Why are you a Christian?

Acts 26:12-20 and John 10:1-3 & 11-15

Why are you a Christian?

01 **Freedom – I am set free**

02 **Forgiveness- I have a brand-new identity**
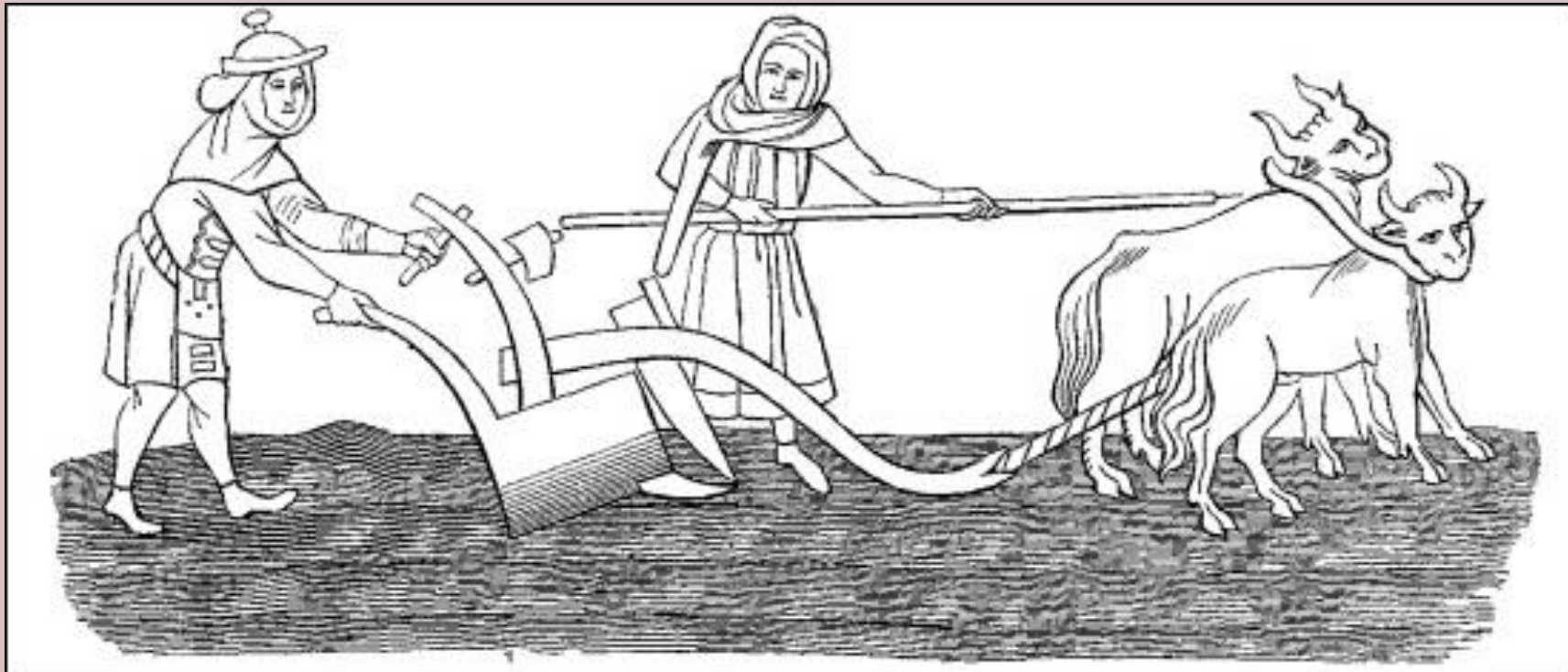
03 **Future – I have a place, a destiny**

Acts 26:14

And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language,

"Saul, Saul, **why** are you persecuting me?

It is hard for you to kick against the goads."

"kicking against the goads"
means to go extra effort to cause
one's self pain

1.Freedom-

I am set free

Paul's dark secret inner turmoil

Acts 26:11– so obsessed

Acts 9:1– breathing out murderous threats

Romans 7:8– But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting

Romans 7:24 –"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

Acts 26:14

And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language,

"Saul, Saul, **why** are you persecuting me?

It is hard for you to kick against the goads."

1.Freedom-

-from sin & death

-to love

-to live in a liberating relationship with God

My Life Defining Moment at 23yrs

2.Forgiveness

I have a brand-new identity

Paul's identity before encounter with Jesus

- **Good Person – Pharisee of Pharisees**

- **Zealous for God- prosecuted Christians, destroyed the church**

- **Well Educated- studied under Gamaliel**

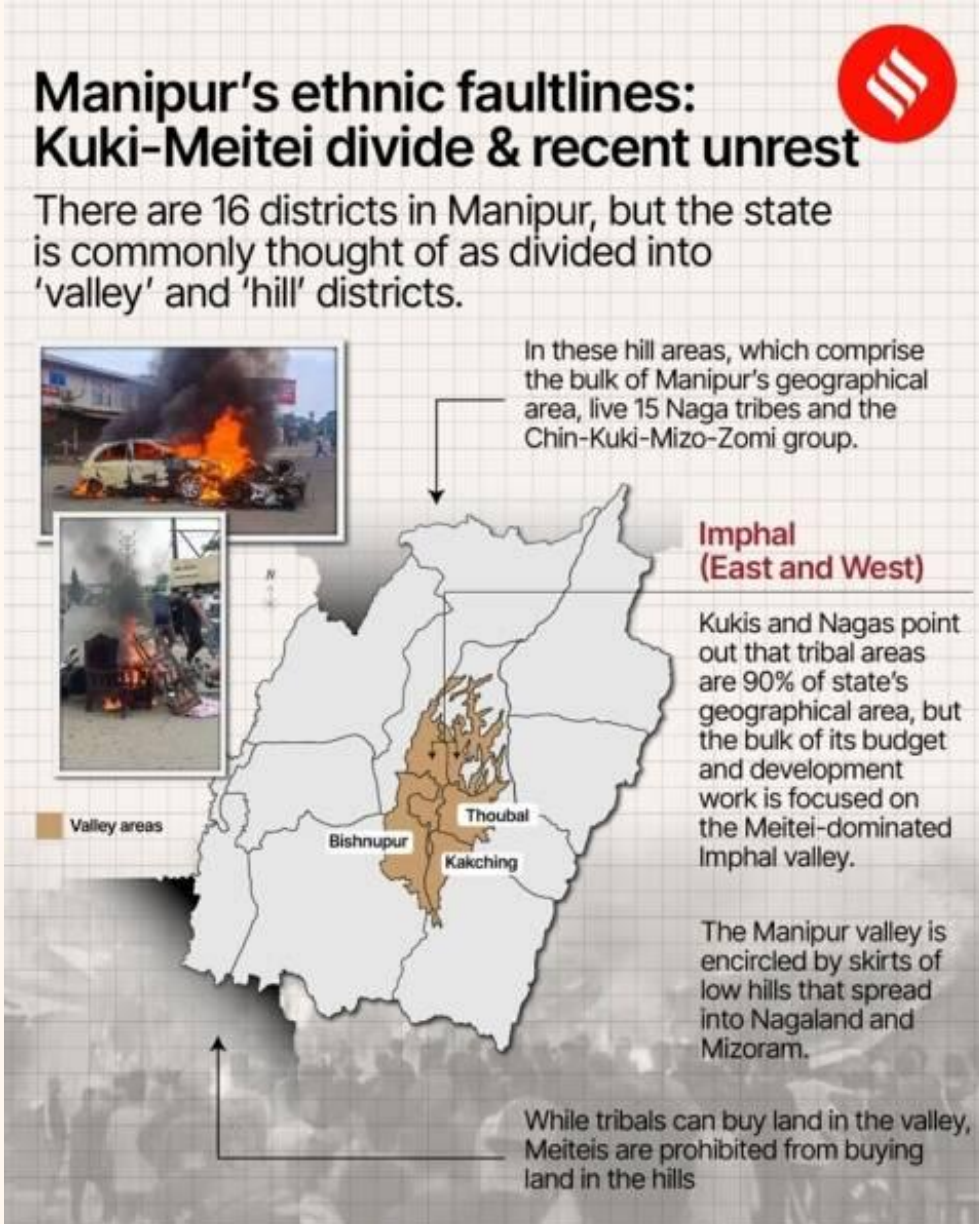- **Free Man – Roman Citizen, believed Jesus was an imposter and a liar**

Acts 26:17b-18

"I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive **forgiveness of sins** and **a place** among those who are **sanctified by faith in me**"

Manipur's ethnic faultlines: Kuki-Meitei divide & recent unrest

There are 16 districts in Manipur, but the state is commonly thought of as divided into 'valley' and 'hill' districts.

In these hill areas, which comprise the bulk of Manipur's geographical area, live 15 Naga tribes and the Chin-Kuki-Mizo-Zomi group.

Imphal (East and West)

Kukis and Nagas point out that tribal areas are 90% of state's geographical area, but the bulk of its budget and development work is focused on the Meitei-dominated Imphal valley.

The Manipur valley is encircled by skirts of low hills that spread into Nagaland and Mizoram.

While tribals can buy land in the valley, Meiteis are prohibited from buying land in the hills

Valley areas

Thoubal
Bishnupur
Kakching

Identity Crisis for Christians in Manipur,India

Meitei Christians and Kuki-Zo Christians Ethnic Conflict

Am I a Meteis or Kukis or a Christian first?

Cry My beloved Country, Cry! Manipur Still Burns!

3.Future

I have a place, a destiny

Acts 26:17b-18

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Acts 26:20

First to those in Damascus,then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they **should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.**

What does it mean to have a place ?

- A place in God's heart

- A new purpose to be a servant to Christ & Others

- The Resurrection

- Free to serve

Our Response

Knowing we are set free, forgiven and with an assured future
let us demonstrate our repentance with deeds.

Let our relationship and identity in Christ form and shape our attitude &   approach to everything.