
A close-up photograph of a hand holding a lit sparkler. The sparkler is bright and glowing, with many sparks flying out. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some faint light patterns. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

Imitating Christ's Humility

— Philippians 2:1-11 (Part 1) —

A hand holding a lit sparkler against a dark background. The sparkler is bright and glowing, with many sparks flying out. The hand is wearing a dark, textured glove. The background is dark and out of focus.

Finding Joy

PHILIPPIANS

Right Where You Are



— Anne Rice, Author —



**For those who
care, and I
understand if
you don't: Today
I quit being a
Christian. I'm out.**



**It's simply impos-
sible for me to
"belong" to this
quarrelsome,
hostile, disputa-
tious, and
deservedly
infamous group.**



**For ten years,
I tried. I've failed.
I'm an outsider.
My conscience will
allow nothing else.**



**I don't really like
disappointing all my
Christian friends and
contacts. I really
don't like it. It's pain-
ful. But I did what I
felt I had to do.**

— Anne Rice, Author —


**What would
you want to
say to her?**



What was
Jesus
known for





A close-up photograph of a hand holding a lit sparkler. The sparkler is bright and glowing, with many sparks flying out. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some faint light patterns. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

Imitating Christ's Humility

— Philippians 2:1-11 (Part 1) —



Philippians 2

1 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 **complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.**

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

any affection and sympathy,

[then] complete my joy.....

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

So if there is

any encouragement **in Christ,**

*This is one of Paul's favorite
descriptions of Christians
used over 60x to speak
about our union with Christ!*



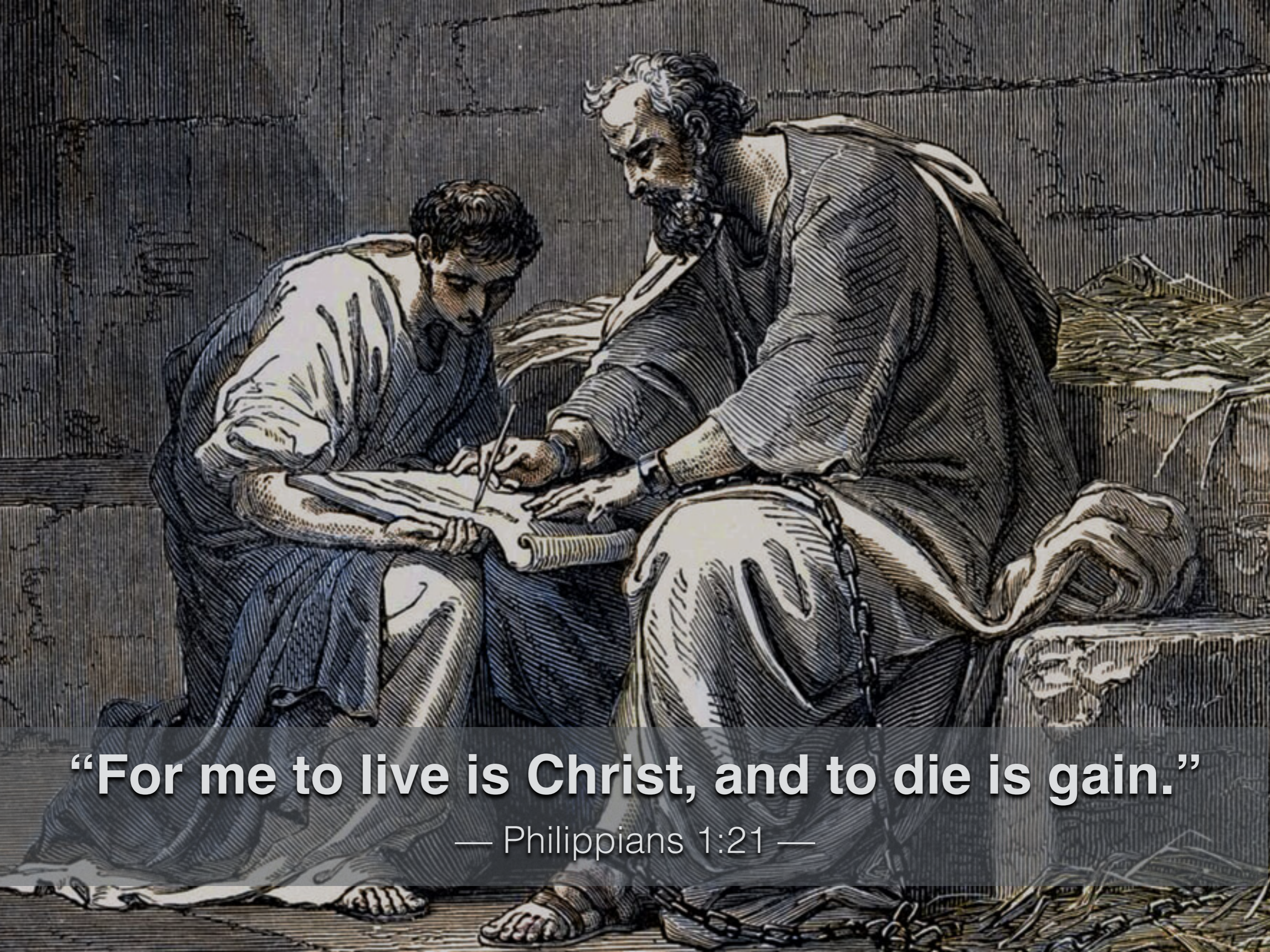
**If anyone is in Christ,
he is a new creation.**

— 2 Corinthians 5:17 —

**Do you not realize
this about yourselves,
that Christ Jesus
is in you?**

— 2 Corinthians 13:5 —





“For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

— Philippians 1:21 —

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

Jesus' love?



**Therefore if you have any
encouragement from being
united with Christ, if any
comfort from his love....**

— The New International Version —



**The Son of God
love me and gave
Himself for me.**

— Galatians 2:20 —



So if there is

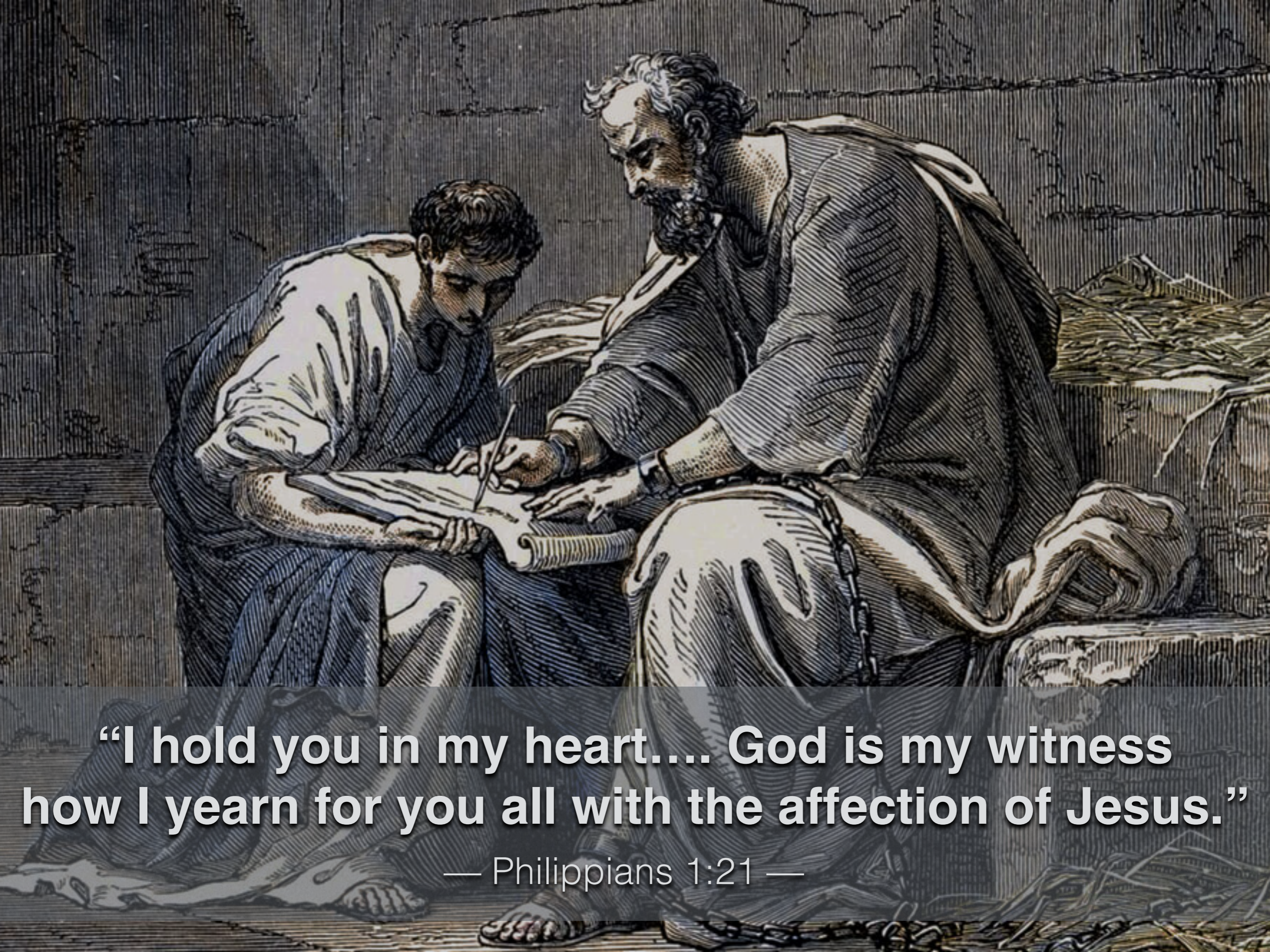
any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,



Jesus' love?

Paul's love?



**“I hold you in my heart.... God is my witness
how I yearn for you all with the affection of Jesus.”**

— Philippians 1:21 —

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,



Jesus' love?

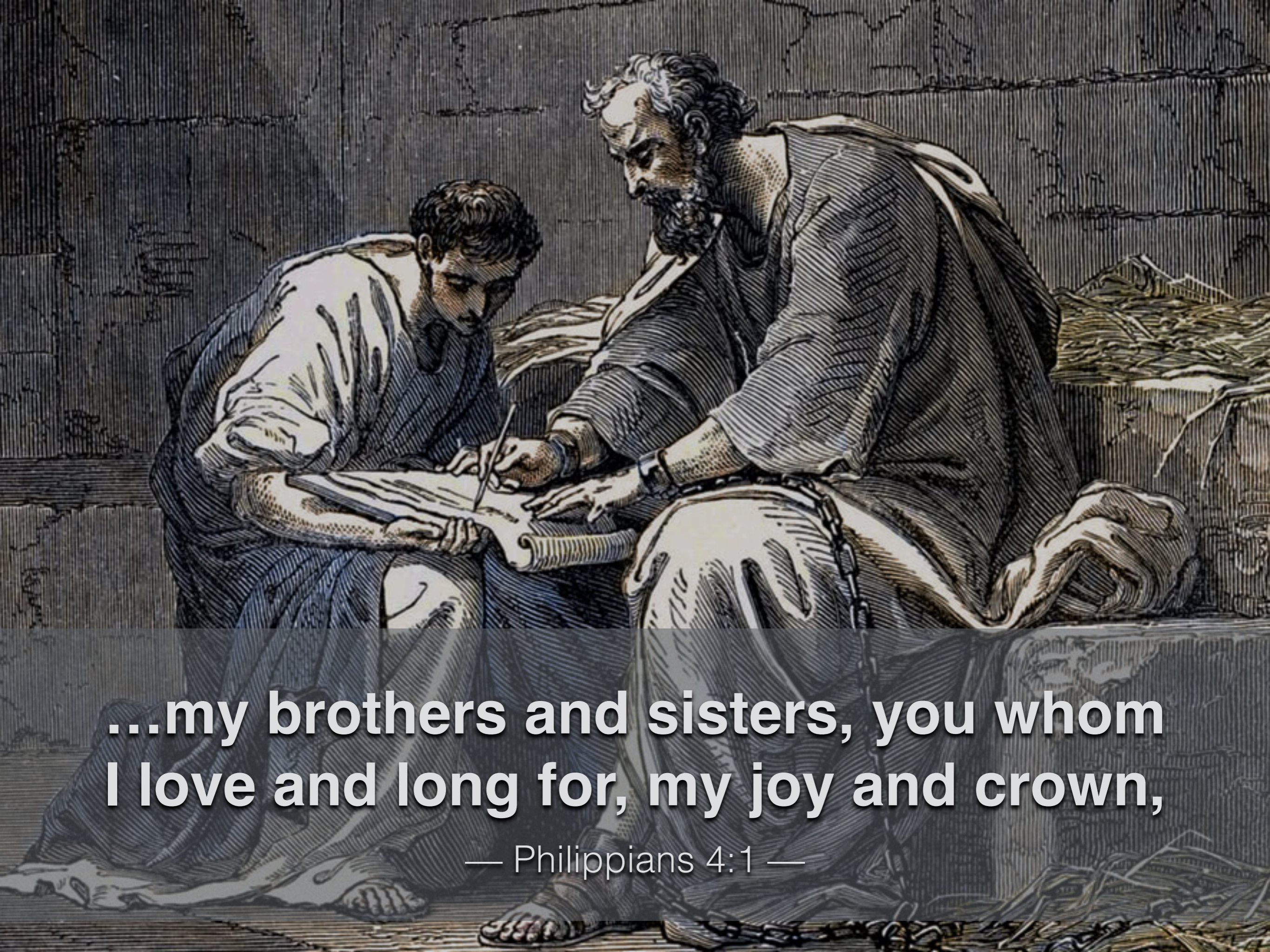
Paul's love?

Their love for one another?



**And this is my prayer: that your love
may abound more and more in knowledge
and depth of insight...**

— Philippians 1:9 —

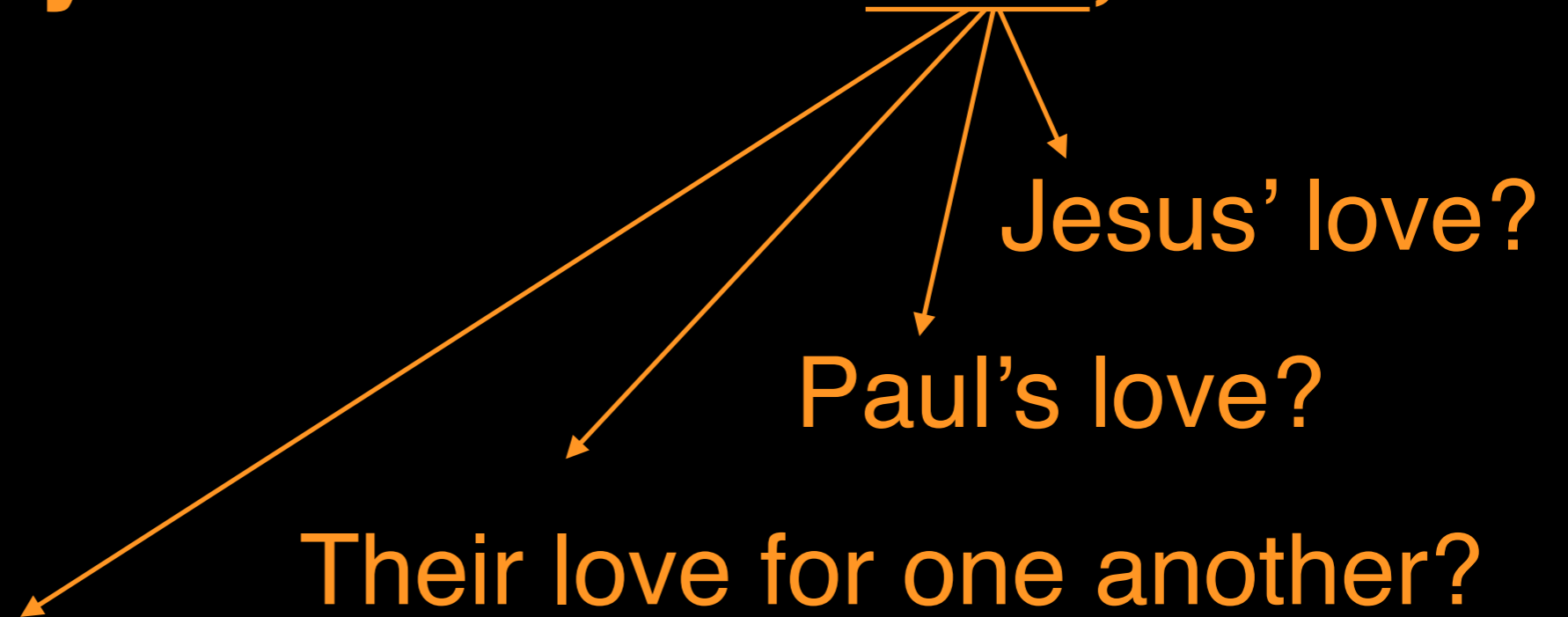


**...my brothers and sisters, you whom
I love and long for, my joy and crown,**

— Philippians 4:1 —

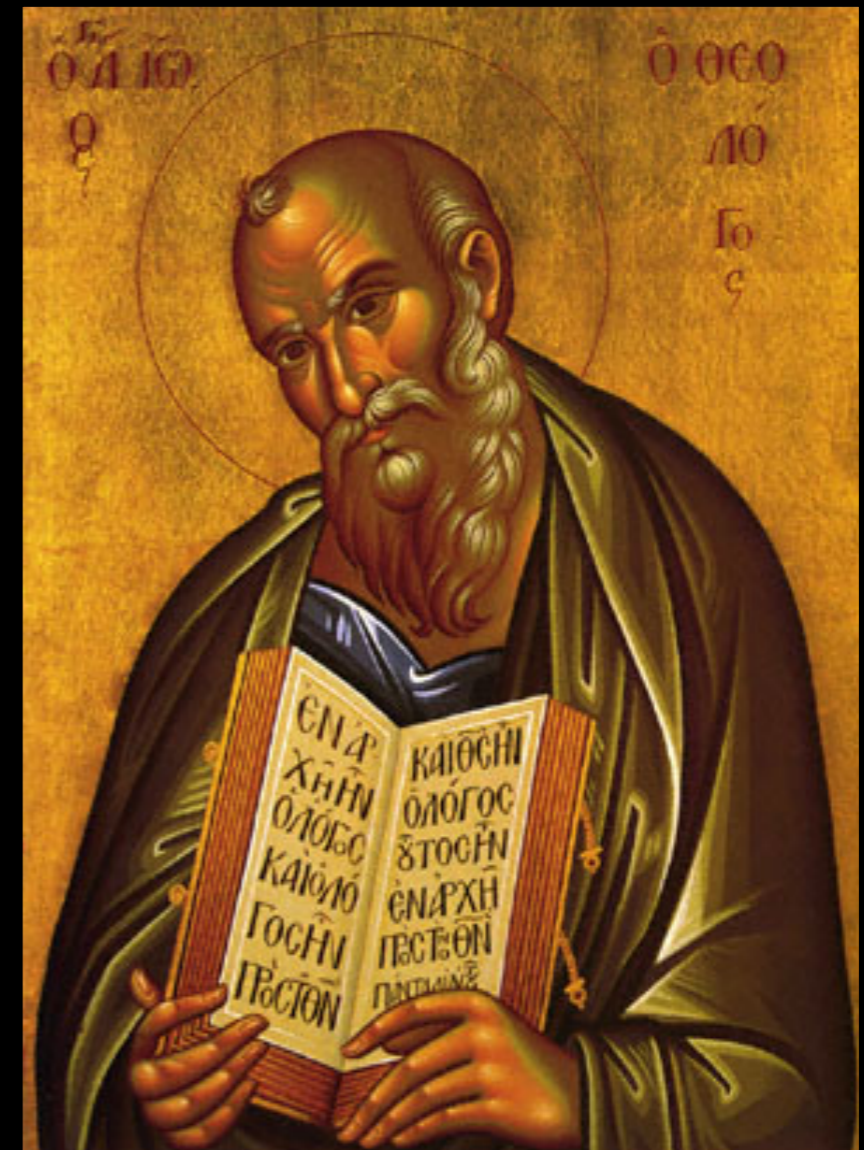
So if there is

**any encouragement in Christ,
any comfort from love,**



The Heavenly Father's love for us?

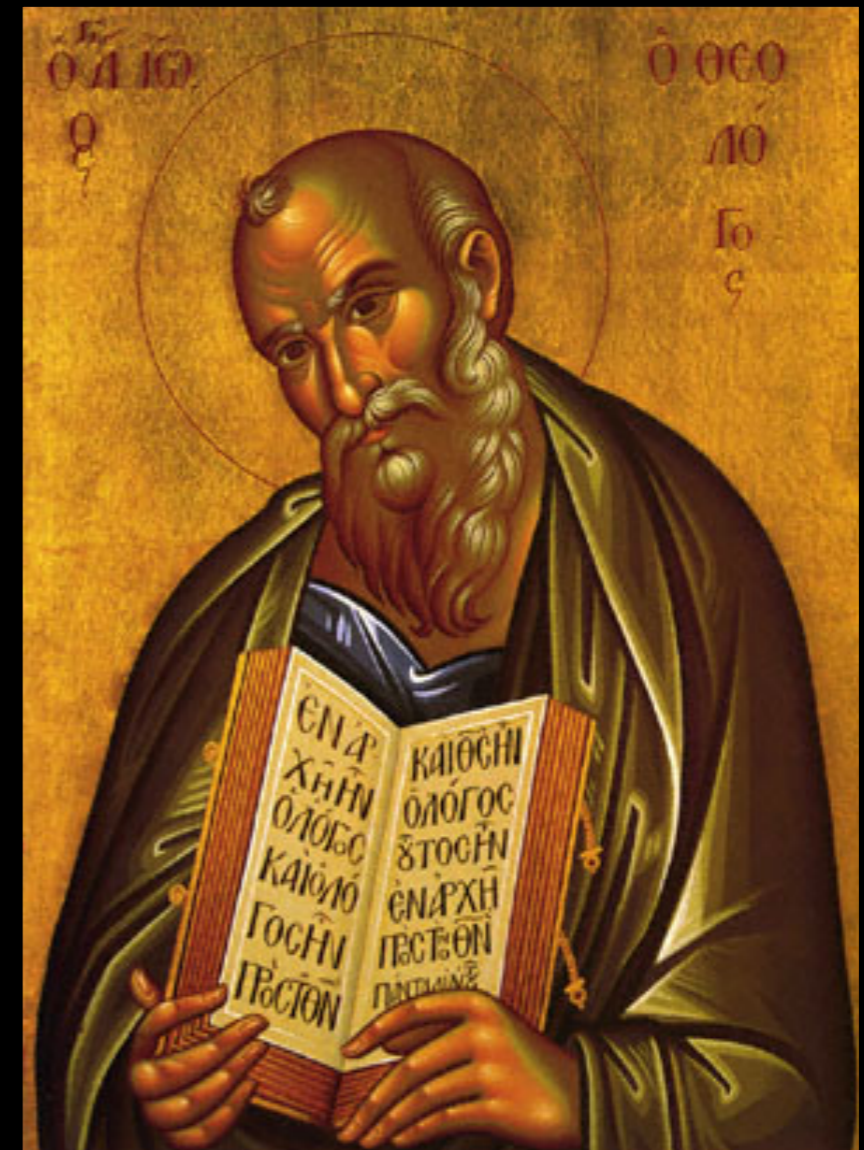
God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.



The Apostle John

— 1 John 4:8-10 —

**This is love: not
that we loved
God, but that he
loved us and sent
his Son as an
atoning sacrifice
for our sins.**



The Apostle John

— 1 John 4:8-10 —

**God's love has been
poured out into our
hearts through the
Holy Spirit, who has
been given to us.**

— Romans 5:5 —



So if there is

**any encouragement in Christ,
any comfort from love,**

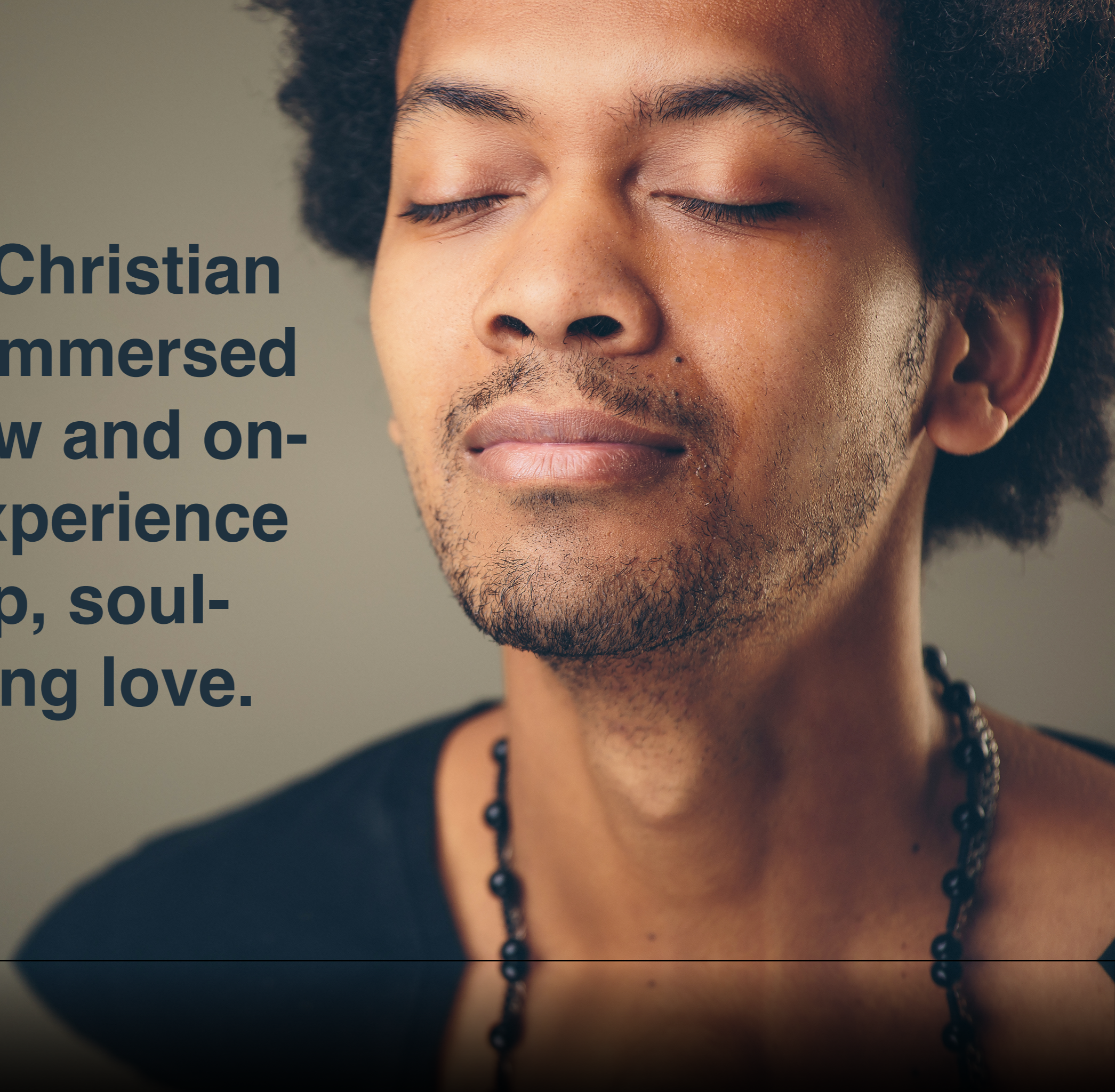
Jesus' love?

Paul's love?

Their love for one another?

The Heavenly Father's love for us?

**To be a Christian
is to be immersed
into a new and on-
going experience
of deep, soul-
satisfying love.**



So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

partnership / fellowship

1:5, "...because of your **partnership**
in the gospel from the first day until now."

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

any affection and sympathy,

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

any affection and sympathy,

mercy

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort...”

So if there is

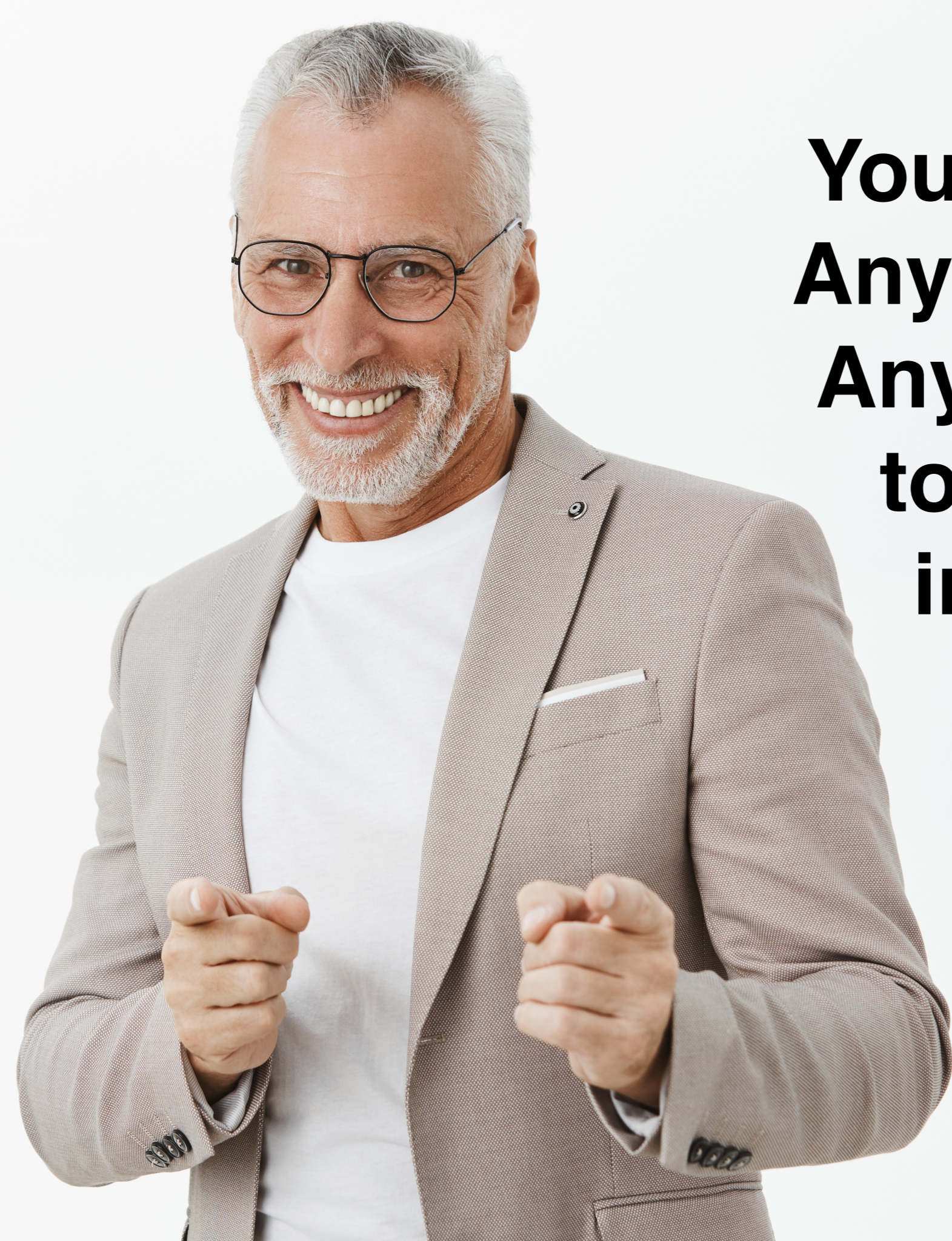
any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

any affection and sympathy,

[then] complete my joy....



**You've got it, Paul.
Anything you want.
Any thing I can do
to help you out
in your tough
situation.**

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

any affection and sympathy,

[then] complete my joy.....

by being of the same mind,

having the same love,

being in full accord and

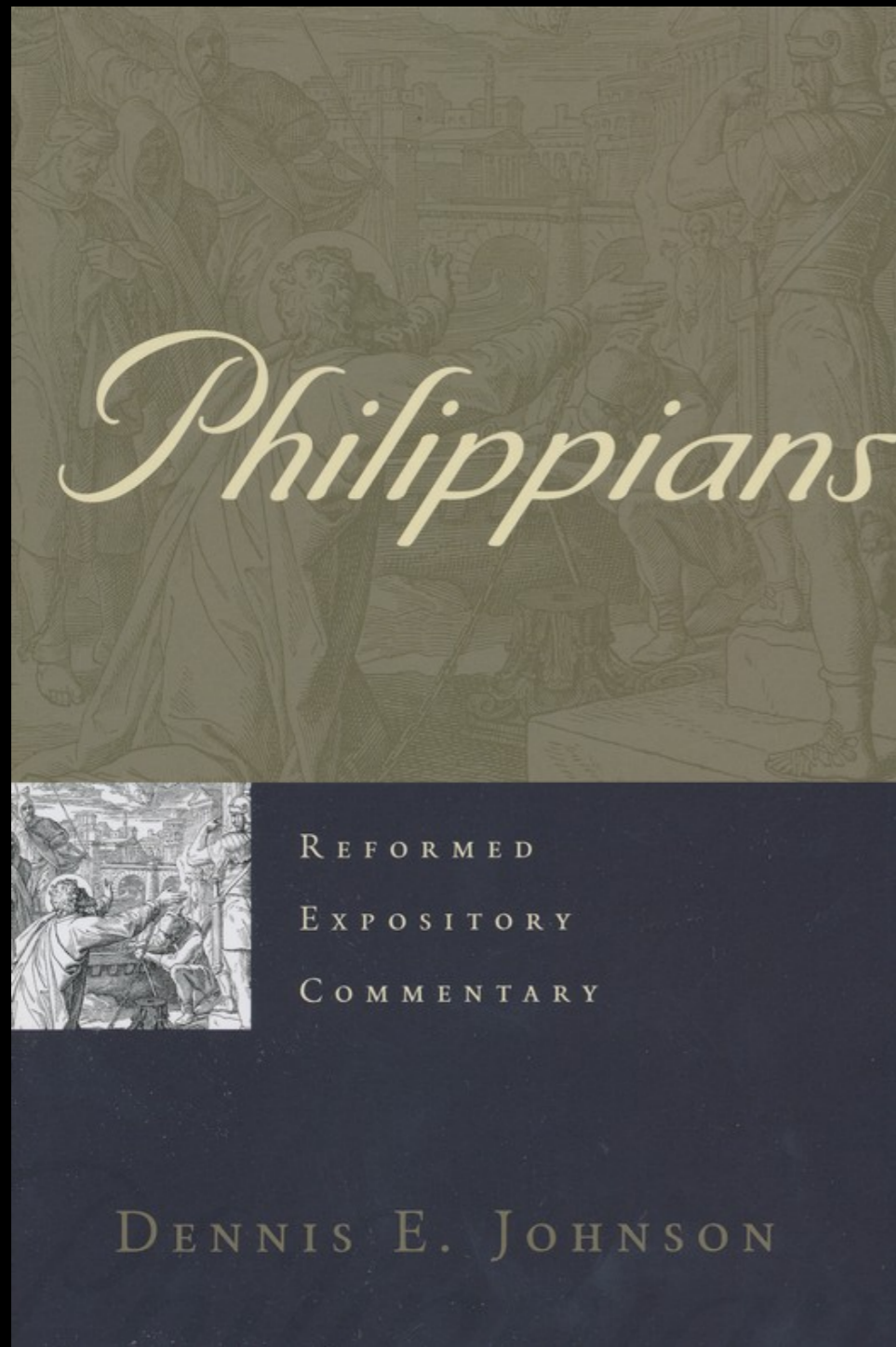
of one mind.



**That's not really
what I thought
he was going
to say. He wants
us to complete
his joy just by
getting along?**



Paul's joy would be brought to completion not by being released from prison, but the unity of mind and affection of heart among Jesus' people.



**Christ's grace
has turned Paul's
heart inside out,
so that his joy
is now bound up
in seeing his
Christians friends
grow more like
Jesus.**

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

any affection and sympathy,

[then] complete my joy.....

by being of the same mind,

having the same love,

being in full accord and

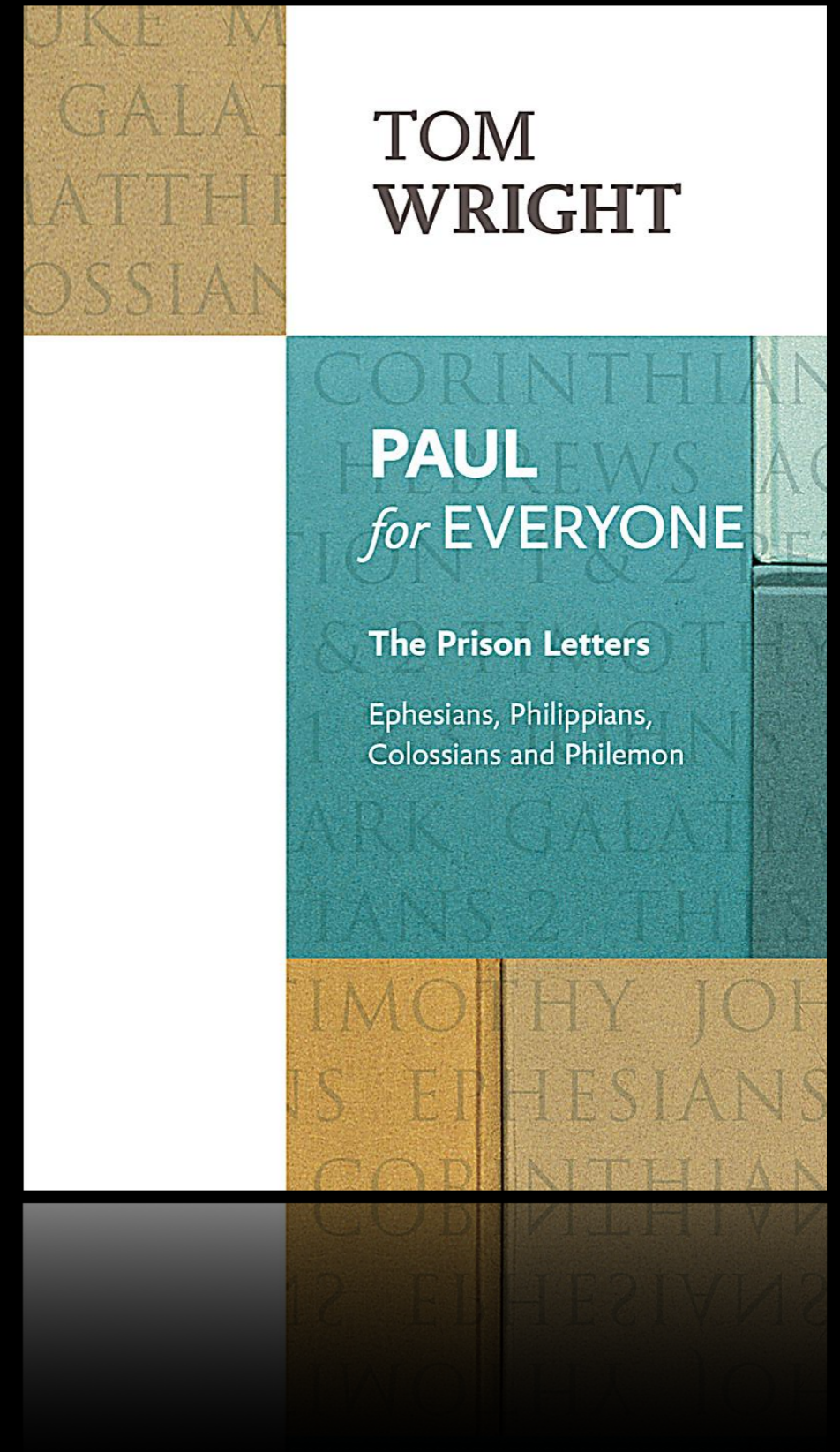
of one mind.



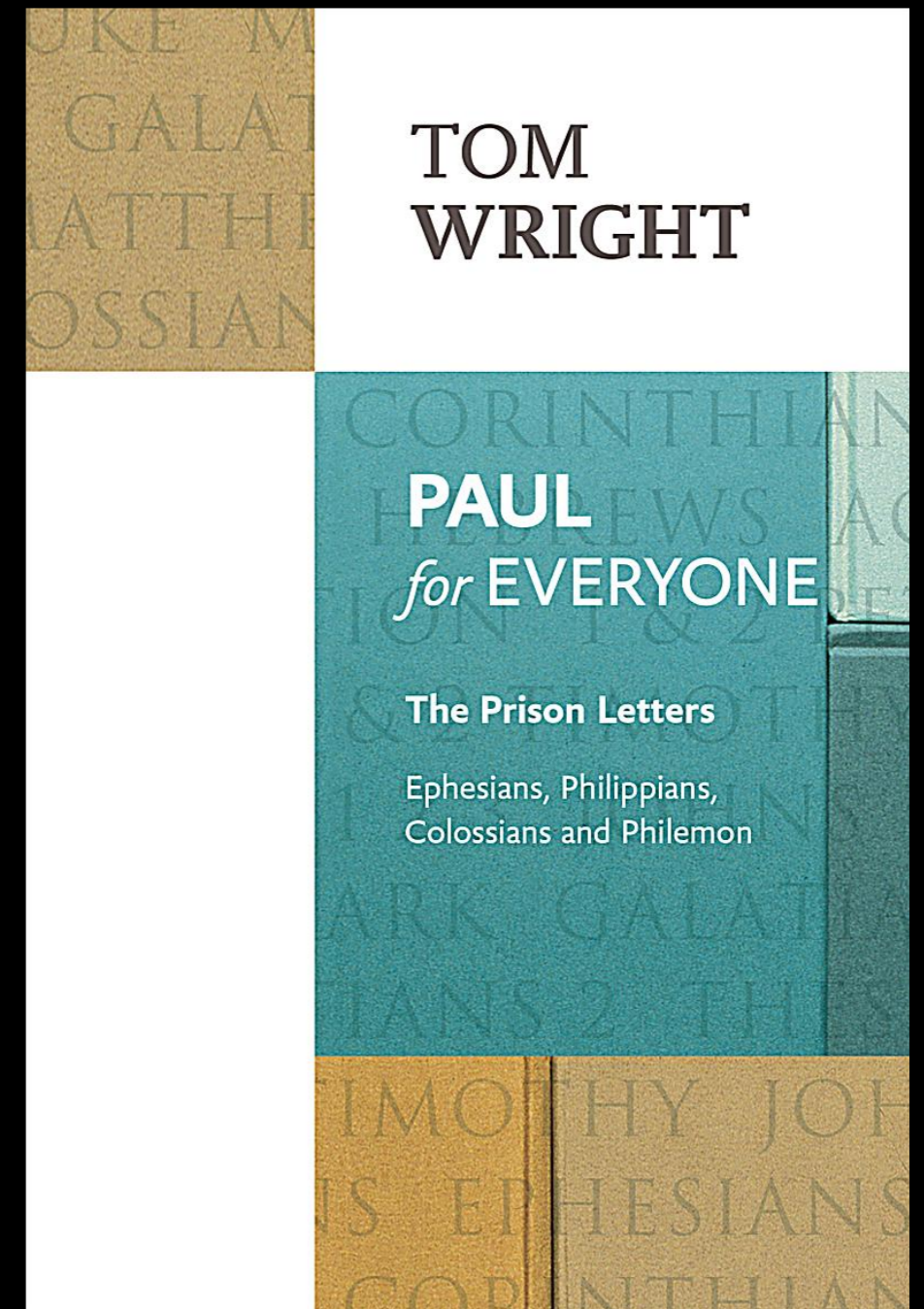
I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel....

— Philippians 4:2 —

...what matters is that Christians, like the actors all focusing singlemindedly on the play, should focus completely on the divine drama that has unfolded before their eyes in Jesus the king, and is continuing now into its final act with themselves as the characters.



**Bringing their thinking
into line with each
other wouldn't be any
good if they were all
thinking about some-
thing that was out of
line with the gospel.**



So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

any affection and sympathy,

[then] complete my joy.....

by being of the same mind,

having the same love,

being in full accord and

of one mind.



Pop Quiz:

What is it that
all Christians
should love?

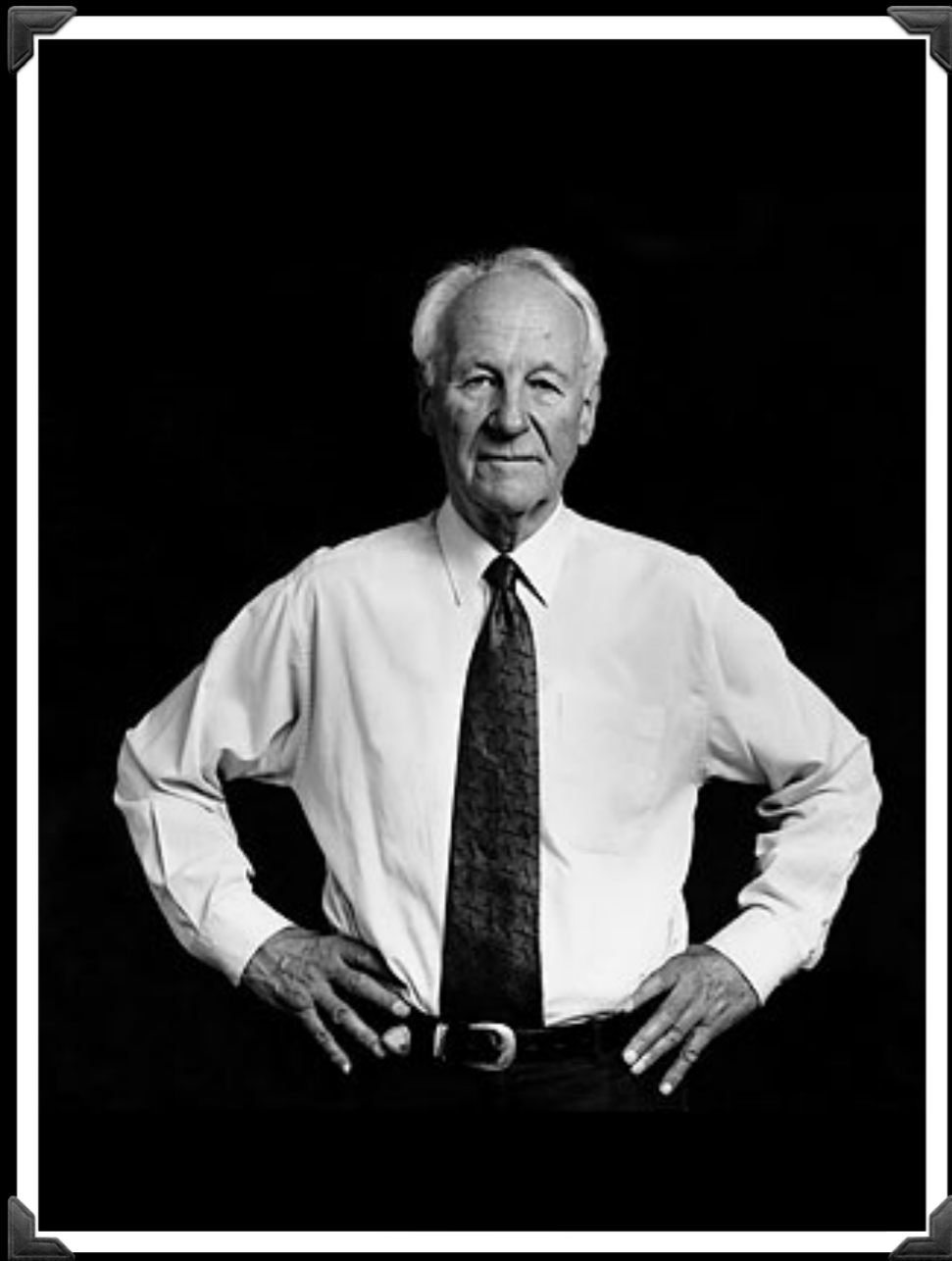


Pop Quiz:

What is it that
all Christians
should love?

Answer:

God + Others



John Stott (1921-2011)
Anglican Minister & Author

There are Christian communities all over the world where **true, sacrificial, serving, supportive love** is to be found. Where such Christian love **flourishes, its magnetism** is almost **IRRESISTIBLE.**

So if there is

any encouragement in Christ,

any comfort from love,

any participation in the Spirit,

any affection and sympathy,

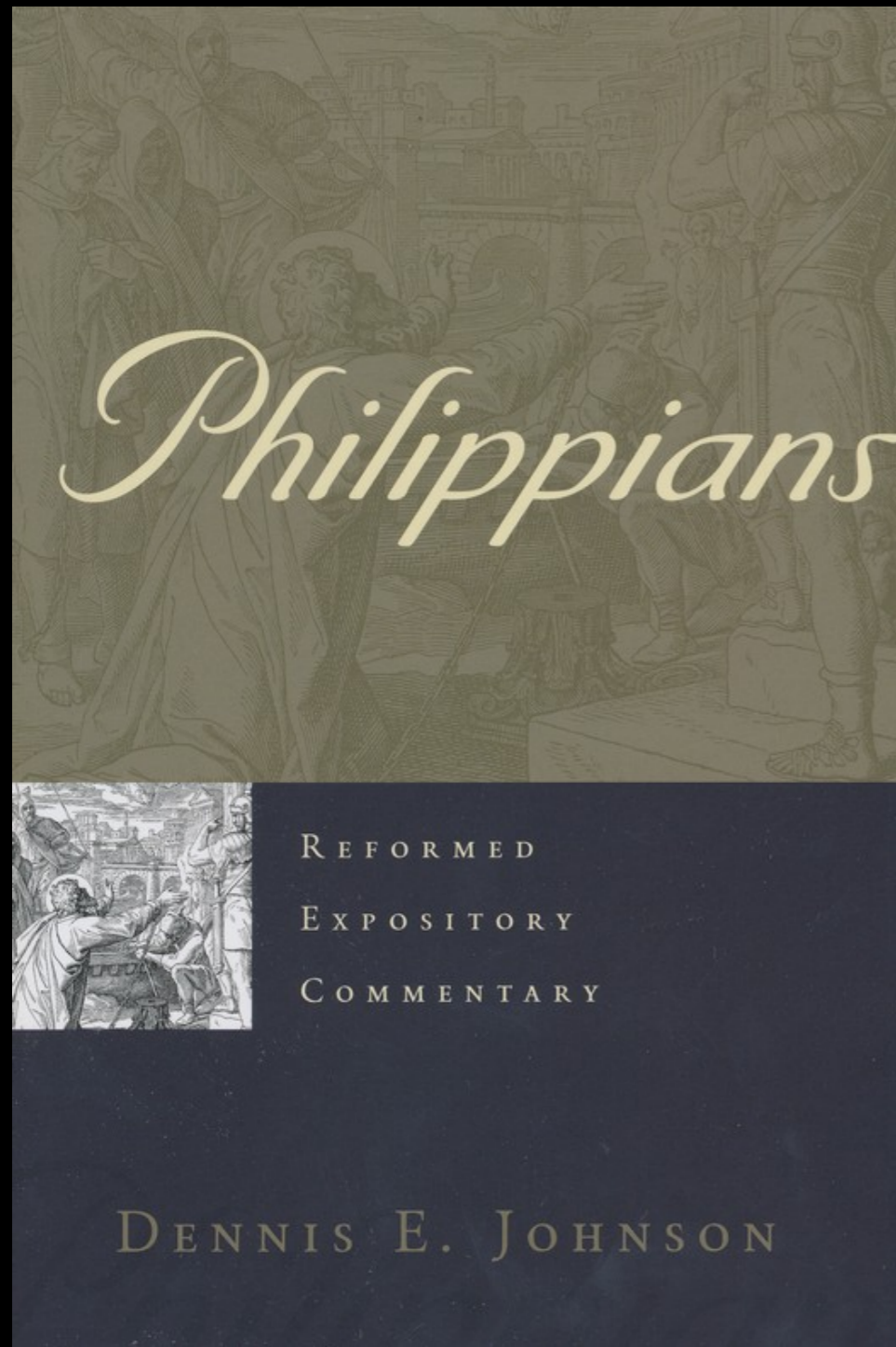
[then] complete my joy.....

by being of the same mind,

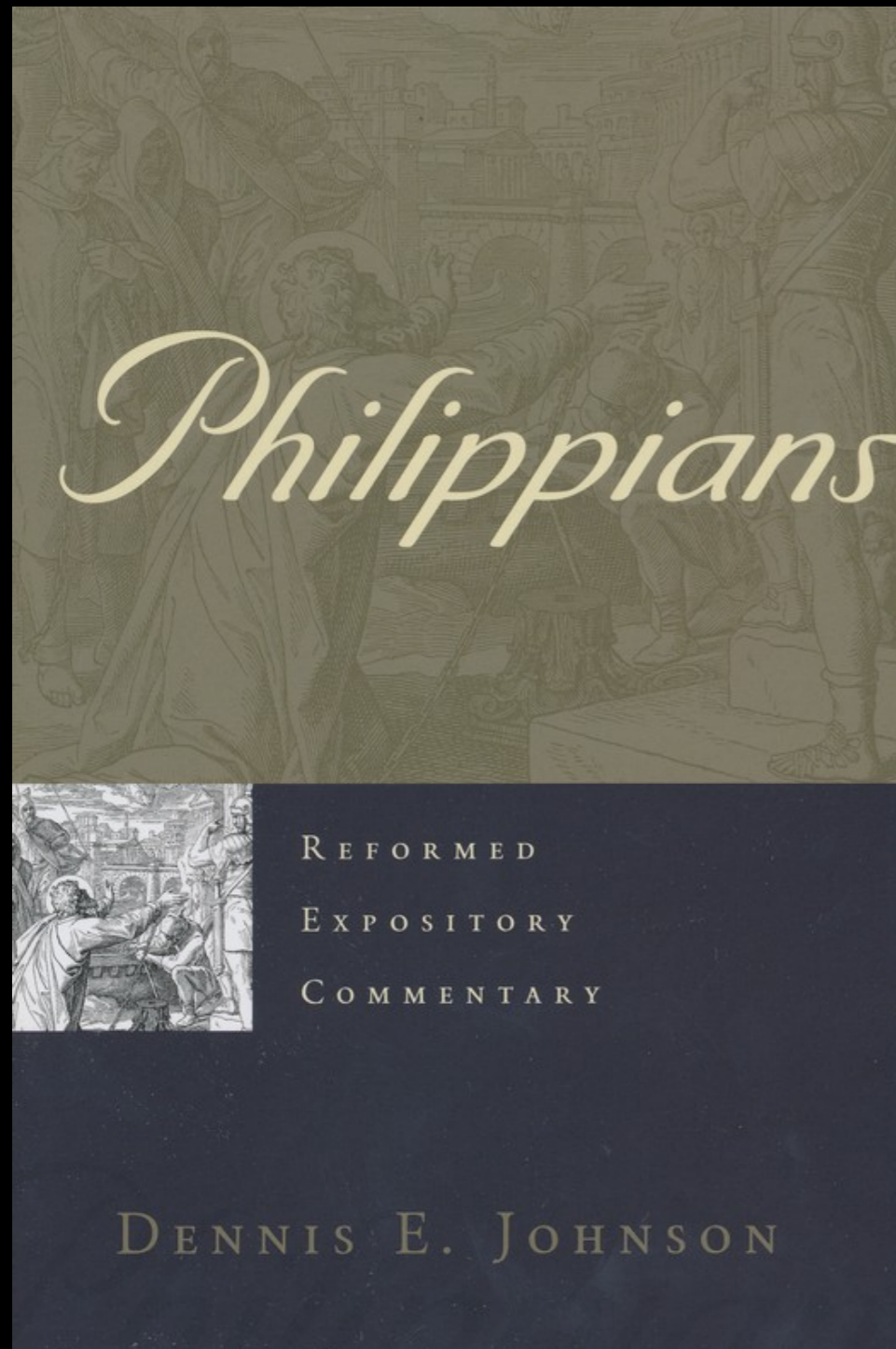
having the same love,

being in full accord and

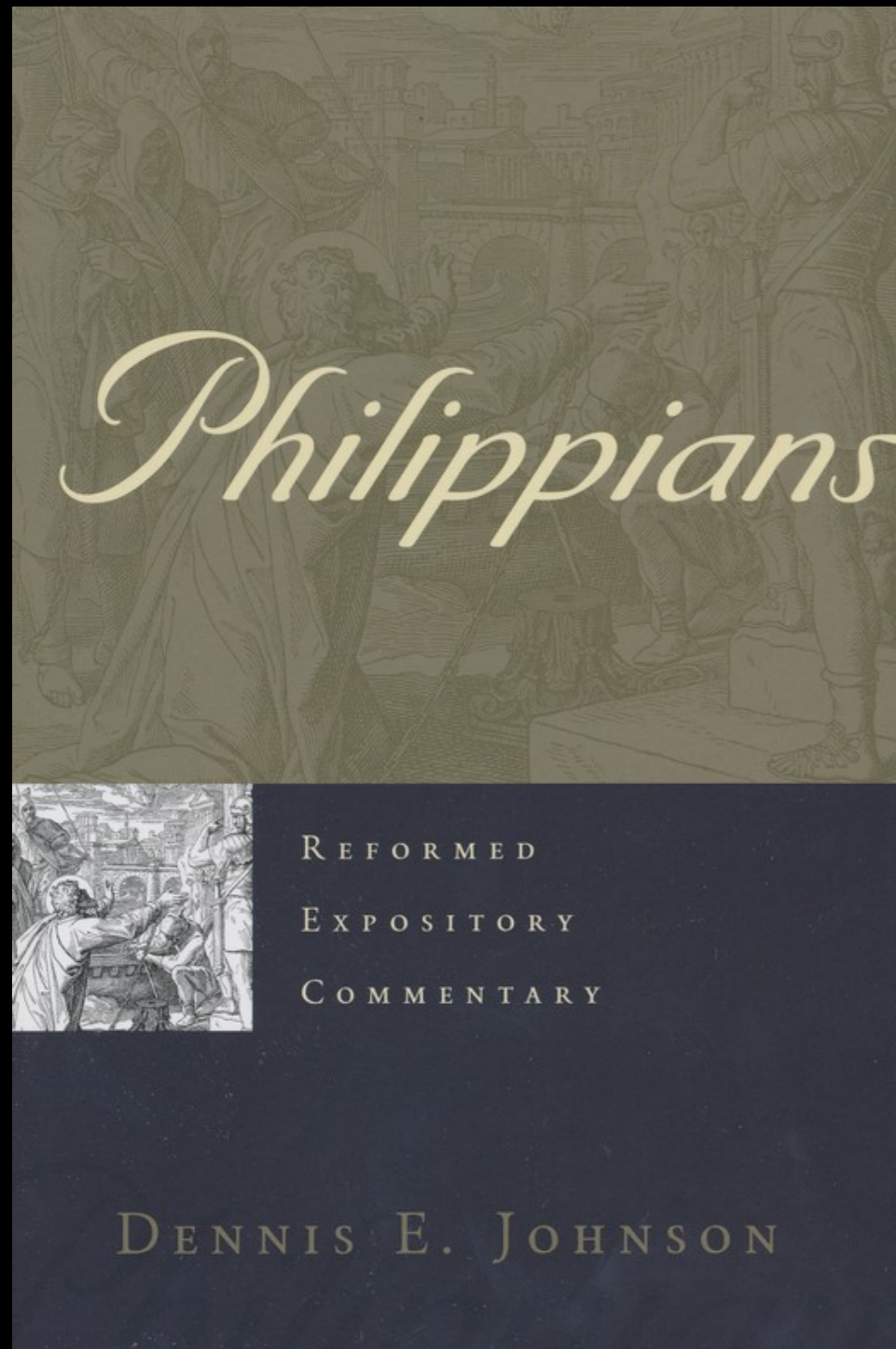
of one mind.



Actually, ‘being in full accord’ represents a single, rare Greek word, *sympsychoi*, which speaks of souls in harmony with one another. Our English expression *soulmates*, captures this wonderful word well.



It's as if Paul is saying, 'It is not enough to agree with each other theologically: God actually calls you to care for each other deeply, in a love that binds your souls together so strongly that differences of perspective cannot tear you apart.'



This strong bond of affection, grounded in the truth of the gospel, stabilizes believer's relationships with each other so that they can address their differences—whether doctrinal or interpersonal—in patience, humility, love.



**In essentials, unity.
In non-essentials, liberty.
In all things, charity.**

Philippians 2

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

Philippians 2

3 Do nothing from **selfish ambition or conceit**, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

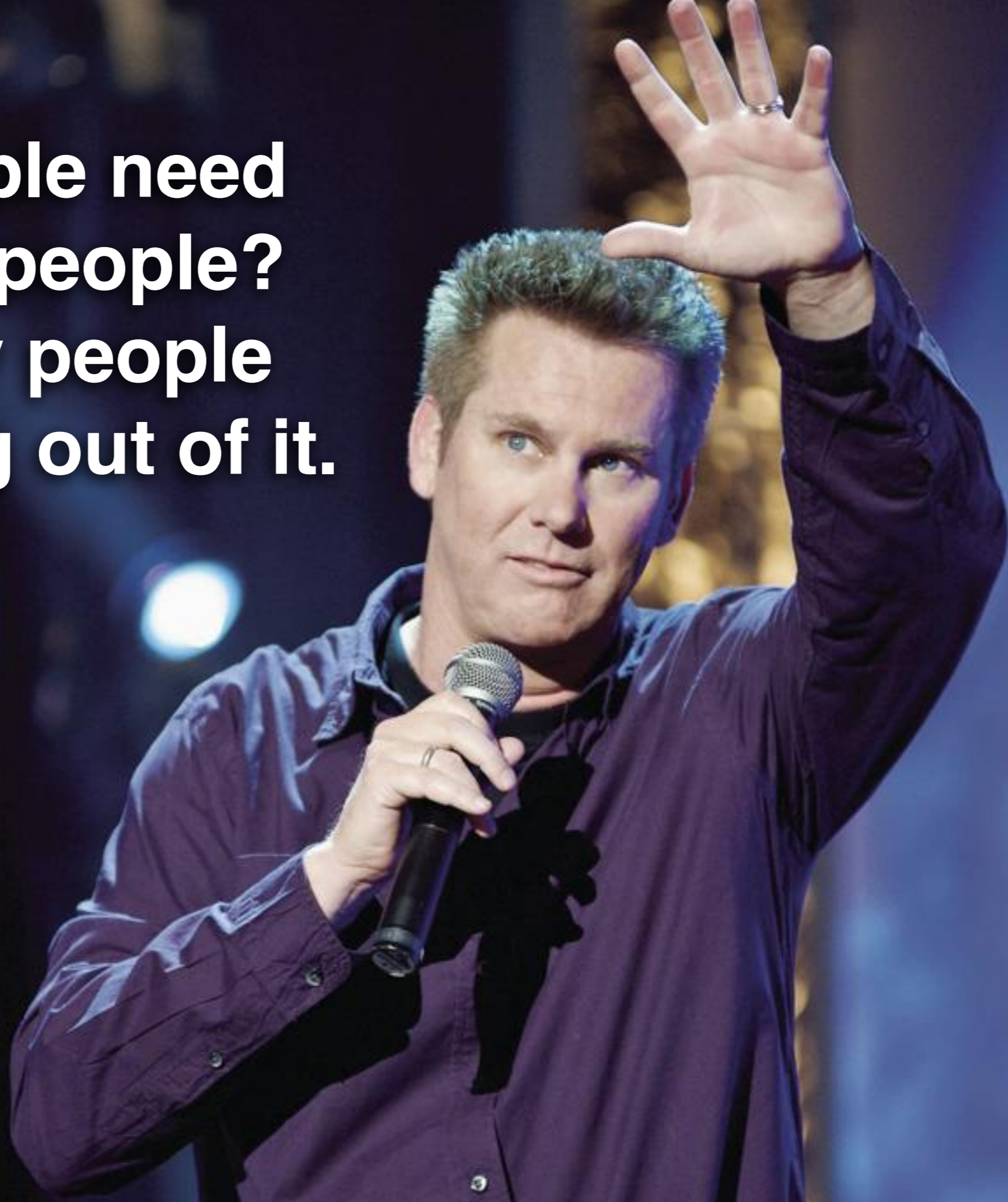
“selfishness, selfish rivalry, selfish ambition”

Brian Regan

— “Me Monsters” —



**Why do people need
to top other people?
...Obviously people
get something out of it.**



Me, Myself, & I

***homo
incurvatus
in se***

**a person
curved in on
oneself**



"Narcissus"

Caravaggio (1594-1596)

Philippians 2

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or **conceit,** but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

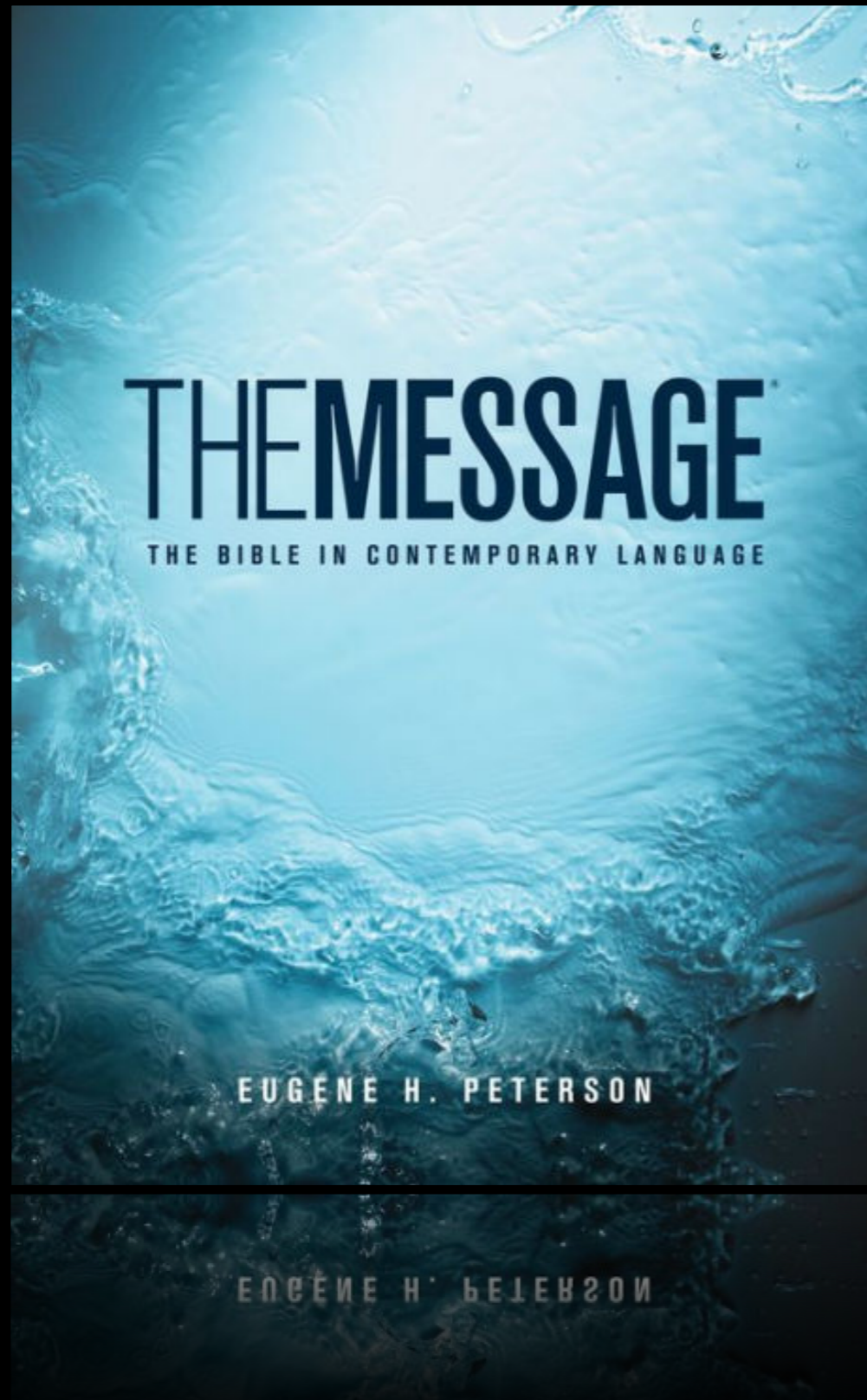
KJV: "vain glory" → "empty glory"

*"excessive appreciation of one's
own worth or virtue"*

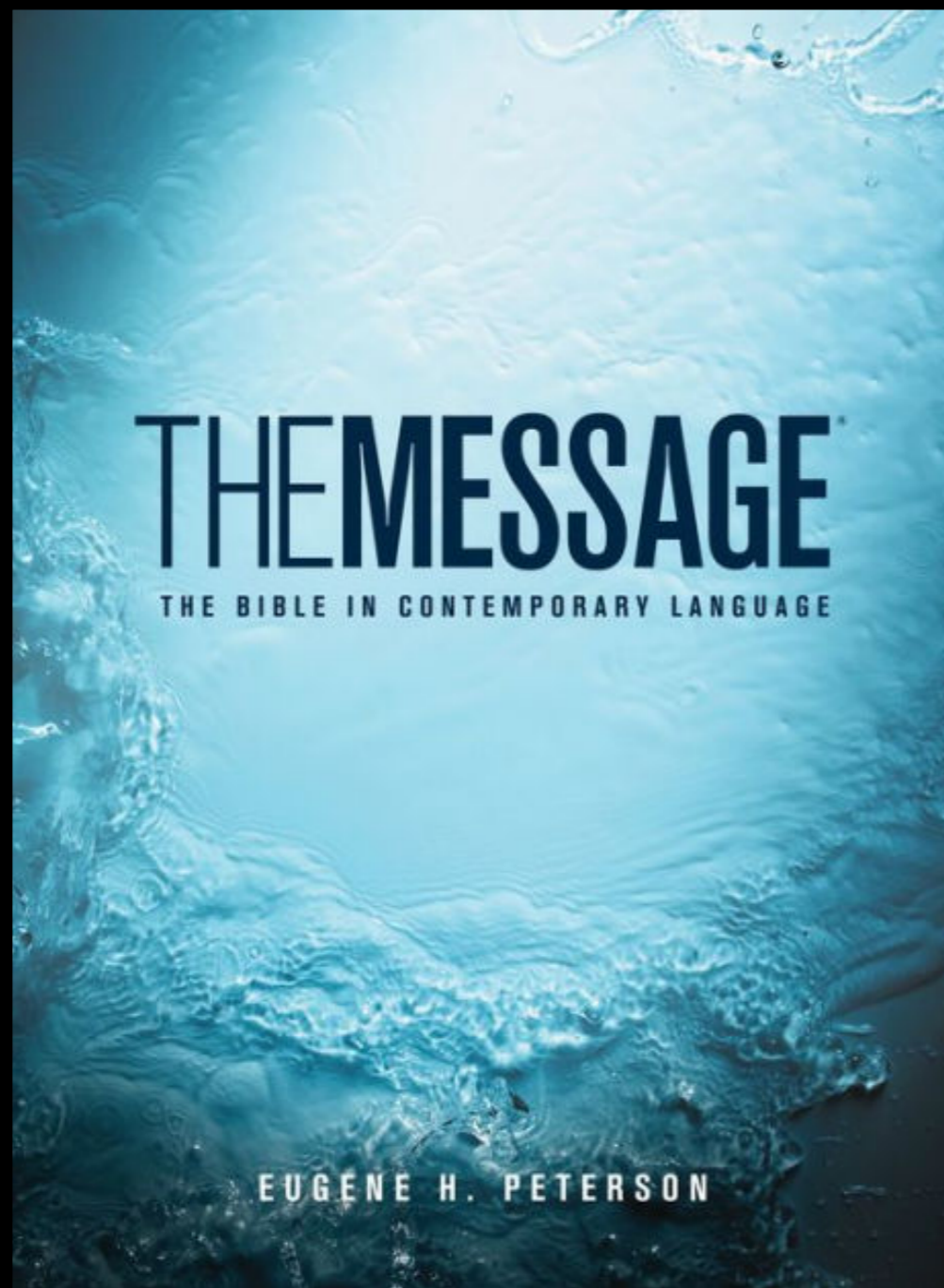
**For by the grace given
to me I say to everyone
among you not to think
of himself more highly
than he ought to think,
but to think with sober
judgment....**

The Apostle Paul
— 1 Corinthians 12:3 —





If you've gotten anything at all out of following Christ, if his love has made any difference in your life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you....,



**if you have a heart, if
you care — then do
me a favor: Agree
with each other, love
each other, be deep-
spirited friends.**



Philippians 2

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but **in humility count others more significant than yourselves.**

Philippians 2

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but **in humility count others more significant than yourselves.**

Instead of having an excessive appreciation of your own worth and value, I want you to have an excessive appreciation of each other's worth and value.



**What if everyone
had an excessive
appreciation of
other people's
worth and value?**

Philippians 2

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but **in humility count others more significant than yourselves.**

Philippians 2

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but **in humility count others more significant than yourselves.**

4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

**How is
this even
possible?**



Philippians 2

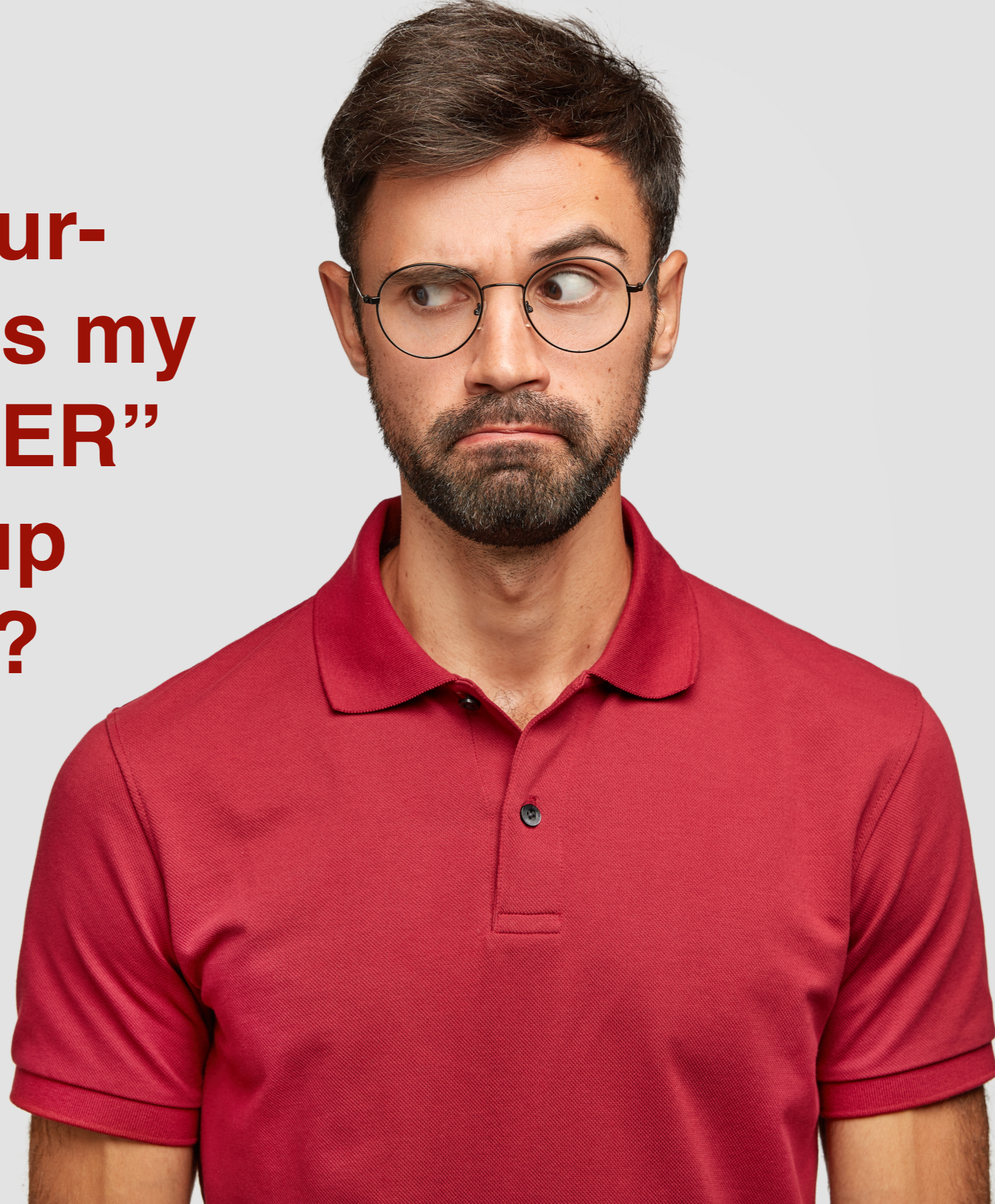
**5 Have this mind among yourselves,
which is yours in Christ Jesus....**

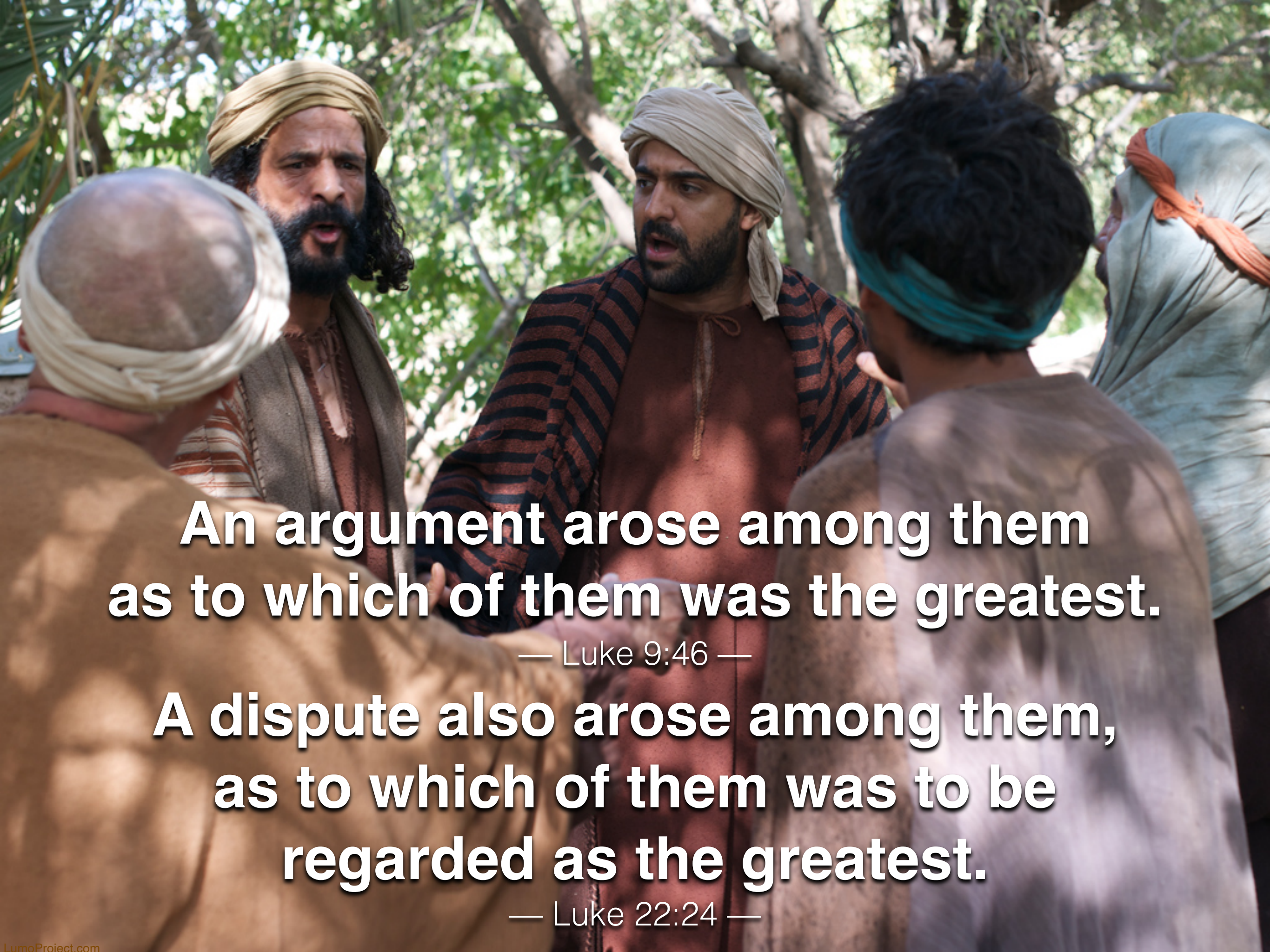


**In following Jesus,
humility is everything.**



**Let's ask our-
selves, How is my
"ME MONSTER"
showing up
in my life?**





**An argument arose among them
as to which of them was the greatest.**

— Luke 9:46 —

**A dispute also arose among them,
as to which of them was to be
regarded as the greatest.**

— Luke 22:24 —



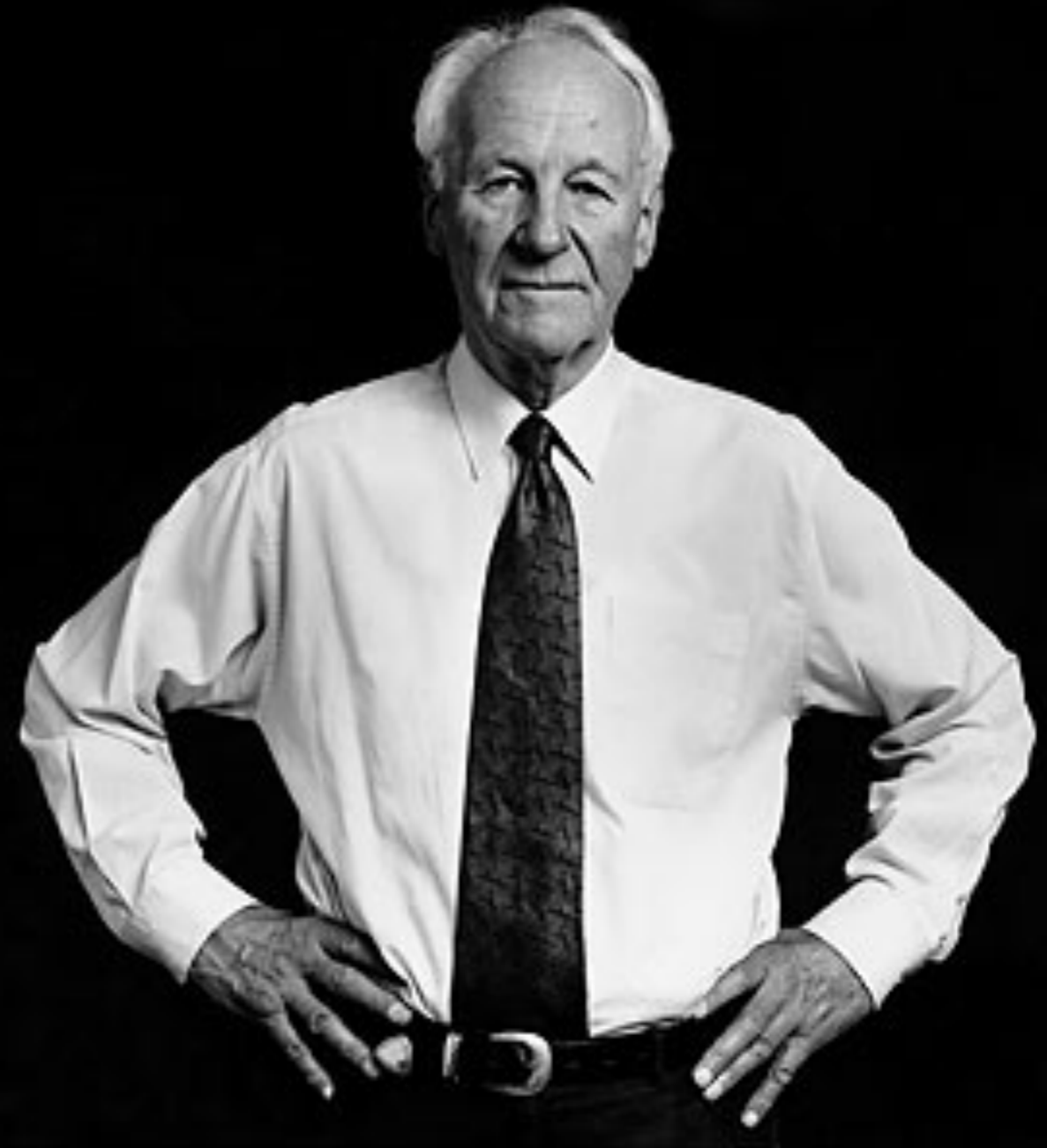
The real issue here is not if pride exists in your heart; it's where pride exists and how pride is being expressed in your life.

— CJ Mahaney, *Humility* —

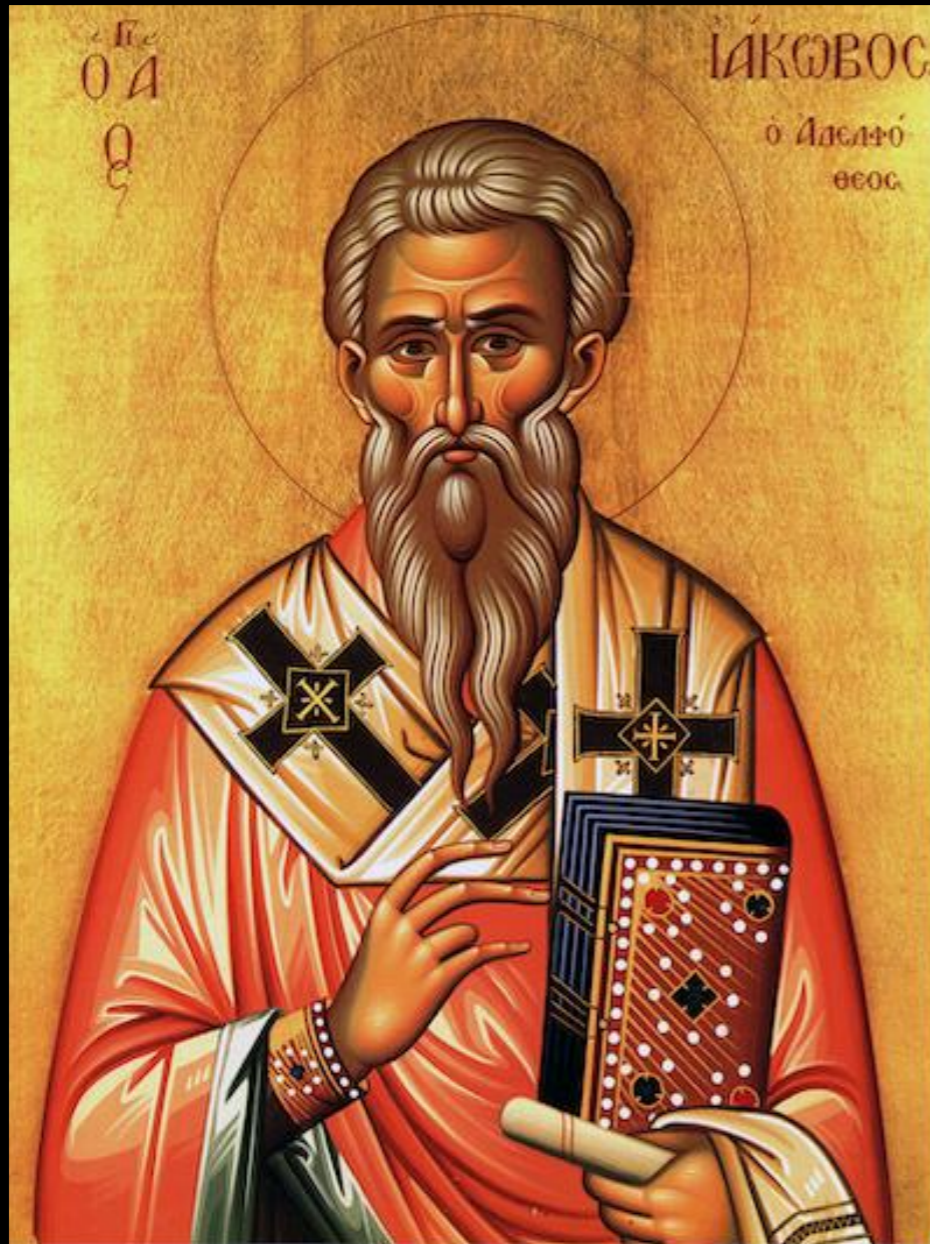


**Tell me, how is pride expressing itself in your life?
Where is it showing up in your life?**

At every stage of our
Christian develop-
ment and in every
sphere of our
Christian disciple-
ship, **PRIDE** is our
greatest enemy
and **HUMILITY** is
our **greatest friend.**



— John Stott —
Anglican Minister

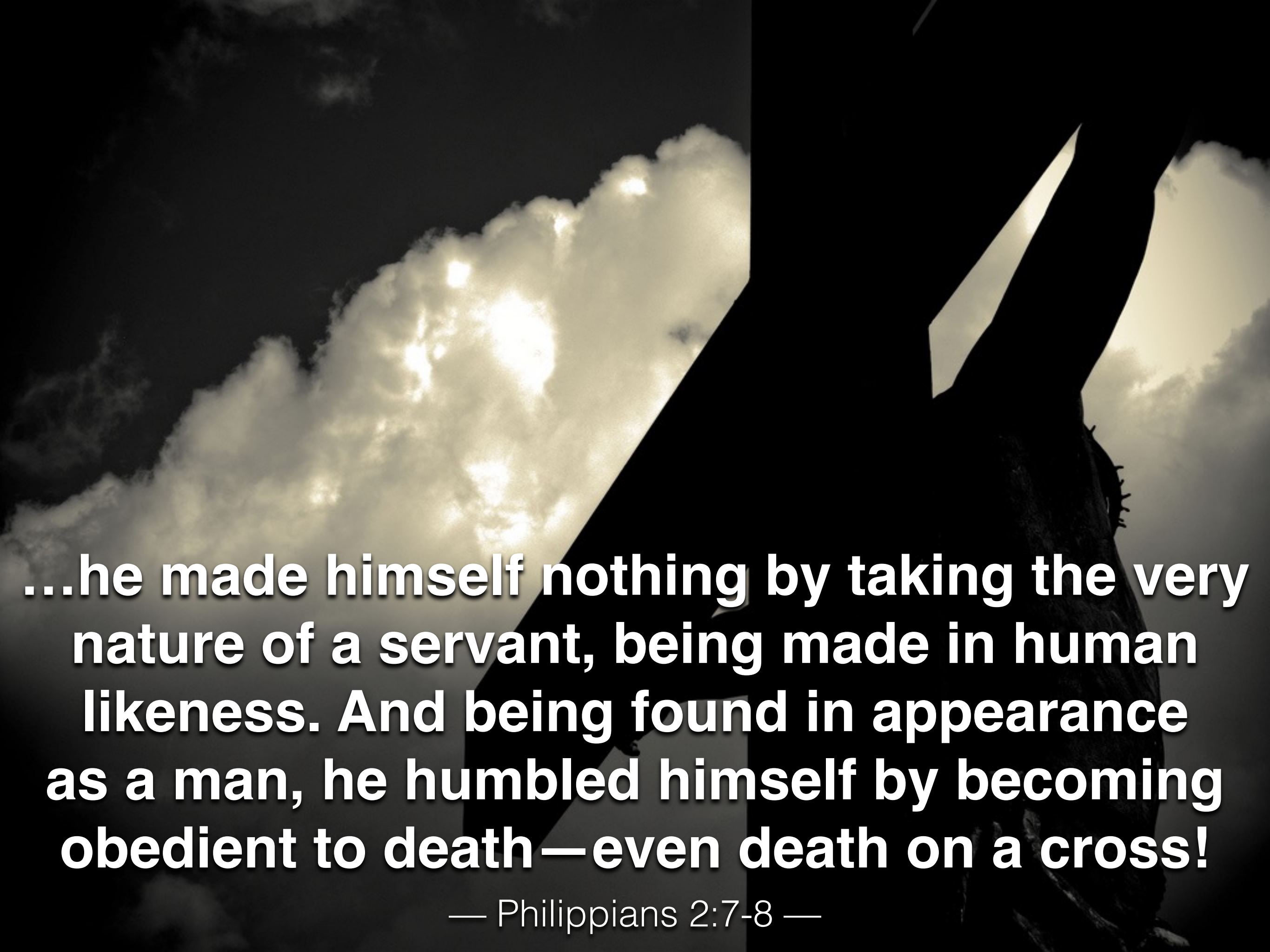


**But he gives more
grace. Therefore it
says, “God opposes
the proud, but
gives grace to
the humble.”**

James, the Brother of Jesus
— James 4:6 —



**Let's Humbly Cast Ourselves
Upon The Mercy of God
in Christ.**

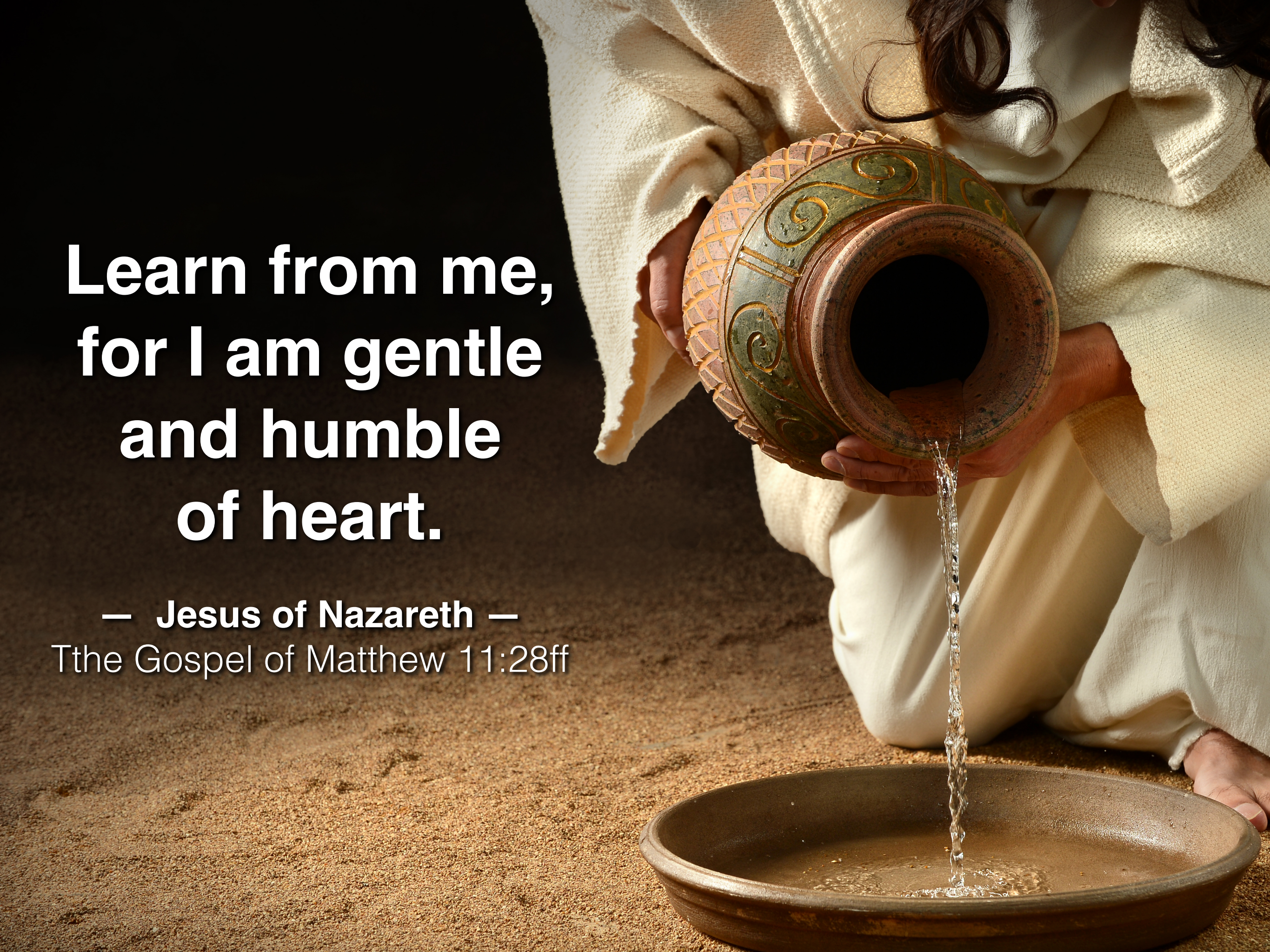


...he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

— Philippians 2:7-8 —

**Let's learn
humility
from Jesus.**



A person wearing a white, textured robe is kneeling on a sandy floor. They are holding a large, ornate ceramic jar with both hands, tilted to pour water into a shallow, round metal basin. The jar has intricate designs, including a grid pattern on the top and spiral motifs. The water is captured mid-pour, creating a clear stream. The background is dark, making the white robe and the golden-brown sand stand out.

**Learn from me,
for I am gentle
and humble
of heart.**

— **Jesus of Nazareth** —

The Gospel of Matthew 11:28ff



**If God wants to make
me more like Jesus,
He can't do that
without dealing with
my pride and working
a deep, Christ-like
humility within me.**

**Do you ever
pray for
humility?**





**Search me, O God, and
know my heart;
test me and know my
anxious thoughts.
Point out anything in me
that offends you,
and lead me along the
path of everlasting life.**

— Psalm 139:23-24 —

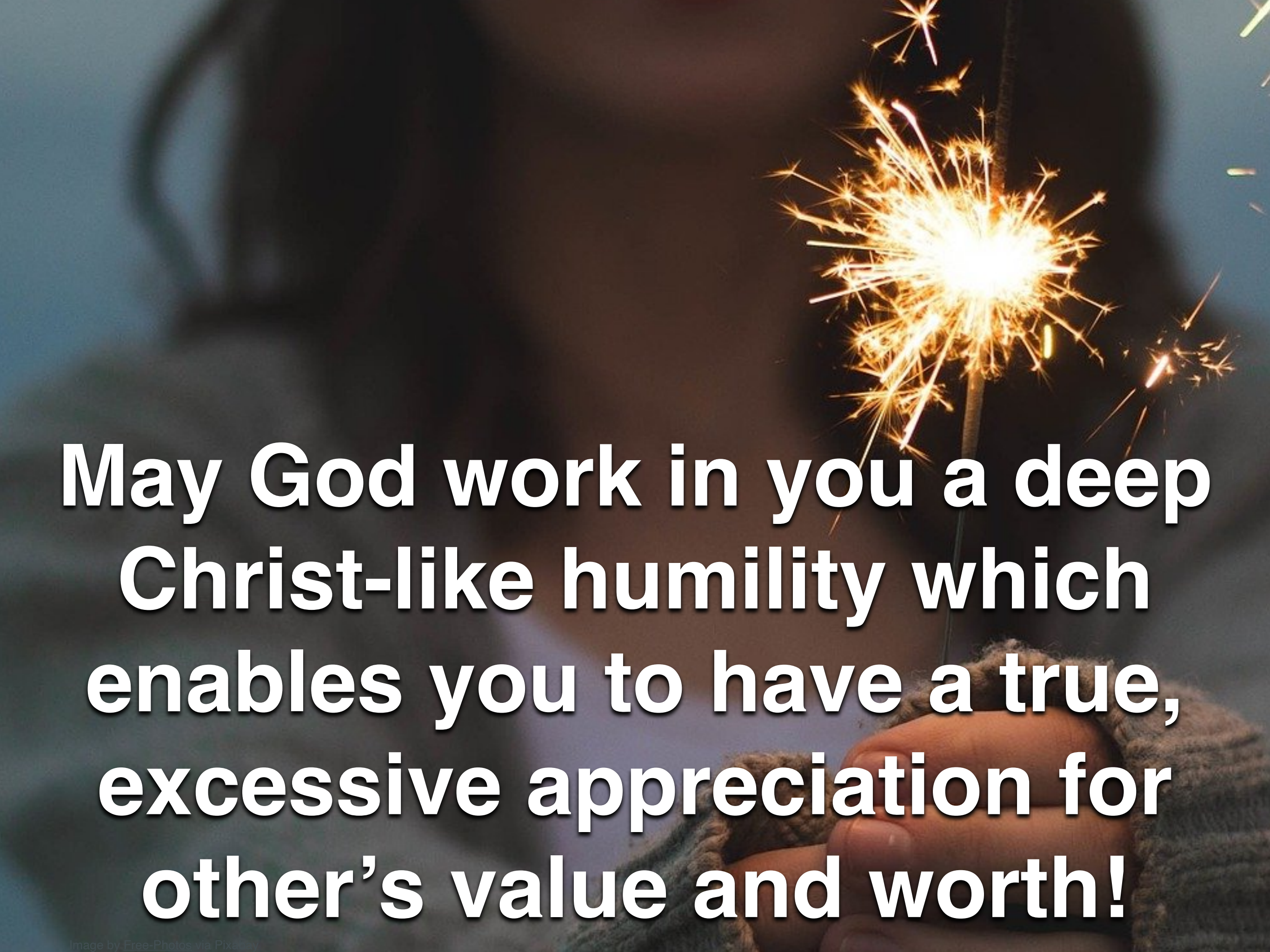
**For those who would
learn God's ways,
humility is the
first thing,
humility is
the second, and
humility is the third.**

— Augustine





What if Ann Rice could say, “Today, I became a Christian because I simply couldn’t resist being a part of this group of people who are the most humble, kind, and loving people I have ever known”?

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a lit sparkler. The sparkler is in full bloom, with a bright, glowing center and numerous thin, golden sparks radiating outwards. The background is a dark, deep blue night sky, with a few other distant sparklers visible. The overall mood is celebratory and warm.

**May God work in you a deep
Christ-like humility which
enables you to have a true,
excessive appreciation for
other's value and worth!**