

2 CORINTHIANS

A Verse-by-Verse Study



2 Corinthians 3: 1 (NASB)

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some, letters of commendation to you or from you?

Commend

Greek: sunistemi, (soon-is'-tay-mee);

- *To announce*
- *To proclaim,*
- *To promote or sell one's self*

Question?

What point is
Paul making
with this first of
these two
questions?

2 Corinthians 3: 1 (NASB)

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some, letters of commendation to you or from you?

In much of the opening chapters of 2 Corinthians, Paul has been defending himself because there were false teachers attacking his credibility in the Church in Corinth.

This was deeply concerning to Paul because if they rejected him, then they would also reject his message, the gospel.

As a messenger of Christ, any loss of credibility would affect Paul's ability to lead the church and disciple its members.

This explains why Paul feels the need to commend himself again.

2 Corinthians 3: 1 (NASB)

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some, letters of commendation to you or from you?

Question?

Why would Paul
need a letter of
recommendation
to the
Corinthians?

When a Christian in the early Church would move to a new town, the leaders in the church from their previous town would write a letter of recommendation.

This was important during times of severe persecution as this recommendation letter would confirm that the newcomer was not a wolf in sheep's clothing.

This question reflects how some in this Church were treating Paul.

Paul planted this Church, so he was not a stranger or new preacher that they had never met.

Question?

What point is
Paul making
next?

2 Corinthians 3: 2-3 (NASB)

You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all people, revealing yourselves, that you are a letter of Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

2 Corinthians 3: 4 (NASB)

*Such is **the confidence we have** toward
God through Christ.*

Question?

Is confidence
good or bad?

Question?

What confidence
is Paul talking
about?

Question?

How can we be
confident before
God?

2 Corinthians 3: 4 (NASB)

*Such is the confidence we have toward
God through Christ.*

Paul and the apostles preached with confidence in the face of persecution, threats and intimidation.

This boldness came from a confidence, not in themselves, but in God!

Today, we also have that same confidence in Christ!

2 Corinthians 3: 5 (NASB)

*Not that we are adequate in ourselves so
as to consider anything as having
come from ourselves, but our adequacy
is from God,*

Question?

What are some
symptoms of
being
self-confident
instead of
God-confident?

- **Lack of prayer.** If we trust in our own abilities we will not seek God's help.
- **Lack of quality time with the Lord.** We don't see our need for God
- **Lack of flexibility.** When everything does not go according to our plans, we become frustrated.

- **Inability to withstand persecution or failure.** We become disappointed when we fail or face criticism.
- **Stress and anxiety.** Because we place our confidence in ourselves, when things do not go as planned our peace is replaced with stress and anxiety.

2 Corinthians 3: 6 (NASB)

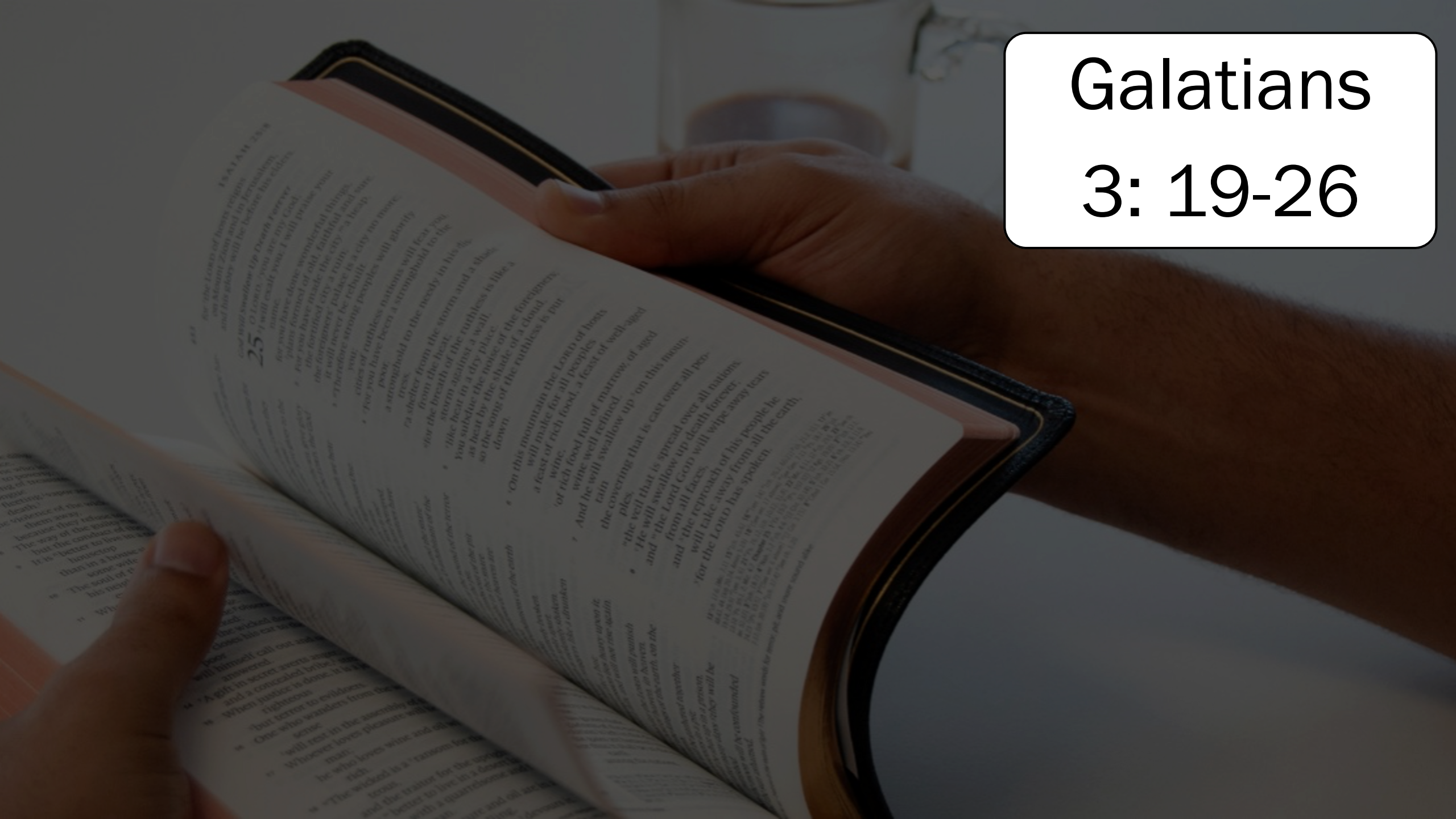
who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Question?

What point is Paul making when he says “*the letter kills but the Spirit gives life*”?

Galatians

3: 19-26



Galatians 3: 19-26 (NLT)

Why, then, was the law given? It was given alongside the promise to show people their sins. But the law was designed to last only until the coming of the child who was promised. God gave his law through angels to Moses, who was the mediator between God and the people.

Galatians 3: 19-26 (NLT)

Now a mediator is helpful if more than one party must reach an agreement. But God, who is one, did not use a mediator when he gave his promise to Abraham.

Galatians 3: 19-26 (NLT)

Is there a conflict, then, between God's law and God's promises? Absolutely not! If the law could give us new life, we could be made right with God by obeying it. But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God's promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3: 19-26 (NLT)

Before the way of faith in Christ was available to us, we were placed under guard by the law. We were kept in protective custody, so to speak, until the way of faith was revealed.

Galatians 3: 19-26 (NLT)

Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian. For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews

9: 15



Hebrews 9: 15 (NLT)

That is why he is the one who mediates a new covenant between God and people, so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.

2 Corinthians 3: 6 (NASB)

who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Corinthians 3: 7-8 (NASB)

*But if the ministry of death, **engraved in letters on stones**, came with glory so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory?*

2 Corinthians 3: 9-11 (NASB)

*For if **the ministry of condemnation** has glory, much more does the **ministry of righteousness** excel in glory. For indeed what had glory in this case has no glory, because of the glory that surpasses it. For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.*

- *the ministry of condemnation*
✓ (old covenant)
- *the ministry of righteousness*
✓ (new covenant)

Hebrews

8: 13



Hebrews 8: 13 (NASB)

When He said, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

Romans

7: 7



Romans 7: 7 (NASB)

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law.

*For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said,
“You shall not covet.”*

2 Corinthians 3: 12 (NASB)

*Therefore, **having such a hope**, we use
great boldness in our speech,*

Question?

What hope is
Paul talking
about?

2 Corinthians 3: 12 (NASB)

*Therefore, **having such a hope**, we use
great boldness in our speech,*

2 Corinthians 3: 13 (NASB)

and we are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not stare at the end of what was fading away.

When Moses was with God his face began to reflect, radiate the glory of God, however God's glory had only gotten on him, not in him.

Because of this the glory on the face of Moses was only temporary and began to leave Moses after descended from Mount Sinai, so he veiled his face so that people could not see the fading glory.

2 Corinthians 3: 14 (NASB)

But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ.

Question?

What veil is Paul
talking about?

Question?

Who removes
the veil?

2 Corinthians 3: 14 (NASB)

But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ.

Jesus Christ Alone has the
power, the qualifications
and the authorization to
remove the veil of the Law
and open the eyes of
mankind!

Question?

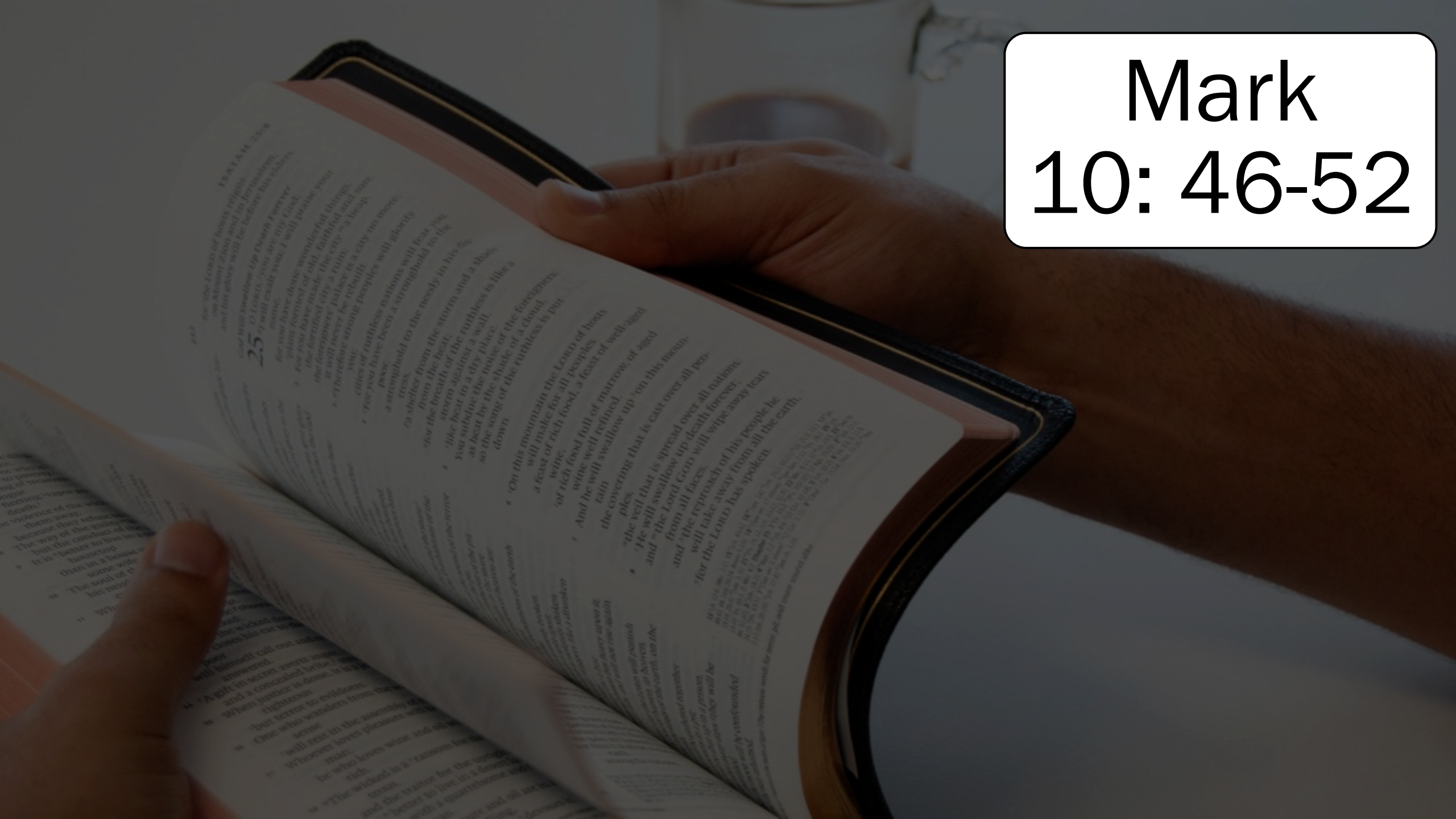
Who is Paul
talking about in
the next verse?

2 Corinthians 3: 15 (NASB)

But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts;

Mark

10: 46-52



Mark 10: 46-52 (NLT)

Then they reached Jericho, and as Jesus and his disciples left town, a large crowd followed him. A blind beggar named Bartimaeus (son of Timaeus) was sitting beside the road.

Mark 10: 46-52 (NLT)

When Bartimaeus heard that Jesus of Nazareth was nearby, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

“Be quiet!” many of the people yelled at him.

But he only shouted louder, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Mark 10: 46-52 (NLT)

*When Jesus heard him, **he stopped** and said, “Tell him to come here.”*

So they called the blind man. “Cheer up,” they said. “Come on, he’s calling you!”

Only three times in
scripture does it say that
Jesus stops or stands still,
and each time it was to
open the eyes of the blind!

Mark 10: 46-52 (NLT)

Bartimaeus threw aside his coat, jumped up, and came to Jesus.

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked.

“My Rabbi,” the blind man said, “I want to see!”

Mark 10: 46-52 (NLT)

*And Jesus said to him, “Go, for **your faith has healed you.**” **Instantly the man could see, and he followed Jesus** down the road.*

It takes faith to remove the
veil of blindness!

2 Corinthians 3: 15 (NASB)

But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts;

2 Corinthians 3: 16 (NASB)

*but whenever someone turns to the
Lord, the veil is taken away.*

It is clear that the eyes of the Jews are veiled because It is impossible to not see that Jesus Christ is the Messiah as prophesied throughout the Old Testament.

Question?

Who else's eyes
are veiled?

2 Corinthians

4: 4

2 Corinthians 4: 4 (NLT)

Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.

2 Corinthians 3: 17 (NASB)

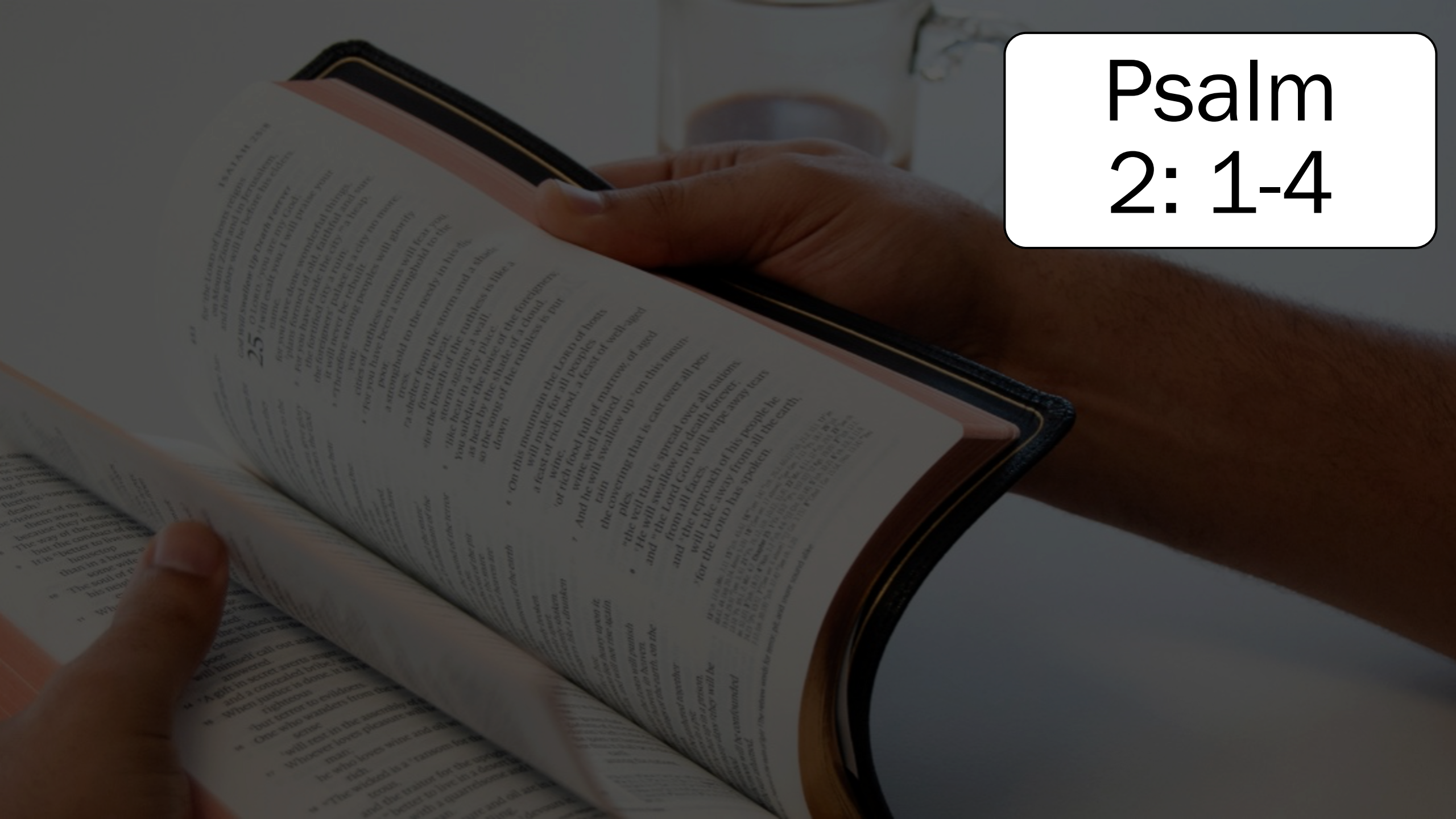
Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

Question?

Where does
satan say you
will find
freedom?

Psalm

2: 1-4



Psalm 2: 1-4 (NIV)

*Why do the nations conspire
and the peoples plot in vain?
The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together
against the Lord and against his
anointed, saying,
“Let us break their chains
and throw off their shackles.”*

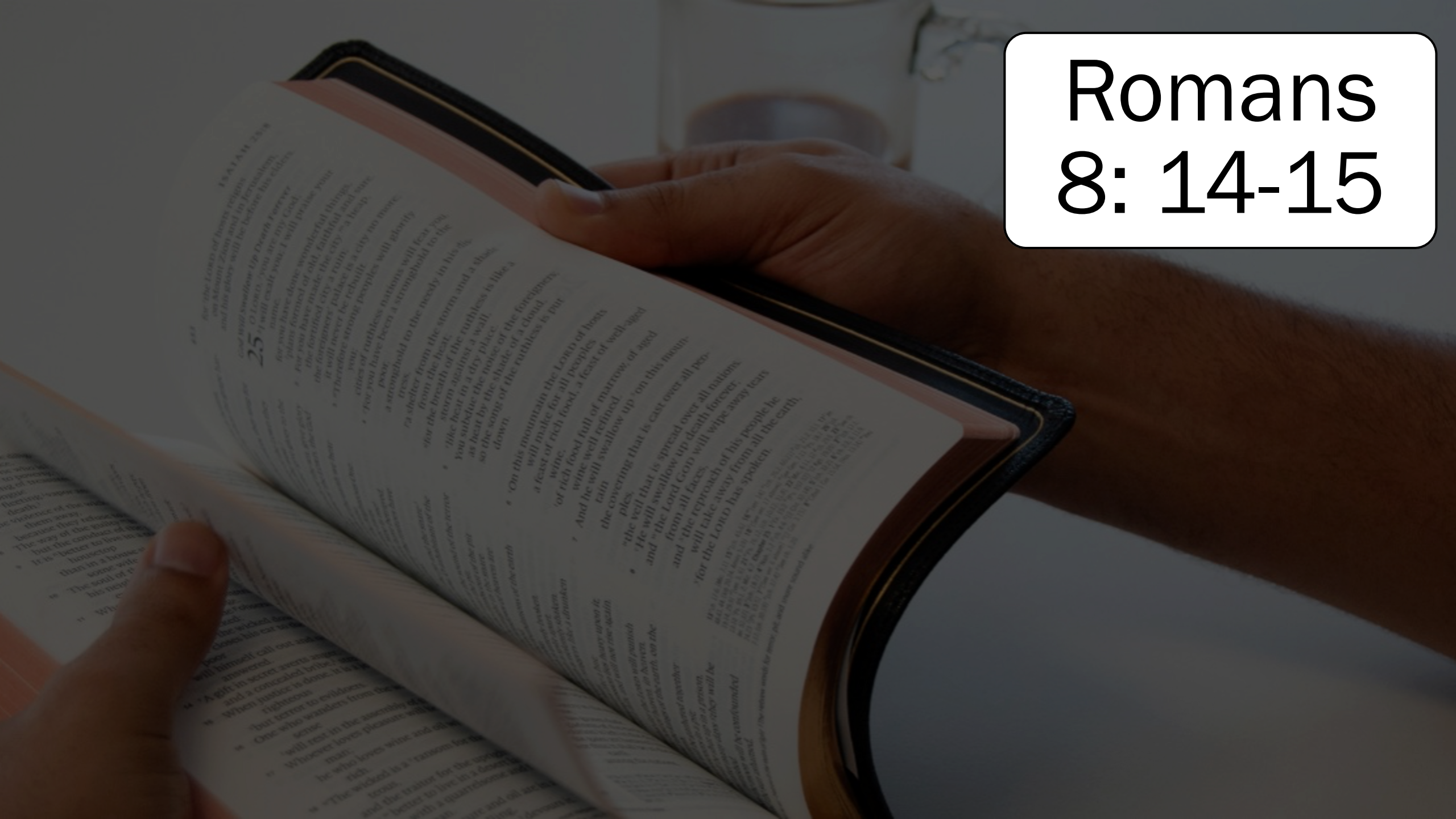
Psalm 2: 1-4 (NIV)

*The One enthroned in heaven laughs;
the Lord scoffs at them.*

Satan has blinded
this world into
believing bondage is
freedom and
freedom is bondage!

Romans

8: 14-15



Romans 8: 14-15 (NASB)

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons and daughters of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons and daughters by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

Galatians

5: 1



Galatians 5: 1 (NASB)

*It was for freedom that Christ set us free;
therefore keep standing firm and do not
be subject again to a yoke of slavery.*

2 Corinthians 3: 17 (NASB)

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Corinthians 3: 18 (NASB)

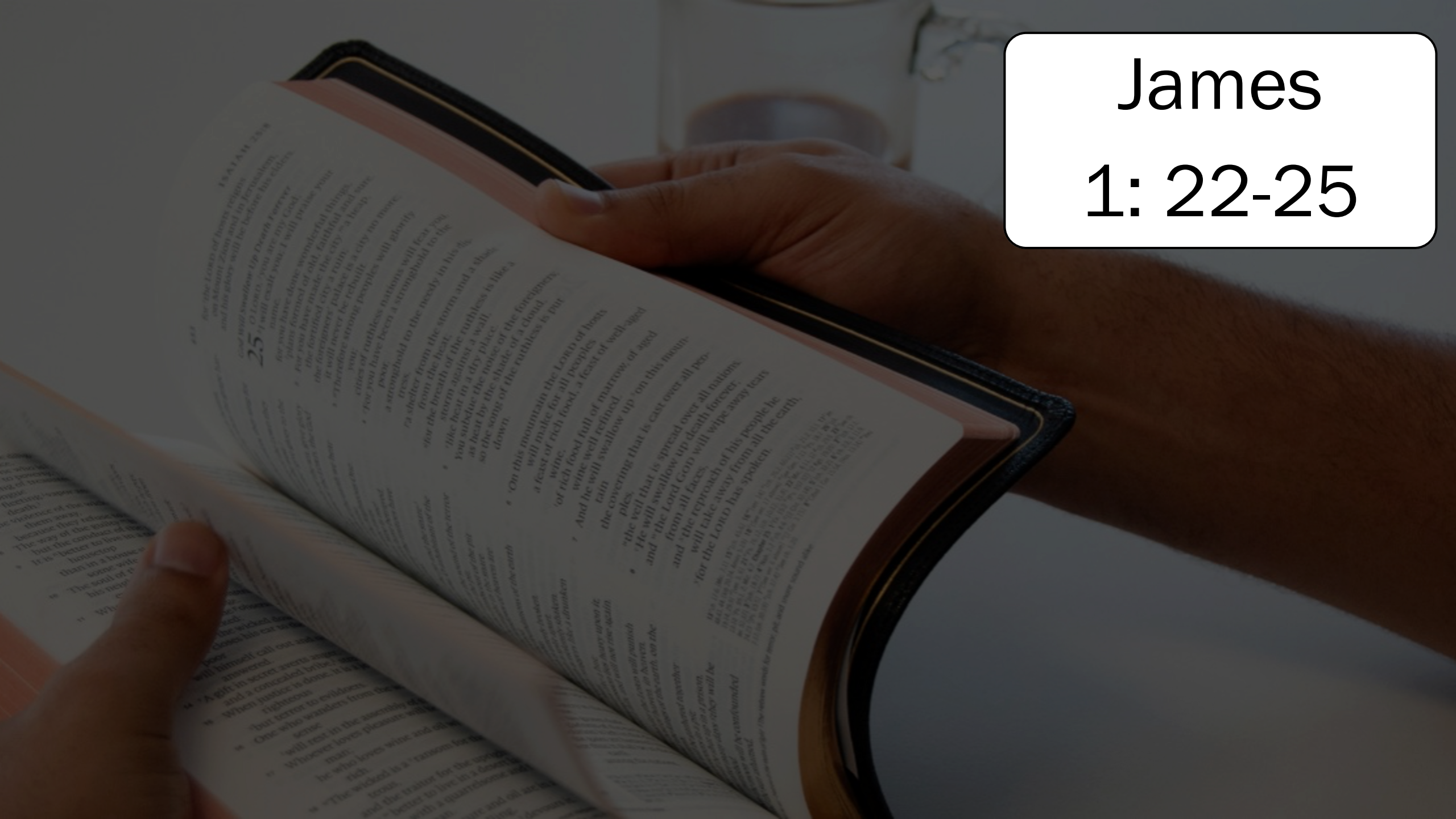
*But we all, with unveiled faces, looking as
in a mirror at the glory of the Lord, are
being transformed into the same image
from glory to glory, just as from the Lord,
the Spirit.*

Question?

Where do we
find this mirror?

James

1: 22-25



James 1: 22-25 (NASB)

*But prove yourselves doers of **the word**,
and not just hearers who deceive
themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of
the word and not a doer, he is like a man
who looks at his natural face in a **mirror**;*

James 1: 22-25 (NASB)

for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who has looked intently at the perfect law, the law of freedom, and has continued in it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an active doer, this person will be blessed in what he does.

Question?

How is the Word
of God a mirror?

Question?

What should we
do when we look
in this mirror?

2 Corinthians 3: 18 (NASB)

But we all, with unveiled faces, looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Question?

What transforms
us?

2 Corinthians 3: 18 (NASB)

But we all, with unveiled faces, looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 4: 1 (NASB)

Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart,

Question?

What does it
mean to lose
heart?

Galatians

6: 9



James 1: 22-25 (NKJV)

*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap **if we do not lose heart.***

Question?

How do we not
lose heart?

2 Corinthians 4: 2 (NASB)

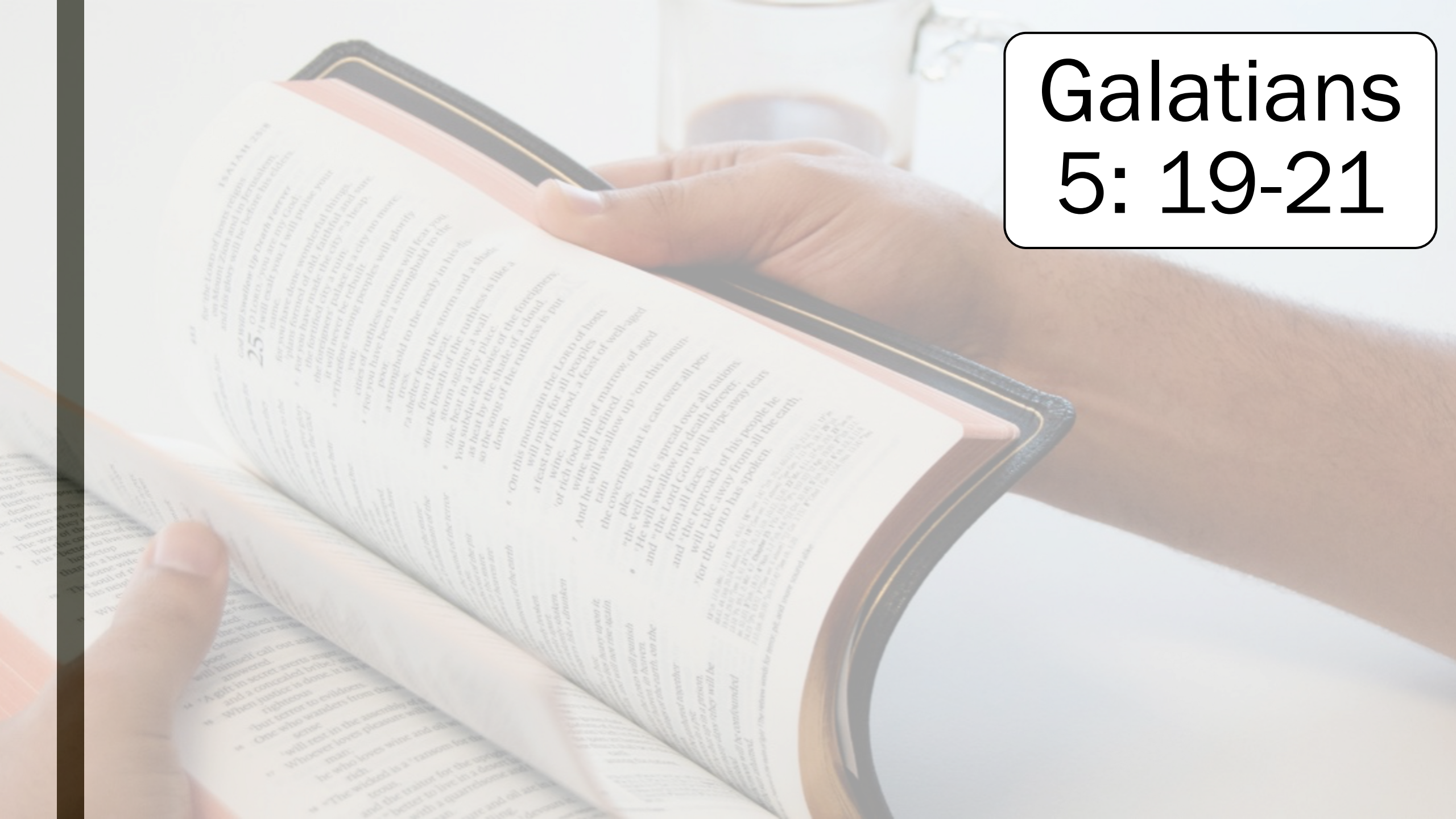
but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in trickery nor distorting the word of God, but by the open proclamation of the truth commending ourselves to every person's conscience in the sight of God.

Question?

What is Paul
saying we should
be renouncing?

Galatians

5: 19-21



Galatians 5: 19-21 (NASB)

*Now the deeds of the flesh are evident,
which are: sexual immorality, impurity,
indecent behavior, idolatry, witchcraft,
hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of
anger, selfish ambition,
dissensions, factions,*

Galatians 5: 19-21 (NASB)

envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ephesians

5: 3-5



Ephesians 5: 3-5 (NASB)

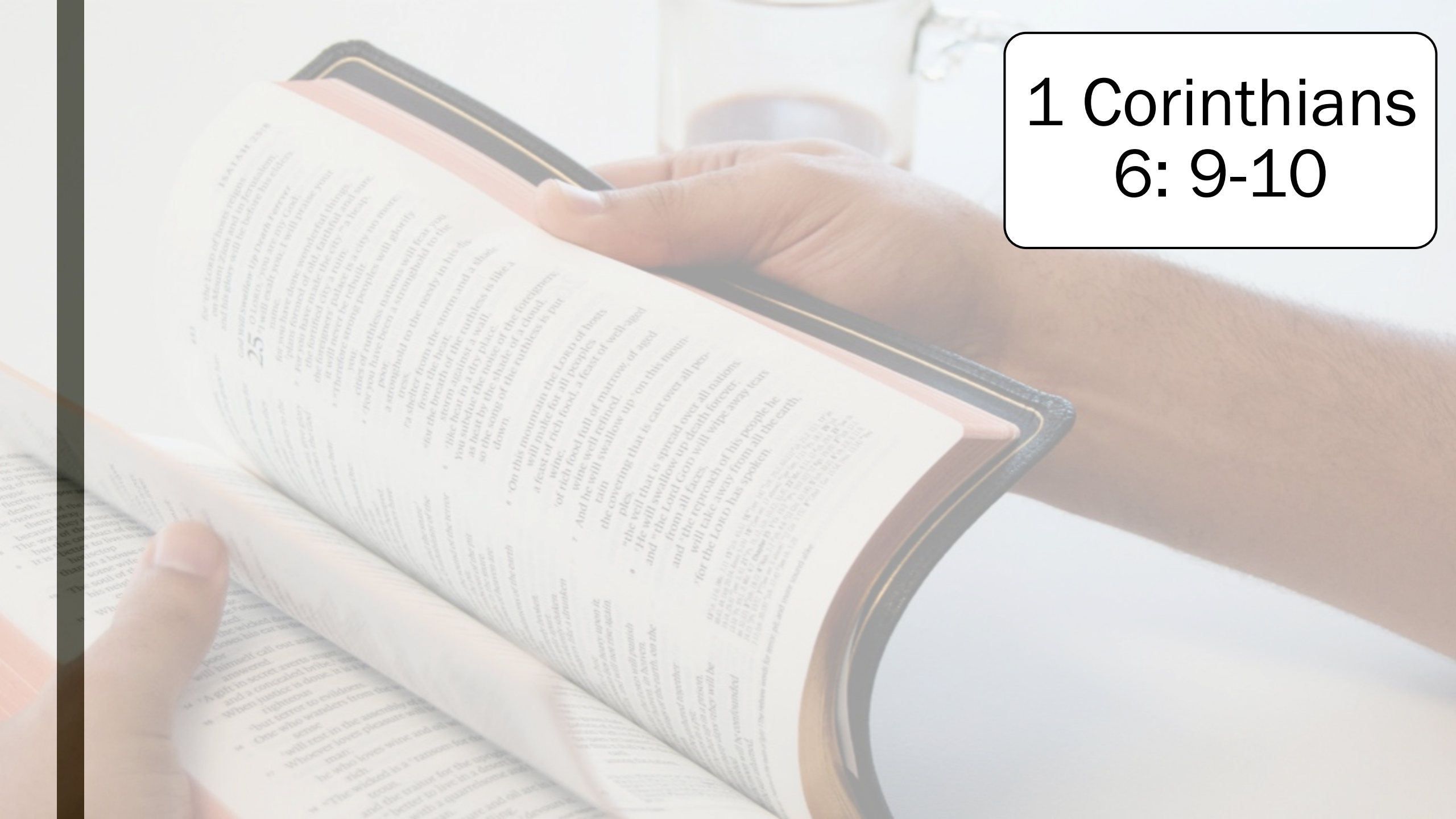
But sexual immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be mentioned among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness or foolish talk, or vulgar joking, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

Ephesians 5: 3-5 (NASB)

For this you know with certainty, that no sexually immoral or impure or greedy person, which amounts to an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

1 Corinthians

6: 9-10



1 Corinthians 6: 9-10 (NASB)

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor [g]homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor those habitually drunk, nor verbal abusers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

2 Corinthians 4: 2 (NIV)

Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.

Question?

What does it
mean to not
renounce sin by
distorting the
word of God?



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Abortion 'must be legal and accessible,' says mainline US church

2 Corinthians 4: 2 (NIV)

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