

How to Enter the Kingdom of God

— The Gospel Luke 18:15-30 —





THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY FOR ALL PEOPLE

“The Captain”

— Leonard Cohen —



**What I mean to say is
that there are many
things about Chris-
tianity that attract me.
The figure of Jesus is
extremely attractive.
It's difficult not to fall
in love with that
person.**

— Leonard Cohen —



How to Enter the Kingdom of God

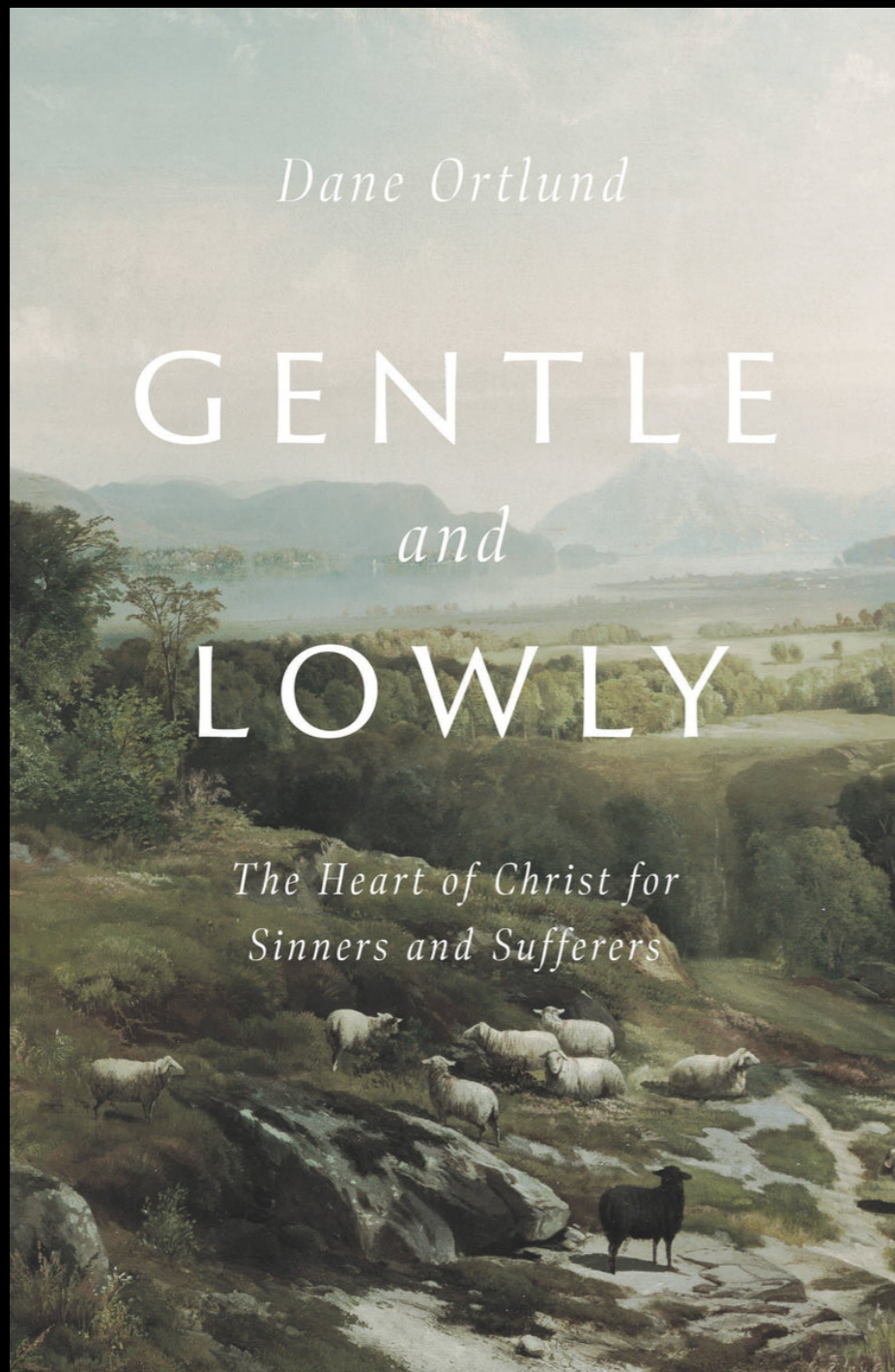
— The Gospel Luke 18:15-30 —





The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

15 Now they were bringing even infants to Jesus that he might touch them.

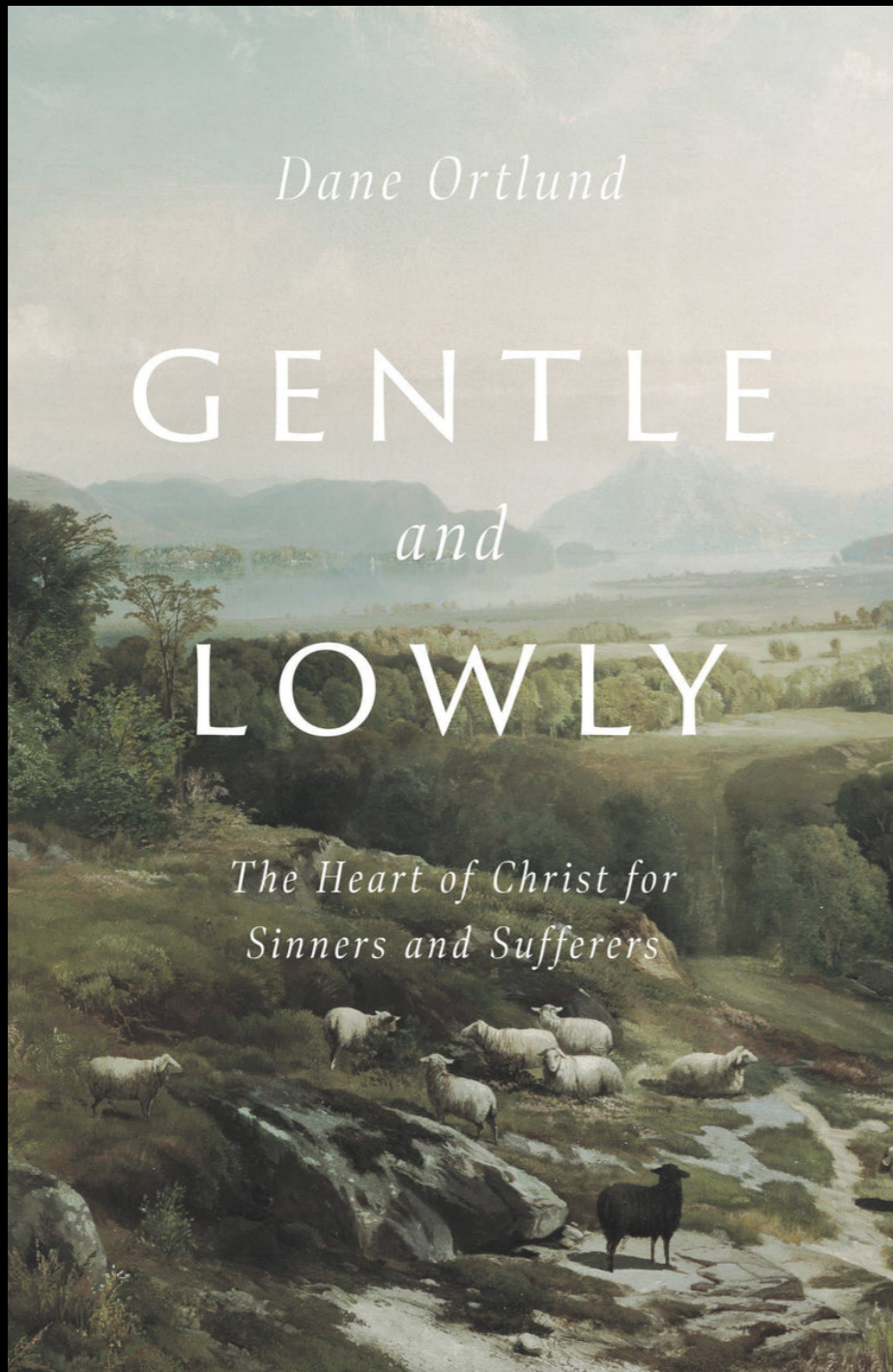


For all his resplendent glory and dazzling holiness, his supreme uniqueness and otherness, no one in human history has ever been more approachable than Jesus Christ.

Dane Ortlund

GENTLE
and
LOWLY

*The Heart of Christ for
Sinners and Sufferers*



**...it is impossible
for the affectionate
heart of Christ to
be over-celebrated,
made too much of,
exaggerated.**

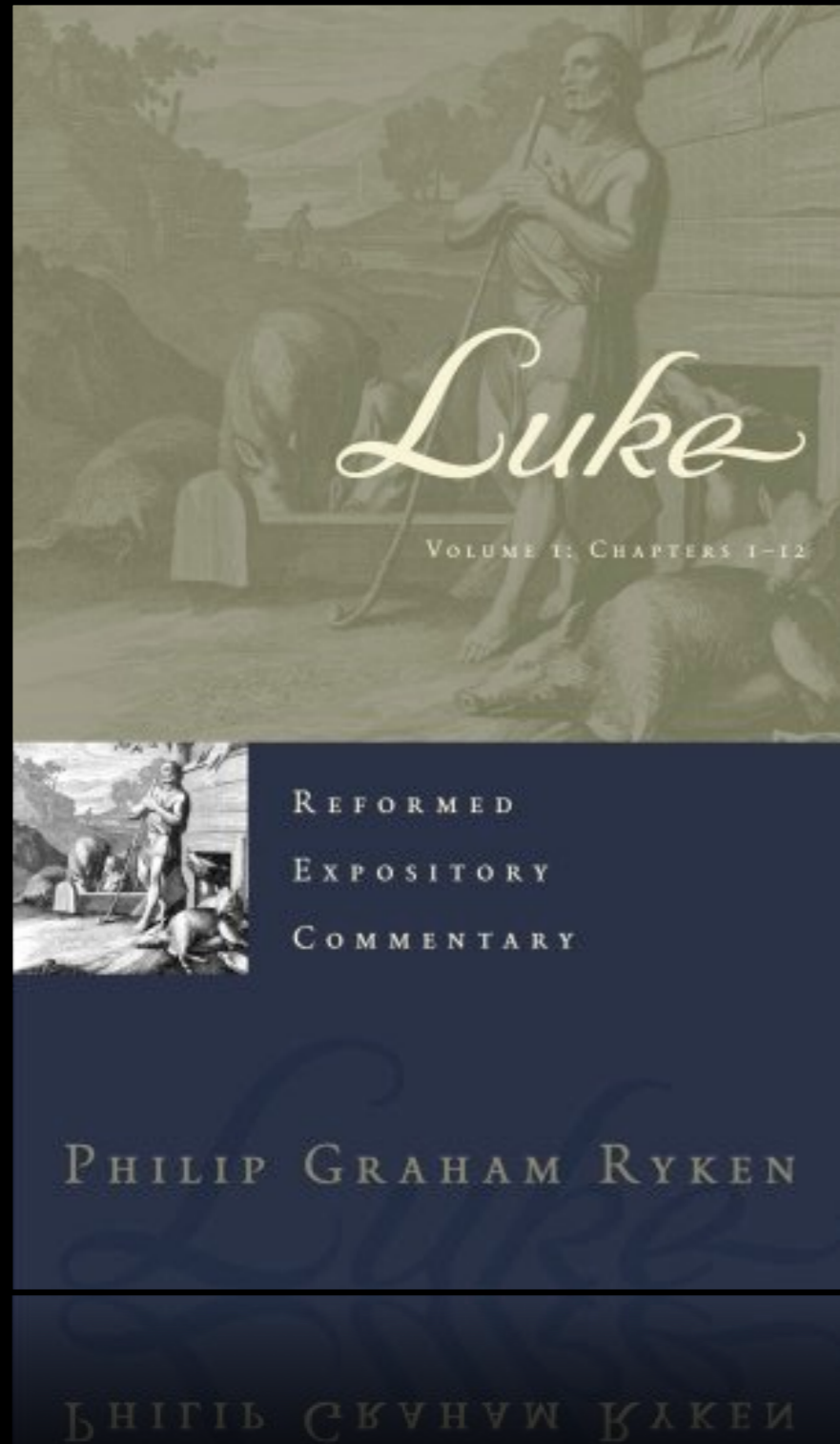
The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

15 Now they were bringing even infants to Jesus that he might touch them. **And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.**

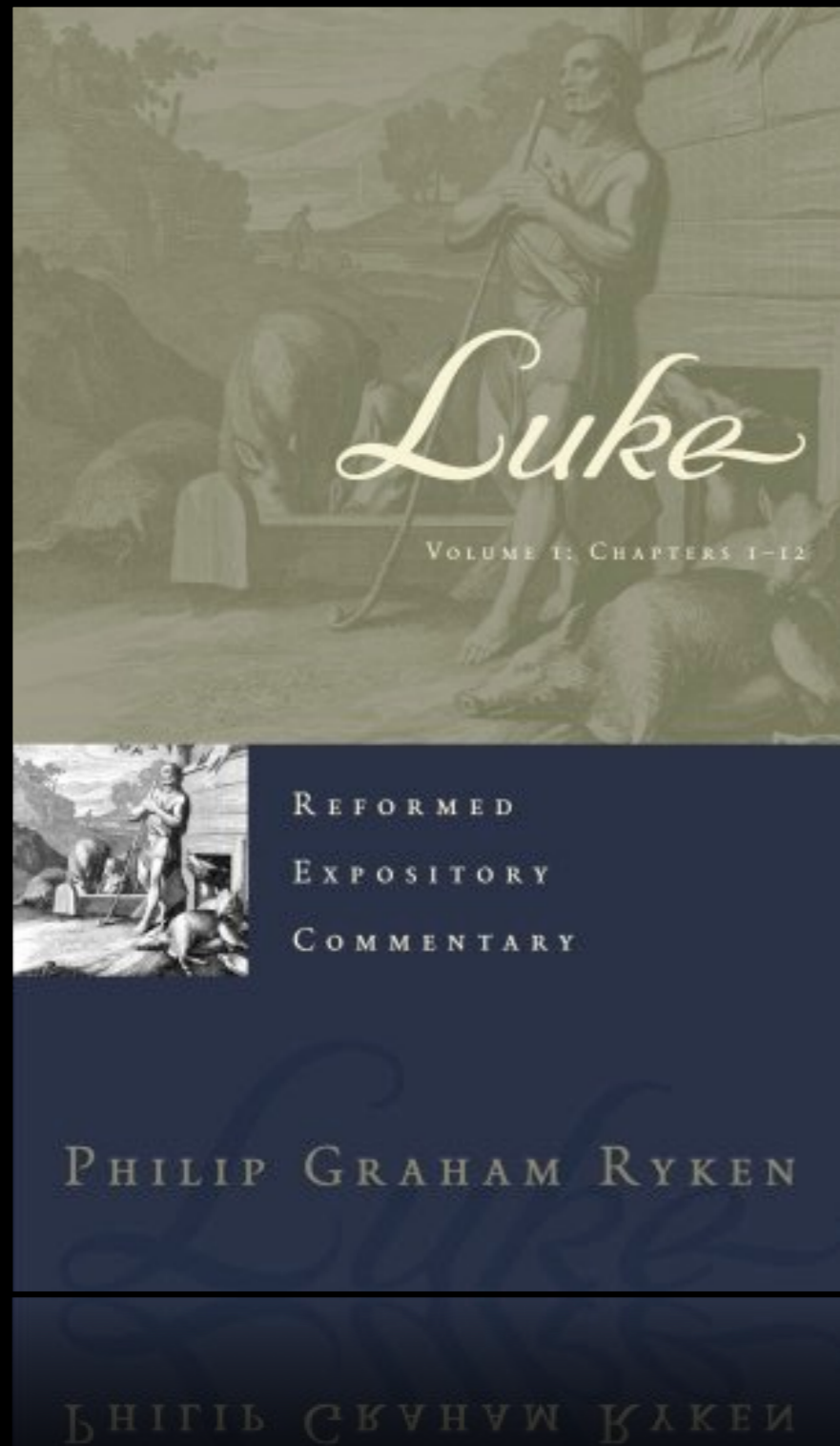


**When Jesus saw it,
he was indignant.**

— The Gospel of Mark 10:13 —



At best they were protecting Jesus from what they deemed as interruptions or pressure. At worst they saw the situation as a waste of time. But whatever their motivation, Jesus used their intervention to give some of his most penetrating teaching and most often quoted words.



He did not talk about his love for children (as beautiful as that was) or about parenting or about blessings or even about the spirituality of children.... Rather, he spoke about the kind of people who enter the kingdom of God.

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

16 But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.”



SEEK FIRST

How the Kingdom of God
Changes Everything

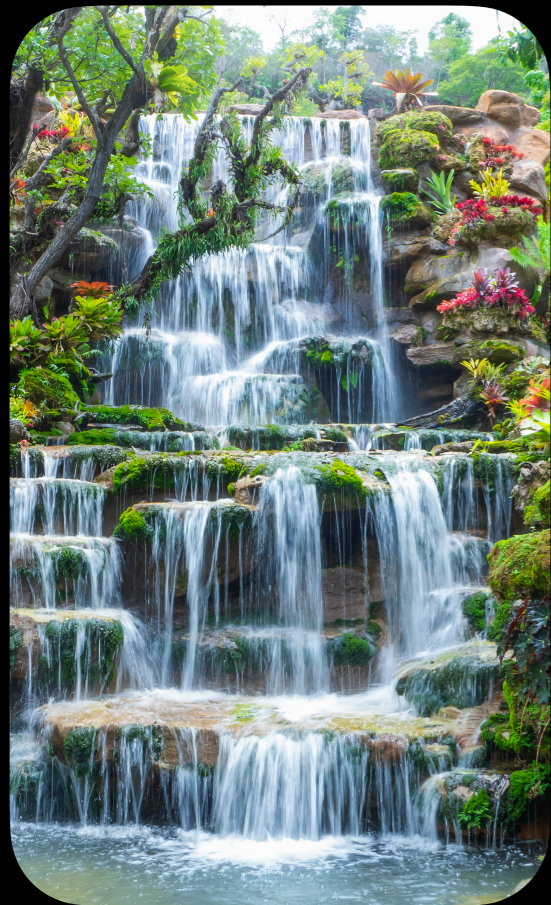
JEREMY TREAT

When Jesus spoke of the kingdom of God, he was not simply discussing a doctrine; he was evoking an entire story. It's the story of God making his broken creation into a beautiful kingdom.

JEREMY TREAT

— The Four Part Story of the World —

Part 1



Creation

Part 2



Rebellion

Part 3



Redemption

Part 4



Restoration

“shalom” = flourishing, peace”



SEEK FIRST

How the Kingdom of God
Changes Everything

JEREMY TREAT

Salvation is aimed at recovering Eden and the Edenic vision of God's reign over all the earth. The kingdom is about God's reign over every nook and cranny of this planet.

JEREMY TREAT



“the renewal of all things”

— The Gospel of Matthew 19:28 —

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

16 But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God....”

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

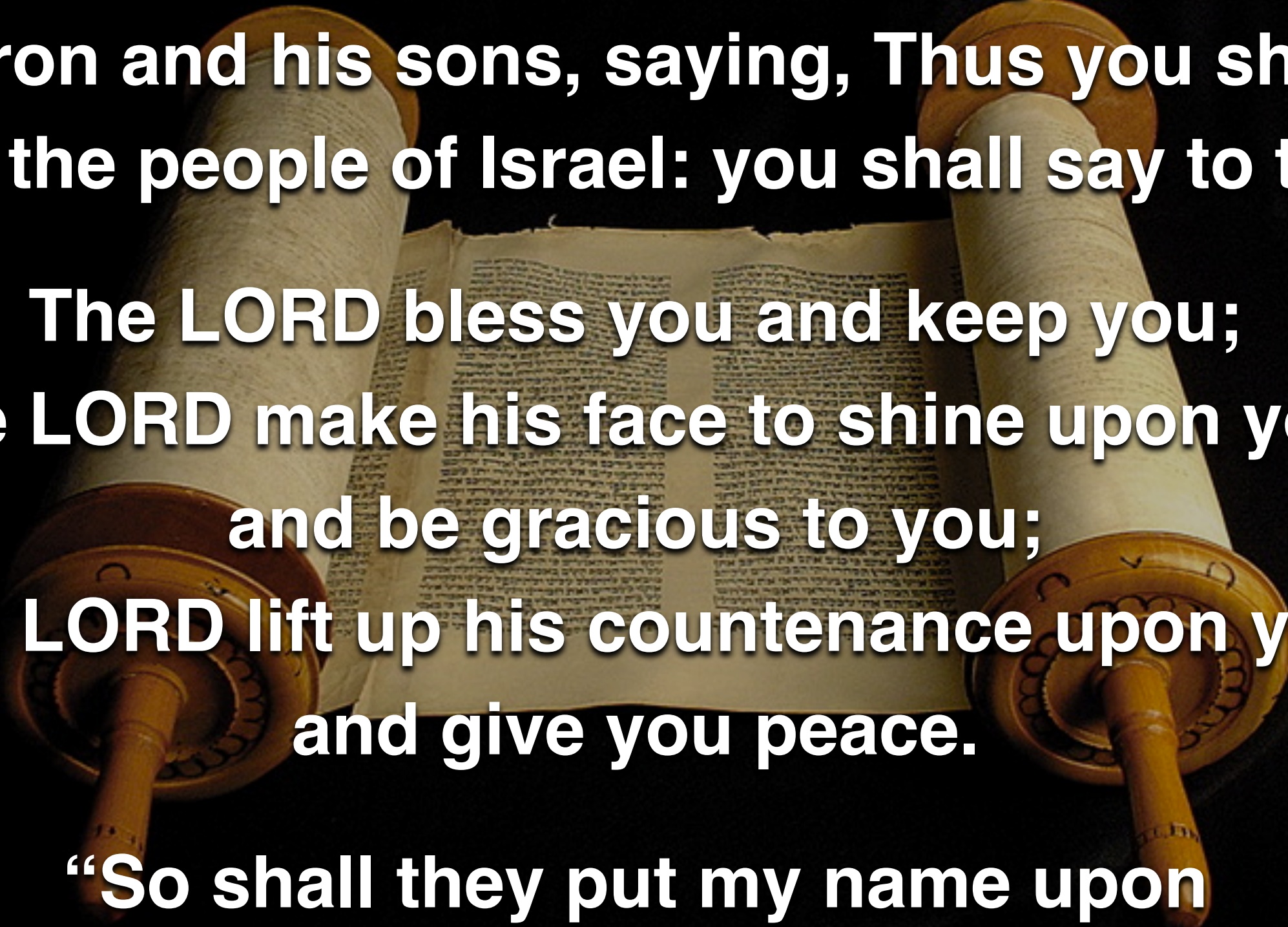
17 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

17 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.

[And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.]

- Mark 10:16



The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,

**The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace.**

**“So shall they put my name upon
the people of Israel, and I will bless them.”**



Helpless Dependency



Note the Structure

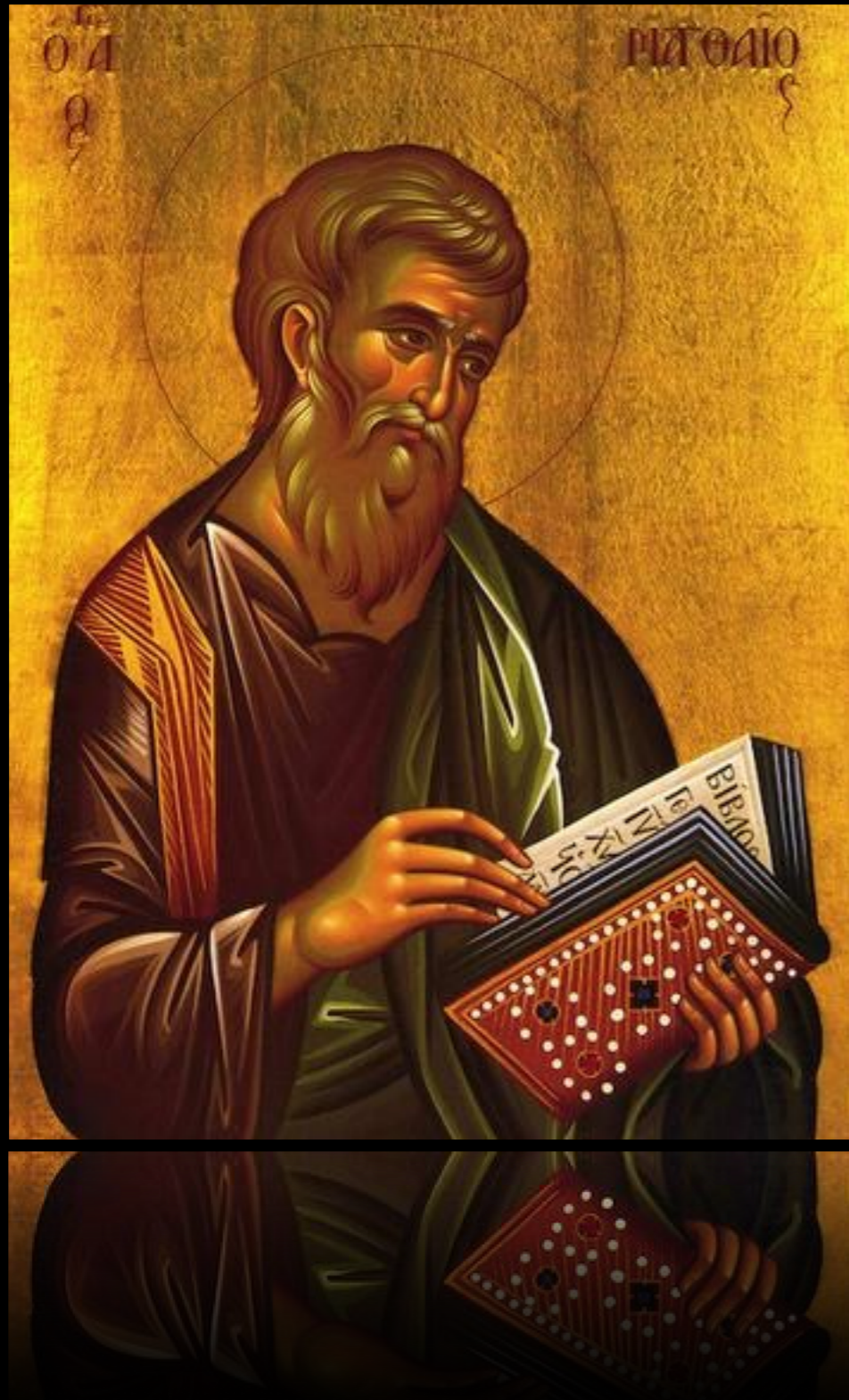
18:9-14 - **The Pharisee** (who trusted in his righteousness)

18:15-17 - **Whoever does not receive the kingdom like a child shall not enter it**

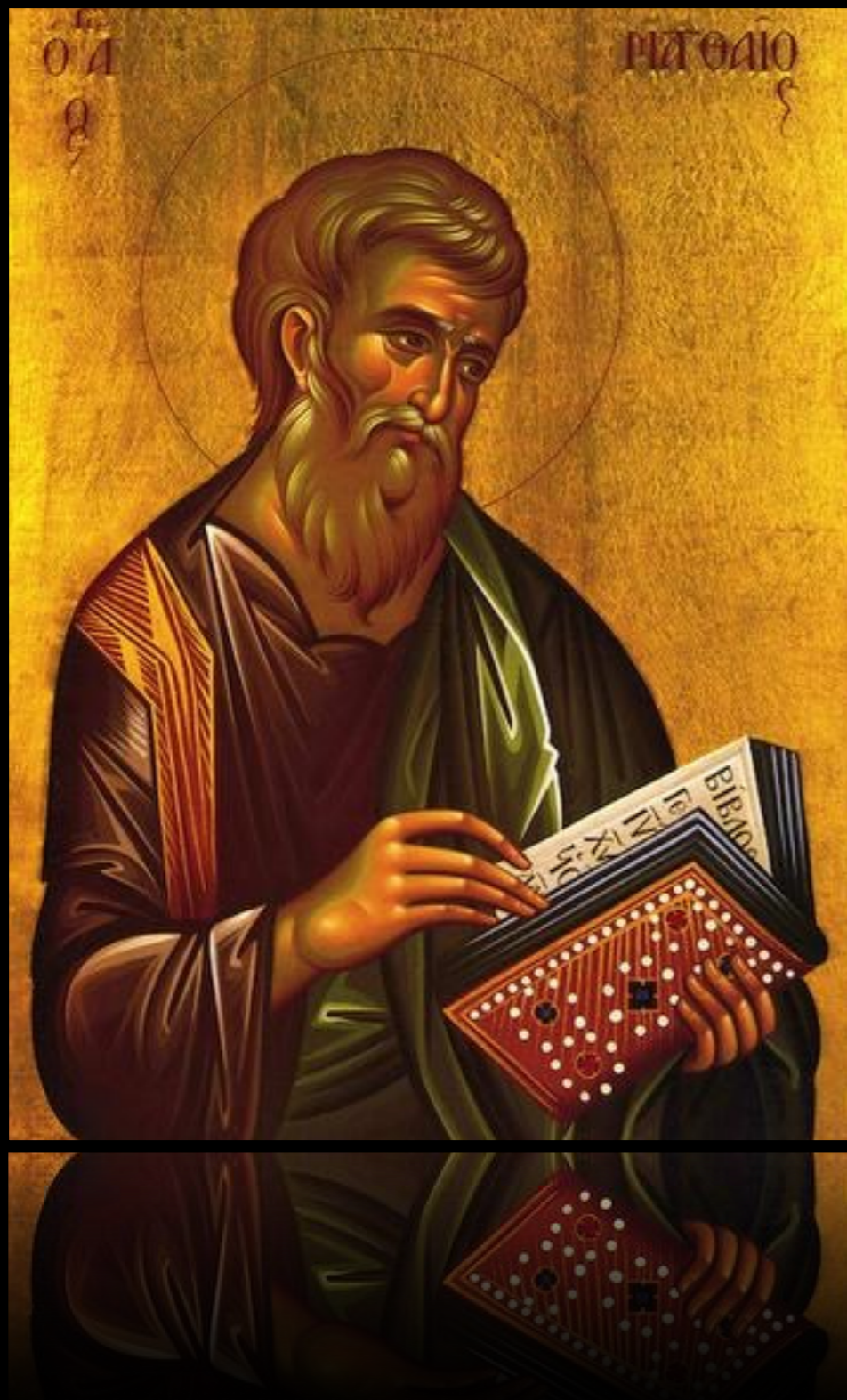
18:18-30 - **The Ruler** (who trusted in his righteousness)

Key Thought

In contrast to those who trust in their own righteousness, children and even infants are helpless, dependent on others.



At the time the disciples came to Jesus, saying “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said,



**“Truly, I say to you,
unless you turn and
become like children,
you will never enter the
kingdom of heaven.**

**Whoever humbles
himself like this child
is the greatest in the
kingdom of heaven.”**

— The Gospel of Matthew 18:1-4 —

Key Thought

When it comes to entering the kingdom of God, children do not need to become more like adults, but adults need to become more like children: helpless and humbly dependent upon another.

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

17 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.

18 And a ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

19 And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

19 And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”

What are the implications of this truth for understanding the identity of Jesus?



**Can any of you
prove me guilty of sin?**

Jesus of Nazareth

— The Gospel of John 8:46 —

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

19 And Jesus said to him, **“Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”**

What are the implications of this truth for understanding the identity of Jesus?

Maybe Jesus is trying to get this ruler to reflect on the implications of his truth for himself.



**Surely there is not a righteous man on
earth who does good and never sins.**

— Ecclesiastes 7:20 —

**Can the Ethiopian change his skin
or the leopard his spots?**

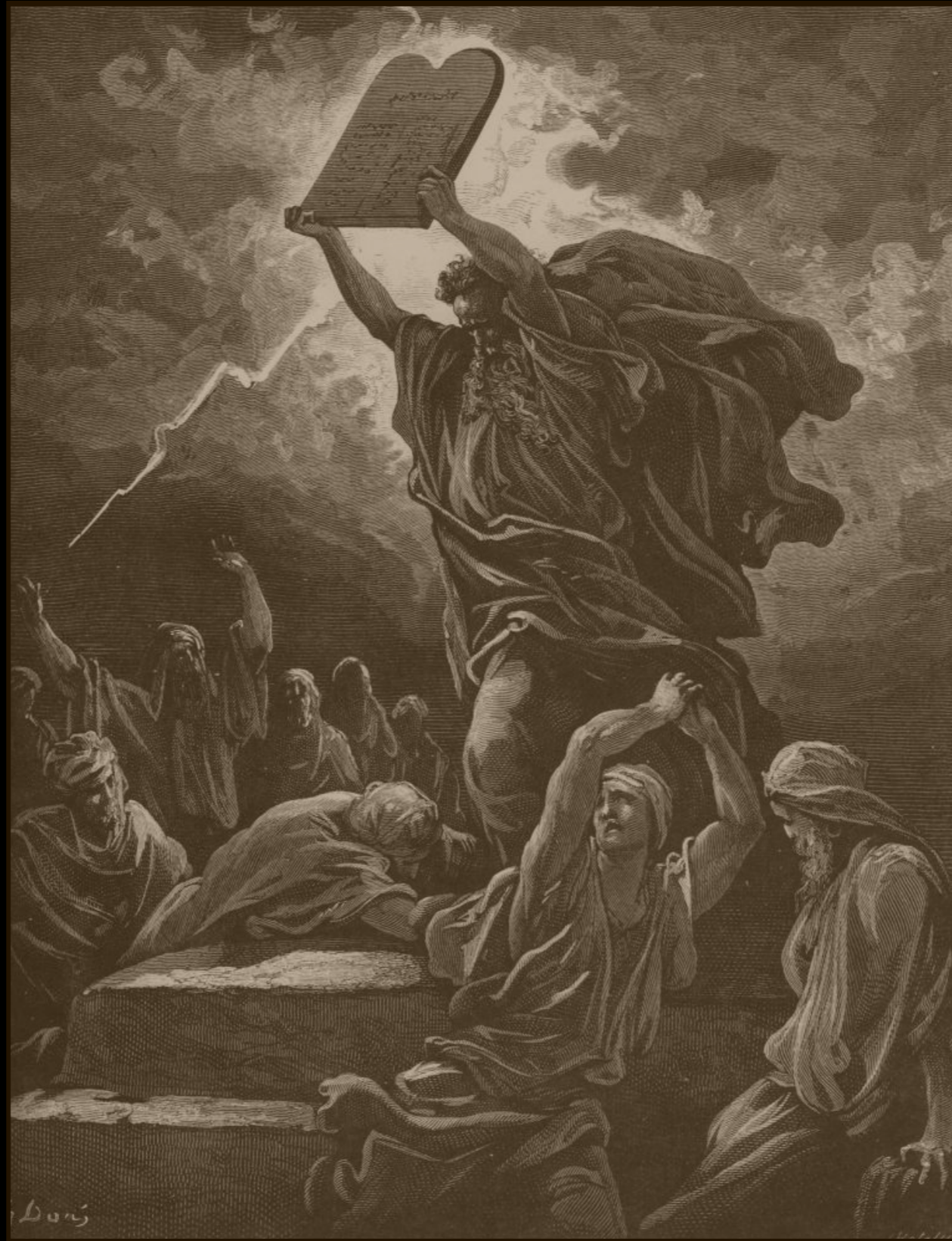
**Then also you can do good
who are accustomed to do evil.**

— Jeremiah 13:23 —



The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

19 “You know **the commandments**: Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.”



— The Commandments —



“Woe to me!” I cried.

“I am ruined!

**For I am a man of
unclean lips, and I
live among a people
of unclean lips....**

— Isaiah 6:5 —

**Wretched man that
I am! Who will
deliver me from
this body of death?
Thanks be to God
who delivers me
through Jesus
Christ our Lord!**

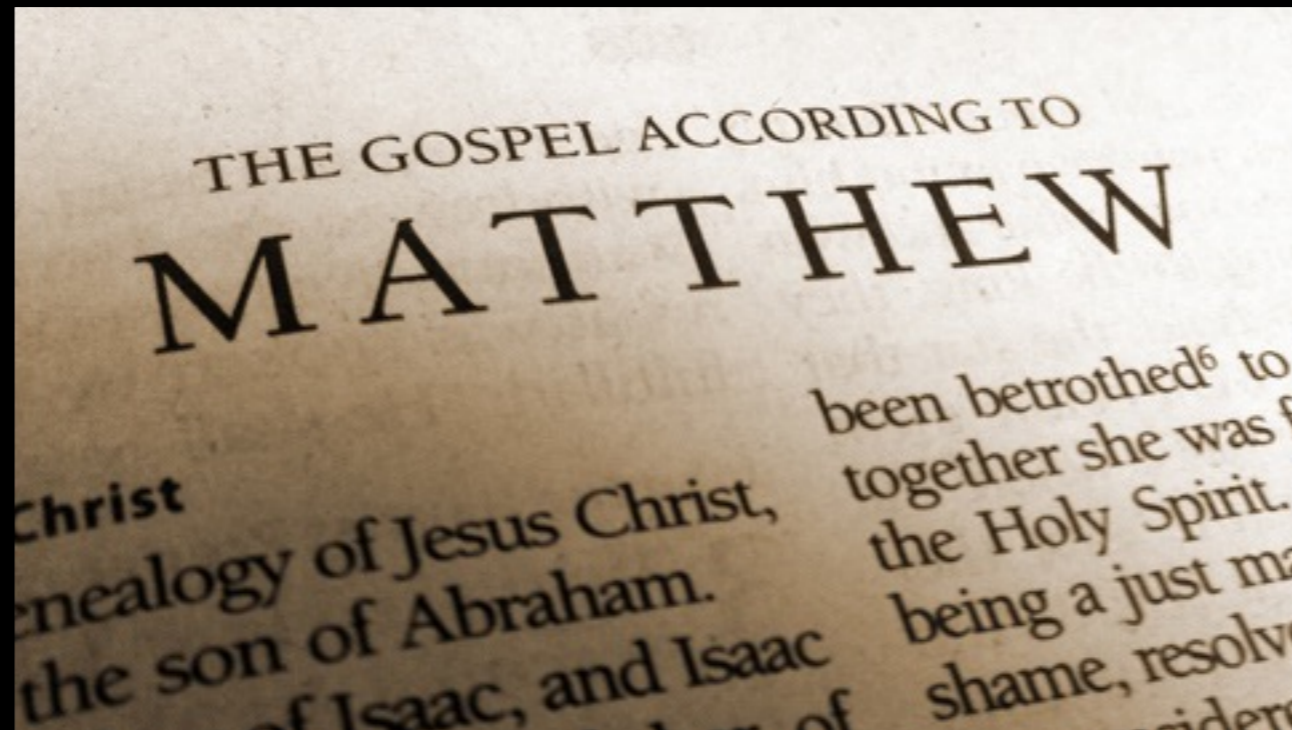
The Apostle Paul
— Romans 7:24-25 —



The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

20 And he said, **“All these I have kept from my youth.”**





You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery.” But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

— Jesus of Nazareth in the Gospel of Matthew 5:27-28 —

FOCUS • ON • THE • BIBLE

LUKE 14-24

ON THE ROAD TO JERUSALEM

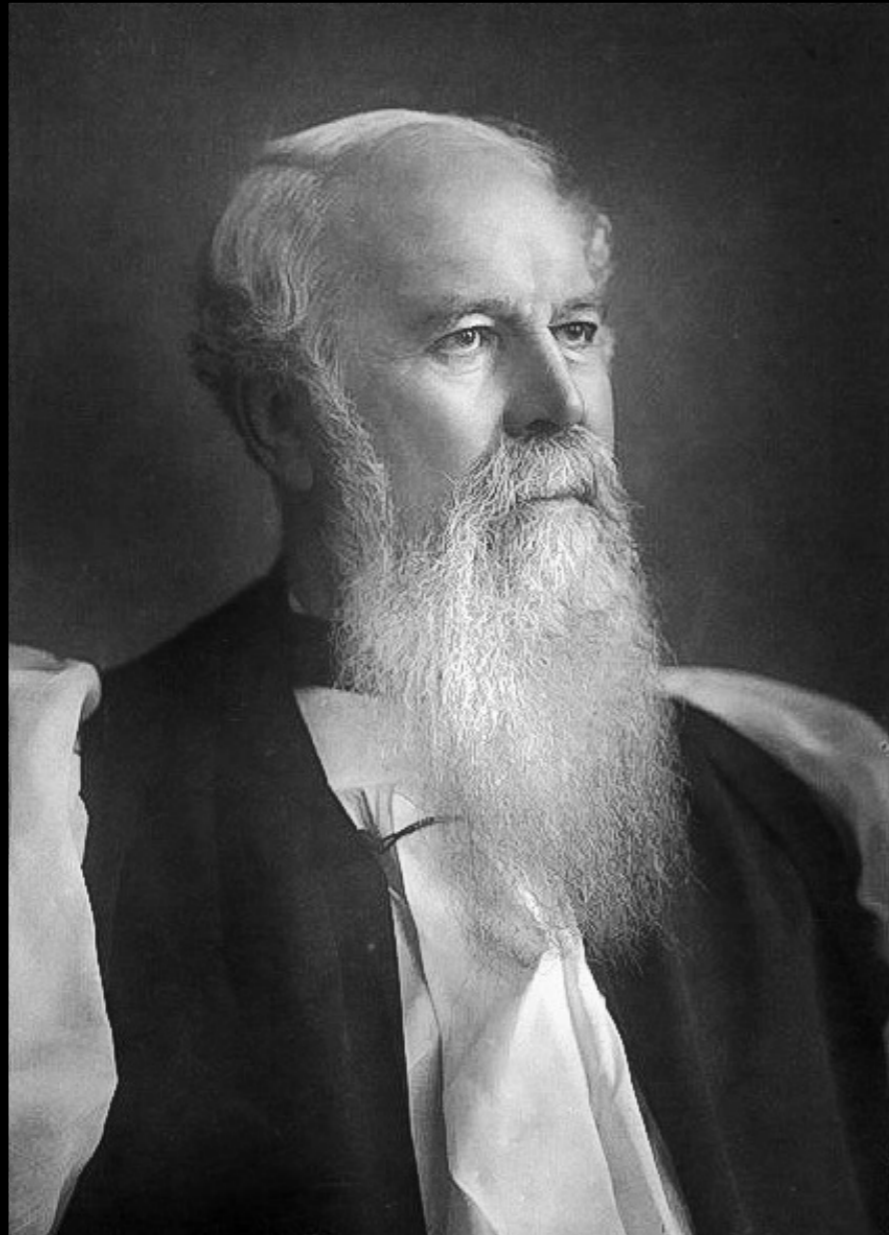
'Ralph Davis always unfolds the text with freshness, insight, and humor, leaving the reader with a clear understanding of what God is up to.'

Iain Duguid

DALE RALPH DAVIS

DALE RALPH DAVIS

He has never felt the razor edge of the law slicing deep into the abyss of his conscience. 'All these I have kept.' How tragic to see a man who knows the commandments but not himself.



**An answer more full of
darkness and self-
ignorance is difficult to
conceive! He who made
it could have known
nothing rightly, either
about himself, or God,
or God's law.**

— JC Ryle (1816-1900) —
Anglican Bishop of Liverpool

Ignorance + Arrogance

=

Extreme Danger

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, **“One thing you still lack....”**

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come follow me.”

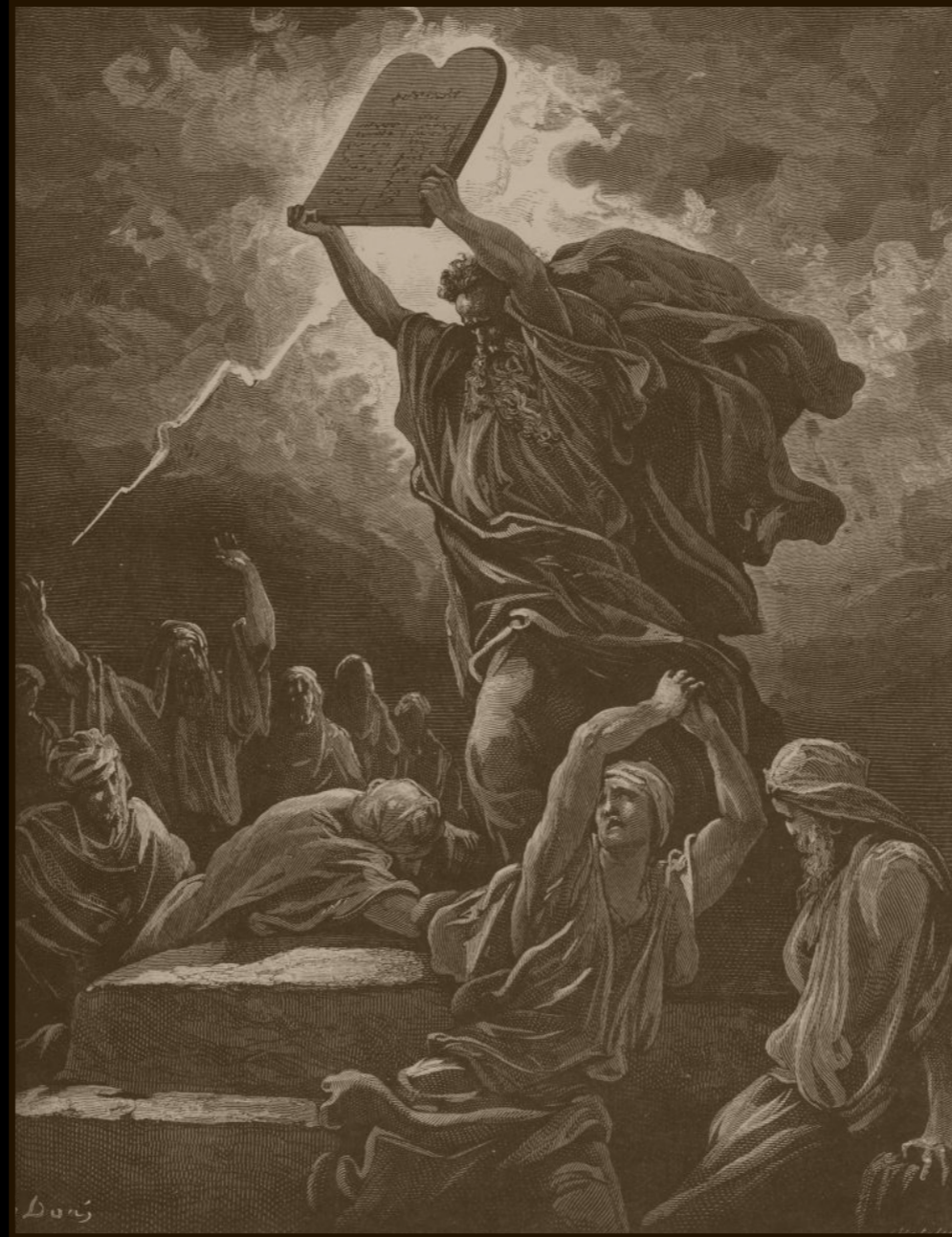
The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

23 But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.



**Disheartened by
the saying, he went
away sorrowful,
for he had great
possessions.**

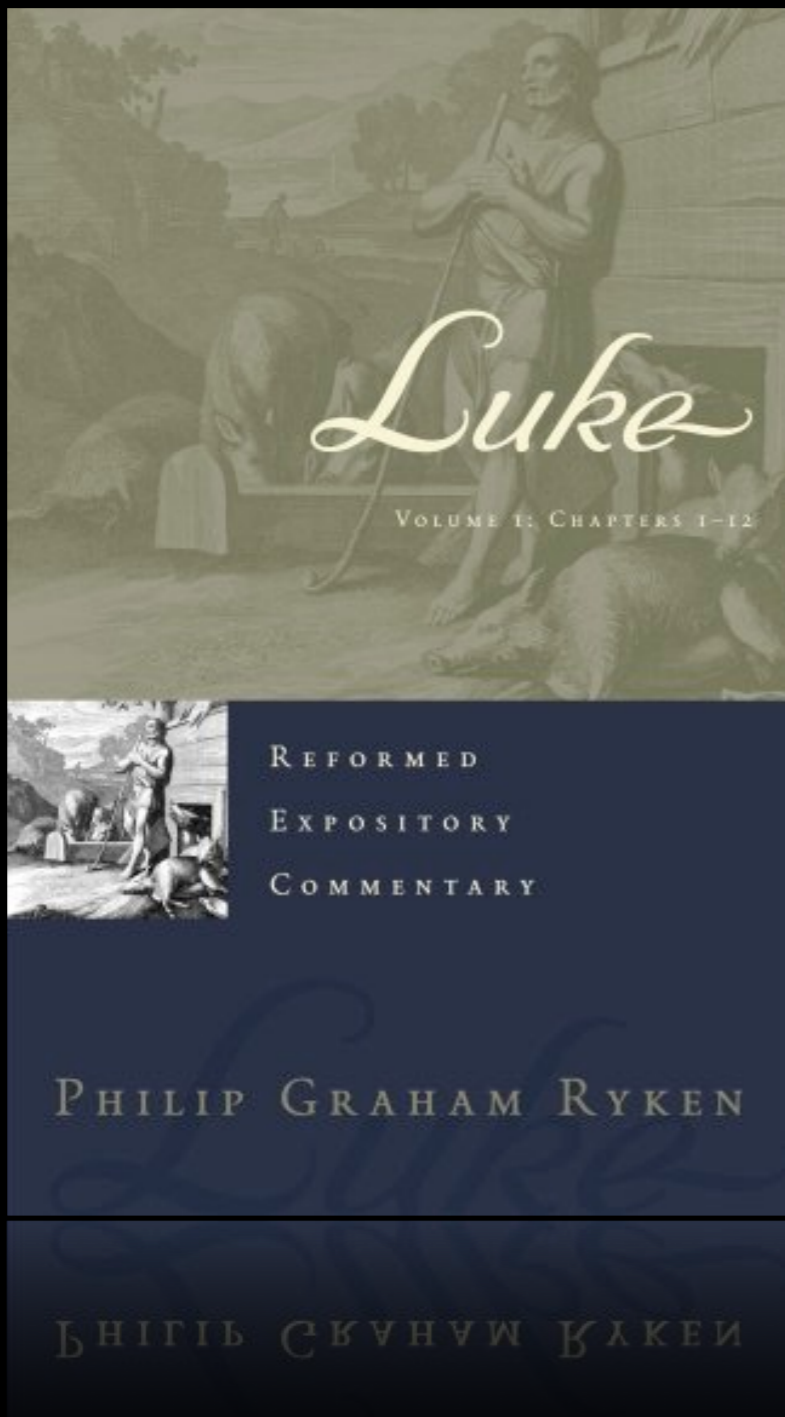
— The Gospel of Mark 10:22 —



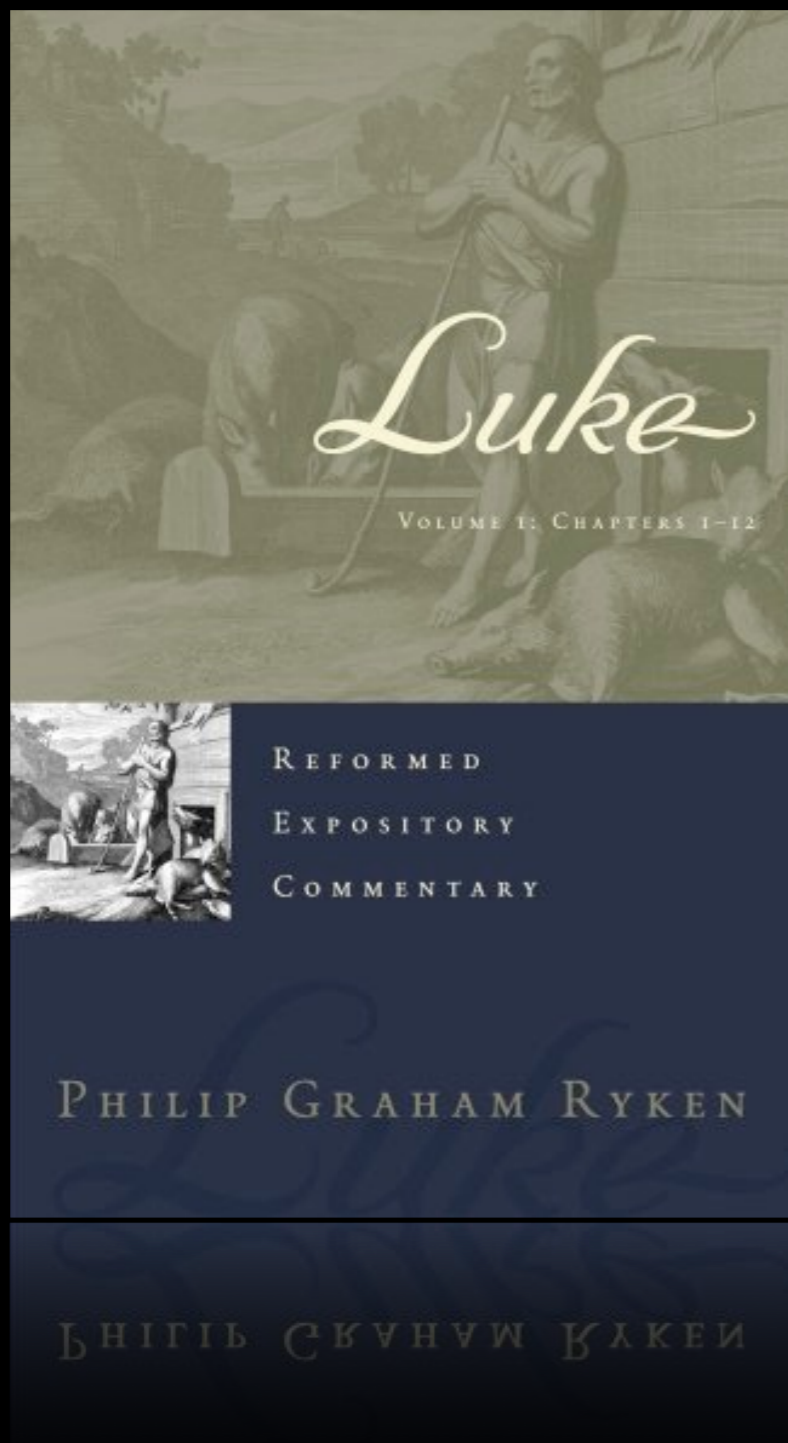
The First Commandment:

“You shall have no other gods before me.”

— Exodus 20:3 —



To sell his possessions was not to add one more act of pious religion, but to subtract all the things that were standing in the way of his entrance into heaven.



It was not simply this asset or that asset that he needed to divest. The man needed to eliminate everything in his life that was keeping him from giving his life to Jesus. In his particular case, this meant giving away everything he had.

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

24 Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, “How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God....!”

**What is it about
\$ wealth \$
that makes it
difficult to enter
the kingdom?**



The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

24 Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, “How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! 25 For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

Key Thought

**The danger in having wealth
is that wealth can have you.**

Key Thought

**The danger in having wealth
is that wealth can have you.**

*IN OTHER WORDS, YOU CAN BE ENSLAVED
TO THE CRAVING FOR WEALTH.*

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

26 **Those who heard it [were exceedingly astonished - Mark 10:26] said, “Then who can be saved?”**

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

27 But he said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

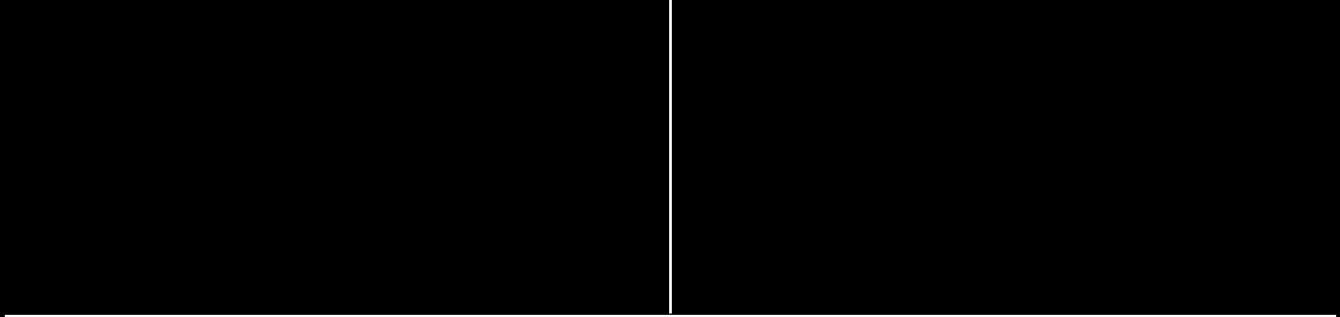
28 And Peter said, “See, we have left our homes and followed you.”

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

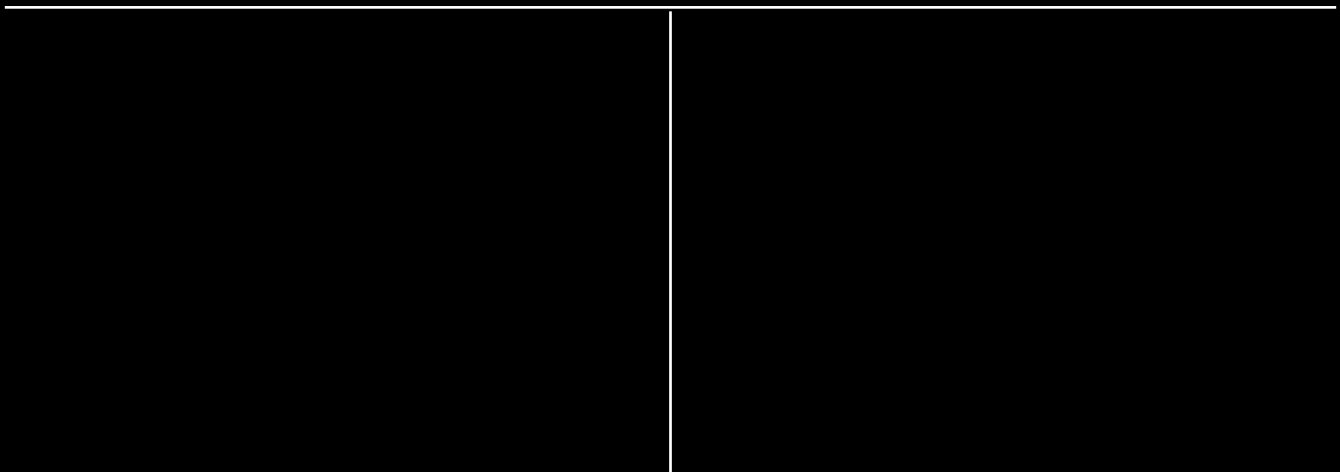
29 And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers and sisters or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times more in this life, and in the age to come.”

Important Question

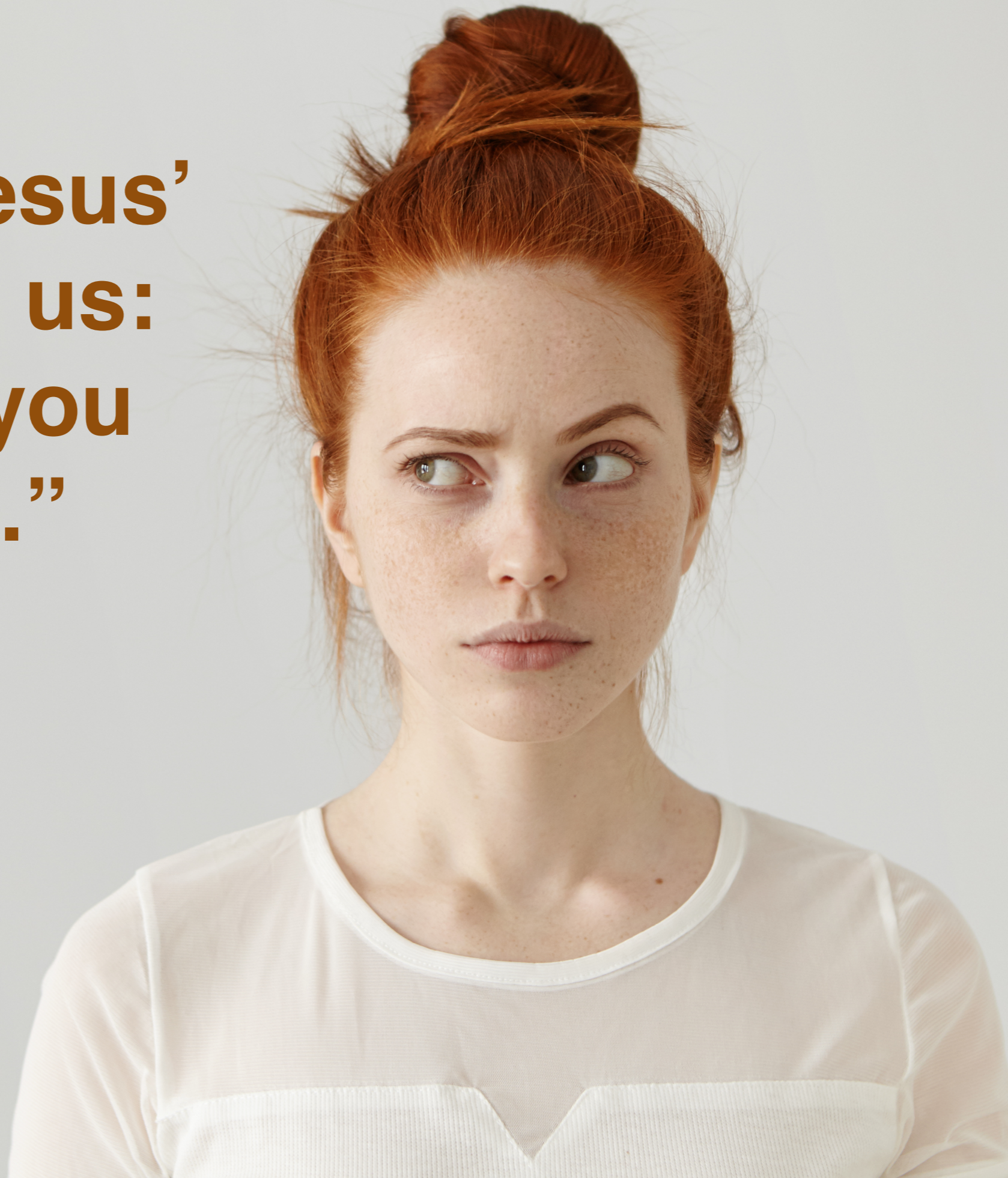
Why does Luke record this account in his historical biography of Jesus?



**If you treasure the kingdom of God,
the kingdom of God will be your
treasure. For where our treasure is,
there our heart will be also.**



**Let's apply Jesus'
statement to us:
“One thing you
still lack....”**



How Rich Am I?

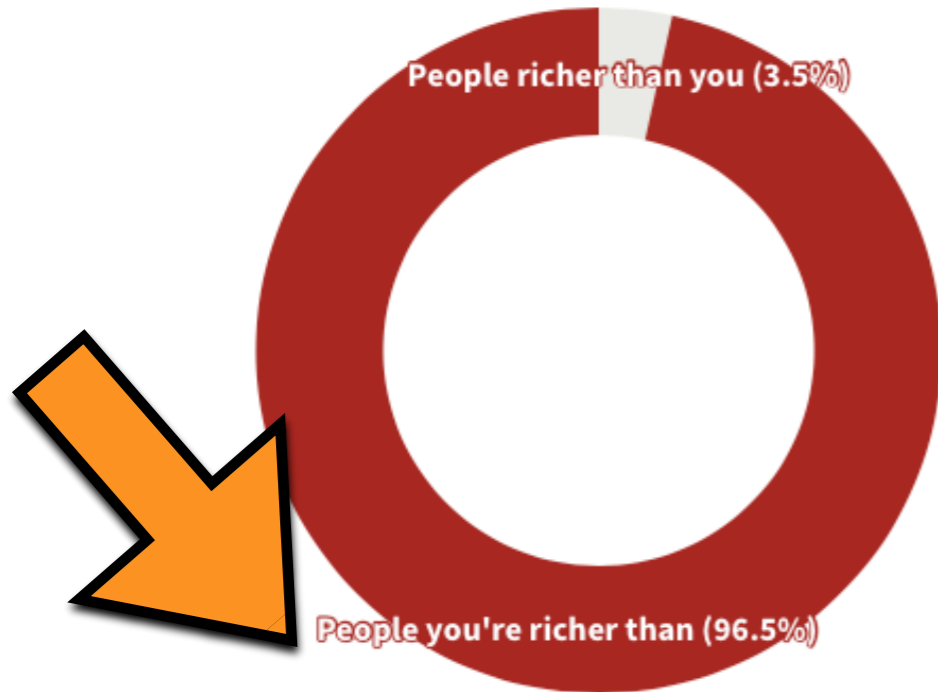
Find out how rich you are compared to the rest of the world – are you on the global rich list?

<https://www.givingwhatwecan.org>

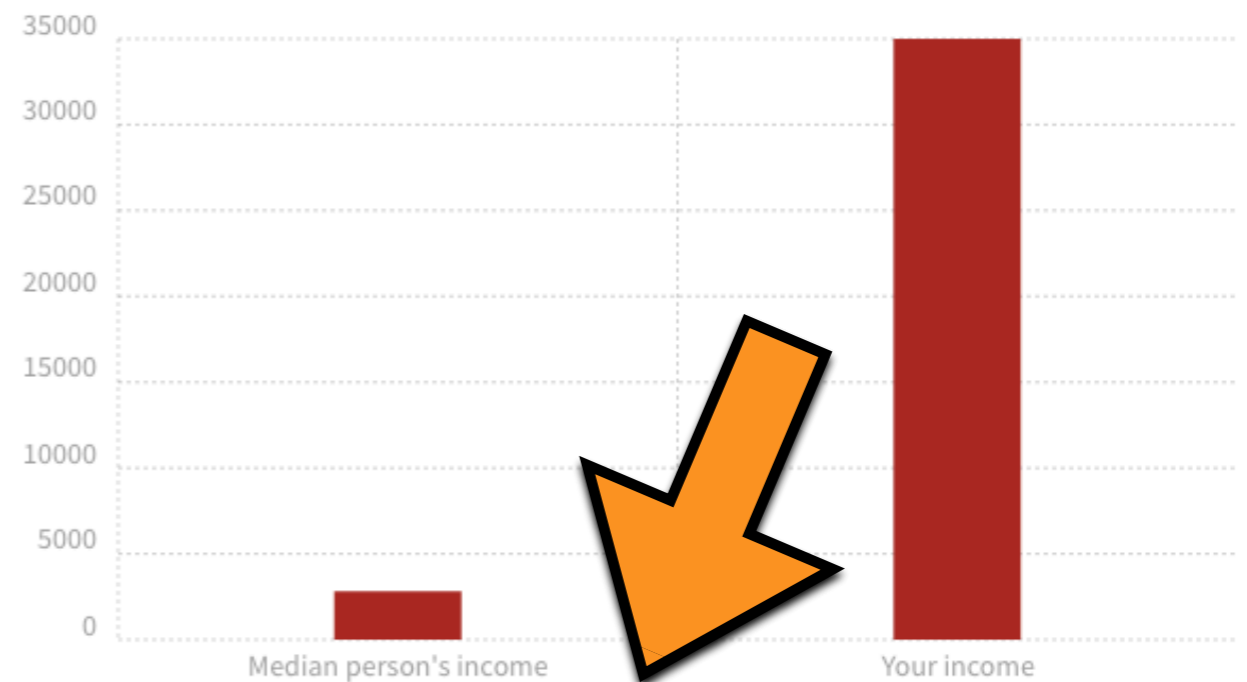
Country	Income	Adults	Children
United States of America	35000 USD	1	0
Select your country	Enter your annual post-tax household income in USD	Enter the number of adults in your household	Enter the number of children in your household
CALCULATE ✓			

If you have a household income of \$35,000

(in a household of 1 adult)



You are in the richest 3.5% of the global population



Your income is more than 12.4 times the global median

Income shown in household-equivalised international dollars (I\$)

You are in the richest 3.5% of the global population

Your income is more than 12.4 times the global median



**How difficult it is for those in America
to enter the kingdom of God.**

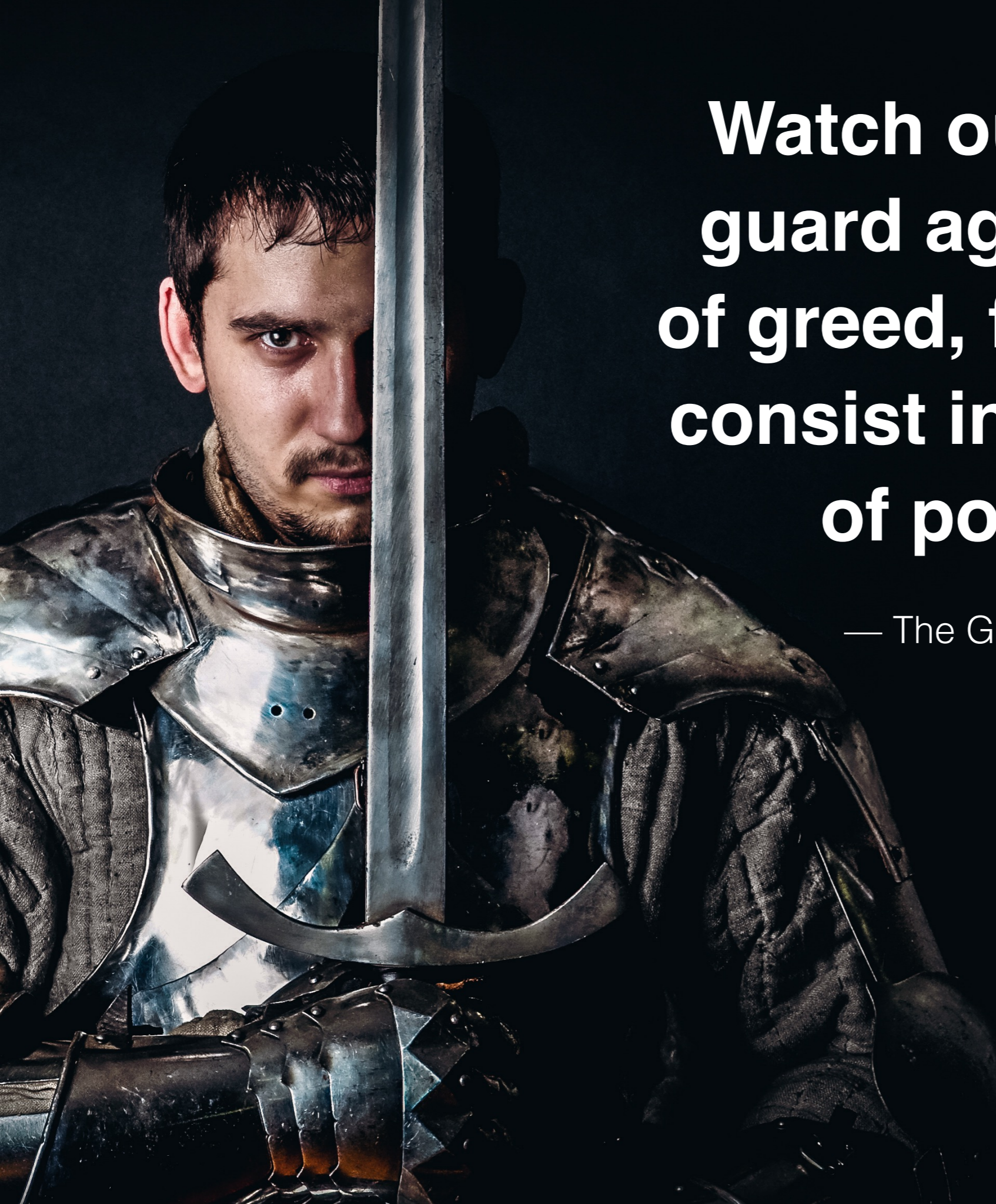




No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Jesus of Nazareth

— The Gospel of John 16:13 —

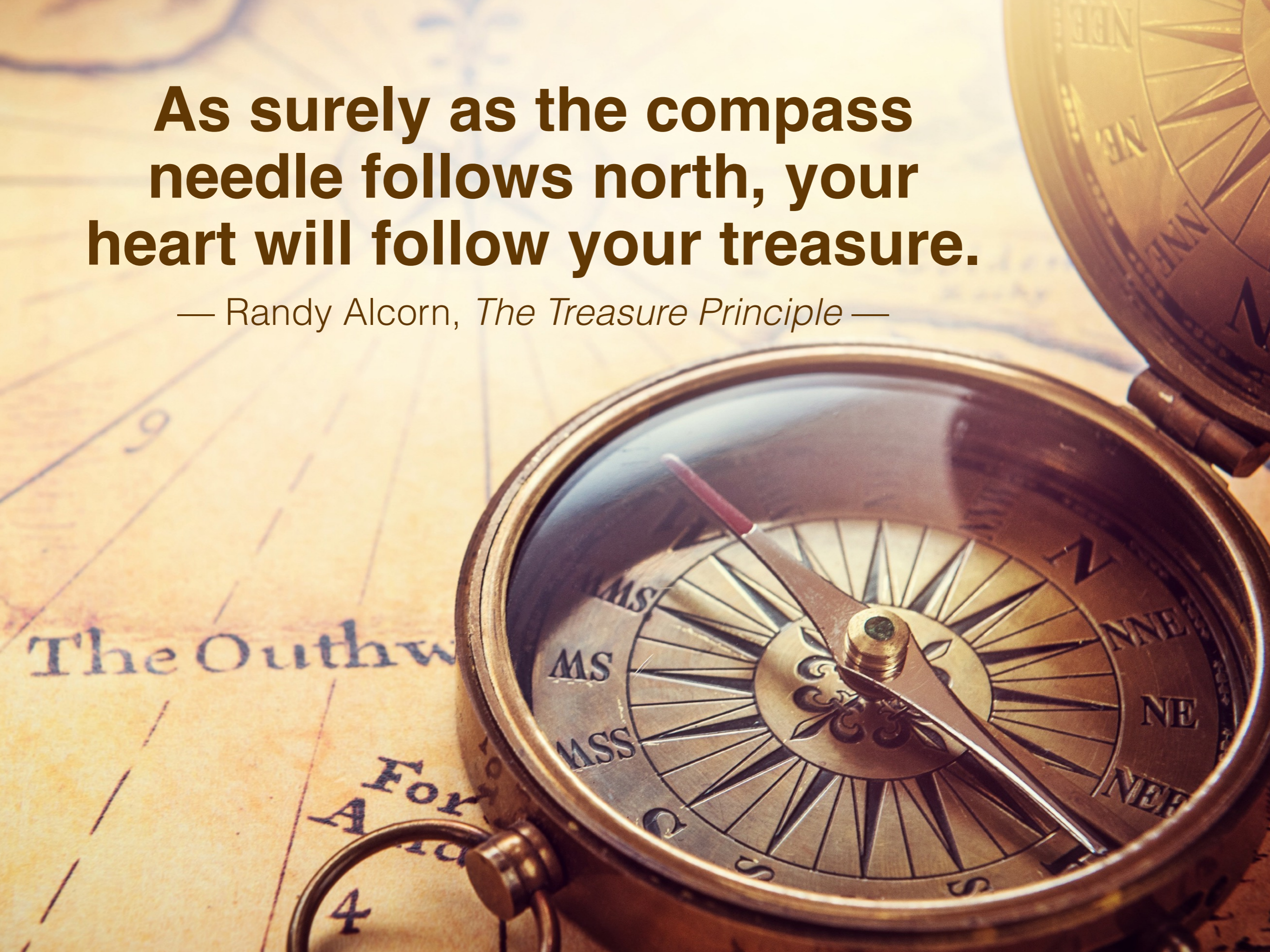


Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed, for life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.

— The Gospel of Luke 6:15 —

**As surely as the compass
needle follows north, your
heart will follow your treasure.**

— Randy Alcorn, *The Treasure Principle* —



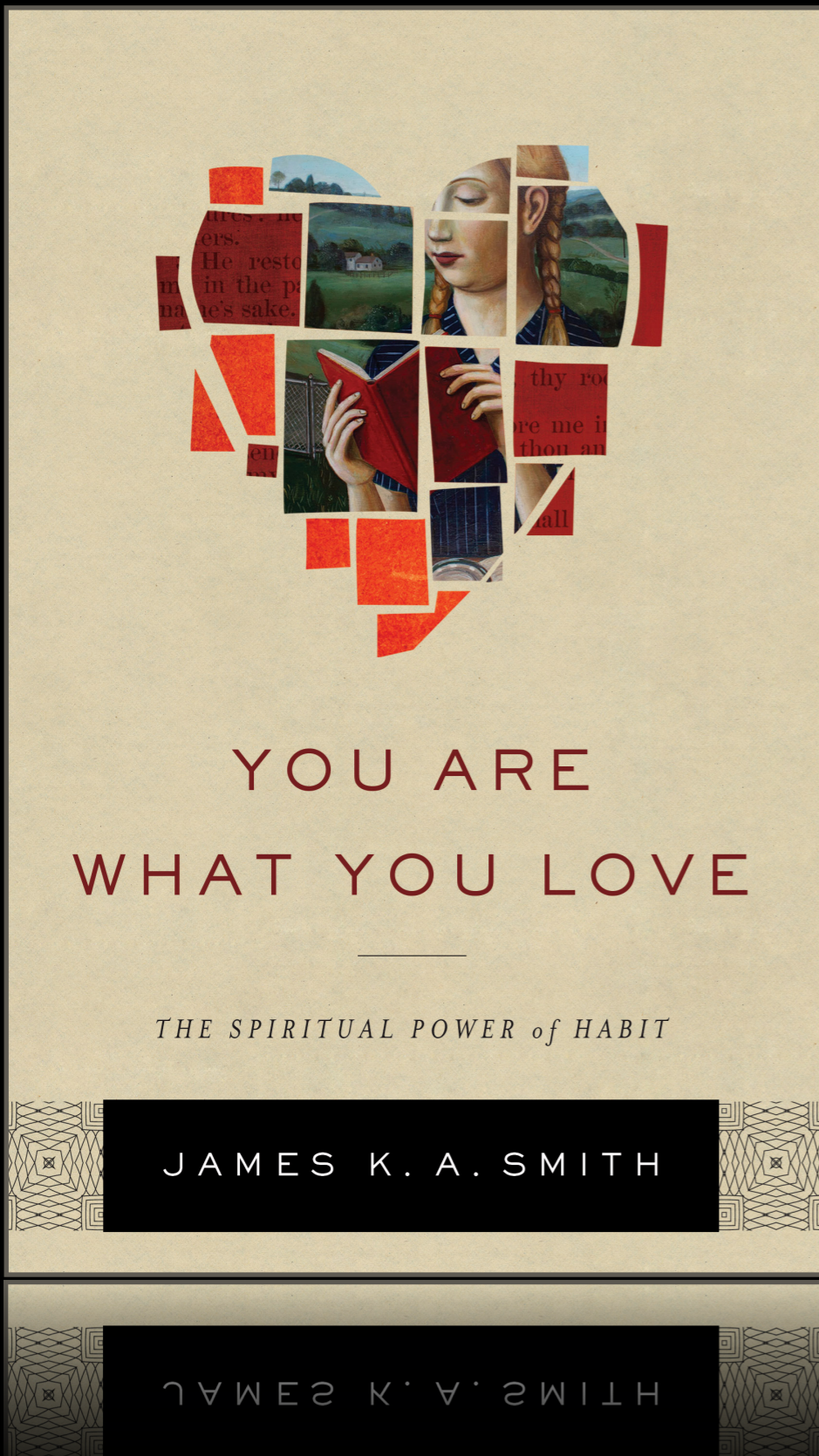


**If money's where
you find happiness,
you'll always be poor.**

— NF: “Remember This” —

The Gospel of Luke 18:15-30

22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come follow me.”



Jesus's command to follow him is a command to align our loves and longings with his—to want what God wants, to desire what God desires, to hunger and thirst after God and crave a world where he is all in all—a vision encapsulated by the shorthand “the kingdom of God.”



YOU ARE
WHAT YOU LOVE

THE SPIRITUAL POWER of HABIT


JAMES K. A. SMITH

JAMES K. A. SMITH

Jesus is a teacher who doesn't just inform our intellect but forms our very loves. He isn't content to simply deposit new ideas into your mind; he is after nothing less than your wants, your loves, your longings.

**Let's remember
that the kingdom
of God is a gift.**



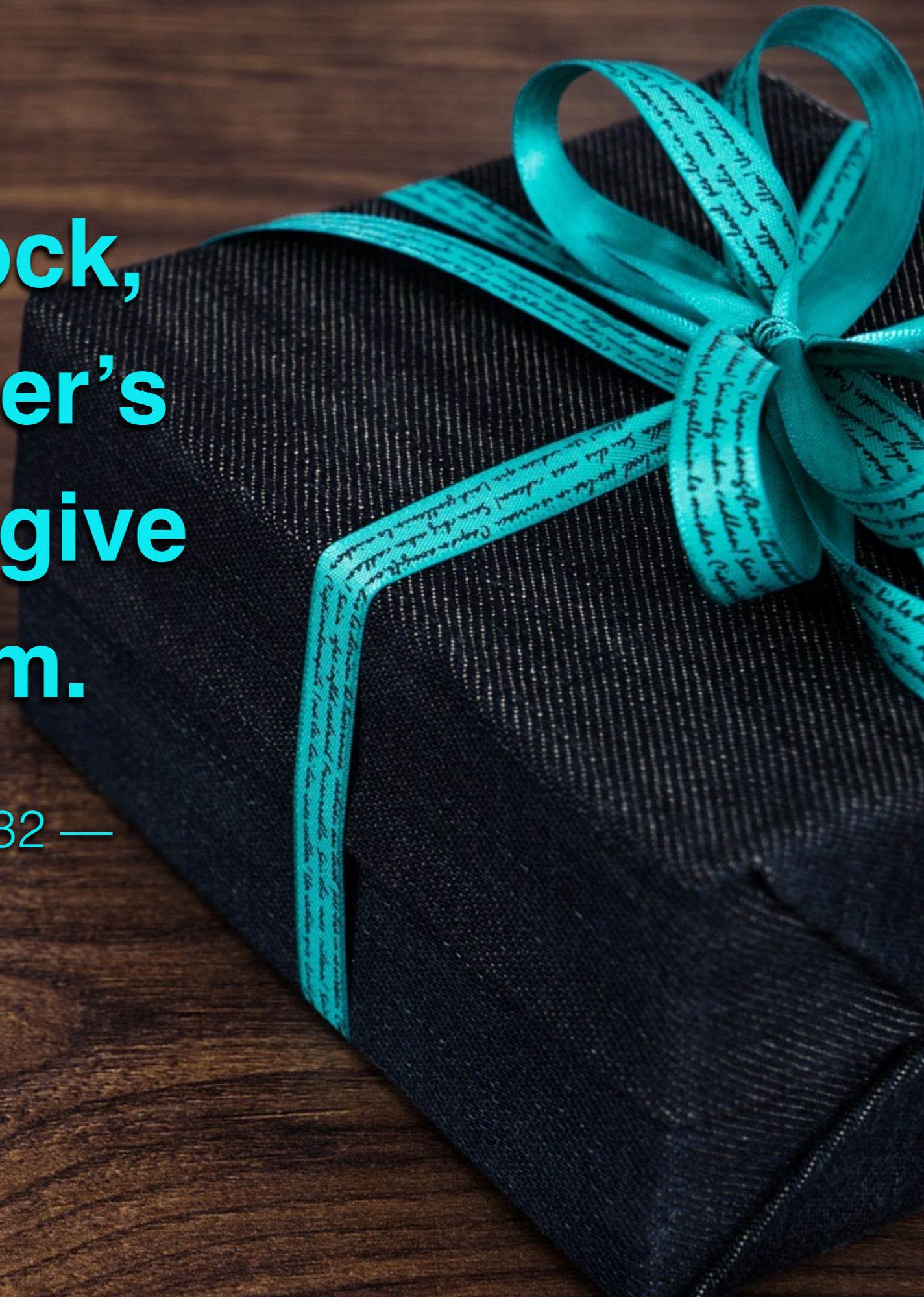
A close-up photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a dark jacket, holding a sleeping baby in a light-colored long-sleeved shirt. The man's hands are gently cradling the baby. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with buildings and greenery under bright, natural light.

**Nothing in my hands
I bring, simply to
Thy Cross I cling
Helpless, look to
Thee for grace**

“Rock of Ages”

**Fear not, little flock,
for it is your Father's
good pleasure to give
you the kingdom.**

— Jesus of Nazareth in Luke 12:32 —



Let's Make Jesus Our Greatest Treasure



**The figure of Jesus is
extremely attractive.
It's difficult not to fall
in love with that
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— Leonard Cohen —



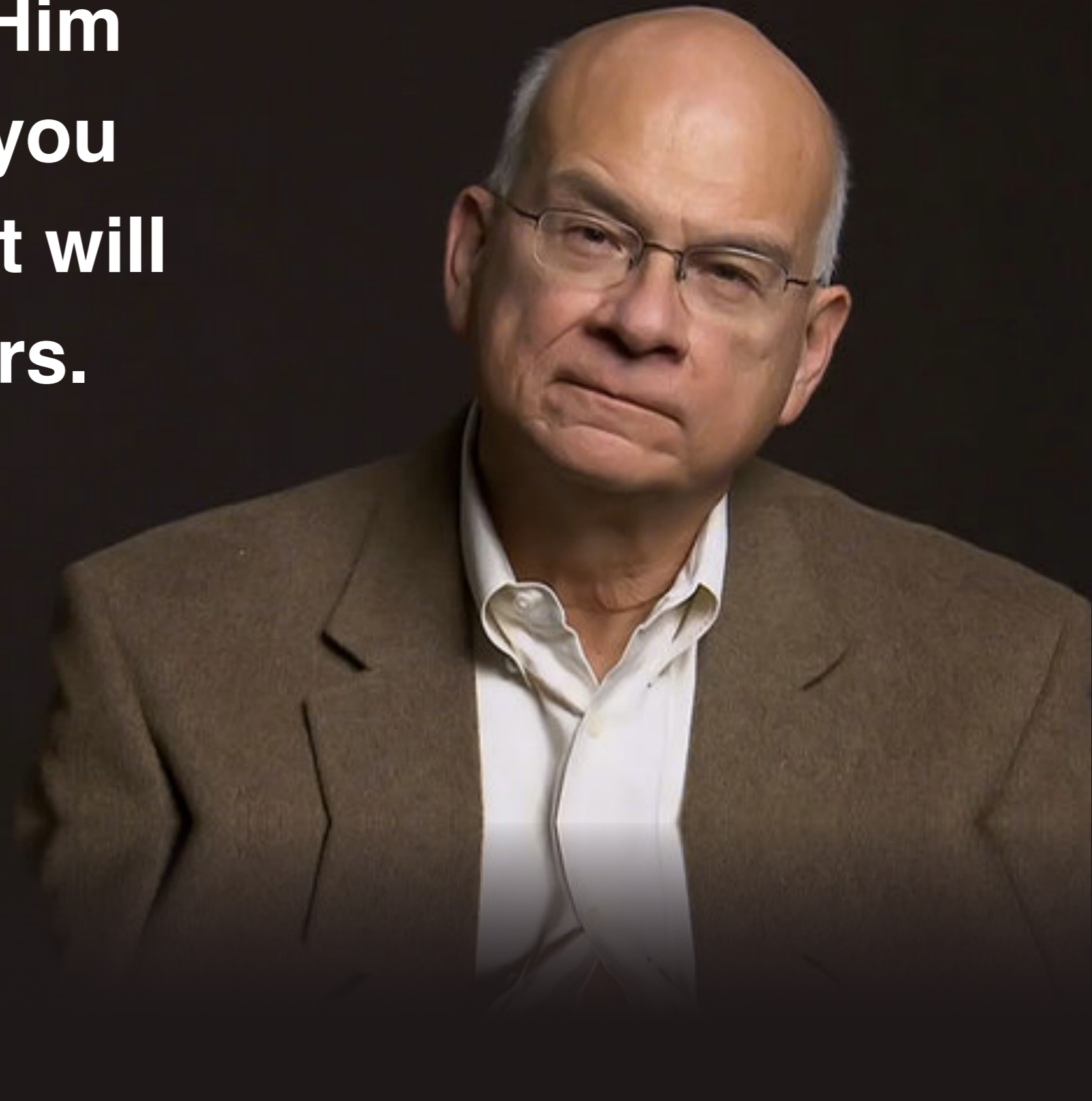
**When young the
Christians told me
how we pinned Jesus
like a butterfly
against the wood
and I wept beside
paintings of Calvary
at velvet wound and
delicate twisted feet.**

— Leonard Cohen —
“For Wilf and His House”



**When you see Him
dying to make you
His treasure, that will
make Him yours.**

— Tim Keller —





**More than all riches
Jesus is better
Make my heart believe**

— “Jesus is Better” —