

The background is a dramatic, painterly landscape. On the left, a bright, golden light source, possibly the sun or moon, illuminates the scene, creating a strong contrast with the dark, shadowed areas on the right. The landscape is composed of rugged, rocky terrain with various shades of brown, orange, and red. In the distance, a small, dark figure stands on a rocky outcrop, looking towards the light. The overall atmosphere is one of mystery and grandeur, typical of a religious or allegorical painting.

The Fulfillment of All Desire

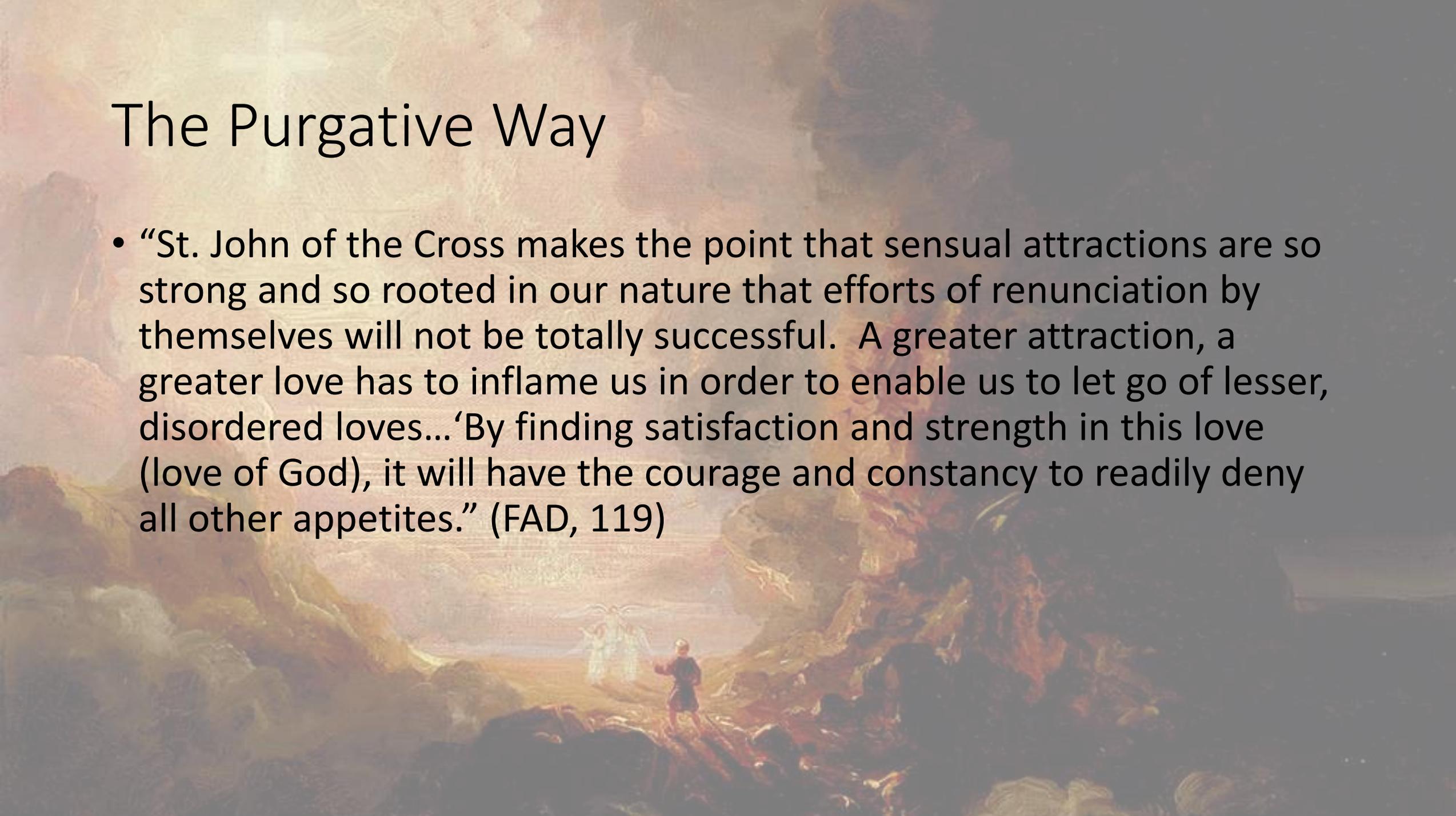
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[Part 3]

(pages 119-178; Chapters 7-8)

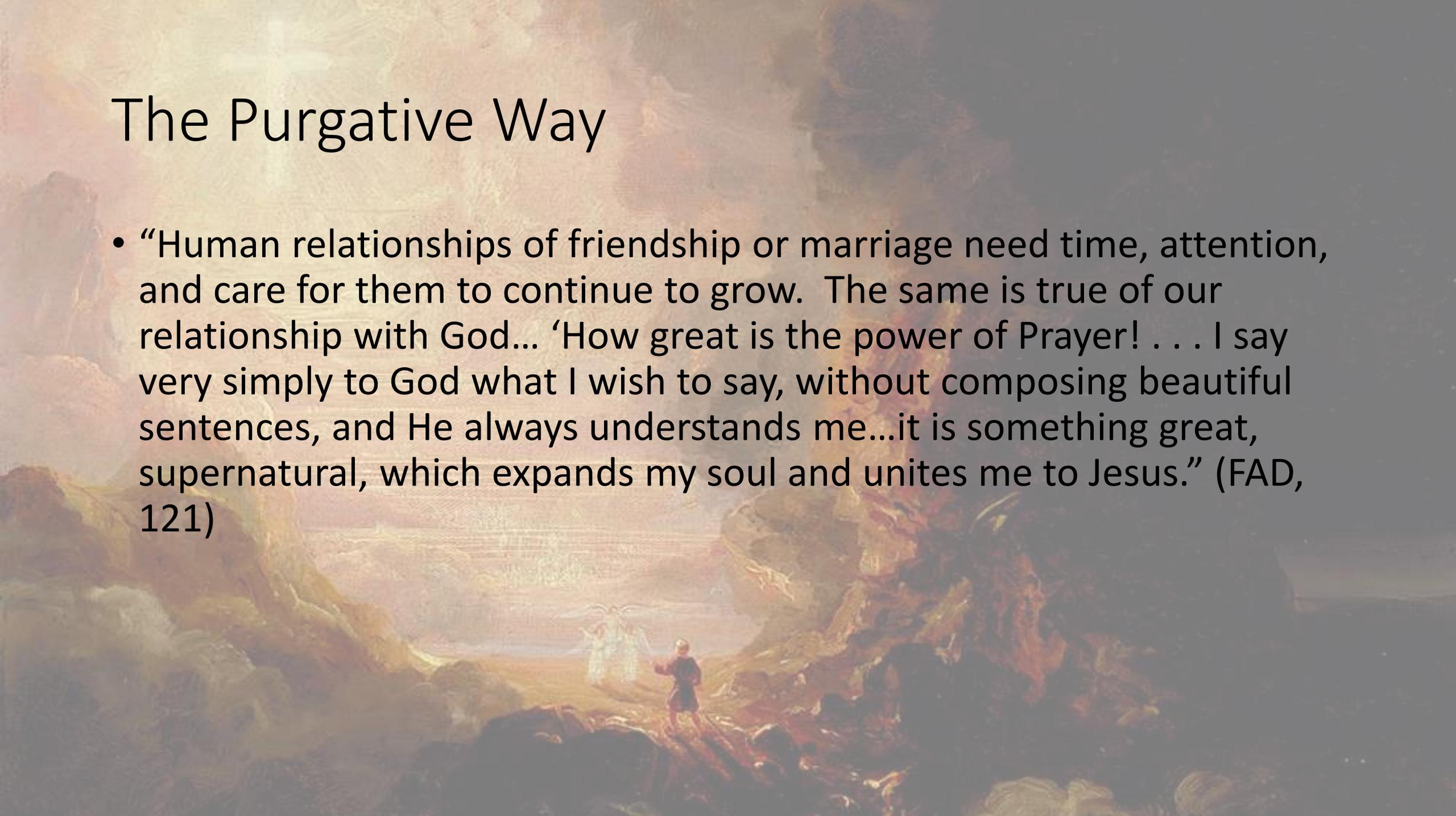
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- “St. John of the Cross makes the point that sensual attractions are so strong and so rooted in our nature that efforts of renunciation by themselves will not be totally successful. A greater attraction, a greater love has to inflame us in order to enable us to let go of lesser, disordered loves... ‘By finding satisfaction and strength in this love (love of God), it will have the courage and constancy to readily deny all other appetites.’ (FAD, 119)



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- “Human relationships of friendship or marriage need time, attention, and care for them to continue to grow. The same is true of our relationship with God... ‘How great is the power of Prayer! . . . I say very simply to God what I wish to say, without composing beautiful sentences, and He always understands me...it is something great, supernatural, which expands my soul and unites me to Jesus.’” (FAD, 121)



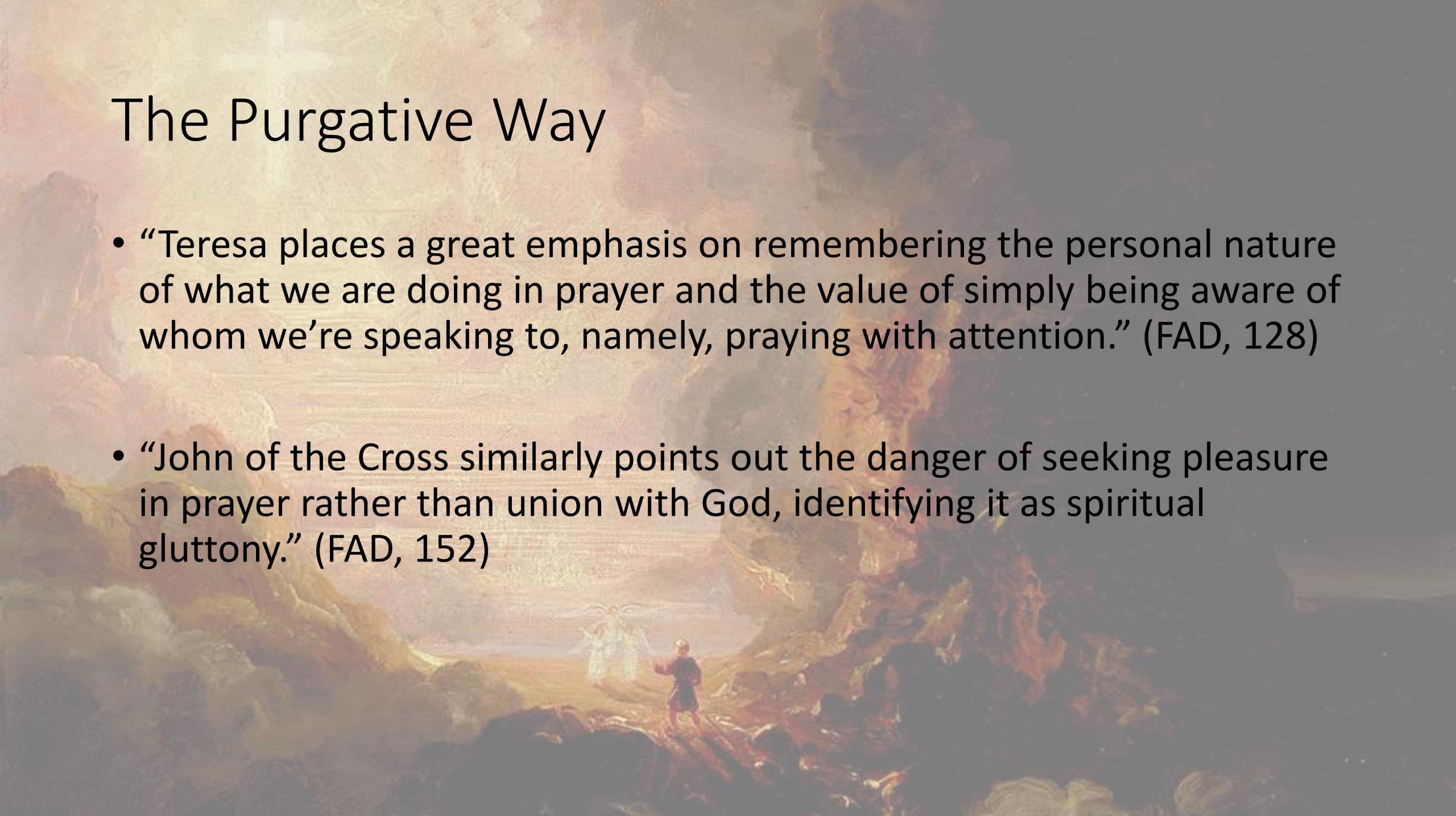
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St. Francis' six steps of prayer (FAD 123-124)

1. place yourself in the presence of God
2. ask the Lord to help you pay attention to Him
3. pick a scripture passage or another spiritual reading and picture yourself in the scene
4. think about what you've chosen in such a way as to increase your love for the Lord
5. be thankful for any good affections that rise up
6. come to some practical resolutions as a response to those affections

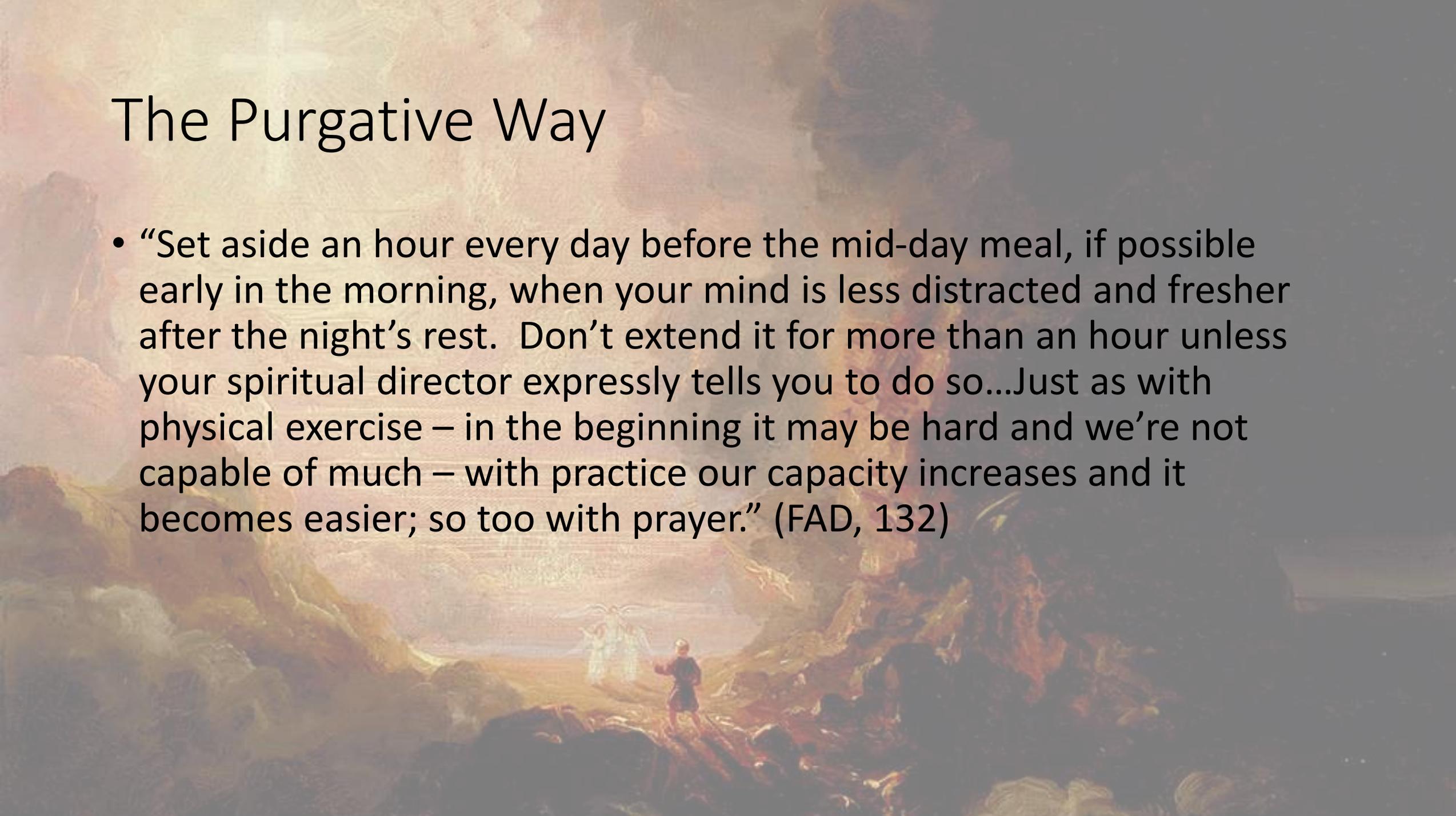
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- “Teresa places a great emphasis on remembering the personal nature of what we are doing in prayer and the value of simply being aware of whom we’re speaking to, namely, praying with attention.” (FAD, 128)
- “John of the Cross similarly points out the danger of seeking pleasure in prayer rather than union with God, identifying it as spiritual gluttony.” (FAD, 152)



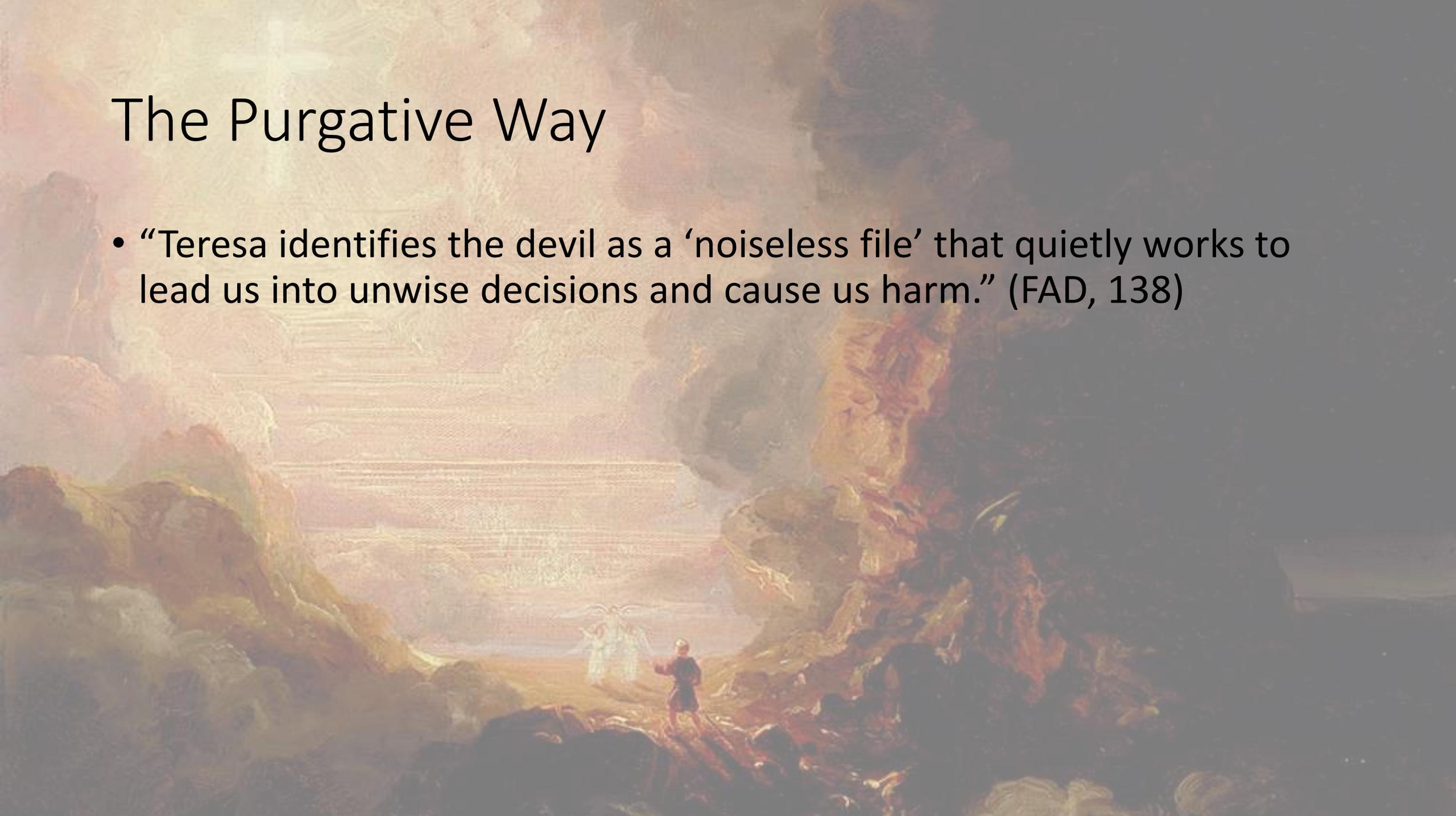
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- “Set aside an hour every day before the mid-day meal, if possible early in the morning, when your mind is less distracted and fresher after the night’s rest. Don’t extend it for more than an hour unless your spiritual director expressly tells you to do so...Just as with physical exercise – in the beginning it may be hard and we’re not capable of much – with practice our capacity increases and it becomes easier; so too with prayer.” (FAD, 132)



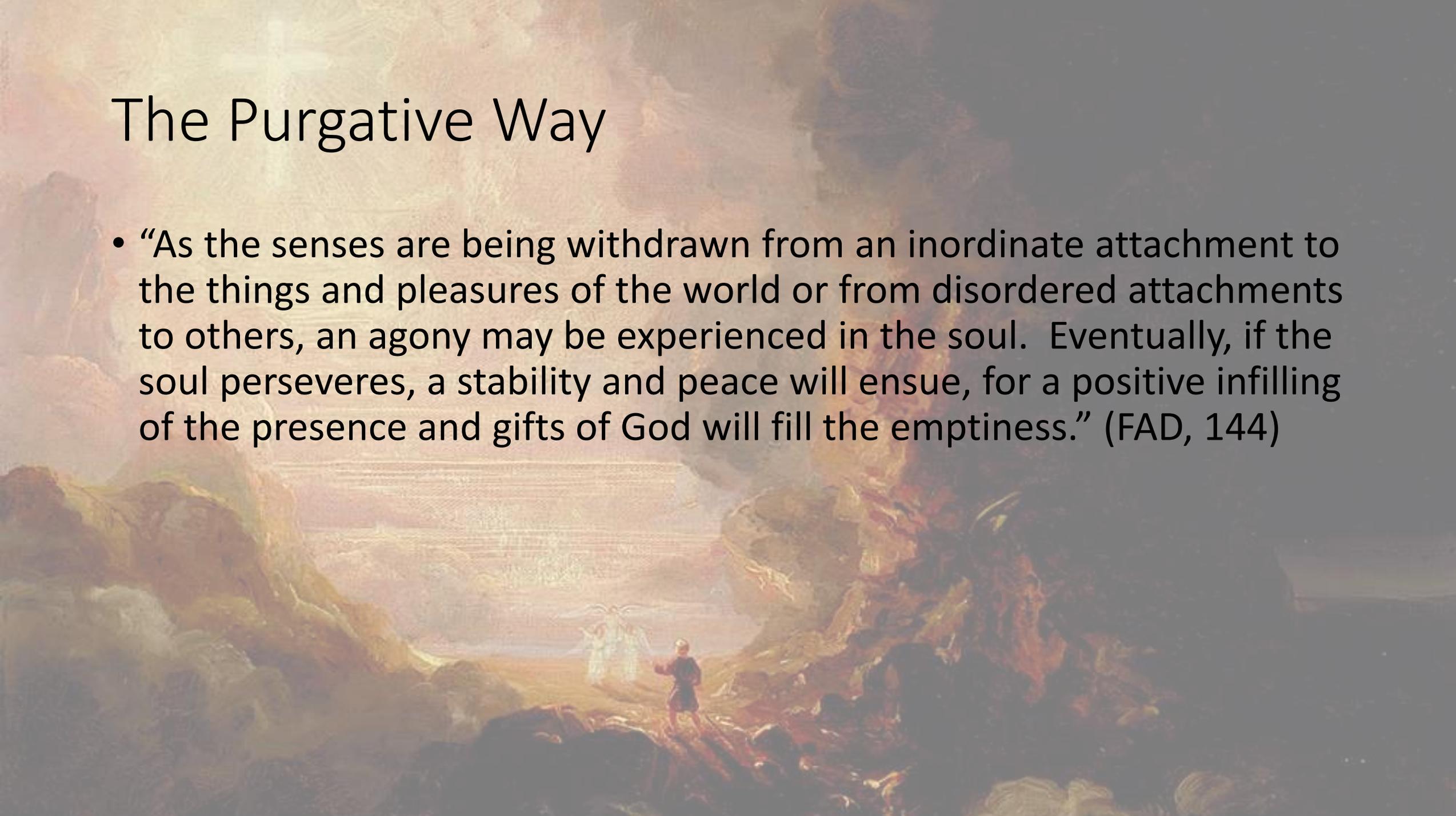
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- “Teresa identifies the devil as a ‘noiseless file’ that quietly works to lead us into unwise decisions and cause us harm.” (FAD, 138)



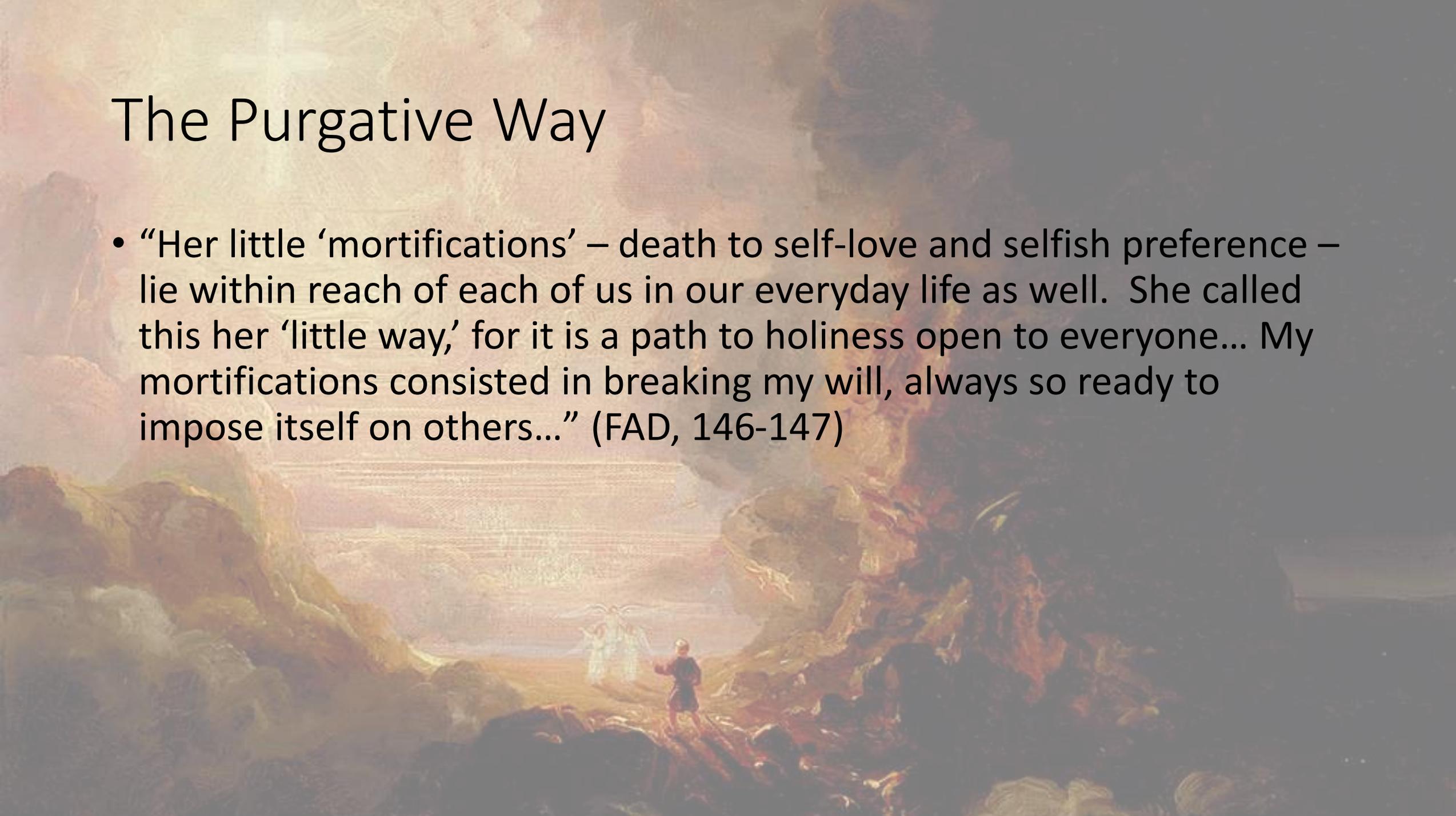
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- “As the senses are being withdrawn from an inordinate attachment to the things and pleasures of the world or from disordered attachments to others, an agony may be experienced in the soul. Eventually, if the soul perseveres, a stability and peace will ensue, for a positive infilling of the presence and gifts of God will fill the emptiness.” (FAD, 144)

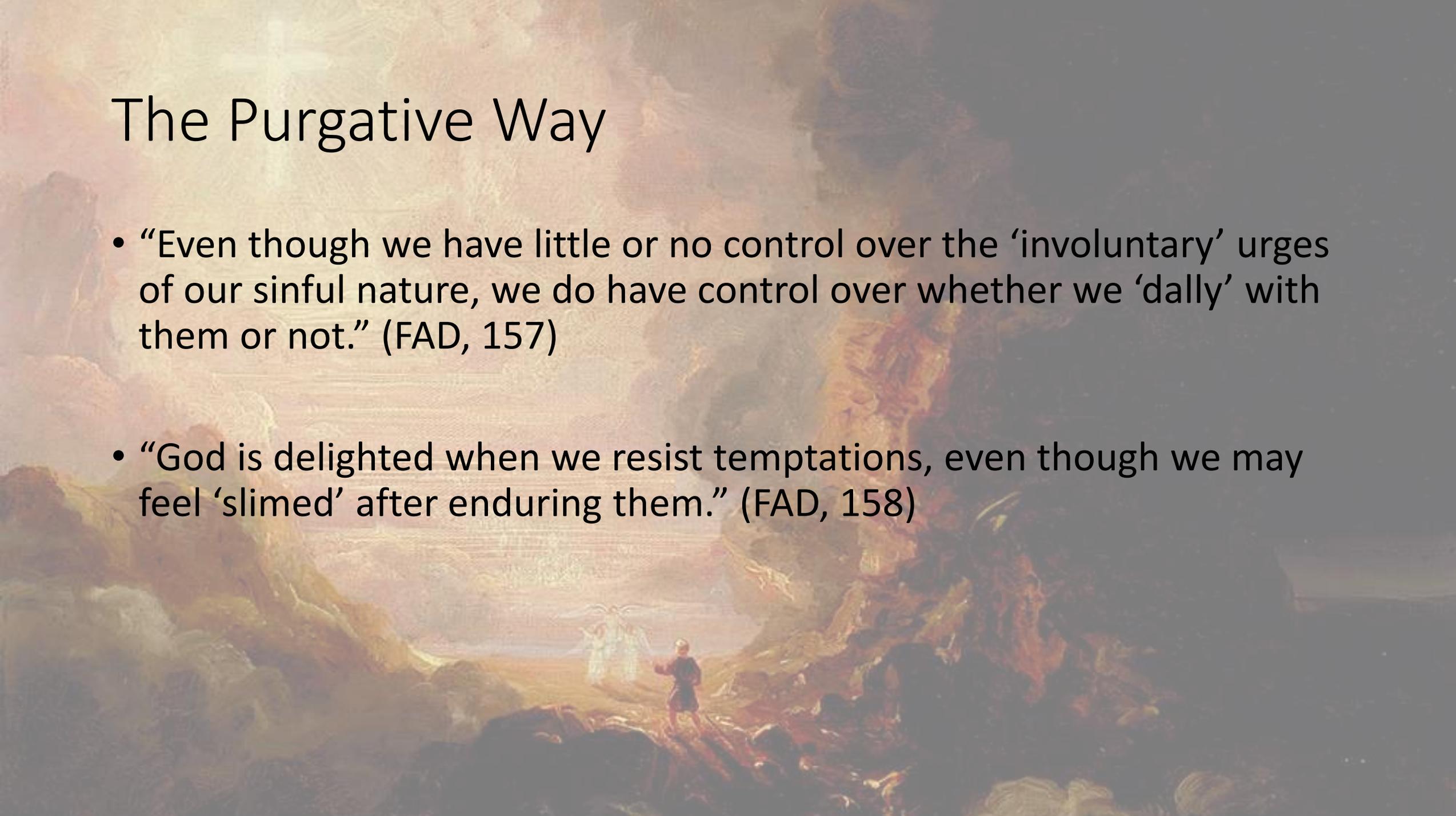


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- “Her little ‘mortifications’ – death to self-love and selfish preference – lie within reach of each of us in our everyday life as well. She called this her ‘little way,’ for it is a path to holiness open to everyone... My mortifications consisted in breaking my will, always so ready to impose itself on others...” (FAD, 146-147)



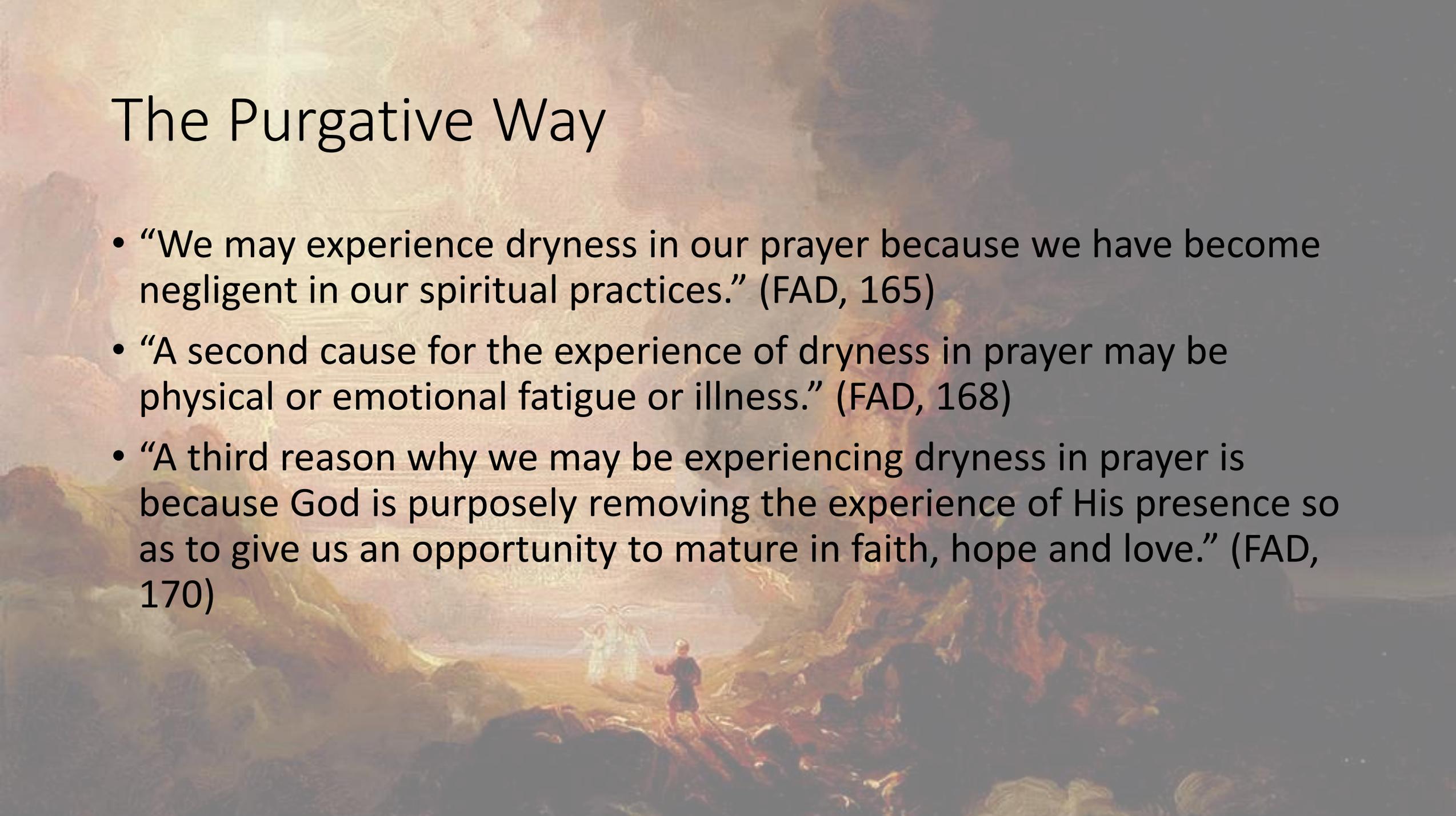
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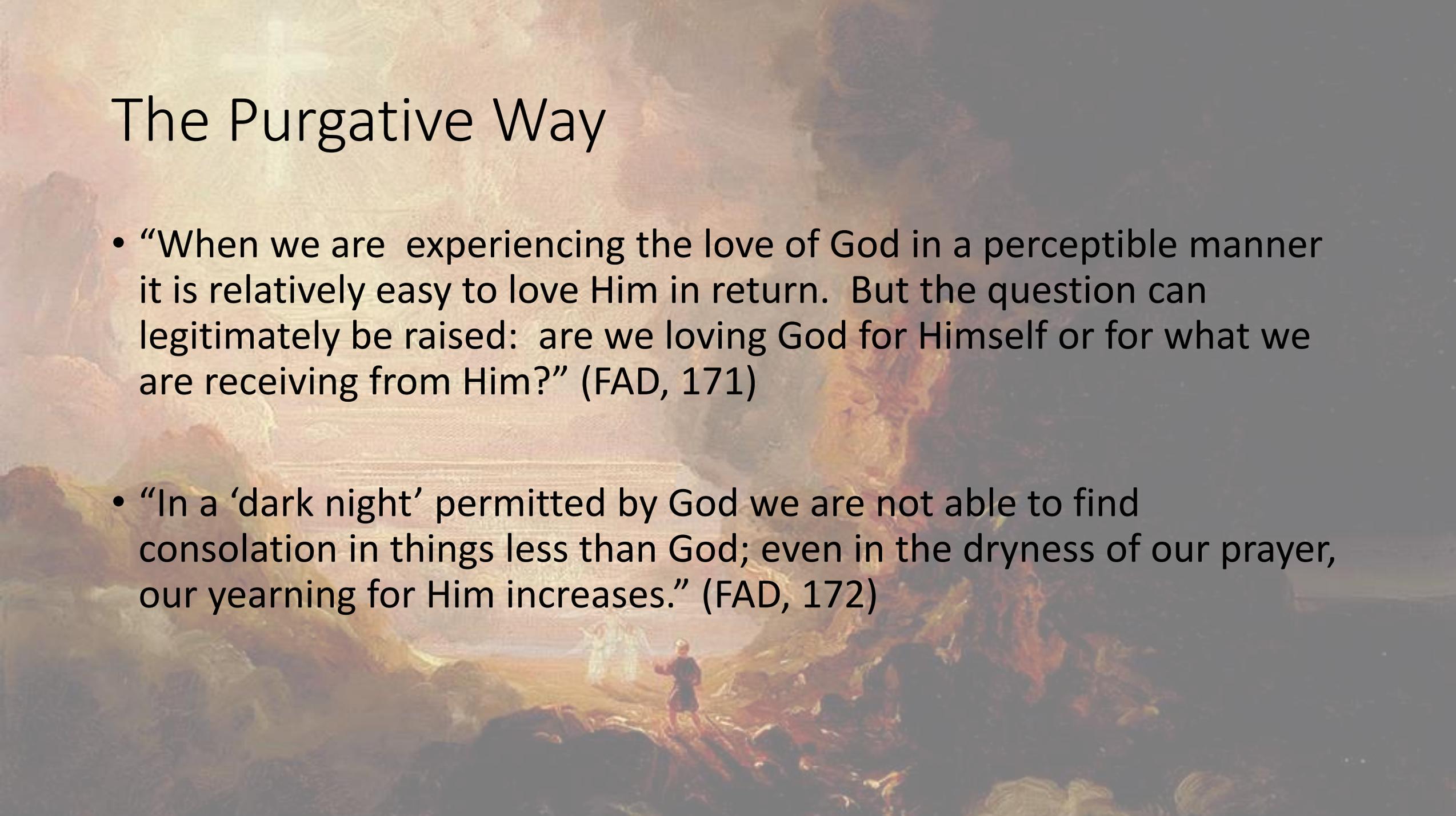
- “Even though we have little or no control over the ‘involuntary’ urges of our sinful nature, we do have control over whether we ‘dally’ with them or not.” (FAD, 157)
- “God is delighted when we resist temptations, even though we may feel ‘slimed’ after enduring them.” (FAD, 158)

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- “We may experience dryness in our prayer because we have become negligent in our spiritual practices.” (FAD, 165)
- “A second cause for the experience of dryness in prayer may be physical or emotional fatigue or illness.” (FAD, 168)
- “A third reason why we may be experiencing dryness in prayer is because God is purposely removing the experience of His presence so as to give us an opportunity to mature in faith, hope and love.” (FAD, 170)



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The background of the slide is a religious painting. It depicts a figure, likely a soul, standing on a dark, rocky, and desolate landscape. The figure is small and appears to be looking towards a bright, ethereal light source in the distance, possibly representing God or a path to salvation. The overall atmosphere is one of spiritual struggle and purification.

- “When we are experiencing the love of God in a perceptible manner it is relatively easy to love Him in return. But the question can legitimately be raised: are we loving God for Himself or for what we are receiving from Him?” (FAD, 171)
- “In a ‘dark night’ permitted by God we are not able to find consolation in things less than God; even in the dryness of our prayer, our yearning for Him increases.” (FAD, 172)

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- Next time:
 - The Illuminative Way [Part 1]
 - (pages 179-280; Chapters 9-11)
- Small-Group Discussion Questions:
 - 1. Describe your prayer life? How has it evolved? What leads to a success in prayer time? What helps you to pray?
 - 2. Do you get distracted during prayer? What could you do differently to prevent distraction?
 - 3. Why is it important to avoid the near occasions of sin? What are some things you can do to overcome the temptations to sin?
 - 4. Are you experiencing dryness in your prayer life? Why? What can help to overcome dryness? Are you only seeking spiritual consolations (good feelings) from your prayer time?