

Faithfulness With What Has Been Entrusted

FOUNDATION

BEFORE

PLATFORM

FORMING A LIFE THAT ENDURES

Session 5

Stewardship Within the Ekklesia Assembly



A DISCIPLESHIP & FORMATION COURSE

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A hand holding a wooden staff against a sunset over mountains. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and lens flare. The mountains are rugged and covered in snow or light-colored rock. The foreground shows a person's arm in a white shirt with blue and yellow embroidery.

Beyond The Dalet
Formation Before Platform
Living From The Finished
Work Of Christ

In the kingdom of God we do not own influence.
We steward what has been entrusted.

The life of the Ekklesia Assembly
requires endurance.

And endurance prepares a people to carry what God entrusts.

*“For you have need of endurance,
so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.” – Hebrews 10:36*

Receiving Before Managing

Formation prepares a people to endure.

Stewardship reveals how faithfully they carry what has been entrusted.

We have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

Session 4 showed us that a formed Assembly remains steady in adversity and in expansion.

Pressure revealed what had been cultivated.

Roots held.

Identity did not shift.

Growth did not redefine belonging.

But endurance is not the end of formation.

Once a people learn to remain steady, another question begins to rise:

What are we entrusted with?

The Ekklesia Assembly does not build the kingdom.

It receives it.



Hebrews is careful with that language:

“Let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken.”

Receiving precedes stewarding.

We do not manage what we have manufactured.

We steward what we have received from the King.

That distinction protects the Assembly from subtle distortion.

When we think we are building something,
we protect it defensively.
When we know we have received something,
we carry it reverently.

Three distortions repeatedly threaten the life of the
Ekklesia Assembly:

ownership, visibility-driven authority, and centralized
influence.

Ownership produces control.
Stewardship produces faithfulness.

The Ekklesia Assembly is not the architect of the kingdom.

It is the caretaker of what Christ has established.
This changes the posture of leadership.
It changes the tone of influence.
It changes the way we measure fruit.

Because maturity is not proven by endurance alone.
It is revealed in **how** we carry what has been placed in our hands.



Formation prepares us to endure.
But endurance prepares us to carry what God entrusts.

The kingdom we steward is not something we created.
It is something that has already been announced.
Scripture often describes the arrival of God's kingdom through
images of announcement — the morning star rising, the dayspring
breaking over the horizon, or the trumpet of Jubilee sounding
across the land.

In each case the pattern is the same: God declares the new reality
first, and then His people learn to live within
that which has already been given.

Stewardship, then, always begins with receiving.



The Kingdom Is Received — Not Built

Authority That Emerges From Formation

If the Ekklesia Assembly has learned to remain steady under pressure, then the next question is not about growth.

It is about trust.

Scripture reveals a consistent order:

Entrustment follows faithfulness.

Jesus says in Luke 16:10, *“One who is faithful in very little is also faithful in much.”*

Notice the order.

**Faithfulness does not follow increase.
Increase follows faithfulness.**

This is not about ambition.

It is about alignment.





The kingdom is not entrusted to those who seek visibility.
It is entrusted to those who have proven to be steady in obscurity.
And obscurity is where formation does its quiet work.

In Matthew 25, the Master entrusts resources to His servants.
Not equally — but intentionally.

And when He returns, the question is not: “How much did you build?” He asks:

“What did you do with what I placed in your hands?”

The servant who was faithful with what was entrusted was given more — not because he demanded influence, but because he demonstrated stewardship.



The Ekklesia Assembly must understand this deeply.

Authority in the kingdom is not self-assumed.

It is entrusted.

**It does not rise from charisma.
It emerges from character.**

**It does not come from platform.
It grows from proven faithfulness.**

**This is why we discussed endurance in Session 4.
Endurance proves stability.**

And stability prepares a people to carry the weight of stewardship.

Peter echoes this in 1 Peter 5:2 *“Shepherd the flock of God that is among you... not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.”*

Authority in the Assembly is not control.

It is care that models by living what is preached.

It is not management that forces compliance on others.

It is faithfulness embodied visibly enough for others to follow.

And notice — Peter does not instruct leaders to manufacture authority.

He instructs them to shepherd what is already “among you.”

Steward what is present.

Tend what has been entrusted.

Care for what Christ has gathered.



Stewardship Is Shared



Authority That Emerges From Formation Does Not Need To Announce Itself.

It is recognized before it is announced.

Authority is affirmed by the assembly before it is platformed.

And when authority flows from formation rather than visibility, the Assembly remains safe.

Because entrusted weight will always expose whether we are rooted in what we have received — or in what we are trying to build.

A rooted Ekklesia Assembly does not grasp for more.
It proves faithful with what is already in its hands.
And faithfulness is what the King entrusts.

Stewardship Is Shared. It Is Not Singular

If stewardship follows formation,
then we must ask a harder question:

Who carries what has been entrusted?

The instinct of fallen systems is always toward centralization.


Influence concentrates.

Responsibility narrows.

Voice elevates.

Others defer.

But the New Testament vision of the Ekklesia Assembly resists that drift.



Because what Christ builds, He does not entrust to one personality.
He entrusts to a people, the Ekklesia Assembly.

Hebrews never says: “Let *him* hold fast.” It says: “Let *us*.”

Plural language is not accidental.

It is theological.

The Assembly is not sustained by strength of one individual.

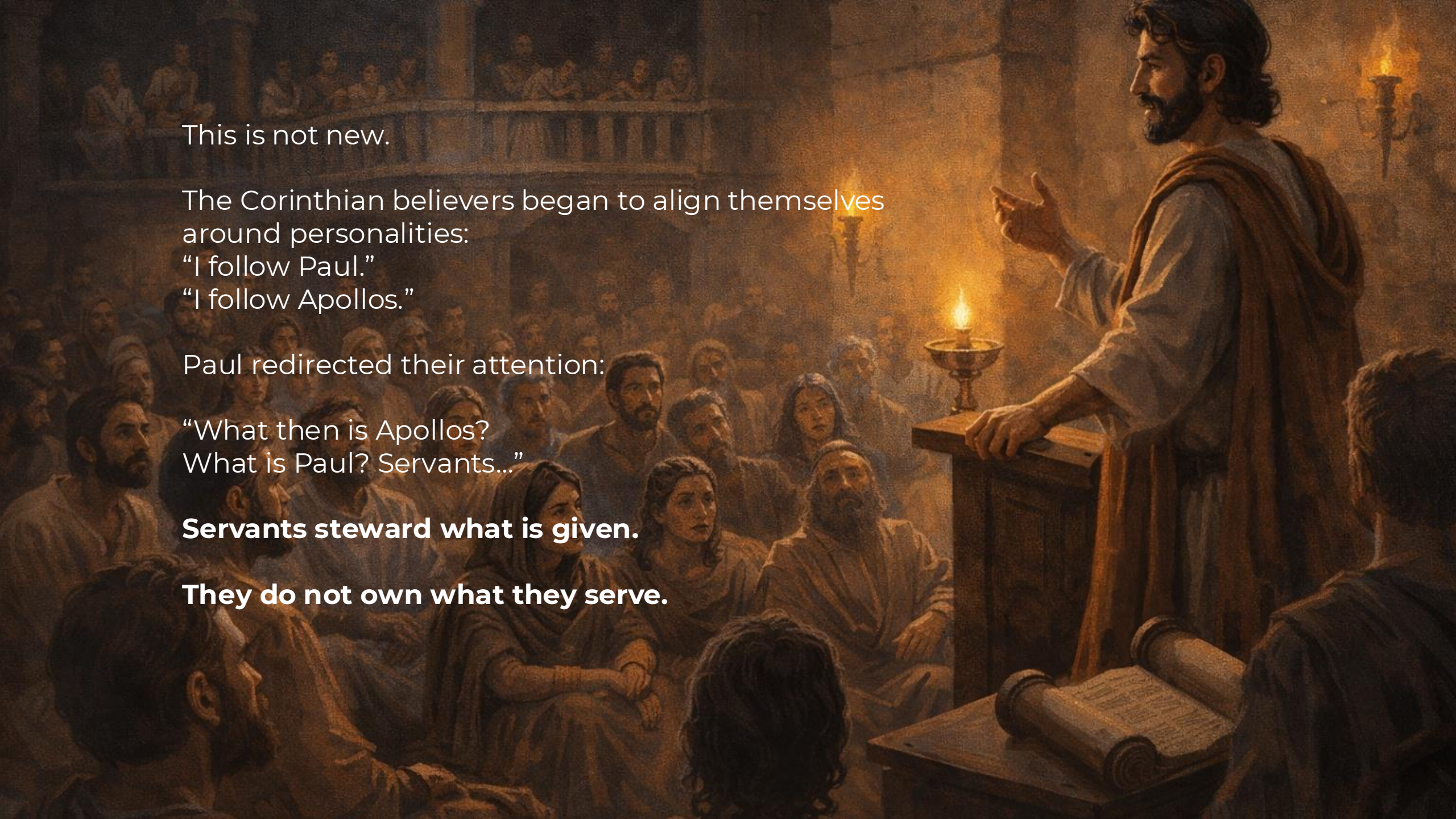
It is preserved through shared conviction.

When stewardship drifts to being centralized rather than shared, the weight shifts.

- One voice carries disproportionate influence
- One personality becomes the reference point
- One platform becomes representative

And slowly — subtly — identity begins attaching itself to a human face rather than to Christ our foundation.





This is not new.

The Corinthian believers began to align themselves around personalities:

“I follow Paul.”

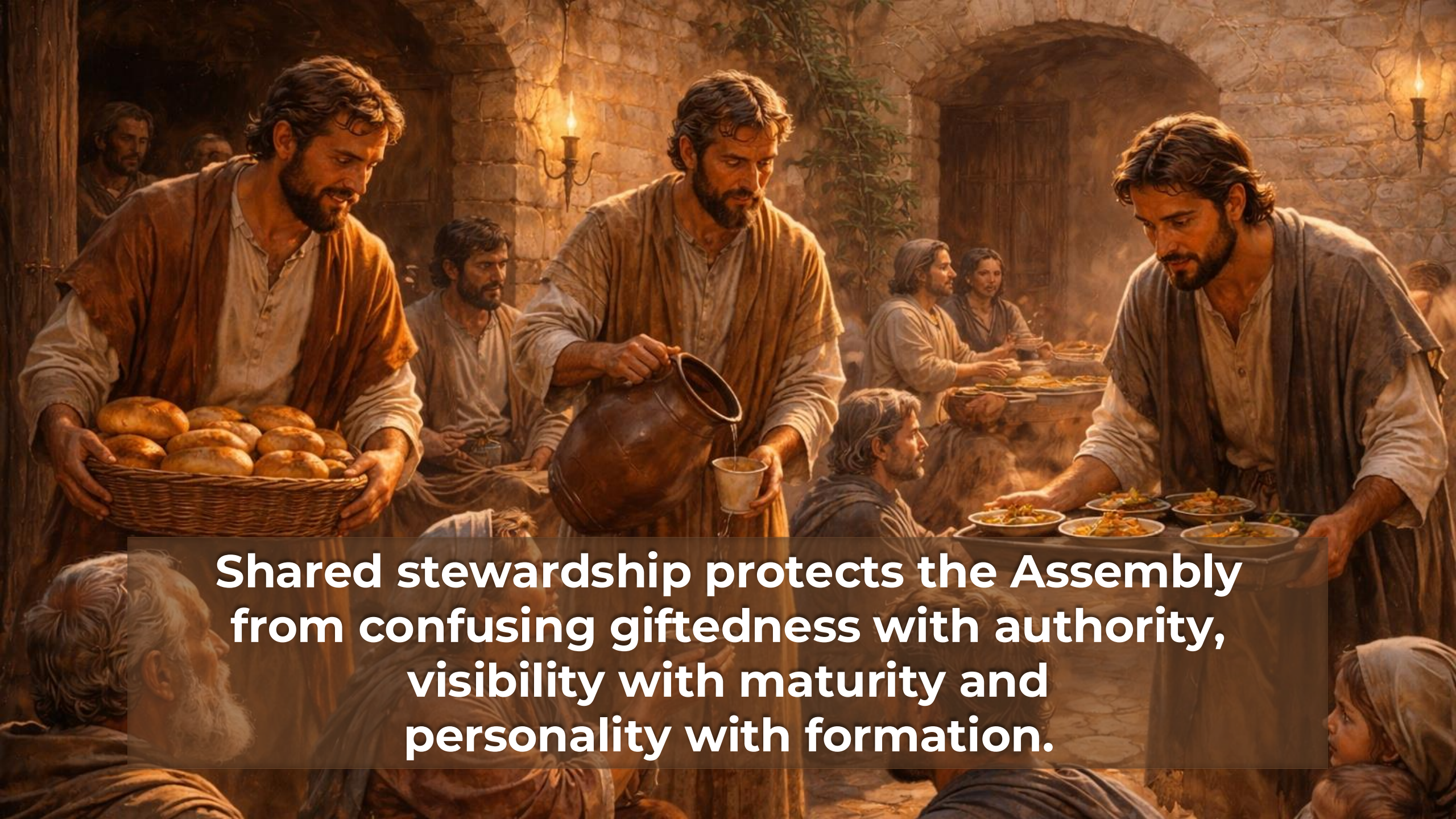
“I follow Apollos.”

Paul redirected their attention:

“What then is Apollos?
What is Paul? Servants...”

Servants steward what is given.

They do not own what they serve.



Shared stewardship protects the Assembly from confusing giftedness with authority, visibility with maturity and personality with formation.



In Acts, leadership was plural.

Elders were appointed — not celebrities elevated.

Doctrine was guarded — not brand cultivated.



Even the apostles operated this way.

When weighty decisions arose: *“It seemed good to the apostles and the elders...”*

Discernment was shared.
Responsibility was distributed.
Authority was relational.


Why?

Because stewardship that is shared mirrors the nature of the kingdom itself.



The kingdom is not carried by the personality or talent of one person.

It is sustained by Christ through the gift of grace which He distributes as He chooses, to every individual in the assembly.



Paul writes in Ephesians 4
that grace was given “*to each one.*”
Not identical roles.
Not equal visibility.
But shared participation.

A photograph of four people sitting in a circle in a living room, engaged in conversation. On the left, an older Black man with a grey beard and a blue denim jacket sits with his hands clasped. Next to him is an older white woman with short white hair, wearing a light-colored cardigan. To her right is a younger man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a grey jacket over a white t-shirt, who is gesturing with his hands as he speaks. On the far right, the back of a younger man's head and shoulders is visible, facing the group. The room is dimly lit with a warm lamp in the background and a bookshelf filled with books. A white mug is visible on a table in the foreground.


When stewardship is shared:

- Correction is possible.
- Humility is protected.
- Blind spots are exposed.
- Drift is interrupted.



When stewardship centralizes:
Pressure concentrates.
Perspective narrows.
Identity fuses with responsibility
And platform slowly feels like ownership.

The Assembly is safest when weight is distributed.
Not because leadership disappears.
But because leadership remains accountable within shared life.

A group of five people (three men and two women) are sitting in a circle on a couch, smiling and talking. The setting is a warm, dimly lit room with a lamp in the background. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

A shepherd may lead.
But the flock belongs to Christ.

An elder may guard it.
But the foundation is not his.

A teacher may instruct.
But truth is not personal property.

Shared stewardship keeps Christ visibly central.

Because when responsibility is carried together,
no one confuses the servant with the Builder.

And that is the protection.




**A rooted Ekklesia Assembly
does not gather around personality.**

It gathers around Christ.



Shared stewardship does not weaken authority.
It strengthens it.
It does not remove responsibility.
It distributes it.
Because identity remains rooted:

A group of people in a rustic setting, including a man with a beard and a woman holding a baby, engaged in conversation. The scene is warmly lit, suggesting an indoor or sheltered outdoor environment. The people are dressed in simple, earthy-toned clothing. The man in the center has a prominent beard and is smiling. The woman on the right is holding a baby and looking towards the group. The overall atmosphere is one of community and shared experience.

It does not outsource
maturity to one voice.

It strengthens one
another daily.

It does not centralize
stewardship in charisma.

It distributes responsibility
in faithfulness.

A group of people in a rustic setting, including a man with a beard and a woman holding a baby. The scene is warm and intimate, with people sitting on the ground and talking. The lighting is soft and golden, suggesting an outdoor setting during the day.

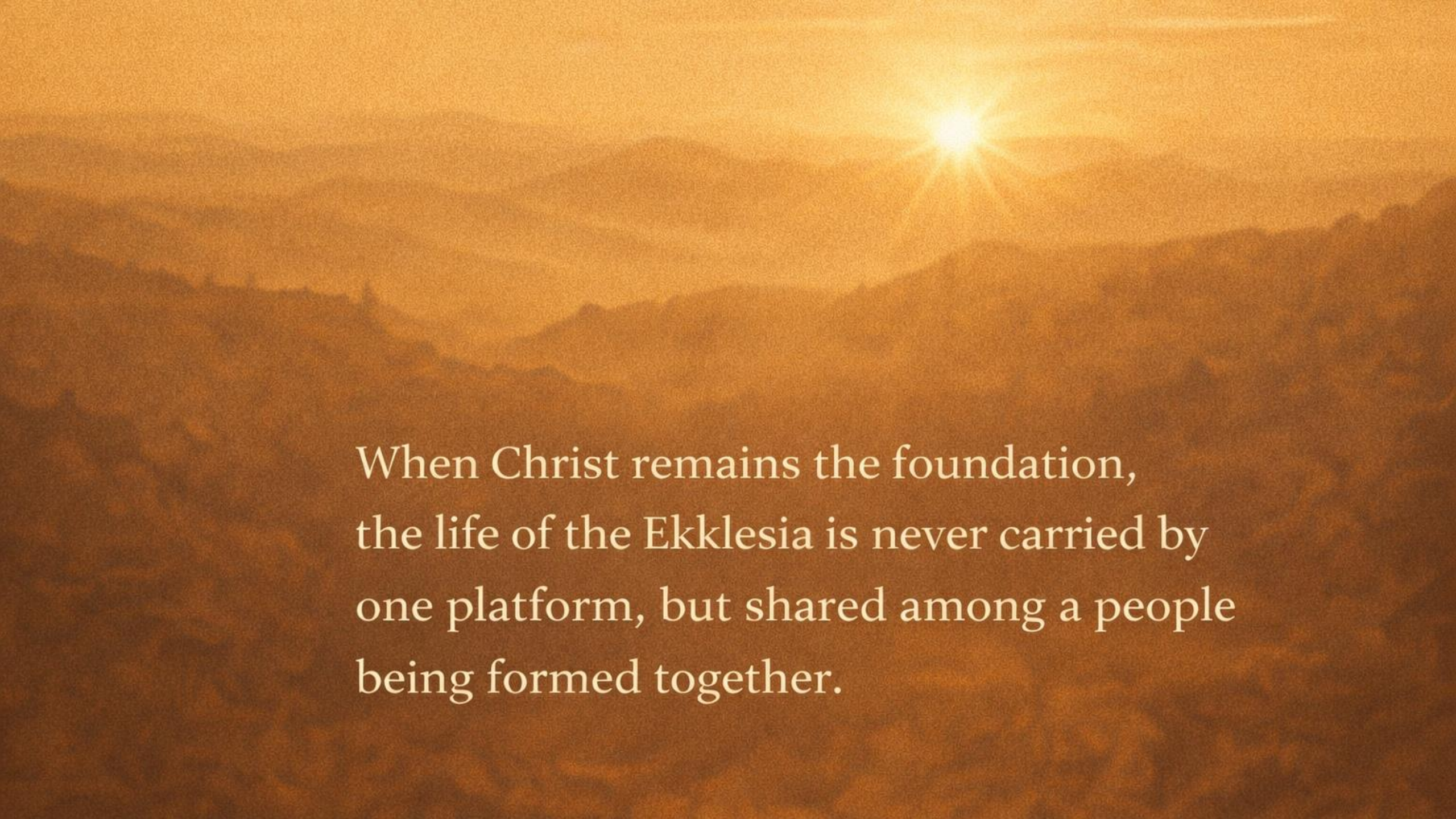
And when stewardship is shared, influence cannot quietly replace identity.

Because identity remains where it belongs:

- ❖ In the kingdom received.
- ❖ In the Builder who is faithful.
- ❖ In the people He has formed to carry it.

The Ekklesia Assembly was never meant
to revolve around a platform.

It was meant to grow from a people
whose shared foundation is Christ.

A warm, golden sunset over a mountain range. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a bright glow and creating a lens flare effect. The sky is a deep orange, and the mountains below are silhouetted against the light. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

When Christ remains the foundation,
the life of the Ekklesia is never carried by
one platform, but shared among a people
being formed together.

Scale is easy to count.

But stability and integrity are not.

Faithfulness Over Scale

Once stewardship is understood as shared,
another question emerges quietly but inevitably:

How do we measure stability?
Or more deeply still —

How do we discern integrity?

Because wherever responsibility is carried, evaluation follows.

And the temptation in every generation is to measure what is visible.

Growth.

Reach.

Attendance.

Momentum.

Influence.



Stability is revealed over time.

Integrity is revealed beneath the surface.

And Scripture consistently measures differently than we do.



In Jesus' parable in Matthew 25, when the Master returns, He does not ask for a report on visibility. He asks about faithfulness.

Not impressive.
Not expansive.
Faithful.

The servant entrusted with five talents and the one entrusted with two receive the same affirmation. Why?

“Well done, good and faithful servant.”

Because the measure was not scale.
It was stewardship.

**The kingdom does not reward comparison.
It honors integrity.**

This is crucial for the Ekklesia Assembly.

Because when scale quietly becomes the measure of maturity, subtle distortions begin to form.

An Assembly may appear stable while slowly losing integrity.

A structure may expand.
A platform may grow.
Momentum may increase.

And yet inward alignment can erode beneath the surface.



Decisions begin leaning toward visibility rather than conviction.
Tone shifts toward attraction rather than depth.

Energy concentrates around expansion rather than formation.
None of it feels dramatic.
It feels strategic.

But stability without integrity cannot endure.
And integrity without stability cannot carry weight.

Both matter.



The early Ekklesia did grow.
Acts tells us, *“The Lord added to their number.”*

- ❖ But notice the order.
- ❖ They devoted themselves.
- ❖ They broke bread.
- ❖ They prayed.
- ❖ They remained.
- ❖ And the Lord added.

Growth was fruit.
Not focus.

**Fruit follows rootedness.
It does not create it.**

A cinematic scene showing Jesus on the left, gesturing towards a vast crowd of people in a hilly, outdoor setting. On the right, a Roman soldier in full armor, including a plumed helmet, stands looking towards Jesus. The background is filled with a dense crowd of people, suggesting a large gathering or assembly.

**A rooted Assembly does not resist scale.
It refuses to worship it.**

**Because scale may expand influence —
but only faithfulness sustains it.**

**An Assembly of twenty can walk in deep integrity.
An Assembly of two hundred can walk in deep integrity.
An Assembly of two thousand can walk in deep integrity.**

**Numbers do not determine maturity.
Faithfulness over time does.**

- ❖ Faithfulness in doctrine.
- ❖ Faithfulness in shared life.
- ❖ Faithfulness in humility.
- ❖ Faithfulness in correction.
- ❖ Faithfulness in care.

**Scale may stretch responsibility.
But integrity stabilizes it.
And stability proves it over time.**

A stewarded Assembly asks different questions.



Not: “How large can this become?”
But: “Are we aligned?”

Not: “How do we expand influence?”
But: “Are we carrying this faithfully?”

Not: “How do we compete?”
But: “Are we remaining rooted?”



There is freedom in this posture.

Because faithfulness
is accessible in obscurity.



It is accessible in small rooms.
In quiet weeks.

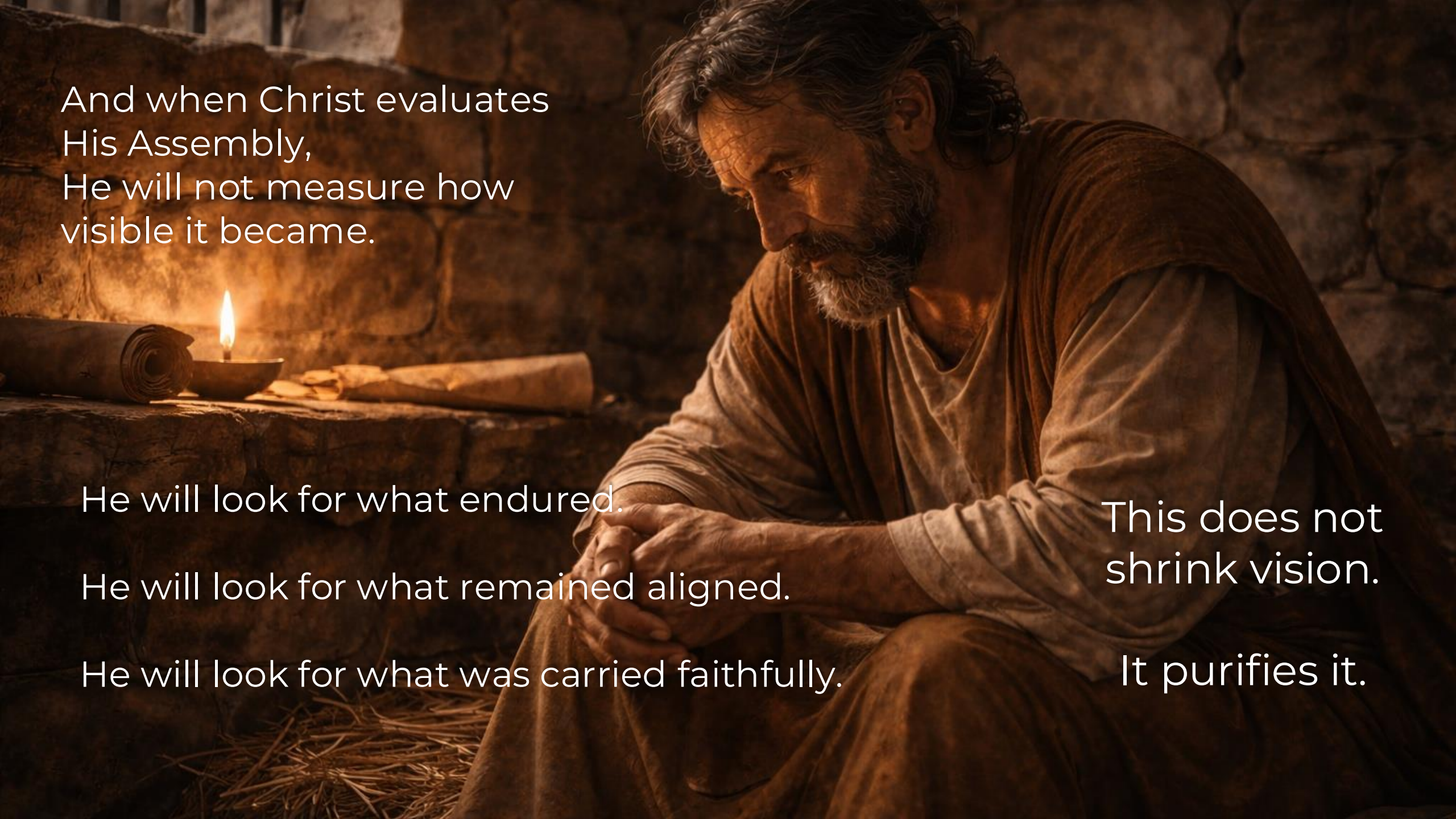
In ordinary gatherings.

In seasons when
momentum is slow.

Scale fluctuates.

Integrity can remain.

Stability can deepen.



And when Christ evaluates
His Assembly,
He will not measure how
visible it became.

He will look for what endured.
He will look for what remained aligned.
He will look for what was carried faithfully.

This does not
shrink vision.
It purifies it.

**Because the vision of the kingdom
is not expansion at any cost.**

**It is stewardship
without self-exaltation.
It is influence
that grows from
formation.**

**It is stability rooted in
integrity.**

**And when faithfulness
becomes the measure,
scale finds its proper place.**

**Not as identity.
Not as validation.**

**But as fruit in the hands of
a faithful King.**



**Carrying Weight While
Keeping Christ Central**

A man with a beard and long hair, wearing a simple brown tunic, is seated at a wooden desk in a stone-walled room. He is focused on writing with a quill pen on a large sheet of parchment. To his left, a lit candle in a small wooden holder provides the primary light source, casting a warm glow. Several other rolled-up scrolls and a small wooden tray are on the desk. The background shows a rough stone wall and a window with bars.

**Formation proves stability.
Stewardship reveals integrity.**

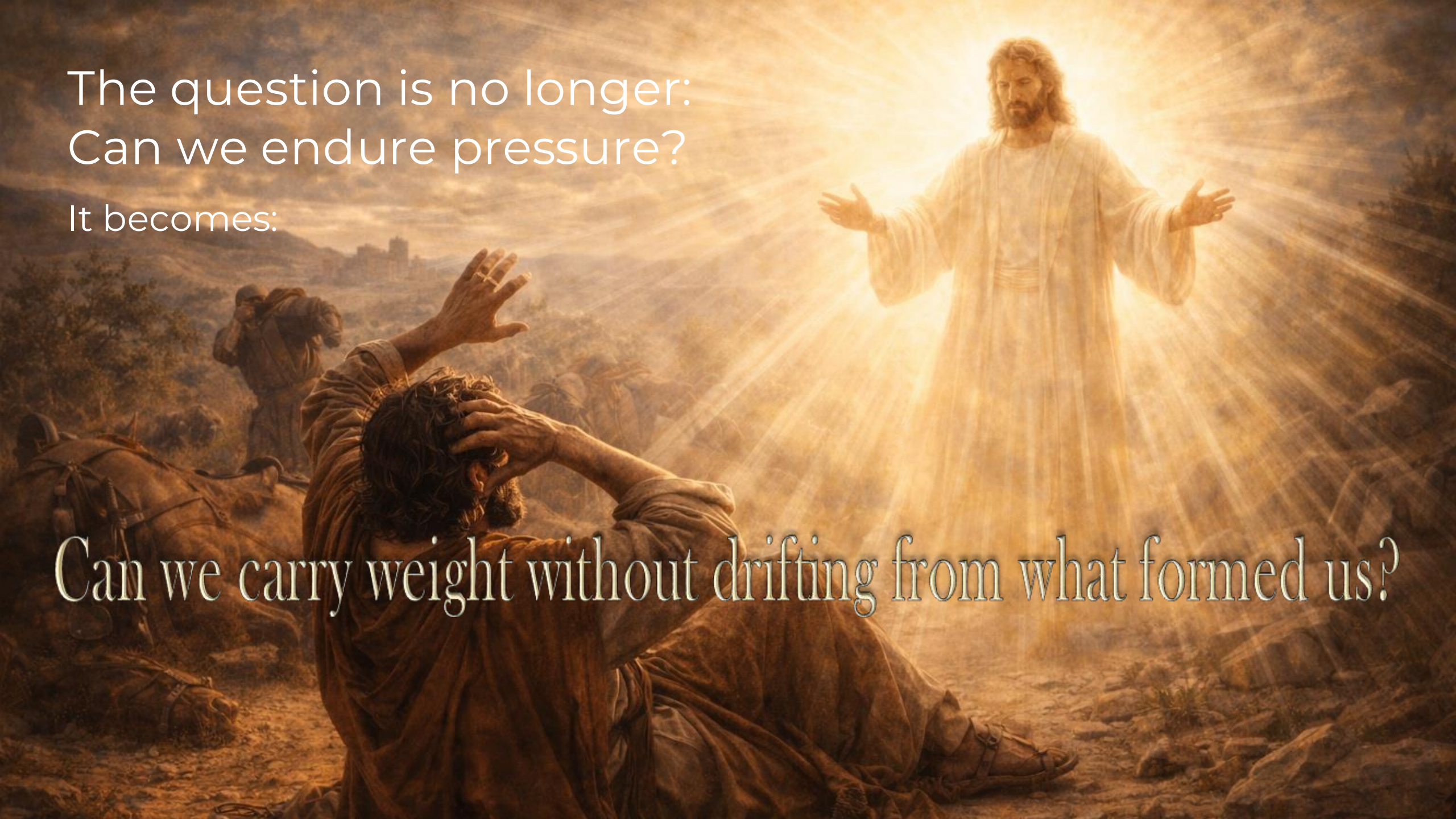
When responsibility increases,
when influence grows,
when people are impacted,
when decisions carry
consequence
something else is tested.

Center.

The question is no longer:
Can we endure pressure?

It becomes:

Can we carry weight without drifting from what formed us?





Because weight
changes posture.
It introduces urgency.

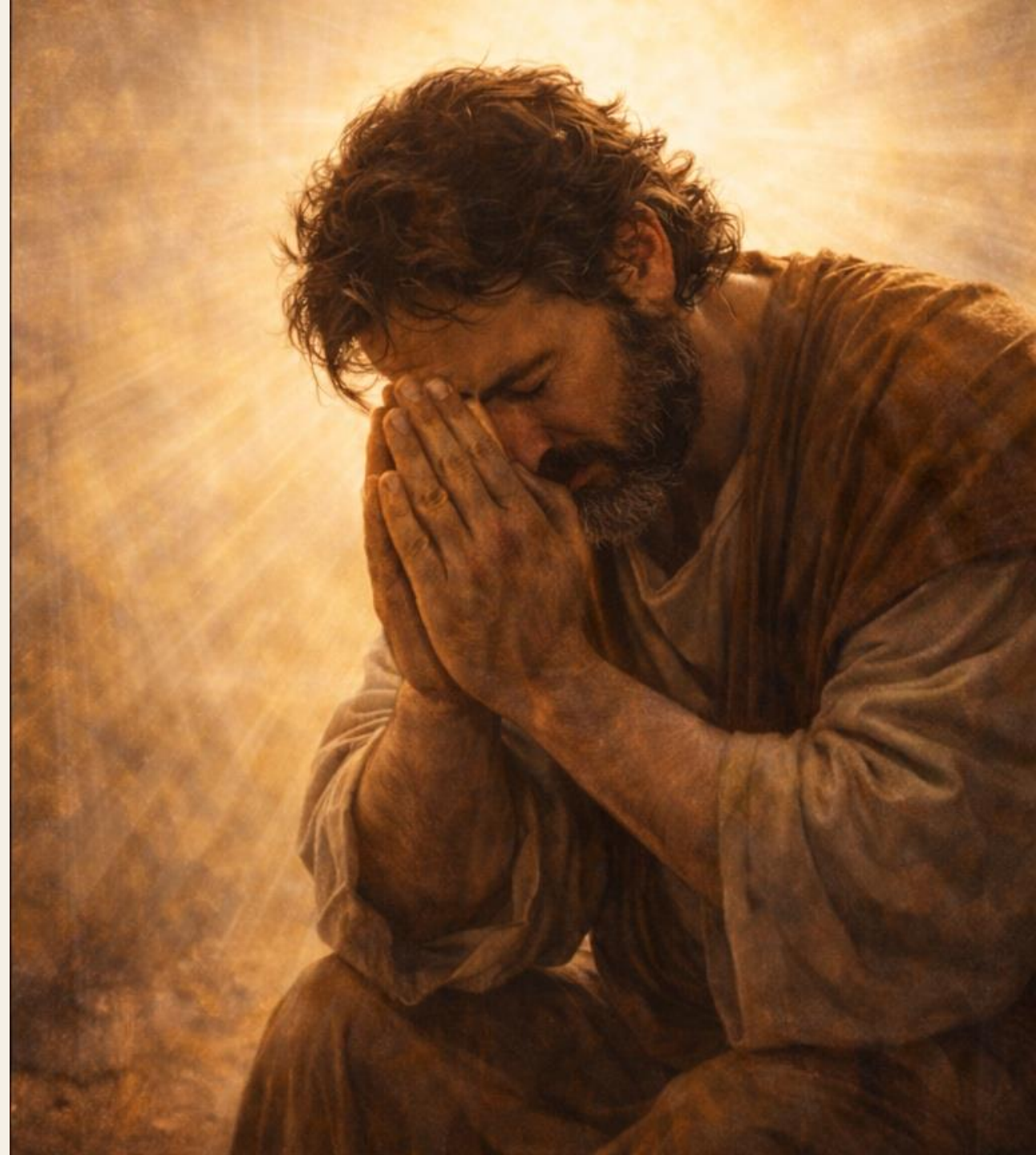
It introduces
expectation.

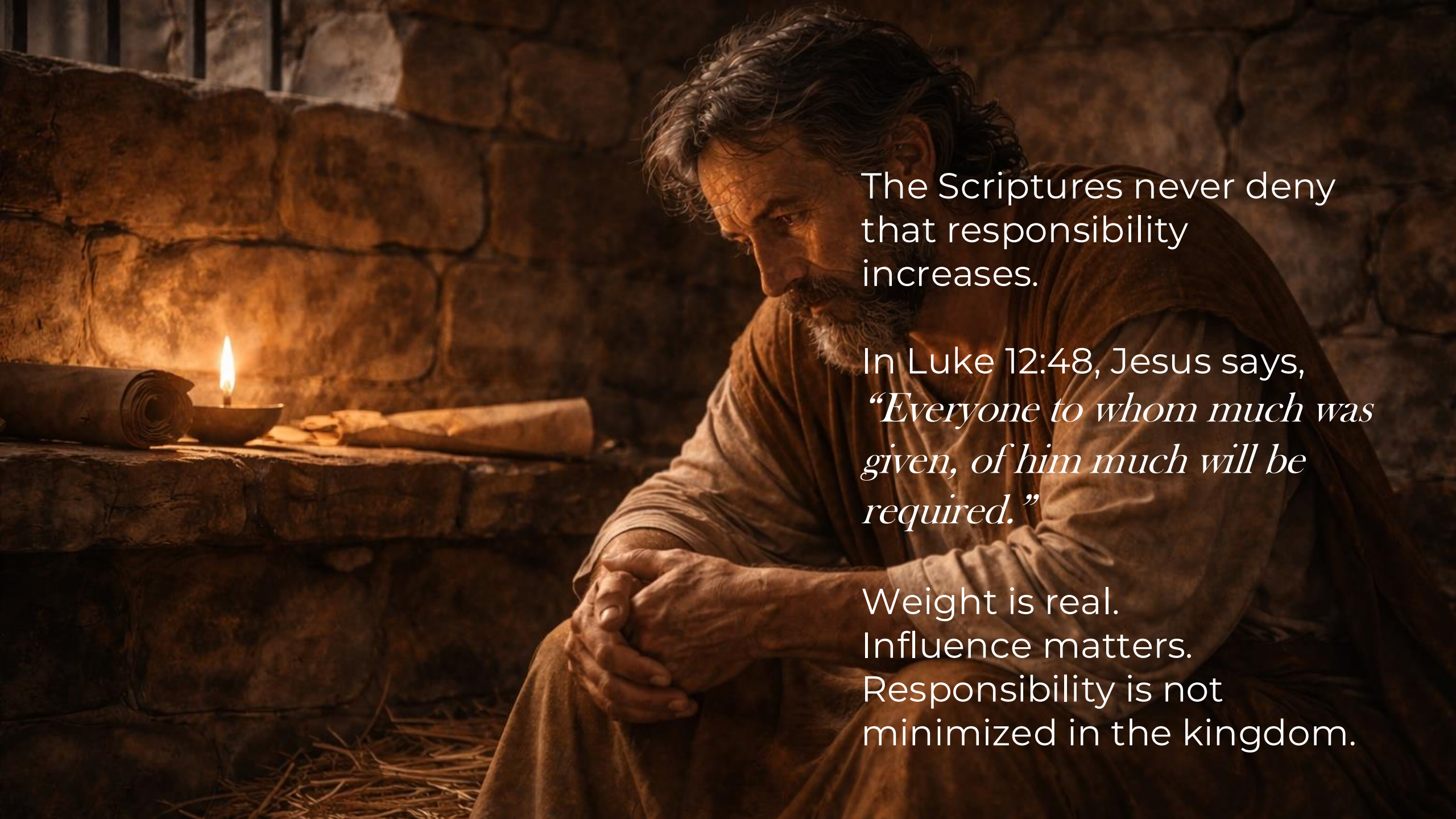
It introduces the
temptation to protect
what feels fragile.

And this is where many
Assemblies begin to shift —
not dramatically, but subtly.

The language becomes tighter.
The margins narrower.
The leadership less accessible.
The pace less relational.

Not because conviction was
lost. But because weight
began to feel heavy.





The Scriptures never deny that responsibility increases.

In Luke 12:48, Jesus says, *“Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required.”*

Weight is real.
Influence matters.
Responsibility is not minimized in the kingdom.



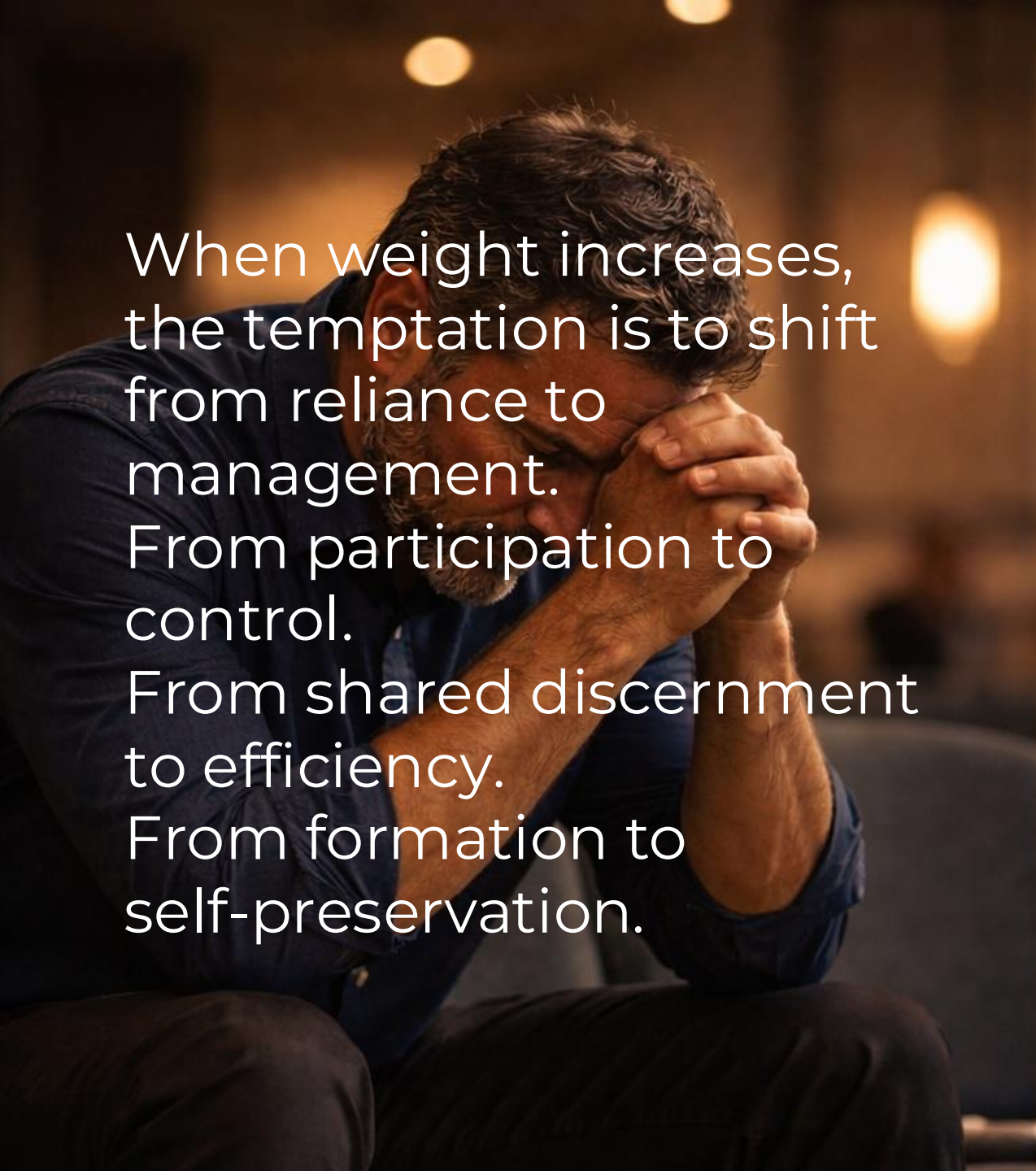
But notice what Scripture never says:

It never says that increased responsibility requires a new center.

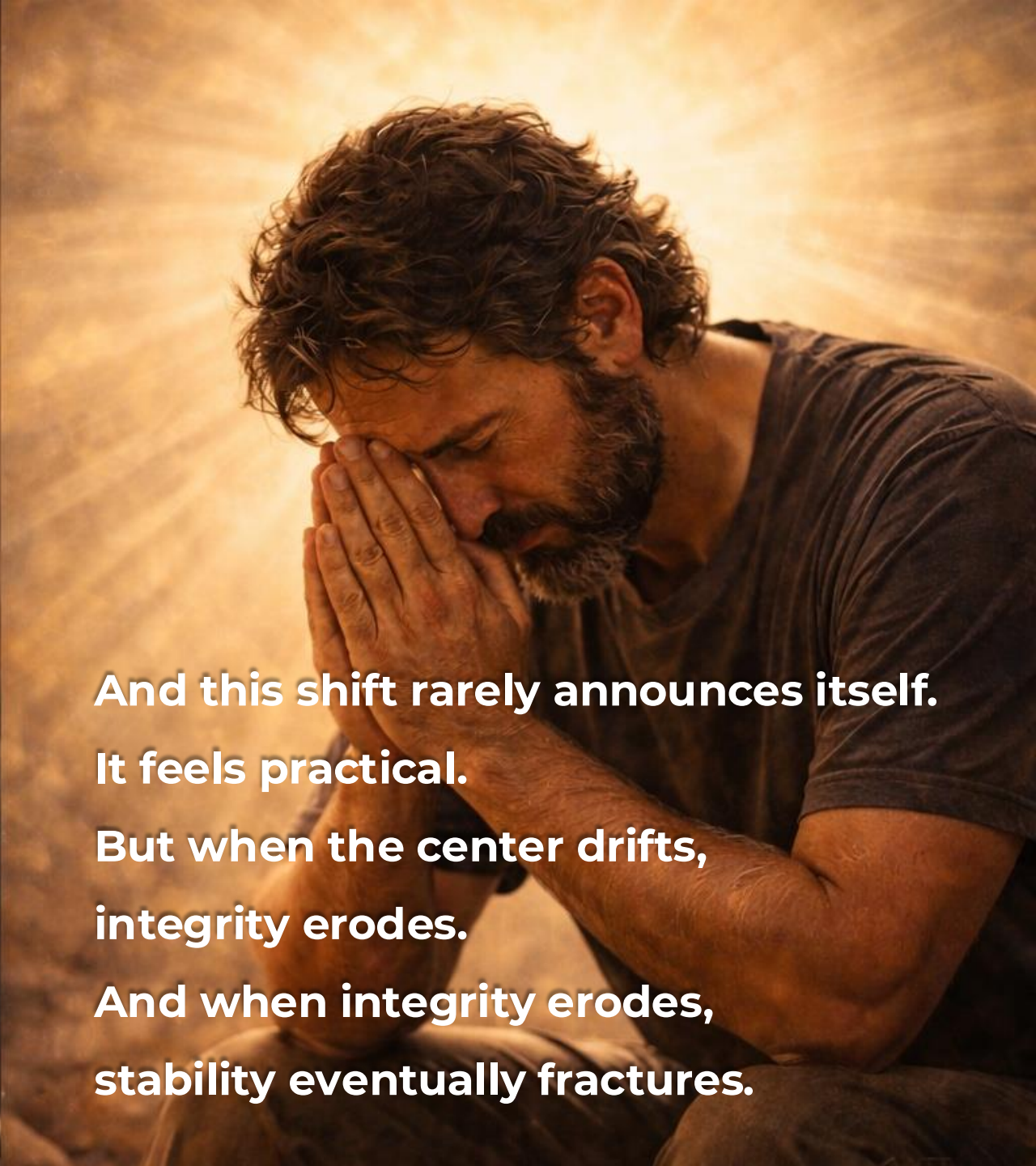
The center remains the same.

**Christ builds His Ekklesia.
We receive the kingdom.
We steward what has been entrusted.**


That center must not move.



When weight increases,
the temptation is to shift
from reliance to
management.
From participation to
control.
From shared discernment
to efficiency.
From formation to
self-preservation.




**And this shift rarely announces itself.
It feels practical.
But when the center drifts,
integrity erodes.
And when integrity erodes,
stability eventually fractures.**



Carrying weight without losing center
requires vigilance — not anxiety, but awareness.

It requires remembering what formed us:
We were rooted before we were entrusted.
We were secured before we were seen.
We were gathered before we were given responsibility.

If those truths remain central,
weight does not distort.
It refines.



**An Assembly that carries weight well remains relational.
It does not sacrifice proximity for pace.
It does not sacrifice prayer for productivity.
It does not sacrifice shared discernment for streamlined control.
It moves steadily.
Not frantically.
Because the goal is not expansion at any cost.
It is faithfulness under responsibility.**

A group of six diverse people (three men and three women) are walking and laughing together in a park. The scene is set during sunset, with warm, golden light filtering through the trees in the background. The people are dressed in casual, comfortable clothing. The overall mood is joyful and relaxed.


Peter's instruction in 1 Peter 5:2 becomes even more relevant here:

Shepherd willingly.

Not under compulsion.
Not for shameful gain.
Not domineering.

Why?

Because weight can distort shepherds as easily as it can destabilize sheep.

A group of six diverse people (three men and three women) are sitting in a circle around a campfire at night. They are all smiling and appear to be in conversation. The campfire is in the foreground, and the background is dark with some trees visible. The lighting is warm, primarily from the fire and some ambient light.

**Authority that forgets its center becomes forceful.
Leadership that forgets its center becomes defensive.
But stewardship rooted in Christ remains gentle.
It remains accountable.
It remains aware that the flock belongs to another.**

A group of people are camping at night. In the foreground, a man and a woman are sitting on chairs, smiling and holding metal cups. In the background, a tent is set up, and string lights are hanging from the trees. The scene is lit with warm, ambient light from the campfire and string lights.

This is where everything converges.

A rooted Assembly.

An enduring Assembly.

A stewarding Assembly.

Now becomes:


A centered Assembly.

Centered in Christ as Builder.

Centered in a kingdom received.

Centered in shared life.

Centered in faithfulness over scale.

A photograph of three men with beards and long hair, dressed in simple, earthy-toned robes, sitting on the ground in a rustic, stone-walled setting. They are engaged in conversation, smiling and looking towards each other. In the background, a woman is seated near a stone archway, and the walls are lit with warm, glowing sconces. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and communal.

When the center holds, weight can increase without identity shifting.
Influence can expand without ego inflating.
Responsibility can multiply without integrity eroding.

And when Christ evaluates His Assembly, He will not be impressed by how much weight it carried. He will look at whether it remained centered while carrying it.

That is maturity.
That is stewardship solidified.
That is faithfulness embodied over time.

And that is how an Ekklesia Assembly carries weight — without losing the center that made it stable from the beginning.



Closing —

**A People Who Carry Well
We have been rooted.
We have endured.
We have been entrusted.
Now we carry.**



**But we do not carry alone.
And we do not carry as owners.**

A group of men in ancient attire are gathered around a low wooden table in a dimly lit room. A central lamp with a flame provides the primary light source. The men are engaged in conversation, with one man in the center gesturing as if speaking. The table holds several scrolls, a bowl, and some bread. The background shows stone walls and a window with a view of the outdoors.

The Ekklesia Assembly is not responsible for constructing the kingdom.
It is responsible for stewarding what has been received.

That difference changes everything.

**Because when a people know they have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken,
they do not grip responsibility anxiously.**



They carry it reverently.
They do not scramble for expansion.
They tend what is already in their hands.
They do not centralize power.
They distribute faithfulness.

A man with a beard, wearing a simple, light-colored robe, is pouring water from a large, rounded clay jug into a smaller cup held by a woman. The woman is also wearing a simple robe and is looking up at the man. The background is a dusty, outdoor setting with other people in similar robes, some of whom are blurred. The lighting is warm and golden, suggesting a bright day. The overall scene conveys a sense of care and service.

They do not measure success by scale.
They measure it by integrity.
This is how weight is carried without distortion.

Not by increasing control.
But by deepening trust.
Not by accelerating pace.

But by guarding the center.
Christ remains the Builder.

The kingdom remains received.
The Assembly remains shared.
And faithfulness remains the measure.

If influence increases,
we remain steady.

If responsibility multiplies, we
remain rooted.

If opportunity expands,
we remain aligned.

Because what was formed
before visibility must remain
when visibility grows.

And what was secured before
entrustment must remain when
entrustment deepens.



A painting depicting Jesus with a beard and long hair, wearing a brown robe, gesturing with his right hand towards a large crowd of people. To his right stands a Roman soldier in full armor, including a helmet with a red plume and a breastplate. The background shows a vast, hilly landscape under a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

This is the quiet strength of a stewarded Assembly.

Not reactive.

Not ambitious.

Not defensive.


But settled.

Settled in Christ.

Settled in shared life.

Settled in the knowledge

that what we carry does not belong to us.



We will be asked how faithfully we carried it.
So, we remain attentive.
We remain accountable.
We remain centered.

And we trust that the One who builds His Ekklesia
knows exactly how much weight to entrust — and when.

**Because what Christ builds will endure.
And what is stewarded with integrity will remain.**



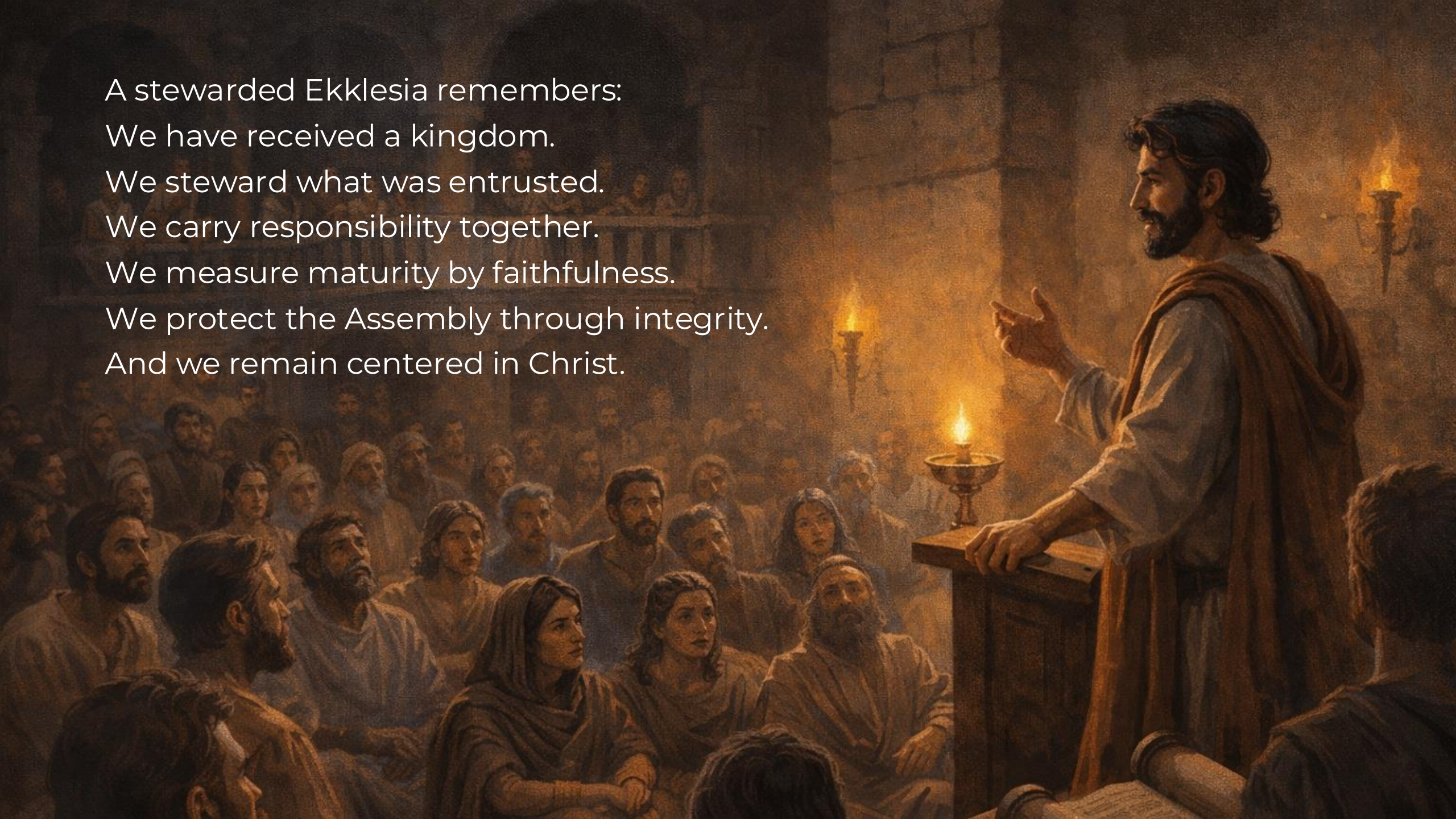
What has the Lord entrusted to you within His Assembly?

Stewardship rarely begins with something large or visible.


More often it begins quietly — caring for people, guarding truth, serving faithfully where God has already placed us.

Over time, faithfulness in small things becomes the place where God forms the stability required to carry greater responsibility.

A stewarded Ekklesia remembers:
We have received a kingdom.
We steward what was entrusted.
We carry responsibility together.
We measure maturity by faithfulness.
We protect the Assembly through integrity.
And we remain centered in Christ.



Endurance proves that a people are stable.
Stewardship reveals whether they are faithful.



FOUNDATION BEFORE PLATFORM

FORMING A LIFE THAT ENDURES

This completes session 5
Remain Centered



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