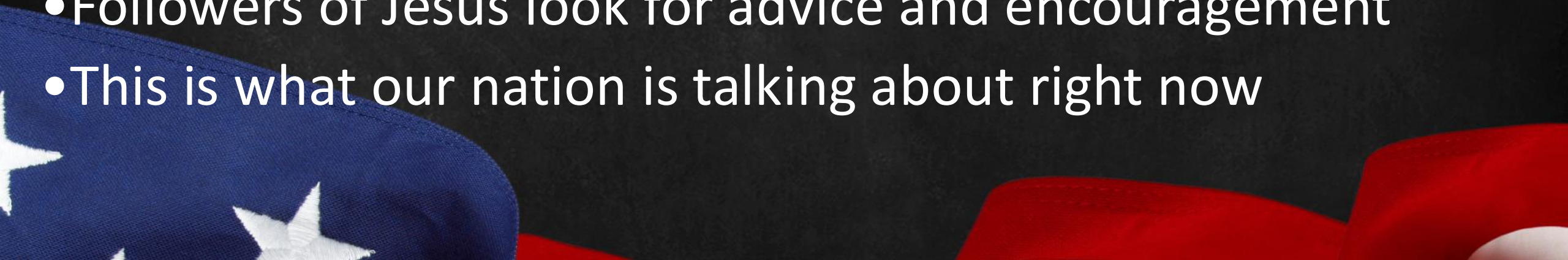

In God We Trust
HOLY
BIBLE



"In God We Trust" is the official motto of the United States.
It was adopted by the U.S. Congress in 1956 and signed into law by President Dwight Eisenhower.

Why this lesson? Why now?

- Politics can be handled positively or negatively
- We don't trust in human government for spiritual guidance
- Politics cannot and will not save us, only faith in Messiah Jesus brings salvation to sinful people
- As followers of Jesus, we are called to be salt and light in a hurting and desperate world
- Followers of Jesus look for advice and encouragement
- This is what our nation is talking about right now



Who is this lesson for?

- Followers of Jesus who love politics
- Followers of Jesus who hate politics
- Followers of Jesus who are involved in politics
- Followers of Jesus who ignore politics
- Followers of Jesus who want to understand God's Word regarding these matters



Relative Importance of Politics

- For believers in Jesus, their ultimate allegiance must be to God above all other people or nations. Devotion to the Savior motivates Christians to participate in the decisions of government and influence society toward righteousness.
- All political candidates are flawed, sinful people who seek office to influence governmental processes and priorities through legislation and negotiation. They are NOT spiritual leaders and they are NOT the Savior of mankind or society.
- Despite the importance of participating in the governing process, political activity and legislative involvement must remain secondary to the growth of one’s personal relationship with Jesus.



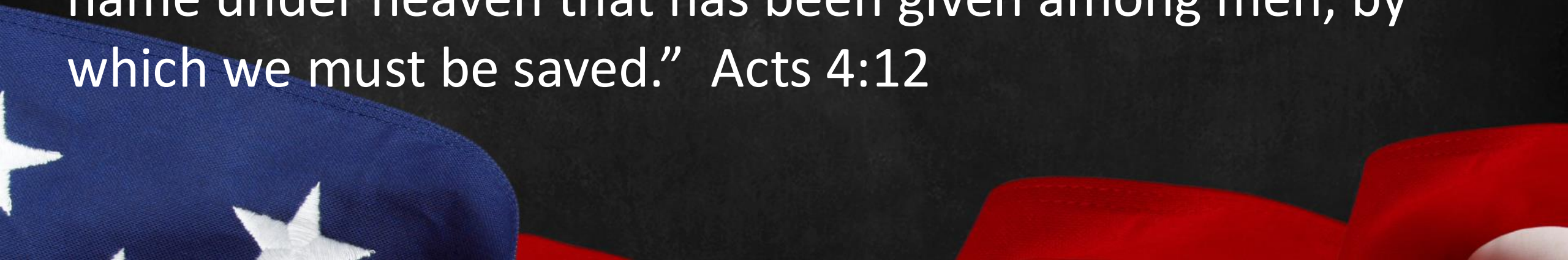
Where is God in politics?

God the Creator is neither a Republican nor a Democrat, and Christian citizens ought to vote for candidates and platforms based on their adherence to Biblical principles rather than mere political affiliations.



Watch Your Priorities

- To honor God in the political arena, one must be involved to serve others and to serve God, not for financial gain or to assert power over others
- As believers, we are primarily concerned about eternal matters, not temporal ones
- “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12



What do we do first?

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 1 Timothy 2:1-2

- If we are PRAYING for our leaders, we won't have the time or the desire to ADORE them or HATE them or RIDICULE them or IGNORE them.



A Time To Pray



Living Out My Faith in Jesus

Matthew 5:13-16

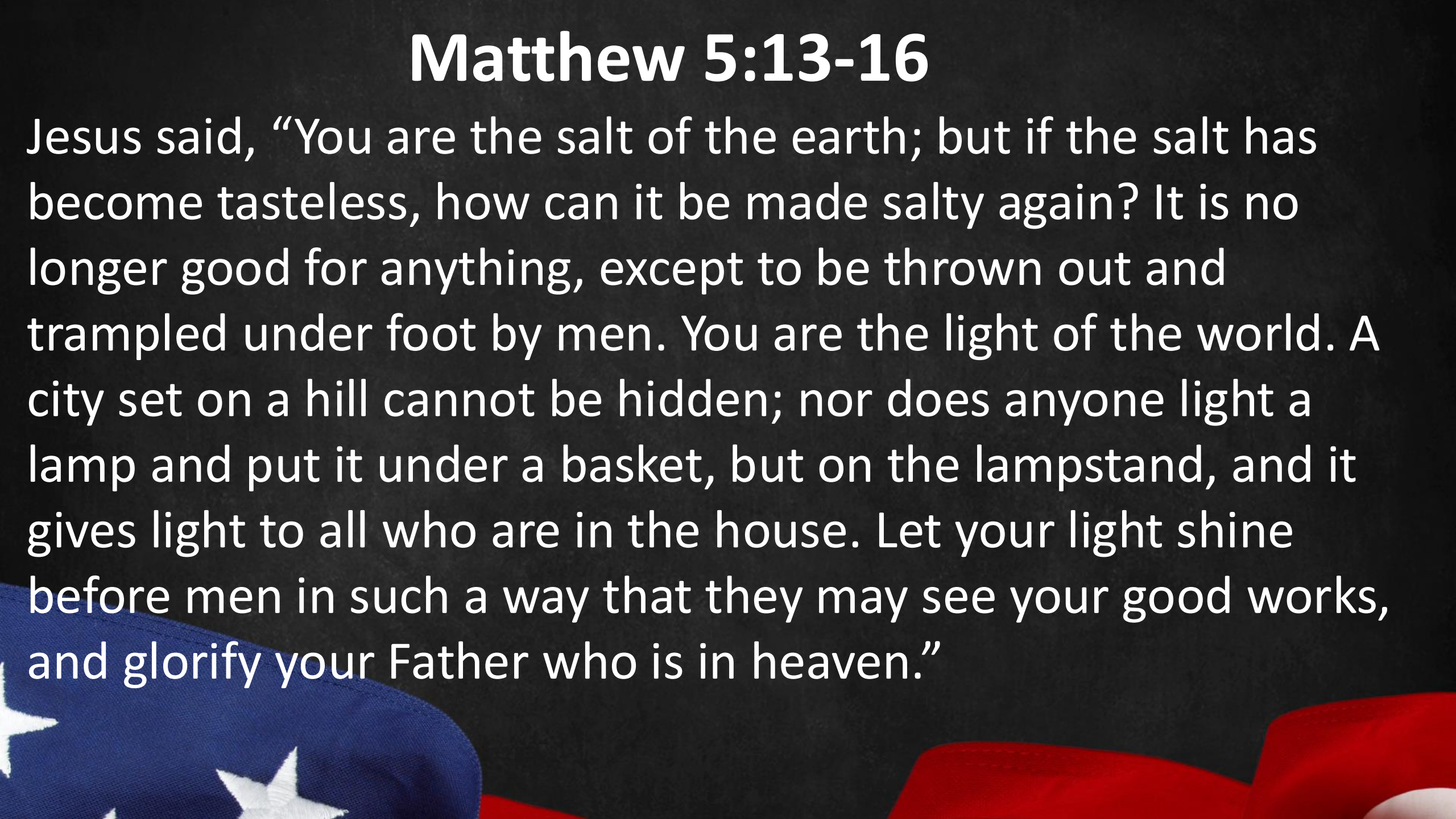


Matthew chapter 5 is the beginning of the **Sermon on the Mount**. In this teaching, Messiah Jesus was specifically addressing His disciples (Matthew 5:1) and generally addressing “the crowds” (Matthew 7:28) who had gathered to listen to Him. Neither the smaller audience or the larger audience were comprised of powerful people or elected officials. Jesus was instead speaking to average people, Jews and non-Jews, trying to survive challenging circumstances while seeking to know and follow God.



Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus said, “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”



In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said…

"You [second person plural] are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men."
Matthew 5:13



Qualities of Salt

1. Valuable

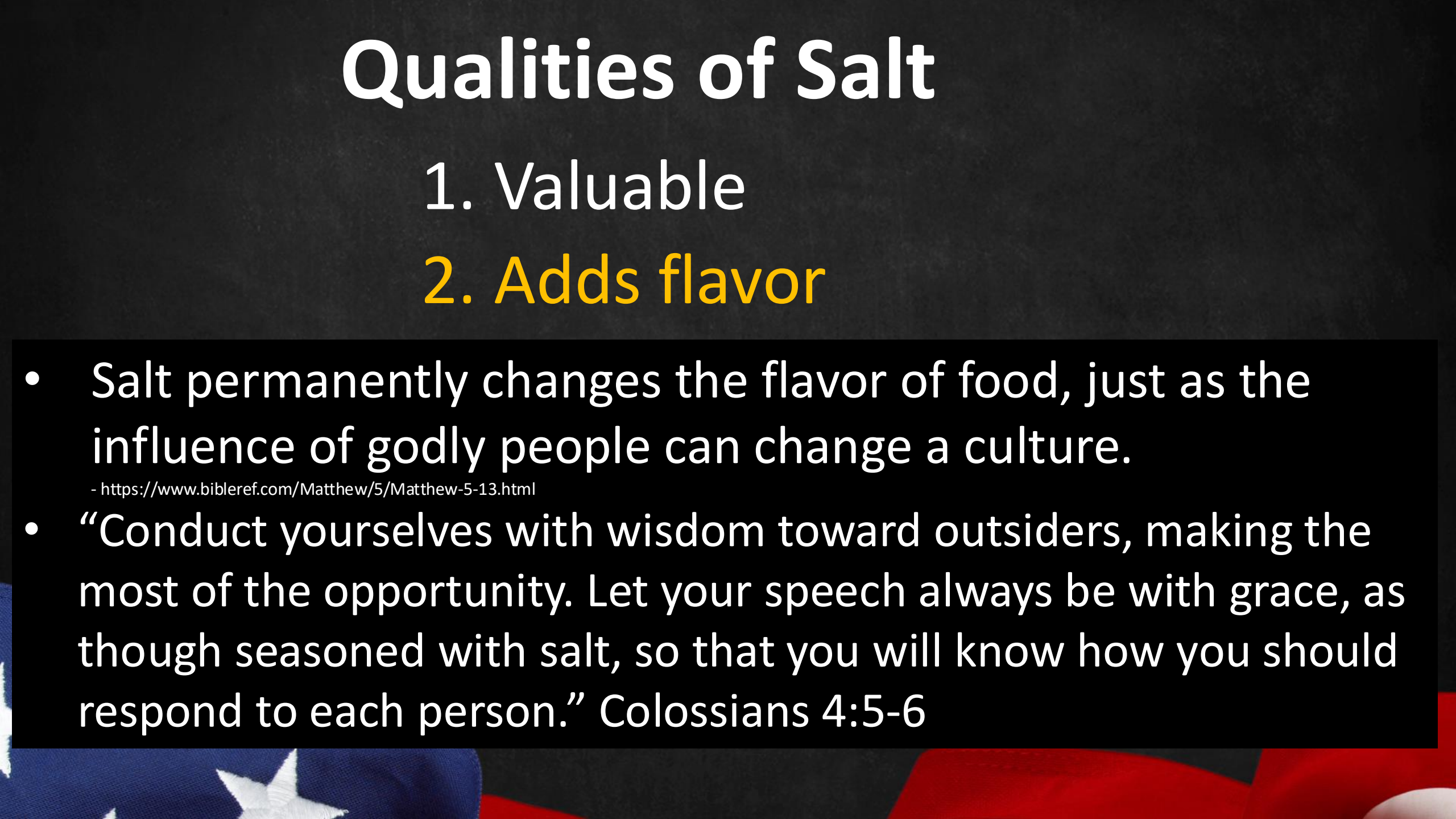
Salary comes from the Latin word *salarium*, which also means "salary" and has the root *sal*, or "salt." In ancient Rome, it specifically meant the amount of money allotted to a Roman soldier to buy salt, which was an expensive but essential commodity. - https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/salary



Qualities of Salt

1. Valuable
2. Adds flavor

- Salt permanently changes the flavor of food, just as the influence of godly people can change a culture.
  - https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/5/Matthew-5-13.html
- “Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.” Colossians 4:5-6



Qualities of Salt

1. Valuable
2. Adds flavor
3. Preserves against decay

- As salt was added to foods, not only for spice but also to preserve them from decay, it became a symbol of incorruptibility and permanence. – Mike Ford
- As salt preserves meat from rotting, believers in Jesus, distributed around the world, help to preserve humanity from falling into godlessness, immorality, chaos, and the resulting judgment.

- https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/5/Matthew-5-13.html

Qualities of Salt

1. Valuable
2. Adds flavor
3. Preserves against decay
4. Creates thirst

Jesus' followers would be like salt in that they would create a thirst for greater information. When one sees a unique person who possesses superior qualities in specific areas, he desires to discover why that person is different. – Bible Knowledge Commentary

Qualities of Salt

1. Valuable
2. Adds flavor
3. Preserves against decay
4. Creates thirst
5. A nutrient for survival

For the human body, salt helps the nervous system and helps muscles flex, including the heart. Salt al so helps manage blood pressure.

Q: What characteristics of “salty” Christ-followers would make non-believers thirsty for the gospel?

A: Grace, faith, honesty, peace, hope, love, humility

Q: What characteristic of “salty” Christ-followers would NOT make non-believers thirsty for the gospel?

A: The candidate or party they supported in an election

***Please God, would the world know us more for the FORMER and less for the LATTER.**



Jesus said, “You [second person plural] are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket [bowl], but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.” Matthew 5:14-15



Qualities of Light

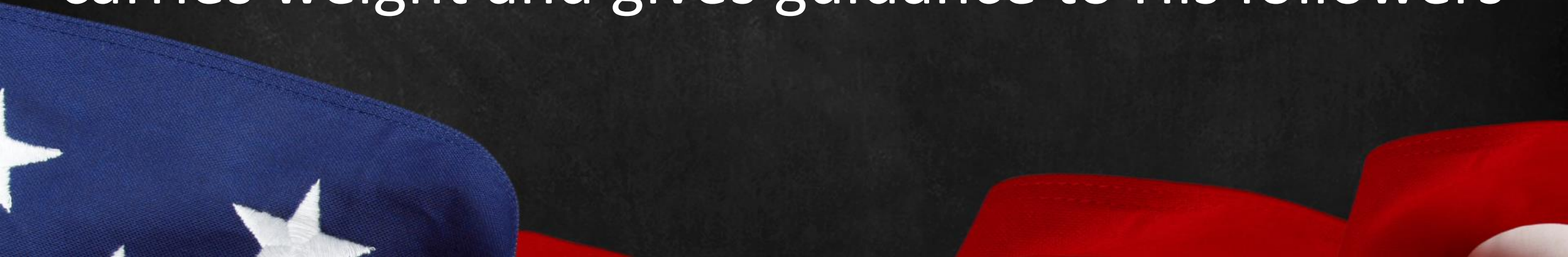
"Light"
Greek φῶς *phos*

1. Visible
2. Can't be ignored
3. Shows the way
4. Brings peace, security
5. Combats the darkness



Jesus said, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

*Each word and phrase spoken by the Savior carries weight and gives guidance to His followers



Serving Jesus Involves the Body of Believers

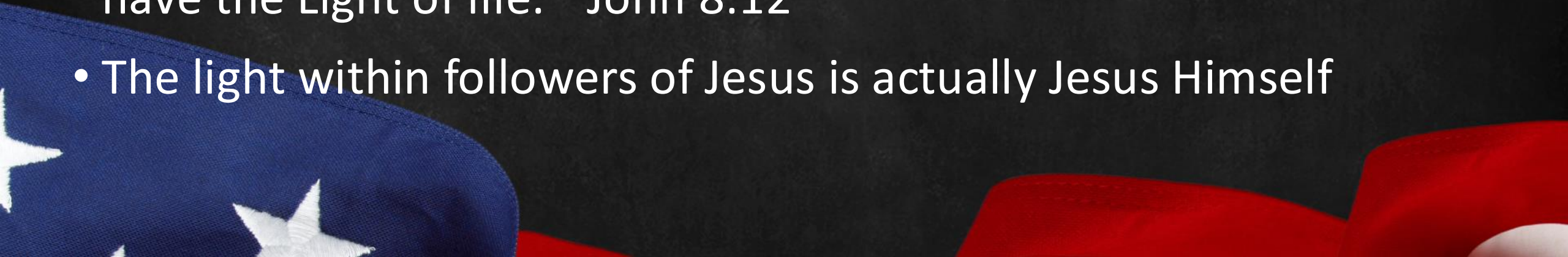
Jesus said, “Let your [second person plural] light shine before men in such a way that they may see your [second person plural] good works, and glorify your [second person plural] Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

*There is great power in MULTIPLE lights shining together



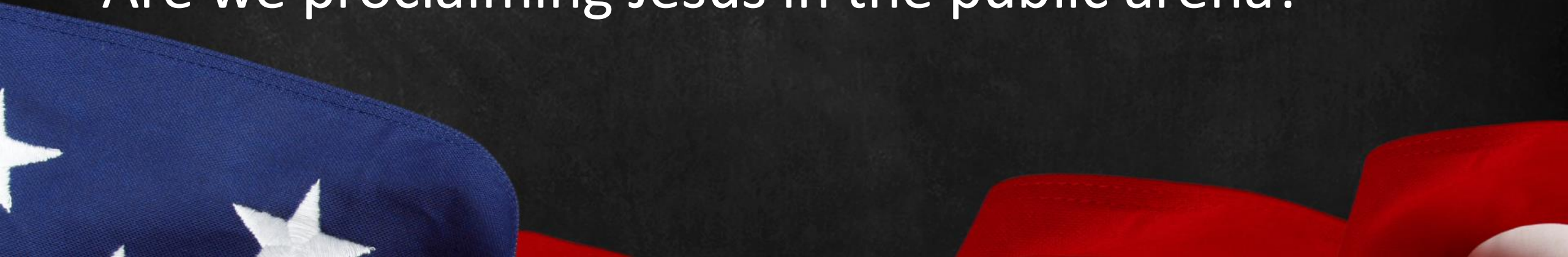
Jesus said, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

- Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.” John 8:12
- The light within followers of Jesus is actually Jesus Himself



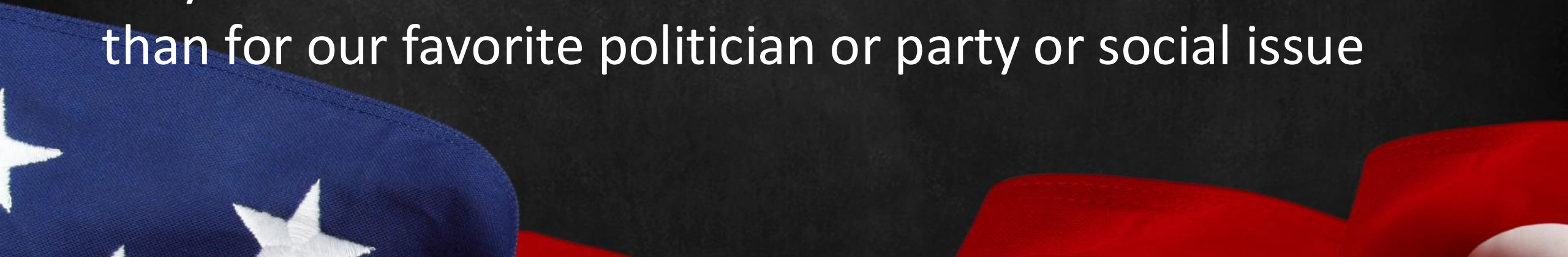
Jesus said, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

- How well do I reflect the light of Jesus?
- Are we proclaiming Jesus in the public arena?



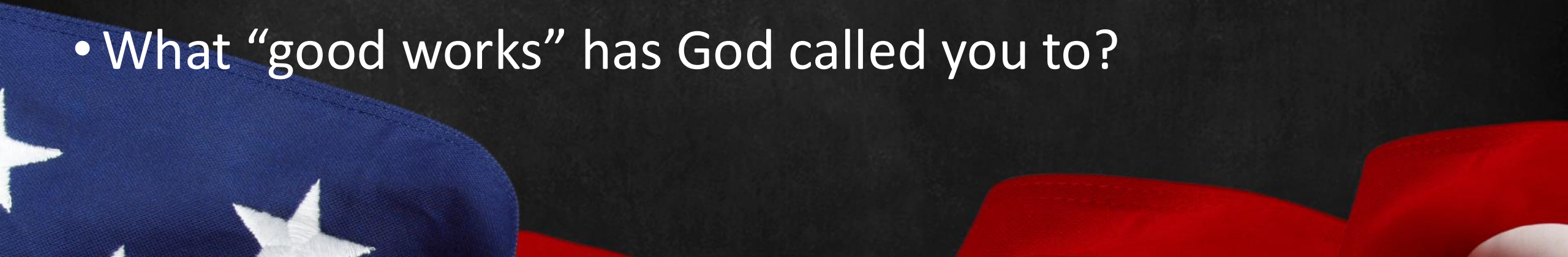
Jesus said, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

- Go public with your faith… live it and speak it
- May we be known more for our consistent walk with Jesus than for our favorite politician or party or social issue



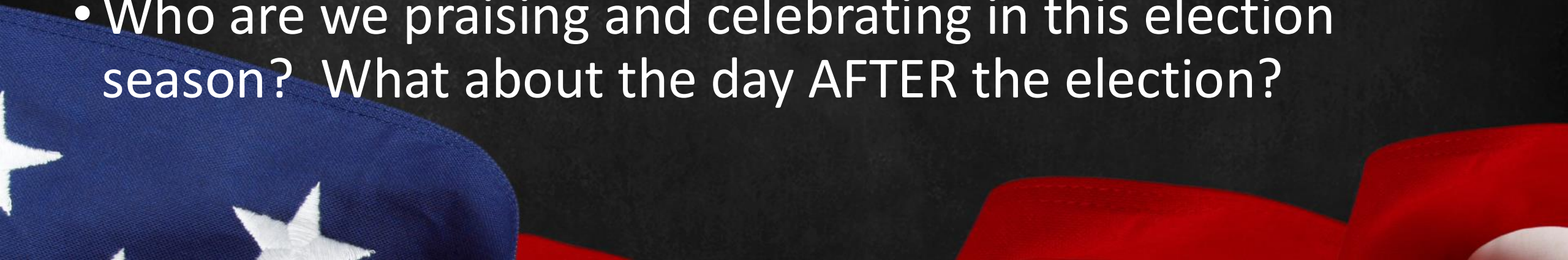
Jesus said, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

- In what ways can you minister to others who are hurting?
- How can you use your gifts and resources to bless others?
- What “good works” has God called you to?



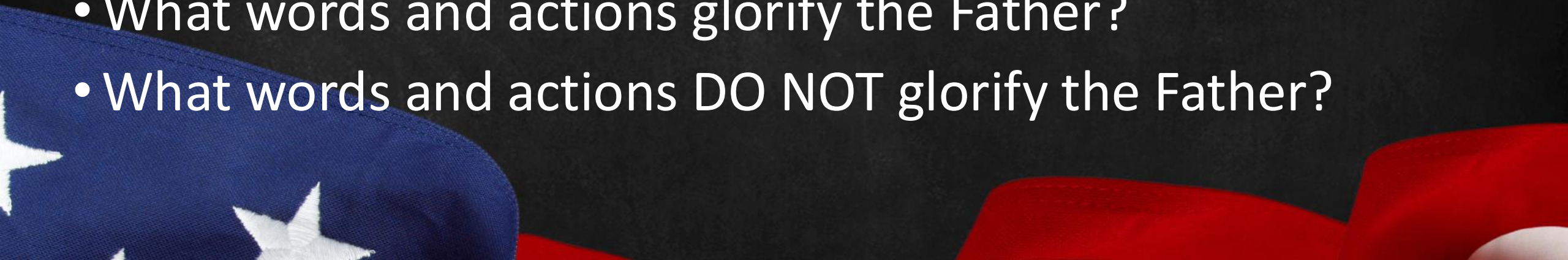
Jesus said, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

- δοξάζω *doxazo* – Greek verb meaning “to praise, magnify, celebrate”
- Who are we praising and celebrating in this election season? What about the day AFTER the election?



Jesus said, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

- When observed honestly, are we seeking to GLORIFY ourselves or a candidate or a political party?
- What words and actions glorify the Father?
- What words and actions DO NOT glorify the Father?

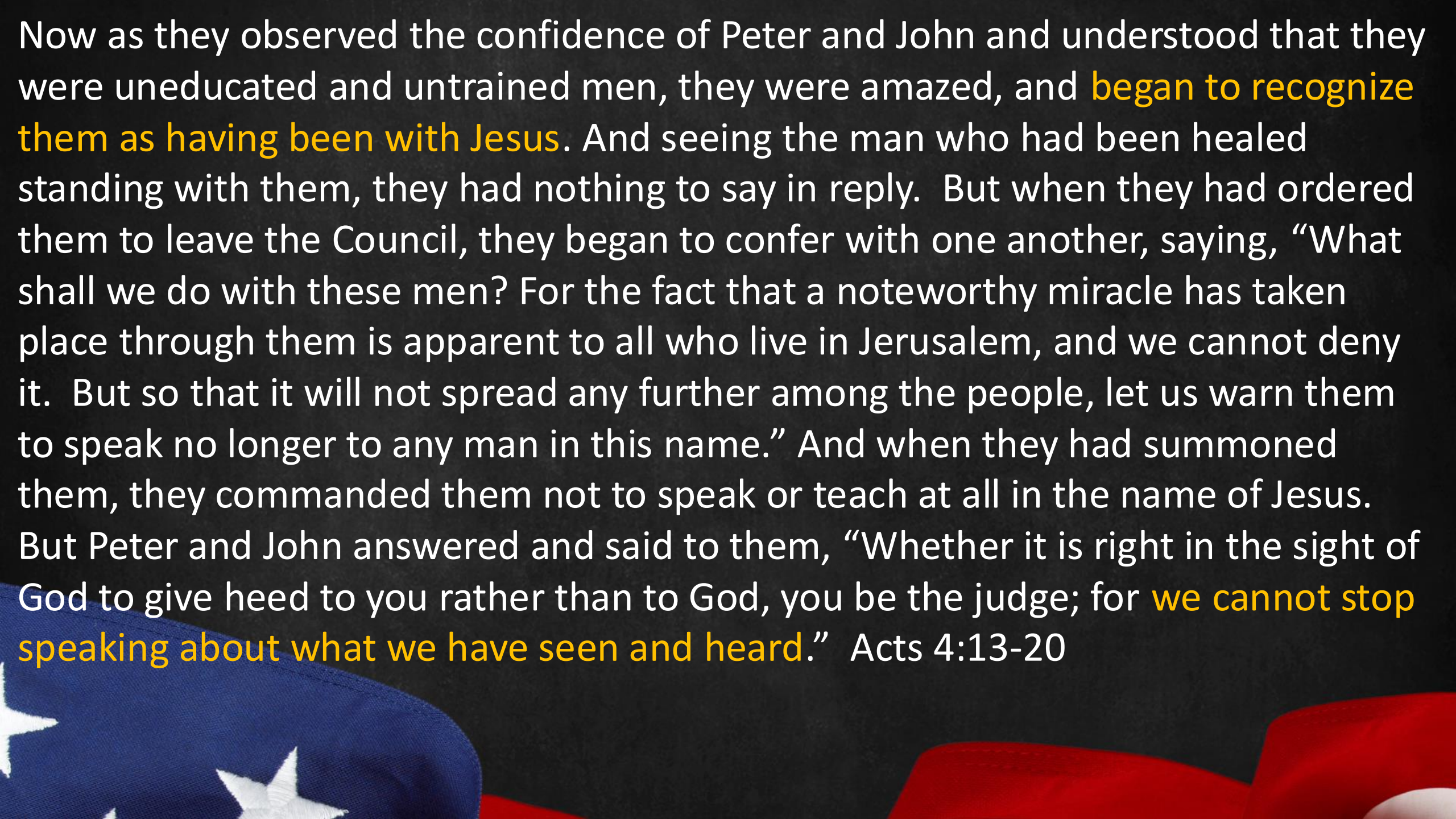


What does a church of “salt and light” look like?

Acts 4:13-20

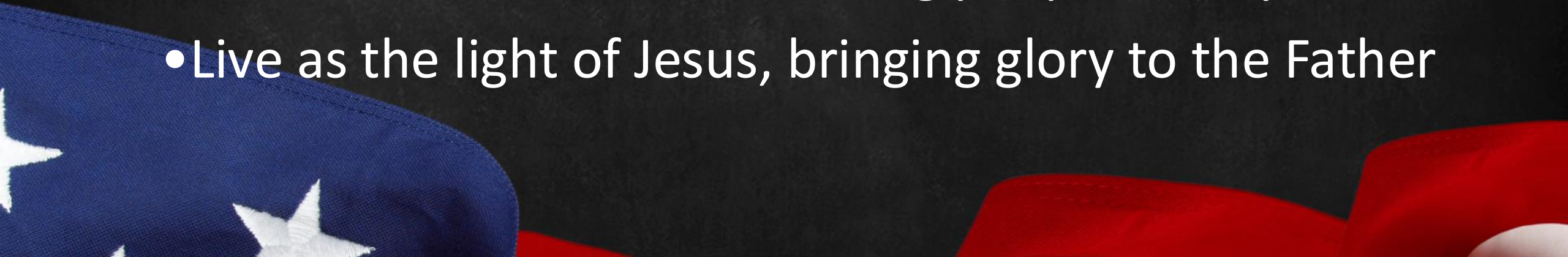


Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply. But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another, saying, "What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name." And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." Acts 4:13-20



What can believers do in the political arena?

- Pray for your leaders and your community
- Be informed about the issues
- Be involved and let your voice be heard
- Vote for candidates who best express Biblical values
- Run for office if God leads you
- Live as the salt of Jesus, making people thirsty for Him
- Live as the light of Jesus, bringing glory to the Father



TEXAS GENERAL ELECTION IS NOV. 3 2026

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.
JEREMIAH 29:7

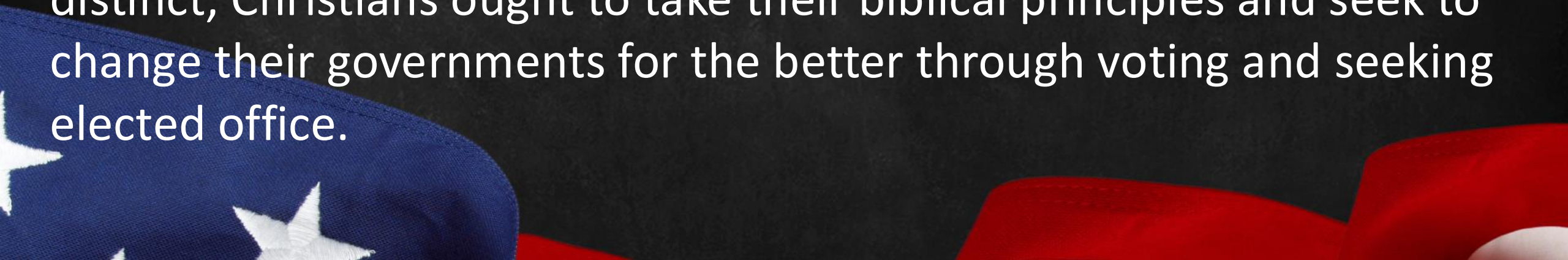
5 ways to *seek the welfare of our city* through voting:

1. By voting for leaders who will best serve our communities.
2. By elevating godly leadership.
3. By supporting policies that lead to life.
4. By modeling a biblical approach to public discourse.
5. By honoring and praying for those in authority.

https://www.churchambassadorstx.com/

Why be informed? Why be involved?

- Christians can and should be active in the political process, and to fail to participate is to forfeit the right to shape the moral future of America as God the Father would will it.
- Those who profess no faith in Christ will continue to dominate the political process until influential, dedicated Christian citizens enter the political arena and make a faithful stand for the cause of Christ.
- Rather than allowing government and religion to remain separate and distinct, Christians ought to take their biblical principles and seek to change their governments for the better through voting and seeking elected office.



Sunday, October 1, 2006 Page 11B

The Dallas Morning News

Vote your values

Elections are important opportunities to shape our communities, says TREY GRAHAM

Few admonitions given in this space have been stated more and heeded less than this one: VOTE!

For the upcoming elections on Nov. 7, the last day to register to vote is Oct. 10. I have repeatedly encouraged you to participate in the political process and to vote your values. If you have not yet registered to vote, you need to register now and let your voice be heard on the important issues facing our communities. Early voting begins Oct. 23 and ends Nov. 3.

Before we look ahead to the upcoming election in November, let's look back. Turnout for our primary elections in March of this year was pathetic. When one considers the blessings of freedom and the unique opportunity provided by going to the ballot box, I am saddened by the apathy that reigns in our democratic process. Of 369,493 registered voters in Collin County, 19,768 votes were cast — a 5.35 percent turnout. Overall, of the 12,722,671 registered voters in Texas, there was a 9 percent turnout statewide, even lower than the 13 percent turnout statewide in the 2002 primary elections.

As I wrote in March, some will argue that the low turnout in the primaries was partly due to all those Kinky Friedman and Carole Keeton Strayhorn supporters who stayed home in order to sign the petitions for these independent gubernatorial candidates. While that may have some effect, I don't believe the almost 94 percent of registered voters in Collin County (those who chose not to participate in the primaries) are committed to one of these independent candidates. Instead, I am afraid that laziness and indifference — not support for independents — reigned supreme.

You have just a few weeks to determine your choices for each contested race. Whom do you support for governor of Texas? Have you made your selection for other important races, such as senator or U.S. Congress? What about picking the best candidates in the local races, such as district judges, county commissioner or state representatives? These are the people who will speak for us, the ones who will lead us and are supposed to fight for the values we hold dear.

Before you vote, you need to decide. In order to decide, you need to be informed. I encourage you to do your homework and support the candidates that best represent you and your values. As a pastor, my calling is to help others find God and find a place of service in God's kingdom. My desire is to persuade followers of Jesus Christ to live for the Savior outside the walls of the church, letting their faith guide their politics. I believe our county, state and nation would be well-served by having faithful Christian believers in positions of political influence. Whatever you think about his political views, I submit that our nation is truly blessed by having a president in George W. Bush, who boldly proclaims his faith in and dependence on our Savior.

As a speaker and writer, my calling is to motivate audiences to set high goals and achieve them. I have tried to do that, in this newspaper and others, by encouraging voters to participate in the democratic process to ensure that their voices are heard. Remember, if you don't vote, don't complain.

The low turnouts in the past have been simultaneously expected and disappointing. I wish that more of our citizens cared enough to take the time to learn the platforms of each candidate in order to make informed choices at the ballot box. If you don't cast your vote, you will have no say in the future of the political process. Come on, will you exercise your right this time?



Trey Graham is the senior pastor of First Baptist Church Melissa (www.firstmelissa.com) and the author of "Lessons for the Journey" and "Light for the Journey." He can be reached at trey@firstmelissa.com. If you don't know which state district you live in, find out online at http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/.

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Please remember…

- Our political leaders are found in Washington and Austin
- Our laws are made in Washington and Austin
- Our salvation is NOT found in Washington and Austin
- Our hope is NOT found in Washington and Austin
- Our purpose in life is NOT found in Washington and Austin
- Our Savior is greater than those in Washington and Austin



Q: If America held an election and ONE OR MORE of the candidates for an office outwardly demonstrated devotion to Jesus and knowledge of the Bible, what should Christ-followers do?

A: In God We Trust



Q: If America held an election and NONE of the candidates for an office outwardly demonstrated devotion to Jesus and knowledge of the Bible, what should Christ-followers do?

A: In God We Trust



“In (ONLY) God We Trust”

How blessed is the man who has made the Lord [Yahweh] his trust, and has not turned to the proud, nor to those who lapse into falsehood. Psalm 40:4



A Time To Pray

