Choosing Devotion Over Distraction



Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic *Jews* against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. 2 So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.

Acts 6:1-7

3 Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men
of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom
we may put in charge of this task. 4 But we will devote
ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

Acts 6:1-7

5 The statement found approval with the whole
congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith
and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor,
Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. 6
And these they brought before the apostles; and after
praying, they laid their hands on them.

Acts 6:1-7

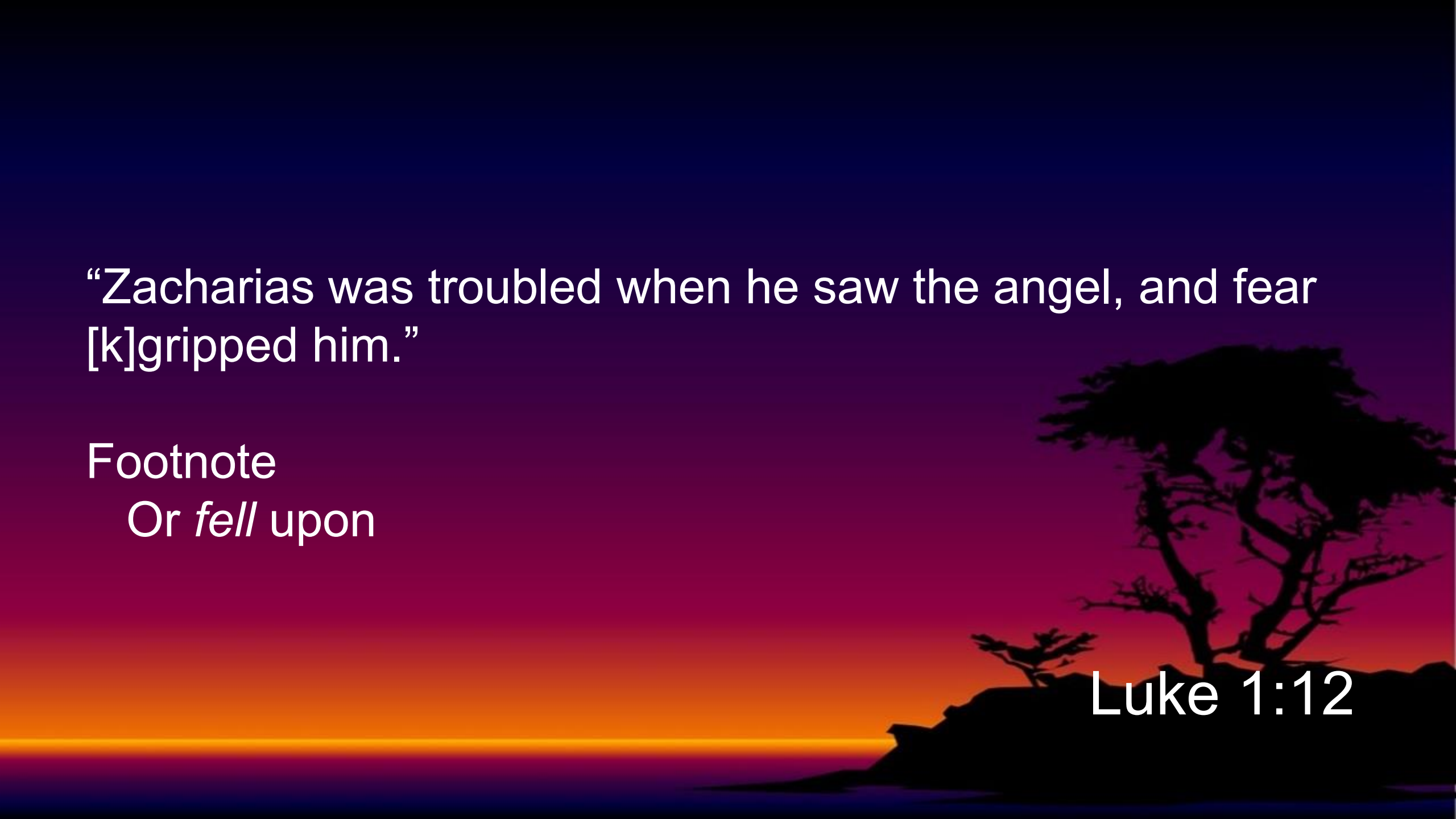
“Italics are used in the text to indicate words which are not found in the original Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek but implied by it. Italics are used in the marginal notes to signify alternate readings for the text.

Italics

“Zacharias was troubled when he saw the angel, and fear [k]gripped him.”

Footnote

Or *fell* upon



Luke 1:12

“since attitudes and prejudices are formed before conversion and are often carried over into Christian life-too often the unworthy ones more than the worthy ones -some of the problems between the Hebraic Jews and the Hellenistic Jews in the church must be related to such earlier differences and prejudices.”

Richard N. Longenecker

Strongs (G1675) tells us that Ἑλληνιστής (Hellēnistēs) pr. one who uses the language and follows the customs of the Greeks; in NT a Jew by blood, but a native of a Greek-speaking country, Hellenist

Hellenistic *Jews*

Strongs (G1445) tells us that Ἑβραῖος (Hebraios)

Refers to a Hebrew, one descended from Abraham the Hebrew, 2 Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:5; in NT, a Jew of Palestine, one speaking Aramaic

Hebrew

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful in it with
thanksgiving; 3 praying at the same time for us as well, that
God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may
speak the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been
bound, 4 that I may make it manifest in the way I ought to
speak.

Colossians 4:2-4

Why Pray?

(1) God commands us to pray;
(2) the needs are great, and eternal things are at stake;
(3) God acts when we pray and often does more in seconds than we could do in hours or weeks or sometimes years.

John Piper

“I would imagine there were more Aramaic-speaking Christians in the church than there were Greek-speaking Christians, but the church as a whole said, Let’s elect Greek-speaking leaders.”

James Montgomery Boice

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

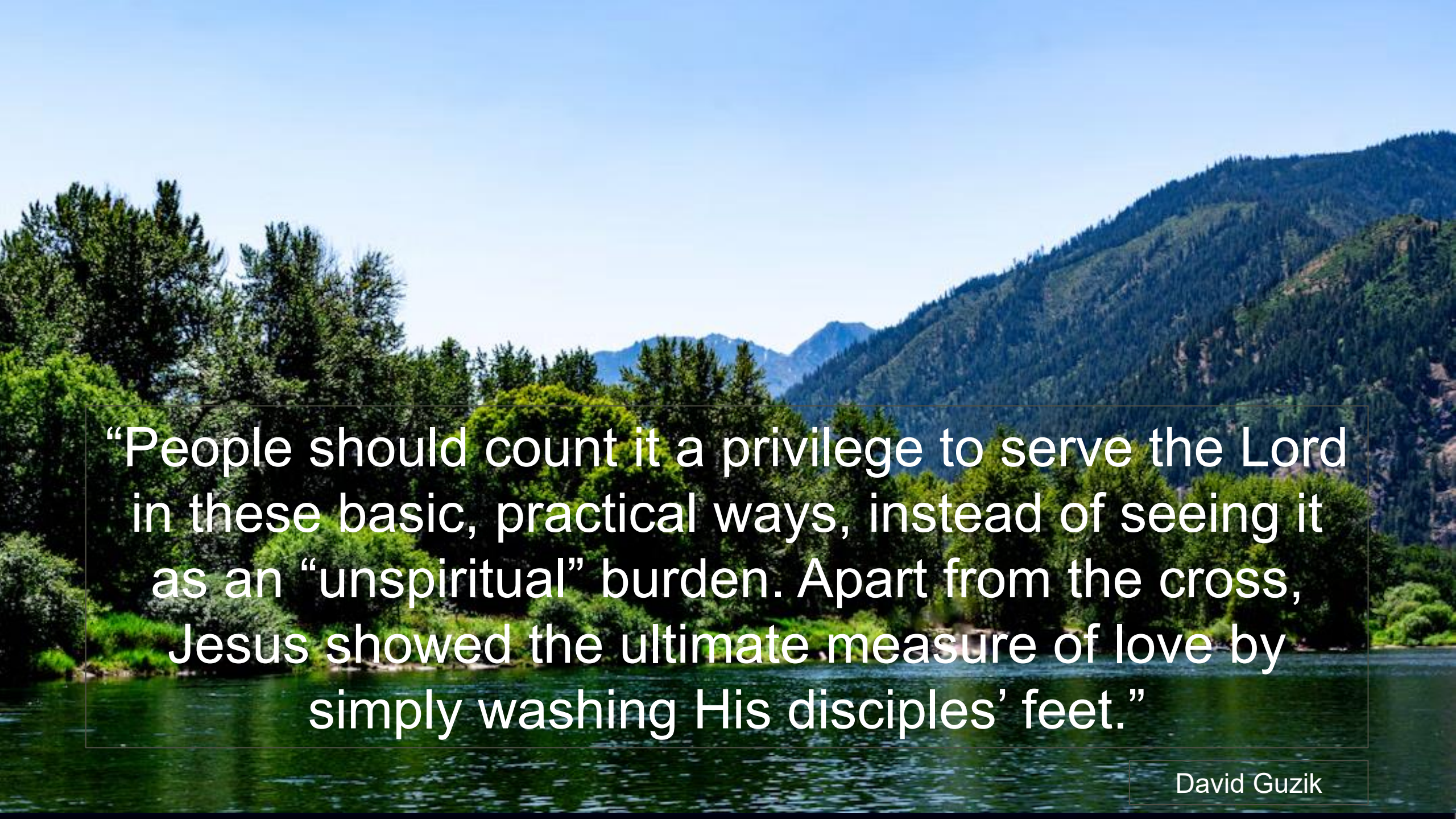
Ephesians 2:10

“The emphasis in Stephen’s life is on fullness: he was full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom (Acts 6:3, 10), full of faith (Acts 6:5), and full of power (Acts 6:8). In Scripture, to be ‘full of’ means ‘to be controlled by.’ This man was controlled by the Spirit, faith, wisdom, and power. He was a God-controlled man yielded to the Holy Spirit, a man who sought to lead people to Christ.”

Warren Wiersbe

7 The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

Acts 6:1-7


“People should count it a privilege to serve the Lord in these basic, practical ways, instead of seeing it as an “unspiritual” burden. Apart from the cross, Jesus showed the ultimate measure of love by simply washing His disciples’ feet.”
David Guzik



Choosing Devotion Over Distraction

Satan will try in any way that he can to keep the church from accomplishing its tasks. He will use division and distractions to stop us. We must be wise in dealing with any issues that try to disrupt the mission of the church. Unity can only be accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit. We must find out what God created us for within the church and then we are to do it.

Acts 6:1-7