

A hand holding a lit sparkler against a dark, stormy background. The sparkler is bright and glowing, with many sparks flying out. The background is dark and blurry, suggesting a storm or a night sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

# **Finding Peace in the Storms of Life**

— Part 2 - Philippians 4:8-9 —

A hand holding a lit sparkler against a dark background. The sparkler is bright and glowing, with many sparks flying out. The hand is wearing a dark, textured glove. The background is dark and out of focus.

Finding Joy

# PHILIPPIANS

Right Where You Are



COVENANT  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

THE COVENANT SCHOOL

POLICE



Katherine Koonce - 60, Mike Hill - 61, Cynthia Peak - 61  
Evelyn Dieckhaus - 9, William Kinney - 9, Hallie Scruggs - 9



The Chad & Jada Scruggs Family

**If we think happy  
thoughts, we will  
be happy. If we  
think miserable  
thoughts, we will  
be miserable.**

— Dale Carnegie —





**You have  
got to be  
kidding me....**



**For everything there is a season, and  
a time for every matter under heaven:  
...a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance....**

— Ecclesiastes 3:1 & 4 —



A hand holding a lit sparkler against a dark, stormy background. The sparkler is bright and glowing, with many sparks flying out. The background is dark and blurry, suggesting a storm or a night sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

# **Finding Peace in the Storms of Life**

— Part 2 - Philippians 4:8-9 —

# Philippians 4

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## 8 Finally, brothers....

# Philippians 4

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8 **Finally,** brothers....

*“next” or “beyond that....”*

## Philippians 4

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4 **Rejoice** in the Lord always; again I will say, **rejoice.**



*“to rejoice, to be glad, to be happy”*

Keep on rejoicing in the Lord at all times.  
I will say it again: Keep on rejoicing!

— International Standard Version —

## Philippians 4

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**5 The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything....**

Paul is not saying don't ever feel anything, but he is saying, "Don't get stuck in this moment / this worry / this anxiety when it comes storming into your life **BECAUSE** you are **NOT** facing it alone."

## Philippians 4

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**5 The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.**



## **3 Essential Tools**

**1) Prayer**

**2) Thanksgiving**

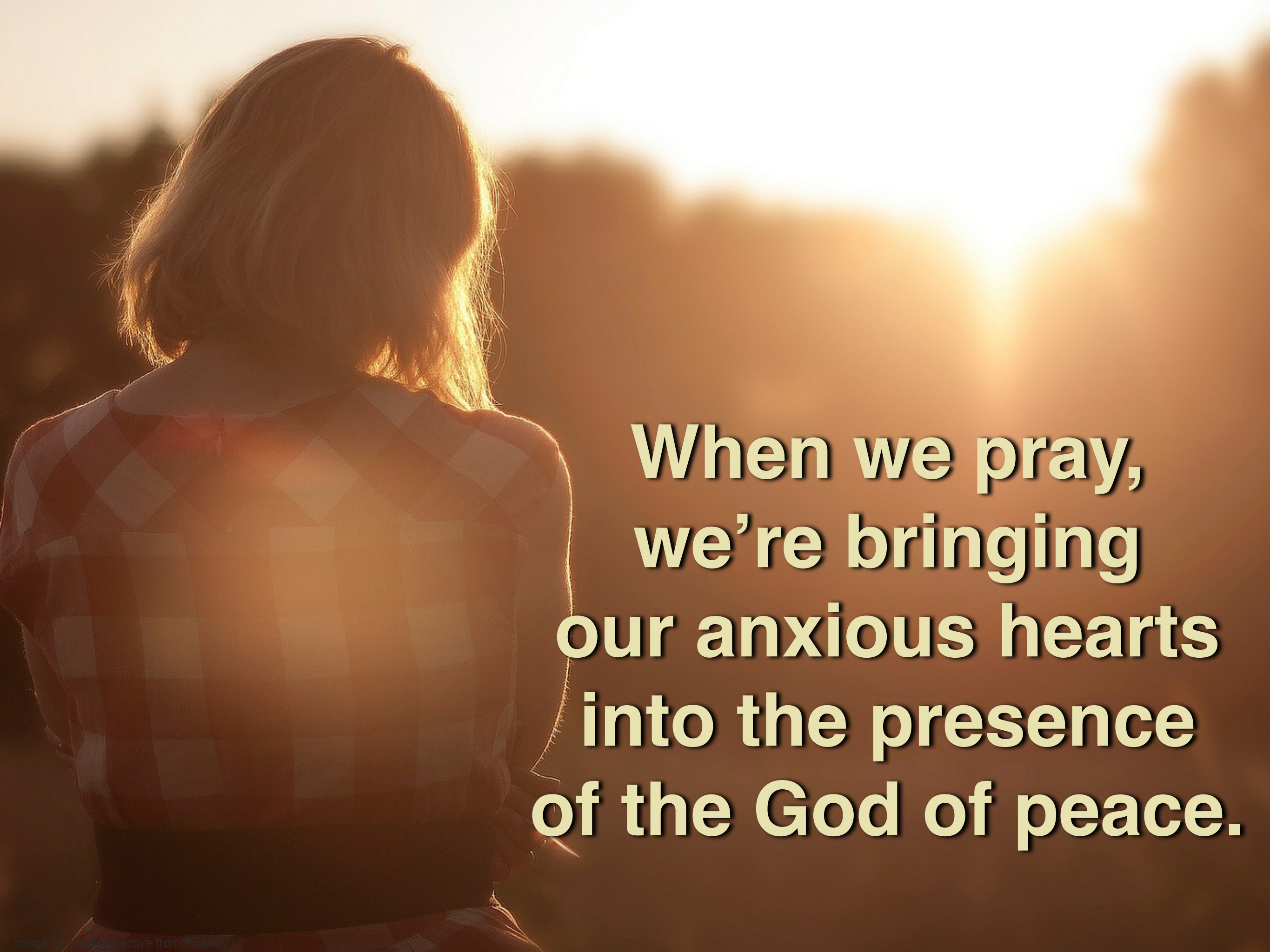
**3) Supplications**

## Philippians 4:4-7

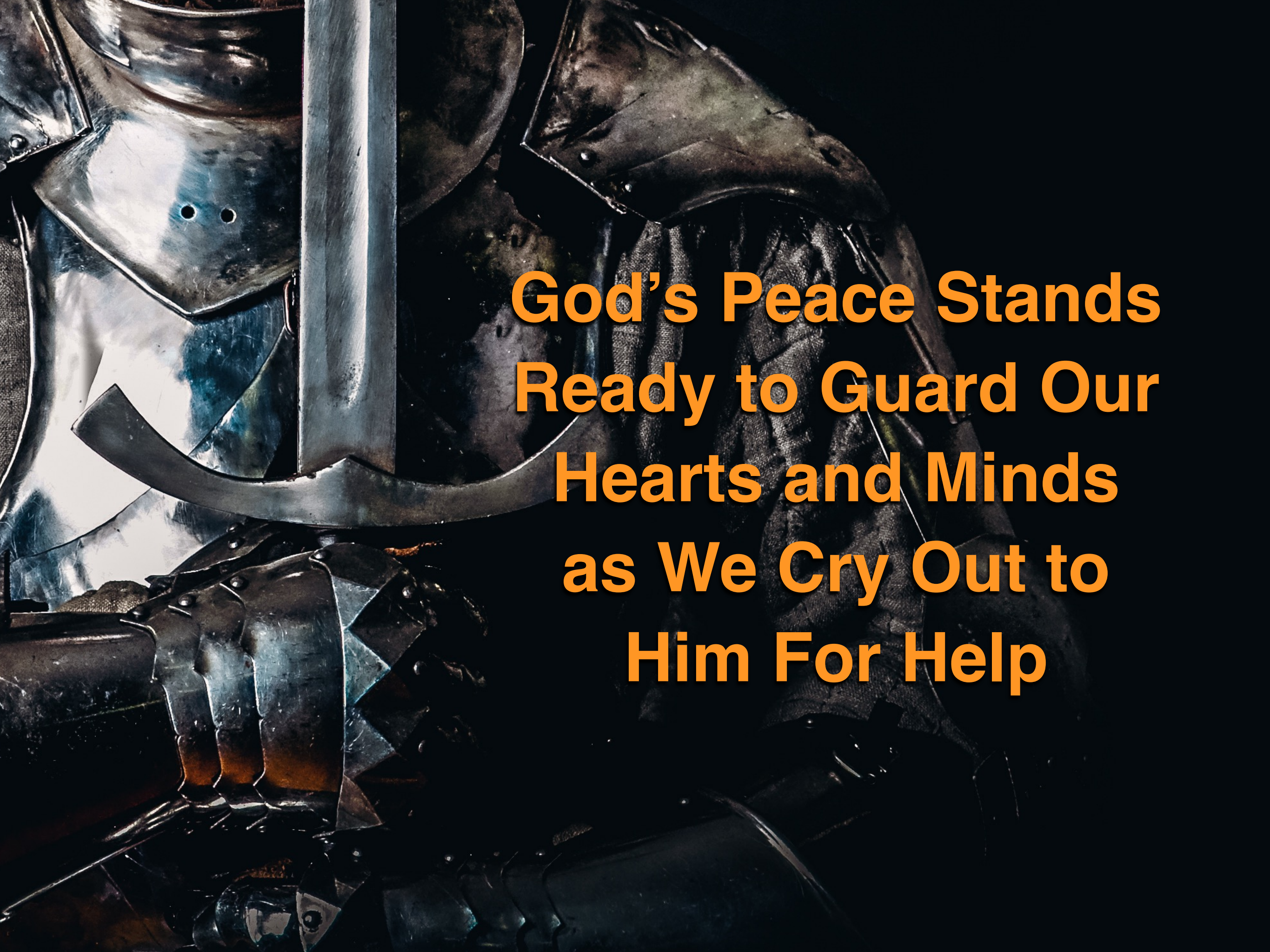
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**7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**





**When we pray,  
we're bringing  
our anxious hearts  
into the presence  
of the God of peace.**



**God's Peace Stands  
Ready to Guard Our  
Hearts and Minds  
as We Cry Out to  
Him For Help**



# 5 Essential Tools

1) Prayer

2) Thanksgiving

3) Supplications

4) Filling your mind

5) Imitation

# Philippians 4

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8 **Finally,** brothers....

*“next” or “beyond that....”*

## Philippians 4

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8 Finally, brothers, whatever is **true**, whatever is **honorable**, whatever is **just**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **commendable**, if there is any **excellence**, if there is anything worthy of **praise**, think about these things.

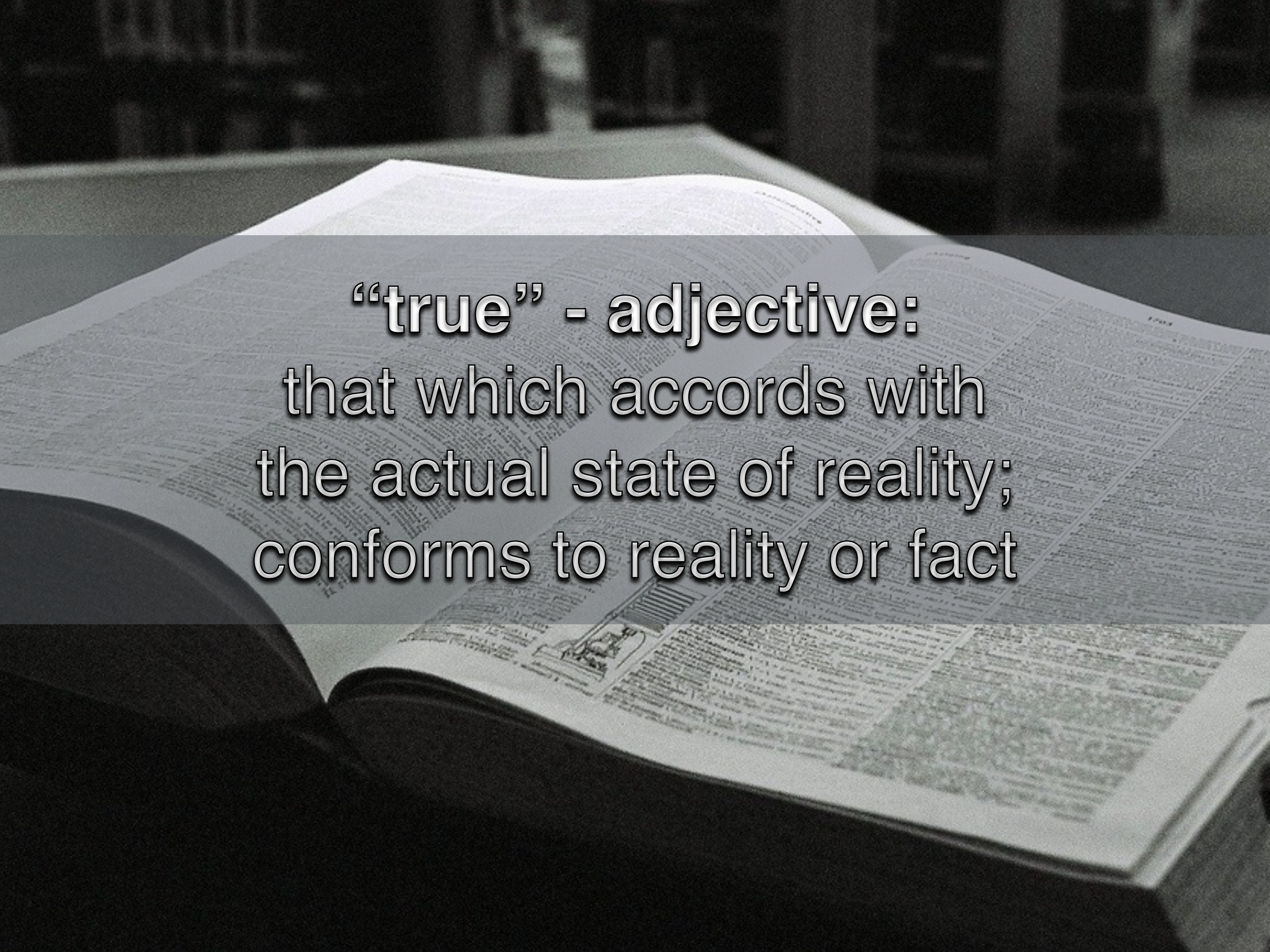
**Everywhere our world  
tells us to find peace  
by emptying our minds.  
But the Apostle Paul  
tells us we will find peace  
by filling our minds.**



- whatever is **true,**
- whatever is **honorable,**
- whatever is **just,**
- whatever is **pure,**
- whatever is **lovely,**
- whatever is **commendable,**
- if there is any **excellence,**
- if there is anything worthy of **praise,**

- **whatever is true,**
- whatever is honorable,
- whatever is just,
- whatever is pure,
- whatever is lovely,
- whatever is commendable,
- if there is any excellence,
- if there is anything worthy of praise,



An open newspaper is shown from a high-angle perspective, lying flat. The pages are filled with dense, small text in multiple columns. A small, detailed illustration is visible on the lower left page. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an indoor setting like a library or study.

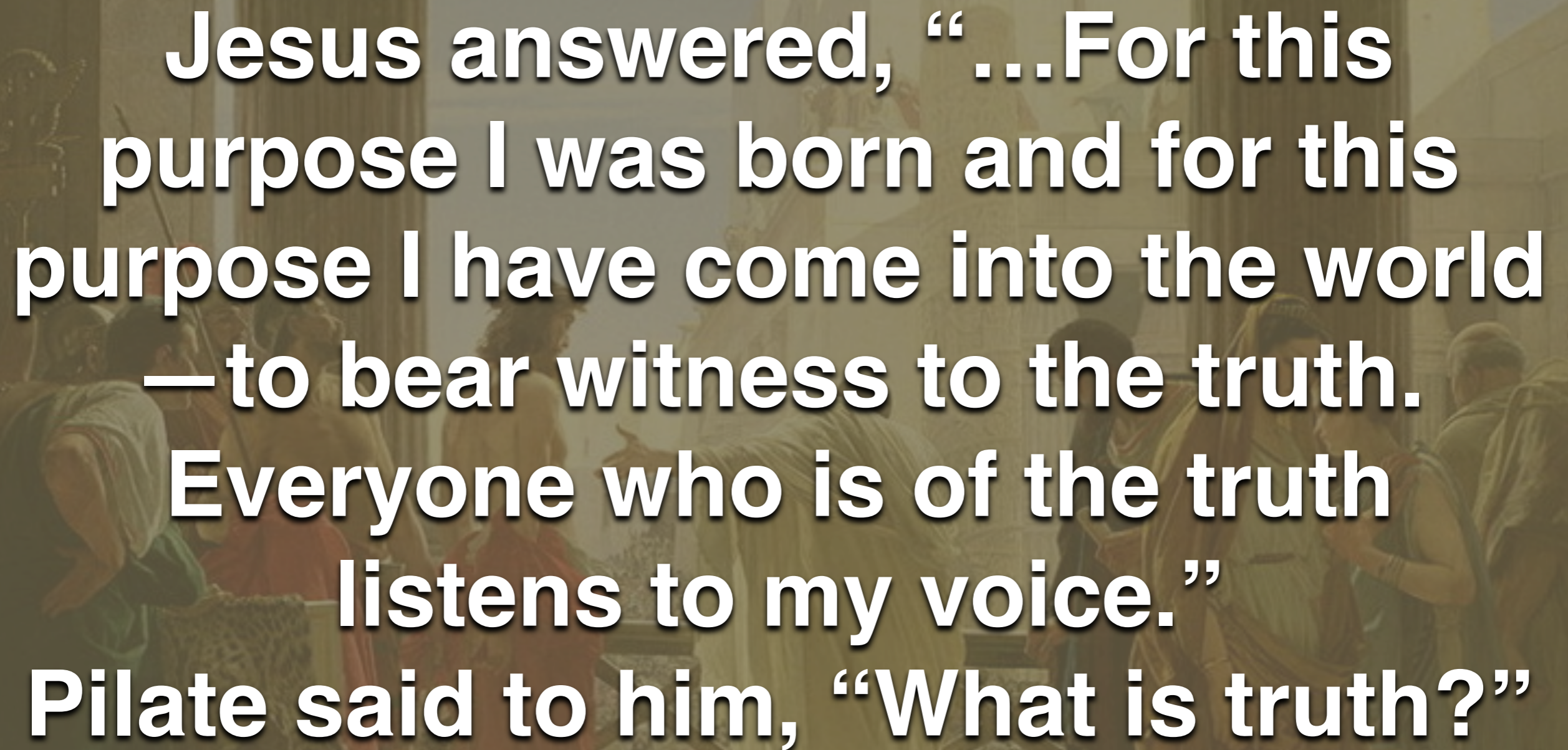
**“true” - adjective:**  
that which accords with  
the actual state of reality;  
conforms to reality or fact



**I am the way, the truth,  
and the life....**

**Jesus of Nazareth**  
The Gospel of John 14:6





**Jesus answered, “...For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world —to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”**

**Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”**

— Cf. The Gospel of John 18:37-38 —

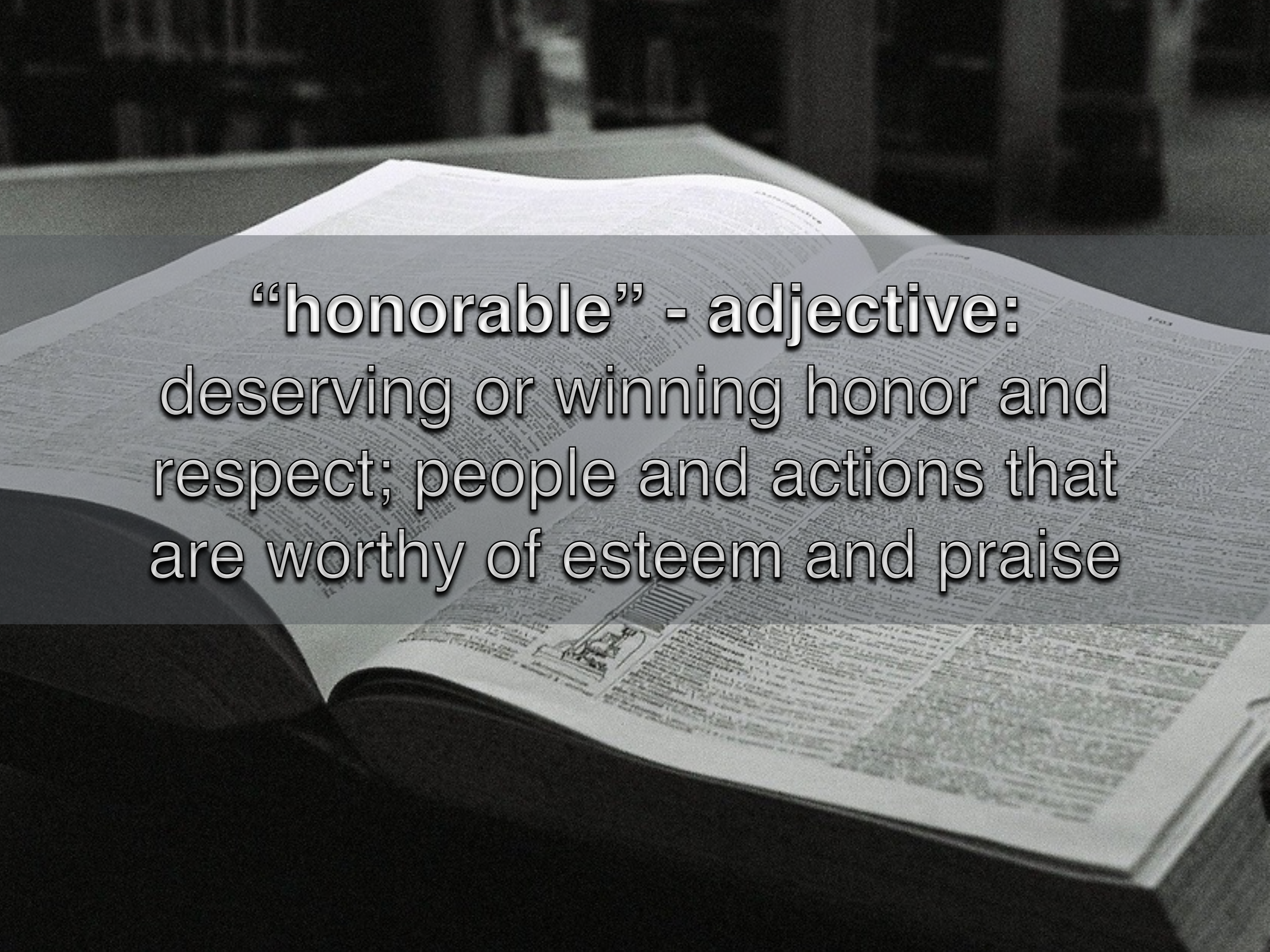
**If you abide in my word, you are truly my  
disciples, and you will know the truth,  
and the truth will set you free....**

**So if the Son sets you free,  
you will be free indeed.**

— Jesus of Nazareth in The Gospel of John 8:31ff —



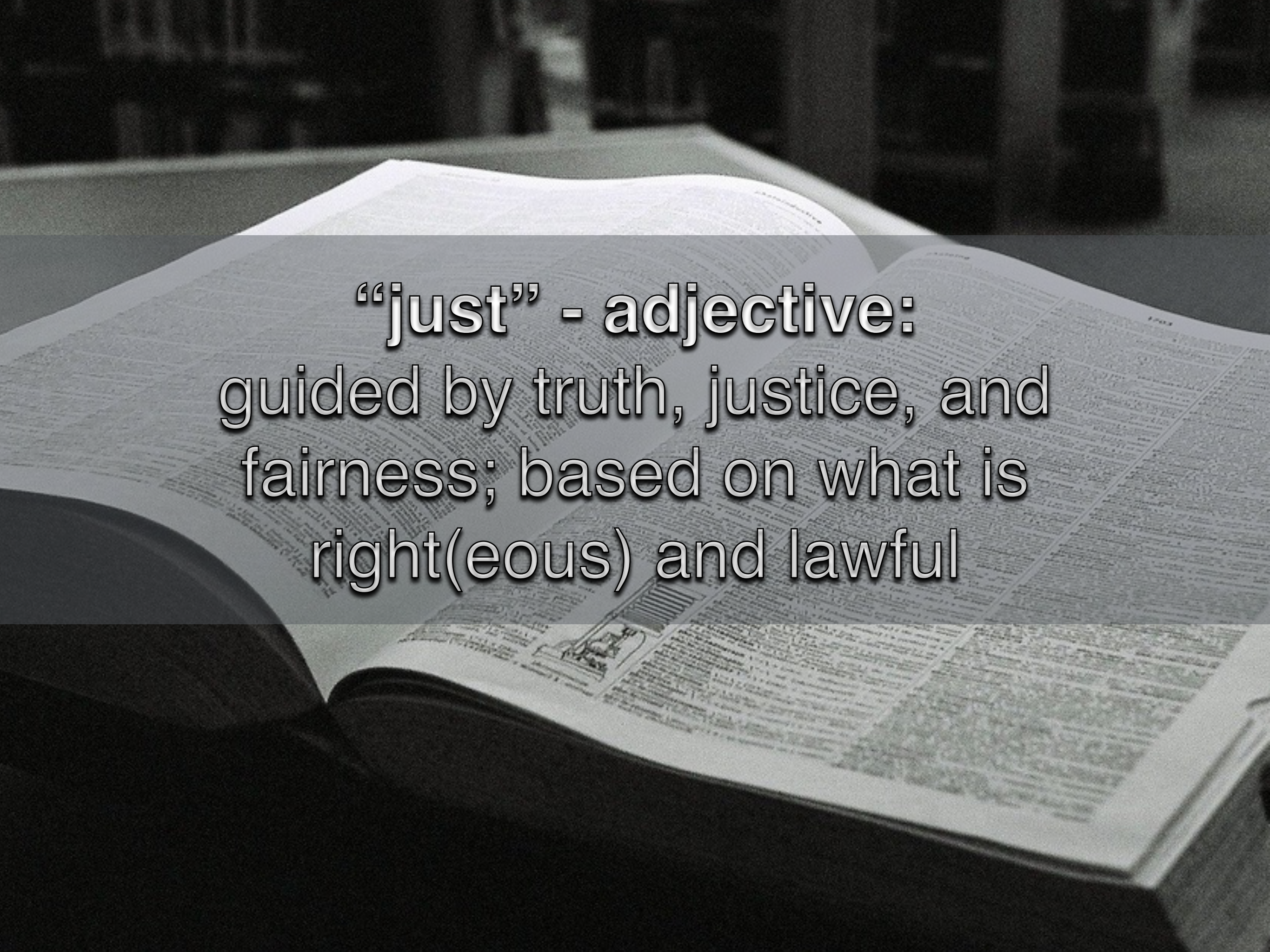
- whatever is true,
- **whatever is honorable,**
- whatever is just,
- whatever is pure,
- whatever is lovely,
- whatever is commendable,
- if there is any excellence,
- if there is anything worthy of praise,

An open book is shown from a high-angle perspective, lying flat. The pages are filled with dense, small text, likely a dictionary or encyclopedia. A semi-transparent dark grey rectangular box is centered over the book, containing white text with a thin black outline. The background is dark and out of focus.

**“honorable” - adjective:**  
deserving or winning honor and  
respect; people and actions that  
are worthy of esteem and praise

- whatever is true,
- whatever is honorable,
- **whatever is just,**
- whatever is pure,
- whatever is lovely,
- whatever is commendable,
- if there is any excellence,
- if there is anything worthy of praise,



An open book is shown from a high-angle perspective, lying flat. The pages are filled with dense, small text, likely a dictionary or encyclopedia. A semi-transparent dark grey rectangular box is centered over the book, containing white text with a thin black outline. The background is dark and out of focus.

**“just” - adjective:**  
guided by truth, justice, and  
fairness; based on what is  
right(eous) and lawful


- whatever is true,
- whatever is honorable,
- whatever is just,
- **whatever is pure,**
- whatever is lovely,
- whatever is commendable,
- if there is any excellence,
- if there is anything worthy of praise,

An open book is shown from a high-angle perspective, lying flat. The pages are filled with dense, small text, likely a dictionary or encyclopedia. A semi-transparent dark grey rectangular box is centered over the book, containing white text with a subtle drop shadow. The background is dark and out of focus.

**“pure” - adjective:**

based on the root word for holy /  
holiness; free from contamination  
or pollution, containing nothing  
inappropriate

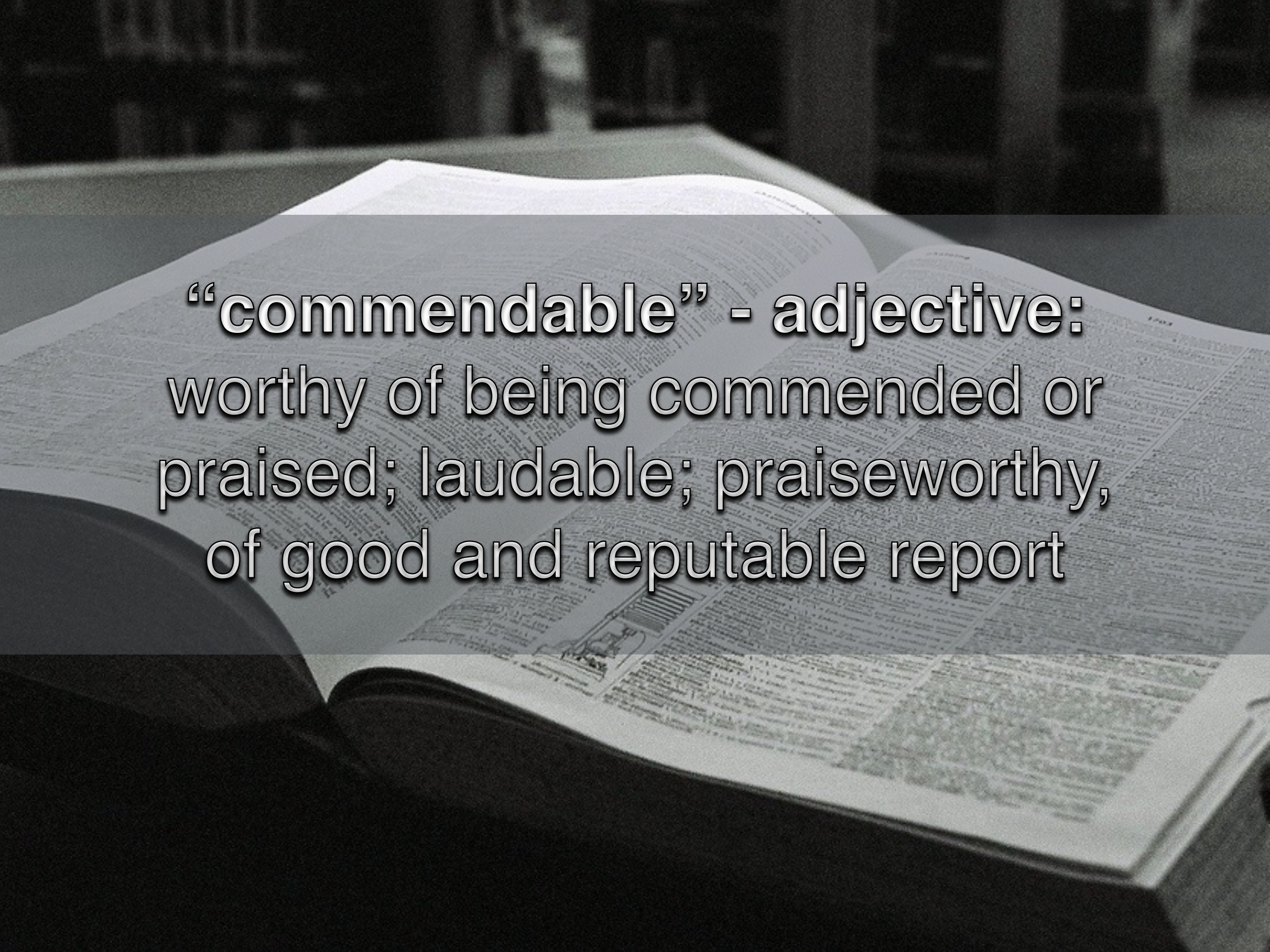
- whatever is true,
- whatever is honorable,
- whatever is just,
- whatever is pure,
- **whatever is lovely,**
- whatever is commendable,
- if there is any excellence,
- if there is anything worthy of praise,

An open book is shown from a high angle, with its pages spread out. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent dark grey rectangular area in the center of the book. The background is dark and out of focus.

**“lovely” - adjective:**

that which is pleasing, beautiful, or  
attractive; enjoyable, delightful;  
inspiring love or affection

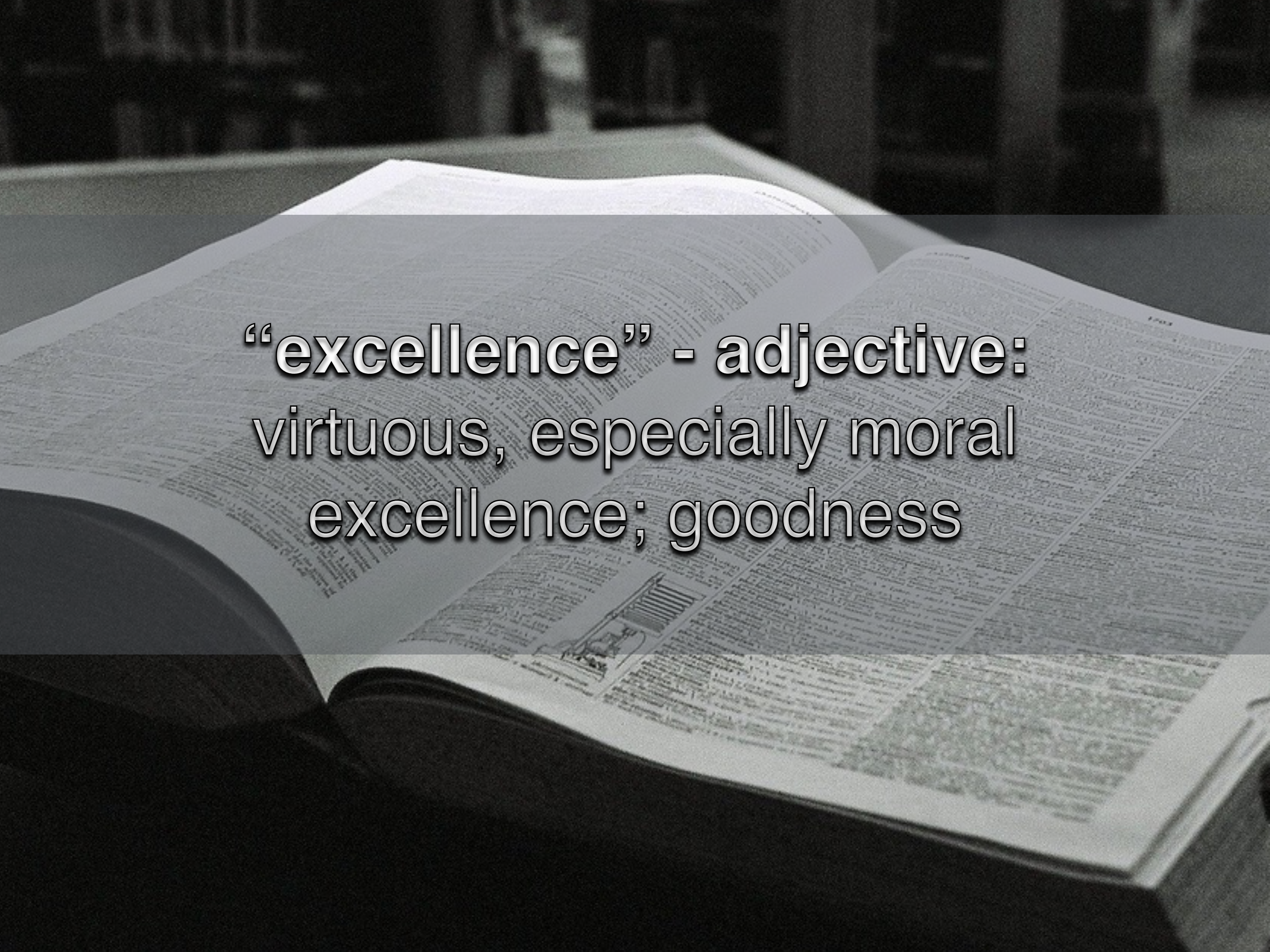
- whatever is true,
- whatever is honorable,
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- whatever is pure,
- whatever is lovely,
- **whatever is commendable,**
- if there is any excellence,
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An open newspaper is shown from a high-angle perspective, lying flat. The pages are filled with text and some small illustrations. A semi-transparent rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the newspaper, containing white text with a subtle drop shadow. The background is dark and out of focus.

**“commendable” - adjective:**  
worthy of being commended or  
praised; laudable; praiseworthy,  
of good and reputable report

- whatever is true,
- whatever is honorable,
- whatever is just,
- whatever is pure,
- whatever is lovely,
- whatever is commendable,
- **if there is any excellence,**
- if there is anything worthy of praise,



An open book is shown from a high angle, lying flat. The pages are filled with dense, small text, likely a dictionary or encyclopedia. A semi-transparent dark grey rectangular box is centered over the book, containing white text with a subtle drop shadow. The background is dark and out of focus.

**“excellence” - adjective:**  
virtuous, especially moral  
excellence; goodness

- whatever is **true,**
- whatever is **honorable,**
- whatever is **just,**
- whatever is **pure,**
- whatever is **lovely,**
- whatever is **commendable,**
- if there is any **excellence,**
- **if there is anything worthy of praise,**

## Philippians 4

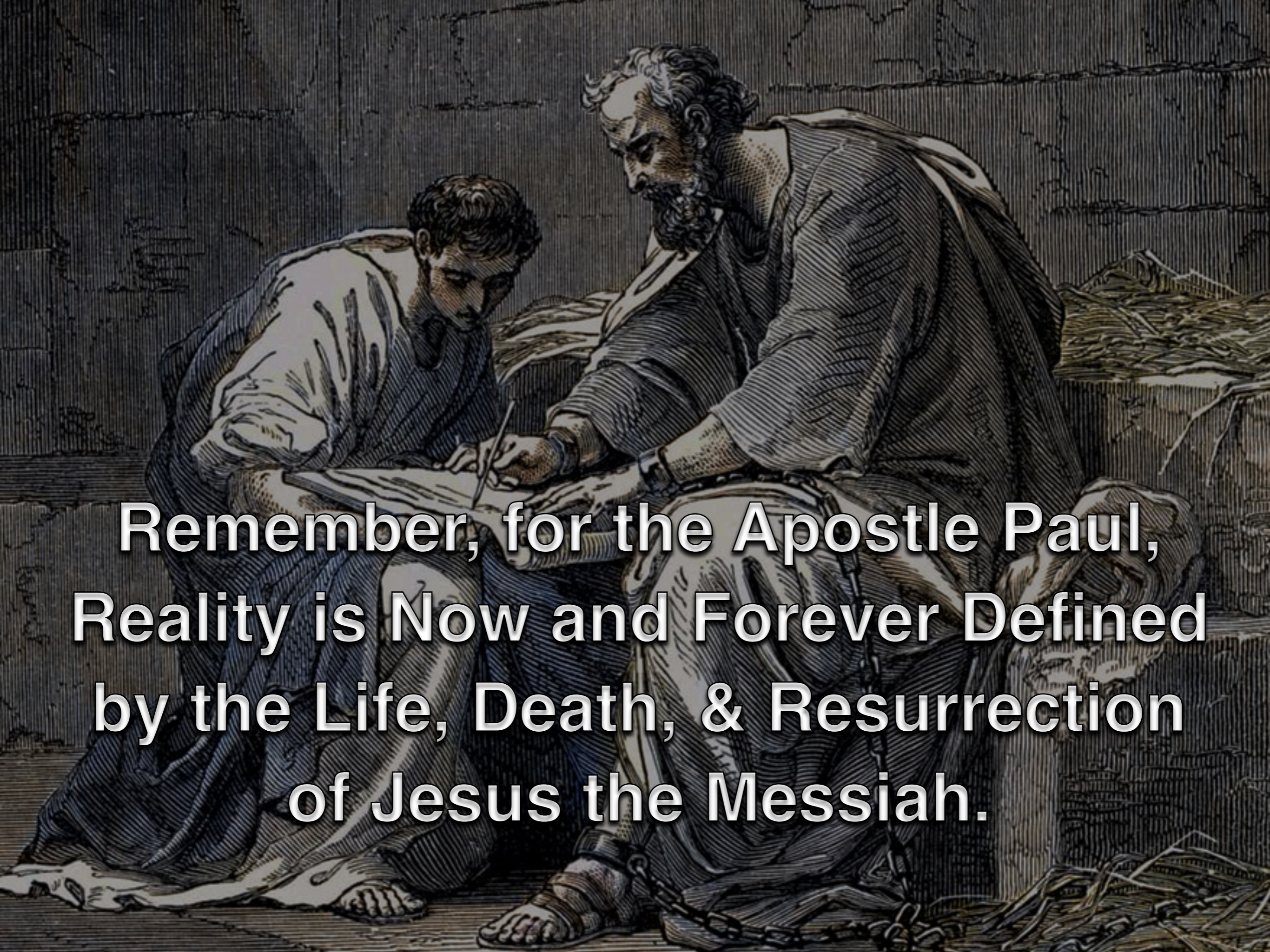
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8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, **think** about these things.

*“to consider, to reflect upon, to take into account”*



**There are things in this world that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, excellent and worthy of praise, but like sunbeams we should trace the beams back to their origin.**



**Remember, for the Apostle Paul,  
Reality is Now and Forever Defined  
by the Life, Death, & Resurrection  
of Jesus the Messiah.**

**...we take captive  
every thought to make  
it obedient to Christ.**

**The Apostle Paul**  
— 2 Corinthians 10:5 —



# Buffalo Survivors to Shooter: 'You Will Not Escape the Fury of the Almighty'

At Wednesday's sentencing hearing, family members quote Scripture and evoke God's vengeance and mercy.

EMILY BELZ | FEBRUARY 15, 2023 03:02 PM

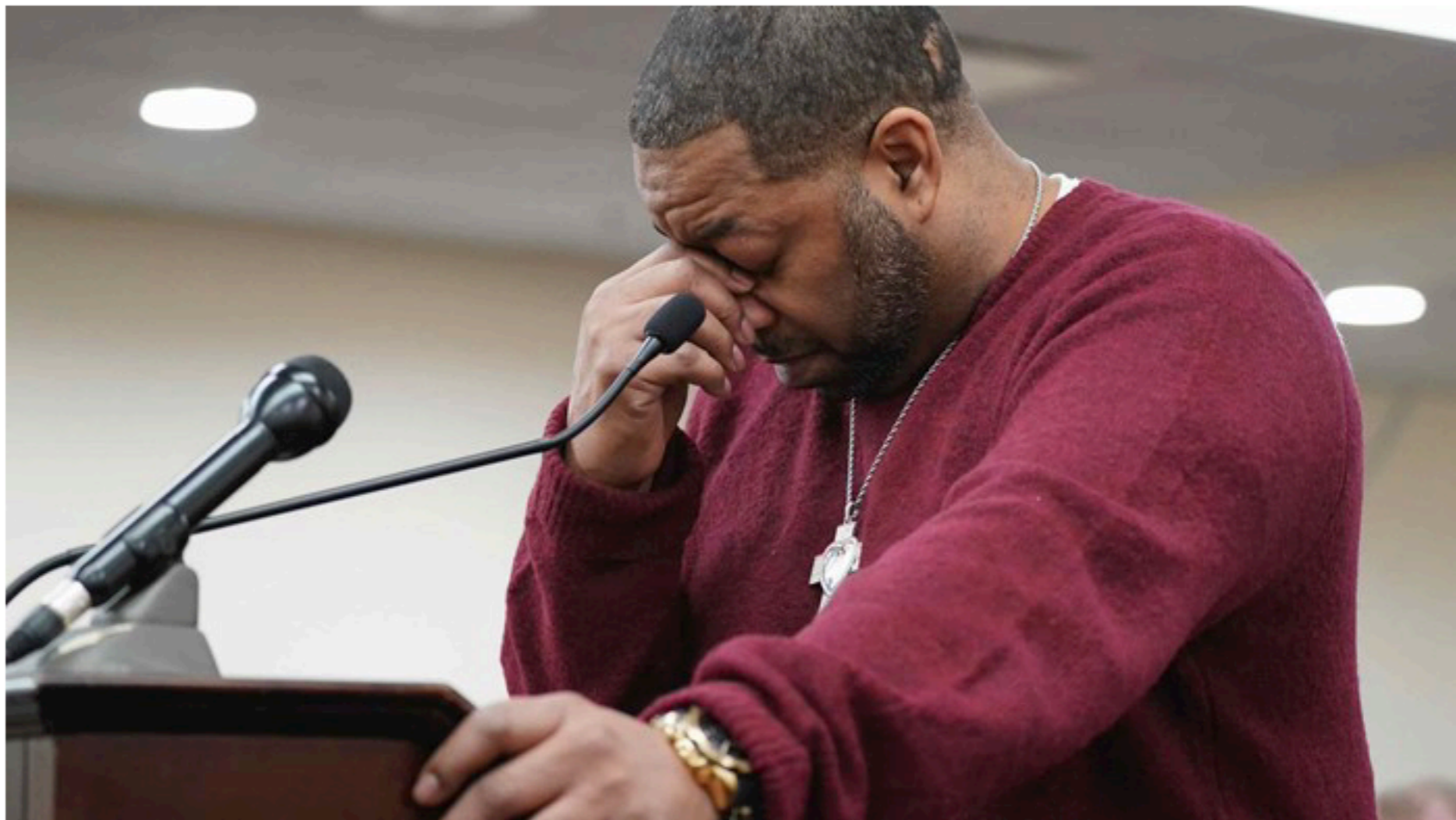


Image: Derek Gee/The Buffalo News via AP, Pool

## Buffalo Survivors to Shooter:

At the sentencing hearing in New York state court, Kimberly Salter [whose husband had been murdered by the self-described racist] stated that “God is love, and he offers love to each and every one of us.” The widow recited John 3:16 [“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life”], ...then she read the entirety of Psalm 35, an imprecatory prayer:



## Buffalo Survivors to Shooter:

**“Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor who seek after my life. Let those be turned back and brought to confusion who plot my hurt. Let them be like chaff before the wind and let the angel of the Lord chase them. Let their way be dark and slippery.... All my bones shall say, “Lord who is like you? Delivering the poor from him to who is too strong for him. Yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders them?”**

## Buffalo Survivors to Shooter:

**Michelle Spight, who lost an aunt and a cousin in the shooting, read a statement from Pamela Young Pritchett, the daughter of victim Pearl Young. She mentioned that Young had been shot several times so that the family could not have an open casket at her funeral. Pritchett said she had to decide whether that last image of her mother's disfigured face would "take up residency in my mind."**

# Buffalo Survivors to Shooter: 'You Will Not Escape the Fury of the Almighty'

At Wednesday's sentencing hearing, family members quote Scripture and evoke God's vengeance and

erney

EMILY BELZ

FEBRUARY 15, 2023 03:02 PM

**“Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right and pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise,” she read from Philippians. “This will take up residency in my mind.”**

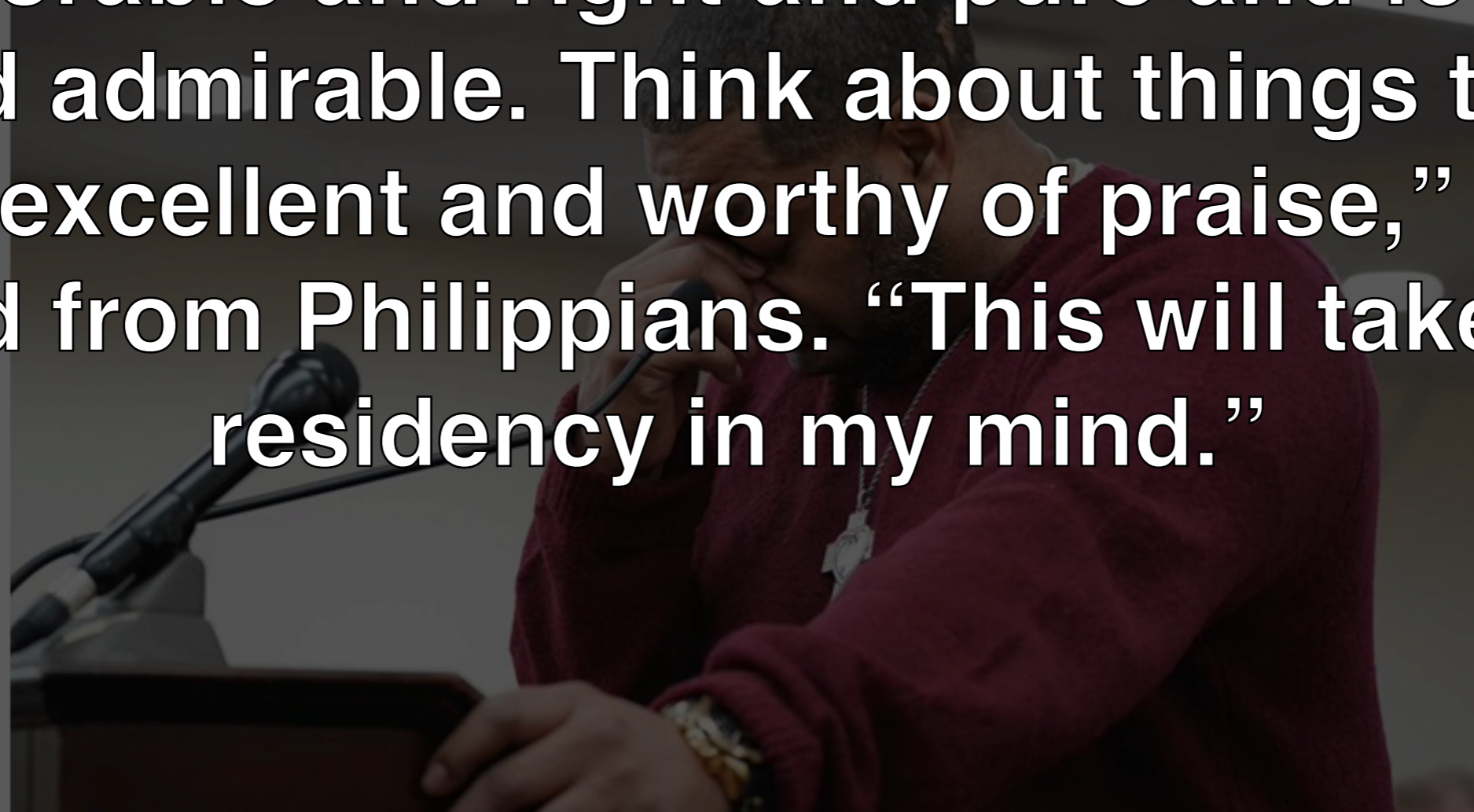


Image: Derek Gee/The Buffalo News via AP, Pool

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At Wednesday's sentencing hearing, family members quote Scripture and evoke God's vengeance and mercy.

Then Spight read a statement from Fred Morrison, whose brother Margus Morrison was killed. Morrison shared that his mother, since her son's death, had a stroke and can't speak.

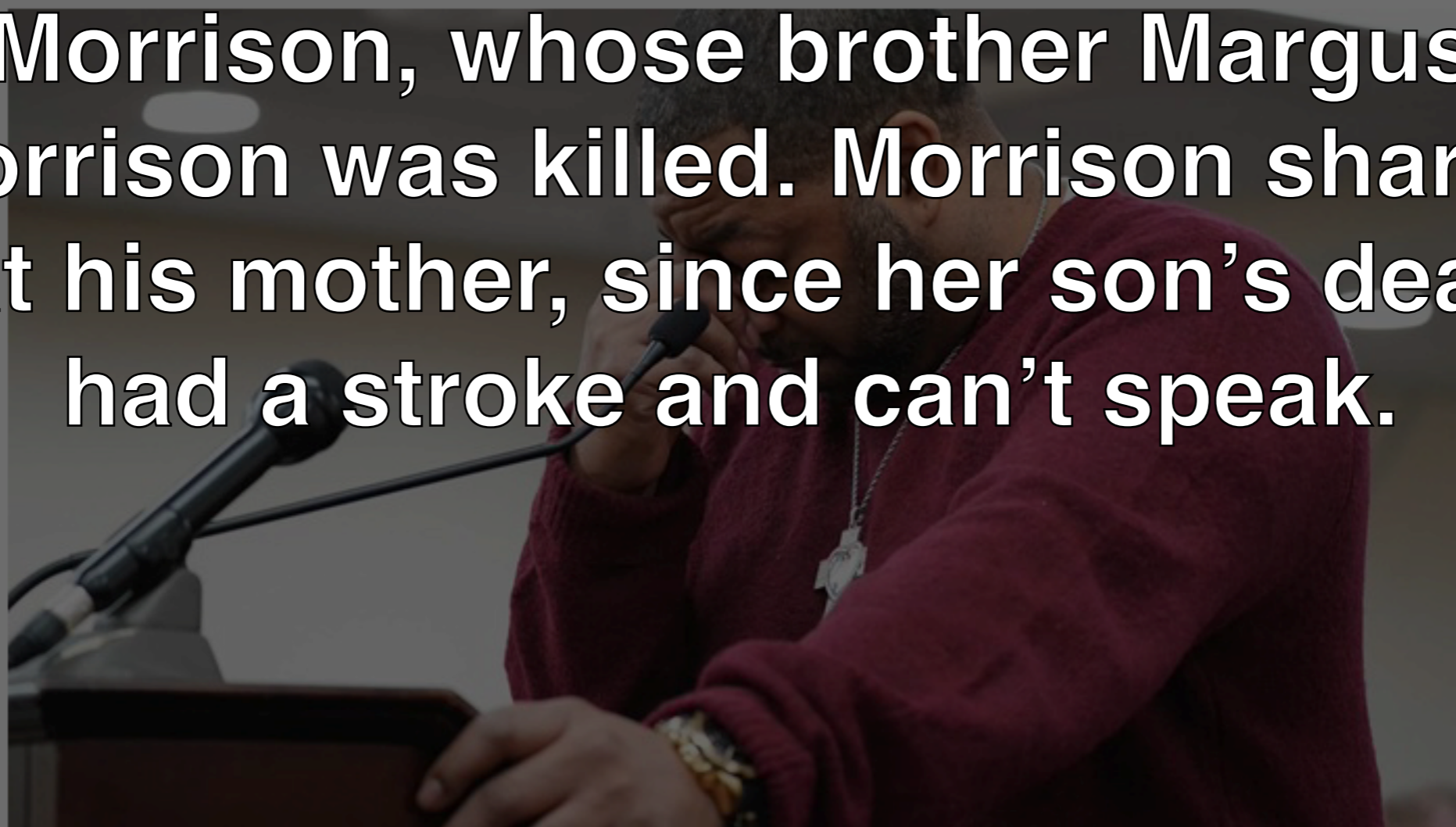


Image: Derek Gee/The Buffalo News via AP, Pool

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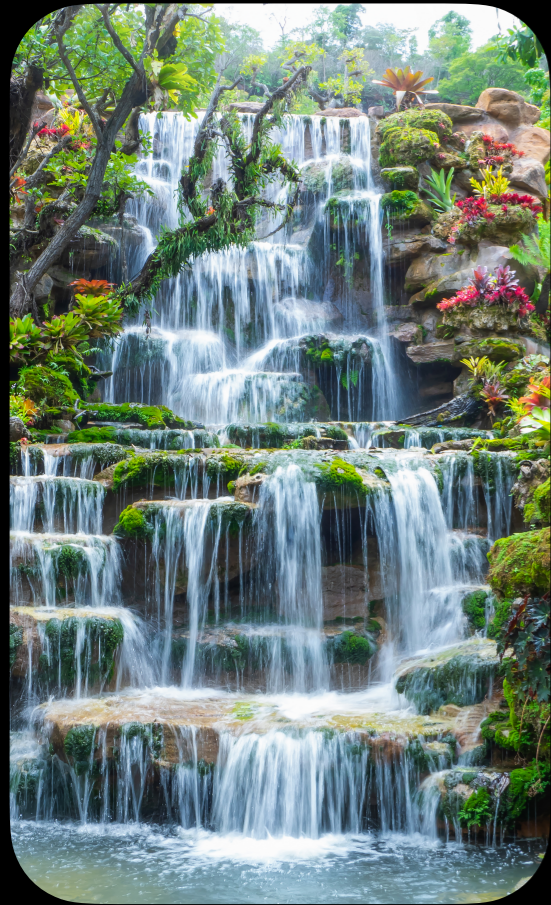
**Spight turned to face [the shooter] and read from Morrison's statement: "There is One...that sees all, and you will not escape the fury of the Almighty. One Scripture is true in the Bible: 'Vengeance is mine,' says the Lord. And he will repay.'" People clapped in the courtroom.**

**“I pray he is merciful, because I, too, need mercy,” she read on. “I pray he is merciful to let you live so you can be reminded of the innocent blood ... behind your calculated, sinister, and demonic act, that caused my beloved brother to be snatched from our family. If you do not know God... I invite you to find him. Because you are going to need him. With deep sorrow, Fred Morrison, brother of Margus Morrison.”**

— Emily Belz, *Christianity Today*, Feb 15, 2023 —

# — The Four Part Story of the World —

Part 1



**Creation**

Part 2



**Rebellion**

Part 3



**Redemption**

Part 4



**Restoration**

“the renewal of all things” / “the kingdom” ←

**For Paul, the attributes  
that should take up  
residence in our minds  
belong preeminently  
to Jesus and  
His coming Kingdom.**





## Philippians 4

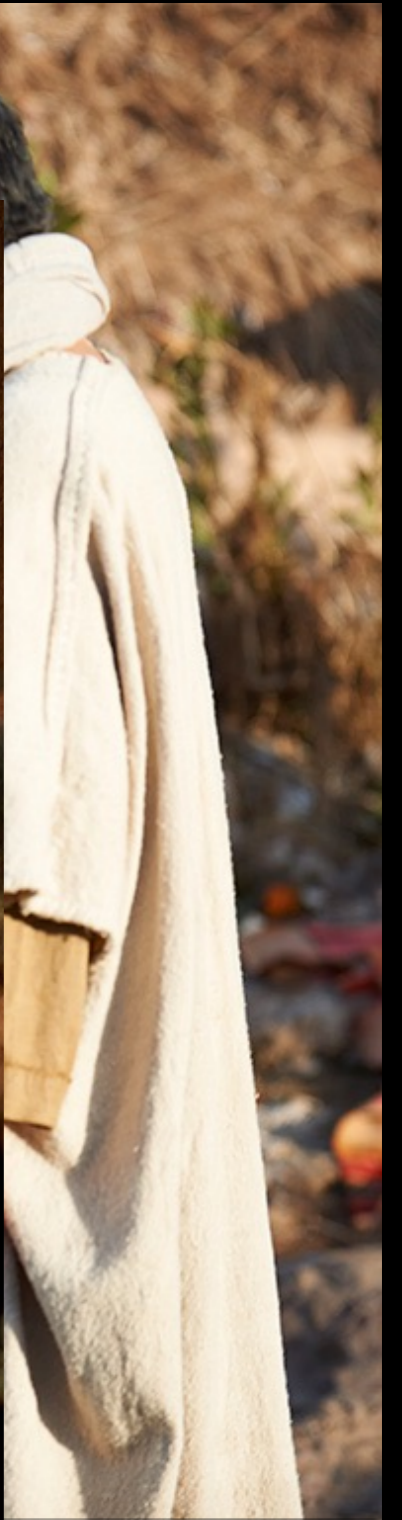
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**9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.**

## Philippians 4

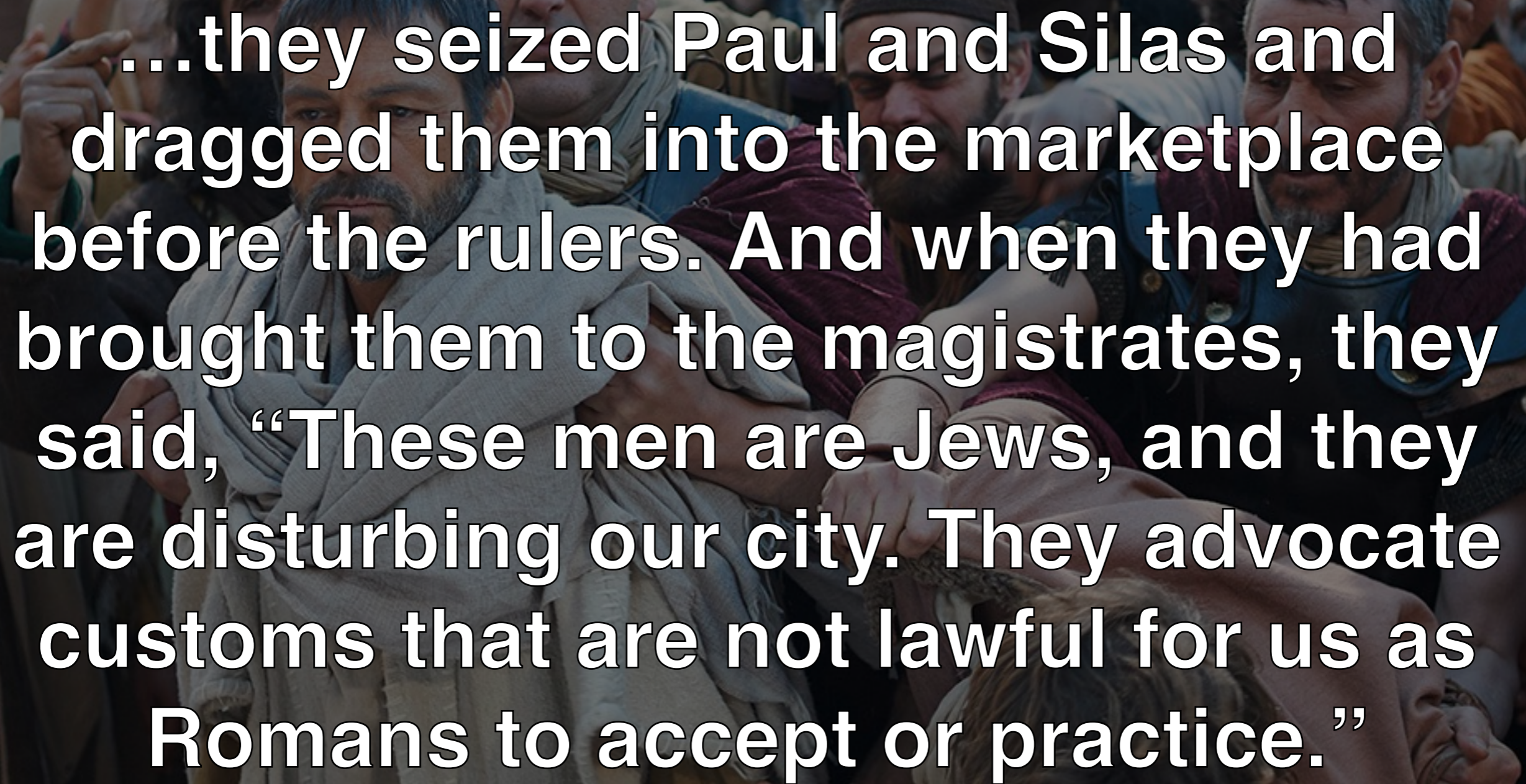
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9 What you have **learned and received** and **heard and seen in me**—**practice these things,** and the God of peace will be with you.

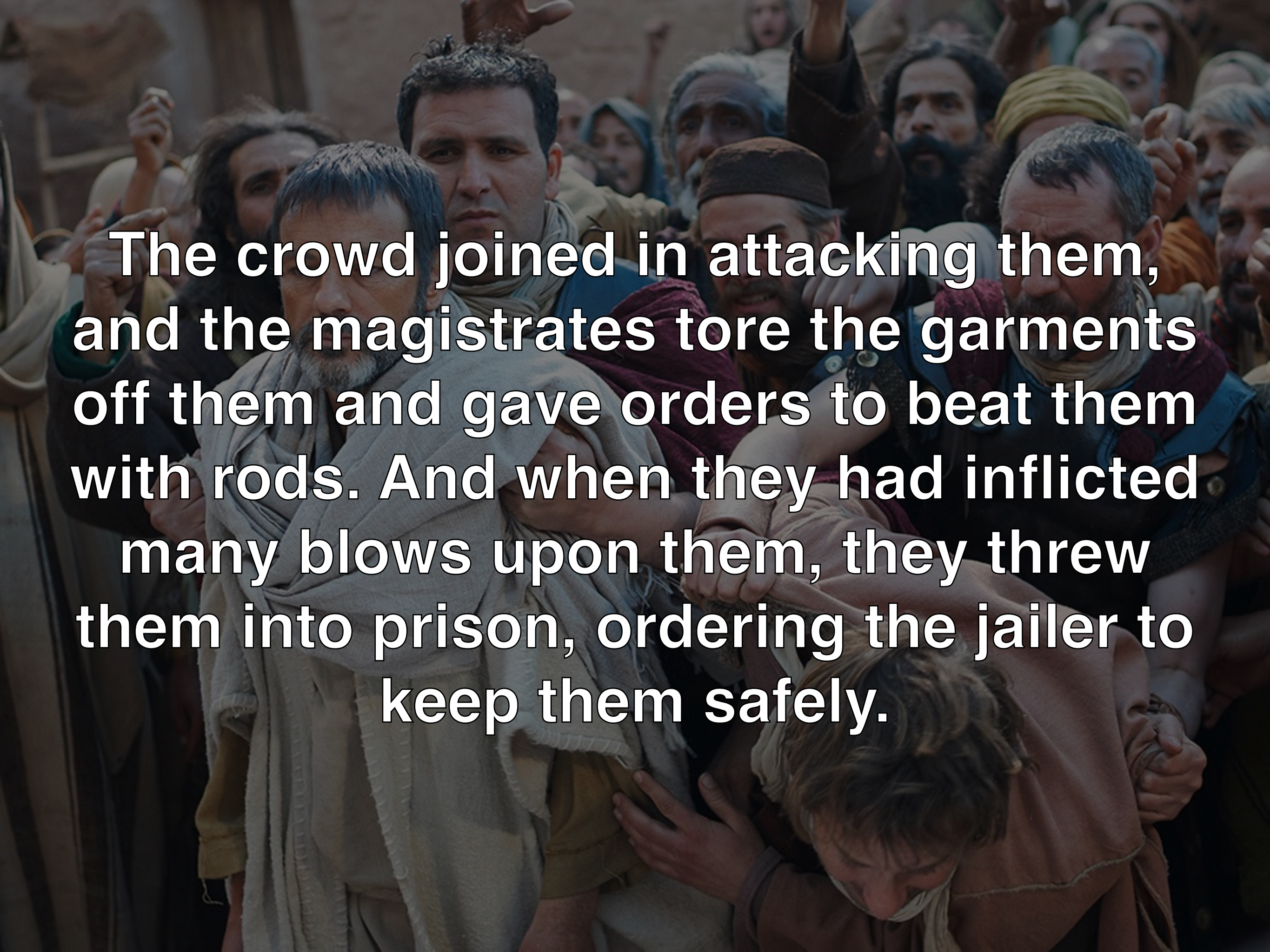




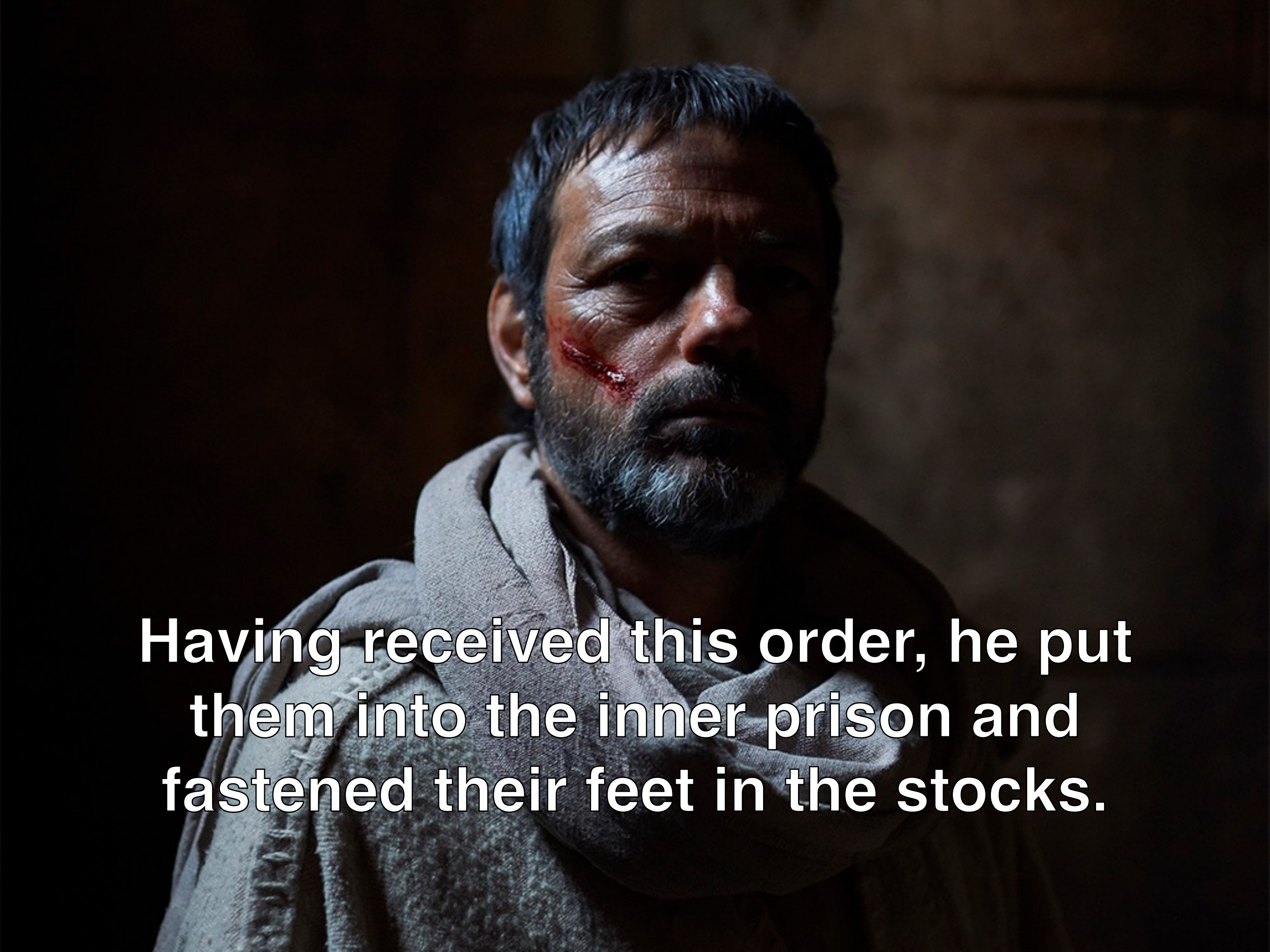


A crowd of people in ancient attire, with one man being held back by others. The scene is set in a marketplace or public square, with many people looking on. The man being held back is wearing a white robe and has a beard. The crowd is diverse, with men and women of various ages and ethnicities. The overall atmosphere is one of tension and conflict.

...they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.”

A dense crowd of people in historical attire, likely from a biblical or historical film. In the foreground, a man with a beard and a white robe is being held back by others. To his right, another man is being restrained, and a third man is bowing his head. The background shows a large group of people with various expressions, some looking towards the camera and others looking away. The overall scene suggests a moment of conflict or a public event.

The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely.


A close-up photograph of a man with a dark beard and hair. He has a visible, bloody laceration on his right cheek. He is wearing a grey, textured hooded garment. The background is dark and out of focus.

**Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.**

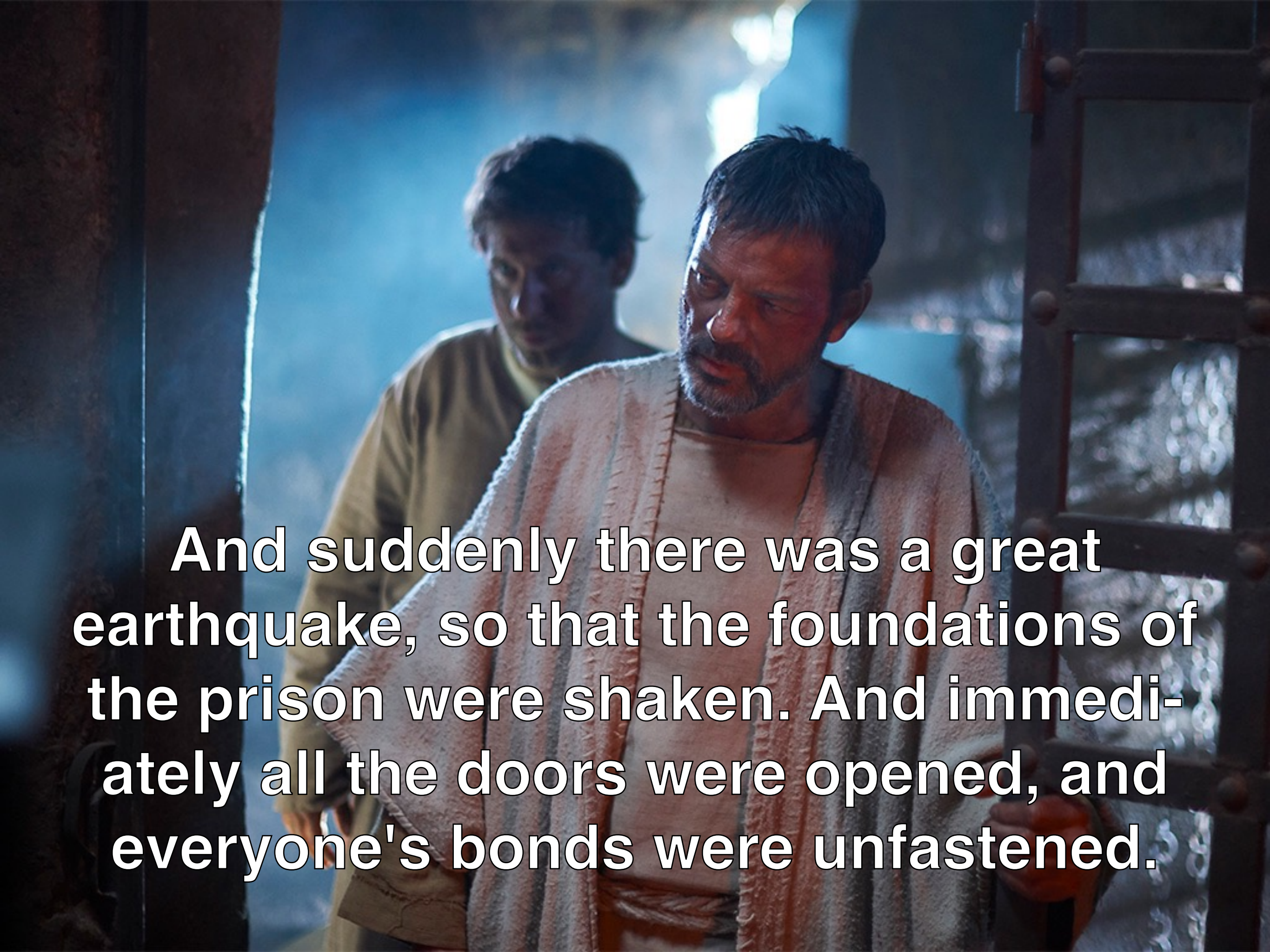


**About midnight Paul and Silas were  
praying and singing hymns to God...**

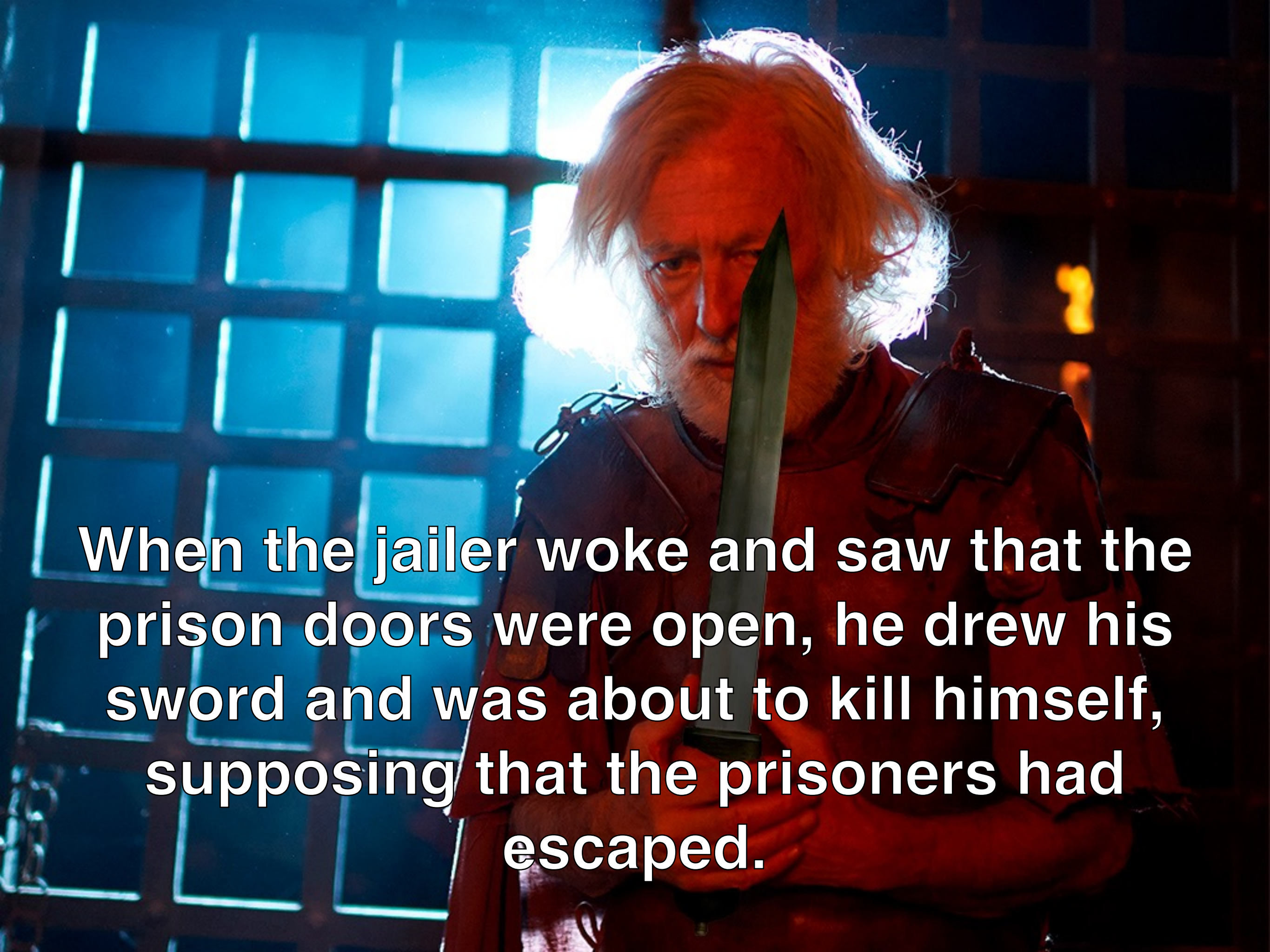




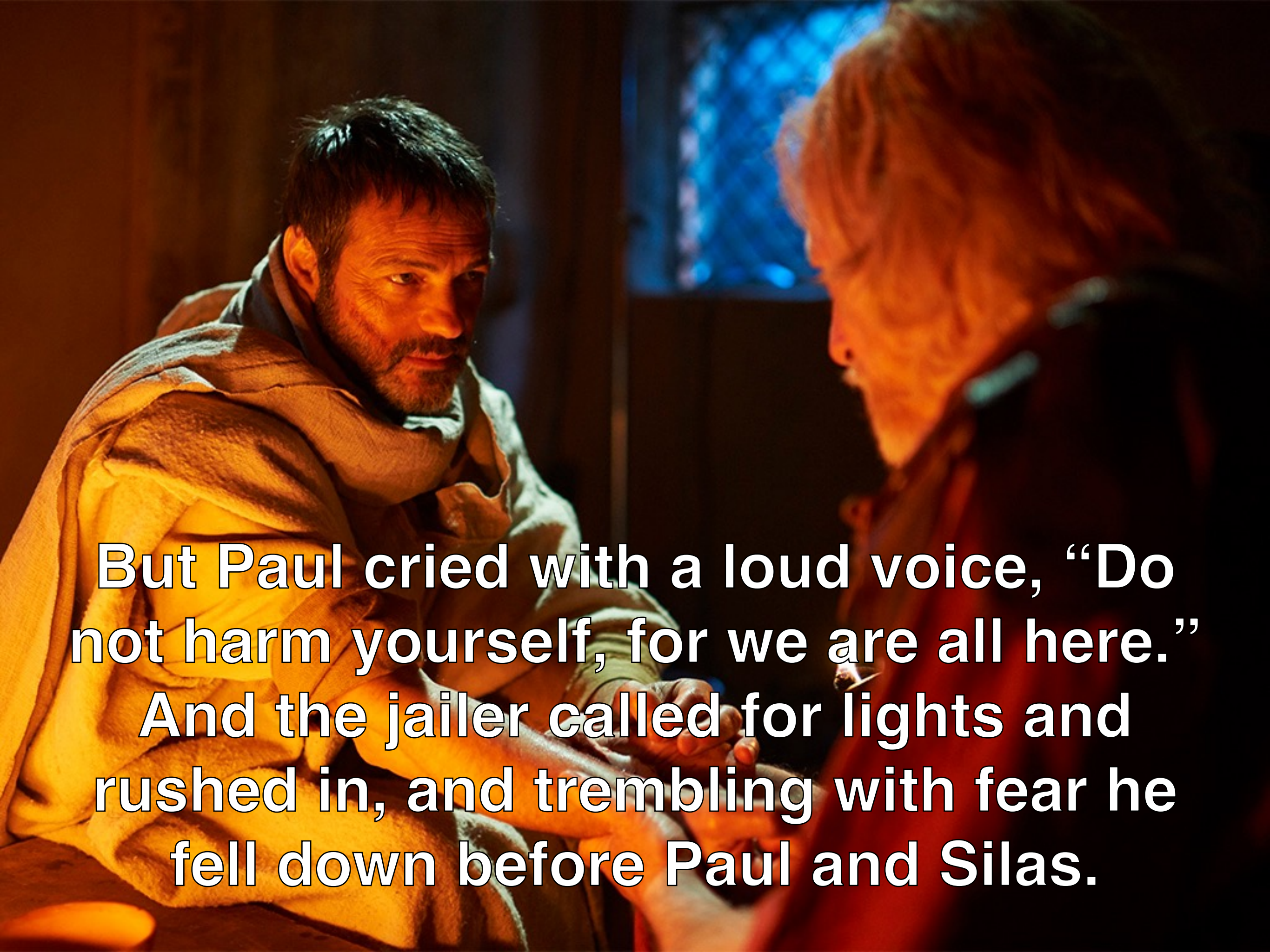
...and the prisoners  
were listening  
to them.

A man with a beard and dark hair, wearing a white, textured robe, is looking down with a somber expression. He is standing in a dimly lit, blue-toned environment that appears to be a prison or a place of confinement. In the background, another man in a brown tunic is visible, looking towards the foreground. The scene is characterized by strong shadows and a cool, blue color palette.

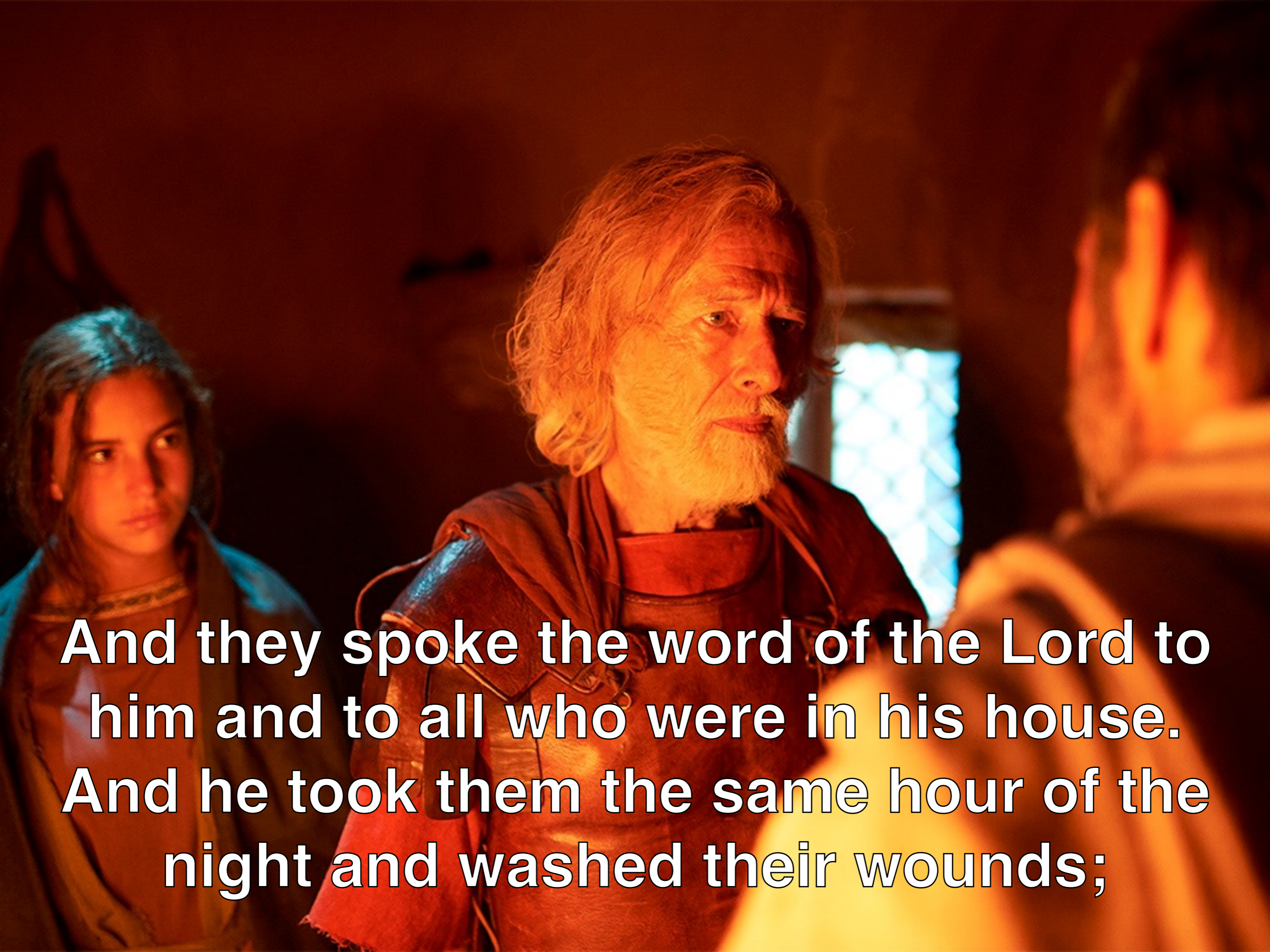
**And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened.**



When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.



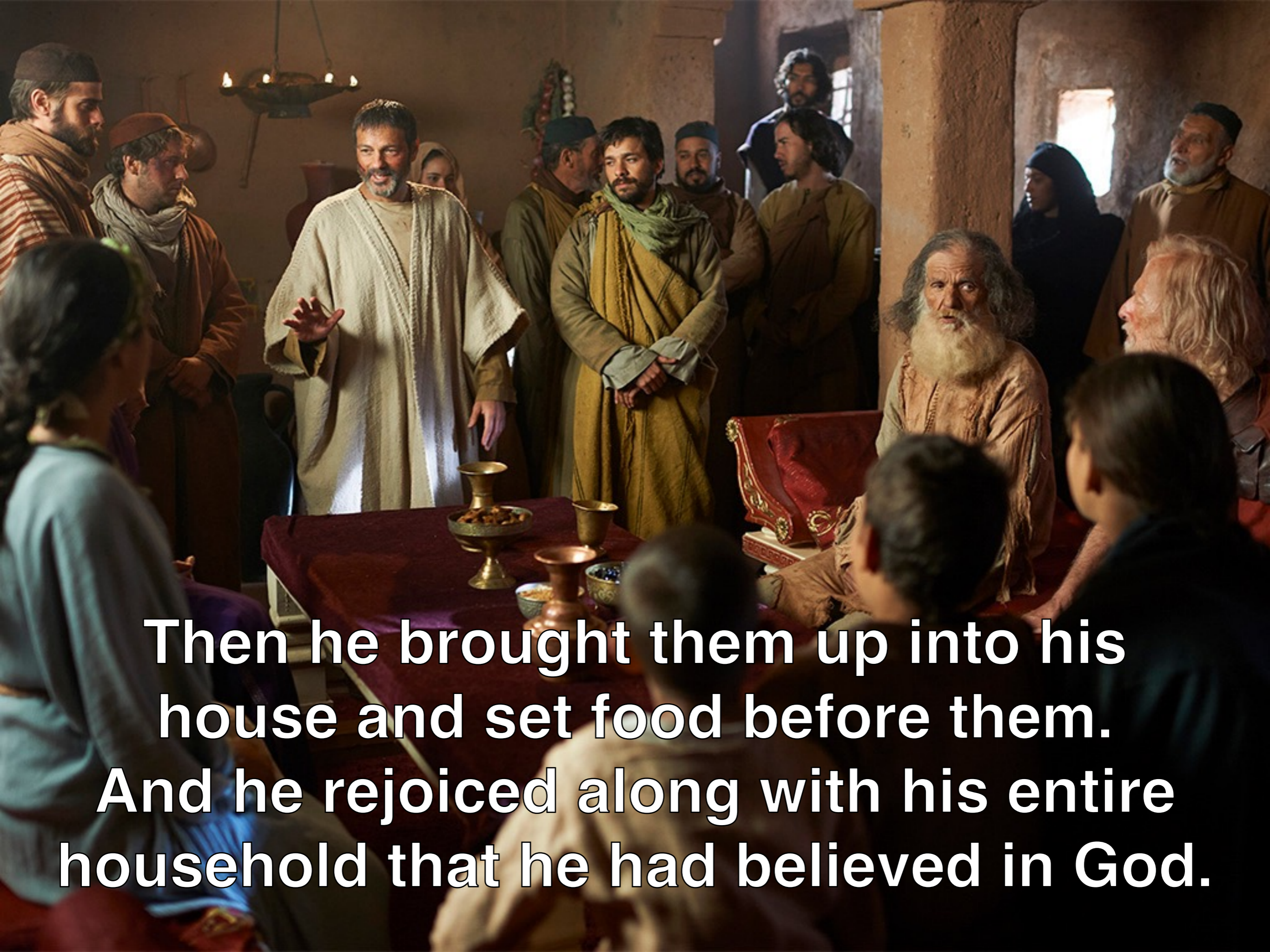
**But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.”**  
**And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas.**



**And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds;**

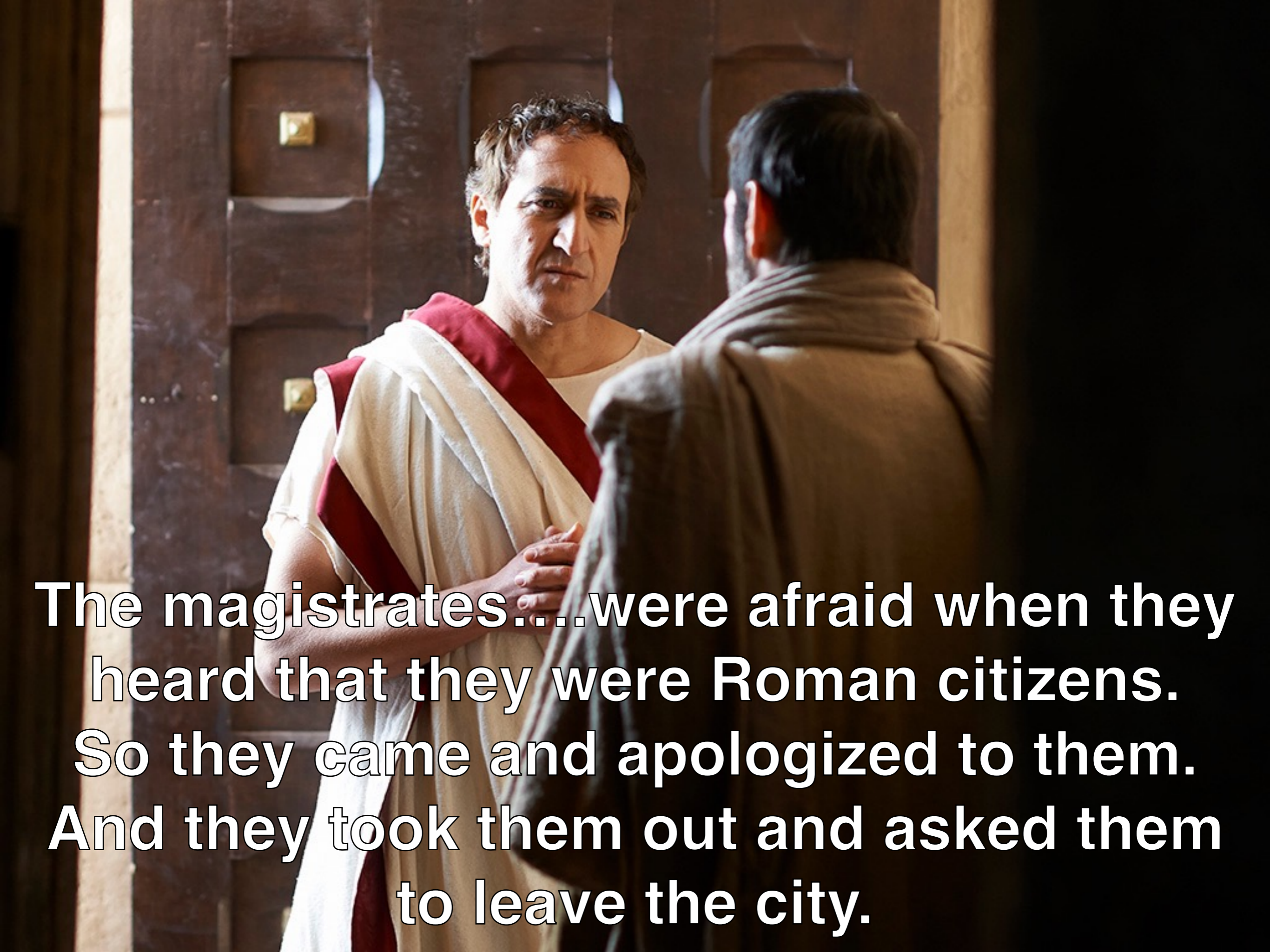


and he was baptized at once,  
he and all his family.

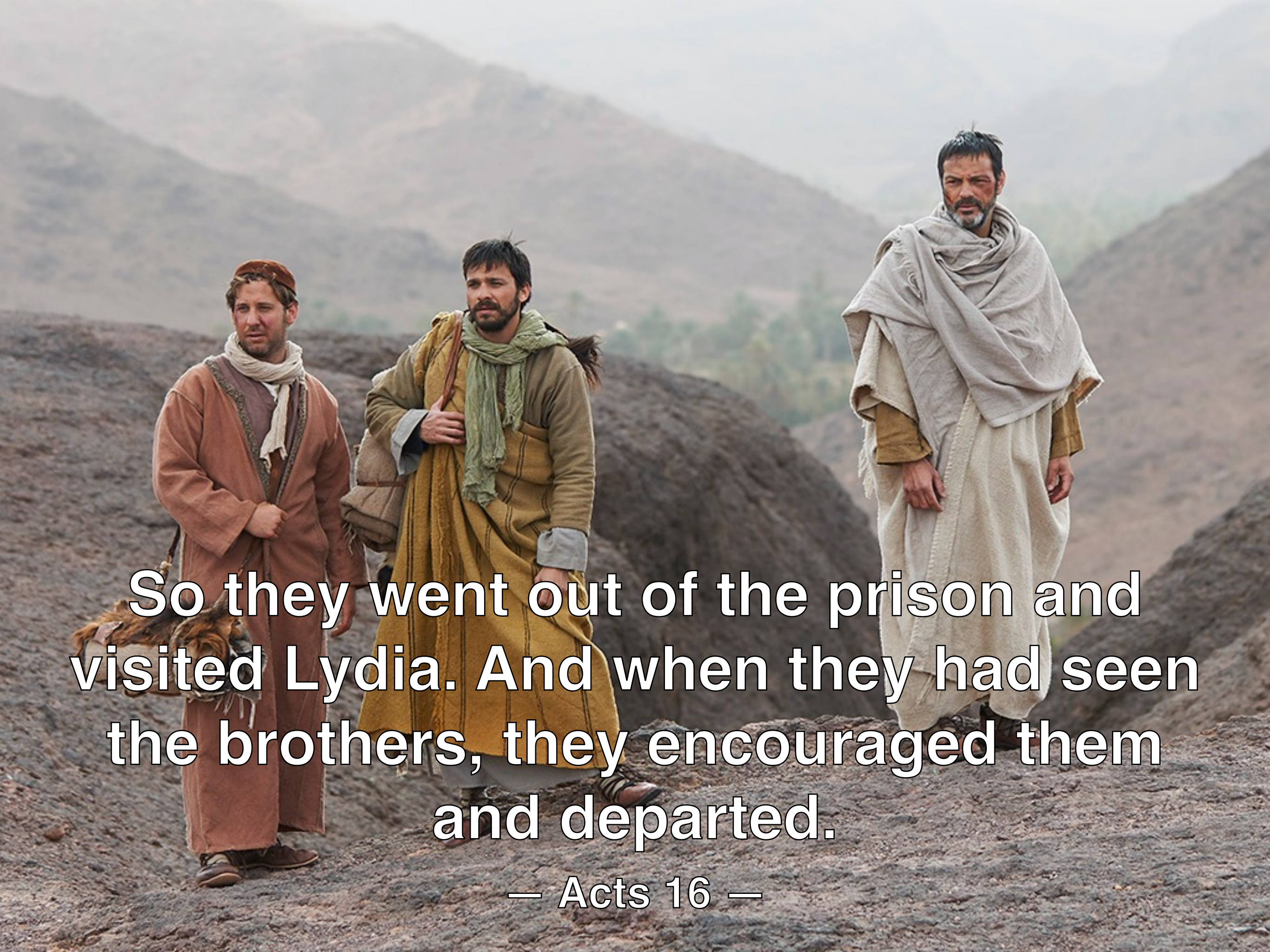


**Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.**





The magistrates....were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens. So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.

A cinematic photograph of three men in ancient, rugged clothing standing on a rocky, mountainous landscape. The man on the left wears a brown robe and a head covering. The man in the center wears a yellowish-brown robe and a green scarf. The man on the right wears a white robe and a white shawl. They appear to be in conversation or preparing for a journey. The background shows misty, layered mountain ranges under a soft, overcast sky.

So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

— Acts 16 —

## Philippians 4

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9 What you have **learned** and **received** and **heard** and **seen in me** — **practice these things**, and the God of peace will be with you.

## Philippians 4

---

9 What you have **learned and received** and **heard and seen in me** — **practice these things**, and the God of peace will be with you.


“For to me to live is Christ,  
and to die is gain.”

— Philippians 1.27 —

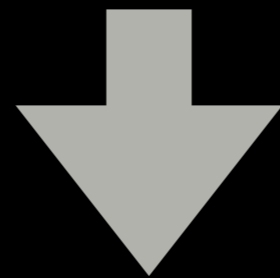
## Philippians 4

---

9 What you have **learned and received** and **heard and seen in me** – practice these things, and **the God of peace** will be with you.



**“the God of peace” = 5x in NT**



**OT “shalom” = flourishing, well being**

**Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.**


— Hebrews 13:20-21 —



**The God of peace  
will soon crush Satan  
under your feet.  
The grace of our  
Lord Jesus Christ  
be with you.**

**The Apostle Paul**  
— Romans 16:20 —

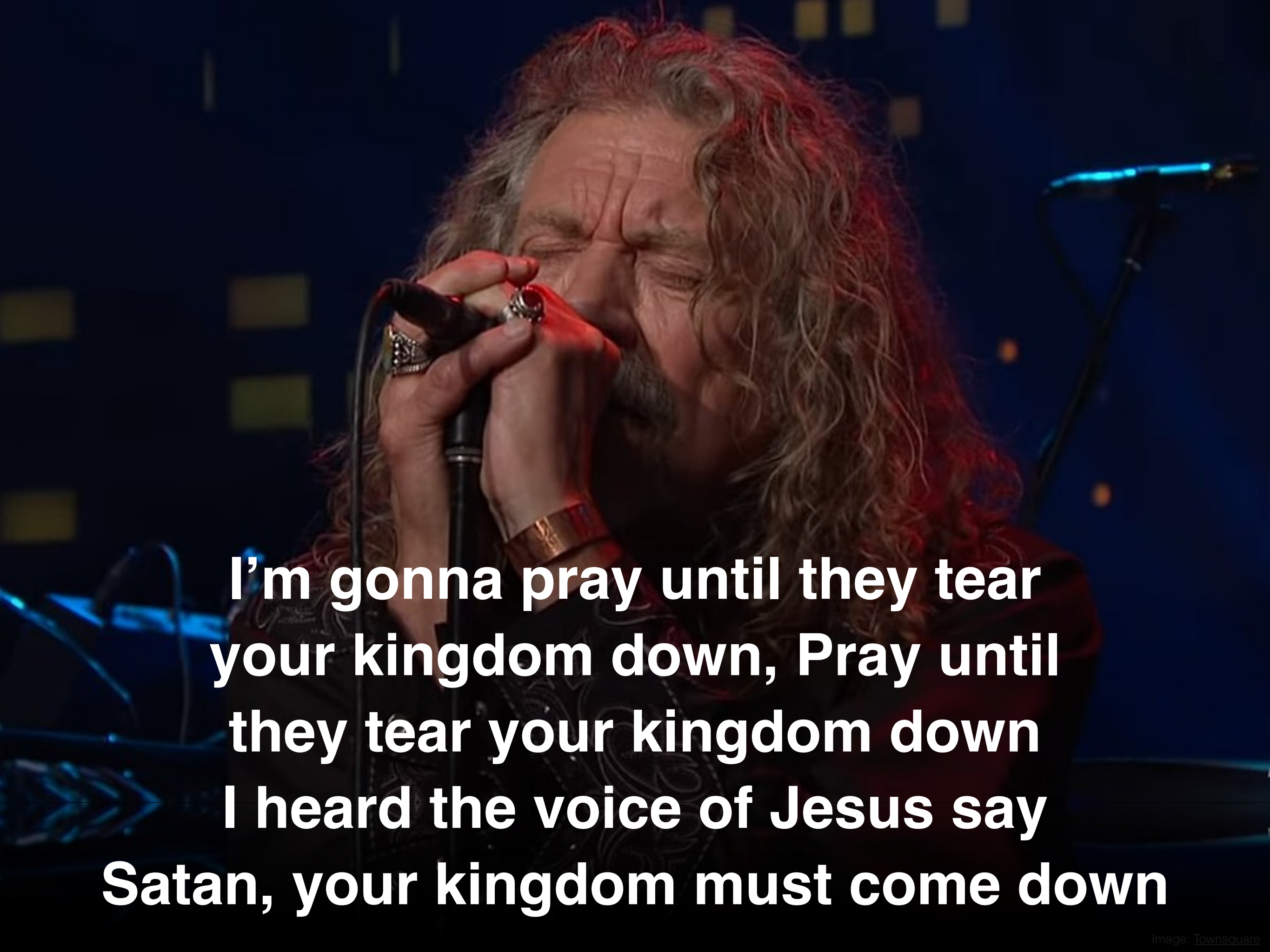


A close-up photograph of Robert Plant performing on stage. He has long, wavy, grey hair and is wearing a dark, patterned shirt. He is holding a microphone with both hands, his eyes are closed, and his expression is one of intense emotion. The background is dark with some blue and yellow stage lights.

**Satan, your kingdom must come down  
Satan, your kingdom must come down  
I heard the voice of Jesus say  
Satan, your kingdom must come down**

— Robert Plant —





**I'm gonna pray until they tear  
your kingdom down, Pray until  
they tear your kingdom down  
I heard the voice of Jesus say  
Satan, your kingdom must come down**

**Maybe—just  
maybe, the most  
important word  
in Philippians  
4:4-9 is the  
little word “and.”**

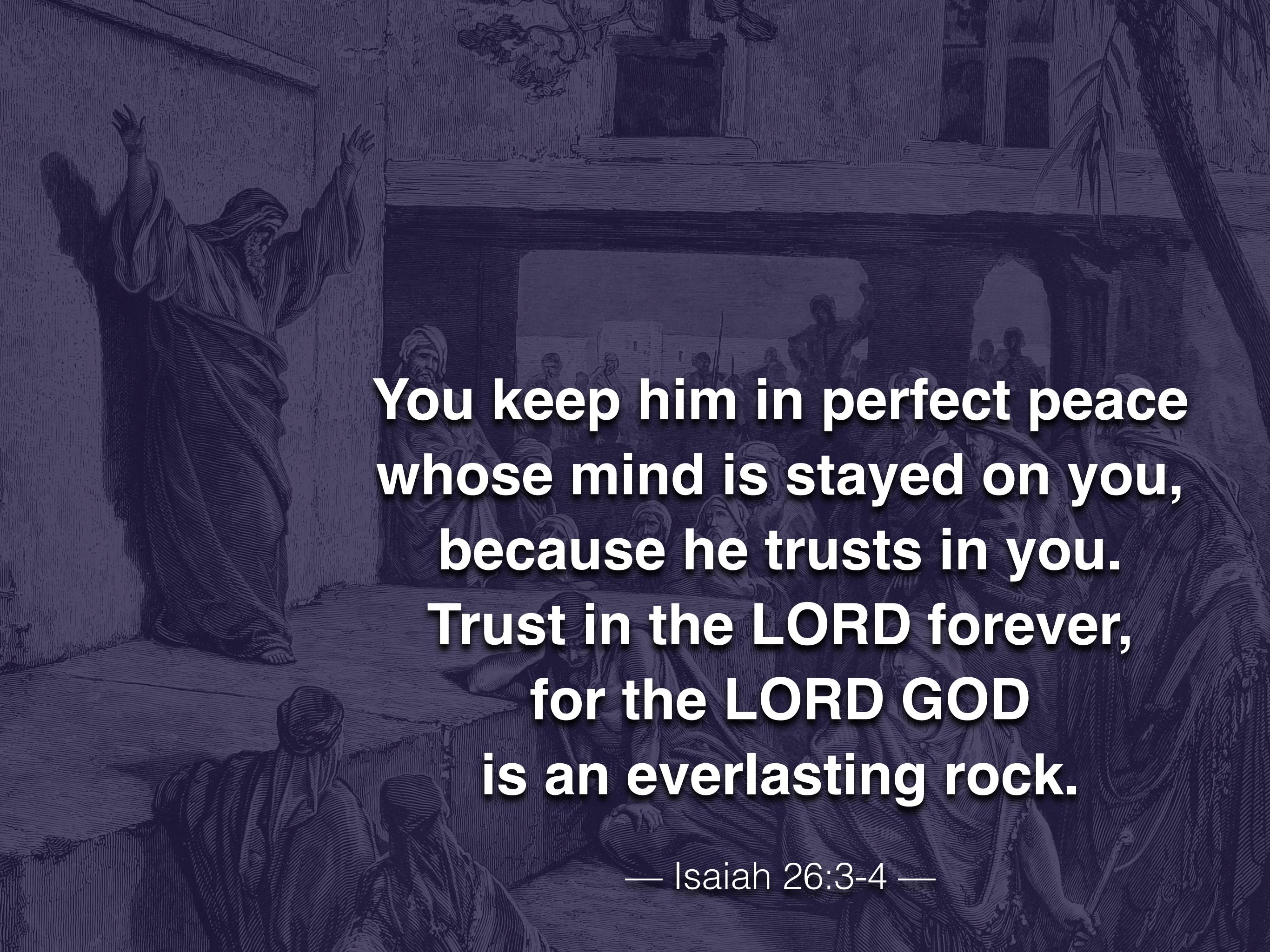


**Do not be anxious about anything,  
but in everything by prayer and  
supplication with thanksgiving let  
your requests be made known to God.**

**AND the peace of God,** which surpasses  
all understanding, will guard your  
hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Whatever is true, honorable, just,  
pure, lovely, commendable, excellent,  
and worthy of praise, think about  
these things.**

**Practice these things,  
AND the God of peace  
will be with you.**



**You keep him in perfect peace  
whose mind is stayed on you,  
because he trusts in you.  
Trust in the LORD forever,  
for the LORD GOD  
is an everlasting rock.**

— Isaiah 26:3-4 —



**Let's Fill our Minds with the Good News  
about Jesus and His Coming Kingdom**

**Do not be conformed  
to this world, but be  
transformed by the  
renewal of your mind,  
that by testing you  
may discern what is  
the will of God, what is  
good and acceptable  
and perfect.**



**The Apostle Paul  
— Romans 12:2 —**

**Jesus was the epitome of everything that is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, & worthy of praise.**







**Jesus bore in His body everything that is untrue, dishonorable, unjust, impure, unlovely, blameworthy, detestable, and worthy of condemnation.**

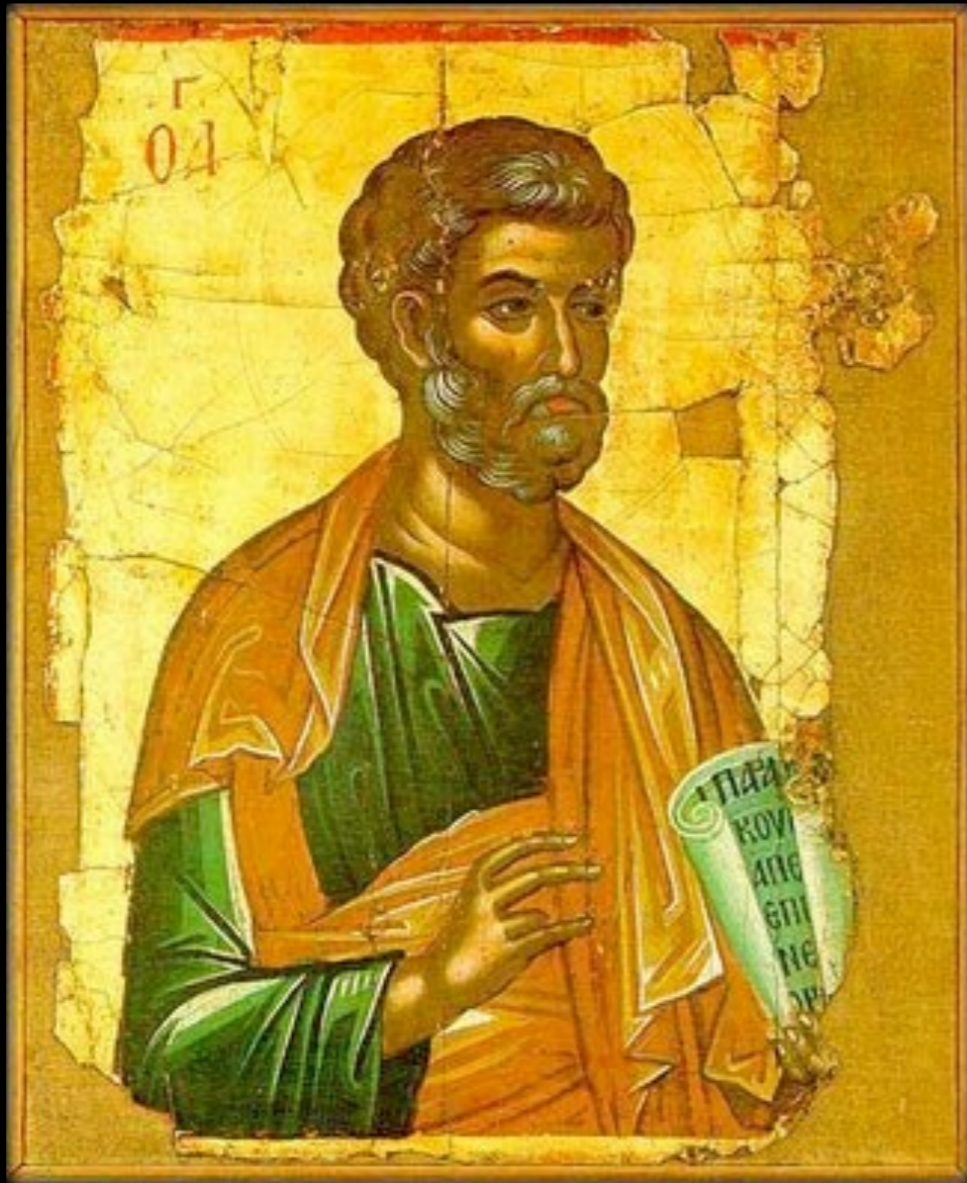
**And let us run with perseverance the race  
marked out for us, fixing our eyes on  
Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith.  
For the joy set before him he endured the  
cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at  
the right hand of the throne of God.**

— Hebrews 12:2-3 —





**The King of God's Kingdom  
is Worthy of Taking Every  
Thought Captive Making  
Them Obedient to Christ**



**In keeping with His  
promise we are  
looking forward to a  
new heaven and a  
new earth where  
righteousness dwells.**

**The Apostle Peter  
in 2 Peter 3:13**

# Joy's Eternal Increase

—Samuel Storms—





**Let's Help Each Other Put These Things Into Practice**

REJOICING  
*in*  
LAMENT



*Wrestling with Incurable  
Cancer & Life in Christ*

J. TODD BILLINGS



REJOICING  
*in*  
LAMENT



*Wrestling with Incurable  
Cancer & Life in Christ*

J. TODD BILLINGS

“

**Get well soon!  
Jesus loves you!  
God is bigger  
than cancer!**

”



REJOICING  
*in*  
LAMENT



*Wrestling with Incurable  
Cancer & Life in Christ*

J. TODD BILLINGS

**Q: What is your only  
comfort in life and  
in death?**

**A. That I belong —  
body and soul, in  
life and in death —  
not to myself but to  
my faithful Savior  
Jesus Christ....**

REJOICING  
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LAMENT



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**who at the cost of  
his own blood has  
fully paid for all my  
sins and has  
completely freed me  
from the dominion  
of the devil;**

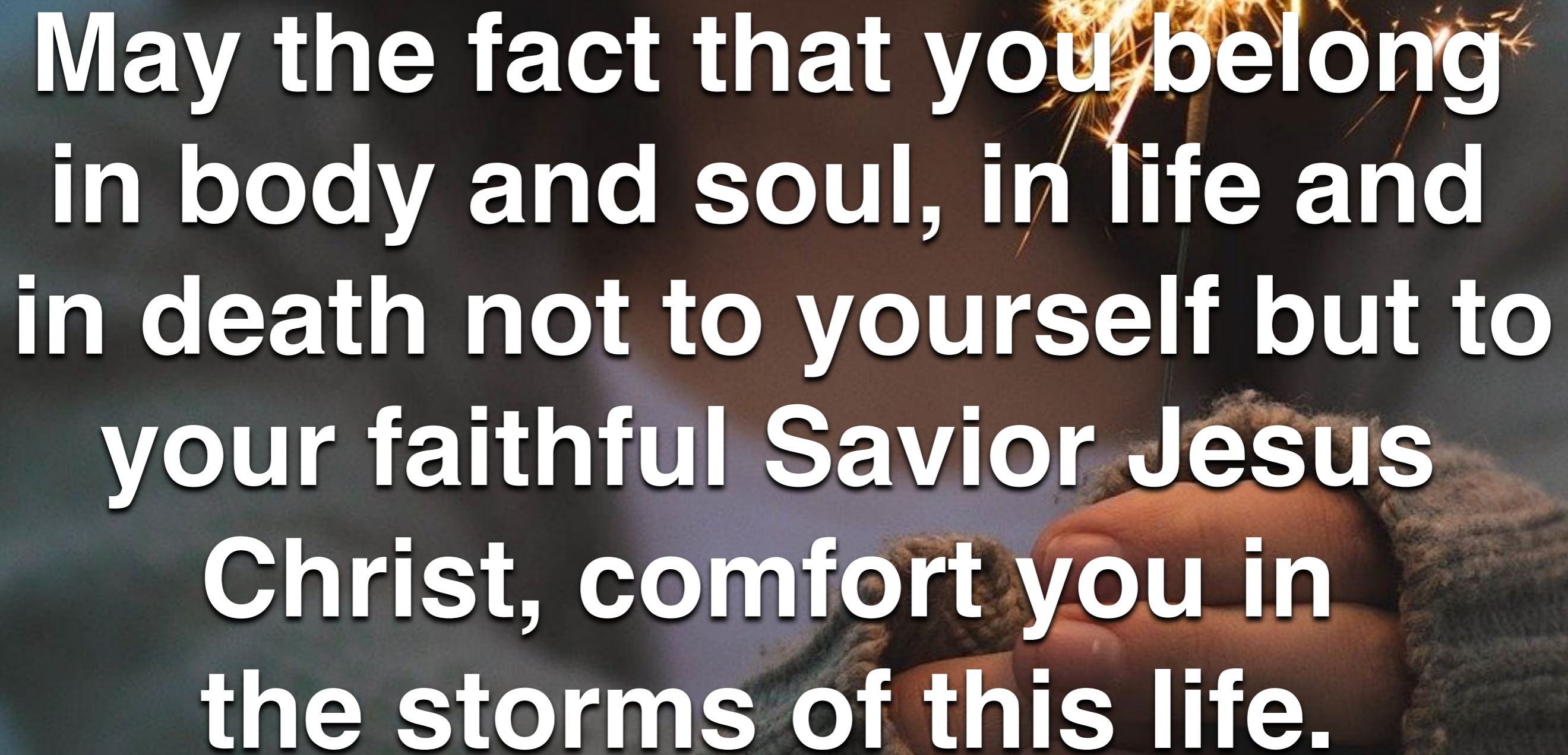
REJOICING  
*in*  
LAMENT



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Cancer & Life in Christ*

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that He protects me  
so well that without  
the will of my Father  
in heaven, not a hair  
can fall from my  
head; indeed, that  
everything must fit  
His purpose for my  
salvation.

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a lit sparkler. The sparkler is bright and glowing, with many sparks flying out. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some faint light patterns. The text is overlaid on the image in a large, white, bold font.

**May the fact that you belong  
in body and soul, in life and  
in death not to yourself but to  
your faithful Savior Jesus  
Christ, comfort you in  
the storms of this life.**