



PRE-PRAYER

THE HEAVENLY CHALLENGE

God has prepared a place of prayer ...

...and it is hidden in Christ and accessed only by faith.

**...by gifting the Spirit who turns our focus to Christ
in whom we are hidden.**

...where we behold His glory and reflect it to the world.



**Since God has prepared a place of prayer,
we choose to go there.**

COLOSSIANS 4:2-4

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

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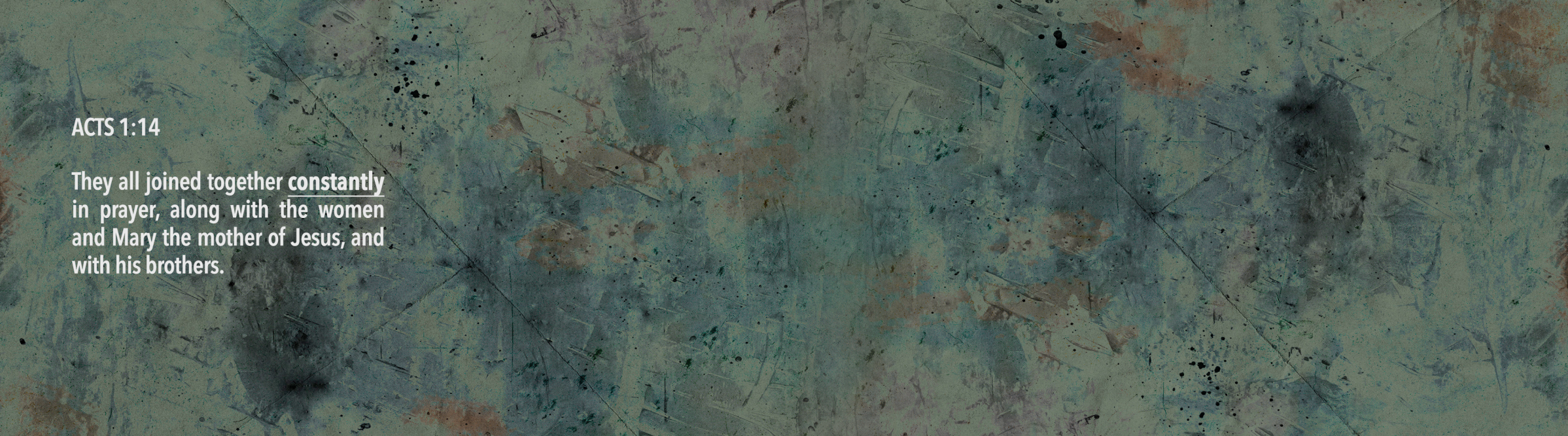
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The challenge of consistency



ACTS 1:14

They all joined together constantly
in prayer, along with the women
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ACTS 2:42

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ACTS 6:3b-4

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ROMANS 12:12

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

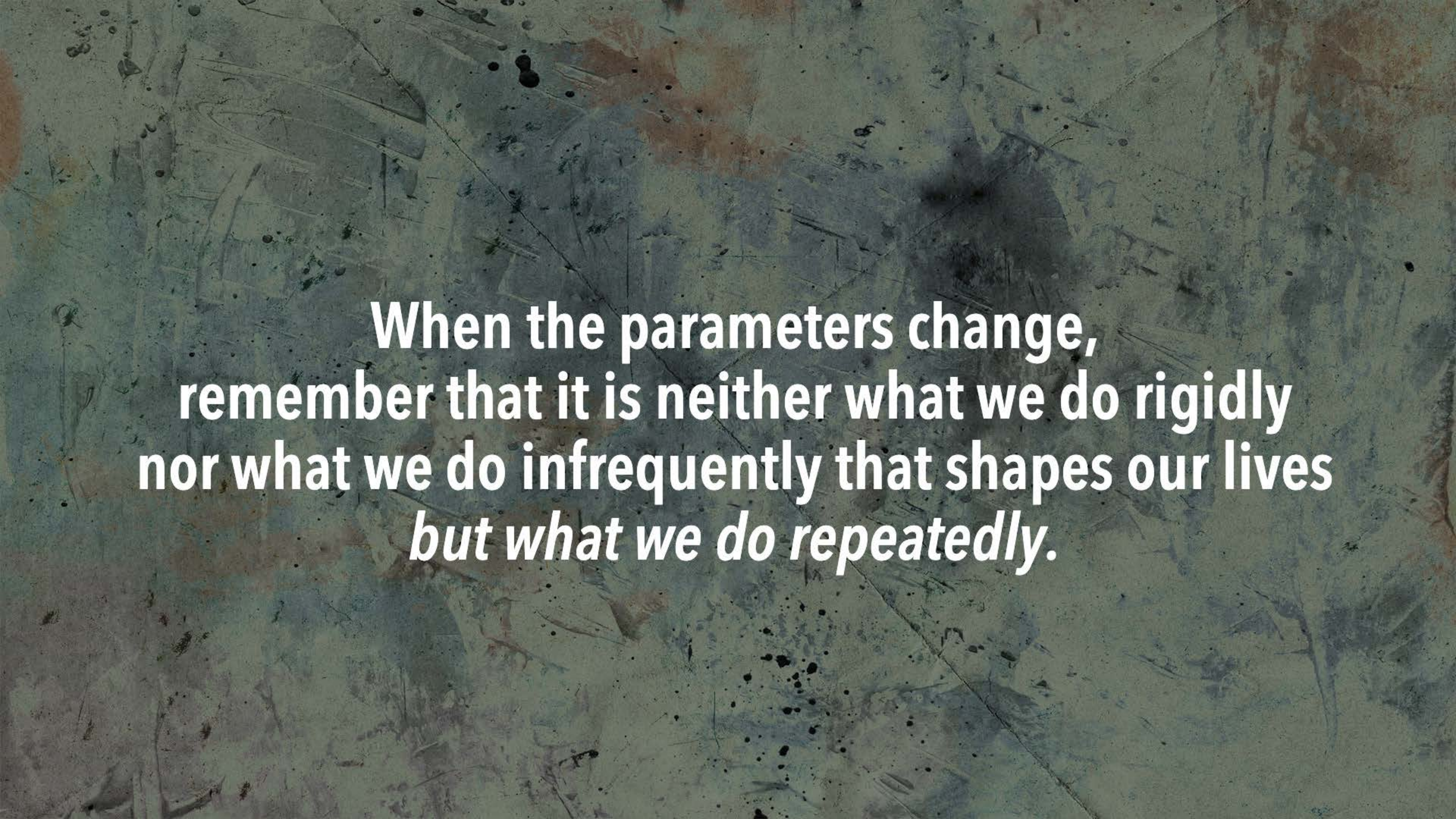


**Jesus was consistent in his practice of prayer
even though the parameters of his practice
constantly changed.**



LUKE 5:16

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.



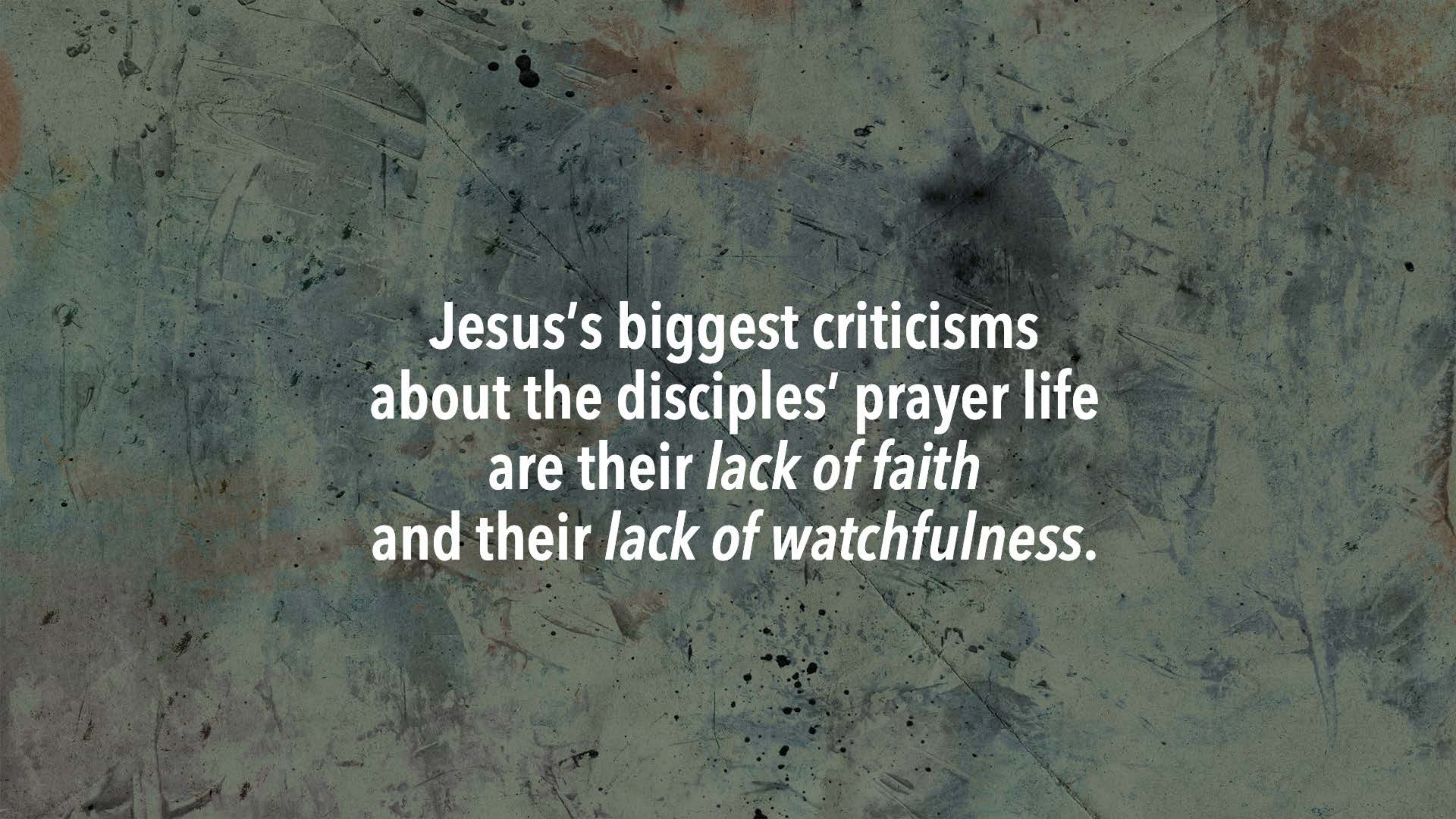
**When the parameters change,
remember that it is neither what we do rigidly
nor what we do infrequently that shapes our lives
*but what we do repeatedly.***



The challenge of watchfulness

MARK 14:37B-38

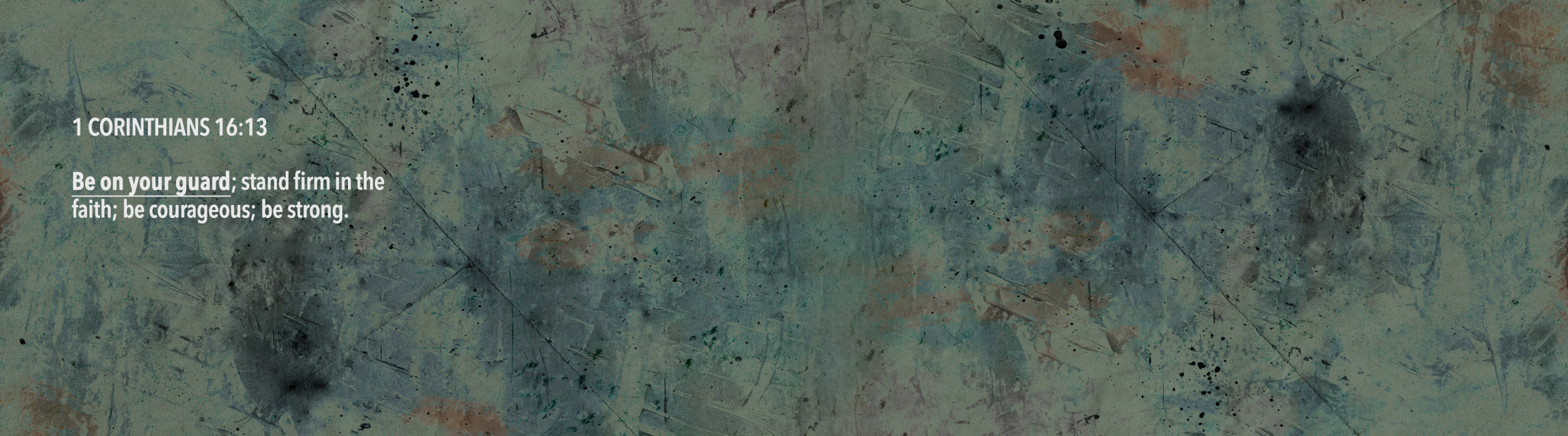
"Couldn't you keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."



Jesus's biggest criticisms
about the disciples' prayer life
are their *lack of faith*
and their *lack of watchfulness*.

MARK 13:37

"What I say to you, I say to everyone: Watch!"



1 CORINTHIANS 16:13

Be on your guard; stand firm in the
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1 THESSALONIANS 5:6

So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober.

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1 PETER 5:8

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

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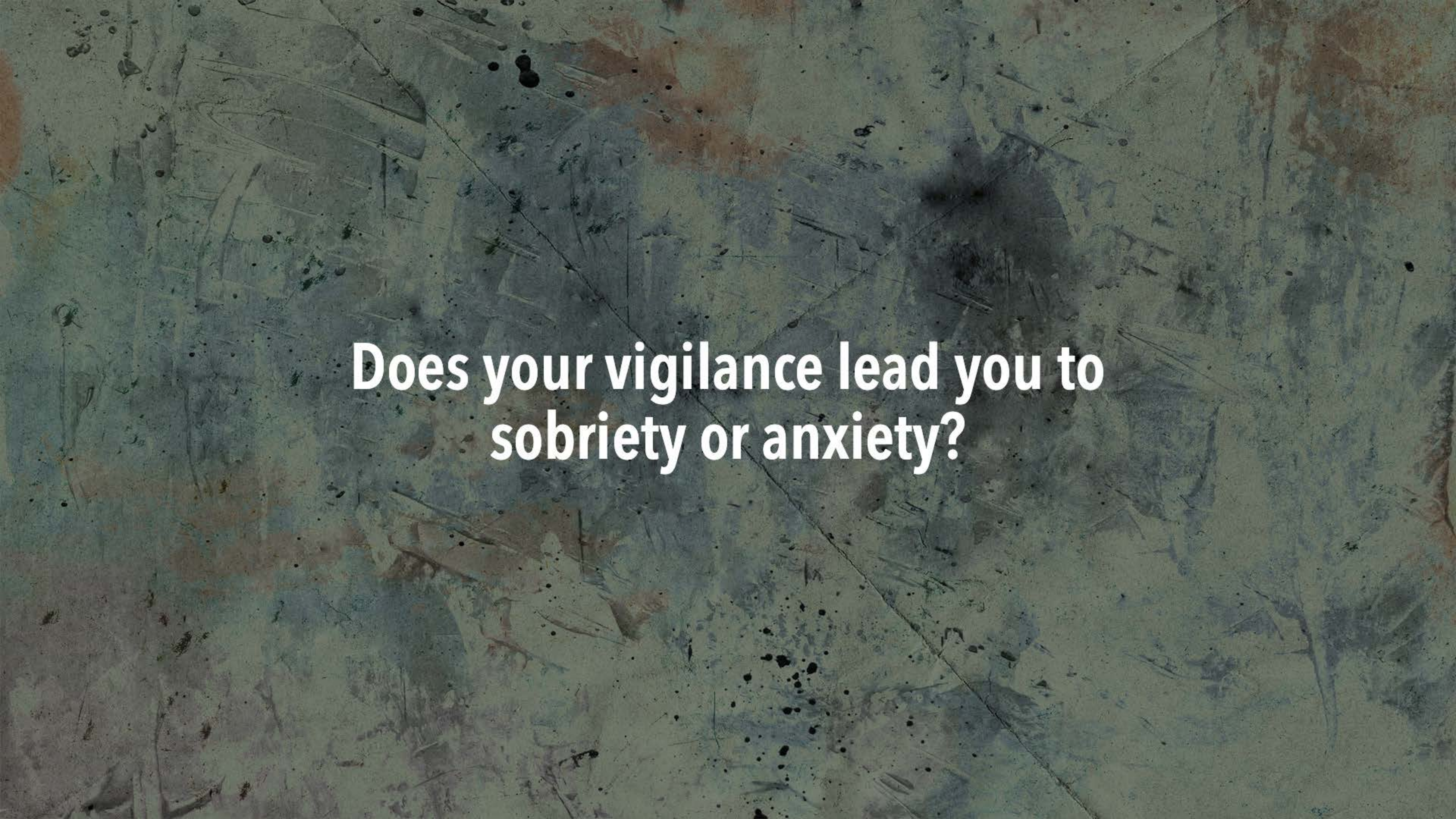
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ACTS 20:31

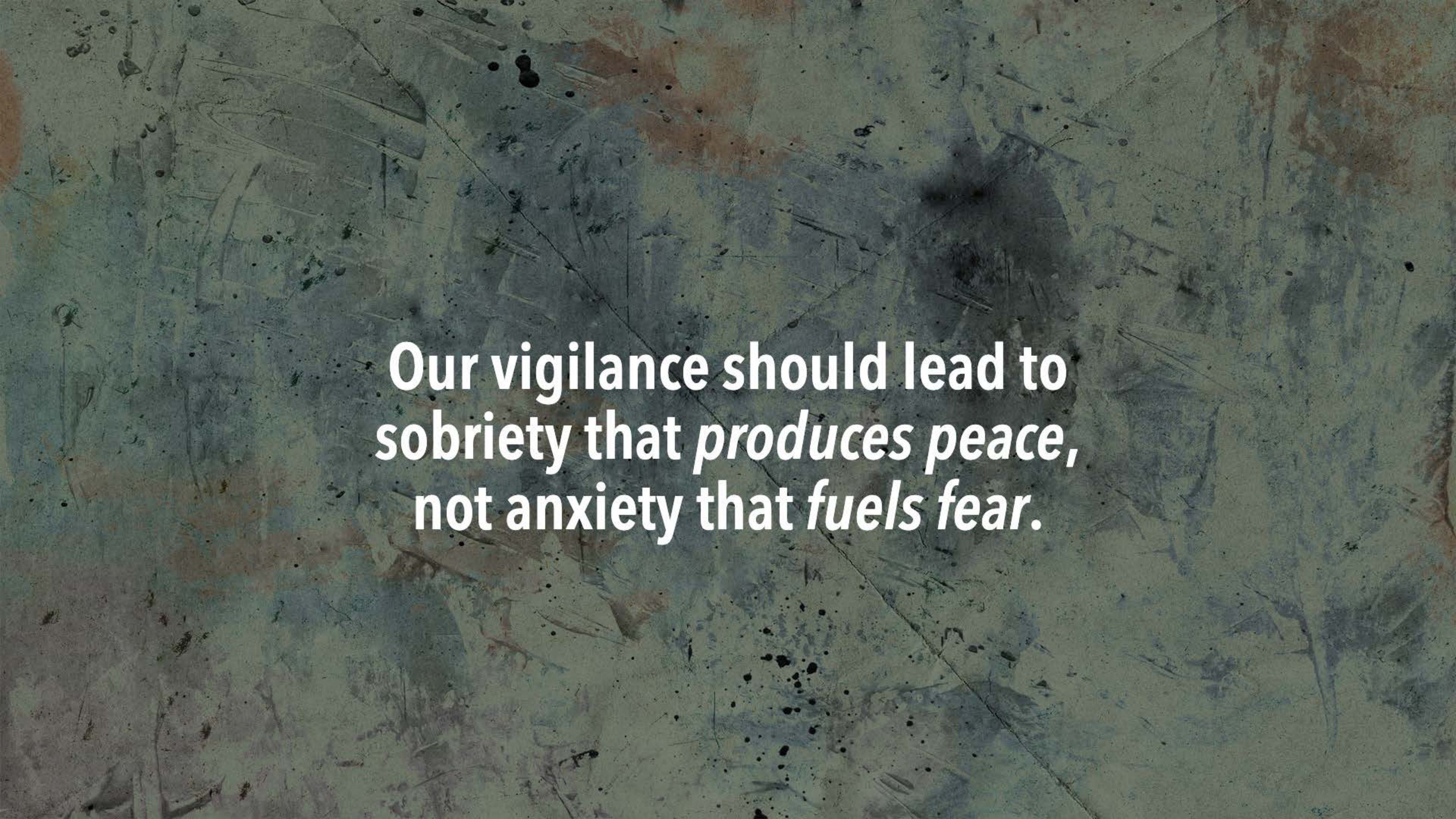
So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.



**Does your vigilance lead you to
sobriety or anxiety?**

EPHESIANS 6:18

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.



Our vigilance should lead to
sobriety that *produces peace*,
not anxiety that *fuels fear*.

LUKE 12:37A

It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes.