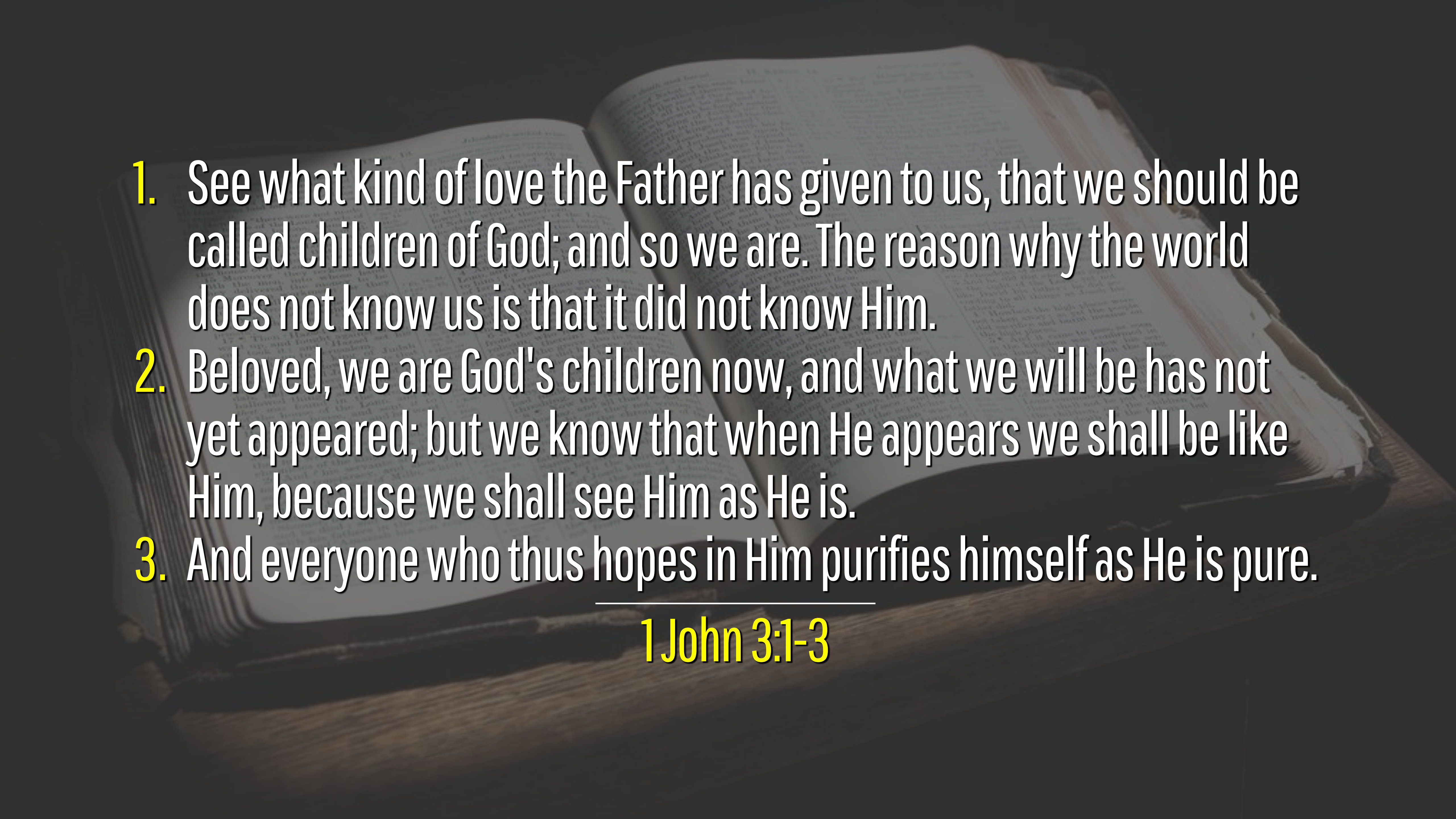
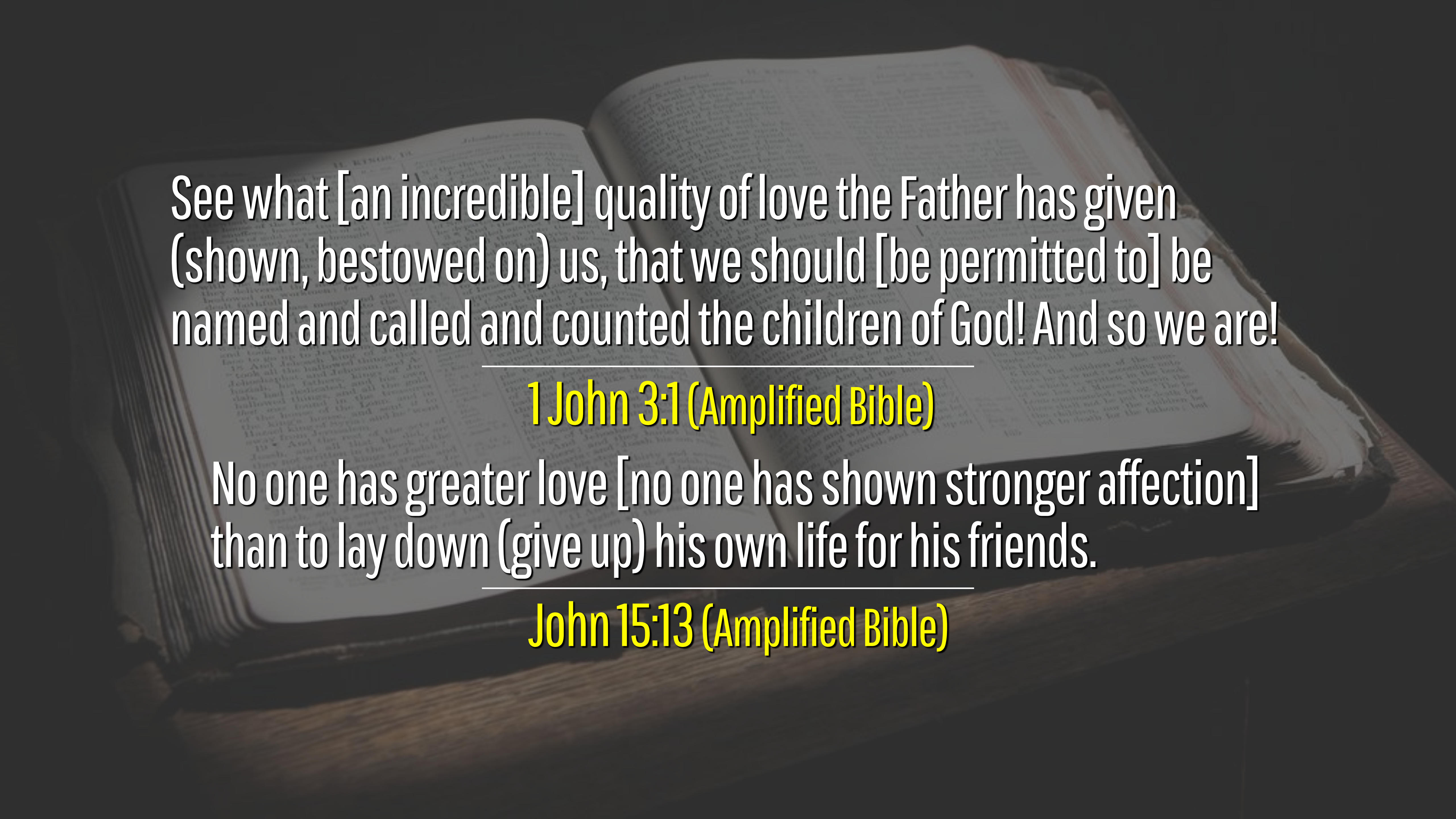


A large, diverse collage of people's faces, including men, women, and children of various ethnicities, arranged to form a heart shape. The faces are of various sizes and are set against a white background. Overlaid on the heart is the text "Being Part of the Family of God" in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font with a black outline. The text is centered and spans across the middle of the heart.

**Being Part
of the
Family of God**

- 
- An open book with text overlaid on it. The text is in white with a drop shadow, making it stand out against the dark background of the book pages. The book is open, showing two pages. The text is arranged in three numbered points.
1. See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.
 2. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is.
 3. And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure.

1 John 3:1-3

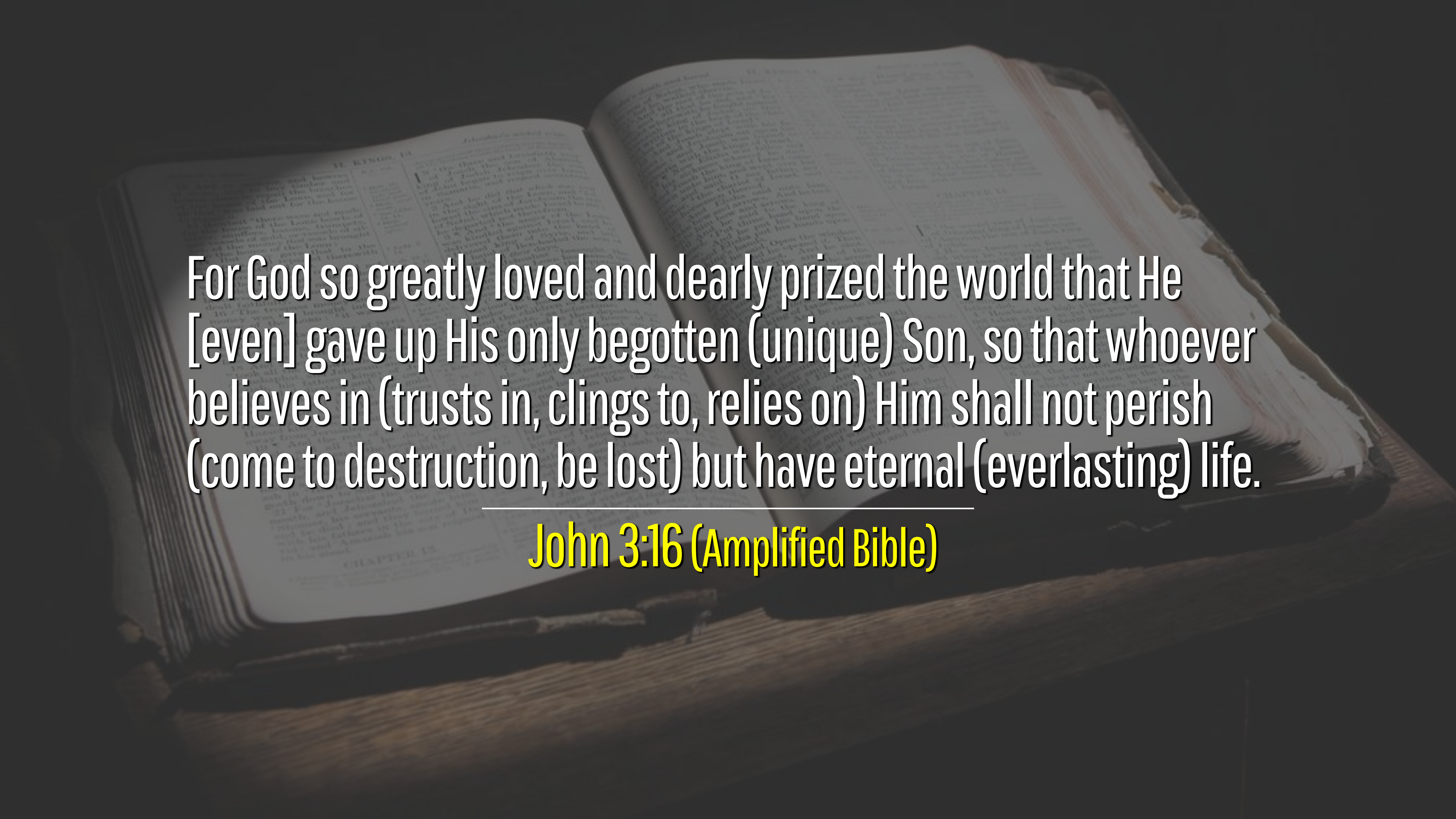
An open Bible is shown from a high angle, with its pages slightly curved. The text is overlaid on the pages in a white, bold, sans-serif font. The background is dark, making the white text stand out. The Bible is open to a page with some text visible, though it is mostly obscured by the overlay.

See what [an incredible] quality of love the Father has given
(shown, bestowed on) us, that we should [be permitted to] be
named and called and counted the children of God! And so we are!

1 John 3:1 (Amplified Bible)

No one has greater love [no one has shown stronger affection]
than to lay down (give up) his own life for his friends.

John 15:13 (Amplified Bible)

An open Bible is shown from a high angle, lying flat on a wooden surface. The pages are slightly aged and the text is faint. Overlaid on the center of the Bible is a large, white, bold text with a subtle drop shadow. Below the main text is a thin white horizontal line, followed by the reference 'John 3:16 (Amplified Bible)' in a bright yellow, bold font.

For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life.

John 3:16 (Amplified Bible)

We respond by walking in that love and relationship when we have come to:

- * Believe in - trust in - cling to - and rely on the Lord Jesus Christ**
- * Our salvation is not just a matter of saying we believe in Jesus, even the demons do that!**
- * Our salvation is not just a matter of a short prayer where you 'do the Lord a favour' by 'accepting Him as your Saviour'**
- * Our salvation is not just an insurance policy or a free ticket to heaven when we die**
- * Our salvation is a wholehearted believing in, trusting in, clinging to and relying on Jesus - who is not only our Saviour but our Lord**

An open Bible is shown from a high angle, with its pages slightly curved. The text is overlaid on the Bible. The background is dark, making the white and yellow text stand out.

See what [an incredible] quality of love the Father has given
(shown, bestowed on) us, **that we should [be permitted to] be
named and called and counted the children of God! And so we are!**

1 John 3:1 (Amplified Bible)

Permitted, named, called and counted as the children of Almighty
God because of His love for us when we choose to become His!

1. Permitted

Becoming a child of the Creator of the Universe starts with Him alone!
He gives us the ability to respond to His love, to His call and to fully surrender our lives to His Lordship!

Permitted means:

- authorised, given permission to do something
- allowed to become, a way made possible, given an opportunity.

2. Permitted to be named!

- authorised to be entitled to be known as children of God!

3. Called

- called, in this sense of the Scripture means you've been given an invite or been summoned to be a child of God!

4. Counted

- you are considered 'included as part of'
- you are significant, important and you matter to God!

After all God gave His Son to save you!

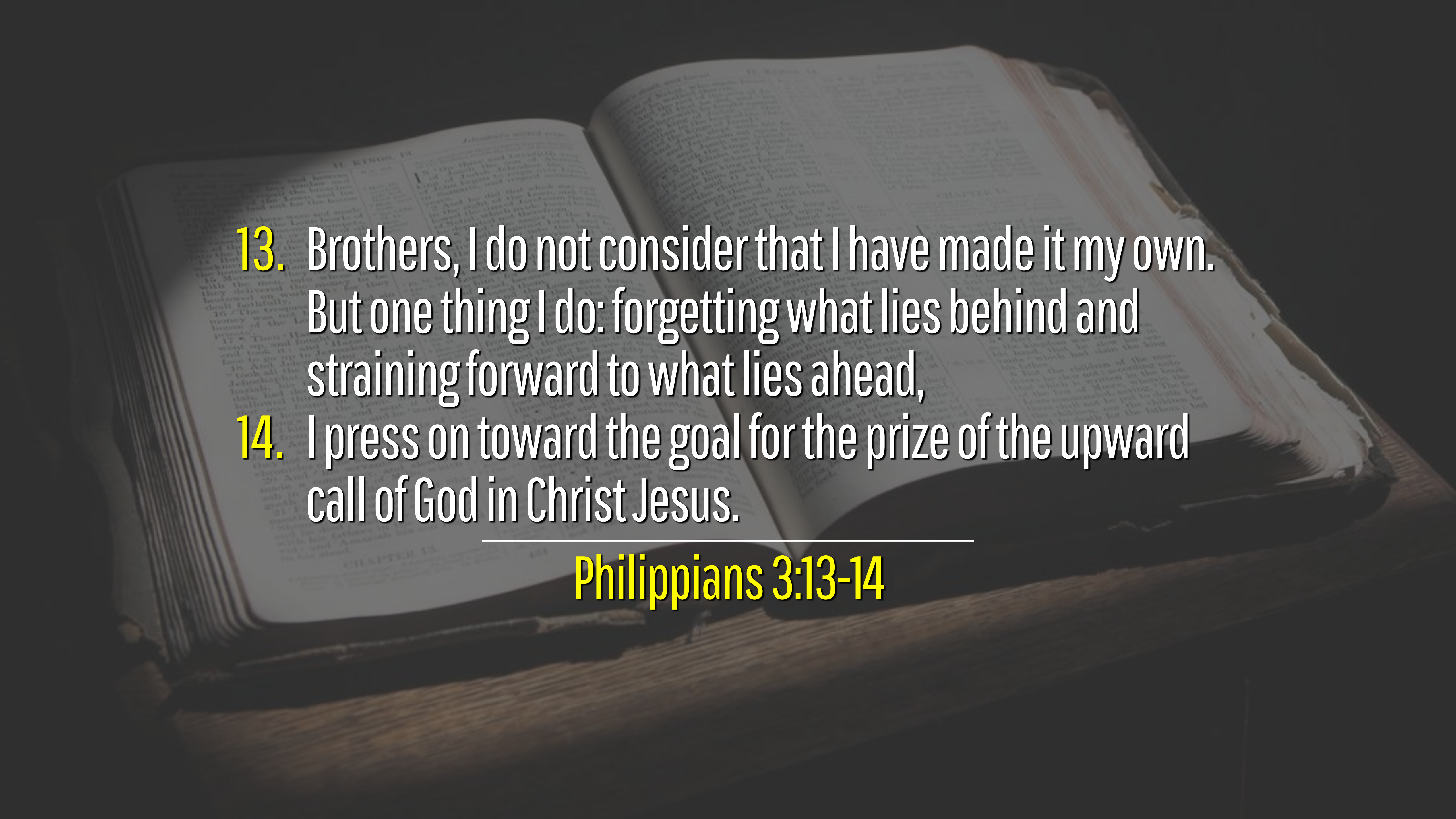
An open Bible is shown from a high angle, lying flat. The pages are filled with text, though it is mostly obscured by the overlaid text. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the paper and the binding. The background is dark, making the Bible stand out.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.
The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

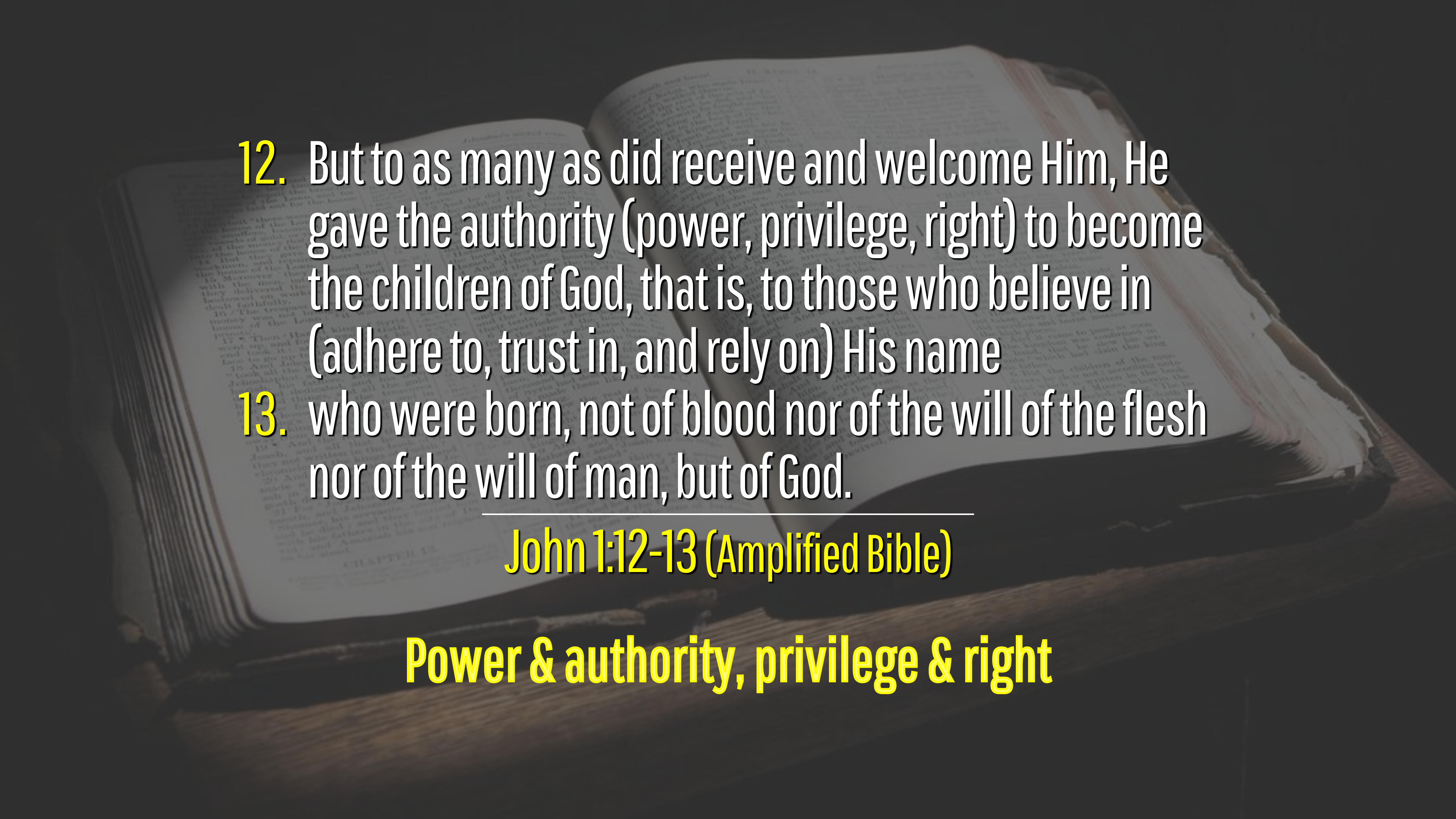
2 Corinthians 5:17

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it
we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 3:20

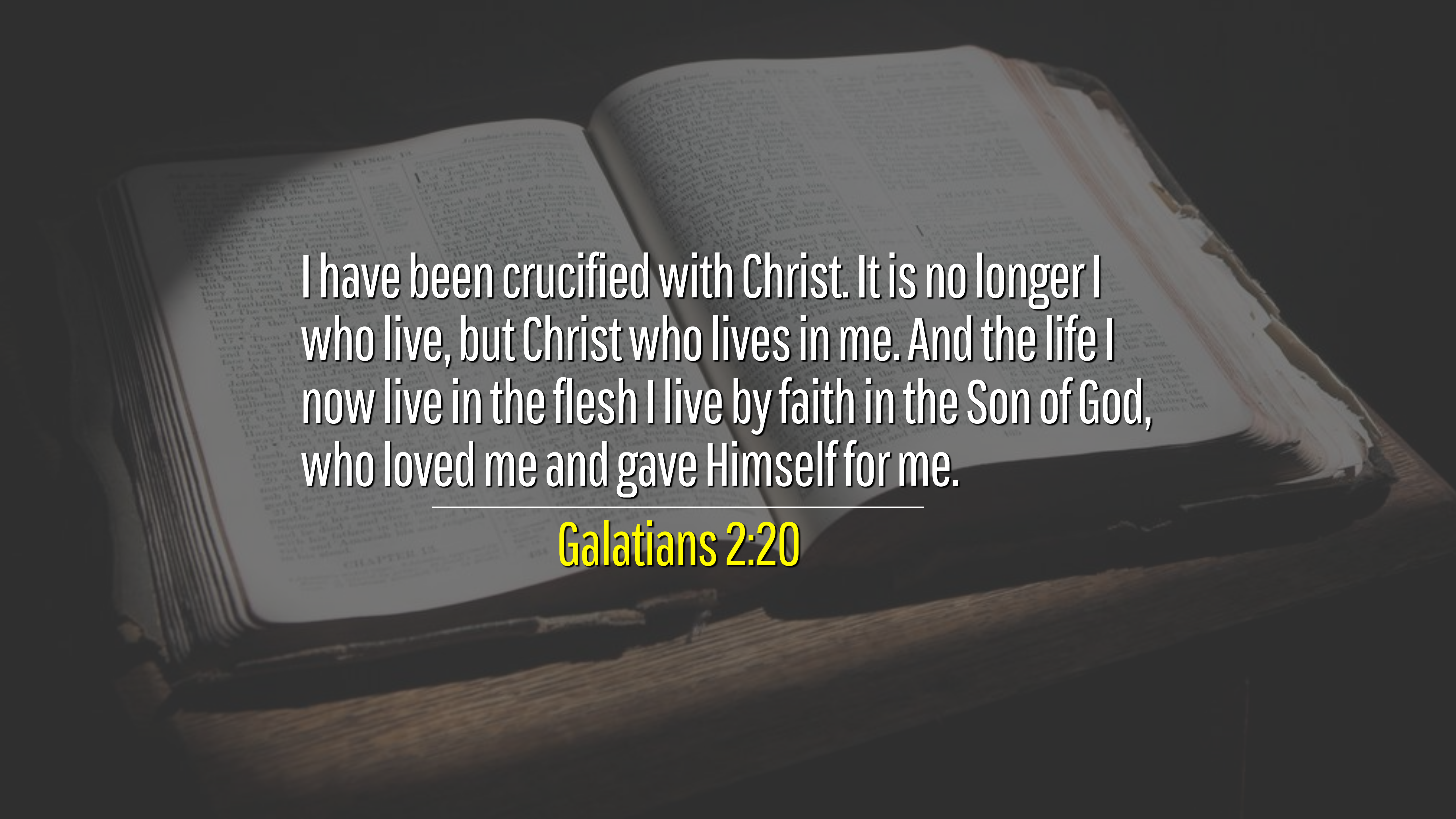
- 
- An open book with text overlaid. The text is in white with a yellow outline and a drop shadow. The background is a dark, slightly blurred image of the book's pages.
- 13.** Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own.
But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and
straining forward to what lies ahead,
- 14.** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward
call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13-14

- 
- An open Bible is shown in the background, with its pages slightly blurred. The text is overlaid on the Bible in a white, bold font with a drop shadow. The text is arranged in two numbered points, with the first point split into two lines. The second point is on a new line. A horizontal line is positioned below the second point. The text is in a sans-serif font.
- 12.** But to as many as did receive and welcome Him, He gave the authority (power, privilege, right) to become the children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name
- 13.** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
-

John 1:12-13 (Amplified Bible)

Power & authority, privilege & right

An open Bible is shown from a high angle, resting on a wooden surface. The pages are aged and slightly yellowed. The text is overlaid in a white, bold, sans-serif font with a subtle drop shadow. The background is dark, making the Bible and the text stand out.

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

We demonstrate that we know His authority & power
and the privileges & rights which are ours by exhibiting:

Responsibility, Trust & Obedience **TO GOD**

And out of that....

We can demonstrate the Kingdom of God **TO OTHERS**
by being part of the family of God!

From a growing relationship with the Lord there comes a strong desire
to want to please and bless Him, being obedient to all He asks of us.

Faith: a Family Principle

But without faith it is impossible to please and be satisfactory to Him. For whoever would come near to God must [necessarily] believe that God exists and that He is the rewarder of those who earnestly and diligently seek Him [out].

Hebrews 11:6 Amplified Bible

We need to ask ourselves:

- do I want to please and be satisfactory to Him?
- do I want to be near to Him?
- do I believe that God is there all the time?
- do I believe that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him?

Being positive workers for God: a Family Principle

For we are fellow workmen (joint promoters, labourers together) with and for God; you are God's garden and vineyard and field under cultivation, [you are] God's building.

1 Corinthians 3:9 Amplified Bible

We need to ask ourselves:

- does my work, study, lifestyle show evidence of growing, being fruitful and doing my best for the Lord?

Being different from this world: a Family Principle

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.

Romans 12:2

We need to ask ourselves:

- are others able to see that I am a person of a different spirit
- or do I just blend in with the world because of how I look, act and speak?

Doing good to others, ESPECIALLY to my Christian brothers & sisters: a vital Family Principle

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Galatians 6:10

- 34.** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another
- 35.** By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

John 13:34-35

We need to ask ourselves:

- is my love for my Christian family evidenced by doing good and blessing them?
- can this be seen by those outside the church?

Always showing forth the nature of God under every circumstance: a Family Principle

If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

1 Timothy 3:15

We need to ask ourselves:

- are my thoughts, words and actions still 'Christian' and pleasing to God especially when I'm on my own? **God sees and knows everything.**
- does my behaviour show forth Kingdom principles that please the living God who is the pillar and buttress of the truth?

Being built together into a Dwelling Place: a Family Principle

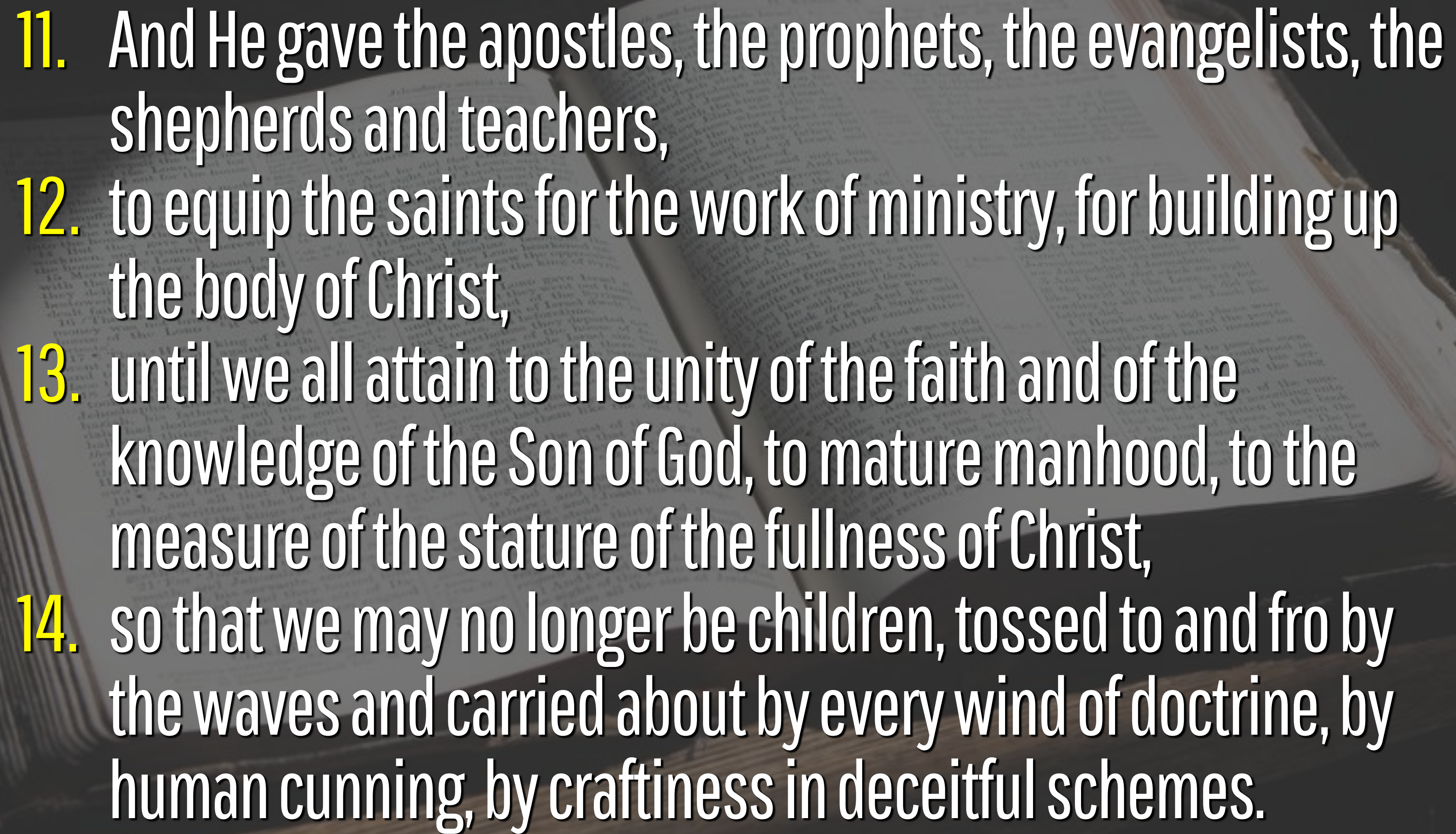
- 19.** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,
- 20.** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone,
- 21.** in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.
- 22.** In Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22

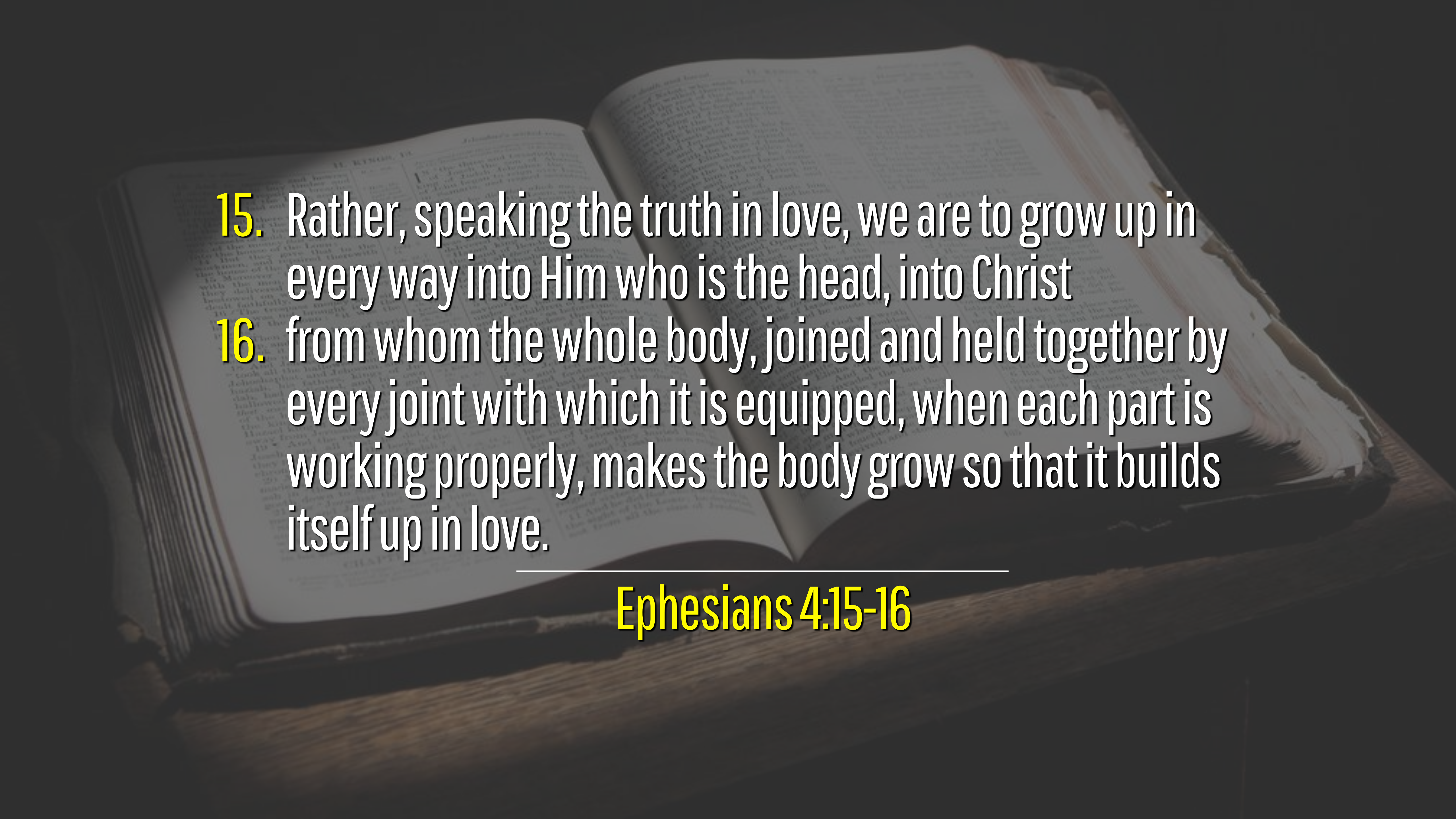
Being **built together** requires that we:

- Love, prefer, encourage, forgive, bear one another's burdens, listen, admonish each other in love, spur one another on to good works, support, provide for and pray for one another.
- Sort out differences quickly and Biblically, remaining humble.
- Always consider others before yourself.

Jesus never failed to do these things. He is our great example.

- 
- An open book with text overlaid on it. The text is in white with a yellow outline, and the numbers 11, 12, 13, and 14 are in yellow. The background is a dark, slightly blurred image of an open book with text on the pages.
11. And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,
 12. to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,
 13. until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,
 14. so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

Ephesians 4:11-14

An open book with text overlaid. The text is in white with a yellow outline and is set against a dark, semi-transparent background that allows the text of the book to be faintly visible. The book is open, showing two pages. The text is centered on the pages.

15. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ

16. from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Ephesians 4:15-16

We need the Holy Spirit AND we need one another!

Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrew 10:25

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Colossians 3:16

An open Bible is shown from a high angle, lying flat on a wooden surface. The pages are filled with text, and the lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the paper and the wood. Overlaid on the Bible are three lines of text in different colors and fonts.

We need the Holy Spirit AND we need one another!

**Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!
For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.**

Psalm 133:1 & 3b

These are wonderful things that God is doing in us by His Holy Spirit

- **Are they just for our benefit?**
- **Does the family of God exist to be an exclusive 'Bless Me' or "Bless One Another" Club?**

NO ABSOLUTELY NOT!!

We are also being equipped and strengthened together to share the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all whom the Holy Spirit leads us to.

The promise is that the Holy Spirit will entrust precious people into our care, for the GLORY OF GOD, as we minister to them as the Body of Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10

An open Bible is shown from a high angle, with its pages slightly curved. The text on the pages is faint and mostly illegible. Overlaid on the Bible is a white text box containing the title 'Romans 12:3-21' in yellow, followed by three paragraphs of white text with a drop shadow. The background is dark and moody.

Romans 12:3-21

Follow these verses in your Bible or simply close your eyes and listen to Paul laying things out clearly to the Church in Rome around A.D.57.

You will realise how the Holy Spirit inspired Paul and how the Holy Spirit inspires us today with these same words in 2024.

These words require a response from each and very one of us.