

MESSAGES

NOT TO BE MISSED!

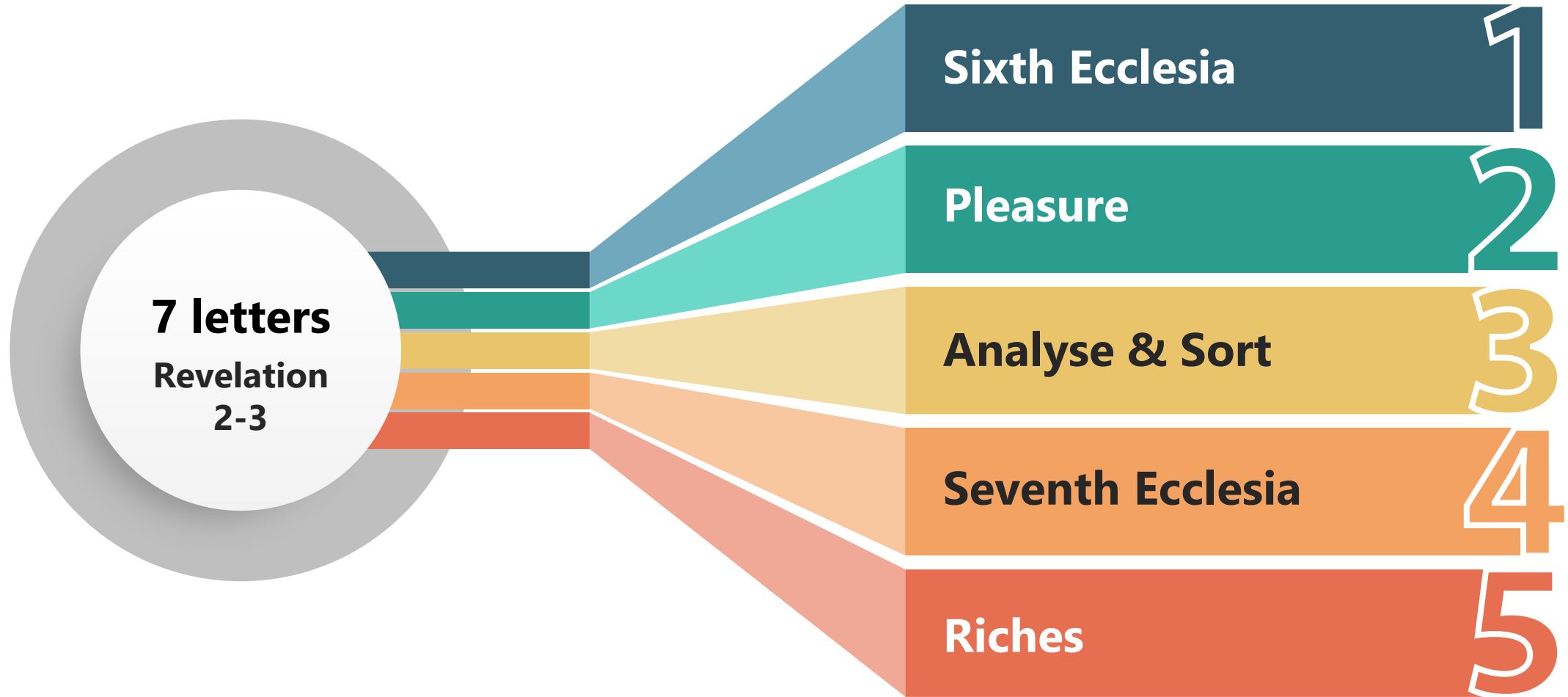
7 LETTERS TO THE SEVEN ECCLESIAS



Class 5: Pleasure & Riches

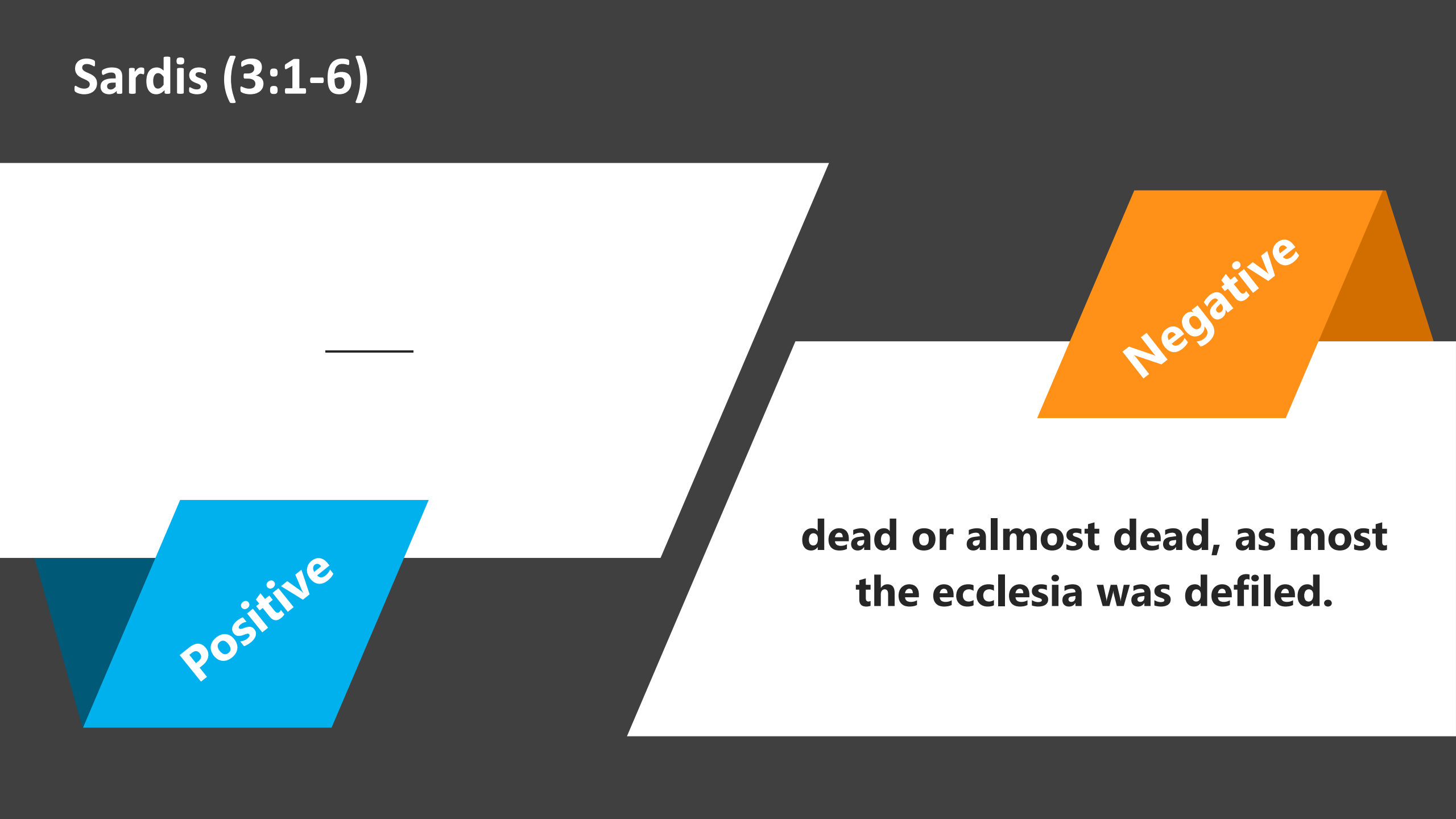


AGENDA



MESSAGES NOT TO BE MISSED!

Sardis (3:1-6)



Positive

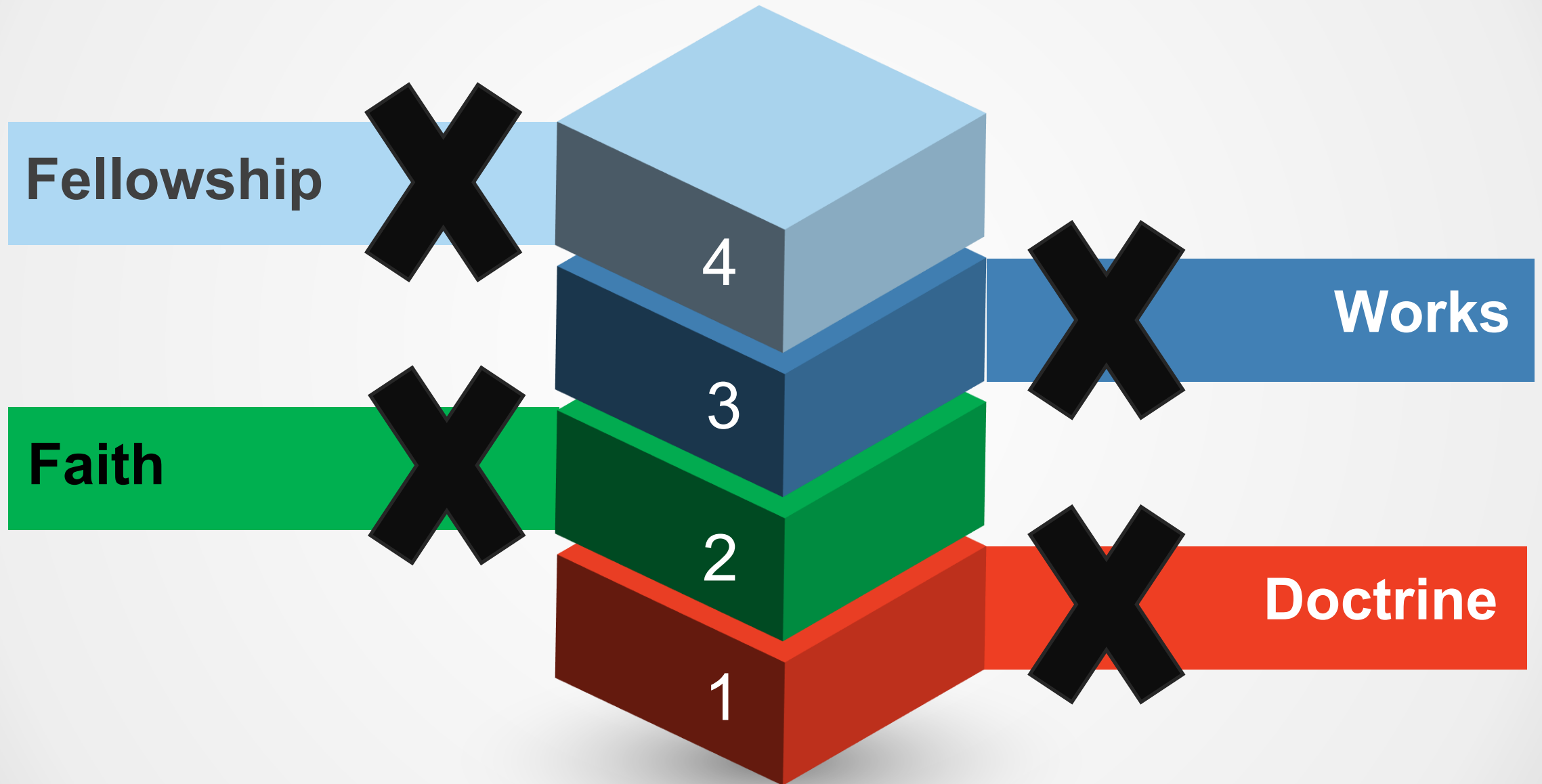
Negative

**dead or almost dead, as most
the ecclesia was defiled.**



A house
that from afar looks good
to others, on a post-card it looks like
a house that is good outside and inside.
But it is pretty much not operational,
the water, the electrical and the hvac
are not working. The small basement
apartment is the only room that looks great.

Building Blocks of the Ecclesia - Sardis



SORTING THE ECCLESIAS (i.e. positive to negative)

1

Smyrna

1. Did they receive any condemnation?

2

Philadelphia

2. Are there any concerns?

3

Pergamos

3. Did they receive any commendation?

4

Thyatira

4. Christ's action against the whole ecclesia

5. Ecclesia no longer capable of recovering apostates

5

Ephesus

6

Sardis Laodicea

7

SORTING THE ECCLESIAS (i.e. positive to negative)

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Sardis

7

Laodicea

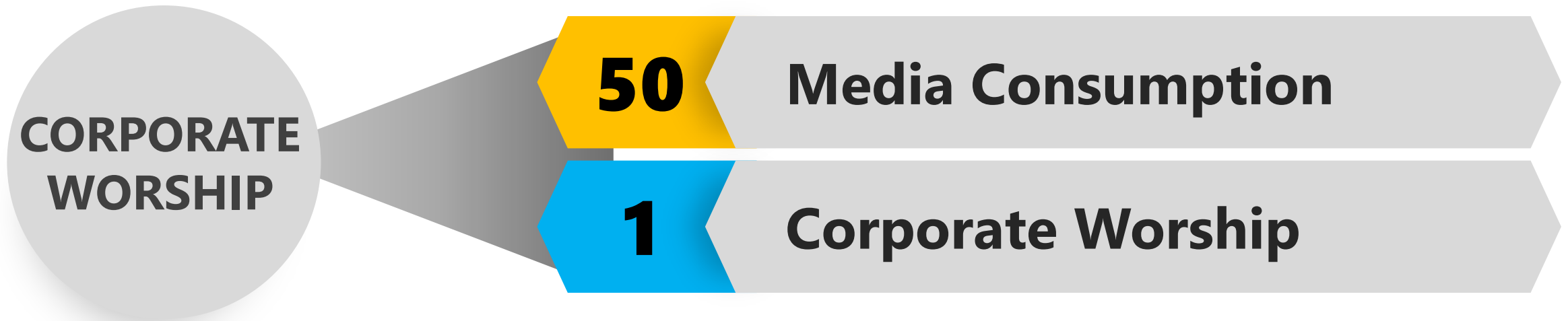
“In name only”

After Constantine...

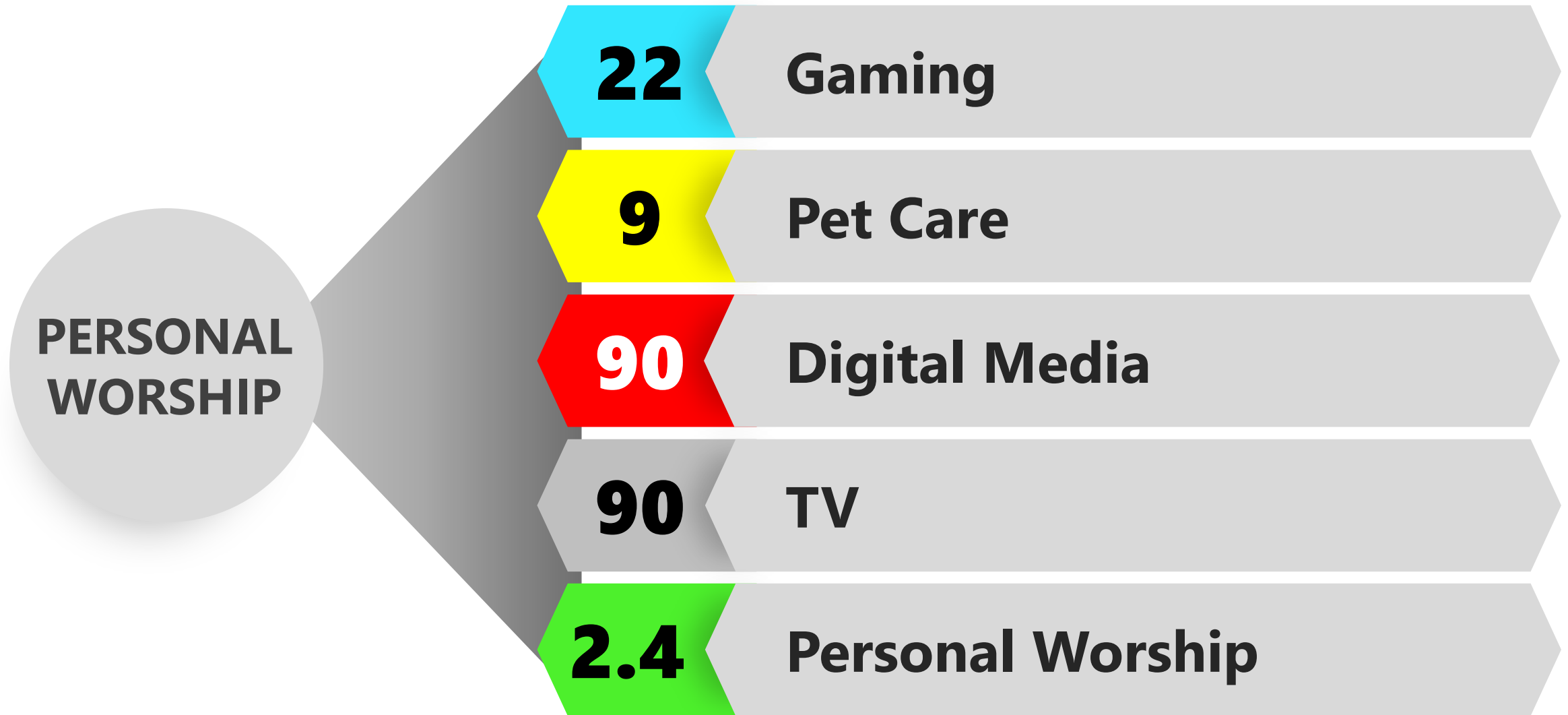
“The Christian name had become a passport to political, military, and social promotion. As a result, thousands upon thousands joined the Church. Unfortunately many of these were Christians **in name only...What the Church gained in quantity it lost in quality. Constantine’s edict of 313 opened the floodgates through which **a mighty stream of corruption** poured into the Church.”**

(Kuiper pg 27)

PLEASURE (hours per week)



PLEASURE (minutes per day)



Laodicea (3:14-22)



Positive

Negative

**wretched, miserable, poor,
blind, naked, self-deceived!**

More Dangerous than Persecution?

Gibbon remarks on a period between the persecution of Valerina and Diocletian in the 3rd century before Constantine and he says...

“the disciples of Christ passed above 40 years in a state of prosperity far more dangerous to their virtue than the severest trials of persecution”
(Gibbon: Abridged Chapter XI, pg 157)

More Dangerous than Persecution?

The whole life of the people was saturated with heathen ideas. When Constantine the Great gave the Christians freedom of religion, and when he **showered favors** upon the Church, thousands upon thousands of heathen flocked into the church without having to become true Christians. **A flood of worldliness** engulfed the Church...They took their heathen ideas along with them into the Church.” (Kuiper pg 44)

The story of Paul of Samosata

“may serve to illustrate the condition and character of the times”

“The wealth of the prelate...was neither derived from the inheritance of fathers nor acquired by the arts of honest industry”

“the service of the church was a very lucrative profession”

“extorted frequented contributions”

(Gibbon: Abridged Chapter XI, pg 157)

The story of Paul of Samosata

“converted to his own use a considerable part of the public revenue”

“By his pride and luxury the Christian religion was rendered odious in the eyes of the Gentiles”

Operated more like a “civil magistrate than to the humility of a primitive bishop”

(Gibbon: Abridged Chapter XI, pg 157)

The story of Paul of Samosata

“Against those that resisted his power or refused to flatter his vanity, the prelate of Antioch was arrogant, rigid, and inexorable”

“lavished his treasures of the church on his dependent clergy”

“two young and beautiful women as the constant companions of his leisure moments”

(Gibbon: Abridged Chapter XI, pg 157)

Laodicea (3:14-22)

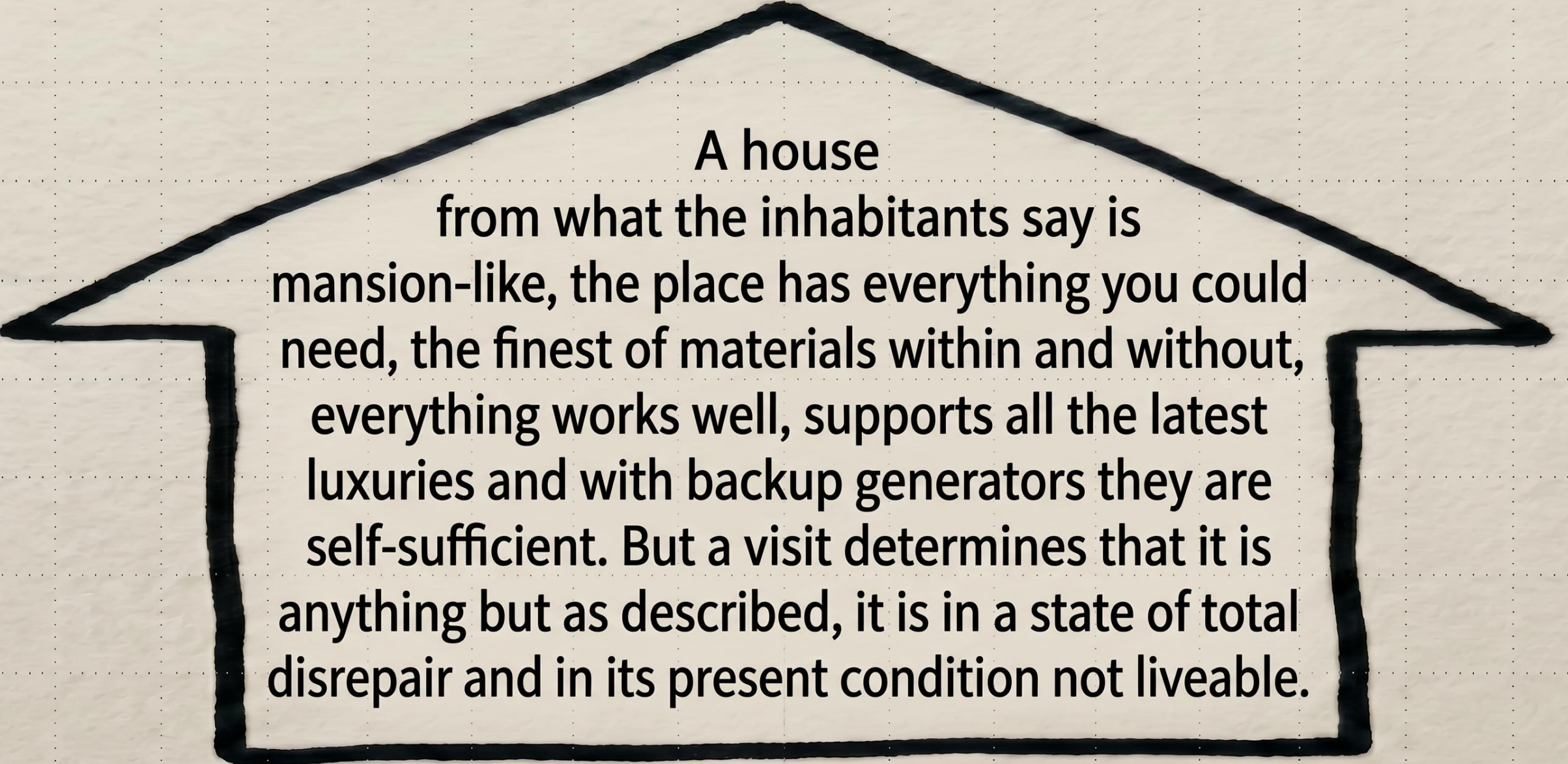


Positive



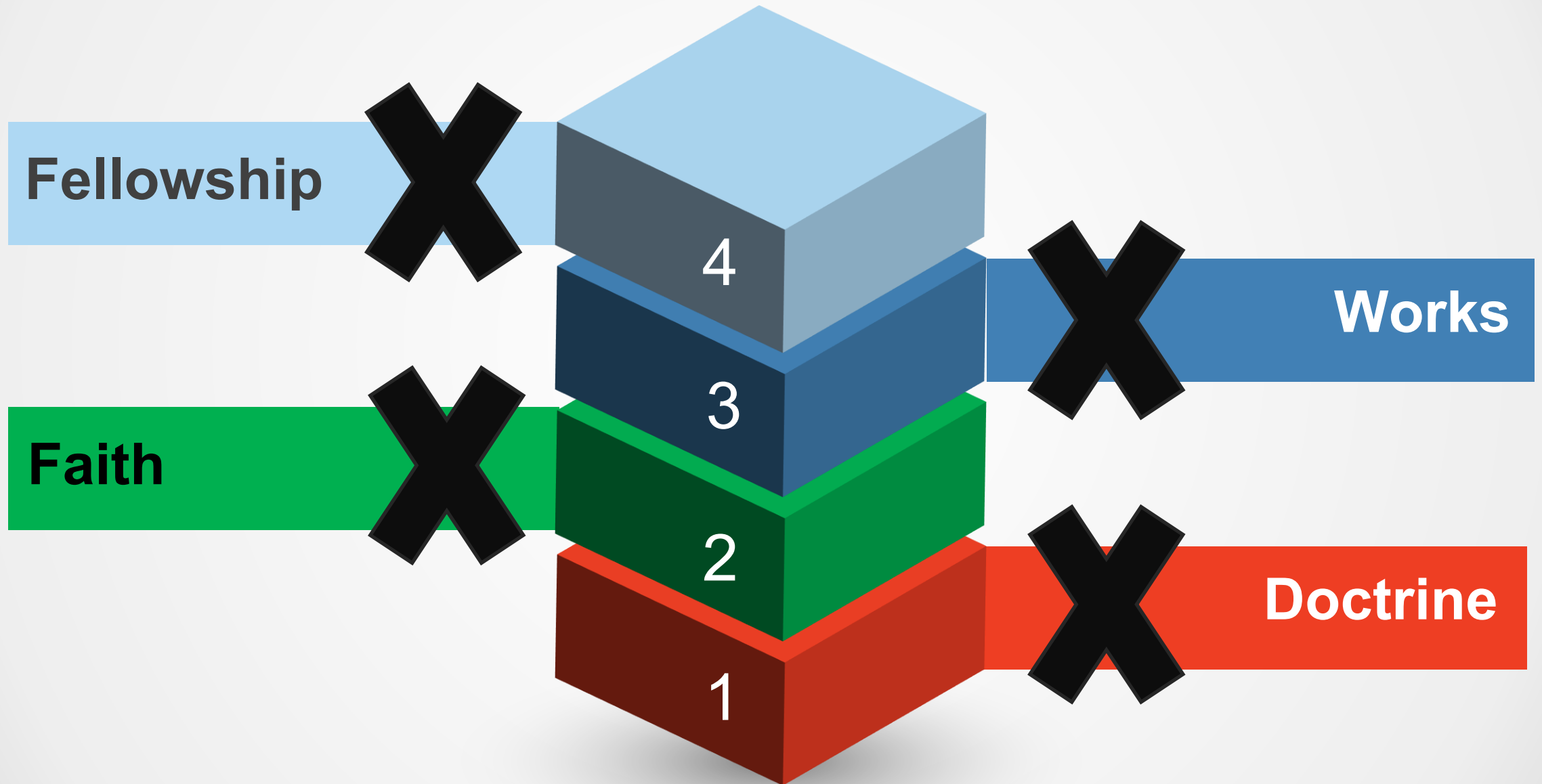
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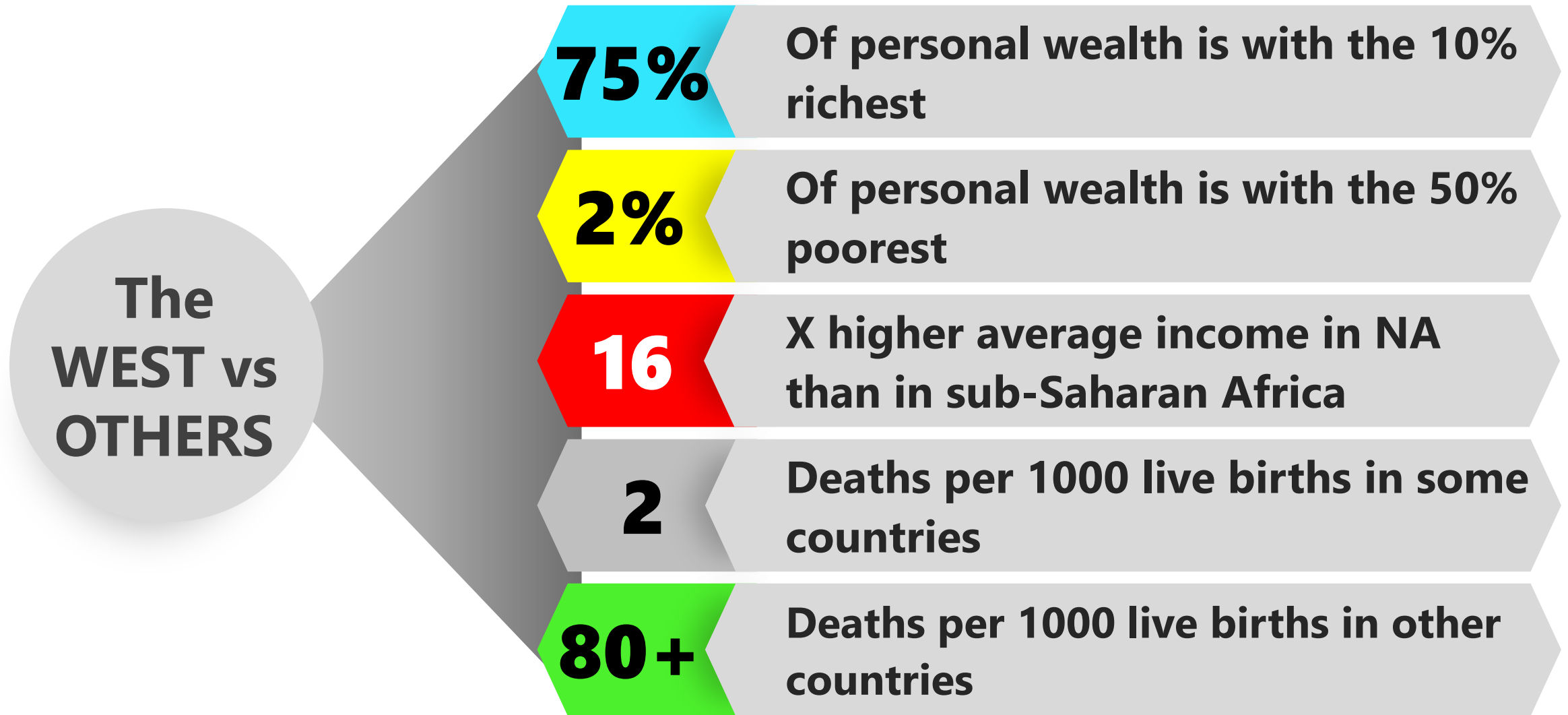


A house
from what the inhabitants say is
mansion-like, the place has everything you could
need, the finest of materials within and without,
everything works well, supports all the latest
luxuries and with backup generators they are
self-sufficient. But a visit determines that it is
anything but as described, it is in a state of total
disrepair and in its present condition not liveable.

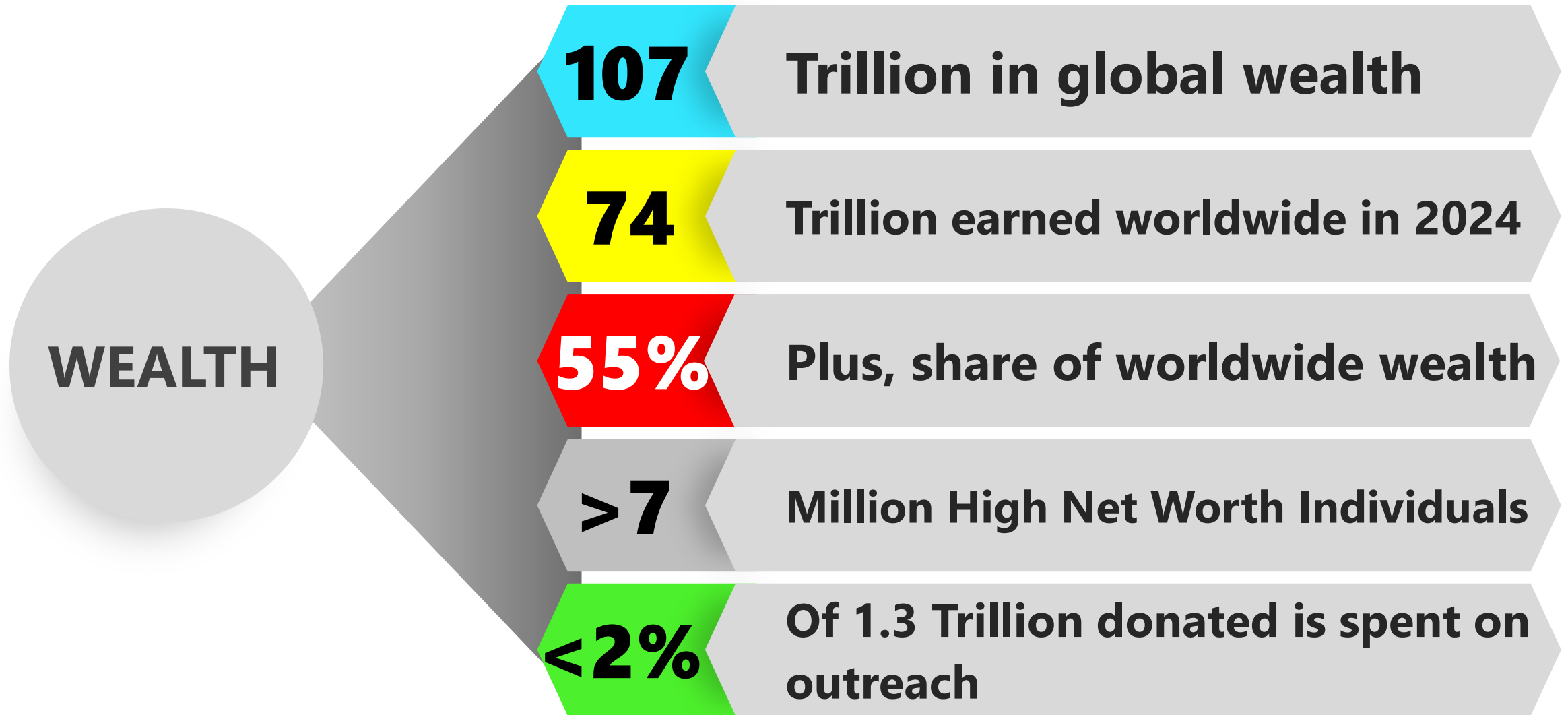
Building Blocks of the Ecclesia - Laodicea



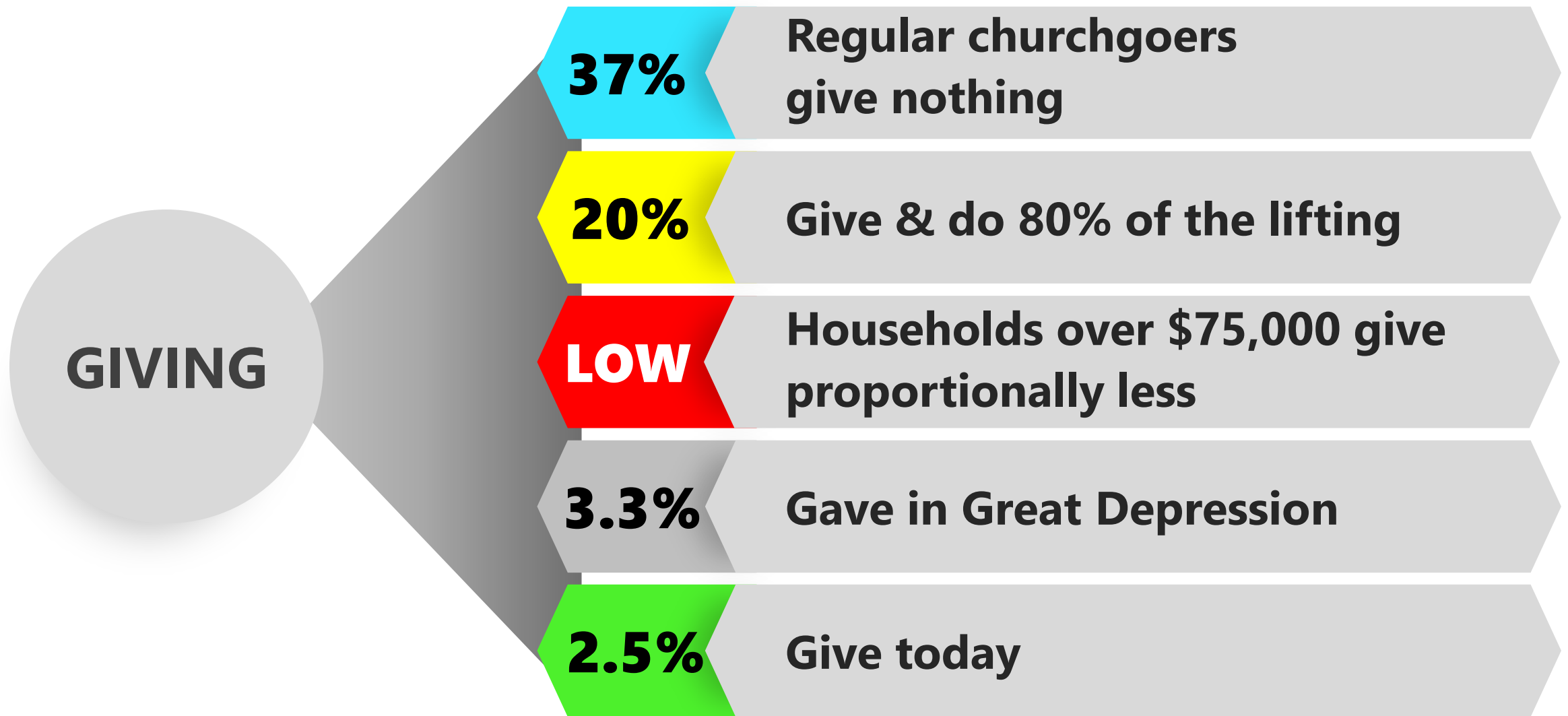
RICHES – WORLD



RICHES – CHRISTIANITY



RICHES - CHRISTIANITY



MESSAGES NOT TO BE MISSED

SARDIS

- 1. As an ecclesia we are considered dead if we are not serving, working and producing fruit in the truth, but rather living in pleasure, pursuing worldly activities.**

MESSAGES NOT TO BE MISSED

LAODICEA

- 1. Riches and self-reliance in this life can fool us to the point of not recognizing that we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.**

NAME THE ECCLESIA

