

# The Catholic Epistles

# Contents

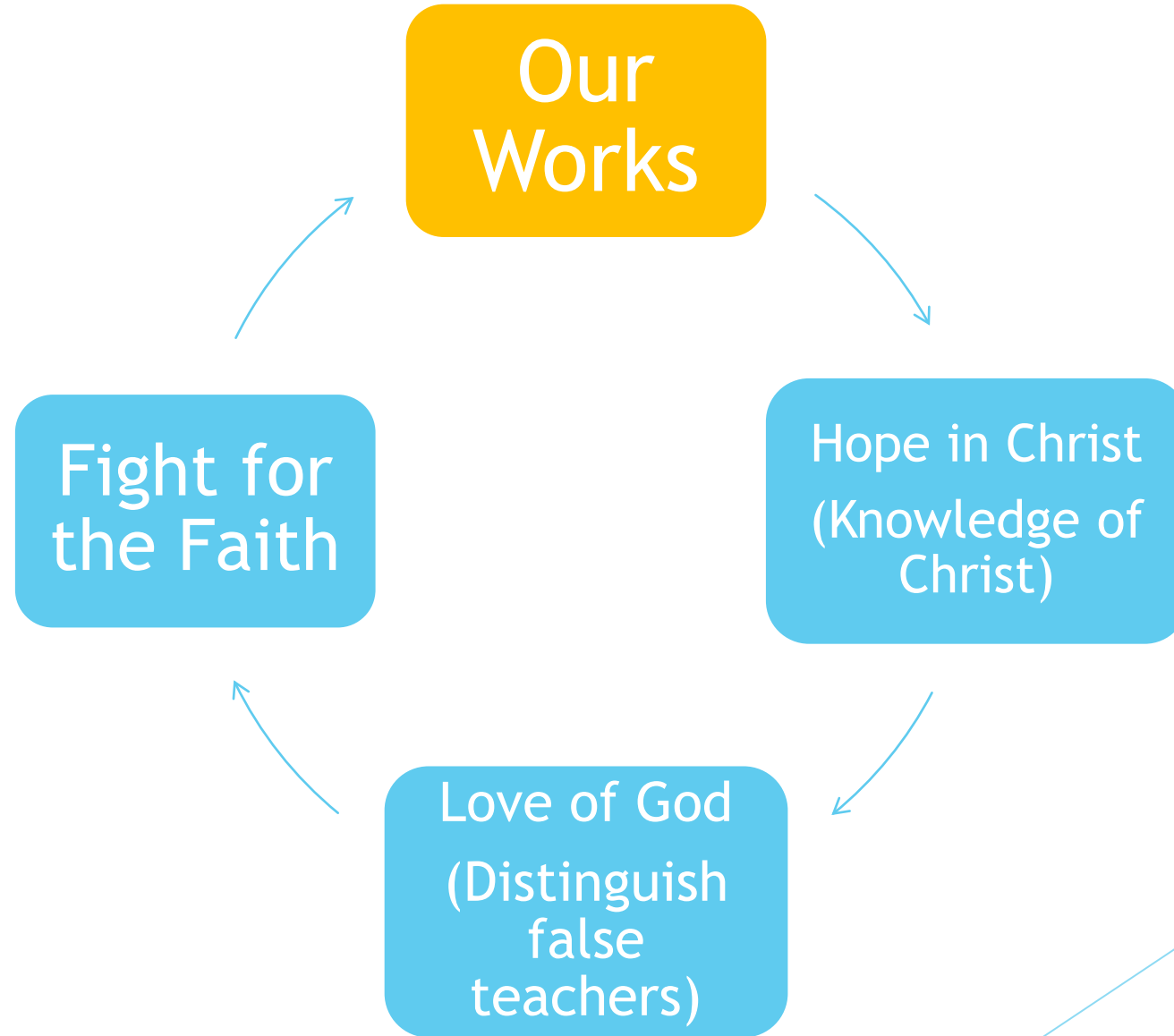
- ▶ James
- ▶ 1 Peter
- ▶ 2 Peter
- ▶ 1 John
- ▶ 2 John
- ▶ 3 John
- ▶ Jude





## 3 Main Objectives

- ▶ Themes/message
- ▶ How it shapes my relationship with Christ and the Church
- ▶ How it shapes my vision of the service



# Epistle of St. James (Apostle of works)

- ▶ *“My brethen, count it all joy when you fall into various trials...”*
- ▶ Trials vs Temptations
- ▶ Formula: Desires → Sin → Death
- ▶ How to prevail?
  - ▶ 3 qualities:
    - ▶ Swift to hear, Slow to speak, Slow to wrath
- ▶ Finally, Doers of the Word, not just hearers
- ▶ Theme: *Harmony of Faith and Works*

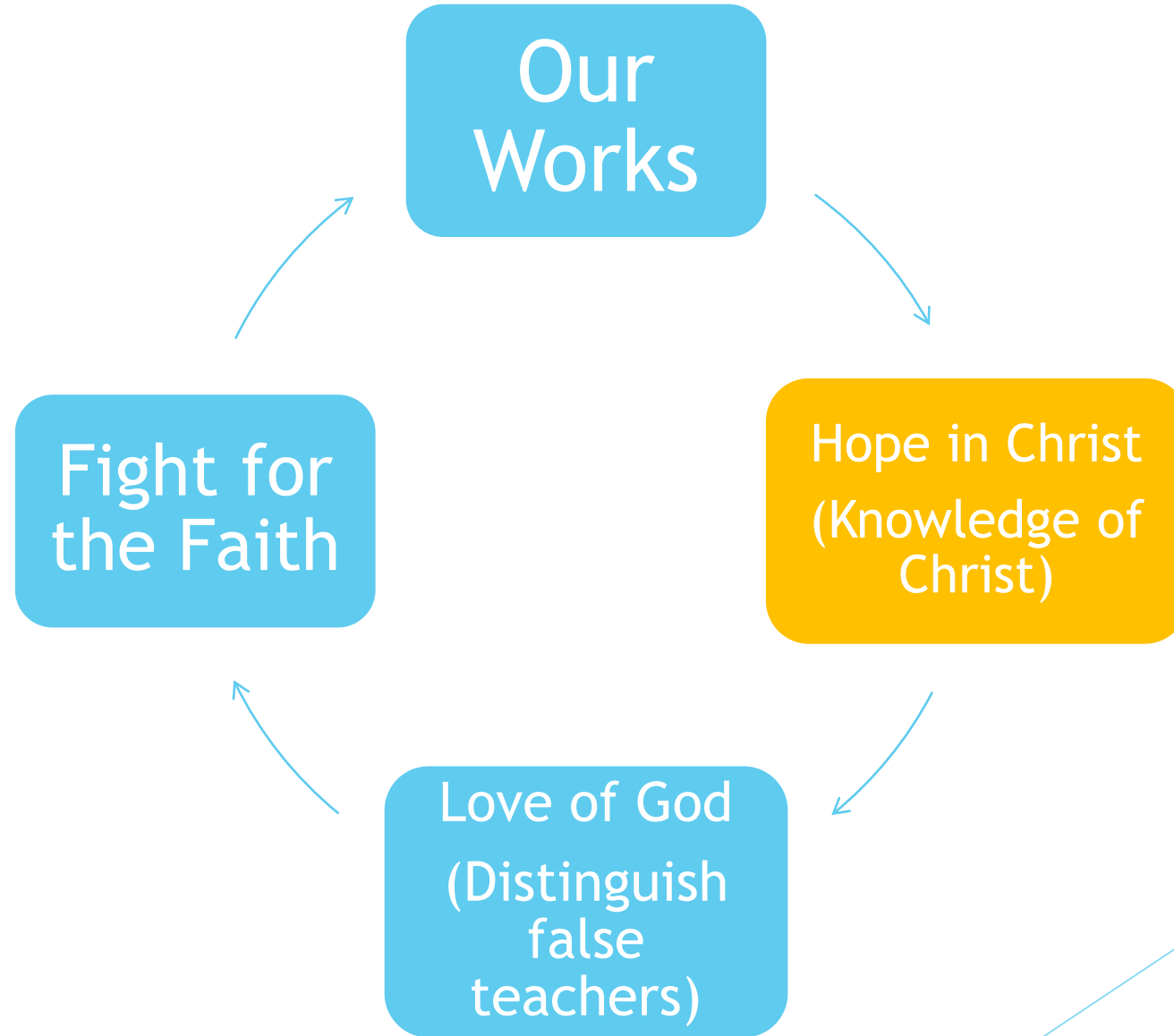
# Applications of Faith + Works

- ▶ Ch. 2: Rich vs Poor - Not to show partiality
  - ▶ Abraham: *“by works faith was made perfect”*
- ▶ Ch. 3: Taming the tongue
  - ▶ Envy + self-seeking → earthly, demonic, sensual
- ▶ Ch. 4: Quarrels in the Church arise from pride and desires
  - ▶ *“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”*
- ▶ Ch. 5: Persevere until the end
  - ▶ Job as an example



Relationship with  
Christ?

Vision of Service?





# 1<sup>st</sup> Epistle of St. Peter (Apostle of Hope)

- ▶ Written around 63-64 AD near the end of St. Peter's life
- ▶ Written to the Christian Diaspora
- ▶ Incorruptible and undefiled inheritance
  - ▶ Grieved by various trials that *“the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ...”*
- ▶ **Theme:** Hope in Christ, and not to conform to former lusts: BE HOLY (ch.1:13-15)
- ▶ Many themes that help us serve Christ faithfully

# Practical Themes revolving around Hope

- ▶ Appreciating our salvation rather than take it for granted
  - ▶ Very precious calling (ch. 2:6-7)
- ▶ Obedience and submission
  - ▶ Submission to government/rulers (ch. 2:13-17)
  - ▶ Submission to Masters (do good and suffer → commendable before God)
  - ▶ Submission between husband and wife (ch. 3)
- ▶ Growing through our sufferings
- ▶ Emulating Christ (suffering and sacrifice)
- ▶ Being faithful in our relationships (family, employer, employee, etc.)
- ▶ Preparing for Judgement without being driven by fear
  - ▶ *“be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things, have fervent love for one another...” ch. 4:7-8*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Epistle of St. Peter

- ▶ “As His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly *great and precious promises*, that through these you may **be partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.”  
*Ch. 1:3-4*

# Fruitful Growth

- ▶ “But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, **add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.”** *ch. 1: 5-7*
- ▶ Chapters 2 & 3: Warning that Many false teachers & prophes will arise
- ▶ *Theme: Increase knowledge of God*

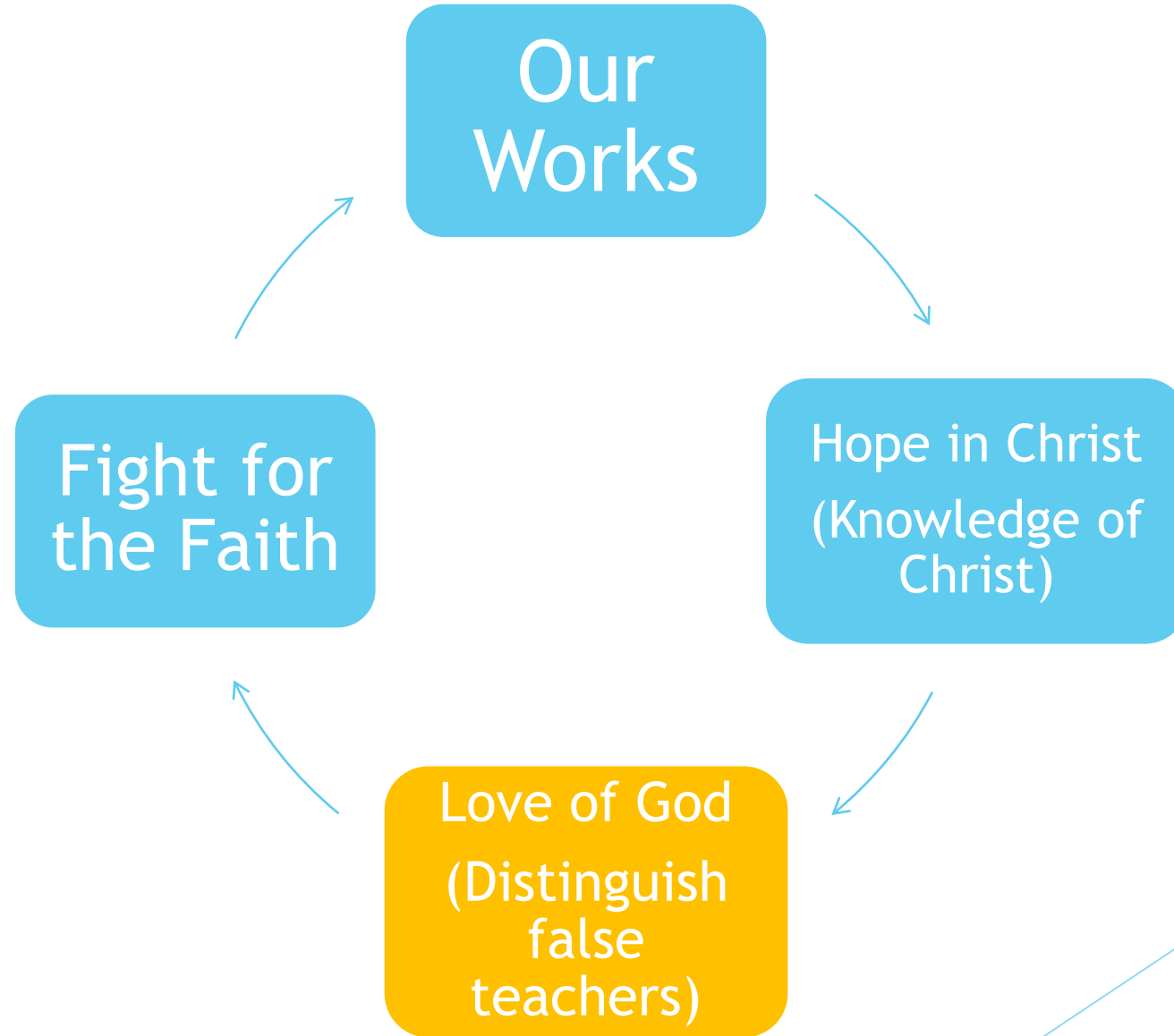
A photograph of a helicopter cockpit at night, showing the instrument panel and a view of city lights through the windshield. The image is partially obscured by a white and blue geometric overlay on the right side.

## Relationship with Christ?

- Message of Hope
- Learn more about God through scriptures

## Vision of Service?

- Deliver the right message to those we serve



# 1<sup>st</sup> Epistle of St. John (Apostle of Love)

- ▶ Written 90 AD
- ▶ Conditions that prompted the writing:
  - ▶ Opposition to Christ: false teachers
  - ▶ Poor spiritual condition
  - ▶ Fighting Agnosticism
- ▶ Purpose
  - ▶ Provide **Evidence** of faith
  - ▶ Describe the life that faith demands
- ▶ **Theme: *Assurance of faith and Eternal Life manifested through God's Love (v.1)***

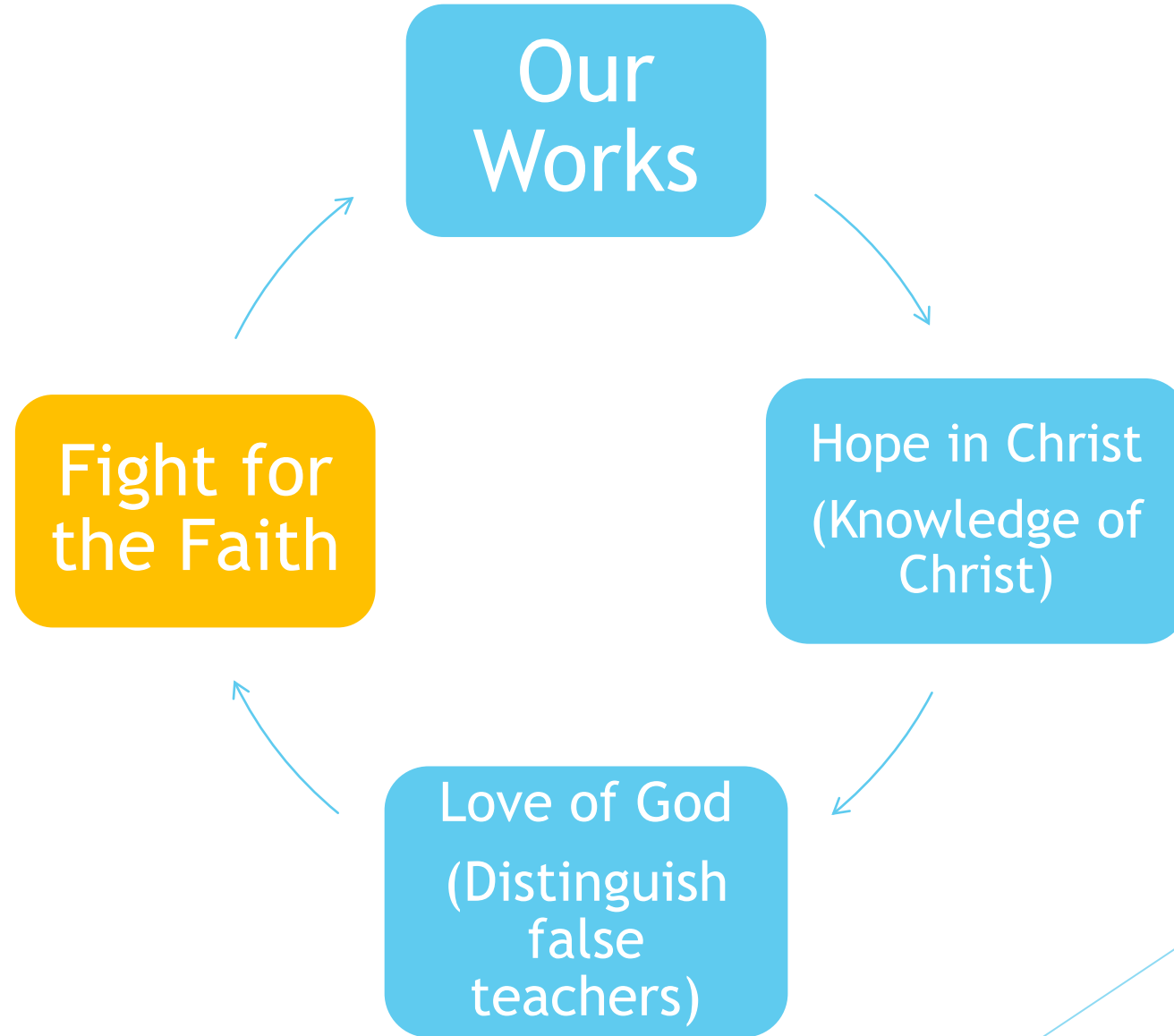
# Life of Faith

- ▶ *“No one has seen God at any time. If we **love** one another, **God abides in us**, and His love has been **perfected in us**.... God is love, and he who abides in love **abides in God**, and God in **him**.” 1 John 4:12-16*
- ▶ **Vision of Christ:** Jesus Christ is the Son of God, took flesh, died and saved us
- ▶ **Vision of Service:** Deliver a message of LOVE, deliver the upright faith in a world of false *Antichrist* Teachers



## 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Epistles of St. John

- ▶ More warnings about false teachers
  - ▶ *“For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”*
- ▶ Transgress → No unity with God
- ▶ Imitate what is good!
  - ▶ *“Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.” 3 John 1:11*



# Epistle of St. Jude (Apostle of Faith)

- ▶ Jude, brother of James
- ▶ Written around 70 AD to “dear friends”
  - ▶ Scholars think it was written to some Jewish Christians he met
- ▶ **Purpose: Expose false teachers**
- ▶ The heresy: The Grace of God = freedom to commit sin & immoral acts
  - ▶ They defile the flesh, reject authority, speak evil of dignitaries
- ▶ Expose them as godless men, protect the flock from falling prey to these teachings
- ▶ **Theme: Urge members of the church to fight for the faith entrusted to them**

# Lessons to take

- ▶ In service: Respect the hierarchy, be obedient to higher authority
- ▶ Deliver the upright faith to those we serve
  - ▶ Pass down the TRUE faith to the next generation
  - ▶ Warn against false teachings
  - ▶ Save members who strayed away: “full out of the fire”

A hand is shown from the bottom left, holding a glowing, golden orb. The background is a soft, out-of-focus sunset or sunrise with warm orange and yellow tones. The overall composition is split into a white area on the right containing text and a blue geometric pattern on the far right.

# Our Responsibility

- ▶ L.I.T.
- ▶ Learn the True Christian Faith
- ▶ Increase our knowledge of God
- ▶ Teach and Pass down the Gospel

