


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 trails. The overall mood is celebratory and joyful.

The Surpassing Greatness of Knowing Christ Jesus

— Philipians 3:1-11 (Part 1) —

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

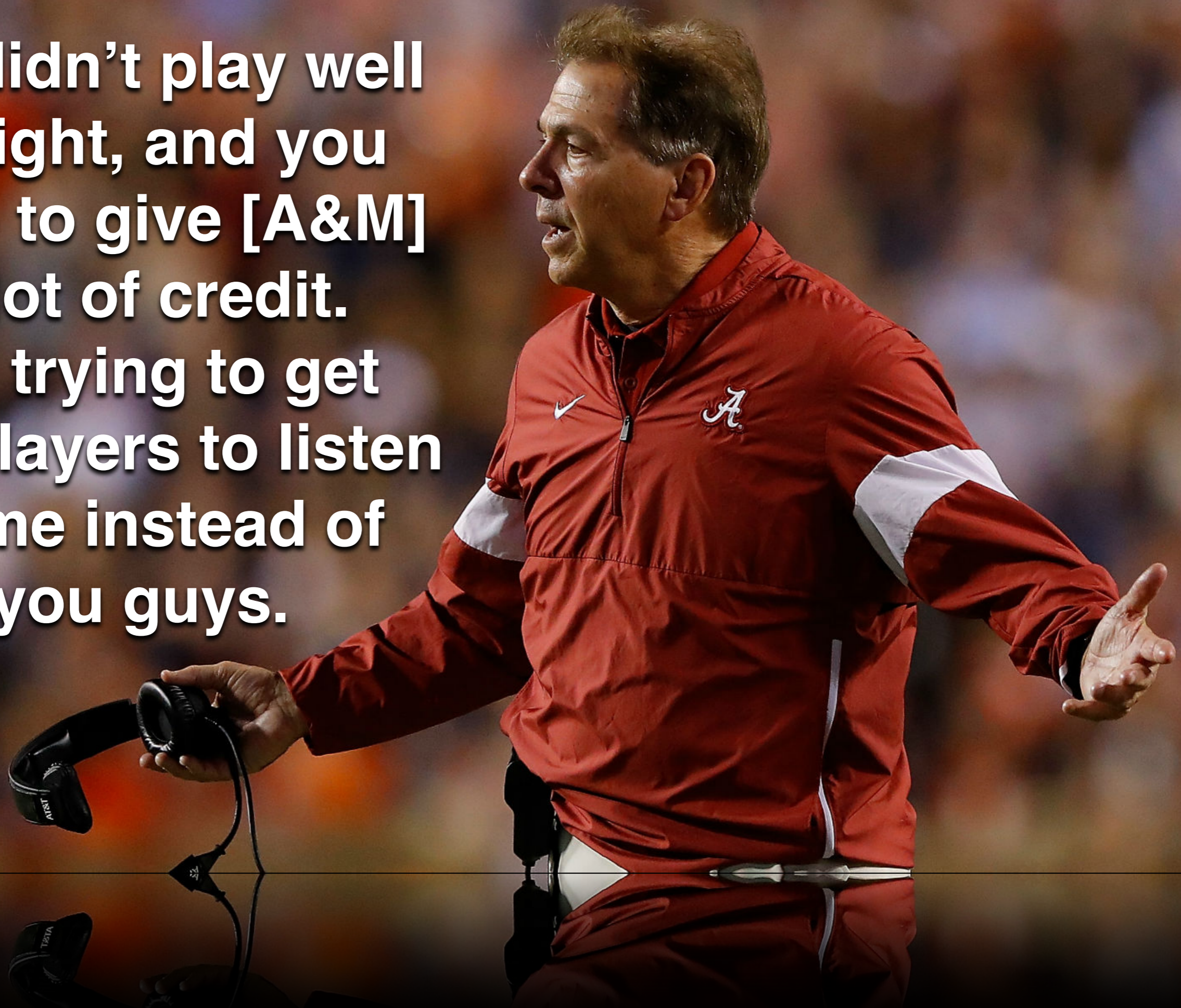
BAMA: 27

A&M: 19

October 7, 2017

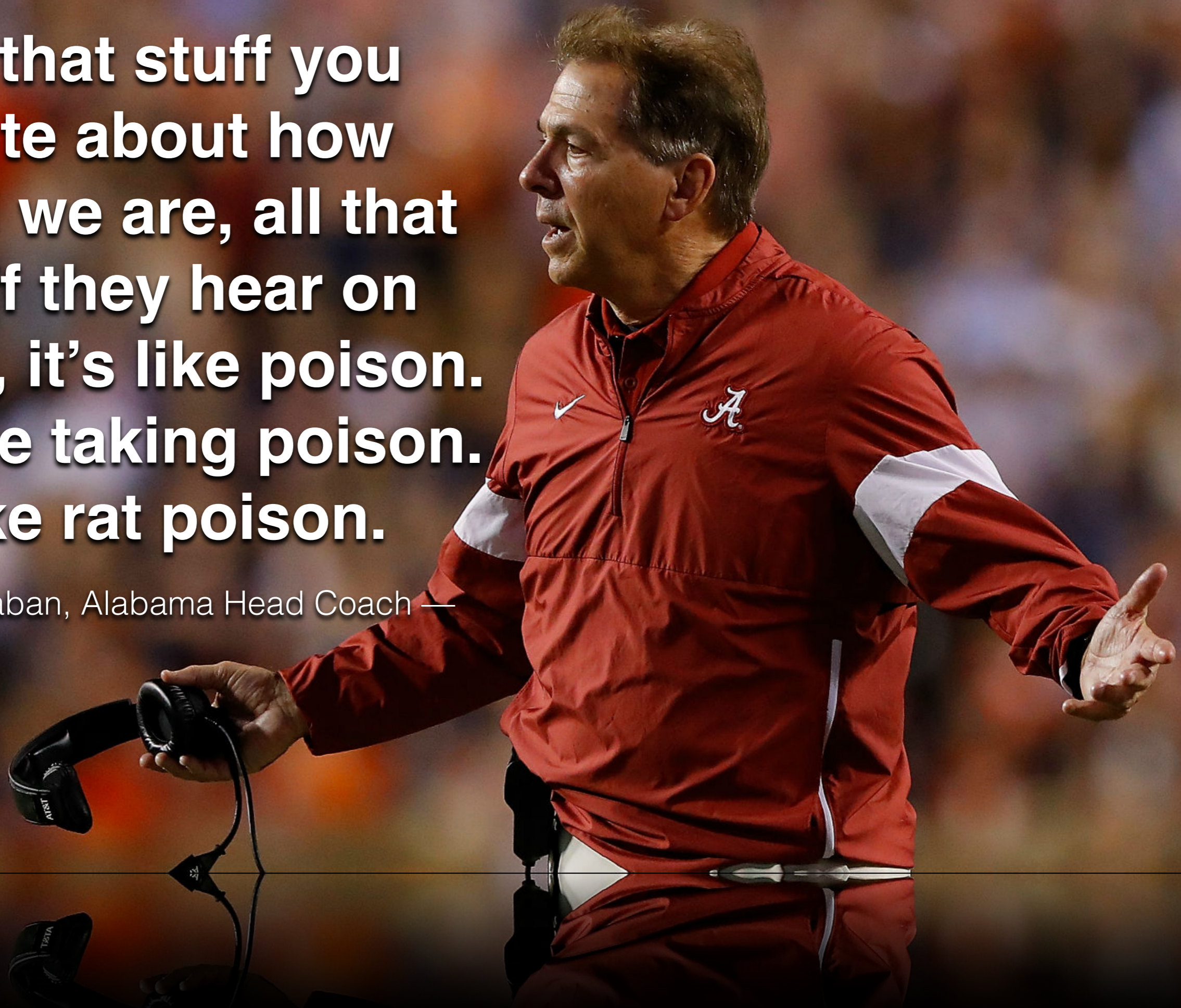


**We didn't play well
tonight, and you
have to give [A&M]
a lot of credit.
I'm trying to get
our players to listen
to me instead of
you guys.**

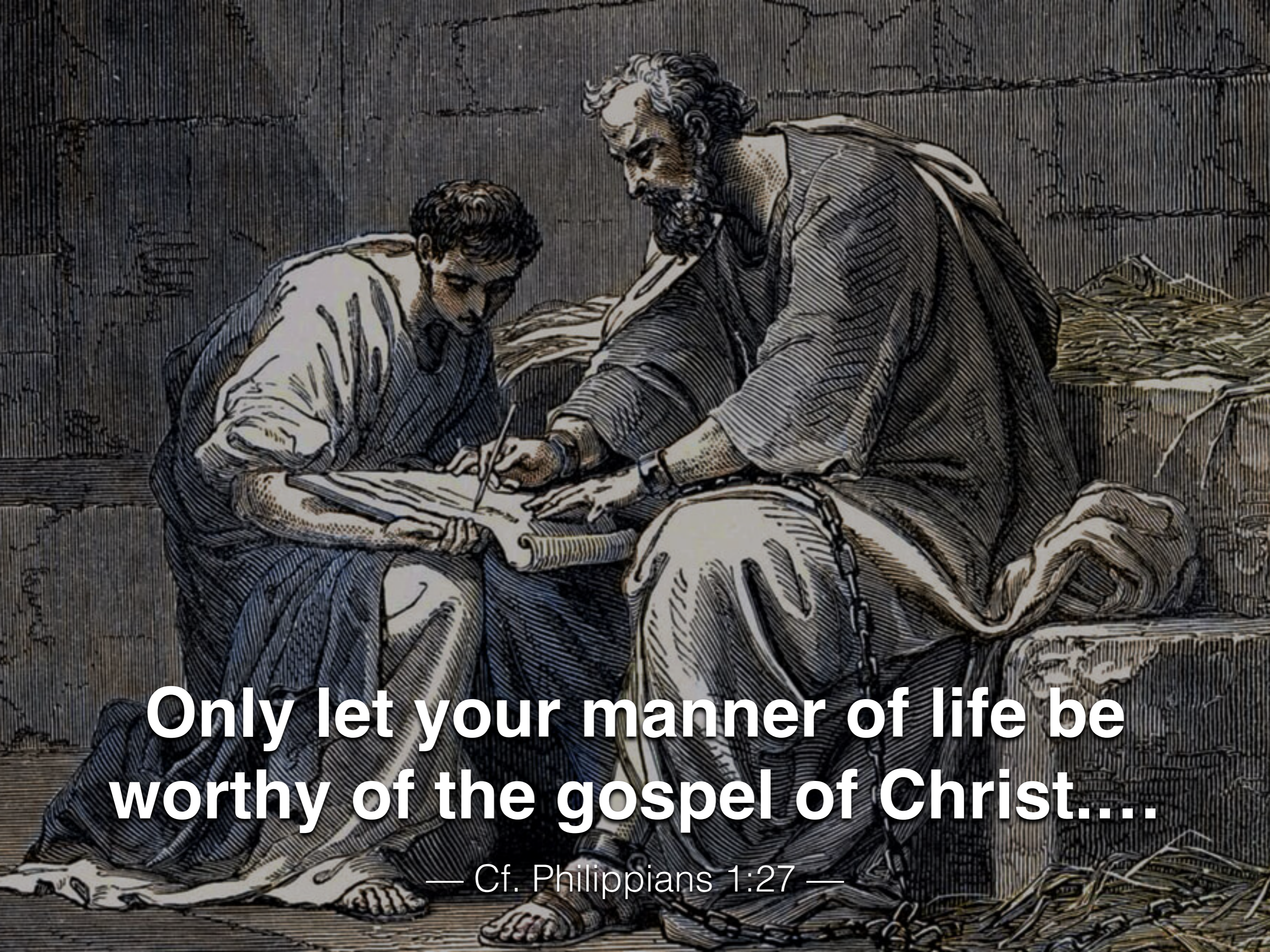


**All that stuff you
write about how
good we are, all that
stuff they hear on
ESPN, it's like poison.
It's like taking poison.
Like rat poison.**

— Nick Saban, Alabama Head Coach —







**Only let your manner of life be
worthy of the gospel of Christ....**

— Cf. Philippians 1:27 —



This seasoned follower of Jesus, knows that there is something so potentially harmful that if it gets into your system will have spiritually lethal consequences and will keep you from being able to glory in Christ Jesus.

A hand holding a lit sparkler against a dark background with a faint circular light.

The Surpassing Greatness of Knowing Christ Jesus

— Philippians 3:1-11 (Part 1) —

Philippians 3

1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

Philippians 3

1 **Finally,** my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

But we're only half way through this letter!





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

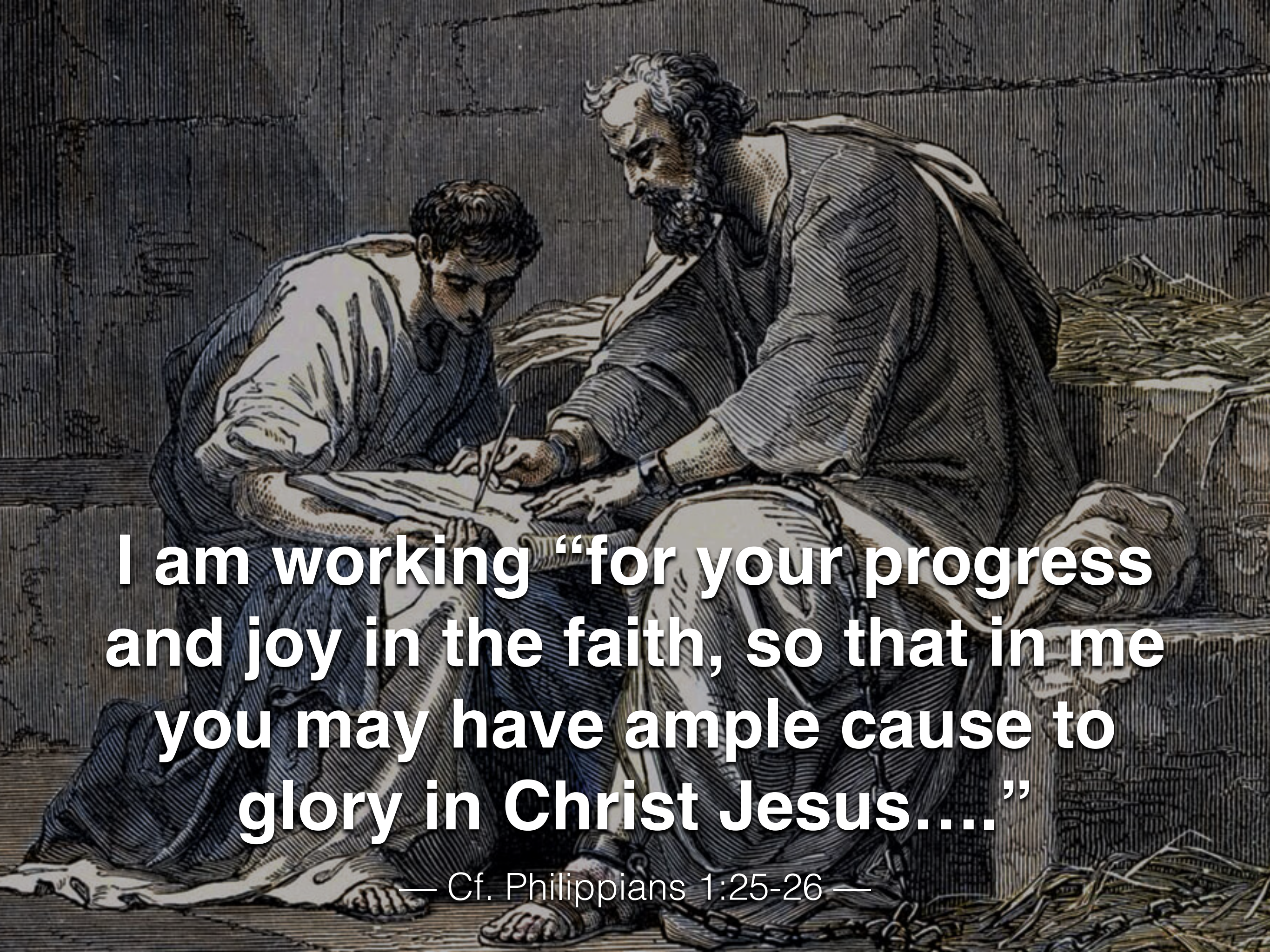
— Philippians 4:4 —

Philippians 3

2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

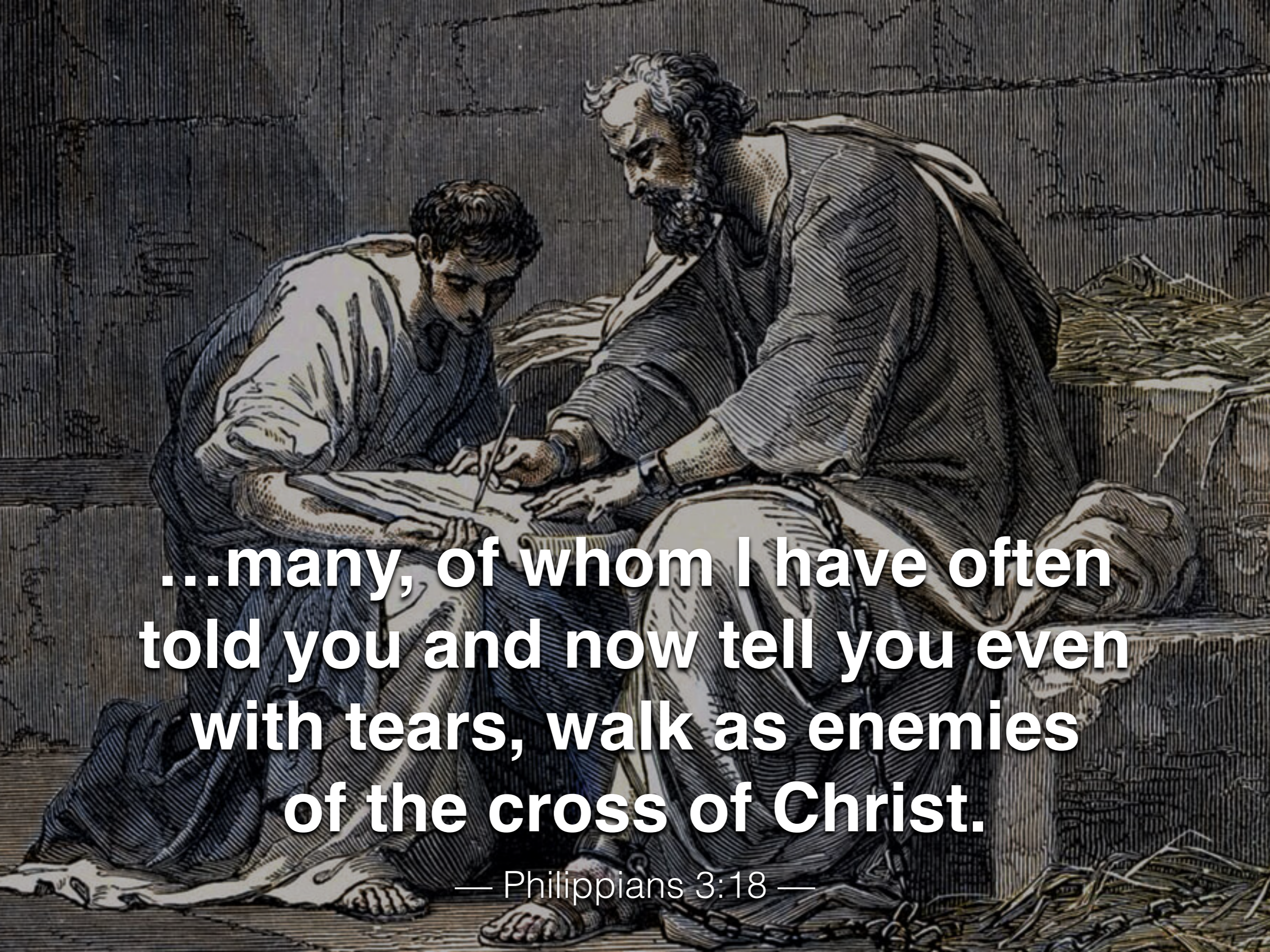
**Whoah Paul!
That seems
to come out of
the blue and
a little over
the top, don't
you think?**





I am working “for your progress and joy in the faith, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus....”

— Cf. Philippians 1:25-26 —



**...many, of whom I have often
told you and now tell you even
with tears, walk as enemies
of the cross of Christ.**

— Philipians 3:18 —

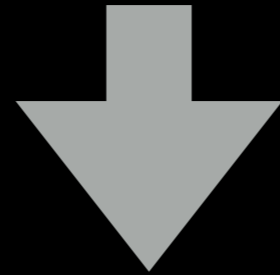


— THE JUDAIZERS —

These were Jews who claimed to follow Jesus the Messiah, but insisted that to be a true follower of the Jewish Messiah, one must zealously perform “the works of the law.”

THE WORKS OF THE LAW

Rituals That Made Israel Distinct From The Nations



Keeping the Sabbath / Holy Days

Eating only Kosher Foods

Practicing Circumcision



AKA “THE CIRCUMCISION PARTY”

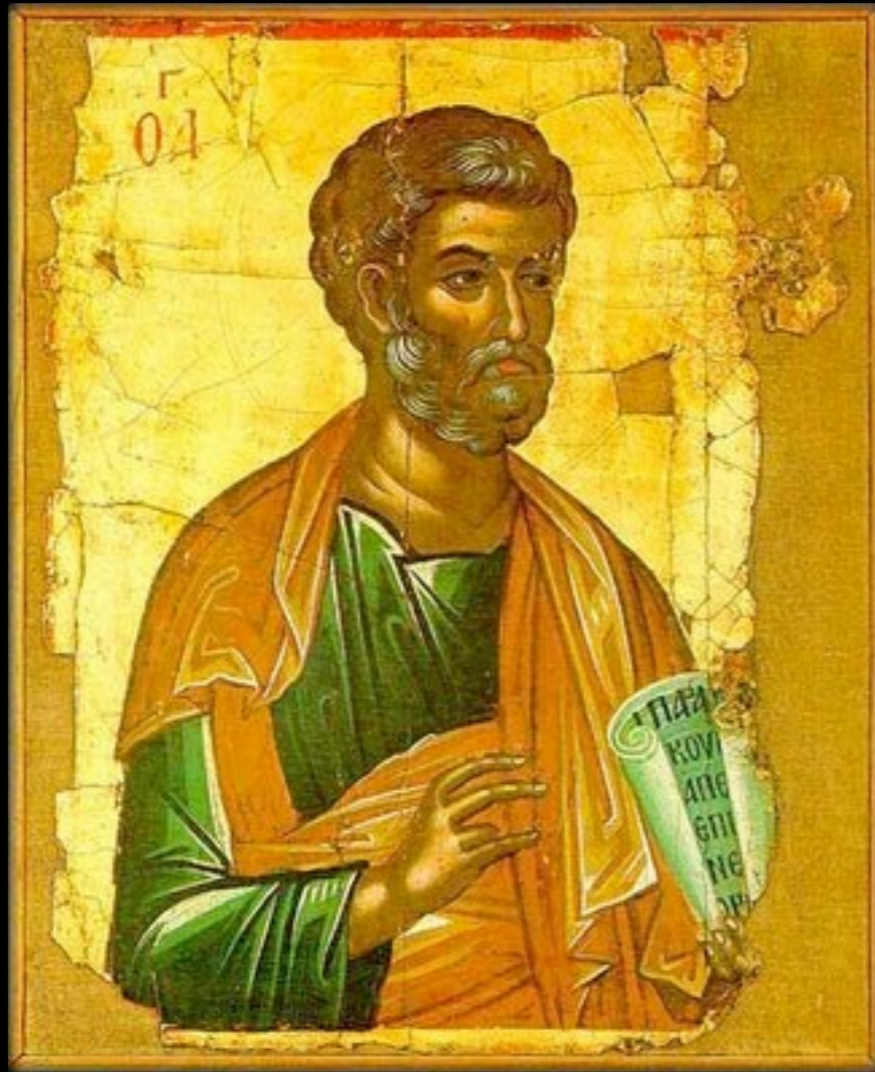
The logic of the “circumcision party” seemed to be that if God made a covenant with Abraham and gave him the sign of circumcision as a sign of the covenant, and if Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s covenant with Abraham, then these new followers of Jesus must be circumcised too.



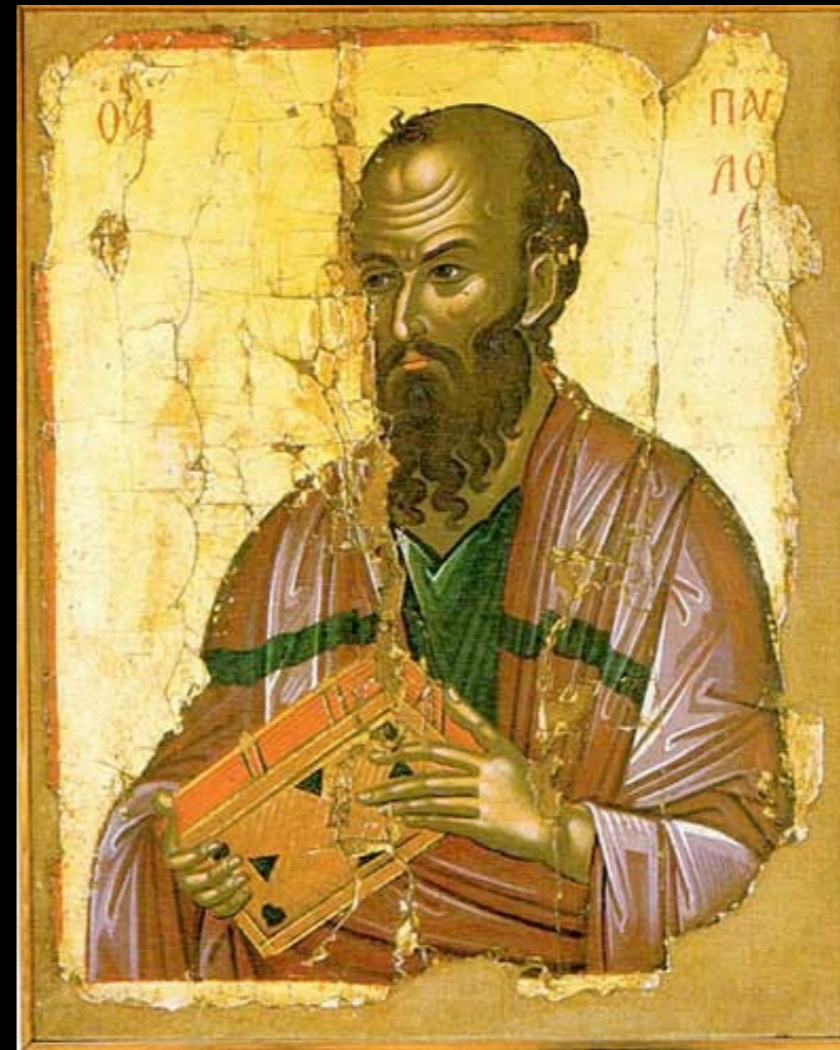


**But some men came down from Judea
and were teaching the brothers,
“Unless you are circumcised according to
the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”**

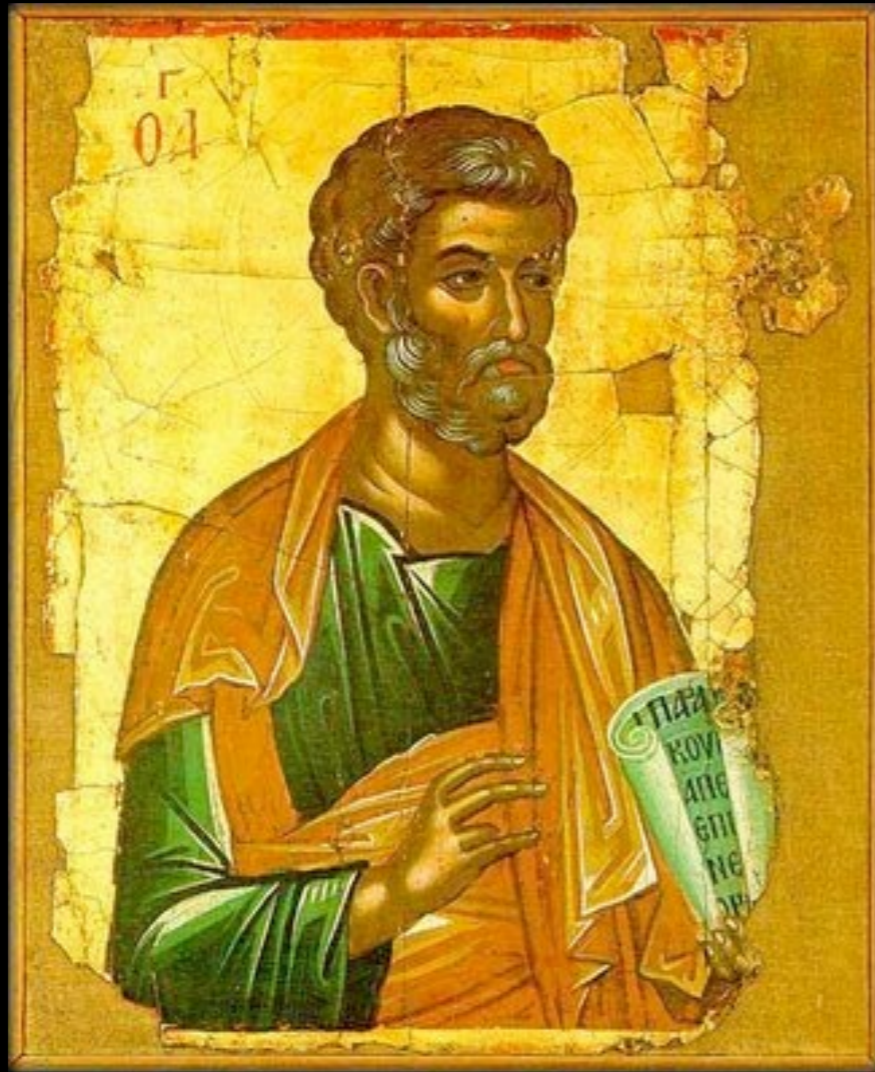
— Acts 15:1 —



The Apostle Peter



The Apostle Paul



But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

— GALATIANS 2:14 —

The Gospel According to the Judaizers

Jesus
+
Works of the Law
=
Salvation

The Gospel According to the Apostles

Jesus
+
Nothing
=
Salvation

The Gospel According to Many Moralists Today

Jesus

+

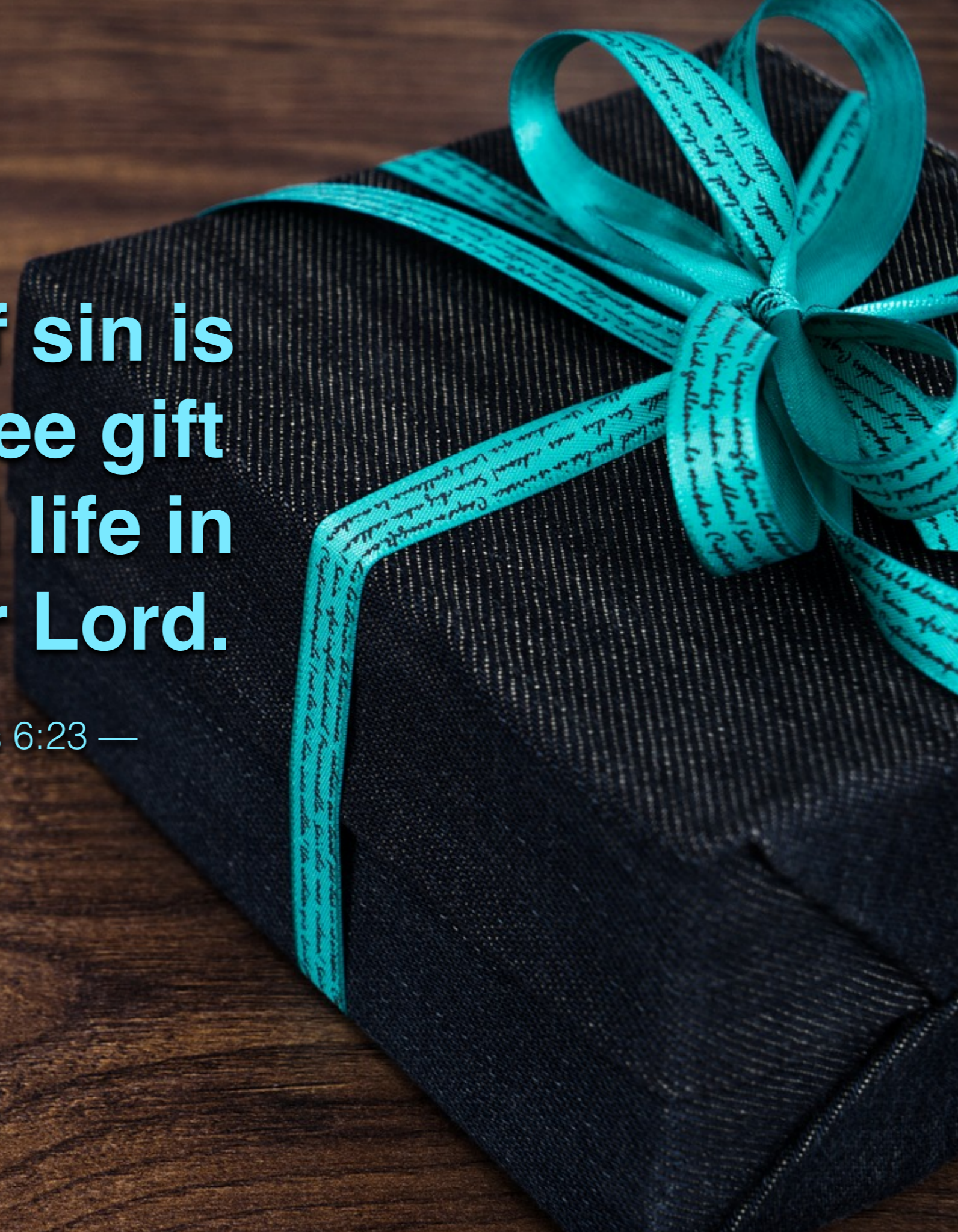


=

Salvation

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

— The Apostle Paul in Romans 6:23 —



Philippians 3

2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

Look out for the dogs.

Look out for the evildoers,

Look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

Look out for the kunas (dogs),

Look out for the kakos ergatas (evildoers),

Look out for the katatomen (the mutilation)

Look out for the kunas (dogs),

Look out for the kakos ergatas (evildoers),

Look out for the katatomen (the mutilation)

The people of Israel called non-Israelites, “dogs,” essentially wild animals who lived outside the holy nation of Israel.

Look out for the kunas (dogs),

Look out for the kakos ergatas (evildoers).

Look out for the katatomen (the mutilation)

The Judaizers thought they were doers of good, but according to Paul, they were doers of evil because they were taking people's eyes off of Jesus and redirecting their gaze to their own efforts / good works.

Look out for the kunas (dogs),

Look out for the kakos ergatas (evildoers),

Look out for the katatomen (the mutilation)



By insisting that followers of Jesus be circumcised in order to be saved, Paul brands these Judaizers as those who simply mutilate the flesh, like those in pagan religions who tried to get the attention of the gods by the cutting and bleeding their flesh.

Philippians 3

3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—

*ie., the true covenant
people of God*



For we are the circumcision,

who

- **worship by the Spirit of God**
- **and glory in Christ Jesus**
- **and put no confidence in the flesh**

**For we are the circumcision,
who**


- **worship by the Spirit of God**
 - **and glory in Christ Jesus**
 - **and put no confidence in the flesh**
- 

**“...the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true
worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth...”**

— Jesus of Nazareth in The Gospel of John 4:23—

**For we are the circumcision,
who**

- **worship by the Spirit of God**
- **and glory in Christ Jesus**
- **and put no confidence in the flesh**



**That is, we make much of Jesus,
and we glory and boast in Him,
not in our own accomplishments.**

For we are the circumcision,

who

- **worship by the Spirit of God**
- **and glory in Christ Jesus**
- **and put no confidence in the flesh**

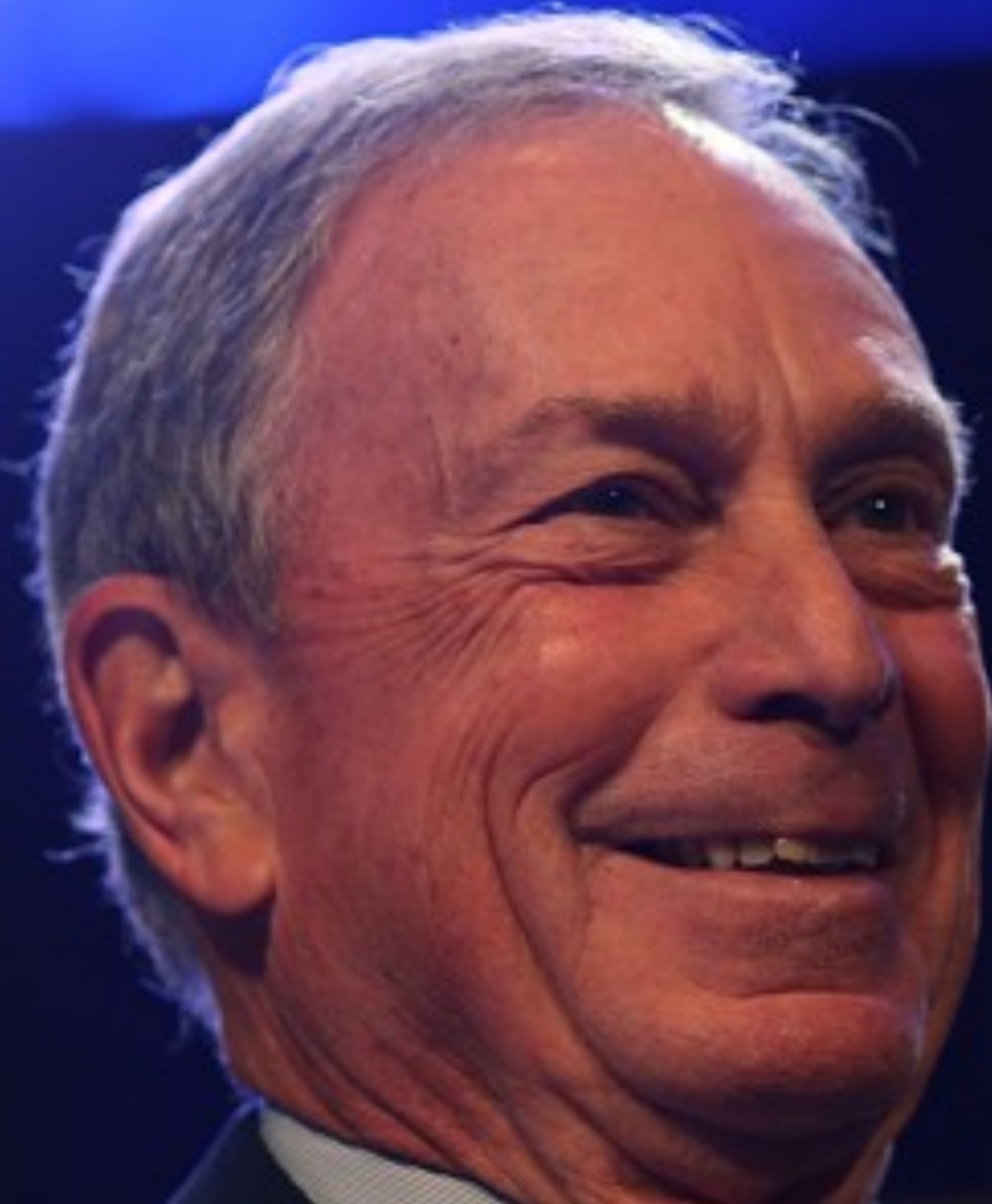


POLITICS

Michael Bloomberg: 'I Have Earned My Place in Heaven'

The former New York City mayor is confident that his latest \$50 million gun-control initiative has secured him a happy afterlife.

MATT VASILOGAMBROS AND NATIONAL JOURNAL APRIL 16, 2014

A close-up photograph of Michael Bloomberg, an older man with grey hair, smiling and looking slightly to the right. He is wearing a dark suit jacket and a light-colored shirt. The background is dark and out of focus.

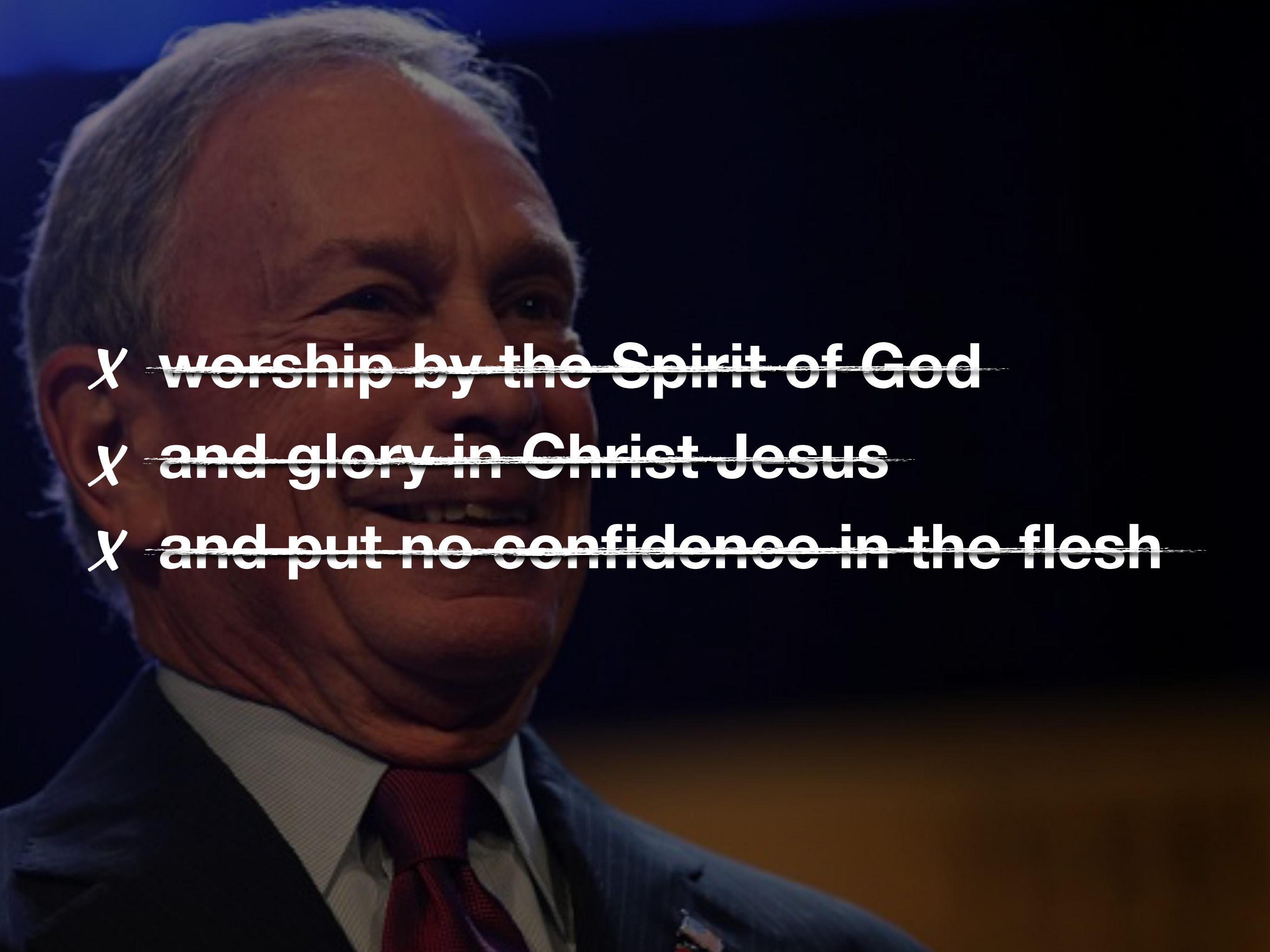
I am telling you, if there is a God, when I get to heaven I'm not stopping to be interviewed. I am heading straight in. I have earned my place in heaven. It's not even close.

POLITICS

Michael Bloomberg: 'I Have Earned My Place in Heaven'

The former New York City mayor is confident that his latest \$50 million gun-control initiative has secured him a happy afterlife.

MATT VASILOGAMBROS AND NATIONAL JOURNAL APRIL 16, 2014



~~X worship by the Spirit of God~~

~~X and glory in Christ Jesus~~

~~X and put no confidence in the flesh~~

Philippians 3

3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh— 4 though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more:

Philippians 3

5 circumcised on the eighth day,

Philippians 3

5 circumcised on the eighth day,
of the people of Benjamin,

Philippians 3

5 circumcised on the eighth day,
of the people of Benjamin,
a Hebrew of Hebrews;

Philippians 3

**5 circumcised on the eighth day,
of the people of Benjamin,
a Hebrew of Hebrews;
as to the law, a Pharisee**

Philippians 3

**5 circumcised on the eighth day,
of the people of Benjamin,
a Hebrew of Hebrews;**

**6 as to the law, a Pharisee
as to zeal, a persecuted of the church**

Philippians 3

- 5 circumcised on the eighth day,
of the people of Benjamin,
a Hebrew of Hebrews;**
- 6 as to the law, a Pharisee
as to zeal, a persecuted of the church
as to righteousness under the law,
blameless.**

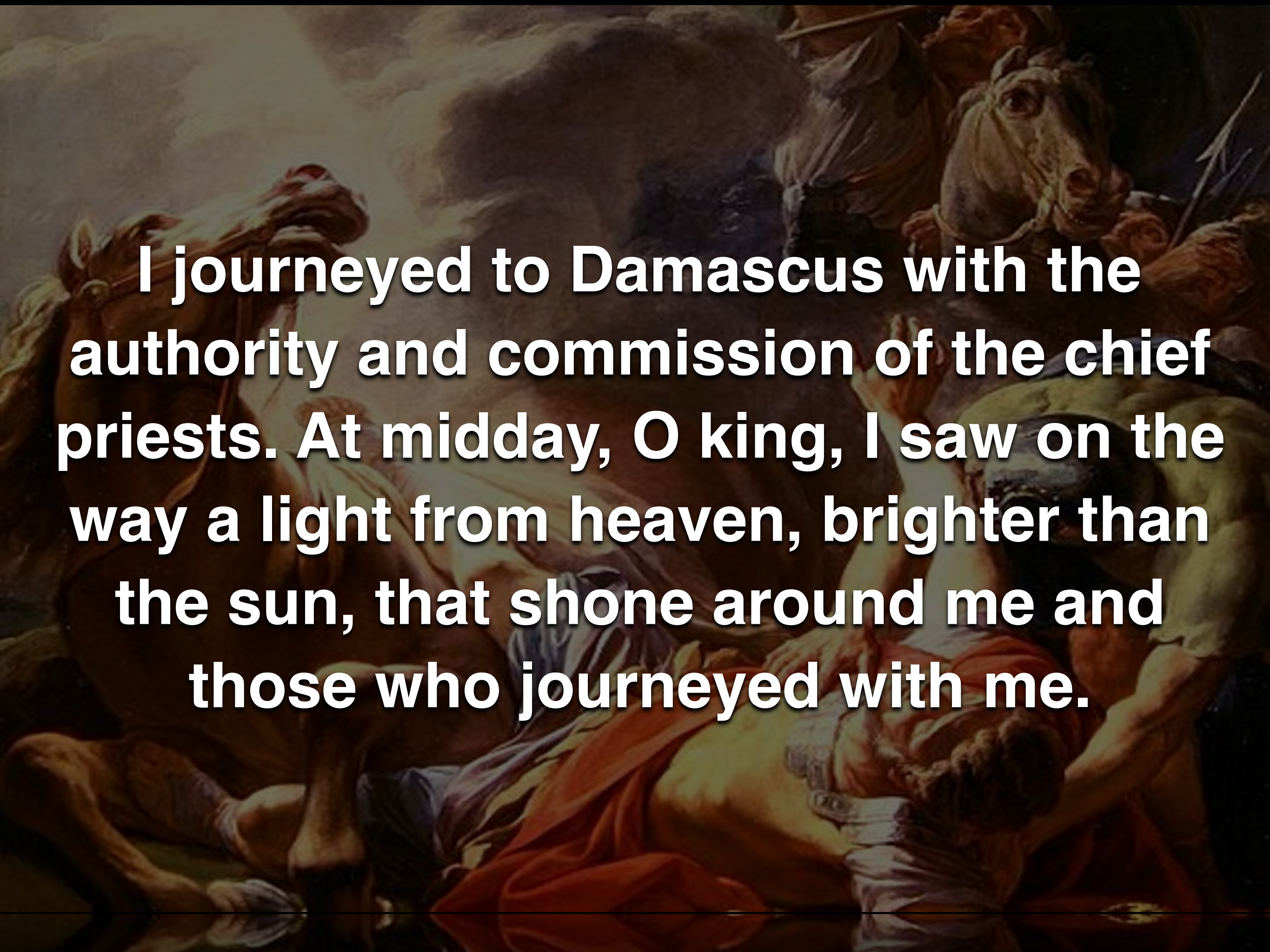
“

...some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt:

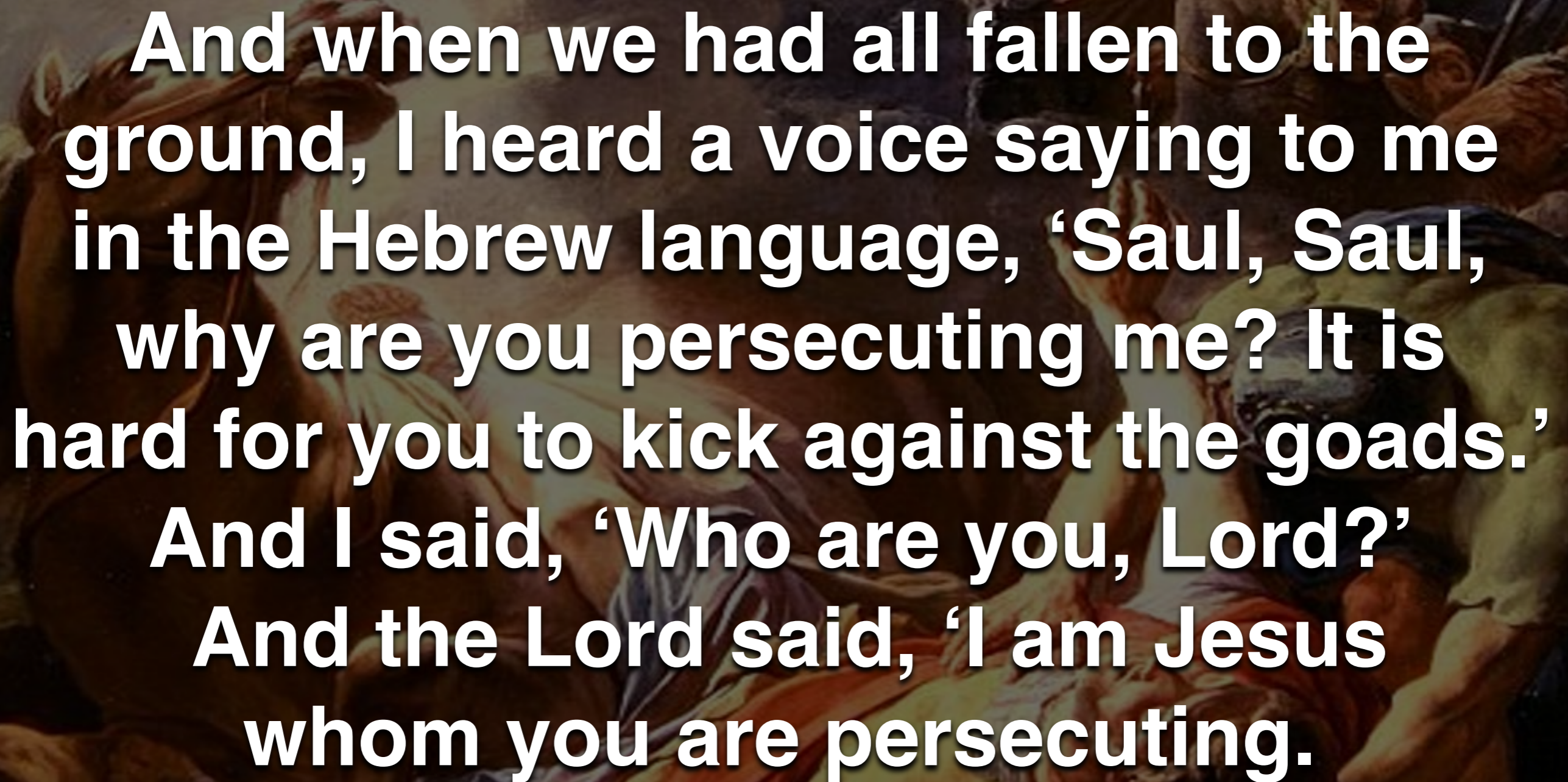
— Jesus of Nazareth
The Gospel of Luke 18:9

”





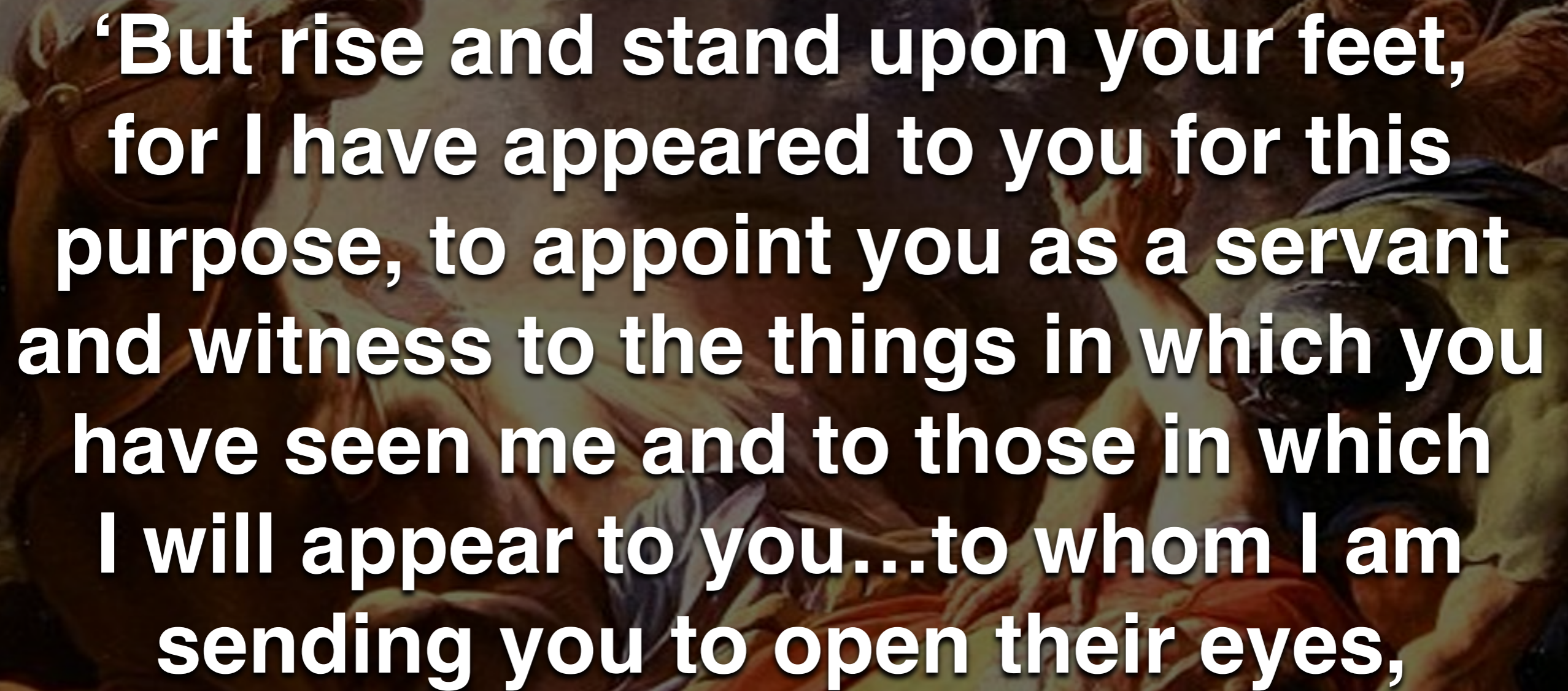
I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me.



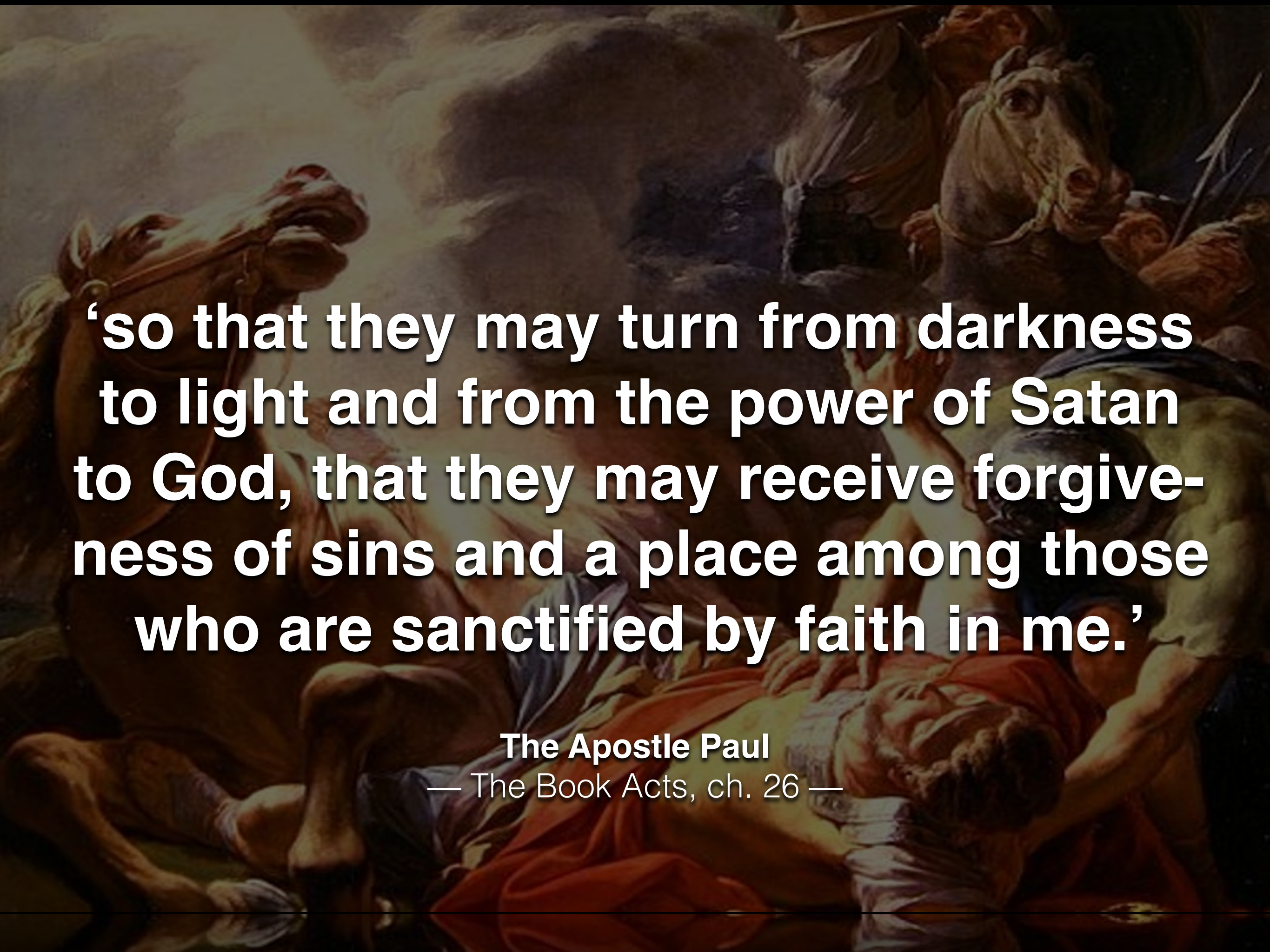
And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’

And I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’

And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.’

A dramatic painting depicting a scene of capture or conflict. A central figure, a man with long dark hair and a beard, wearing a vibrant red robe, is being held or restrained by several men in dark, heavy clothing. The man in red is looking upwards with a determined or pleading expression. The background is filled with more figures, some on horseback, suggesting a chaotic battle scene or a military operation. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, creating a sense of tension and gravity.

**‘But rise and stand upon your feet,
for I have appeared to you for this
purpose, to appoint you as a servant
and witness to the things in which you
have seen me and to those in which
I will appear to you...to whom I am
sending you to open their eyes,**



‘so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

The Apostle Paul

— The Book Acts, ch. 26 —

Philippians 3

- 5 circumcised on the eighth day,
of the people of Benjamin,
a Hebrew of Hebrews;**
- 6 as to the law, a Pharisee
as to zeal, a persecuted of the church
as to righteousness under the law,
blameless.**

Philippians 3


7 but whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

Philippians 3

8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

Philippians 3

8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.



“the surpassing value of knowing Christ”

— The New American Standard Bible —

“the superior value of knowing Christ”

— The Common English Bible —

“the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus”

— The New Living Translation —

“the greatness of knowing Christ Jesus”

— The New Century Version —

*There is simply nothing better
than knowing and being known
by Jesus Christ. Nothing.*

- Scott Sauls -



**Are you experiencing
the surpassing greatness
of personally knowing
Christ Jesus as your Lord?**



Philippians 3

7 but whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. **8** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ....

Paul's "Before Christ" Confidence in the Flesh

Assets / Profit	Liabilities
+ Circumcised on the 8th day	—
+ Born of the people Israel	—
+ Raised a Hebrew of Hebrews	—
+ A Pharisee regarding Torah	—
+ Zealous in persecuting Church	—
+ Blameless in Righteousness	—
= SALVATION	

Paul's "After Christ" Confidence in the Flesh

Assets / Profit	Liabilities
—	+ Circumcised on the 8th day
—	+ Born of the people Israel
—	+ Raised a Hebrew of Hebrews
—	+ A Pharisee regarding Torah
—	+ Zealous in persecuting Church
—	+ Blameless in Righteousness
	= ZERO (LOSS)

Paul's "After Christ" Confidence in the Flesh

Assets / Profit	Liabilities
CHRIST	+ Circumcised on the 8th day
CHRIST	+ Born of the people Israel
CHRIST	+ Raised a Hebrew of Hebrews
CHRIST	+ A Pharisee regarding Torah
CHRIST	+ Zealous in persecuting Church
CHRIST	+ Blameless in Righteousness
= EVERYTHING	= ZERO (LOSS)

Philippians 3

7 but whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and **count them as rubbish,** in order that I may gain Christ....

“rubbish” = “dung”

KJV: “count them but dung”



“Compared to the high privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as my Master, firsthand, everything I once thought I had going for me is insignificant —dog dung.”

— Eugene Peterson’s The Message —

**Either we can have confidence
in our selves OR in Christ.
One leads to the deadly poison
of self-righteous pride; the other
to the priceless treasure of
personally knowing the Lord
and Savior Jesus Christ.**



**Where do you place
your confidence:
In yourself, or
in Christ Jesus?**



CAN'T

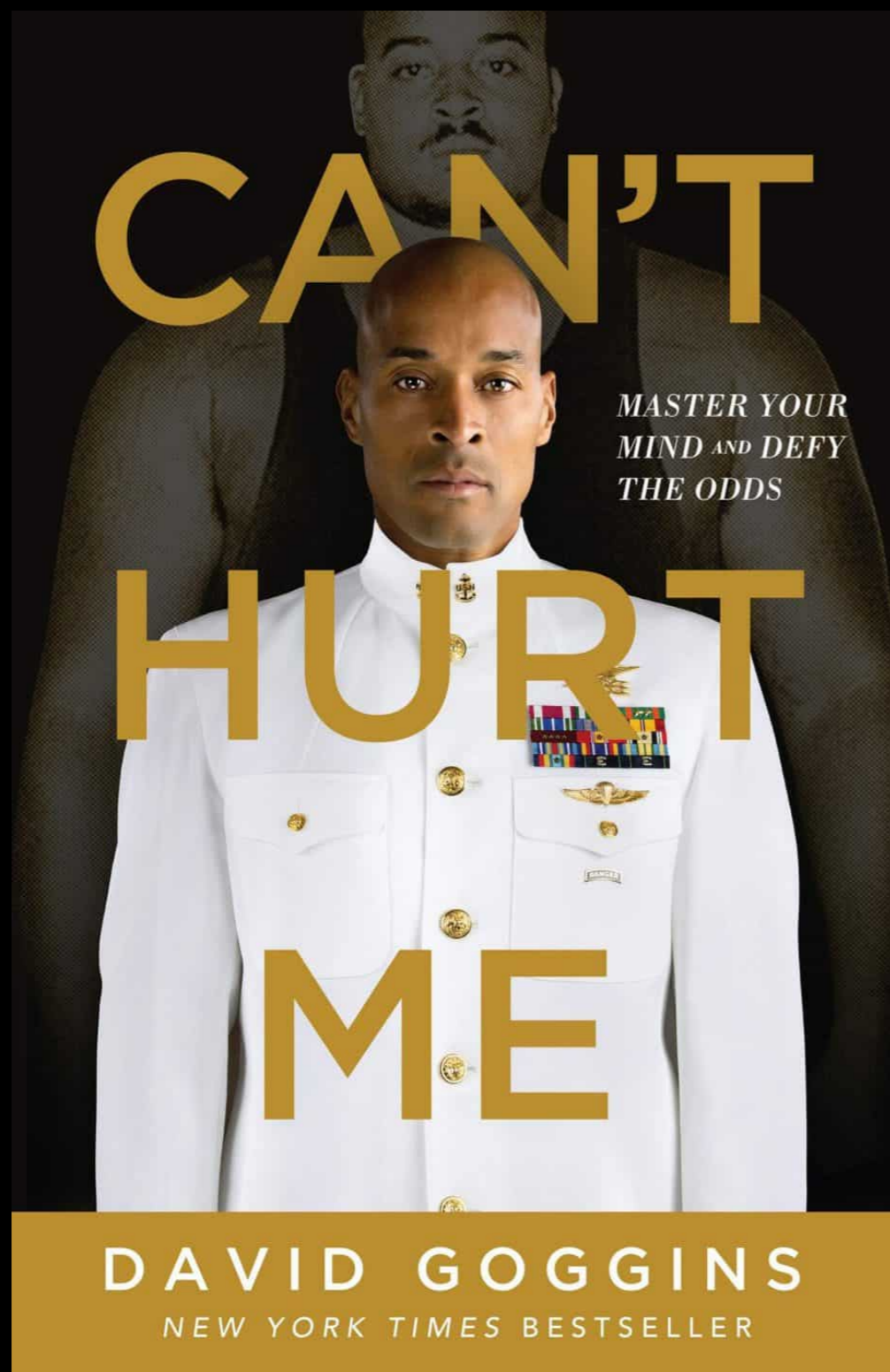
MASTER YOUR
MIND AND DEFY
THE ODDS

HURT

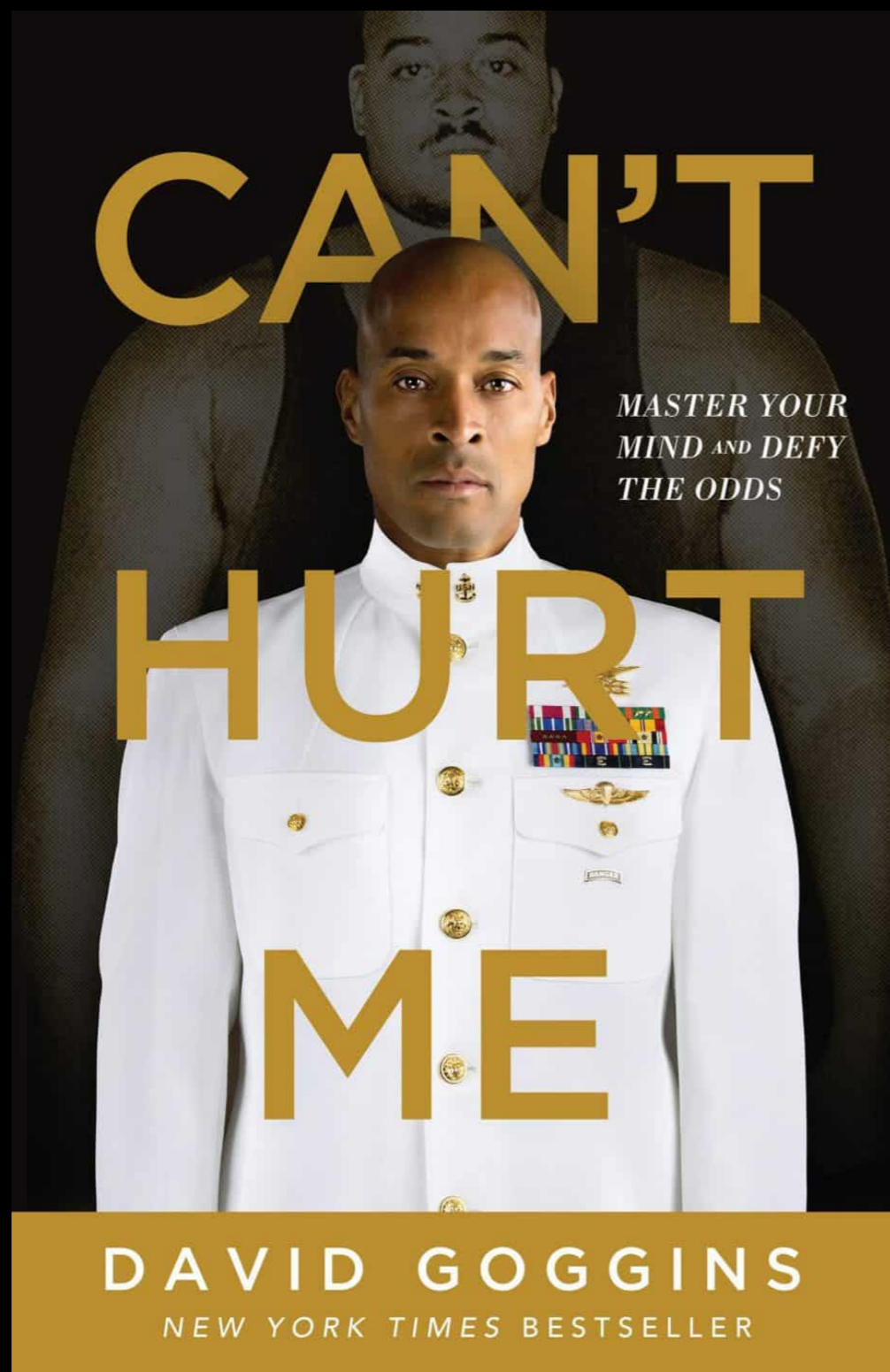
ME

DAVID GOGGINS

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER



Even though God knows all...I work my [tail] off to the point where I want God Himself — the one thing that knows all — to be up there in awe of what I am doing....



I want to exceed even God's expectations of what He thought I was capable of. I want God to be up there saying, "I don't believe it. Not even I saw what David Goggins was capable of."

**Confidence
in the flesh?
Rubbish.
Everything is
a loss compared
to the surpassing
greatness of
knowing Christ
Jesus the Lord.**

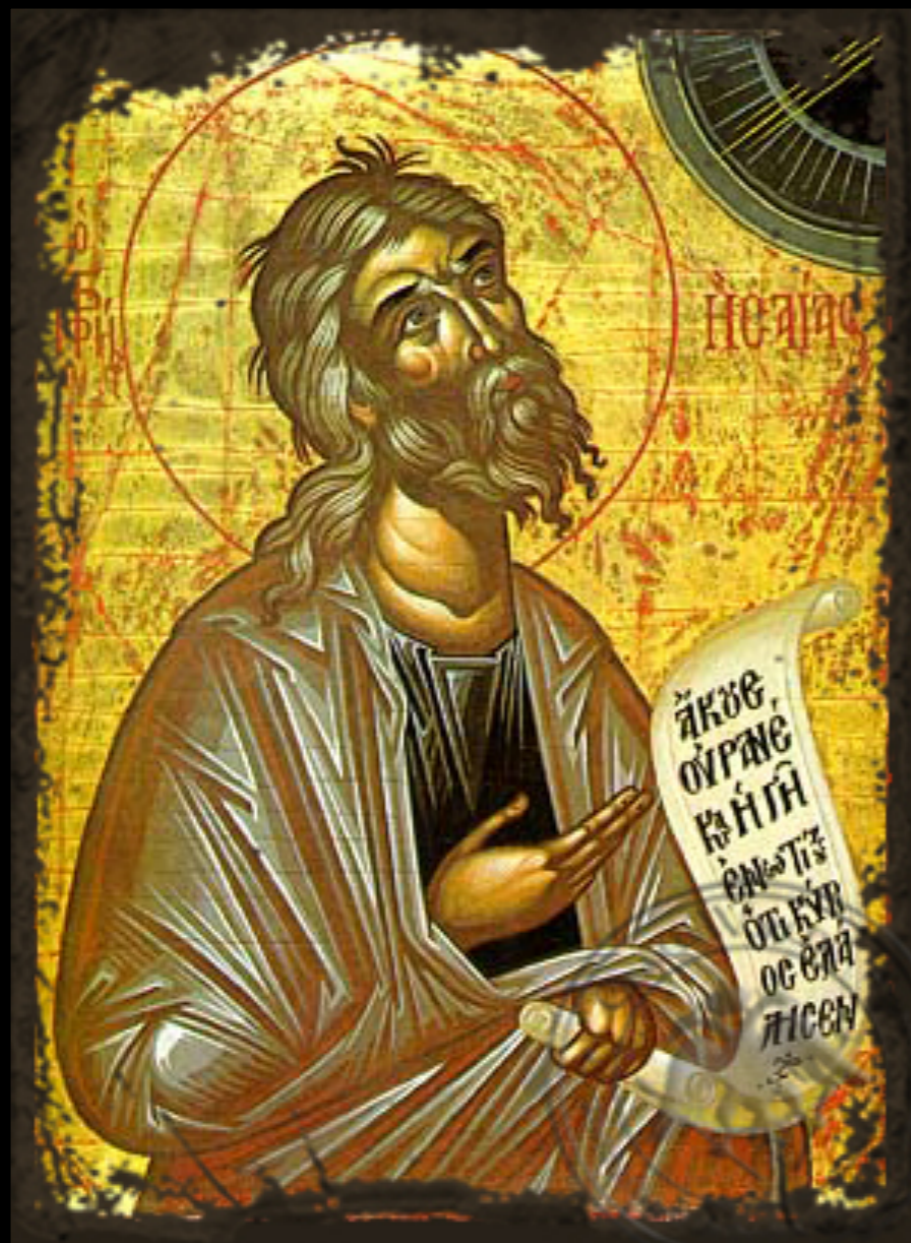




Spiritually speaking, self-confidence
(which is literally “faith in yourself”)
is deadly rat poison.

**Let's Note That
Good Works Can
Actually Be Bad News
When We Trust In Them
Before The Lord**





**All of us have become
like one who is
unclean, and all our
righteous acts are like
filthy rags; we all
shrivel up like a leaf,
and like the wind our
sins sweep us away.**

— Isaiah 64:6 —



**Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law's demands
Could my zeal no respite know
Could my tears forever flow
All for sin could not atone
Thou must save, and Thou alone**

— Augustus Toplady, "Rock of Ages," 1776 —



**Nothing in my hand I bring
Simply to the Cross I cling
Naked, come to Thee for dress
Helpless, look to Thee for grace
Foul, I to the fountain fly
Wash me, Savior, or I die**

— Augustus Toplady, “Rock of Ages,” 1776 —

**When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of glory died
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride**

— Isaac Watts, “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” —




**Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ my God
All the vain things that charm me most
I sacrifice them to His blood**

— Isaac Watts, “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” —



**Let's Note That
Good Works Can
Actually Be Bad News
When We Trust In Them
Before The Lord**





**Let's Treasure
The Surpassing Worth
of Knowing Christ
Jesus our Lord**

**This is eternal life, that they know you,
the only true God, and Jesus Christ
whom you have sent.**

— Jesus of Nazareth in The Gospel of John 17:3 —



**In all my sorrows Jesus is better
Make my heart believe
In every vict'ry Jesus is better
Make my heart believe**

— Aaron Ivey & Brett Land, “Jesus Is Better” —



**Glory, glory, we have no other king
but Jesus Lord of all
We raise the anthem
Our loudest praises ring
We crown Him Lord of All**

— Aaron Ivey & Brett Land, “Jesus Is Better” —



The secret to finding joy right where you are is experiencing the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ right where you are.



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a lit sparkler. The sparkler is in the foreground, glowing brightly with a large burst of golden sparks radiating outwards. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some faint light trails and a circular bokeh effect. The overall mood is celebratory and warm.

**May God Grant You The Grace
To Put No Confidence In The Flesh
So That You Can Experience The
Surpassing Worth Of Knowing
Christ Jesus Your Lord!**