



*awakened*  
*by* Grace



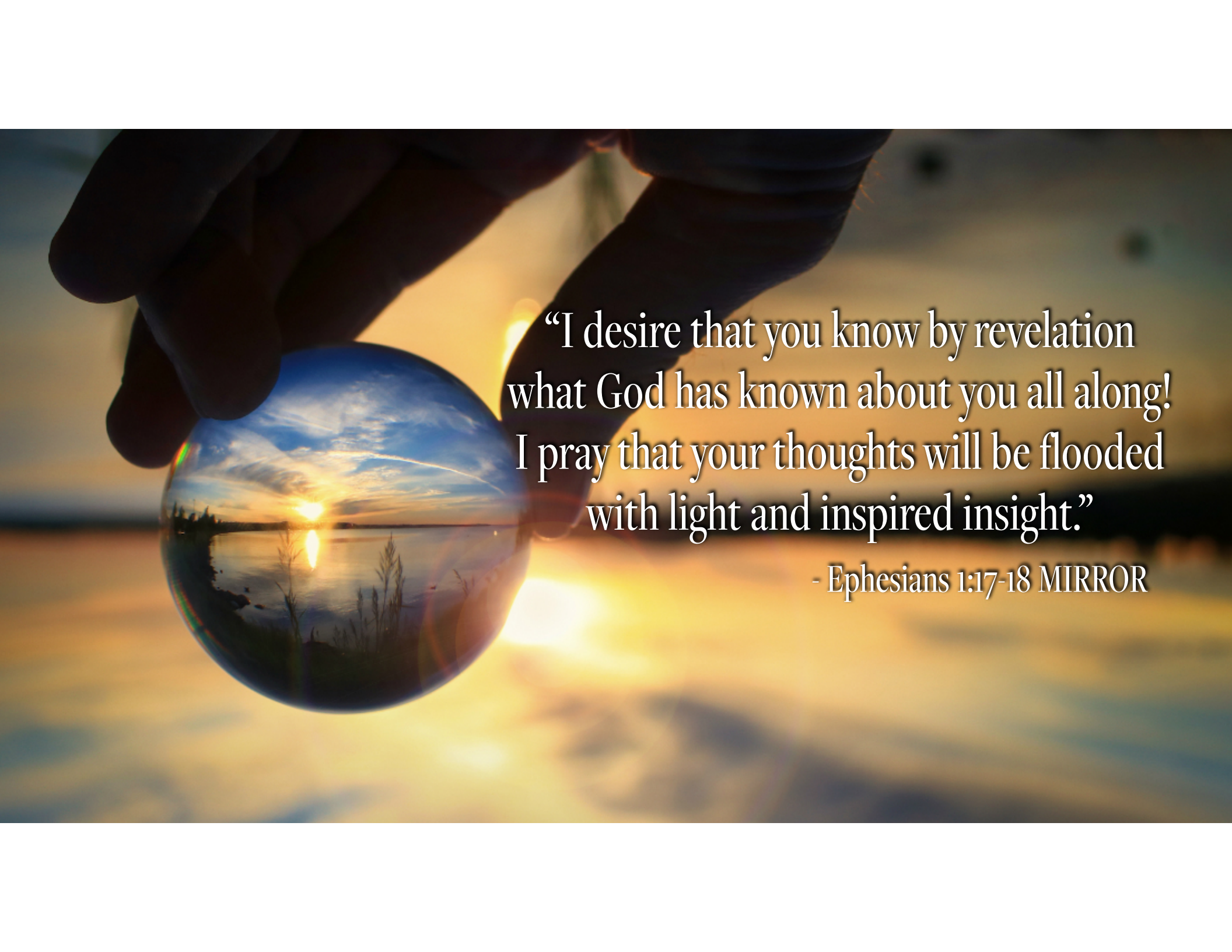
No man ever steps in the same river twice,  
for it's **not the same river**  
and he's **not the same man.**

— *Heraclitus* —



**“Expand our thoughts until they are worthy...  
of God’s own glorious self-revelation”**

*- St. Hilary of Poitiers (310-367)*

A hand is shown holding a crystal ball. The crystal ball reflects a sunset scene over a body of water, with the sun low on the horizon and its reflection visible in the water. The background is a blurred sunset sky with warm colors. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

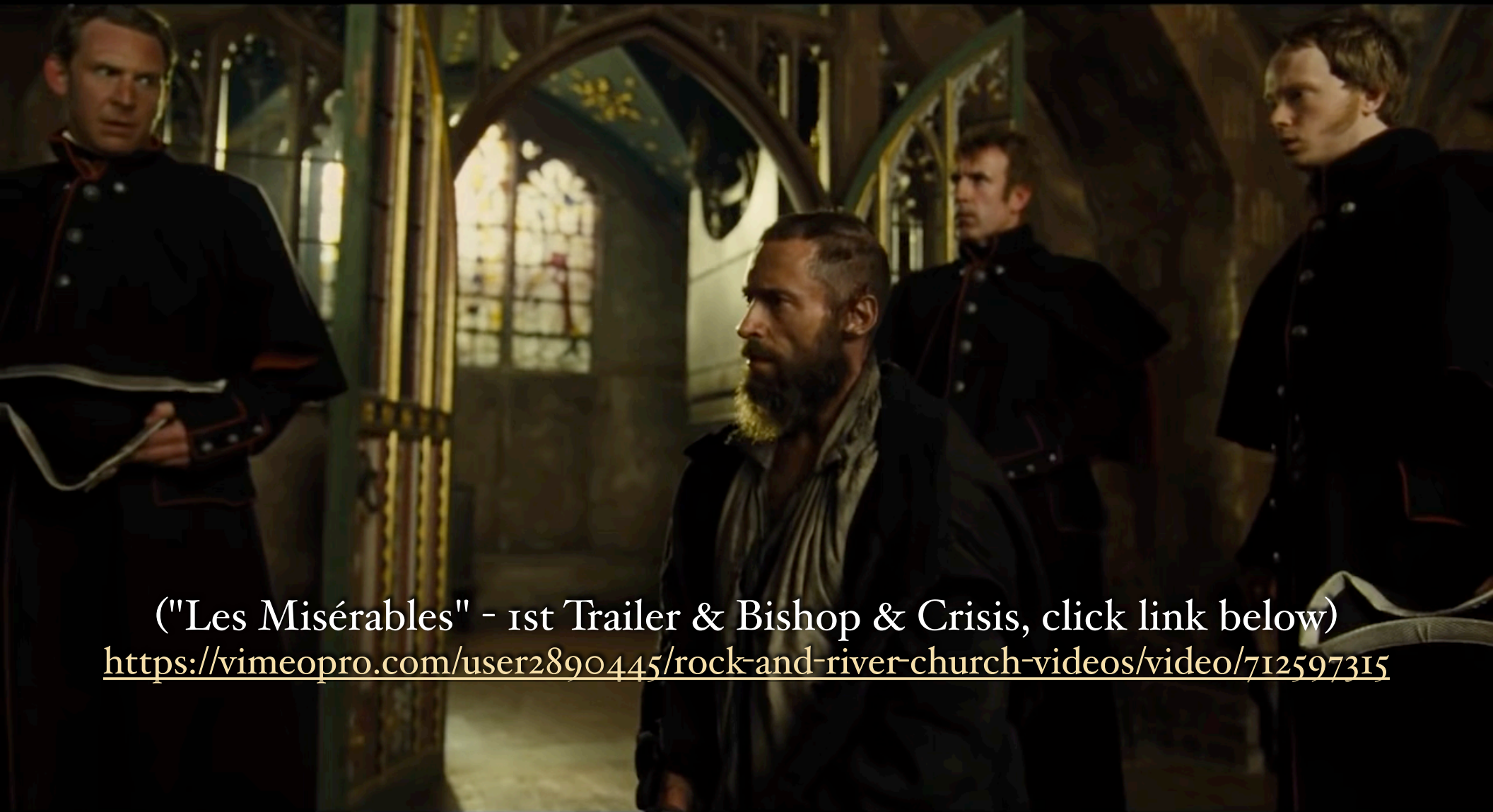
“I desire that you know by revelation  
what God has known about you all along!  
I pray that your thoughts will be flooded  
with light and inspired insight.”

- Ephesians 1:17-18 MIRROR



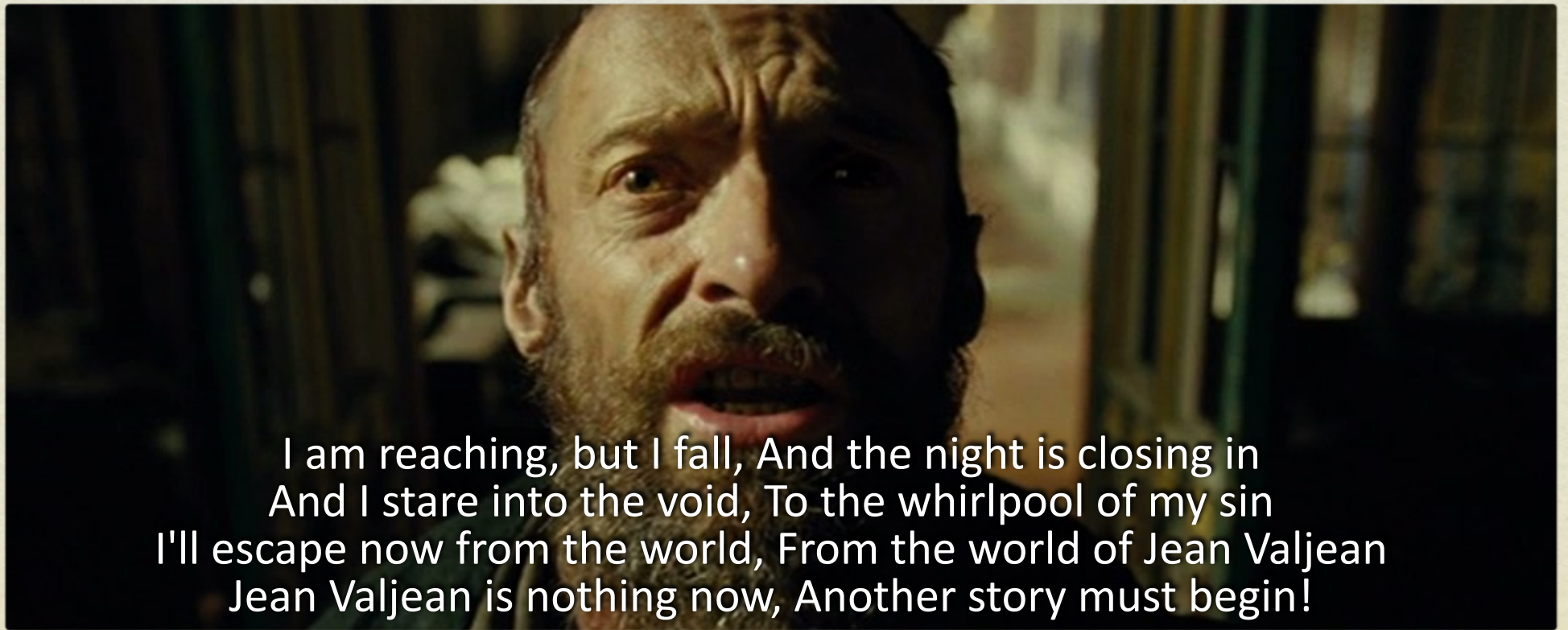
## AWAKENED BY AMAZING GRACE

E.g. Mercy shown to Jean Valjean from the Bishop in "*Les Mis*"



("Les Misérables" - 1st Trailer & Bishop & Crisis, click link below)  
<https://vimeopro.com/user2890445/rock-and-river-church-videos/video/712597315>

ENCOUNTERING THE LIGHT OF GOD'S LOVE AND  
MERCY CREATES A CRISIS OF FAITH WITHIN OUR  
DARKNESS THAT CALLS FOR A RESPONSE (Jn 3:18-21)



I am reaching, but I fall, And the night is closing in  
And I stare into the void, To the whirlpool of my sin  
I'll escape now from the world, From the world of Jean Valjean  
Jean Valjean is nothing now, Another story must begin!

The Holy Spirit is working to help us decisively break agreements with any lies about our identity – tearing up our old scripts, labels, and identity disorders so that we might increasingly live out of the essential truth of our being as God's beloved children.





**"DEFINE** yourself  
radically as one  
be<sup>♥</sup>loved by God.

This is the true self. Every other identity is

**ILLUSION."**

- Brennan Manning



JESUS REVEALED HIMSELF TO SAUL INSIDE HIS DARKNESS  
Gal 1:15-16 “But when God, who set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me **by his grace**, was pleased <sup>16</sup> **to reveal his Son in me** so that I might preach him among the Gentiles...”



“To open their eyes, to turn them away from darkness toward light, and away from the power of the Accuser toward God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those made holy by faith in me.”

- Acts 26:18 (from David Bentley Hart's Translation of the NT)



To  
*Open*  
their  
*EYES*, and turn  
them from  
*Darkness* to *Light.*  
Acts 26:18

Paul's 'conversion' experience was actually **an awakening to and recovery of his true identity** that required an extreme makeover of the way he saw God, himself and others.

Gal 1:16 (The MIRROR)

“This is the heart of the gospel that I proclaim; it began with an unveiling of his Son **in me**, freeing me to announce the same sonship **in the masses** of non-Jewish people.

2 Cor 5:15-17 (The MIRROR)

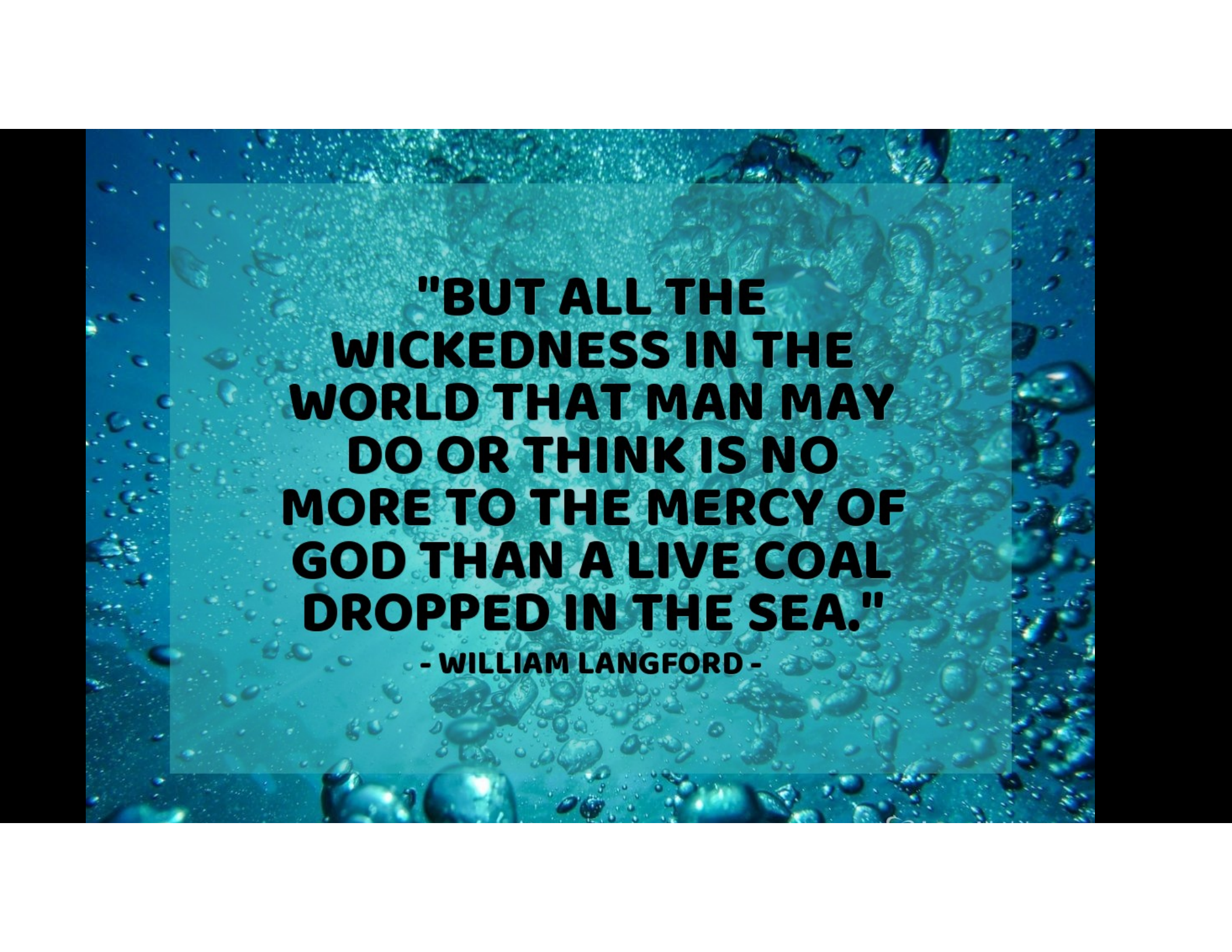
15 Now if all were included in his death they were equally included in his resurrection. This unveiling of his love redefines human life! Whatever reference we could have of ourselves outside of our association with Christ is no longer relevant.

2 Cor 5:15-17 The MIRROR (cont.)

**16 This is radical and our most defining moment! No label that could possibly previously identify someone carries any further significance! Even our pet doctrines of Christ are redefined. Whatever we knew about him historically or sentimentally is challenged by this conclusion.**

**17 Now, in the light of your co-inclusion in his death and resurrection, whoever you thought you were before, in Christ you are a brand new person!**

**The old ways of seeing yourself and everyone else are over.  
Acquaint yourself with the new!**



**"BUT ALL THE  
WICKEDNESS IN THE  
WORLD THAT MAN MAY  
DO OR THINK IS NO  
MORE TO THE MERCY OF  
GOD THAN A LIVE COAL  
DROPPED IN THE SEA."**

**- WILLIAM LANGFORD -**

*For the grace of God  
has appeared,  
bringing salvation  
for all people.*



***Titus 2:11***



# Space for All at God's Table

Brad Jersak

*"The Jesus Way makes space for all at God's table; it enfolds all people as those whom God loves."*

—Greg Albrecht

*"It's easy to call people out. It's harder to call them in. But confession is a helpful start."*

—Jarrod McKenna

## The Pharisee and the Publican

**T**o some who were confident of their own

congratulating presumption by identifying ourselves with the publican, glaring back down our noses at the Pharisees. We despise them to prop ourselves up, practicing exclusion and reserving only our place at the table—just like the Pharisees.

Christ told this parable, not merely to "call out" the Pharisees for their hubris, but to "call them in" to the Father's table. He has no desire to see anyone—including them—wallow outside in the cold

## The Prodigal Son(s)

I speak of the "prodigal" advisedly. In some ways, all brothers are as different as Cain and Abel, Isaac and Jacob, and Jacob and Esau. But I have a lot in common with them. We all receive their inheritance from the Father who divides it among them (vs. 12). Both brothers alienate themselves, their respective fields of riotous rebellion and



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*The Jesus Way makes space for all at God's table...*

*Enfolding all people as those whom God loves.*



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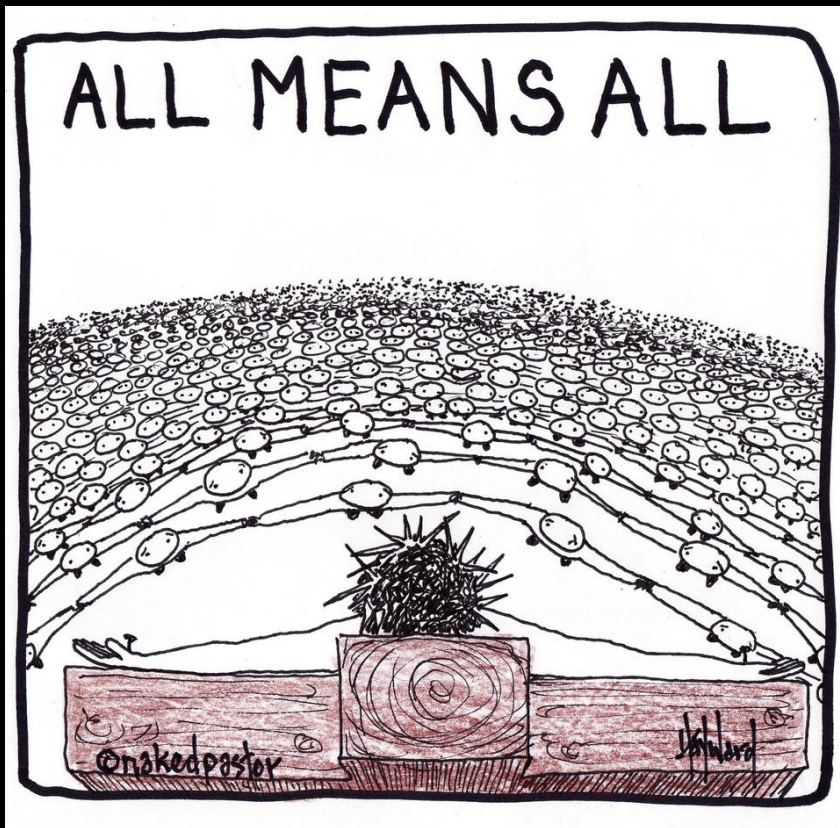
[ from Brad Jersak's book *IN: Incarnation & Inclusion, Abba & Lamb* ]

“Through his Incarnation, Christ reconciled us to Abba, he united and reunited humanity and Trinity in his Person. On the Cross, Christ tore open the curtain for all Abba's children, granting everyone, everywhere complete access to Abba's house now and forevermore. That's our inheritance.

But who is “our”?  
Only Christians, right?

*“And when I am lifted up from the earth,  
I will draw everyone to myself.”*

- John 12:32 NLT



[ from Brad Jersak's book *IN: Incarnation & Inclusion, Abba & Lamb* ]

That's not what we've heard from Paul. Here's Paul:  
*As in Adam, Paradise was lost for all; so in Christ, Paradise is reopened for all.*

But not everyone knows this. Exactly.

That's why John Wesley became an evangelist!

That's the astounding Good News  
that Christ commissioned his  
apostles to share!

That's the feast to which his  
servants invite and compel  
everyone to attend. The message  
is, "You're included! You're IN!  
So please, come on IN!"



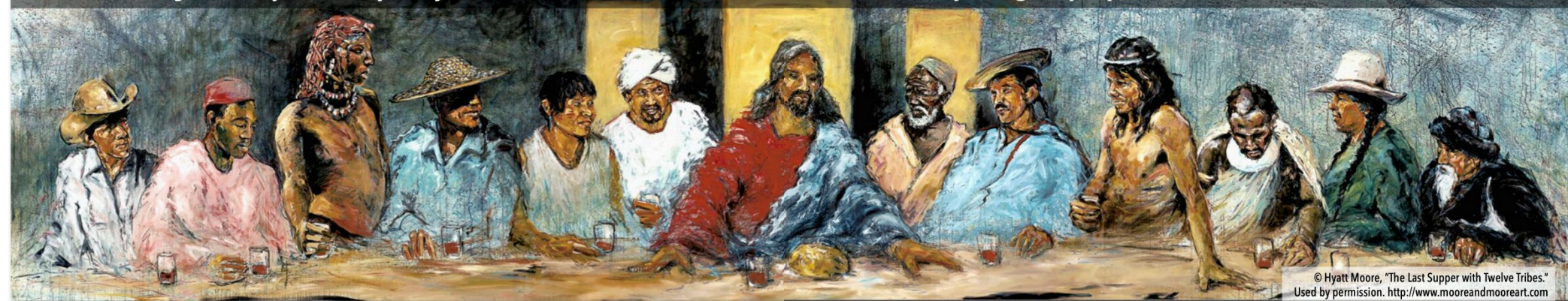
[ from Brad Jersak's book *IN: Incarnation & Inclusion, Abba & Lamb* ]

St. Hilary of Poitiers was a fourth-century evangelist. If we were to tell him, "Everyone's included, so let's dispense with all this embarrassing Jesus-talk," he would be dumbfounded.

"What?" he might gasp. "And fail to share the inheritance?" He'd regard us as greedy hoarders who refused to notify the rest of the family they'd been named in Christ's extravagant living will!

*The Jesus Way makes space for all at God's table...*

*Enfolding all people as those whom God loves.*



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[ from Brad Jersak's book *IN: Incarnation & Inclusion, Abba & Lamb* ]

He'd be like, "Exactly what part of that inheritance did you think was not worth sharing? Haven't you experienced it yourself? Or don't you believe in him?" For Hilary, as for Wesley, it's not that signing off on the inheritance in our baptism earns it for anyone.

Indeed, many are already obviously drawing from it!

Rather, many are not yet aware of the fullness of their inheritance and have yet to begin enjoying it. The role of the "Royal Priesthood" is to **deliver the beautiful news of such great wealth to all.**





The Holy Spirit **Awakens** us by grace and **Astonishes** our hearts so we can **Apprehend** our redeemed identity, **Enjoy** our full inheritance as God's dearly loved children, and allow that to **Overflow** relationally to others.

## 1John 4:12, 16-17 (PASSION)

<sup>12</sup> No one has ever gazed upon the fullness of God's splendour. But if we love one another, God makes his permanent home in us, and we make our permanent home in him, and his love is brought to its full expression in us...

<sup>16</sup> We have come into an intimate experience with God's love, and we trust in the love he has for us.

God is love! Those who are living in love are living in God, and God lives through them. <sup>17</sup> By living in God, love has been brought to its full expression in us so that we may fearlessly face the day of judgment, because all that Jesus now is, so are we in this world.

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to

LOVE

another

person is to see

the face of

God

- Victor Hugo



<sup>18</sup> Love never brings fear, for fear is always related to punishment. But love's perfection drives the fear of punishment far from our hearts. Whoever walks constantly afraid of punishment has not reached love's perfection. <sup>19</sup> Our love for others is our grateful response to the love God first demonstrated to us. - 1Jn 4:12, 18-19 (PASSION)



A close-up shot of a man with a distressed, almost tearful expression. He has dark, curly hair and is wearing a light-colored, textured coat over a white shirt. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting with other people.

("Les Misérables" - 2nd Trailer & Death & Finale, click link below)  
<https://vimeopro.com/user2890445/malcolm-guite-reflections/video/701748810>



To love another person  
is to see the face of God.

Victor Hugo