

# **PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW**

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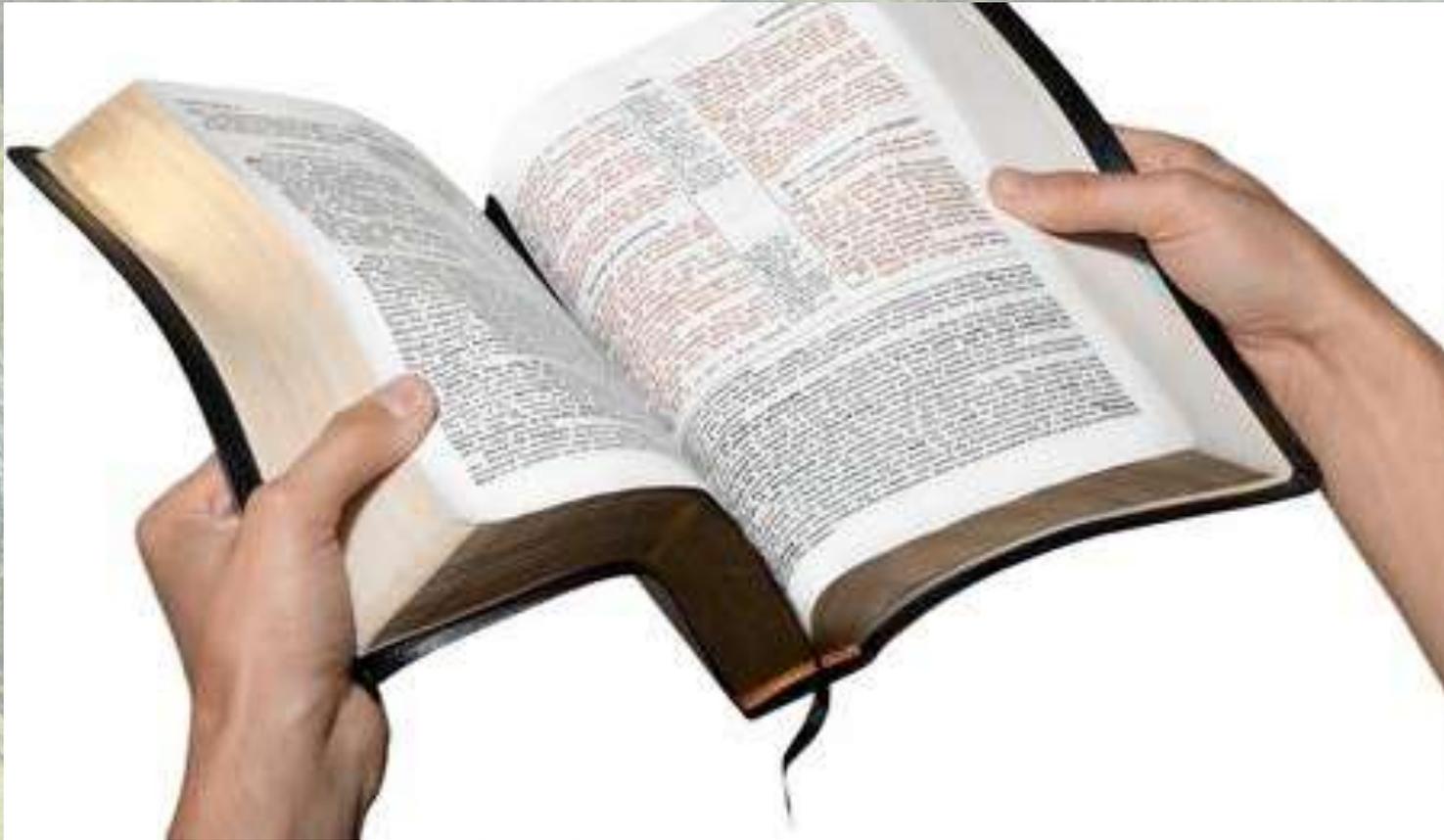
Pastor Steve Odera

A large, solid orange circle is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge.

Discipleship

**Commitment – Training – Role Modeling**





Luke 9:62

But Jesus told him, *“Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.”*

# Introduction

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**THREE DISCIPLES:**



PHYSICAL  
COMFORTS OF LIFE



URGENT THINGS OF  
THIS WORLD



LOOKING BACK

# Introduction



- A Plow
- Familiar imagery:  
agricultural community

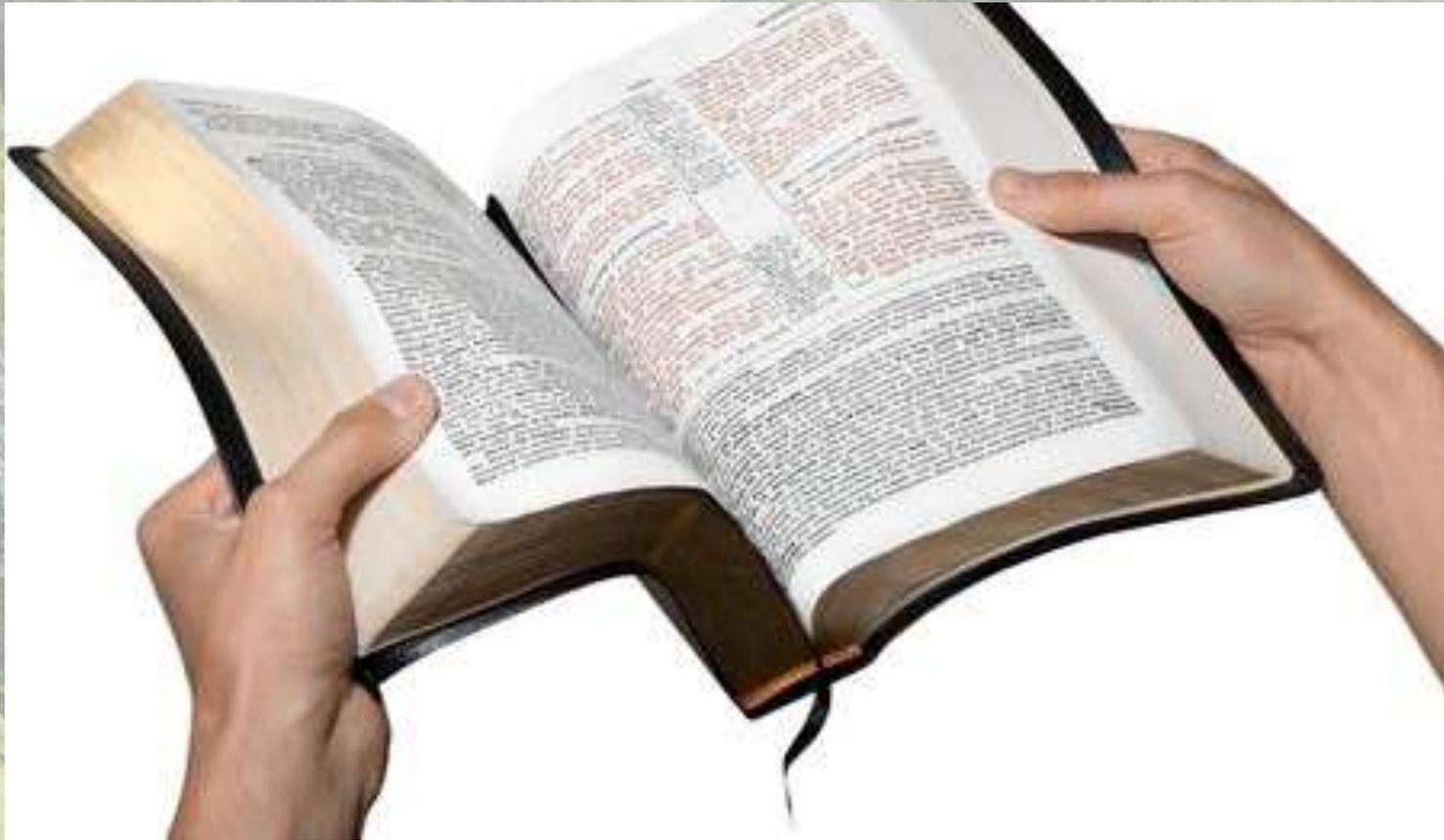
# 1. PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW

## A. What does it mean?

- For Jesus?

- Matthew 16:24





Matthew 16:24

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me."*

# 1. PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW

## A. What does it mean?

- For Jesus?

- **Matthew 16:24**
- Taking up your cross
  - You cannot stay idle
  - Single-mindedness



# 1. PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW

## A. What does it mean?

- For the three disciples?
  - “Yes, But...”

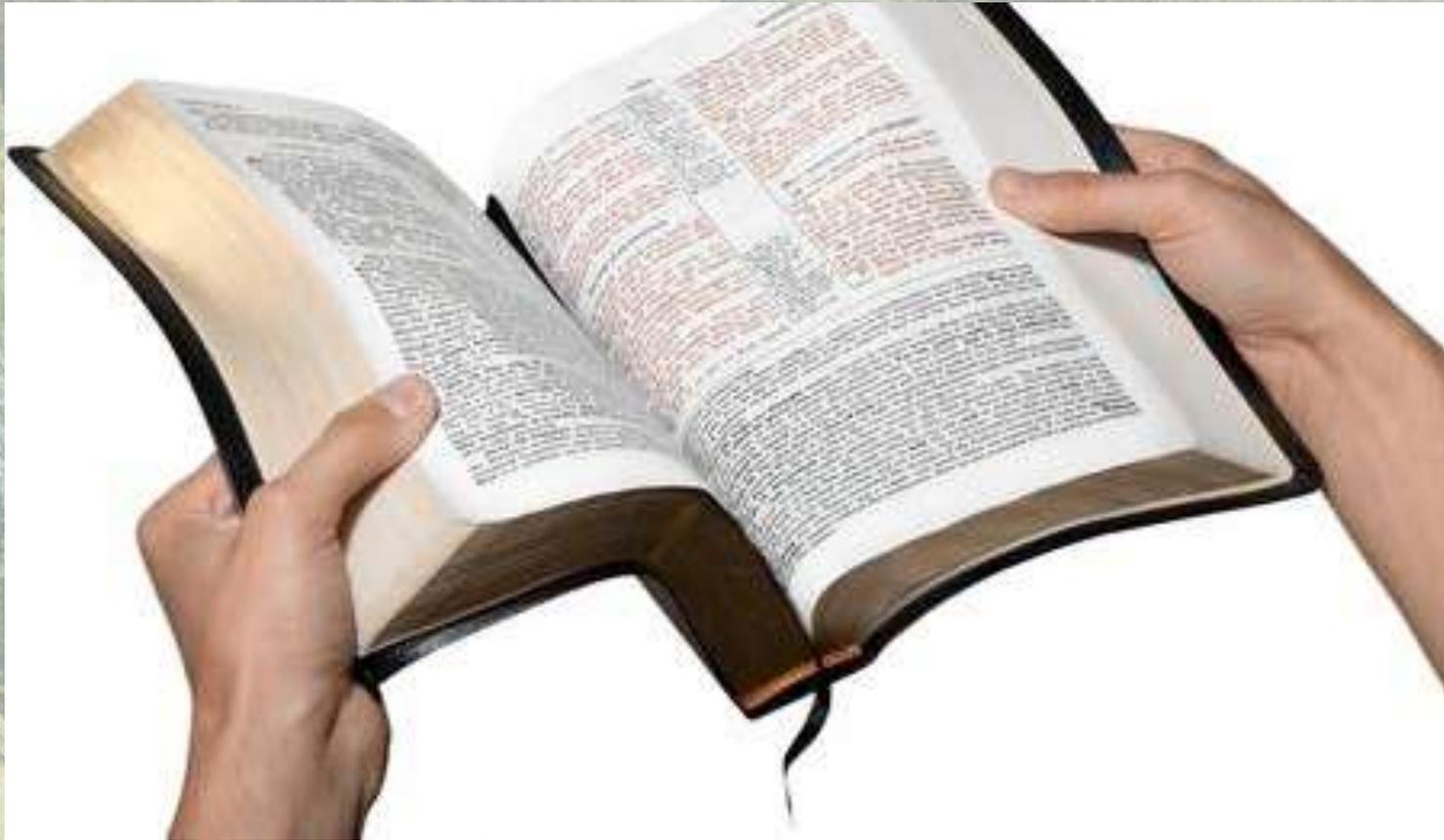


# 1. PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW

## A. What does it mean?

- For the three disciples?
  - “Yes, But...”
- For you and me?
  - **Matthew 6:33**





Matthew 6:33

*Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*

# 1. PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW

## A. What does it mean?

- Love God
- No distractions or diversions



# 1. PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW

## B. What is my plow?

- Family/Marriage:
  - Families: God's idea



# 1. PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW

## B. What is my plow?

- Children's spiritual foundations
- "Marriage time"
- Our "Oikos":
  - Made to live in community



# 1. PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW

## B. What is my plow?

- Our Ministry:

- Pre-COVID complacency?
- What is God teaching us?



# 1. PUTTING YOUR HAND TO THE PLOW

## B. What is my plow?

- Our Salvation:

- Forgotten our first love?
- Signs of neglect of the plow easy to read



## 2. LOOKING BACK

### A. What does it mean?

- For Jesus:
  - Not the act of evaluating progress
  - Degree of longing to return to what was left behind



## 2. LOOKING BACK

### A. What does it mean?

- For Jesus:
  - Not the act of evaluating progress
  - Degree of longing to return to what was left behind
- For the three disciples:
  - Competing personal priorities



## 2. LOOKING BACK

### A. What does it mean?

- For Jesus:
  - Not the act of evaluating progress
  - Degree of longing to return to what was left behind
- For the three disciples:
  - Competing personal priorities
- For you and me:
  - Lose focus on Jesus
  - A higher priority than Jesus?



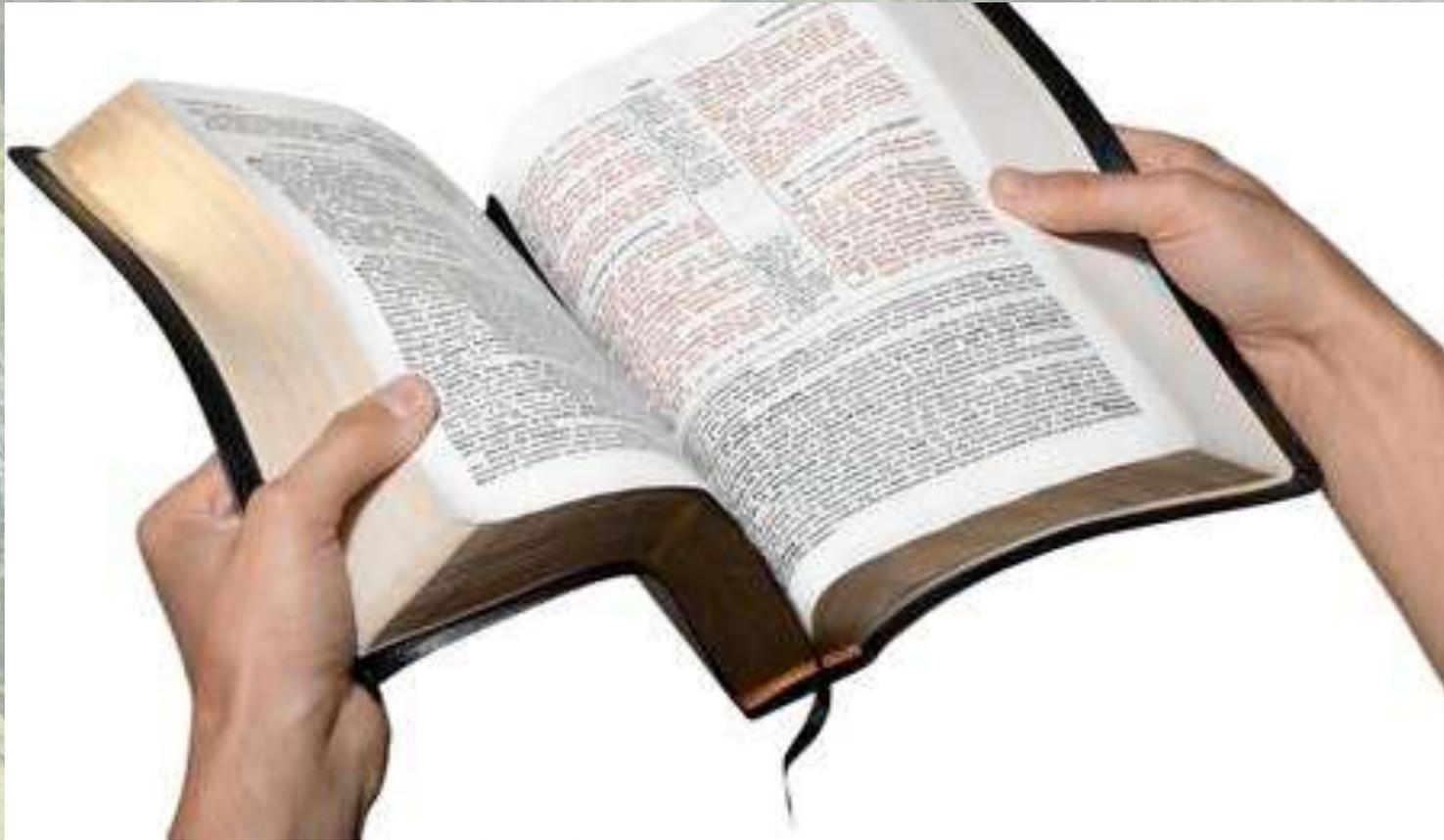
## 2. LOOKING BACK

### B. Reasons why we might look back:

- Regret:

- Heart stuck to the world's pleasures
- Longing for past despite slavery conditions
- **Matthew 6:21**





*Wherever your  
treasure is,  
there the desires  
of your heart  
will also be.*

Matthew 6:21

## 2. LOOKING BACK

- Fear:
  - Taking our eyes off Jesus

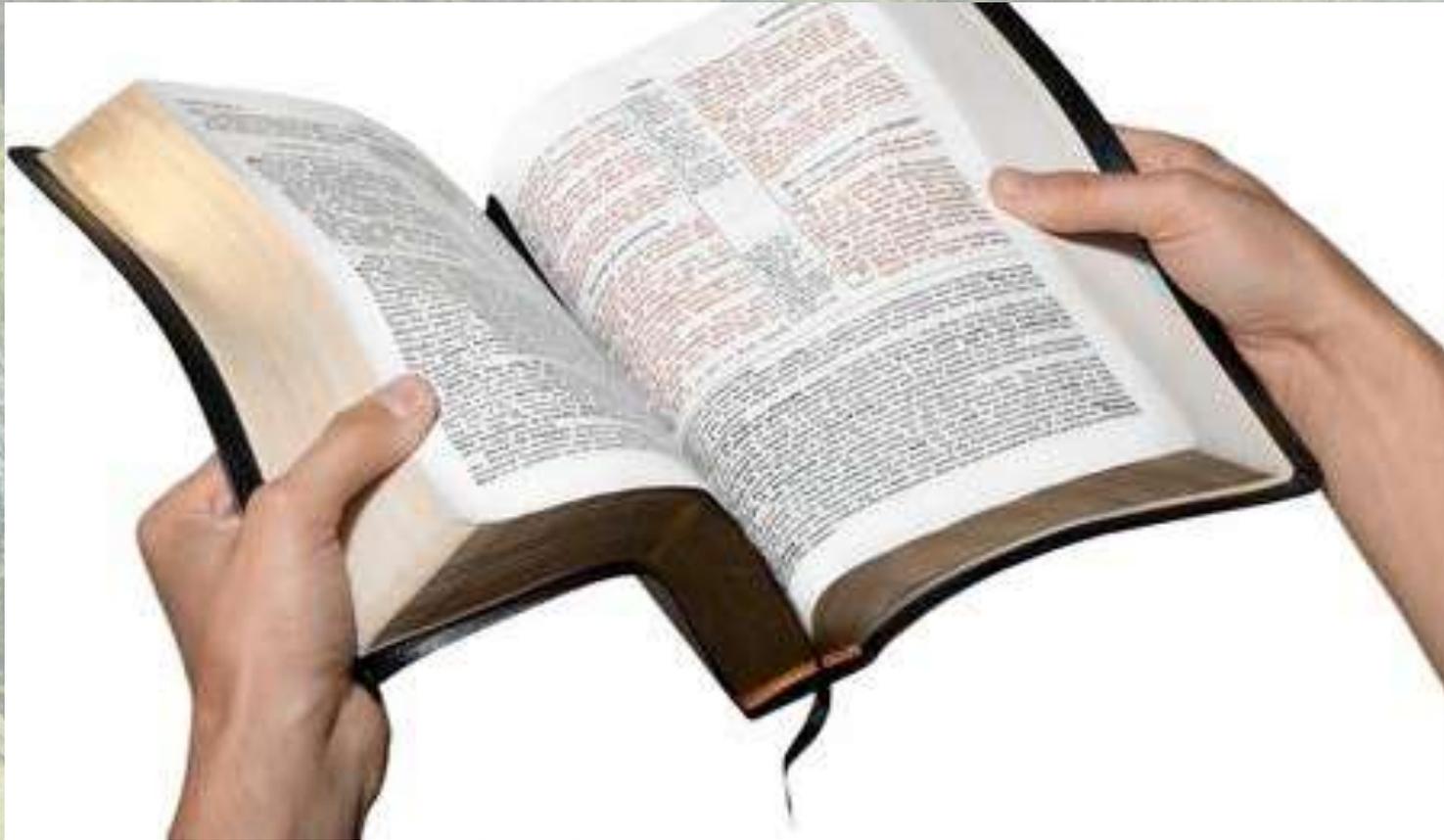


## 2. LOOKING BACK

### B. Reasons why we might look back:

- Lack of commitment:
  - Forget to count the cost
  - **James 1:8**





*Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.*

James 1:8

## 2. LOOKING BACK

- Commitment and total dedication required



## 2. LOOKING BACK

### C. What happens when we look back?

- We plow a crooked row



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- We become like flavourless salt



## 2. LOOKING BACK

### C. What happens when we look back?

- We plow a crooked row
- We invite confusion into our minds
- We cannot bear fruit
- We become like flavourless salt
- We become poor witnesses



# 3. APPLICATION

- Jesus' statement: a response to the "But" reaction



# 3. APPLICATION

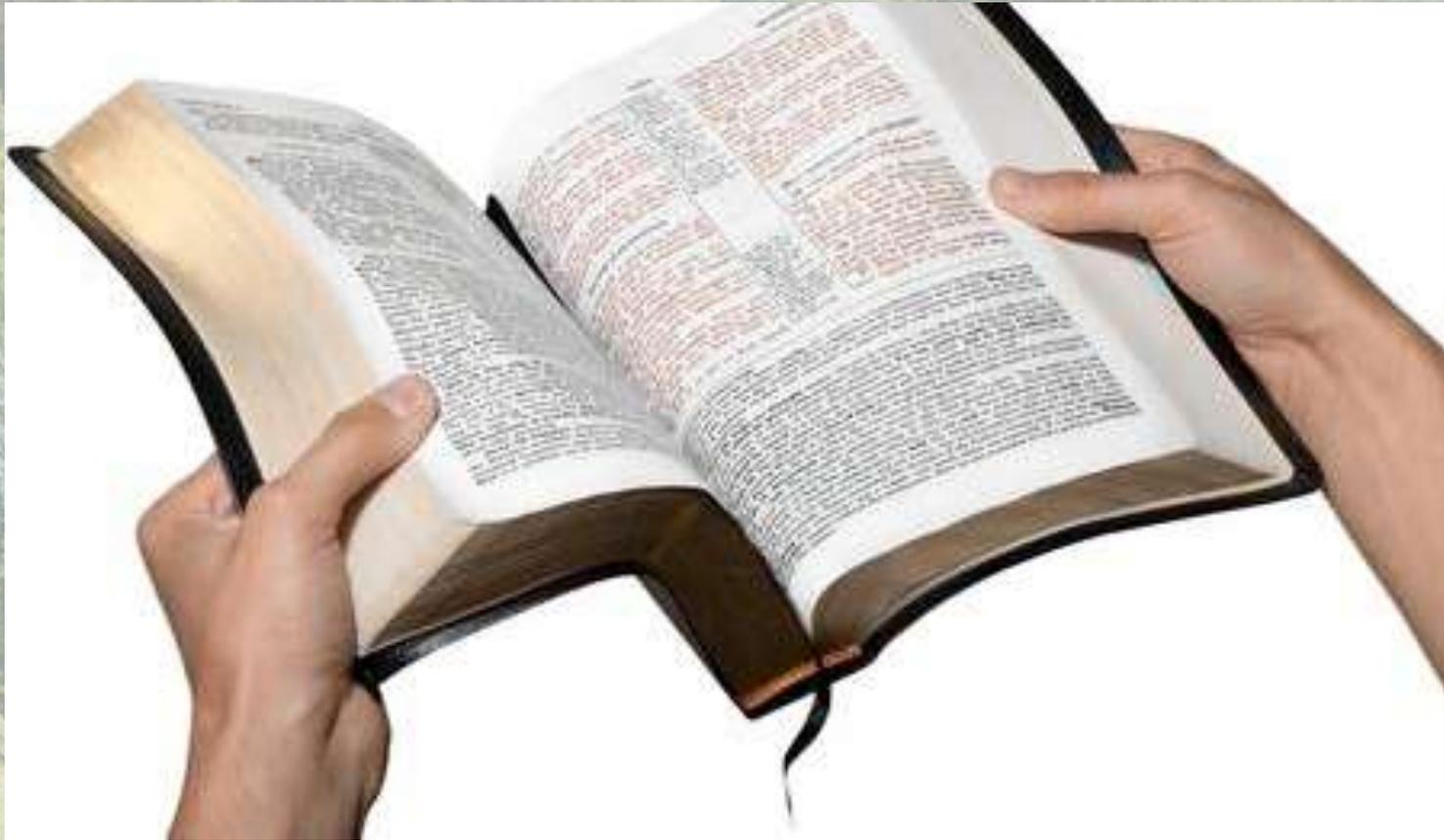
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- Putting our hand to the plow = taking hold of the cross
- Our response to Jesus' statement should be:
  - Be single-minded – **Philippians 3:13**





Philippians 3:13

*No, dear  
brothers and  
sisters, I have not  
achieved it, but I  
focus on this one  
thing: Forgetting  
the past and  
looking forward  
to what lies  
ahead*

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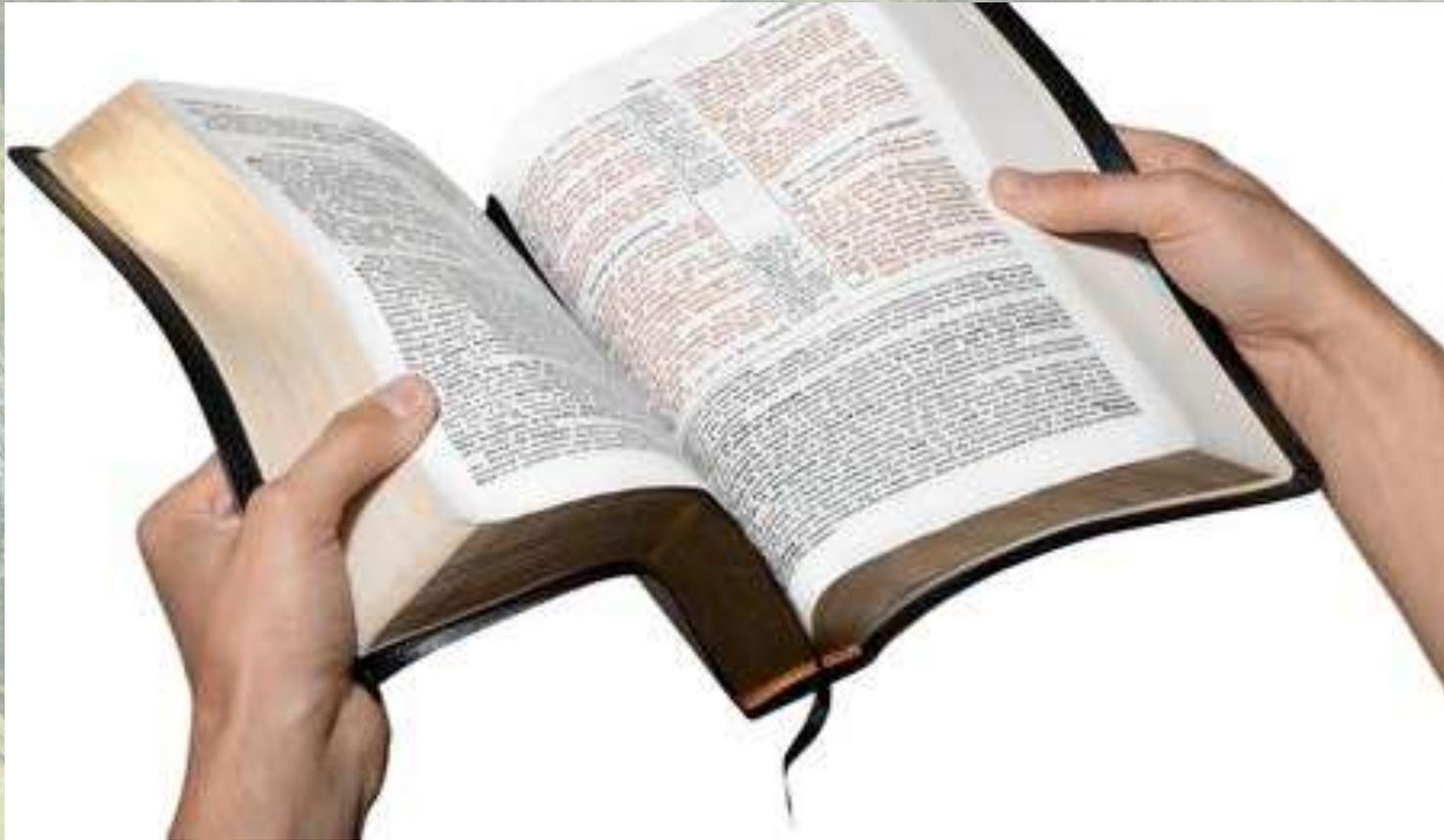
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  - Put God first before the concerns of the world
  - Fulfil the Master's plan for your life – **Ephesians 2:10**





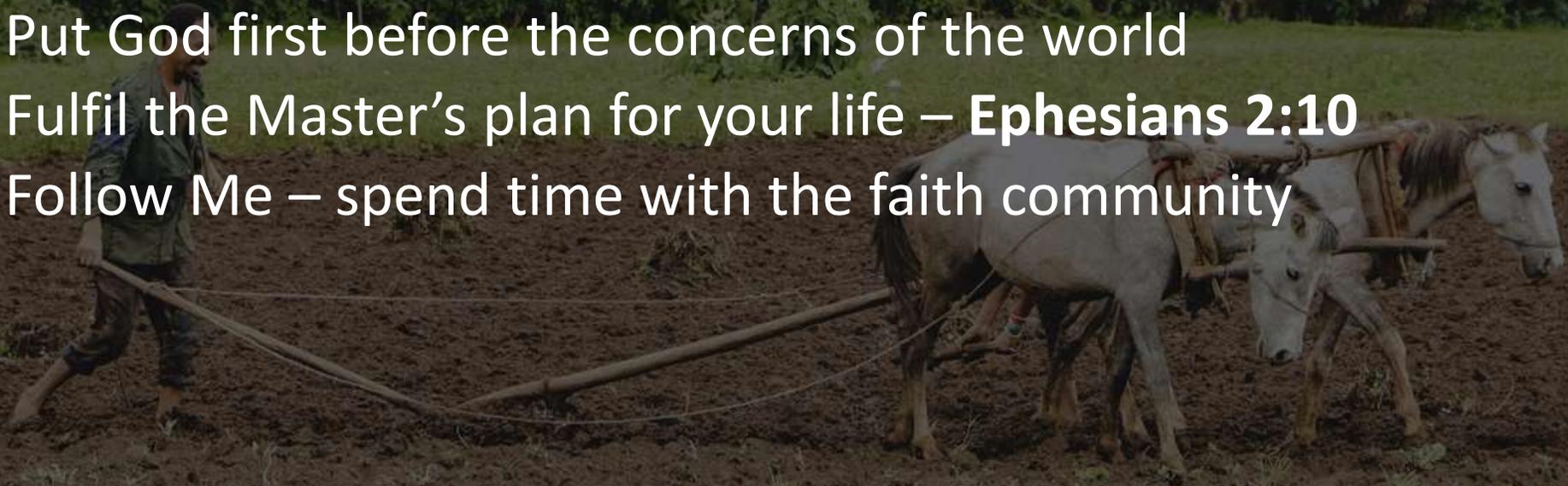
Ephesians 2:10

*For we are God's masterpiece.*

*He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

# 3. APPLICATION

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  - Fulfil the Master's plan for your life – **Ephesians 2:10**
  - Follow Me – spend time with the faith community



# Table of the Lord

