

# **Anxiety and Concerns Part 2**

- What does the Word of God say on the subject of what we should be concerned about?

**We have seen that we shouldn't be concerned  
about the cares of this life.**

**Hebrews 12:1 ESV**

*Therefore, since we are  
surrounded by so great  
a cloud of witnesses,  
let us also lay aside  
every weight, and sin  
which clings so  
closely, and let us run  
with endurance the  
race that is set before  
us*



# The cares of this life can result in us being unprepared for the Rapture.

**Luke 21:34-35.**

*Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap.*

*For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth.*



# Worry and Anxiety is choice.

## Philippians 4:6-7.

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*



# Cast your cares on the Lord.

**Psalm 55:22.**

*Cast your cares  
on the Lord and  
he will sustain  
you; he will never  
let the righteous  
be shaken.*



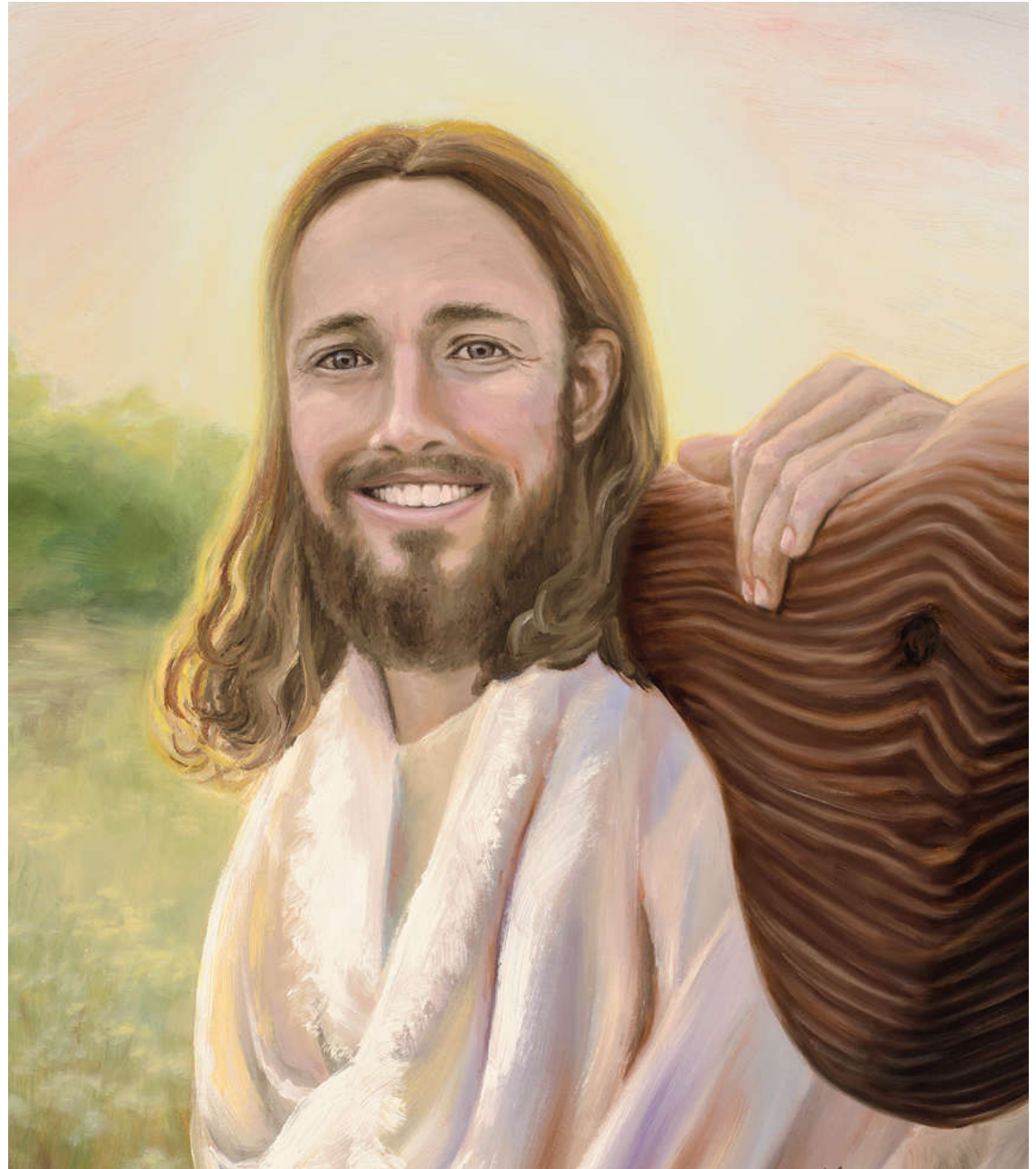


**Matthew 11:28-29.**

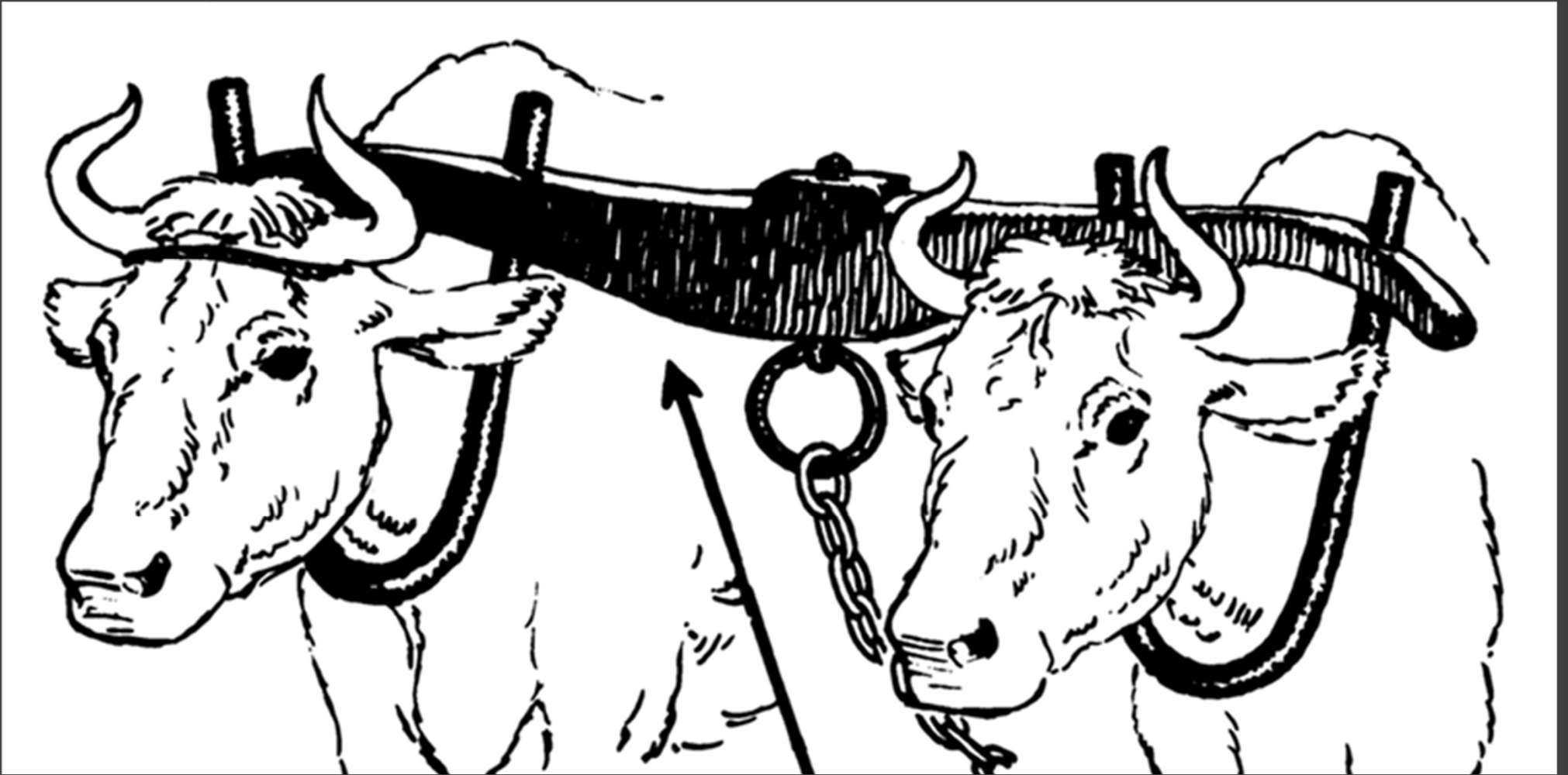
*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.*

*Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

*For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*



**The Lord invites us to be yoked with Him .**



**What does a  
yoke refer to in  
the Bible?**

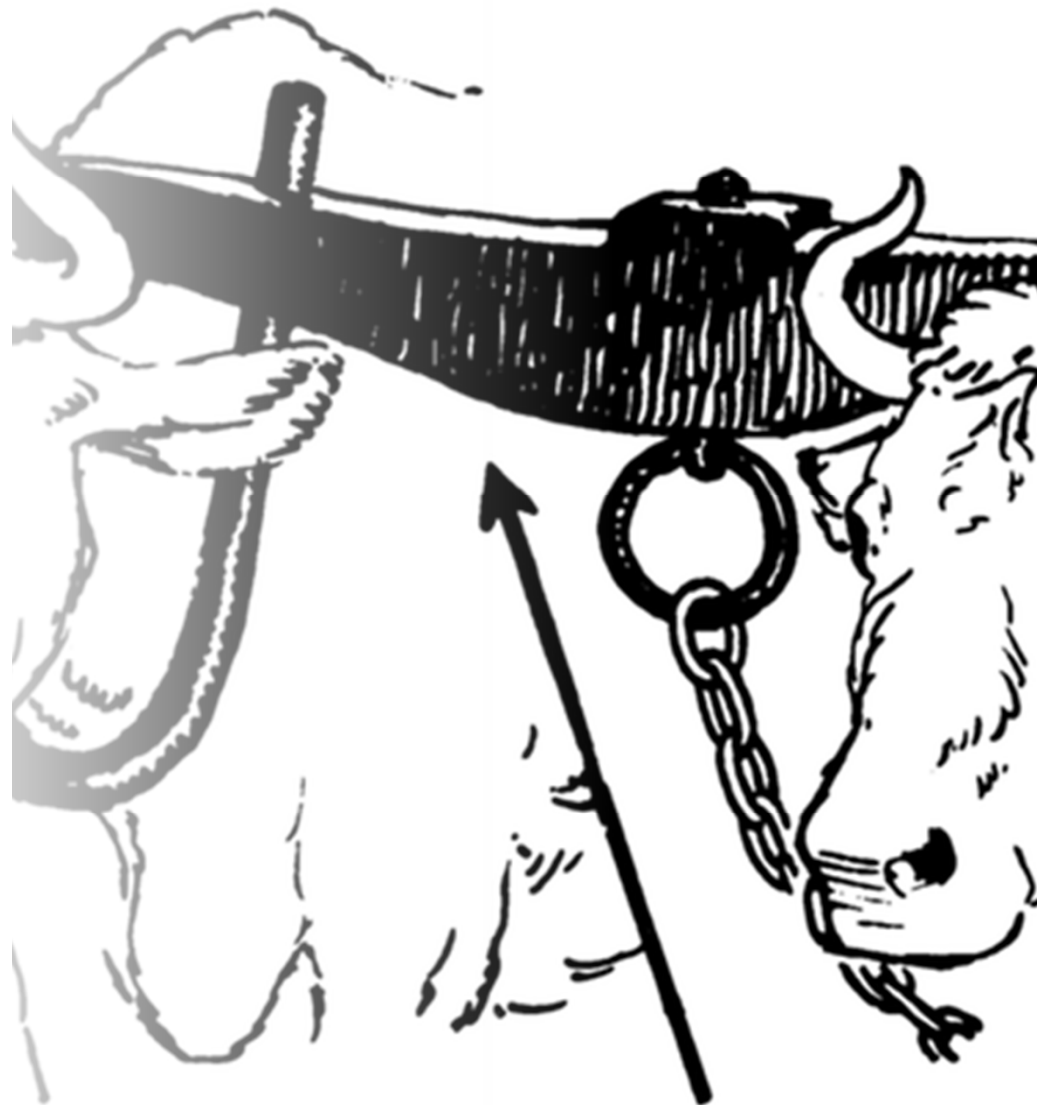
Essentially, a yoke was a harness used by oxen and other animals to ease the work of hauling a load. It was also meant as a designation of servitude and carrying the burden of a task or mission.



When Jesus said, **Matt 11:29**  
*“Take my yoke upon you”*,  
He meant that we are to submit  
ourselves to Him every day in  
every way. A yoke was made of  
wood, hand-carved to fit the  
neck and shoulders of the  
animal to prevent pain or  
discomfort.

In ancient culture, the word  
yoke was a term that was used  
to describe submission.  
So, when someone was  
described as being yoked to  
someone or something, it was  
communicating the idea that he  
or she was in submission to that  
person or thing.

## A yoke in the Bible?



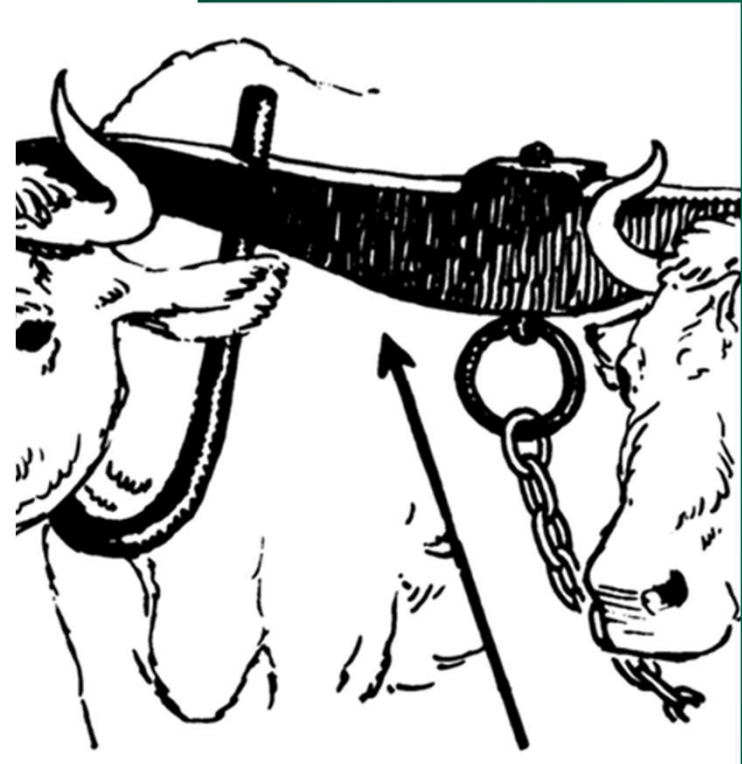
# A yoke in the Bible?

So, to be yoked to Jesus is to serve and obey Him. Before you bristle at that idea, consider this: Everyone is yoked to someone or something.

The question is to whom or what do you want to be yoked?

Some are yoked to the power of sin. They are under its control.

Some are yoked in a relationship with unbelievers, and the Bible warns very specifically against that.



**Some are yoked to unbelievers.**

**2 Corinthians 6:14.**

*Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.*

*For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness?*

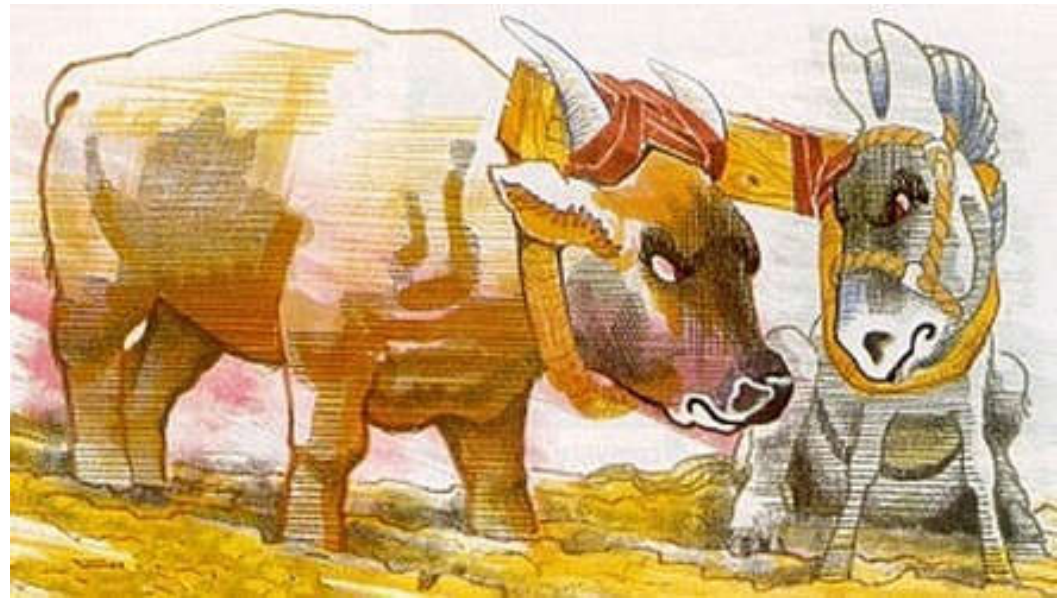
*Or what fellowship has light with darkness?*



**Some are yoked  
to the Law.**

**Galatians 5:1.**

*For freedom Christ  
has set us free;  
stand firm  
therefore, and do  
not submit again to  
a yoke of slavery.*



## **A Yoke and Discipleship.**

Let's consider the context of Jesus' words. Two oxen are chosen to share a yoke. The first is an older seasoned ox. He is trained and hardy from years of routine. The second is a new young ox. He has potential but is inexperienced. By sharing the same yoke with a veteran workhorse, the elder trains the young.

Not only that, but the experienced one draws harder to bear the majority of the load. Since the older one leads, the younger ox does not have to wonder what to do. He learns from his mentor and gains the knowledge and skill to teach others.



## A Yoke and Discipleship.

This very much resembles discipleship. Jesus invites us to *'learn of Him'* which is another way of stating *'be my disciple.'* There is peace in not having to figure life out on our own. There's assurance as we follow His lead.

Jesus also declares that His yoke is easy. The word *'easy'* here doesn't imply *'simple'*, but *'good'*. If I'm yoked to Jesus, there's peace in being yoked to someone good, loving, and patient.

The paraphrase? *"Get in the yoke with me. Let me disciple You. I'll bear the weight of your burden. My yoke is good, and you will find rest and companionship in our labour together."*



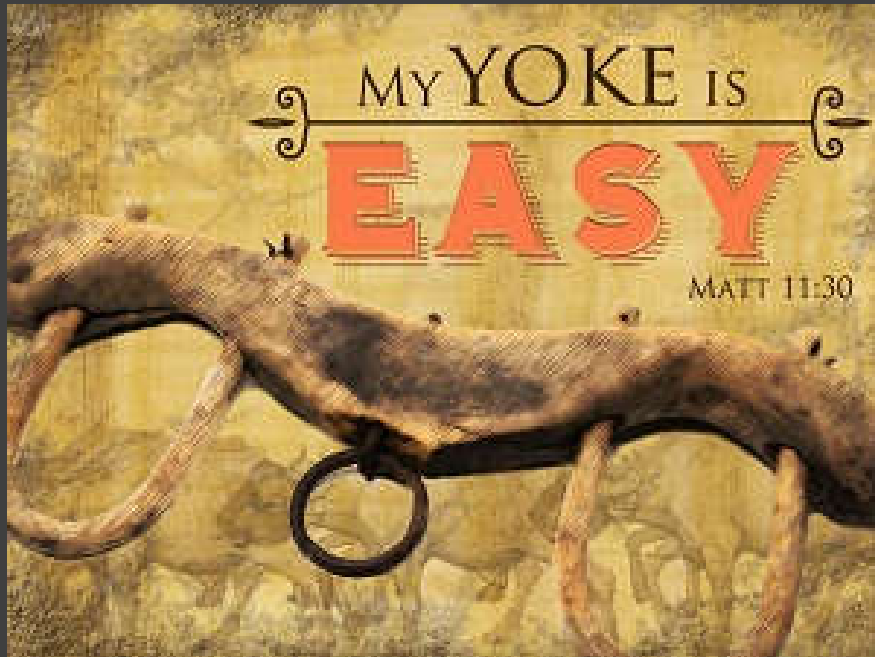
## Yoked With Christ

If we're willing, Jesus releases the yoke of our oppression and encourages us to take on His yoke instead. He said:

**Matthew 11:29.**

*Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

# My Yoke is Easy.



The Lord has not promised us the strength and ability to carry the burdens of our daily lives. He has told us to cast those upon Him.

He has promised to empower us and enable us to do His work. To be able to carry His concerns and burdens that are part of “Our Calling” .

Let us examine some of them.

**We are called  
to set others free**



**Isaiah 58:6.**

*Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loosen the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?*

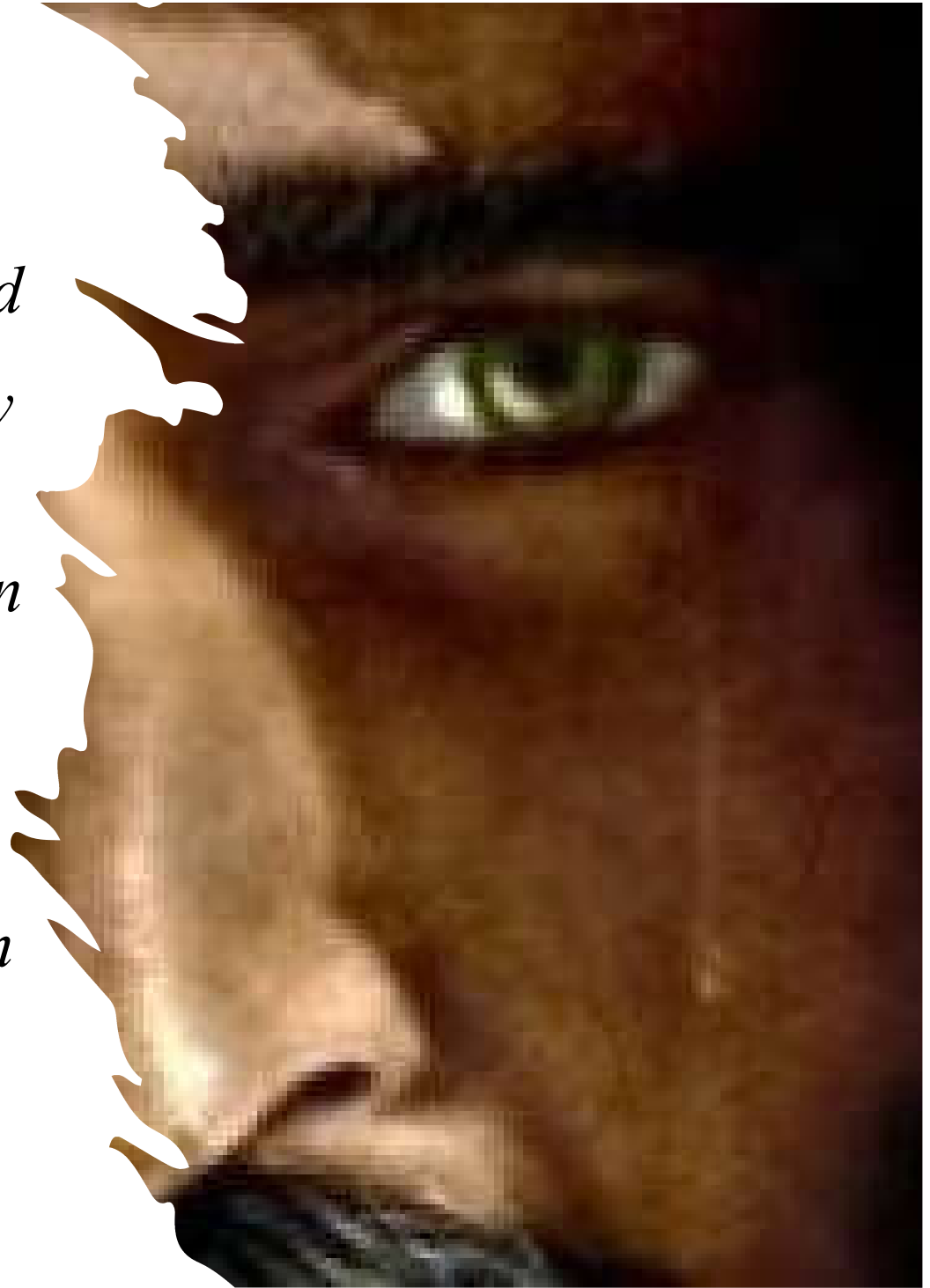
# Concern for “The Lost”.

**Luke 19:41-44.**

*As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace, but now it is hidden from your eyes.*

*The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls.*

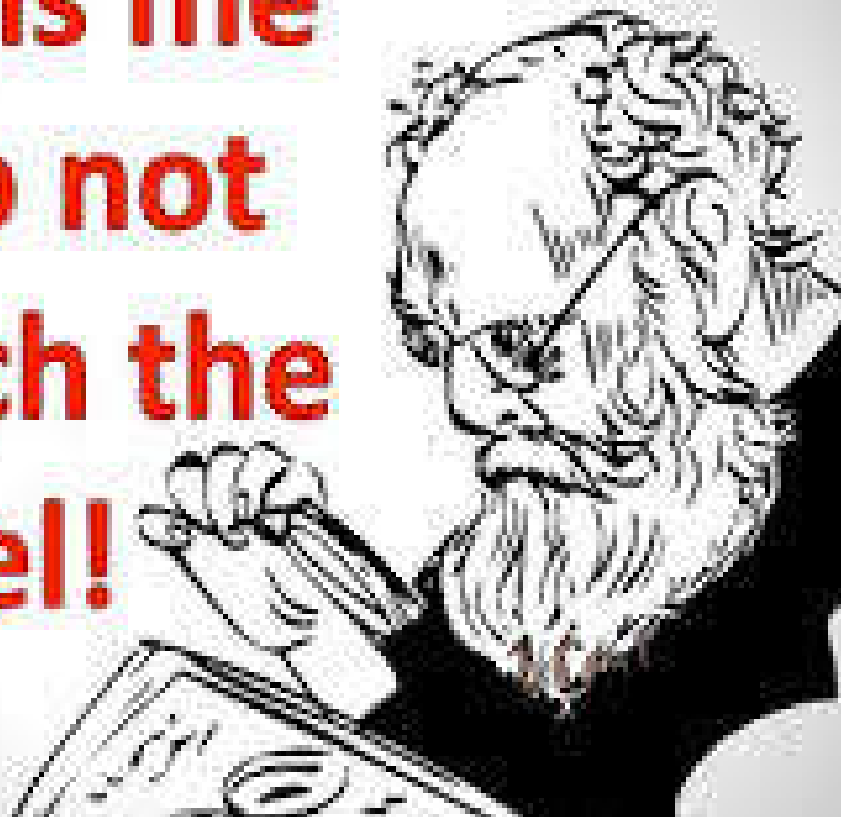
*They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.*





# Concern for “The Lost”.

**Woe is me  
if I do not  
preach the  
gospel!**



**1 Corinthians 9:16**  
**CSB**

*For if I preach the  
gospel, I have no  
reason to boast,  
because I am  
compelled to  
preach, and woe to  
me if I do not  
preach the gospel!*

# Do we share Paul's concern for the unsaved?

## **Romans 9:3**

*I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers.*

Some of us just don't care that much about the unsaved, we don't say it, but our priorities and lives reveal it. We make no time in our busy schedules to interact and engage with those who don't know Christ. We have no non-Christian friends. We lack compassion, we might say we care, but we rarely cry out to God for the salvation of our lost neighbours, co-workers, and classmates.

# How many people are drowning on your watch?

We all have our circles of influence, family, friends, neighbours and work colleagues, are you looking for and making opportunities to share the Good News of the Gospel with them or are you content to see them drown in their sins and go to a lost eternity?



# Concern for Missionaries.

A perfect illustration of “out of sight, out of mind” is that of the missionary serving overseas. We have heard this refrain many times in our conversations with missionaries in our church’s care ministry.

The Cambridge Dictionary describes it this way: *“not able to be seen, and so not thought about. Problems in remote places can be out of sight, out of mind for many people.”*

Paul expressed this same sentiment in his letter to the Philippians when he mentioned being “fully supplied” (Phil. 4:18 HCSB hereafter) and joy in his renewed care (Phil. 4:10). In this way, the dynamics of missionary work have remained the same over the centuries. So church, as much as it depends on us, as we send, we must also support, and support means staying connected.

**Shirley Ralston**

The Apostle Paul

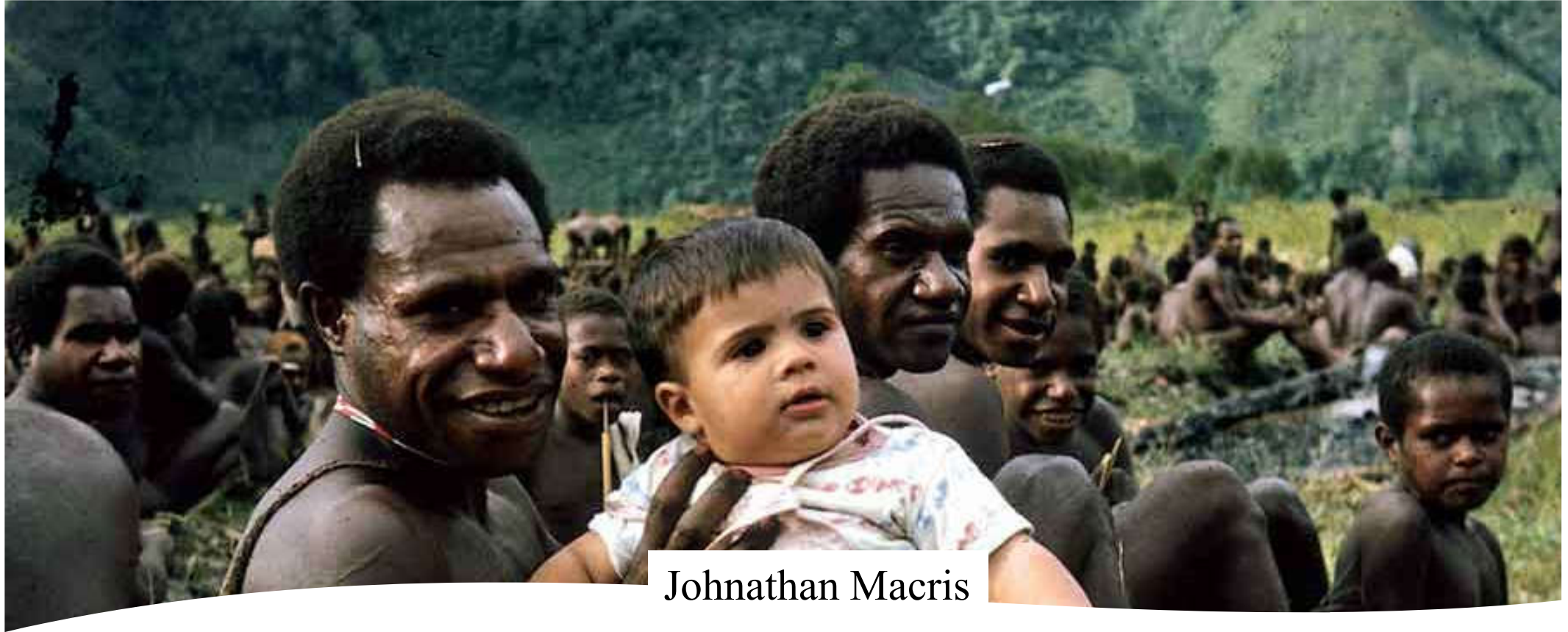
## Concern for Missionaries.

### Philippians 4:13-16.

*I can do all this through him who gives me strength. Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.*

*Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need.*





Johnathan Macris

Early missionaries counted the cost before they set out. In fact, they took their coffins with them! Falling prey to diseases, for which there were no vaccinations, or to attacks by hostile inhabitants, they unintentionally became the first short-term missionaries.

Lives sacrificed through taking the gospel to inhospitable places fell as precious seeds that germinated, grew and produced harvests of souls.

# Evaluating risk and caring for missionaries.



Johnathan Macris

Our world is just as dangerous, in different ways, as that of the early missionaries. But we now understand the necessity and responsibility of caring for missionaries, God's most valuable resource.

The Lord is raising up a new generation of workers, from Africa and other parts of the world, who have known great suffering. Through it they have learned lessons that will help them thrive and bear fruit in difficult mission fields.

But before setting out, every prospective mission worker, with help from his church and mission agency, should: 1) evaluate the risks; and 2) ensure he is adequately equipped and supported.



# Hellenic Ministries (Porta Astro)

This summer we have had the privilege of hosting different groups including camp experiences specifically organized for refugee men, refugee women, refugee families, Greek teens, Greek kids, local communities, a leadership conference for Muslim background youth from Egypt, and not least, a special event for nearly 100 Ukrainians suffering from the impact and trauma of war.

Hundreds of people of all ages from around the world have been refreshed, taught, encouraged, some even baptized, and many strengthened in their faith and journey.



Our vision is being realized by seeing Porto Astro hosting and serving people, beyond the intense summer months, into the rest of the year. We are especially encouraged to see refugee men experiencing events more routinely through the winter months, deepening their confidence in the scripture, relationships, and service!

More educational experiences are in the plans, for the marginalized and hurting communities. Focusing especially on the refugee communities, we aim to continue to provide a safe and refreshing environment. Pray for the staff and the funds needed to continue to expand the impact that Porto Astro has year-round.

## **Hellenic Ministries (Porta Astro)**



# Praise.

- This has been a landmark year! By September we will have completed 15 summer programs and each one has been amazing. We have focused on some great topics, including reconciliation, forgiveness and relationship building. We are especially grateful for the refugee programs that took place and that refugees are participating in other events as well!
- God's provision and protection from fires, sickness and accidents.
- Many volunteers and interns came to help this summer after two years of COVID restrictions.
- A secular Dutch Electrical Engineering firm will be assisting us in a much-needed electrical refit project.
- New roofs on our 10 cabins completed.



# Pray.

- May PA be a place of peace, where people are blessed, challenged and come to a deeper knowledge of who Christ is.
- Ongoing events are planned throughout September. Pray for strength for our team and unobstructed vision for seeing Porto Astro a haven to impact those beyond Greece in the Islamic world of the East!
- Pray for the Ukrainian program in progress, an international Christian skippers conference and an Afghan community event still ahead of us this summer.
- For God to raise up new leaders to be involved in this ministry as Samuel Tsoutsas leaves in September for his military service

# Pray.

- Hamza and Maria, and Artur and Ergena's families, are working at PA all year round. Pray for the Lord to encourage their hearts as they continue serving faithfully.
- For the Lord's hand of protection over PA in the upcoming colder months as we have had heavy winters in the past years that caused significant damage to the property.
- Damaged by the snowstorm of last year, we are in desperate need of replacing our pontoon boat. We are praying for the ability to replace our aged craft with two smaller vessels to provide necessary transportation and back-up.  
(All transportation to and from Porto Astro is by sea.  
\$28,000 needed.)

# Concern for the needy.

## Psalm 72:1-2 &12-13.

*Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness.*

*May he judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice...*

*For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help.*

*He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death.*



# Concern for the needy.



## **Matthew 25:31-46.**

*Then the King will say to those on his right, Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

*For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me....*

*And the King will answer them, Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.*

## Concern for strangers.



### Hebrews 12:1-3.

*Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.*



# Concern for strangers.

## Deuteronomy 10:17-19.

*For the Lord, your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes.*

*He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.*

*And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.*



## Concern for strangers.



### **Ezekiel 42:22.**

*Thus says the Lord of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.*



# Concern for the poor.

## Galatians 2:2-10.

*For God, who was at work in Peter as an apostle to the circumcised, was also at work in me as an apostle to the Gentiles. James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me.*

*They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I had been eager to do all along.*



# Concern for the poor.

## **James 2:14-17.**

*What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?*

*If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, Go in peace, be warmed and filled, without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

## **Philippians 2:4.**

*Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*



# Which category do you fit into?



# The poor.

**If this world were shrunk to the size of a village of 100 people, what would it look like?**

**Of the 100 people in this village:**

20 are undernourished

1 is dying of starvation, while 15 are overweight.

Of the energy of this village, 20 people consume 80%, and 80 people share the remaining 20%.

20 have no clean, safe water to drink.

56 have access to sanitation

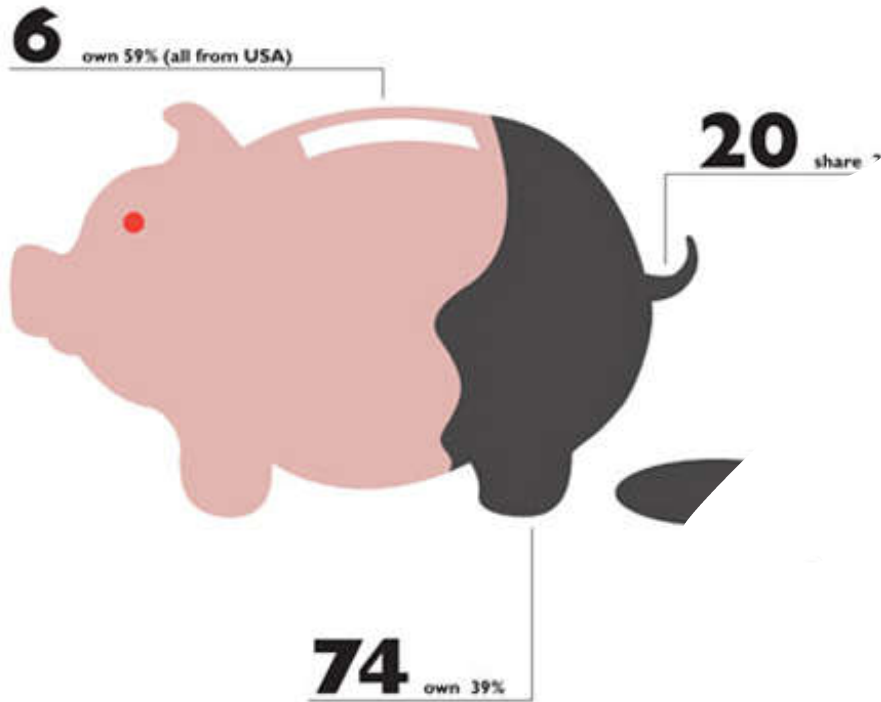
15 adults are illiterate.

1 has an university degree.

7 have computers.

If the world were a village of 100 people,

## MONEY



If the world  
were a village  
of 100 people.

6 own 59%

74 own 39%

20 own 2%

# The poor.

- If you do not live in fear of death by bombardment, armed attack, landmines, or of rape or kidnapping by armed groups, then you are more fortunate than 20, who do.
- If you can speak and act according to your faith and your conscience without harassment, imprisonment, torture or death, then you are more fortunate than 48, who can not.
- If you have money in the bank, money in your wallet and spare change somewhere around the house, then you are among the richest 8.



# The cares of this life.

The truth of the matter is that most professing 1<sup>st</sup> world Christians are more concerned about their pension in 20 years time than they are about the person on their doorstep who has nothing to eat.

This is far more of a problem in our European culture where people don't even care about their own flesh and blood as they pursue careers and wealth. On the other hand we see in the black culture that when a brother or sister dies the family takes the children in and the little that they have has to go further.

The average affluent Westernised Christian is consumed with their own comfort and security and have no resemblance to the Christ they call their Lord, who said:

**Matthew 8:20.**

*Jesus replied, Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.*



# Concern for widows and your own family.

## 1 Timothy 5:3-8. RSV

*Honour widows who are real widows. If a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn their religious duty to their own family and make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God.*

*She who is a real widow, and is left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day; whereas she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives. Command this, so that they may be without reproach.*

*If any one does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his own family, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

# Concern for orphans and widows.

## James 1:27.

*Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*

The problem with the average Christian is that they care about the things they shouldn't and don't care about the things they should.



# Concern for the Weak.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:14.**

*We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.*

## **Romans 15:1.**

*Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.*

## **Acts 20:35.**

*In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'*

**Concern for the Weak.**



**ENCOURAGE  
ONE ANOTHER  
AND BUILD  
EACH OTHER UP**  
- 1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

This means not only the weak immature Christian but also the one who is discouraged and down hearted.

**1 Corinthians 8:11.**

*For through your knowledge, he who is weak is ruined, the brother for whose sake Christ died.*

**Isaiah 35:3.**

*Encourage the exhausted and strengthen the feeble.*

# Concern for the hurting.

## **1 Corinthians 12:25-26.**

*There should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.*

## **Galatians 6:2.**

*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*

## **Galatians 6:9-10.**

*And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

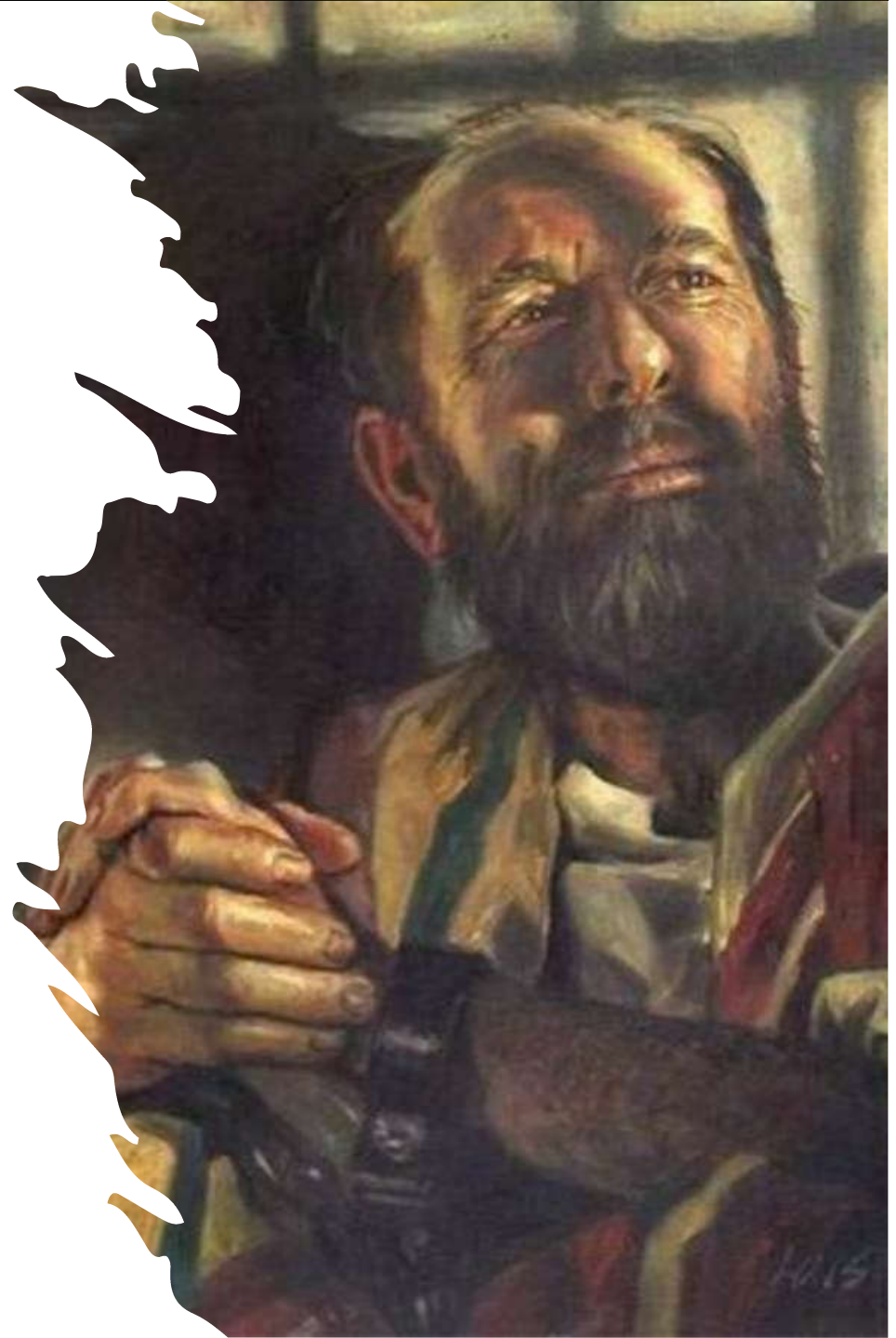
# The cares that should concern us.

## 2 Corinthians 11:23-29.

*I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.*

*Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move.*

*I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers.*





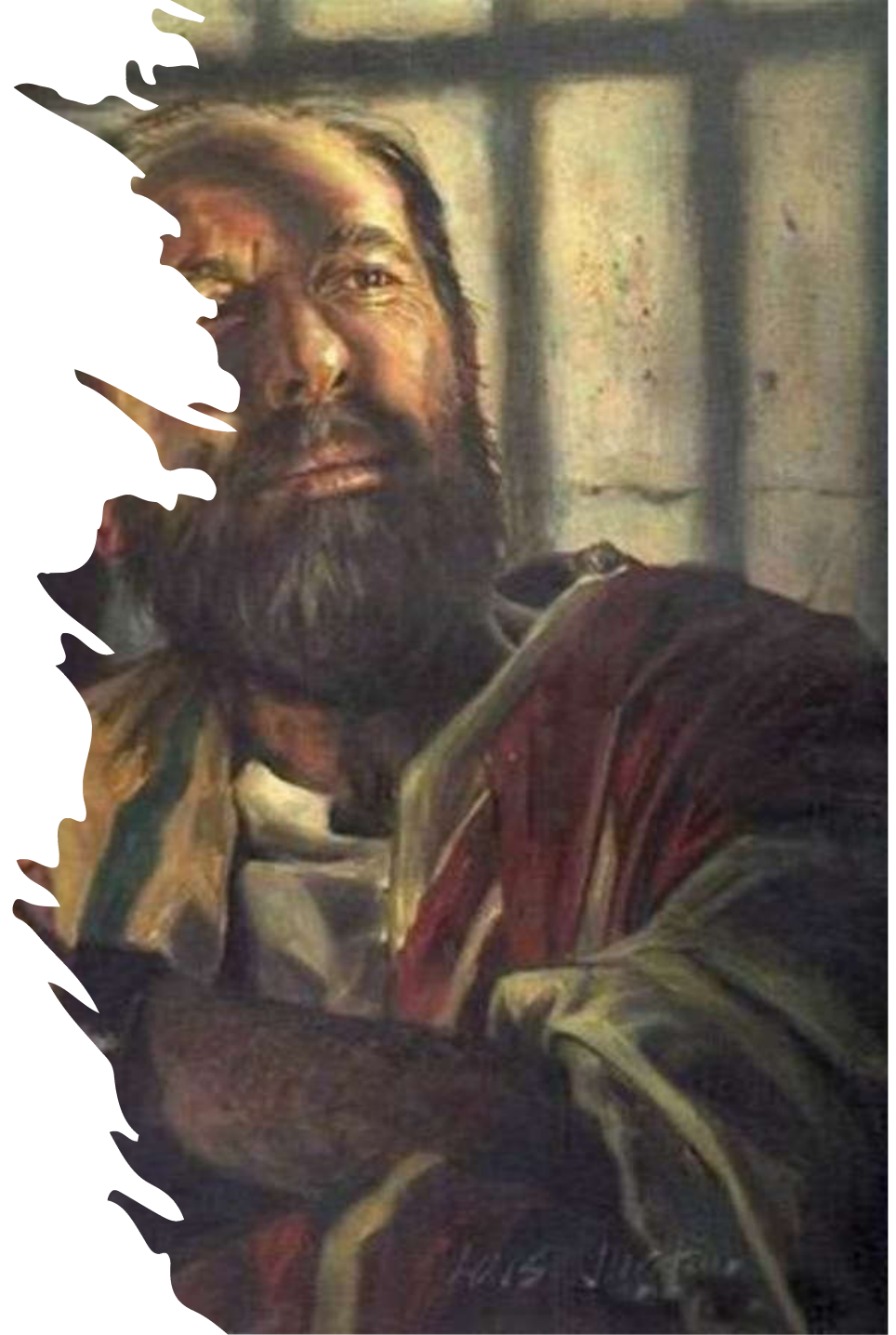
# The cares that should concern us.

## 2 Corinthians 11:23-29.

*I have laboured and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.*

*Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.*

*Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?*



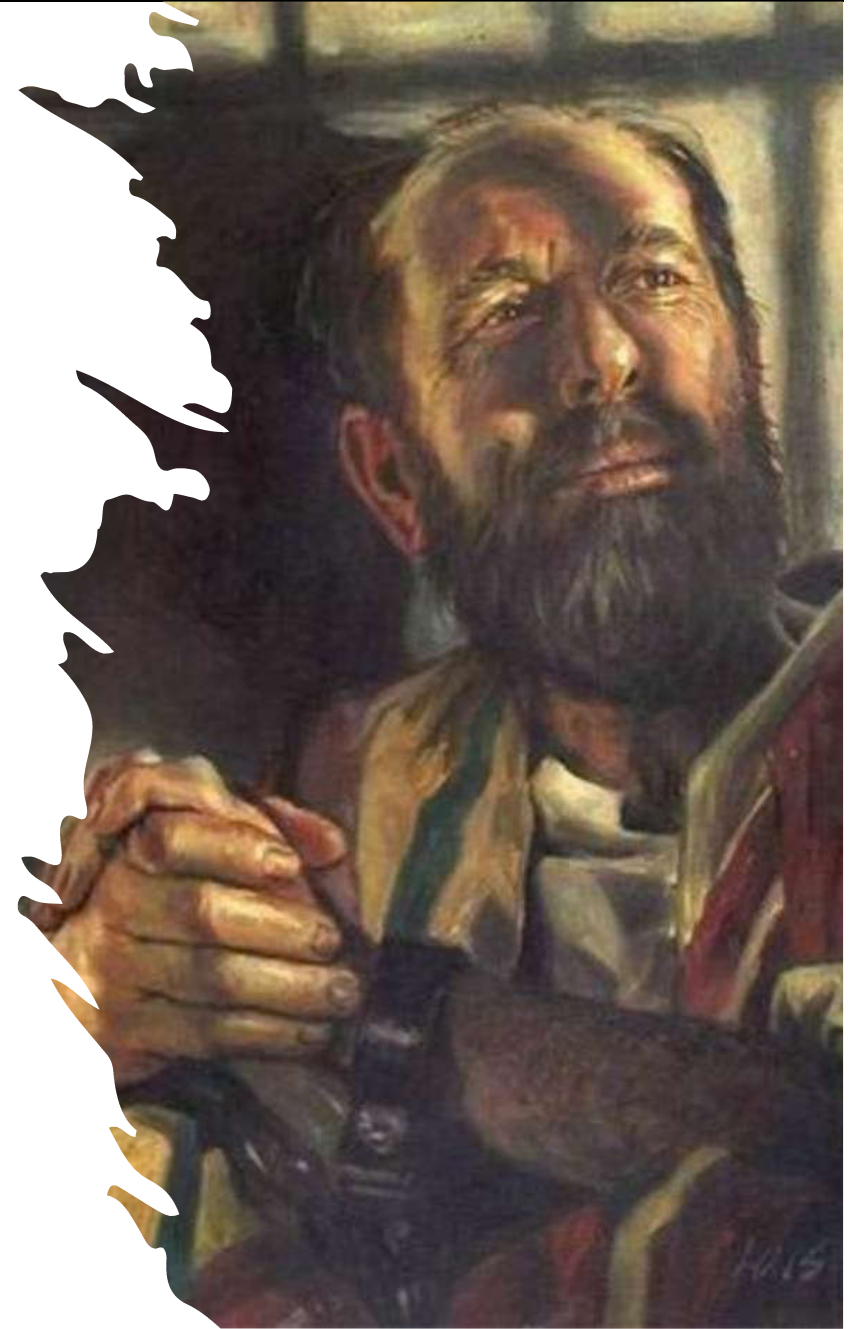
# Timothy needed encouragement as Paul, his mentor was imprisoned.

## 2 Timothy 1:2-9

*To Timothy, my dear son: I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you....*

*For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.*

*So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.*



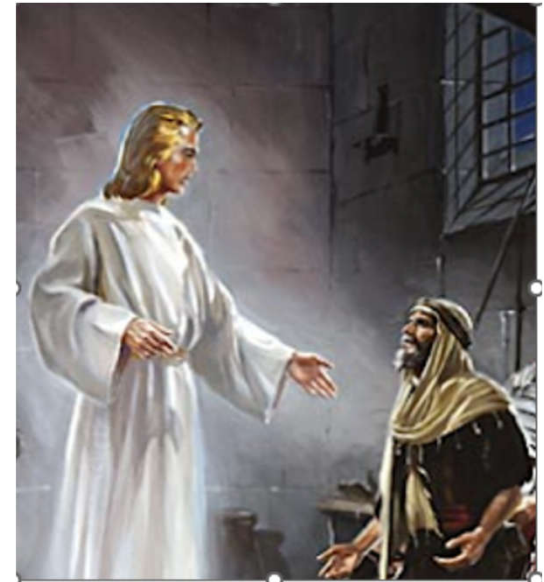
# Paul was deserted and the Lord himself encouraged him.

## 2 Timothy 4:16-18.

*At my first defence, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it.*

*And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

In the absence of brothers and sisters to encourage as was Paul's case at his first defence, we need to look to the Lord.



# David encouraged himself in the Lord when his men wanted to kill him.

## 1 Samuel 30:3-6.

*And when David and his men came to the city, they found it burned with fire, and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive.*

*Then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept until they had no more strength to weep. David's two wives also had been taken captive, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel.*

*And David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because all the people were bitter in soul, each for his sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.*





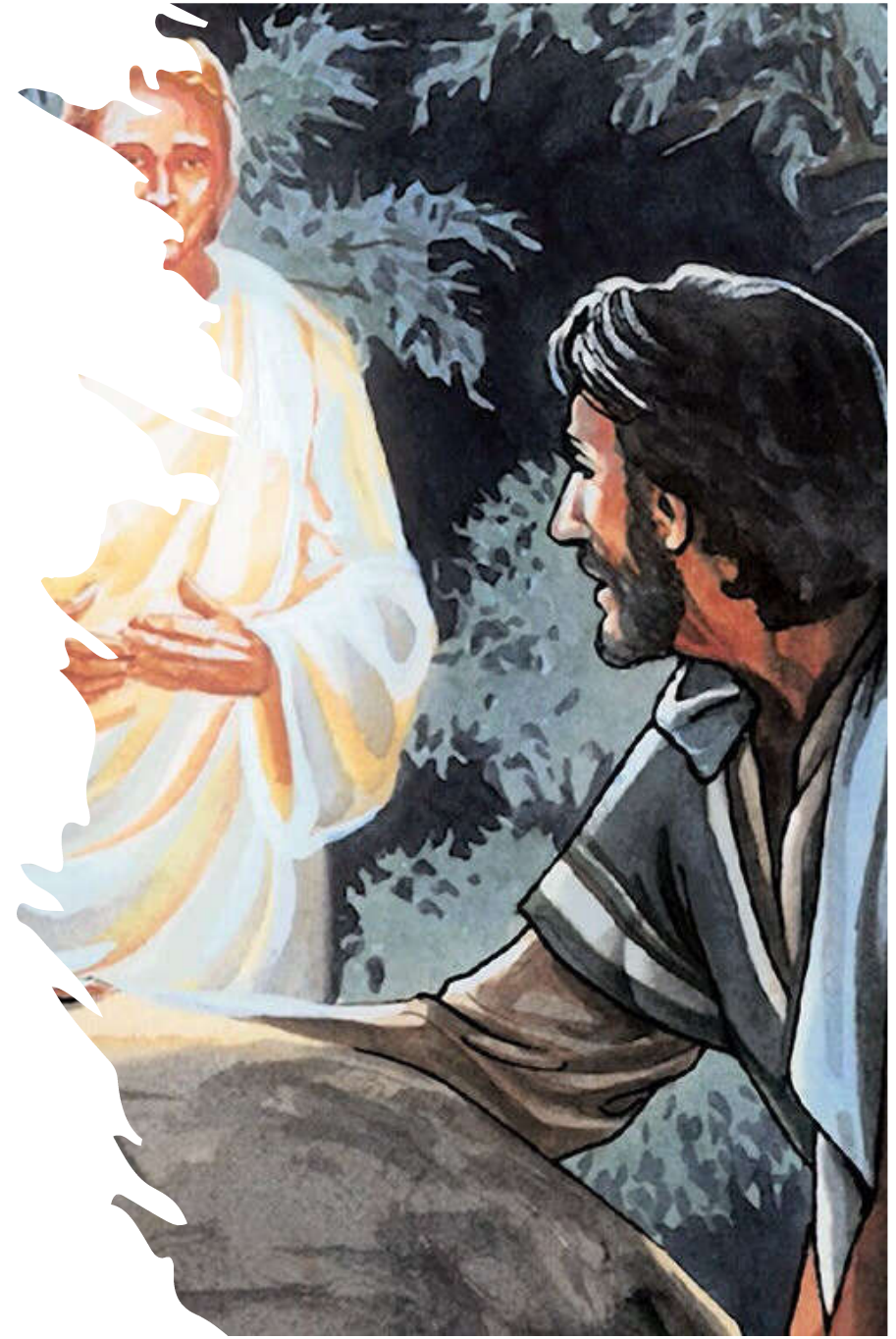
# Even Jesus was strengthened as he prayed in Gethsemane.

**Luke 22:39-44.**

*Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, Pray that you will not fall into temptation.*

*He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.*

*An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.*





# Why is Encouragement so important?

Without encouragement our hearts harden.

**Hebrews 3:12-13.**

*See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.*

*But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.*



# Encouragement.

*And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but **encourage one another**, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.*



*Hebrews 10:25 NLT*

**Hebrews 10:24-25.**

*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*