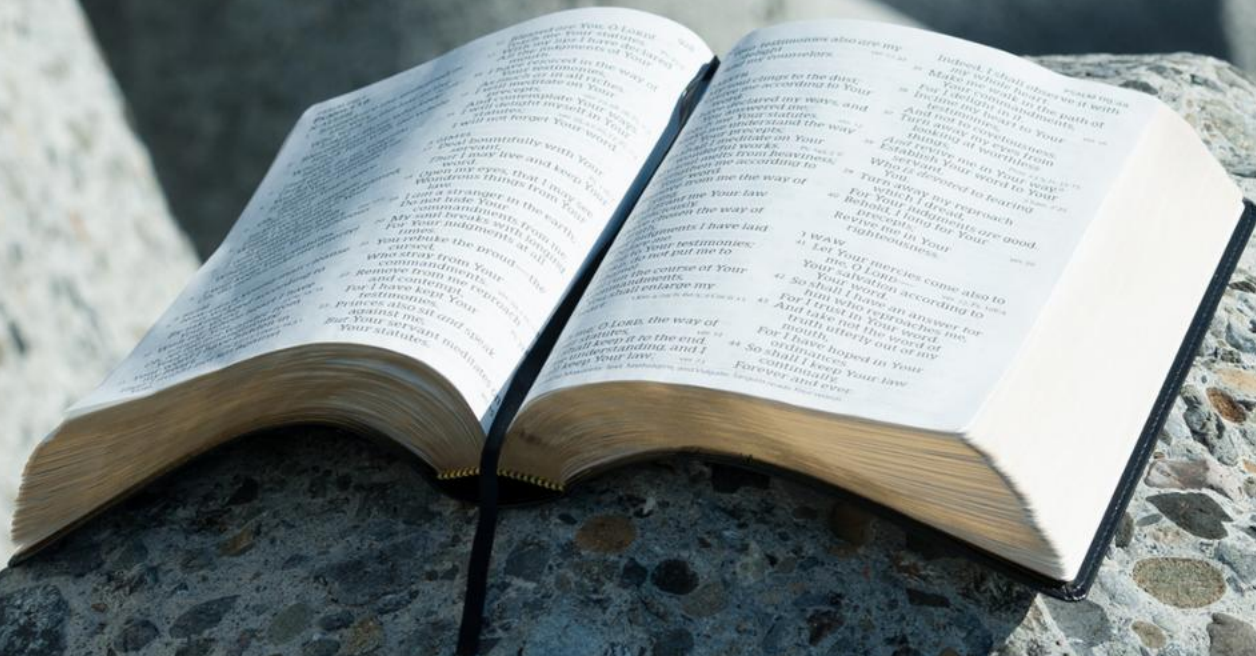
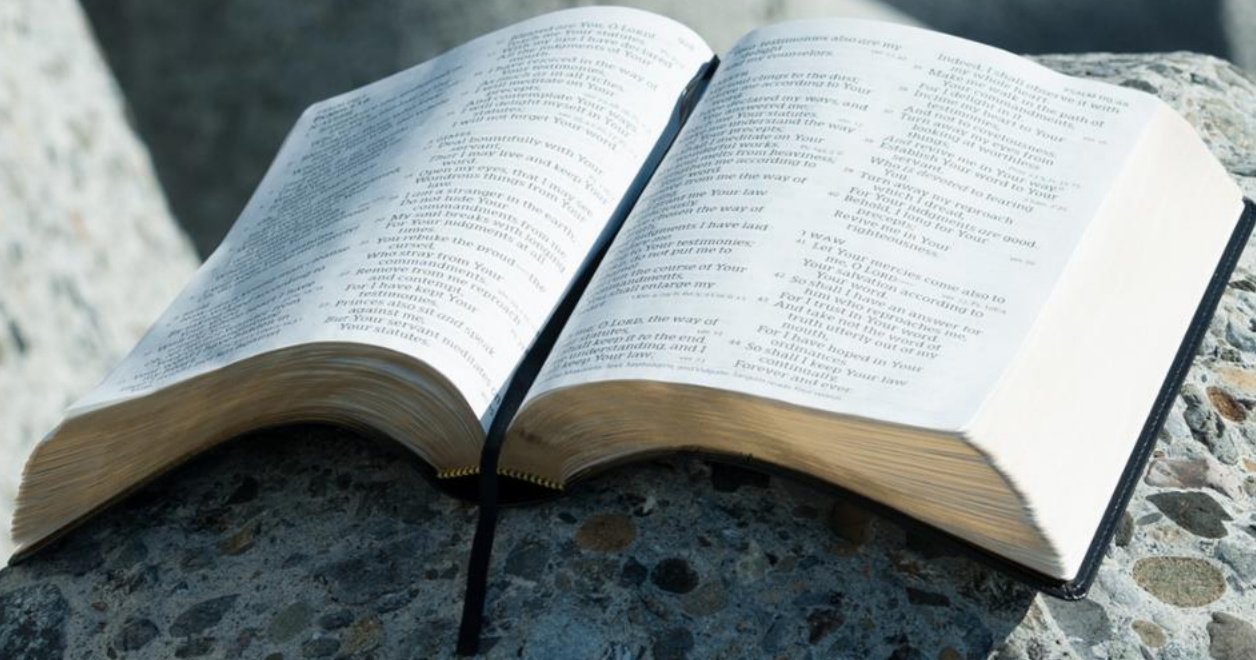


HIDDEN IN MY HEART



HIDDEN IN MY HEART



An open book with white pages and black text is lying flat on a large, light-colored, textured rock. The background is a soft-focus landscape with a blue sky and distant hills. The overall image has a muted, artistic feel.

Eyes on Jesus

Running the Race of Faith

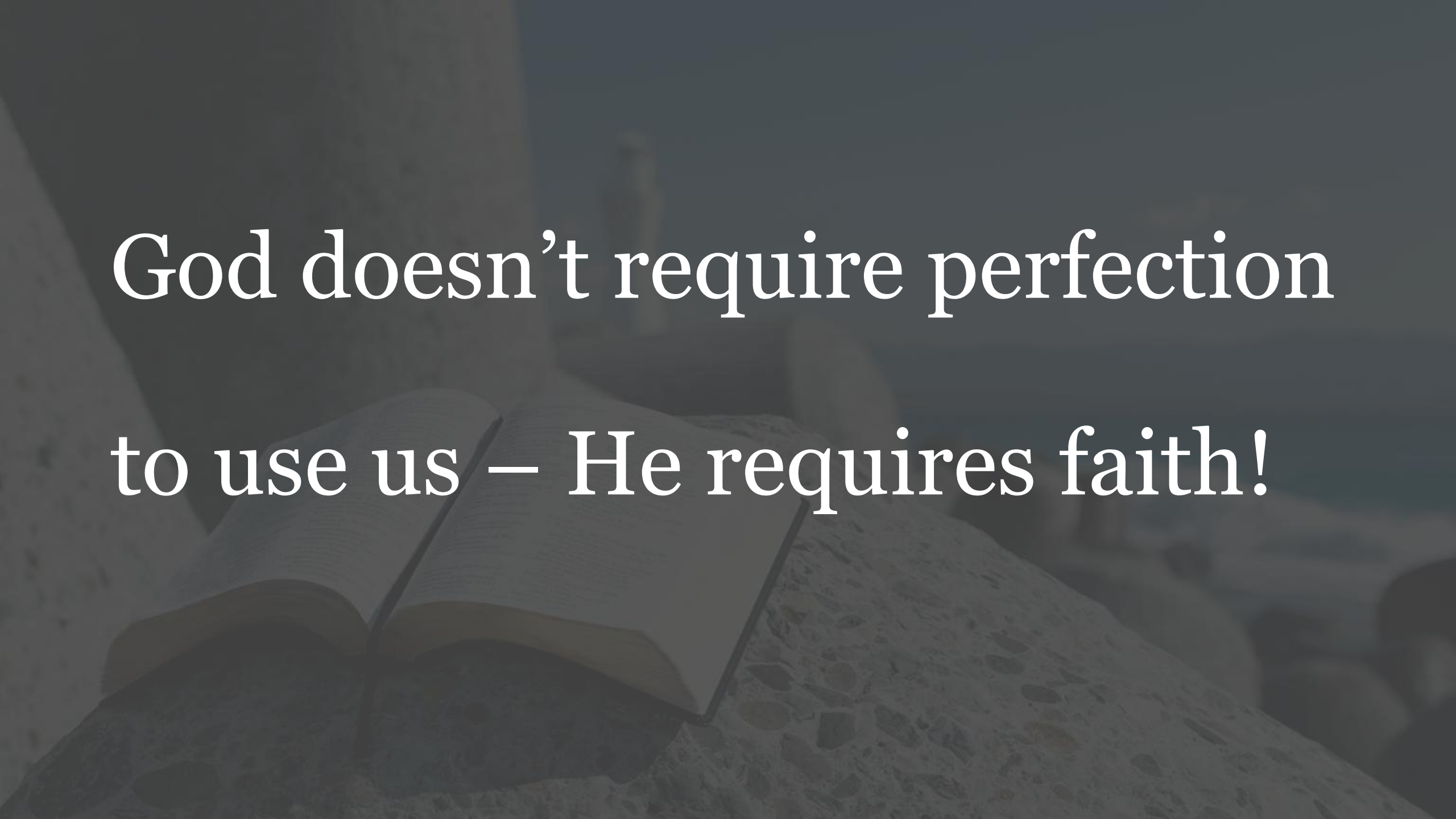
Hebrew 12:1-3 (NLT)

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. ² We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. ³ Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up.

Hiding God's word in our heart

Start by understanding the background of the text:

- Who Wrote It?
- What Was Happening in History?
- Literary Context?

An open book with white pages and dark text is lying flat on a large, light-colored, textured rock. The background is a soft-focus landscape with more rocks and a hint of greenery under a pale sky. The overall tone is serene and contemplative.

God doesn't require perfection
to use us – He requires faith!

Hebrew 12:1 (NLT)

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.

1) Lay aside what holds us back

Matthew 7:24-27 (NLT)

²⁴ “**Anyone who listens to my teaching** and **follows it is wise**, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵ Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. ²⁶ But **anyone who hears my teaching** and **doesn’t obey it is foolish**, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷ When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

Hebrew 12:2 (ESV)

² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

2) Fix our eyes on Jesus. He's the destination.

Hebrew 12:2-3 (NLT)

- ² ...who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

3) We Endure Through His Example

James 1:2-4 (NLT)

² Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. ³ For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴ So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

4) God refines us, He doesn't abandon us

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NLT)

¹⁶ That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. ¹⁷ For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! ¹⁸ So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

In closing

- Where is our faith in God?
- Where is our gaze?
- Will we run the race of faith with joy?

