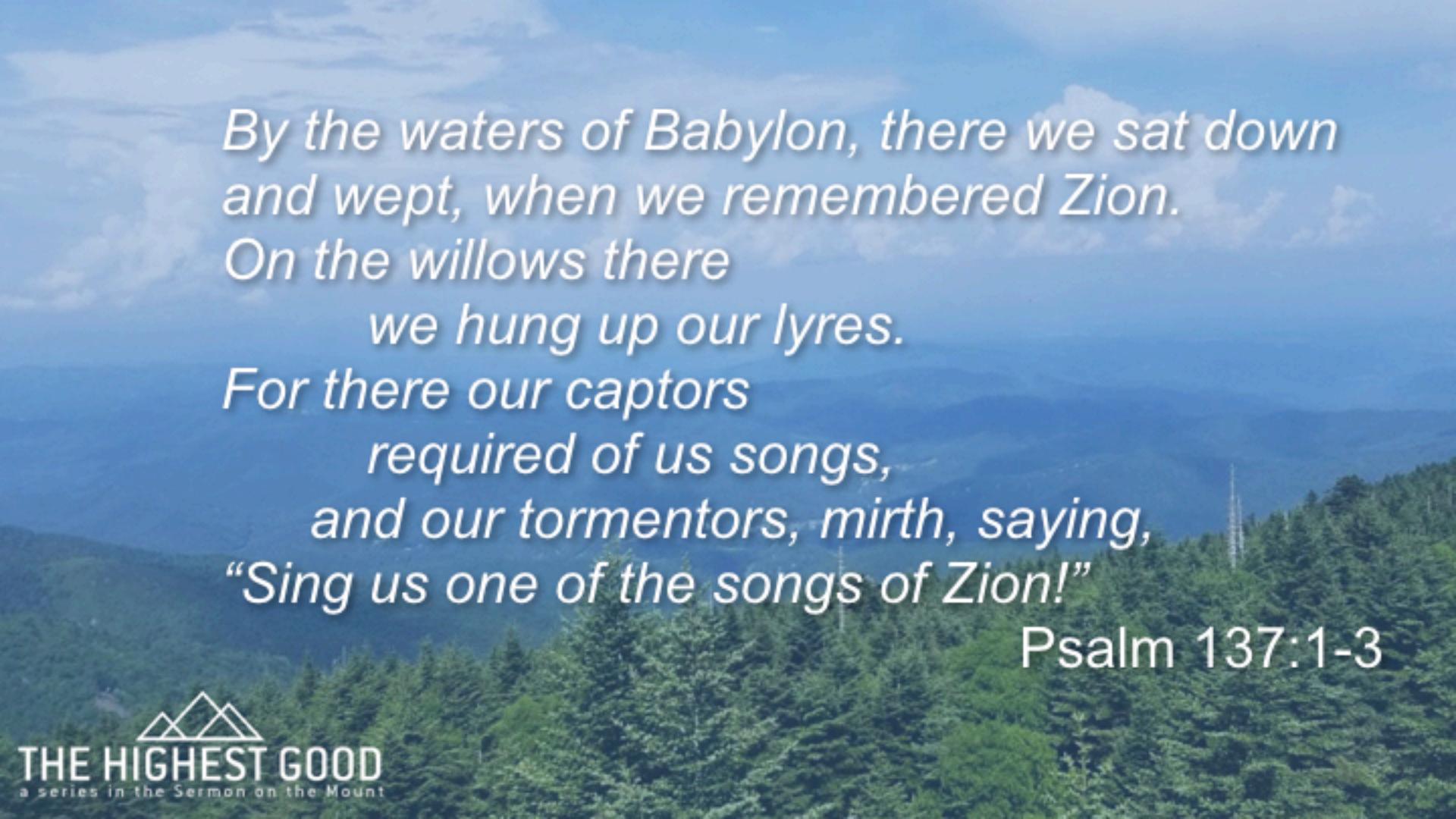


C.S. Lewis

*But go to Him when your need
is desperate, when all other
help is vain, and what do you
find? A door slammed in your
face, and a sound of bolting
and double bolting on the
inside. After that, silence.*



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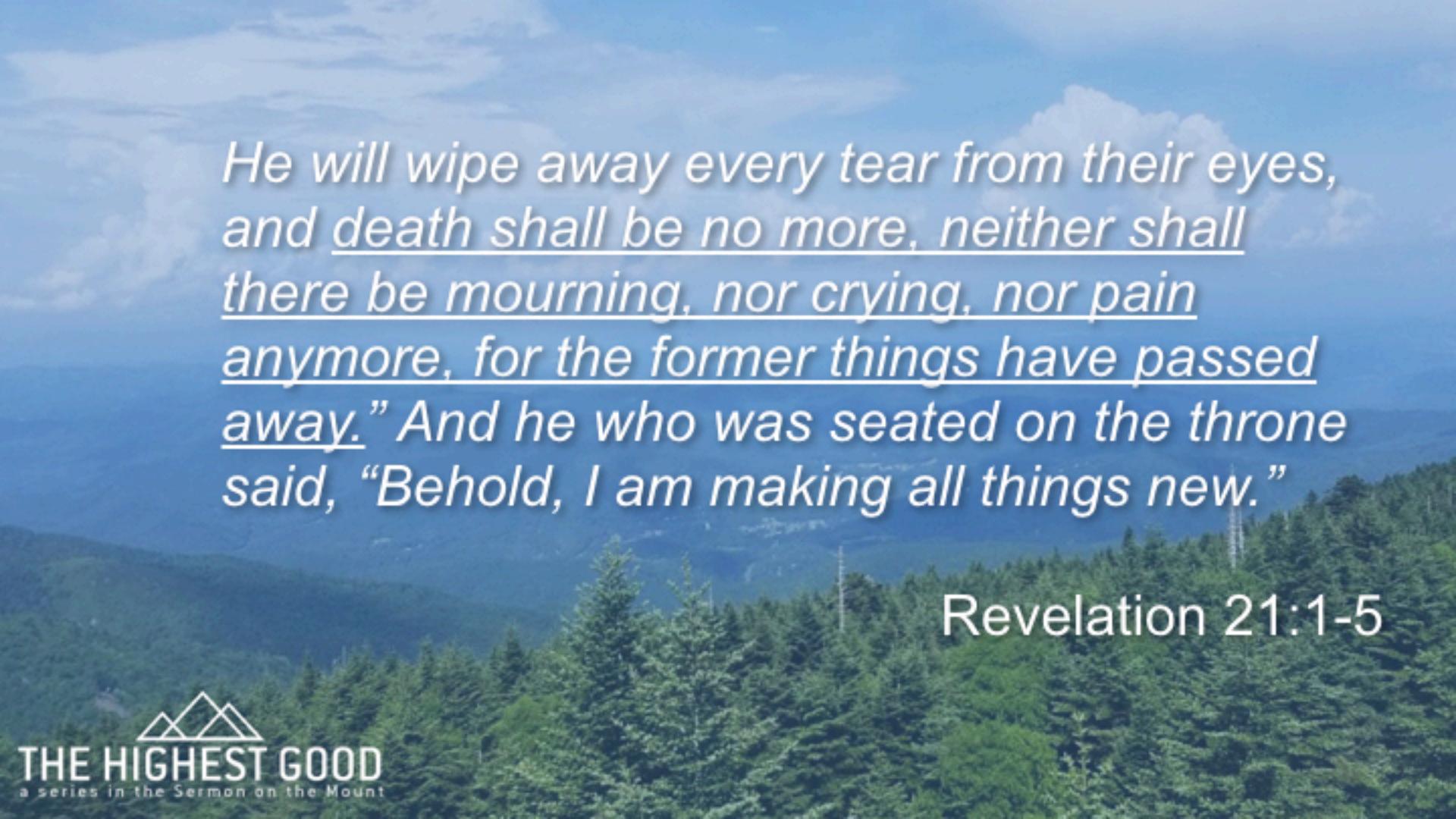
*By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down
and wept, when we remembered Zion.
On the willows there
we hung up our lyres.
For there our captors
required of us songs,
and our tormentors, mirth, saying,
“Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”*

Psalm 137:1-3



Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. . . .

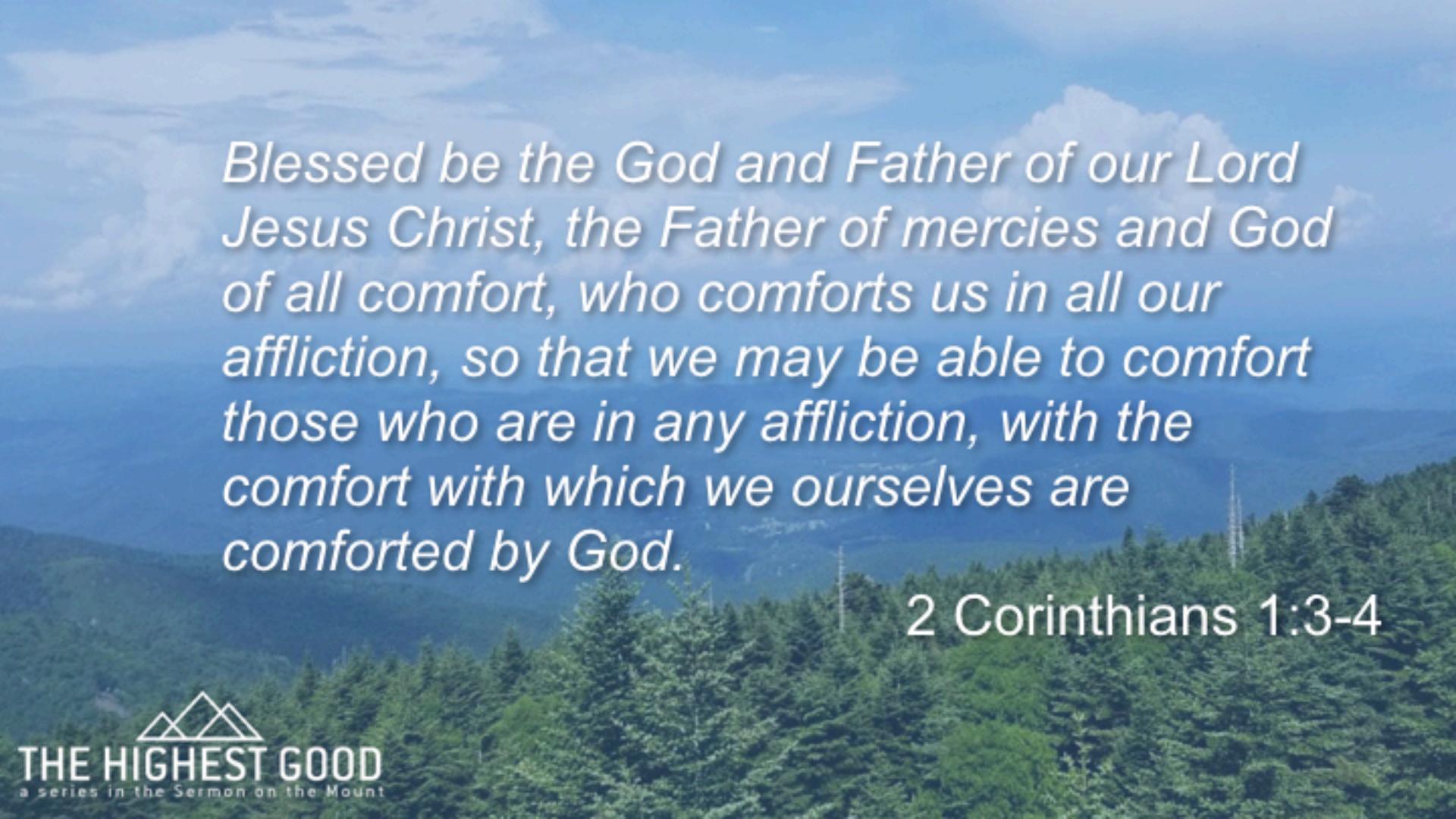




He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.”

Revelation 21:1-5

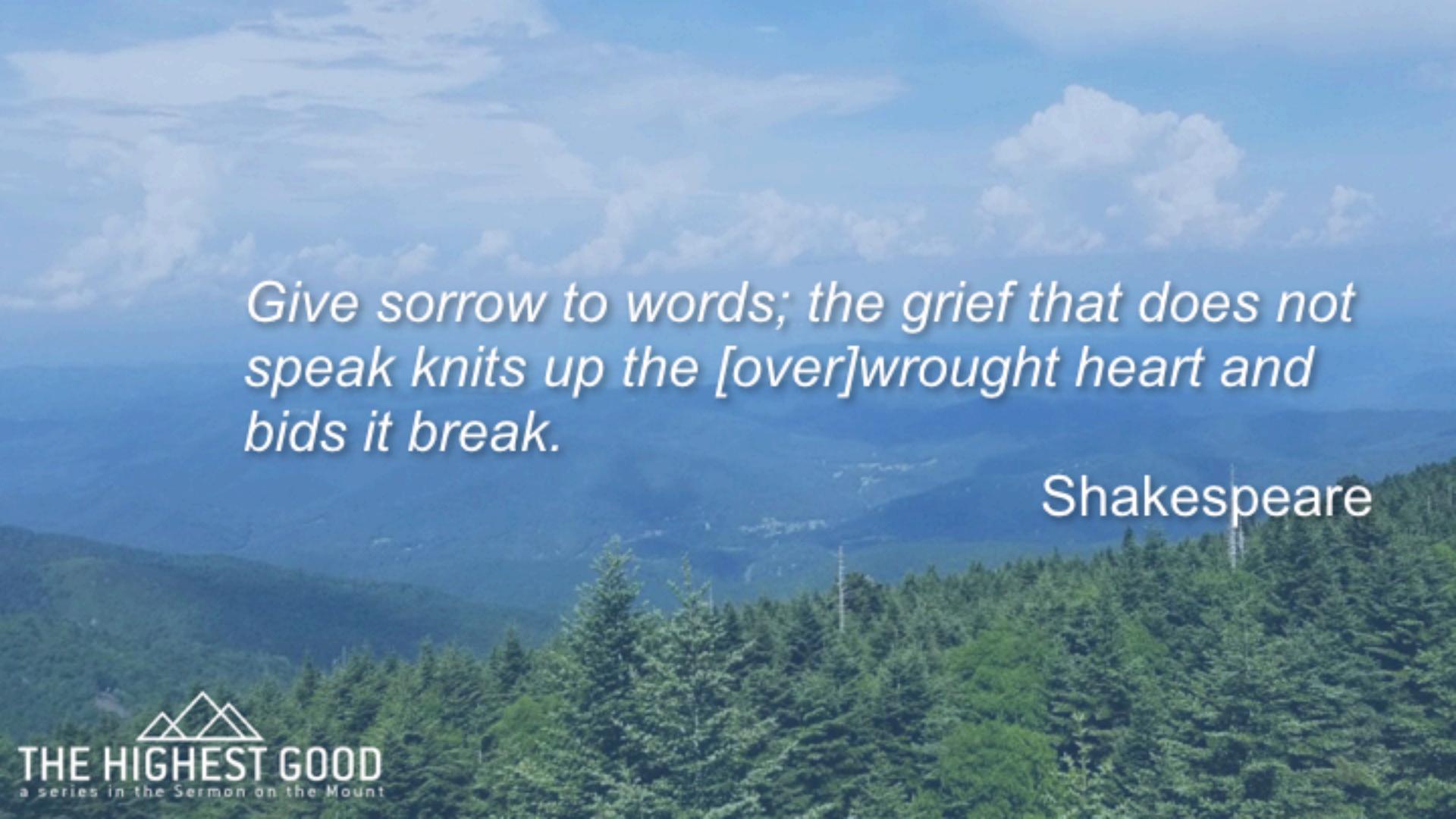




Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4





Give sorrow to words; the grief that does not speak knits up the [over]wrought heart and bids it break.

Shakespeare



John Flavel

*. . . by fretting and discontent
you do yourself more injury
than all your afflictions could
do. Your own discontent is that
which arms your troubles with a
sting; you make your burden
heavy by struggling under it. . . .*





Flannery O'Connor

I think there is no suffering greater than what is caused by the doubts of those who want to believe. I know what torment this is, but I can only see it, in myself anyway, as the process by which faith is deepened. . . .



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Flannery O'Connor

. . . . It is much harder to believe than not to believe. If you feel you can't believe, you must at least do this: keep an open mind. Keep it open toward faith, keep wanting it, keep asking for it, and leave the rest to God.





Teresa of Avila

I do not love you, Lord; I do not even want to love you.

But I want to want to love you.



Kate Bowler

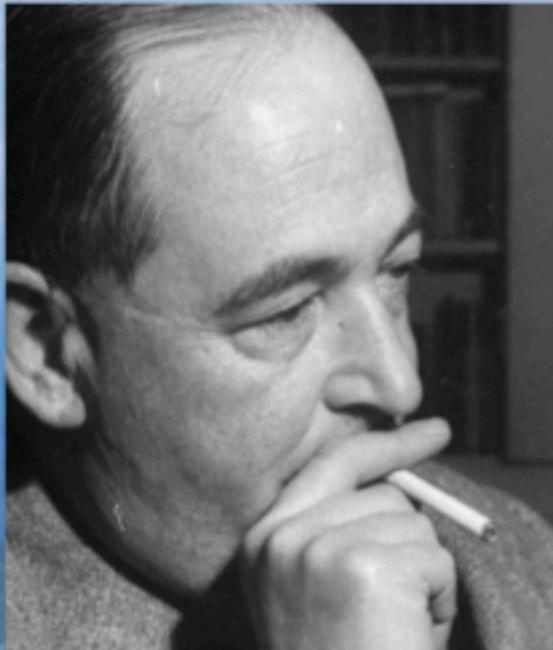
The terrible gift of a terrible illness is that it has in fact taught me to live in the moment. But when I look at these mementos, I realize that I am learning more than to seize the day. In losing my future, the mundane began to sparkle.





Kate Bowler

The things I love—the things I should love—become clearer, brighter. This is transcendence, the past and the future experienced together in moments where I can see a flicker of eternity.



C.S. Lewis

When I lay these questions before God I get no answer. But a rather special sort of “No answer.” It is not the locked door. It is more like a silent, certainly not uncompassionate, gaze. As though He shook His head not in refusal but waiving the question. Like, “Peace, child; you don’t understand.”

