
HOLY SPIRIT IN RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH -
Why do we work?
1 Corinthians 7:17-24
Elder James Lee
23 July 2023

## 1 Corinthians 7:17-24 (NASB)

Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk.  And so I direct in all the churches.
18 Was any man called when he was already circumcised?  He is not to become uncircumcised.  Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? He is not to be circumcised.

## 1 Corinthians 7:17-24 (NASB)

19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision
is nothing, but what matters is the keeping
of the commandments of God. 20 Each man
must remain in that condition in which he was
called. 21 Were you called while a slave?
Do not worry about it; but if you are able
also to become free, rather do that.

## 1 Corinthians 7:17-24 (NASB)

22 For he who was called in the Lord while a
slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who
was called while free, is Christ's slave.
23 You were bought with a price; do not
become slaves of men. 24 Brethren, each one
is to remain with God in that condition
in which he was called.

## Introduction

- The spiritual experiences we had during spiritual renewal is just the beginning.
- Time to deploy our new spiritual energy towards God's kingdom business and various aspects of our personal lives.

## Introduction

- Our work is a calling and assignment from God.
- The circumstances and opportunities in our lives are directed by God and the work we do, assigned by Him even before we become believers.

## Introduction

- Consistent with the biblical truth that God has not only created each of us but has a plan and purpose in place for our lives.
- The natural abilities and talents we possess have been given to us to fulfill the plans and purpose God has designed for our lives.

## Introduction

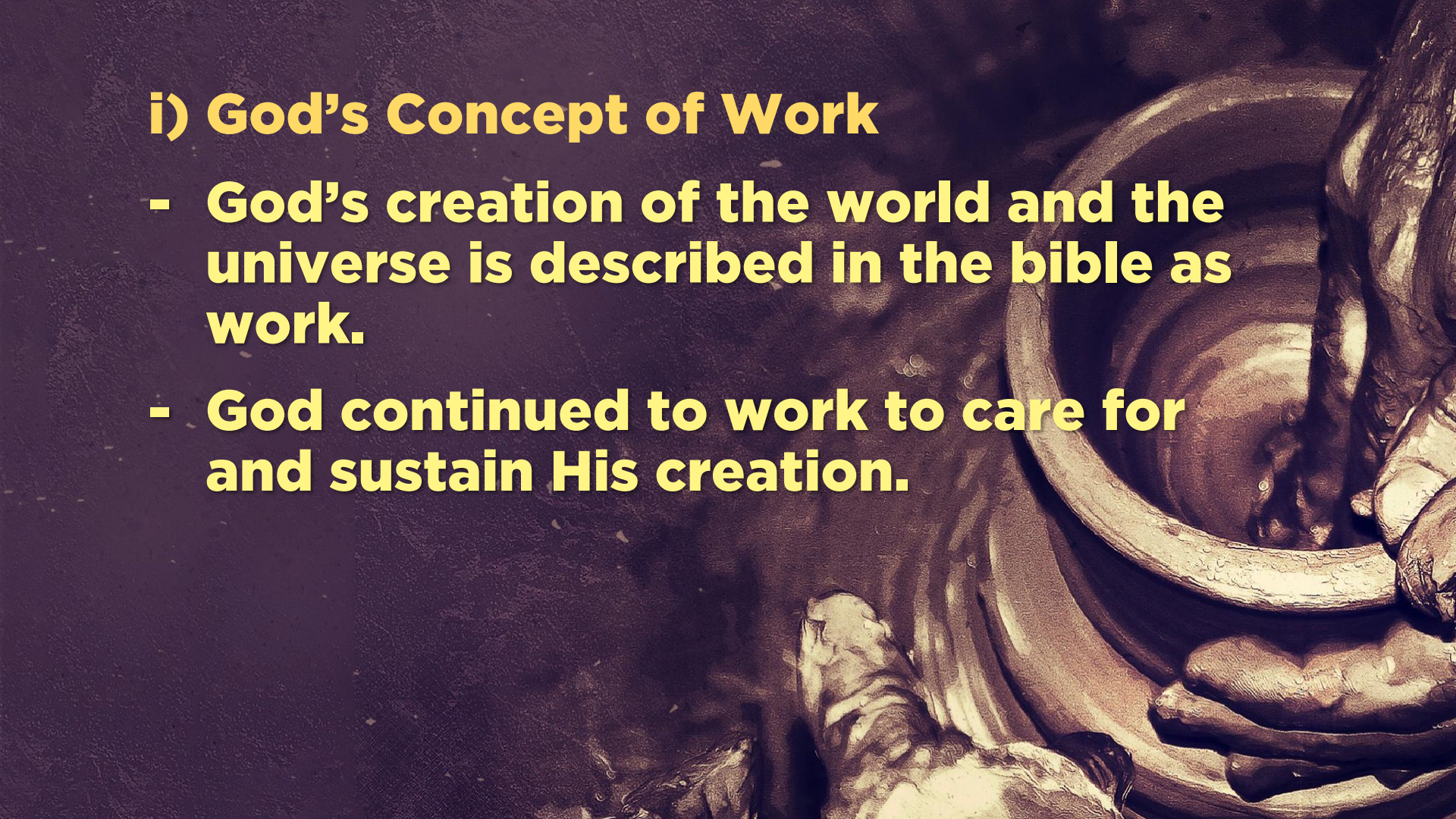
- Principle is important in shaping the right perception of our work and the right attitude towards our work.

## Road Map

i) God's Concept of Work

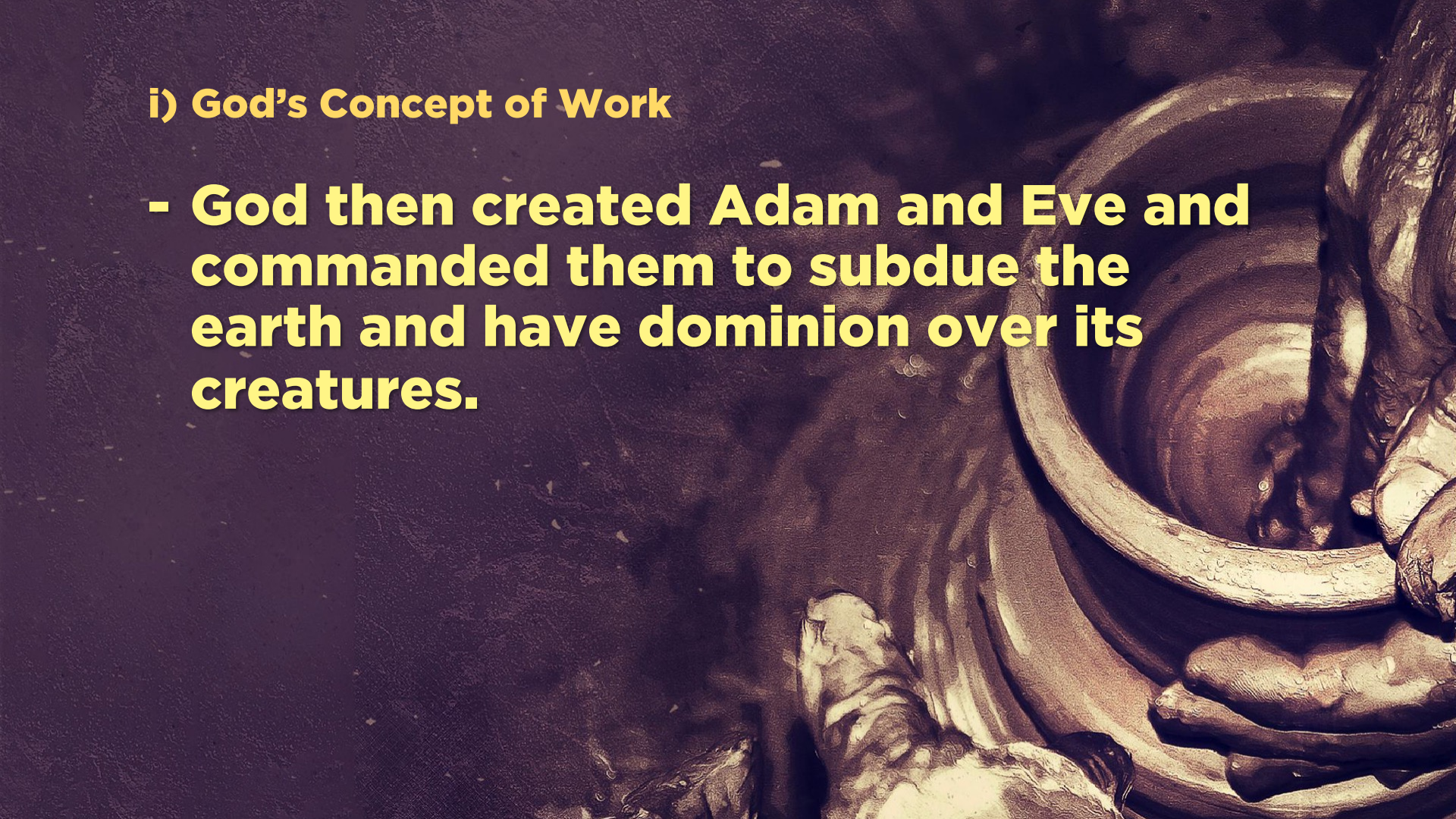
ii) Our Work As God's Calling and Assignment

iii) Our Work As An Act of Love



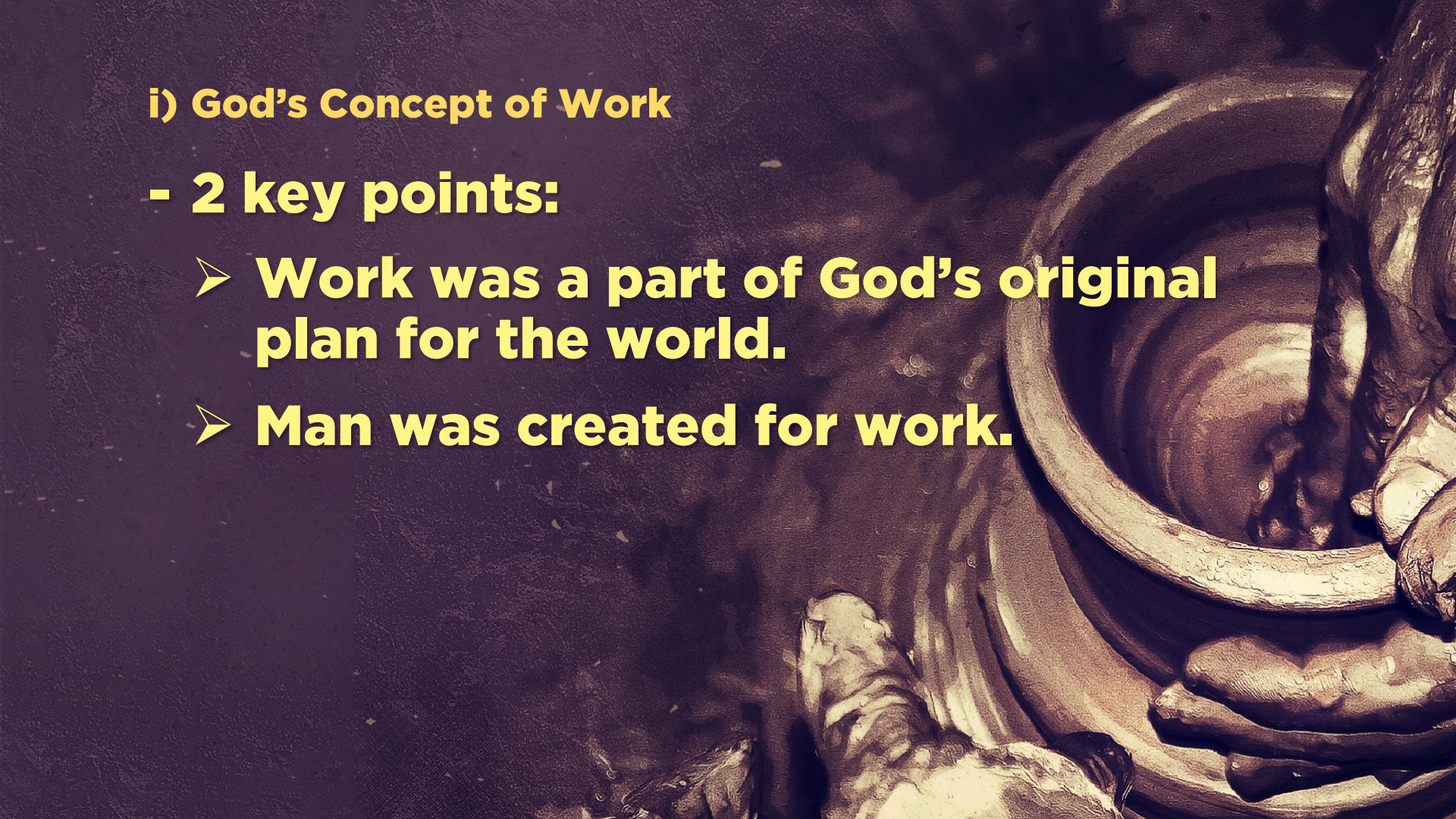
## i) God's Concept of Work

- God's creation of the world and the universe is described in the bible as work.
- God continued to work to care for and sustain His creation.



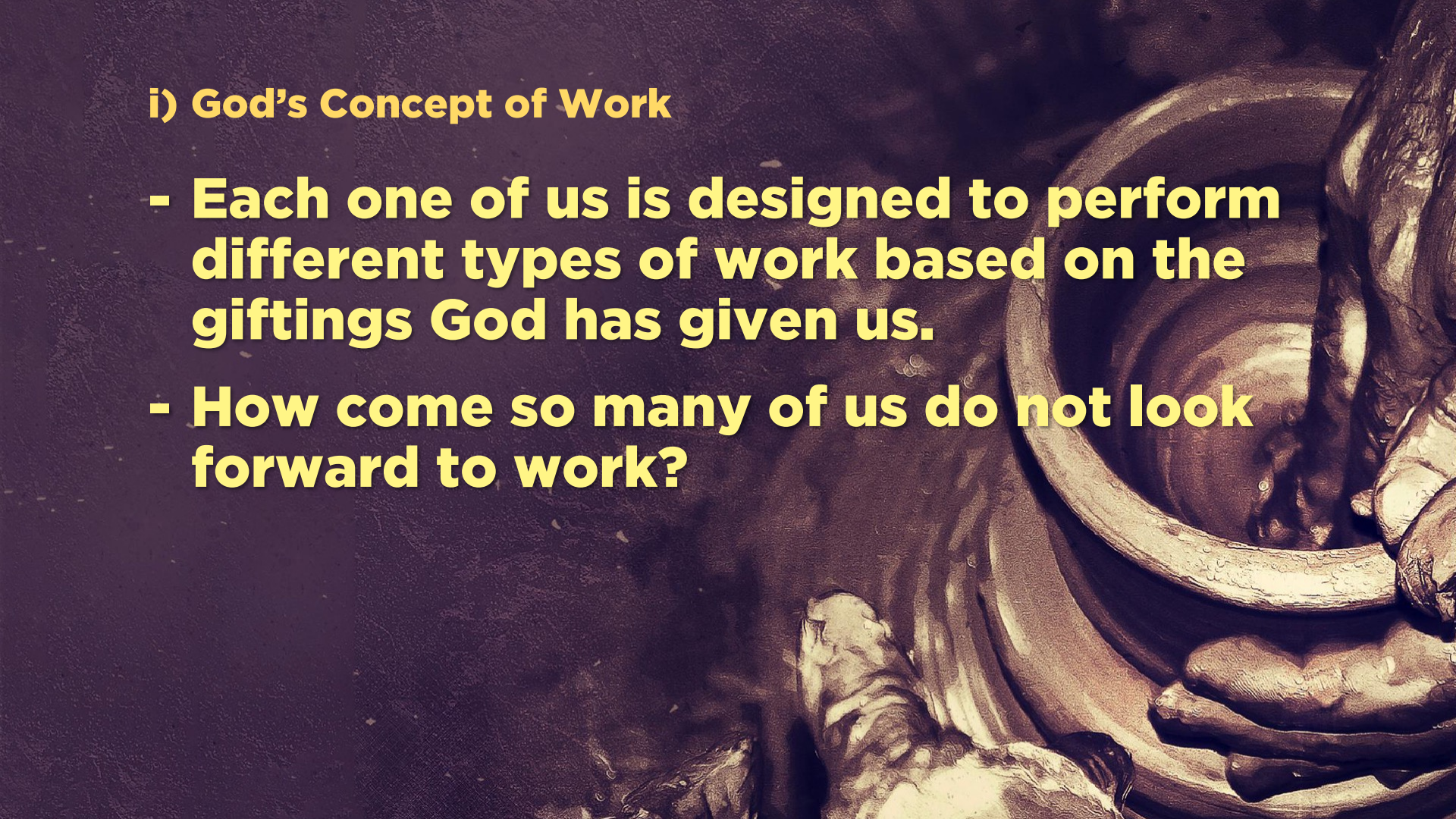
## i) God's Concept of Work

- God then created Adam and Eve and commanded them to subdue the earth and have dominion over its creatures.



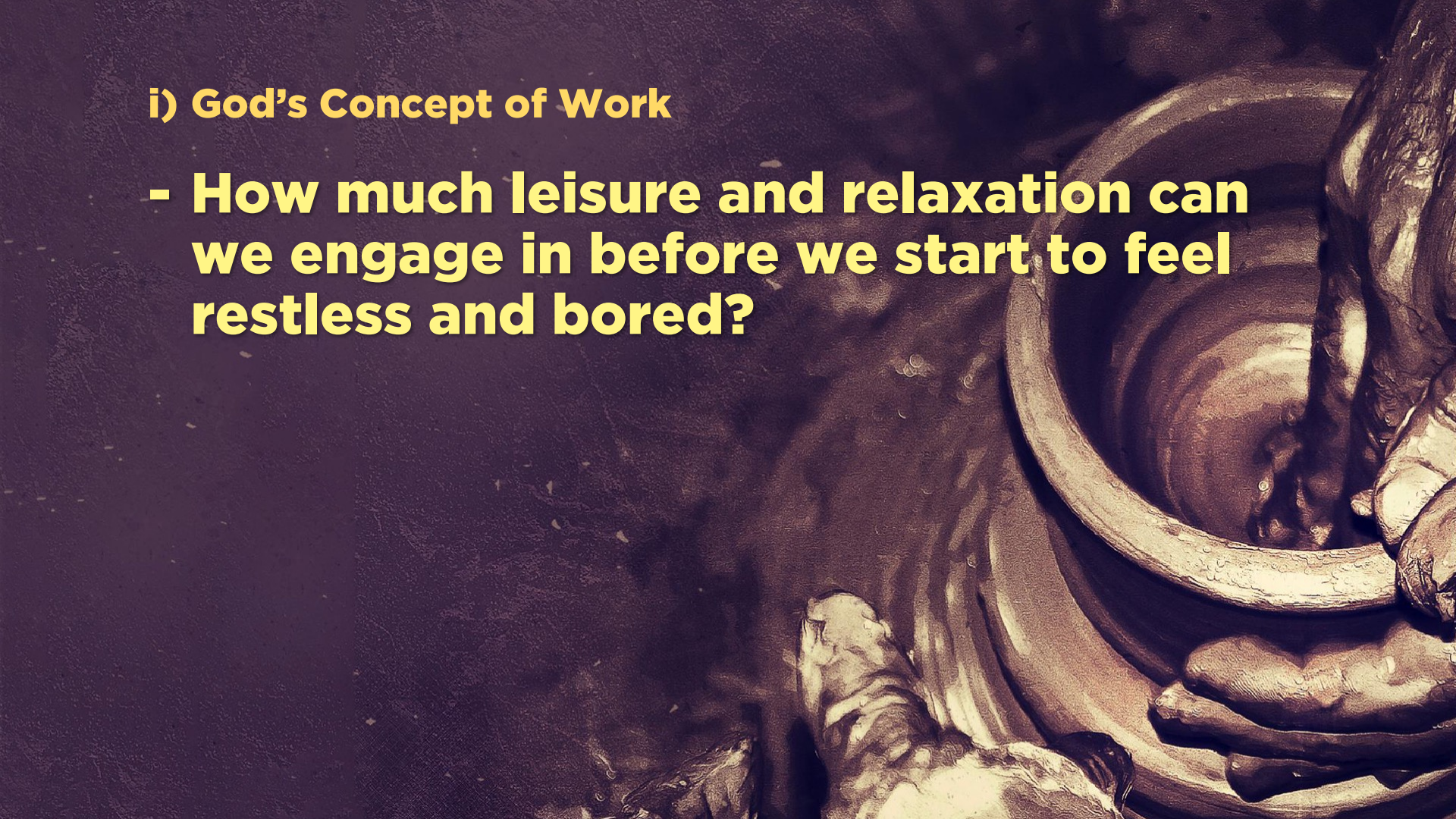
## i) God's Concept of Work

- 2 key points:
  - Work was a part of God's original plan for the world.
  - Man was created for work.



## i) God's Concept of Work

- Each one of us is designed to perform different types of work based on the giftings God has given us.
- How come so many of us do not look forward to work?



## i) God's Concept of Work

- How much leisure and relaxation can we engage in before we start to feel restless and bored?



## i) God's Concept of Work

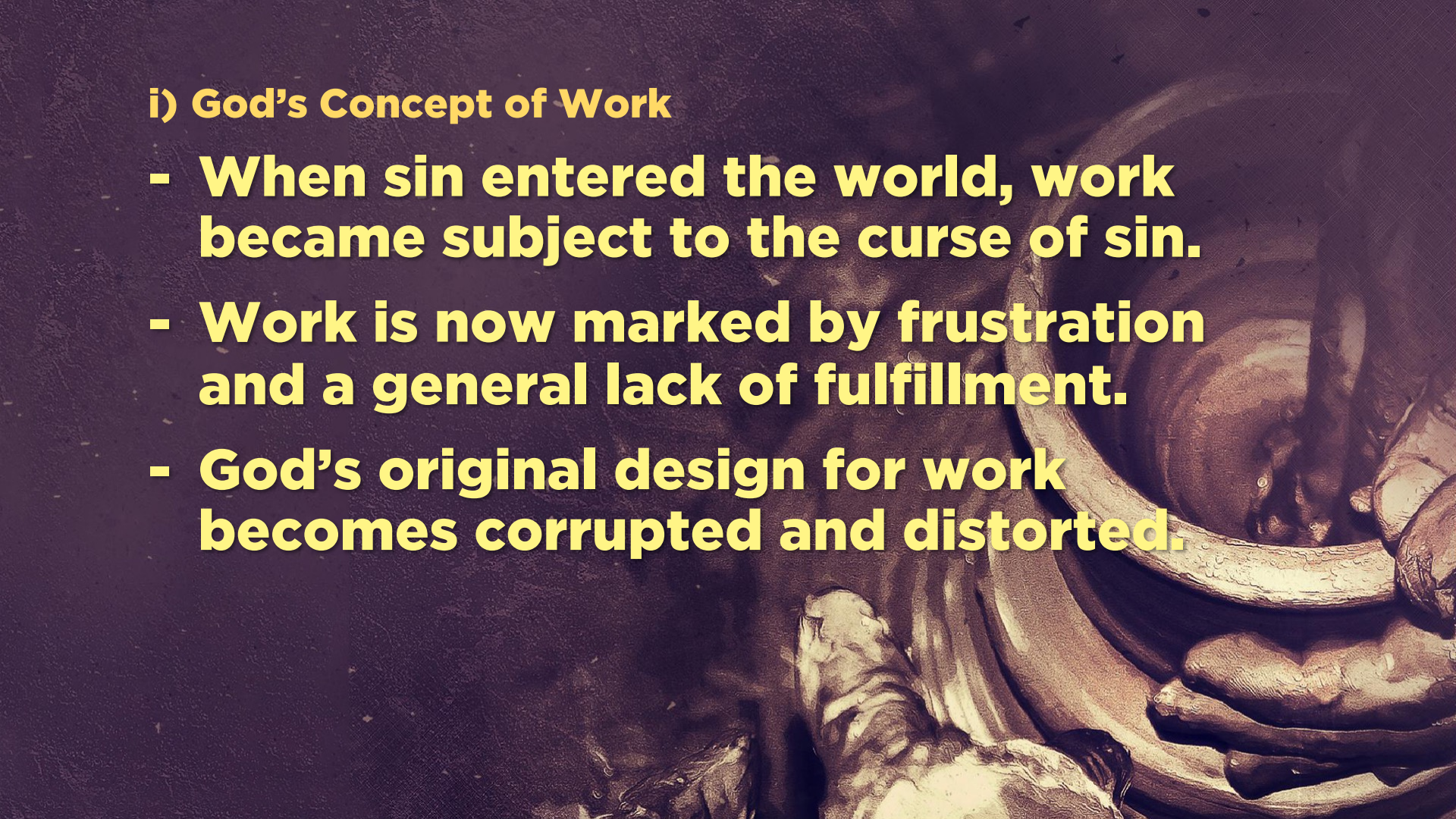
- The need to work is a fundamental part of our makeup as human beings.
- We are created by God to work and to enjoy our work.

## Genesis 3:17b – 19 (NKJV)

“Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil
you shall eat of it All the days of your life.
18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth
for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field.

## Genesis 3:17b – 19 (NKJV)

19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread
Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”

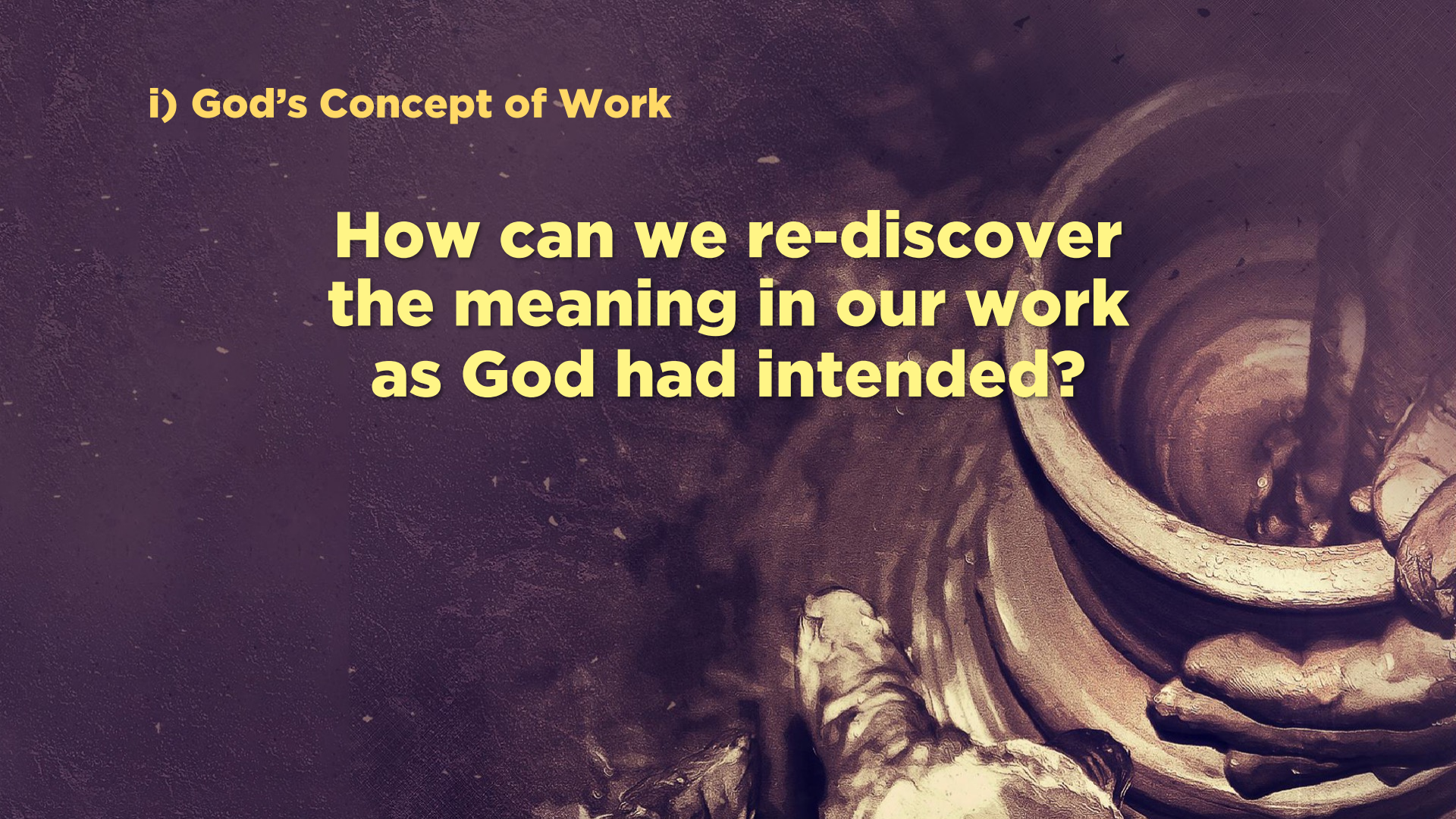


## i) God's Concept of Work

- When sin entered the world, work became subject to the curse of sin.
- Work is now marked by frustration and a general lack of fulfillment.
- God's original design for work becomes corrupted and distorted.

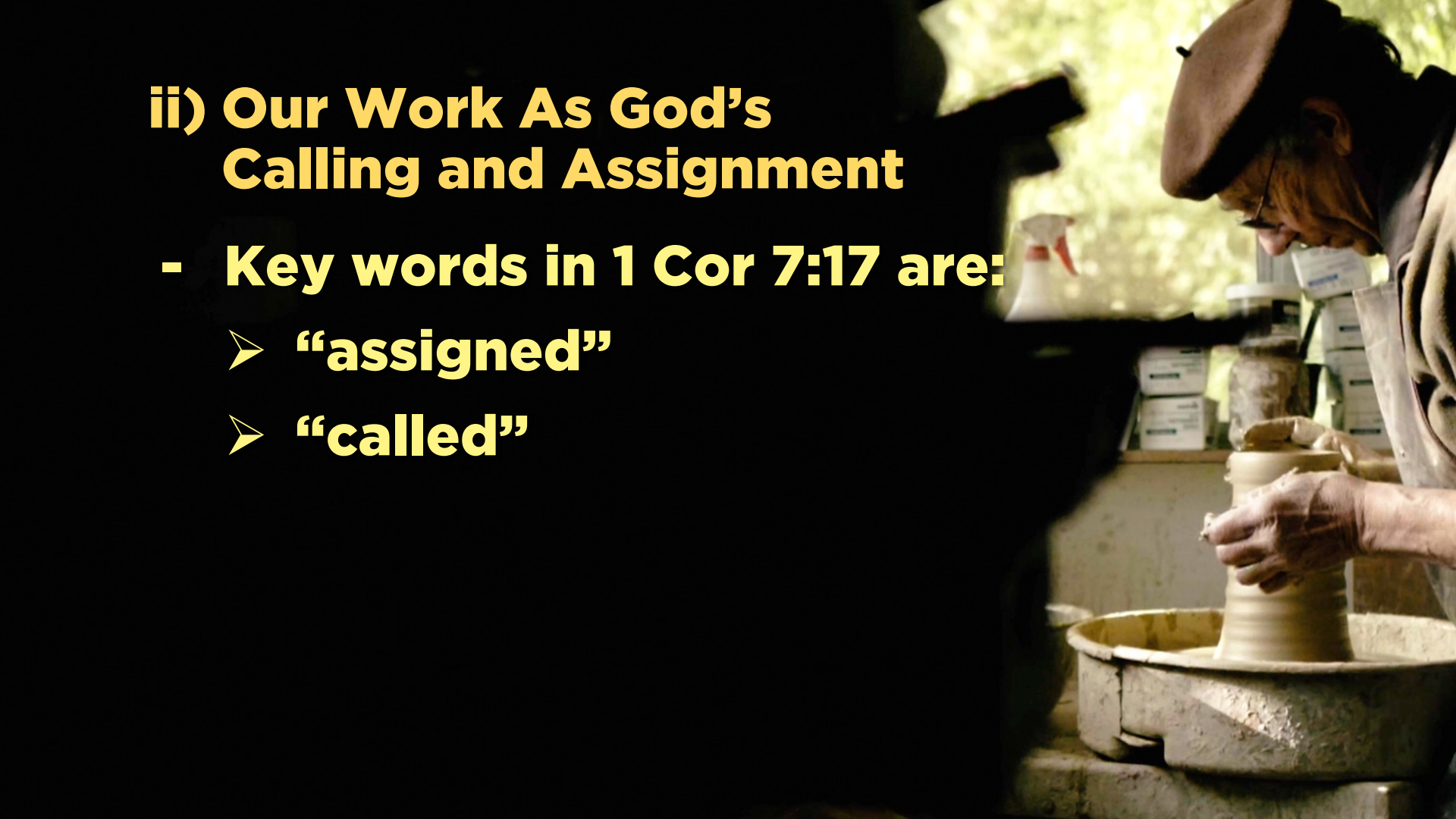
## i) God's Concept of Work

# How can we re-discover the meaning in our work as God had intended?



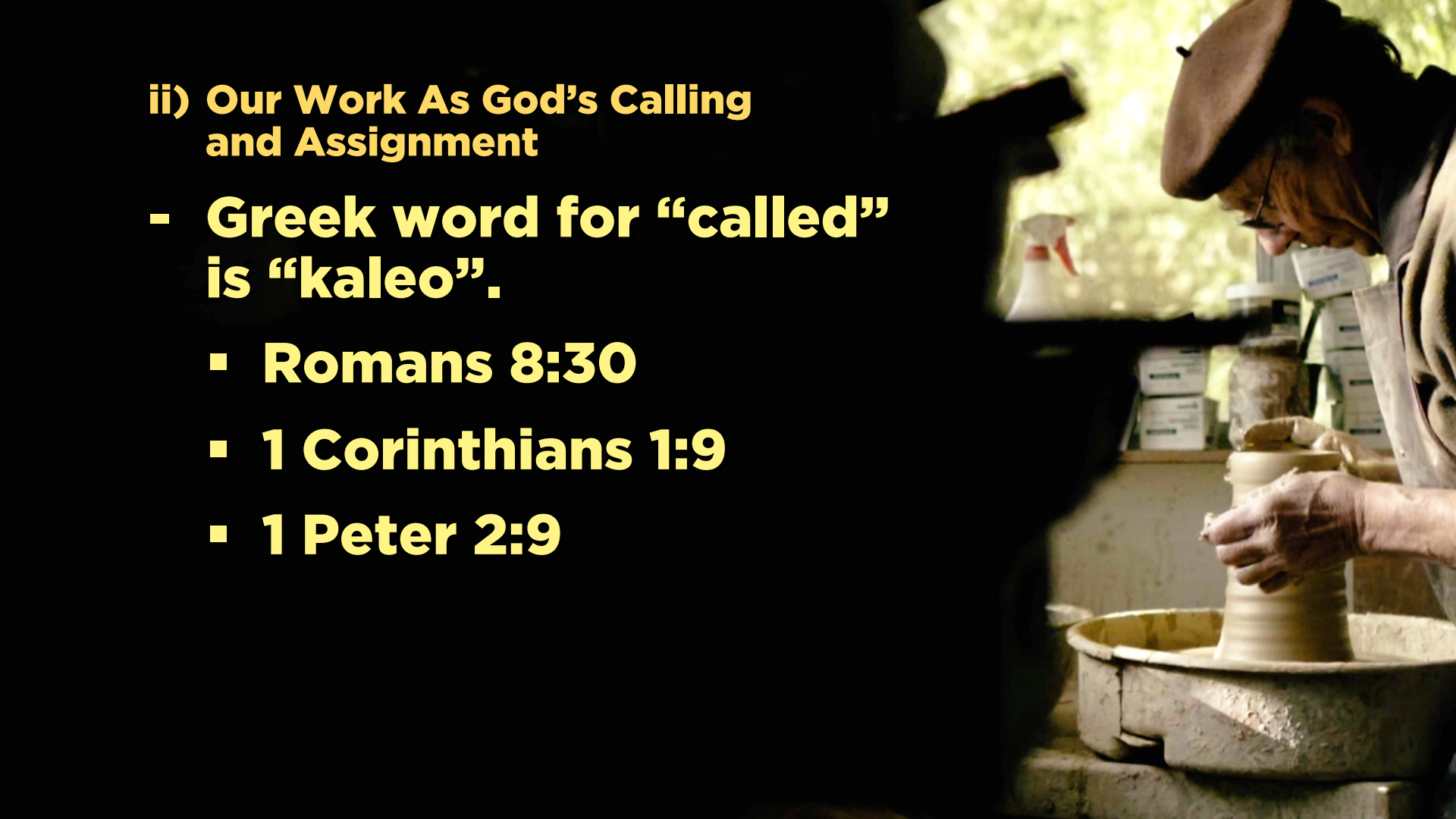
## ii) Our Work As God's Calling and Assignment

- Key words in 1 Cor 7:17 are:
  - "assigned"
  - "called"



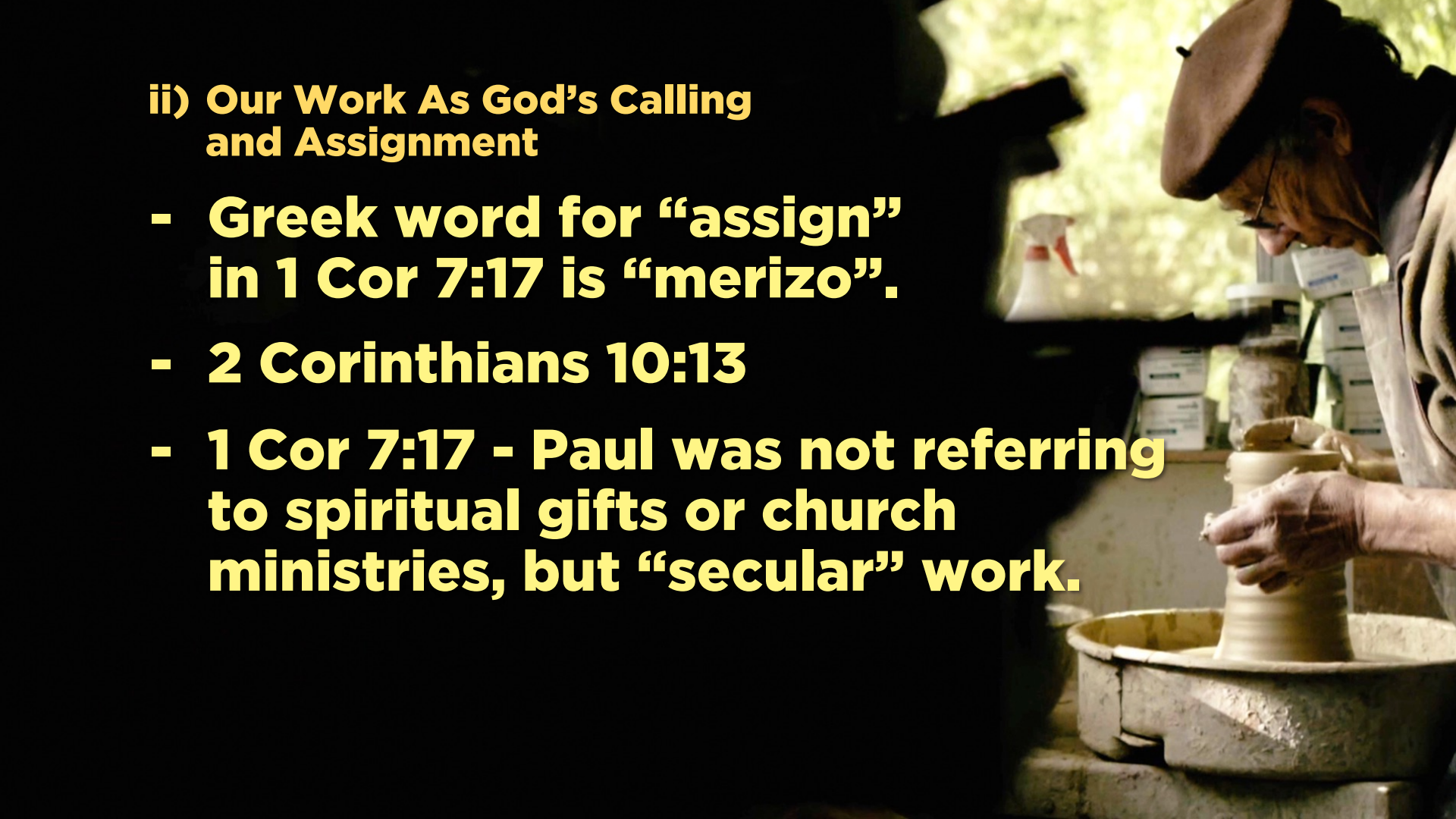
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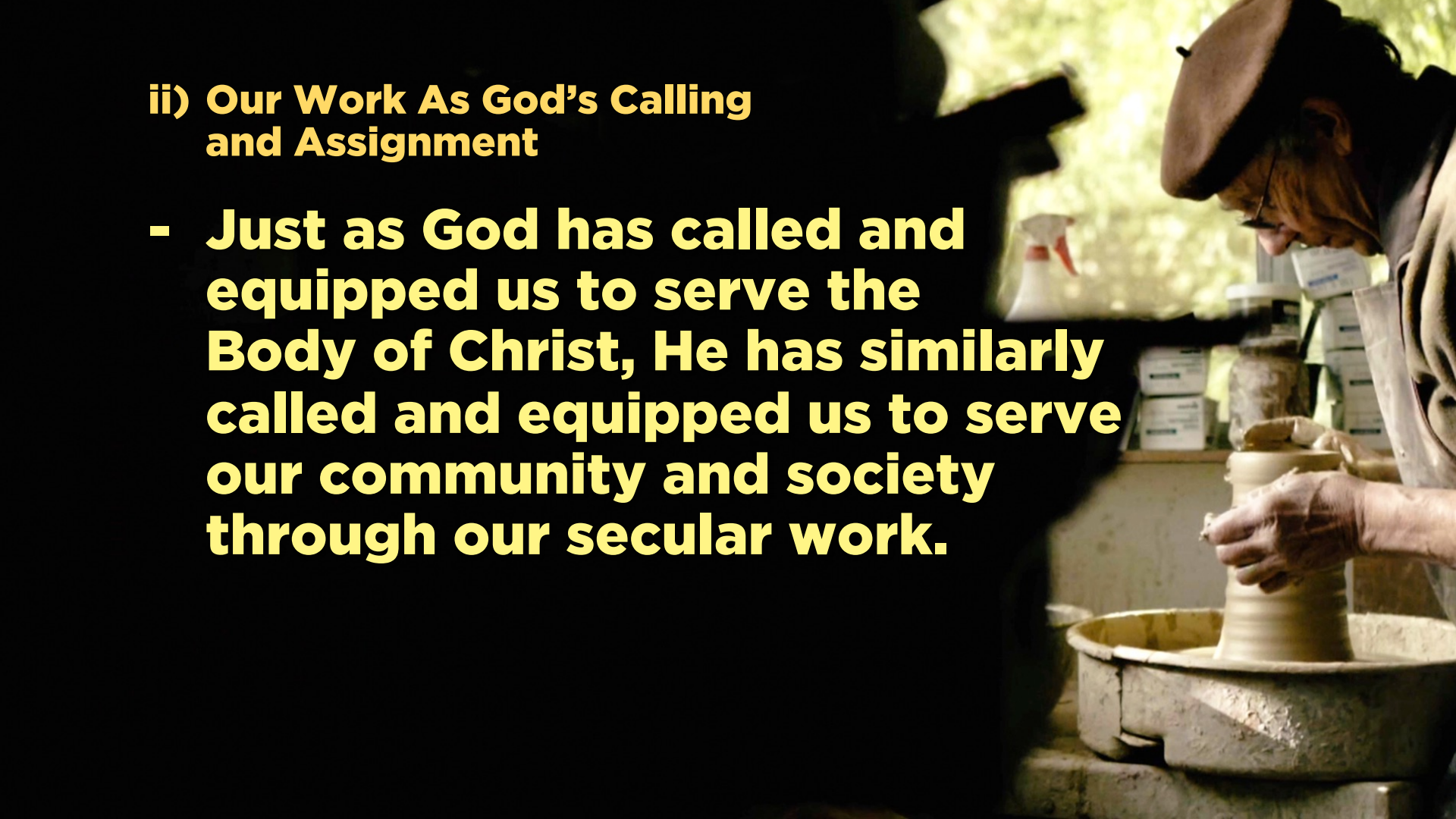
- Greek word for "called" is "kaleo".
  - Romans 8:30
  - 1 Corinthians 1:9
  - 1 Peter 2:9



## ii) Our Work As God's Calling and Assignment

- Greek word for "assign" in 1 Cor 7:17 is "merizo".
- 2 Corinthians 10:13
- 1 Cor 7:17 - Paul was not referring to spiritual gifts or church ministries, but "secular" work.



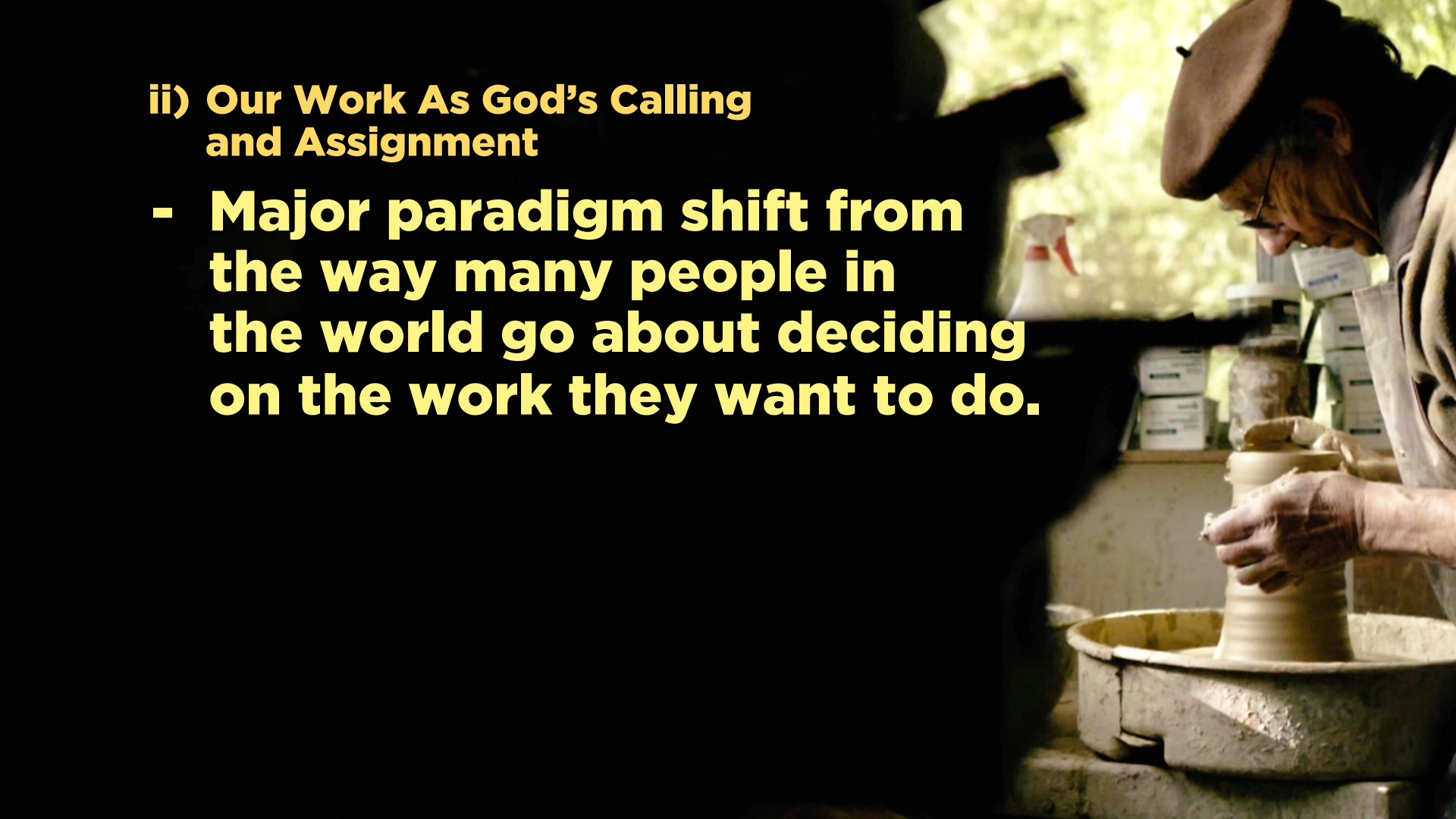


## ii) Our Work As God's Calling and Assignment

- **Just as God has called and equipped us to serve the Body of Christ, He has similarly called and equipped us to serve our community and society through our secular work.**

## ii) Our Work As God's Calling and Assignment

- Major paradigm shift from the way many people in the world go about deciding on the work they want to do.



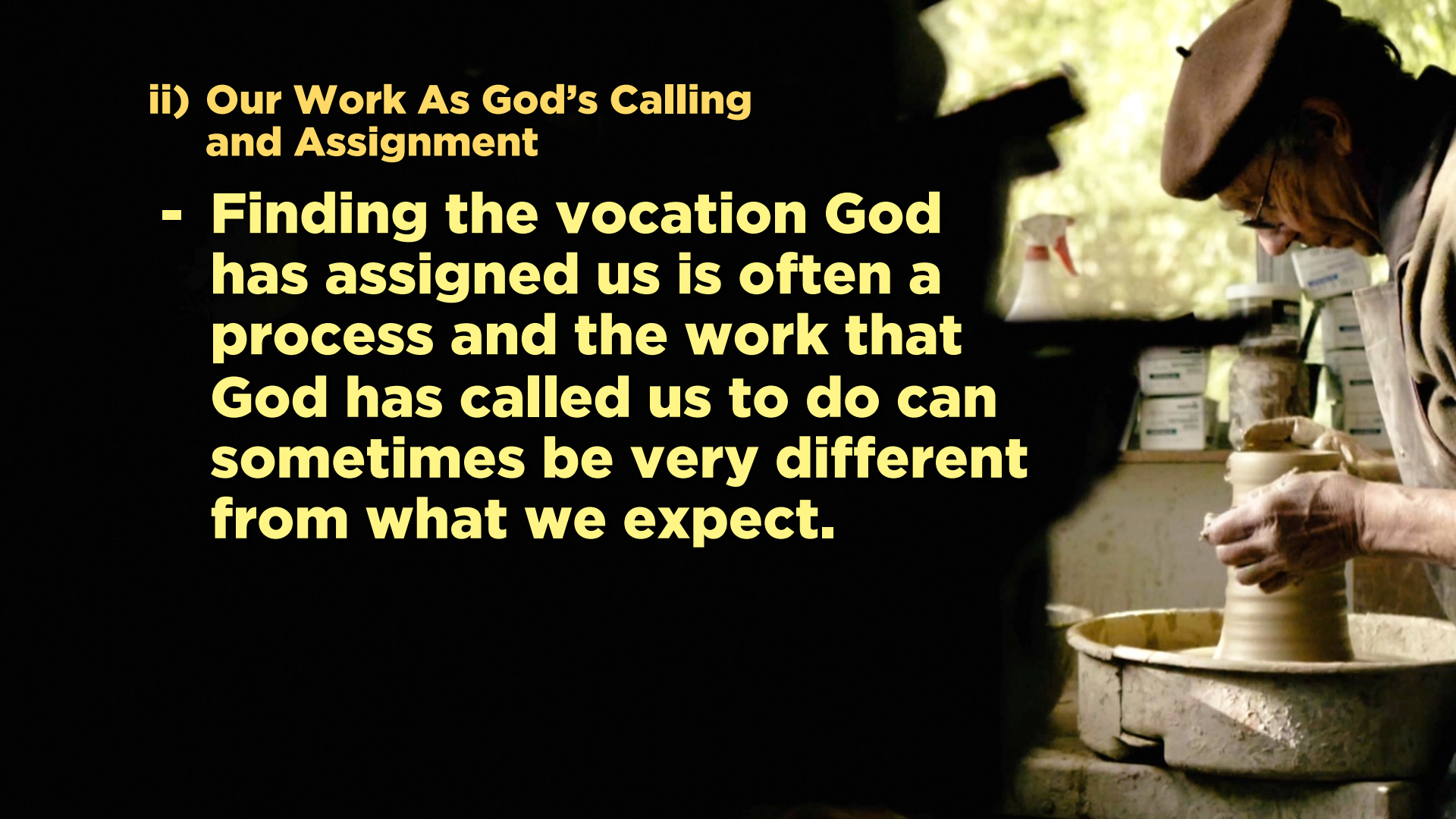


## ii) Our Work As God's Calling and Assignment

- How with our giftings and talents and experience, and the opportunities available to us, we can be of greatest service to God and our society and community?

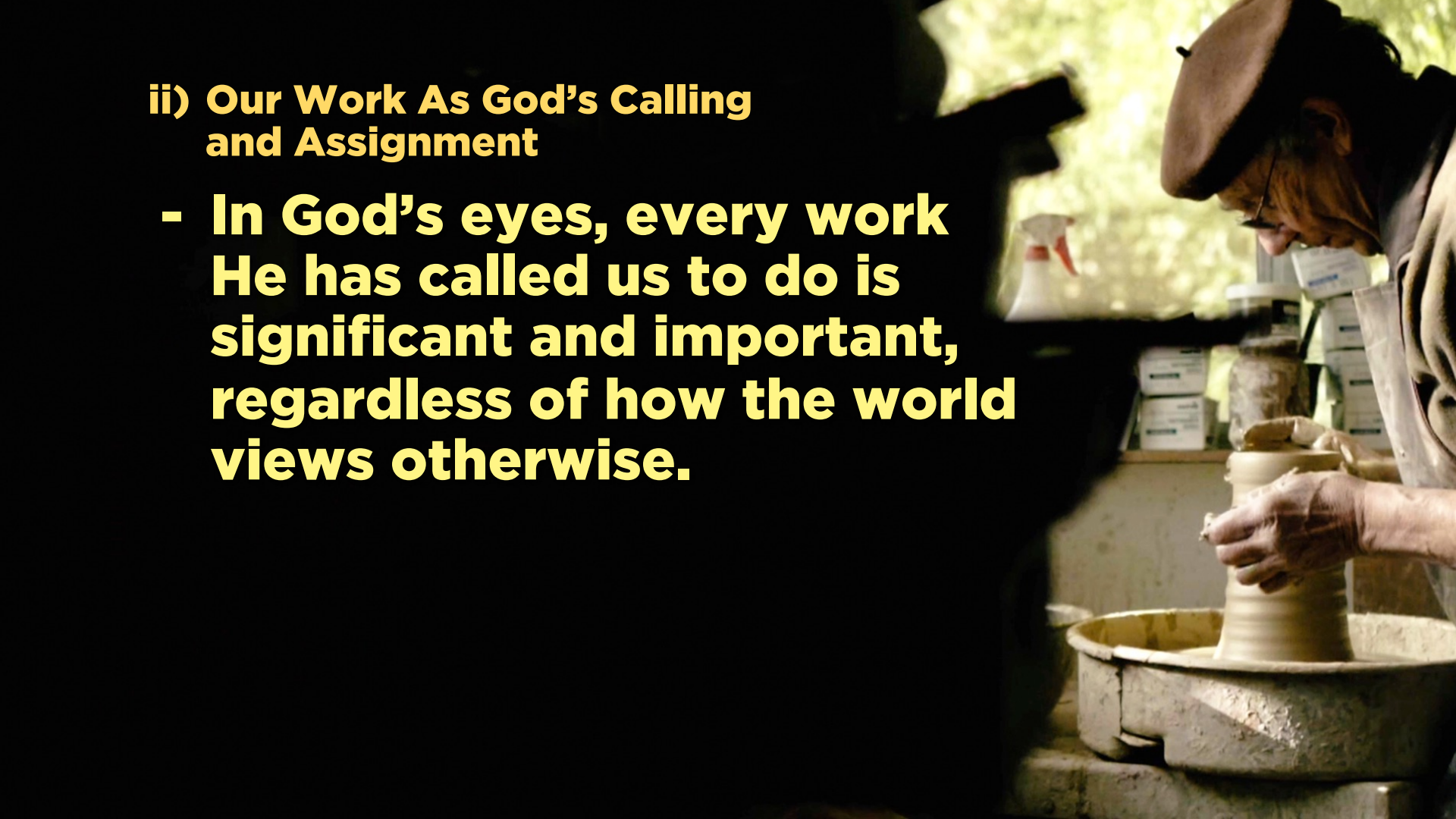
## ii) Our Work As God's Calling and Assignment

- Finding the vocation God has assigned us is often a process and the work that God has called us to do can sometimes be very different from what we expect.



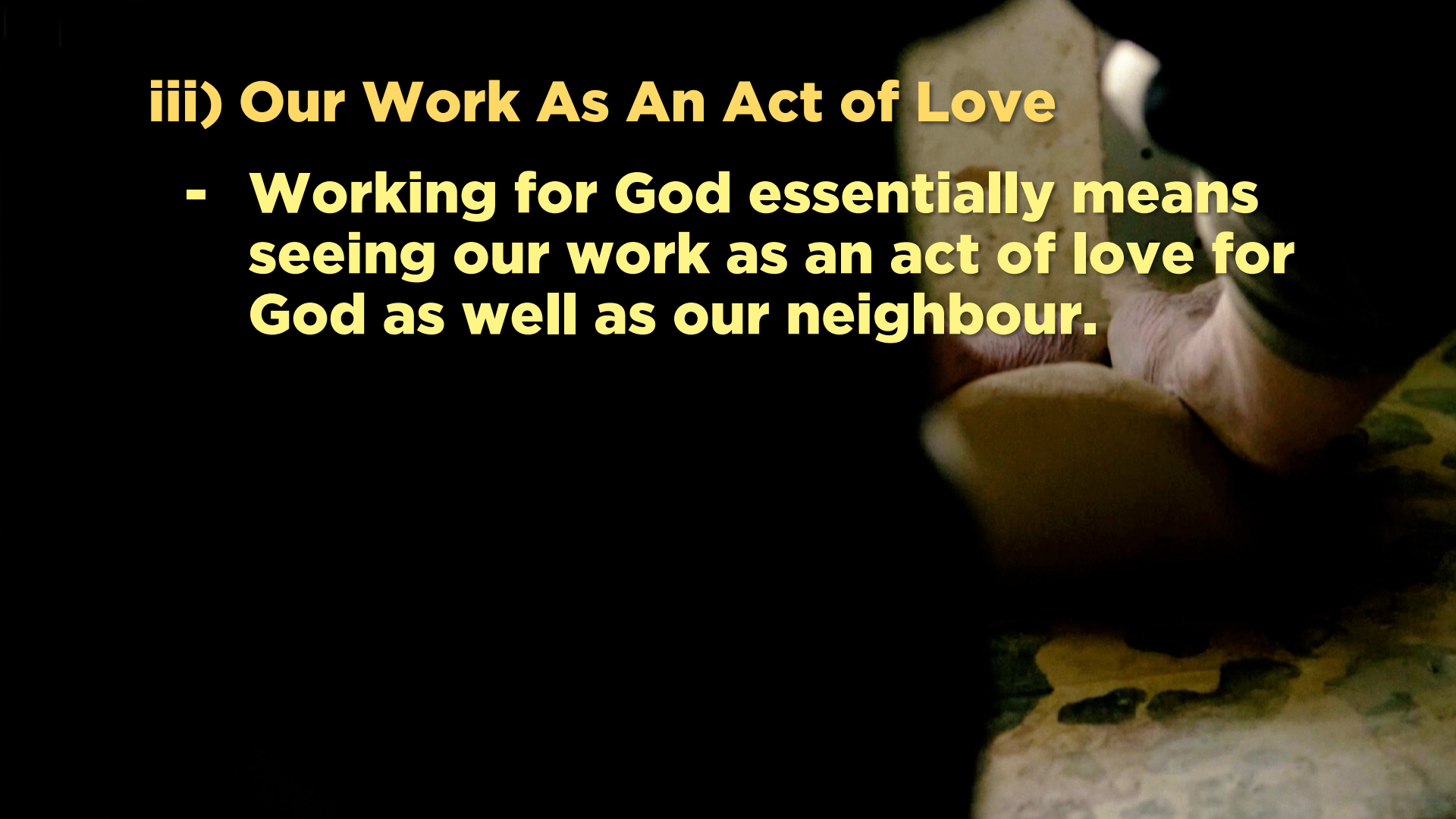
## ii) Our Work As God's Calling and Assignment

- In God's eyes, every work He has called us to do is significant and important, regardless of how the world views otherwise.



## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- Working for God essentially means seeing our work as an act of love for God as well as our neighbour.



## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

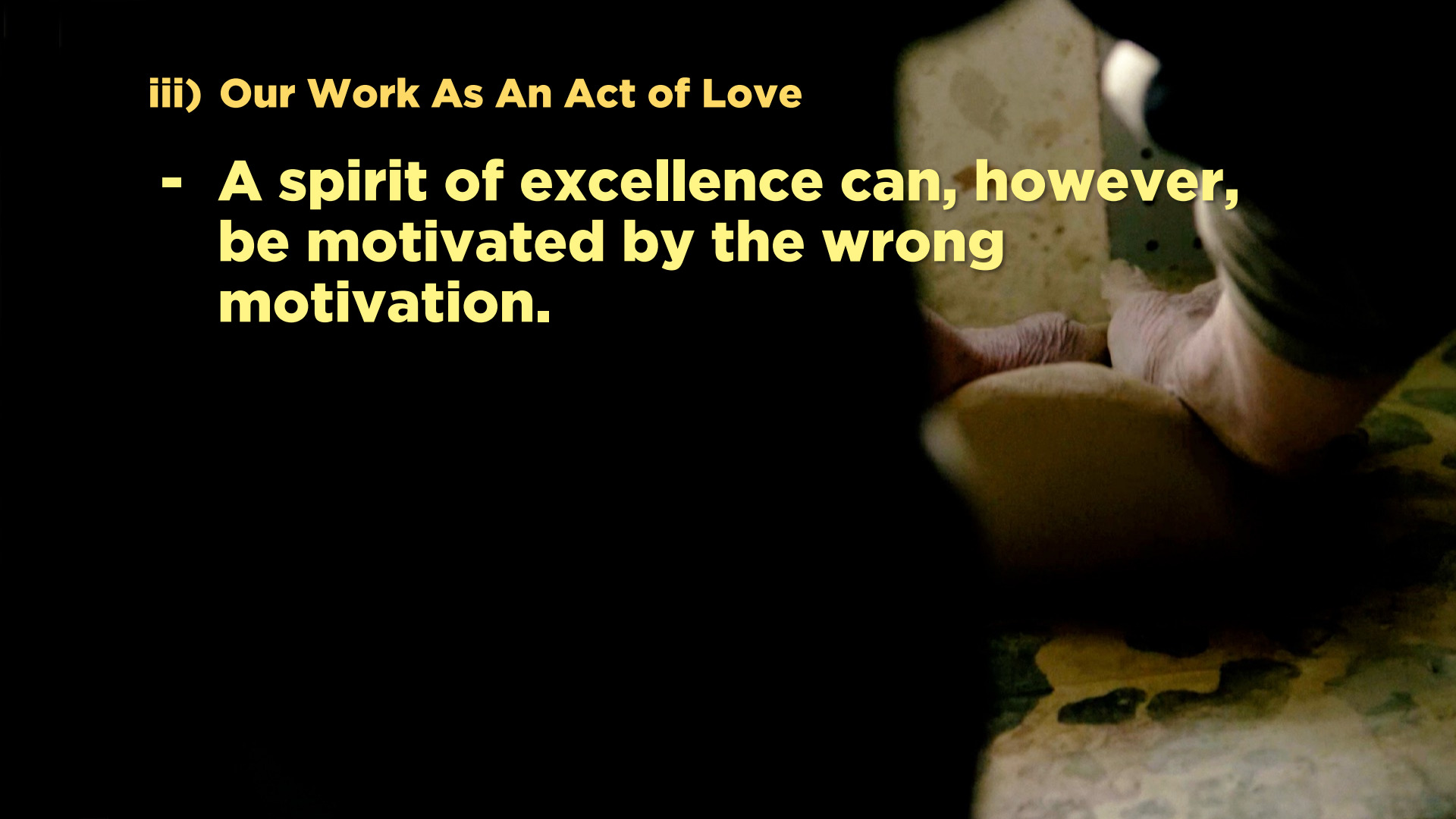
- If we see our work as an act of love for God, then it must surely mean that we should have a spirit of excellence towards our work.
- It means to be competent, diligent, and always wanting to improve.

## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- When we practice the spirit of excellence in our work, not only do we honour God, we also bring the greatest benefit we can to the people and segment of society and our community that God has called us to serve.

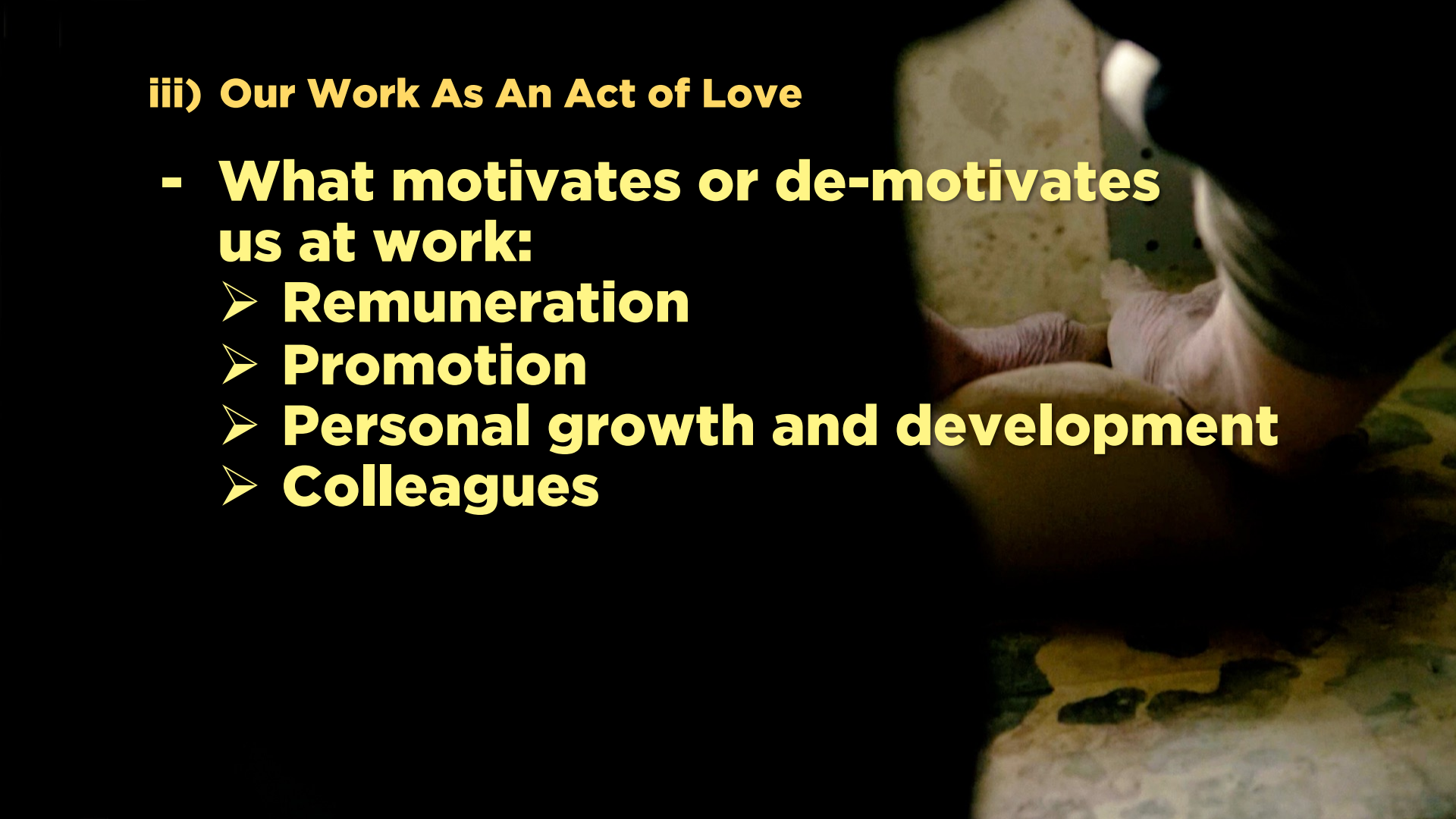
## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- A spirit of excellence can, however, be motivated by the wrong motivation.



## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- **What motivates or de-motivates us at work:**
  - **Remuneration**
  - **Promotion**
  - **Personal growth and development**
  - **Colleagues**



## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- **De-motivators include:**
  - Poor remuneration
  - Poor career prospects
  - Stagnation
  - Work-life imbalance
  - Office politics



## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

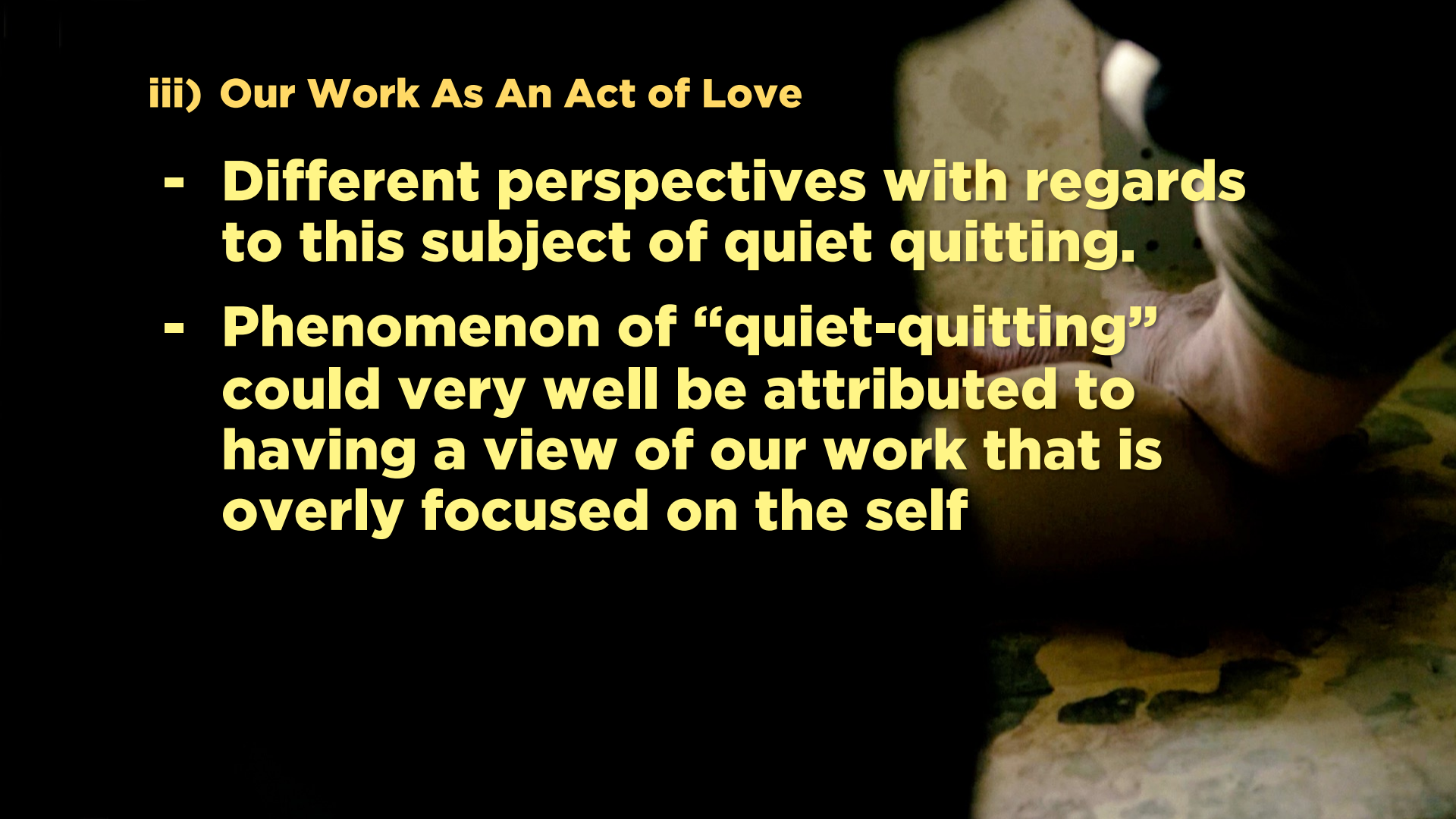
- Many of these motivators and de-motivators focuses on the self
- Our attitude towards our work, and consequently our performance at work, is often shaped by the presence or absence of these motivators and de-motivators

## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- Article in the Straits Times which reported that Singapore has more “quiet quitters” than the global average.
- “Quiet quitting” refers to putting in the bare minimum effort and not being willing to invest anymore beyond that at work

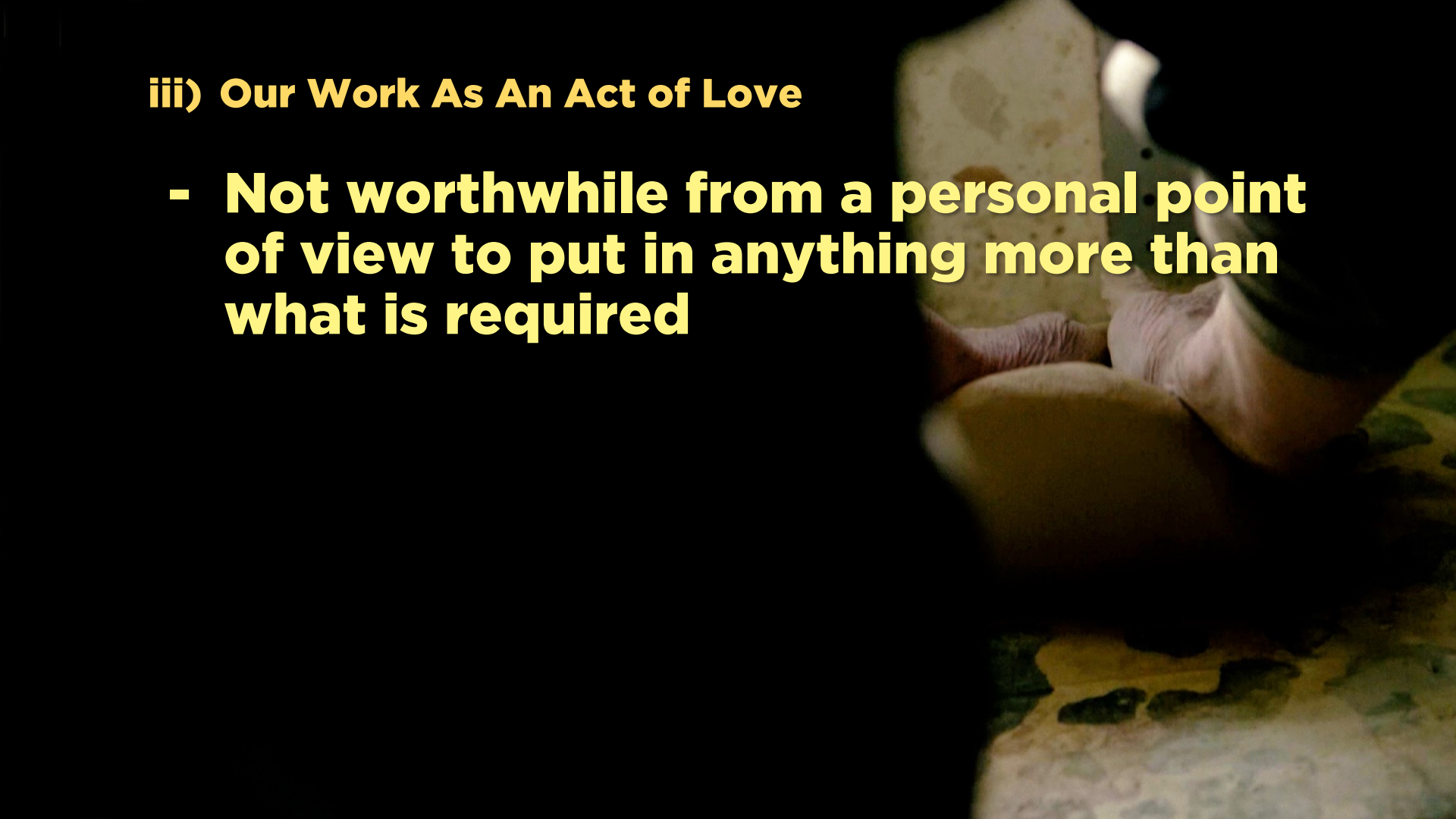
## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- Different perspectives with regards to this subject of quiet quitting.
- Phenomenon of “quiet-quitting” could very well be attributed to having a view of our work that is overly focused on the self



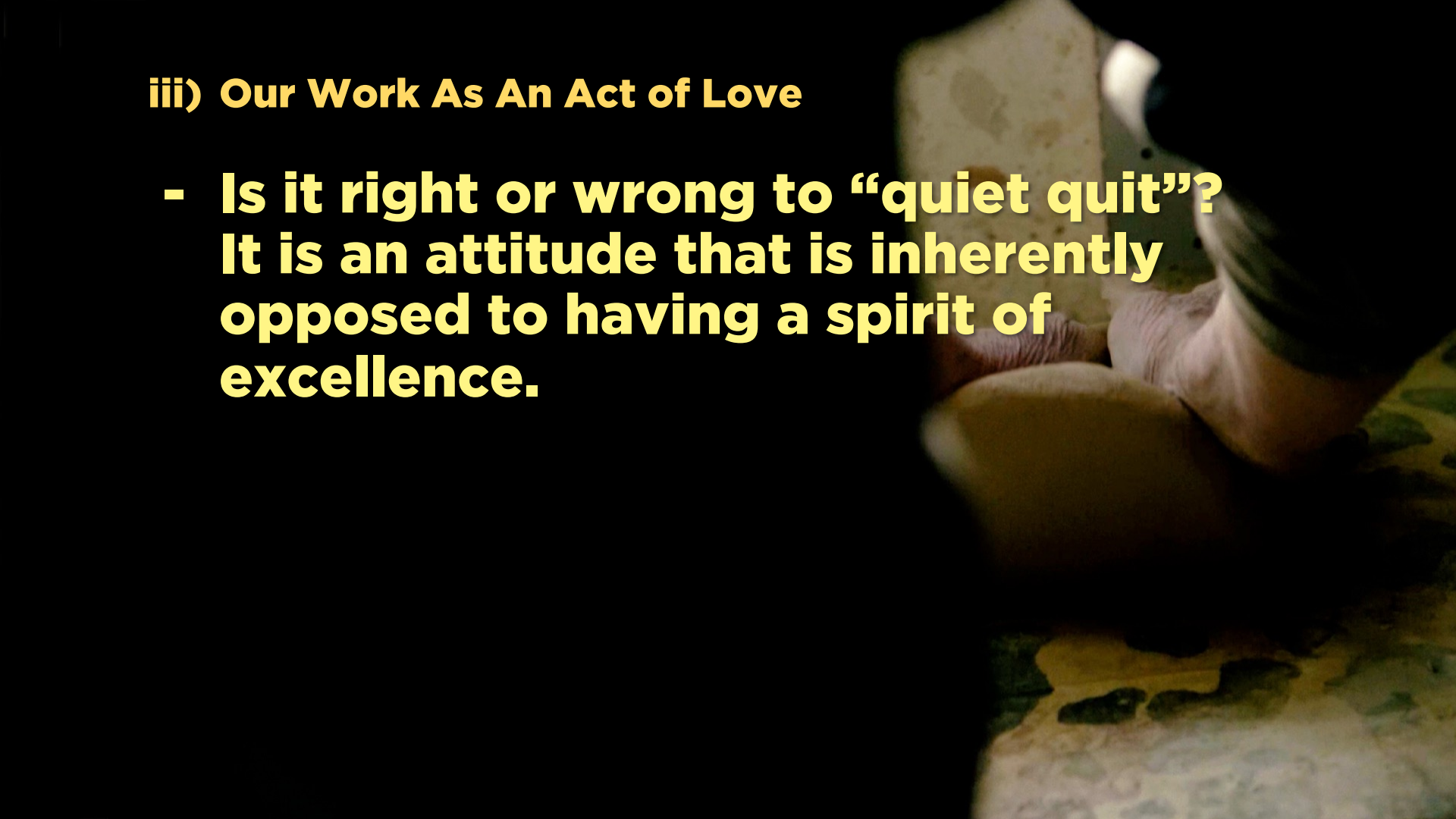
## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- Not worthwhile from a personal point of view to put in anything more than what is required



## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- Is it right or wrong to “quiet quit”? It is an attitude that is inherently opposed to having a spirit of excellence.

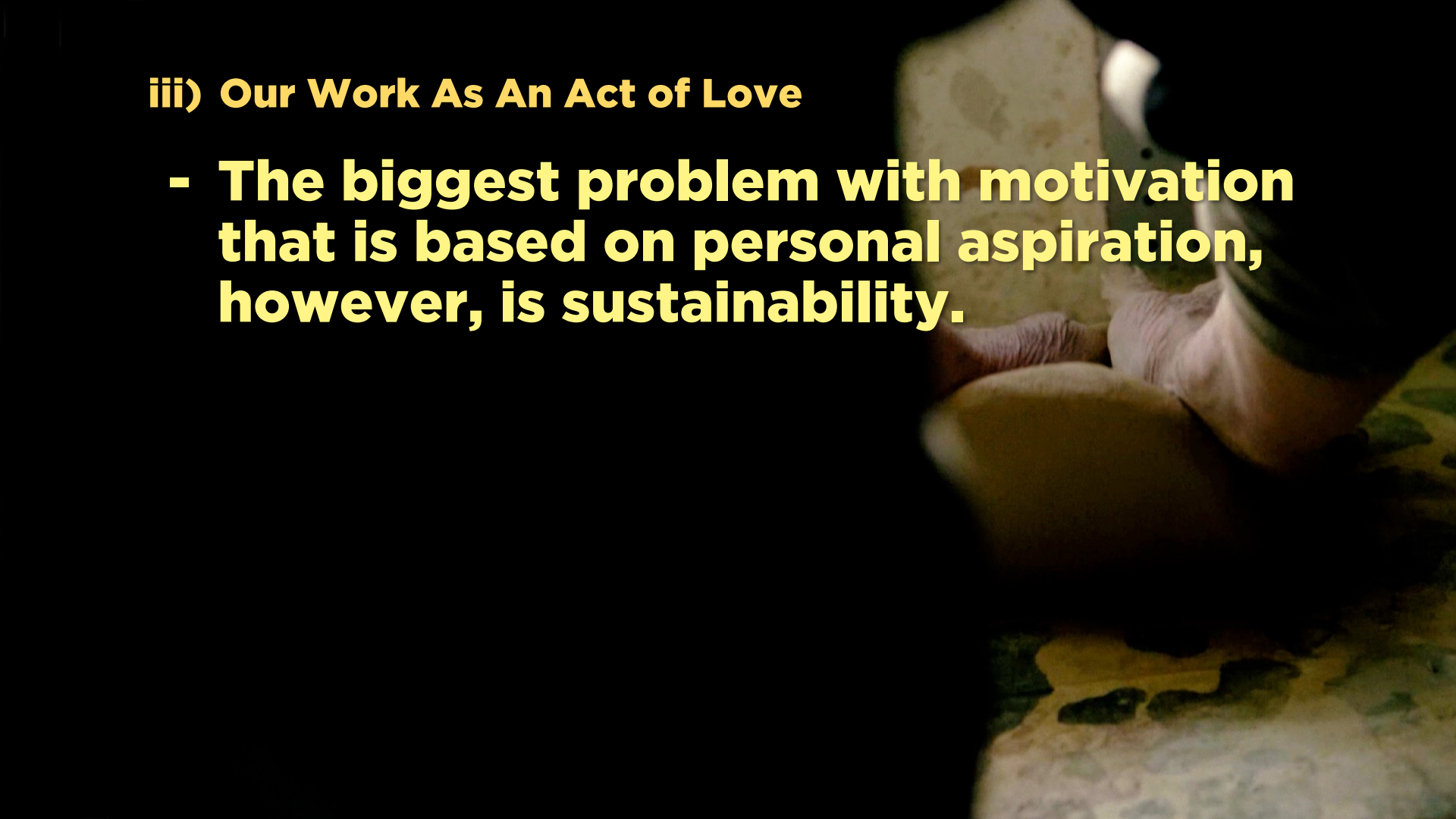


## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- On the other hand, a spirit of excellence can be motivated by personal ambition and desire for more money and recognition rather than a desire to honour God and serve our neighbour.

## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- The biggest problem with motivation that is based on personal aspiration, however, is sustainability.



## iii) Our Work As An Act of Love

- To see our work as an expression of our love for God and our neighbour means not only to have a spirit of excellence at our work, but to be motivated by our love for God and desire to honour Him, and our love for the people whom we serve because God commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves.

# Conclusion