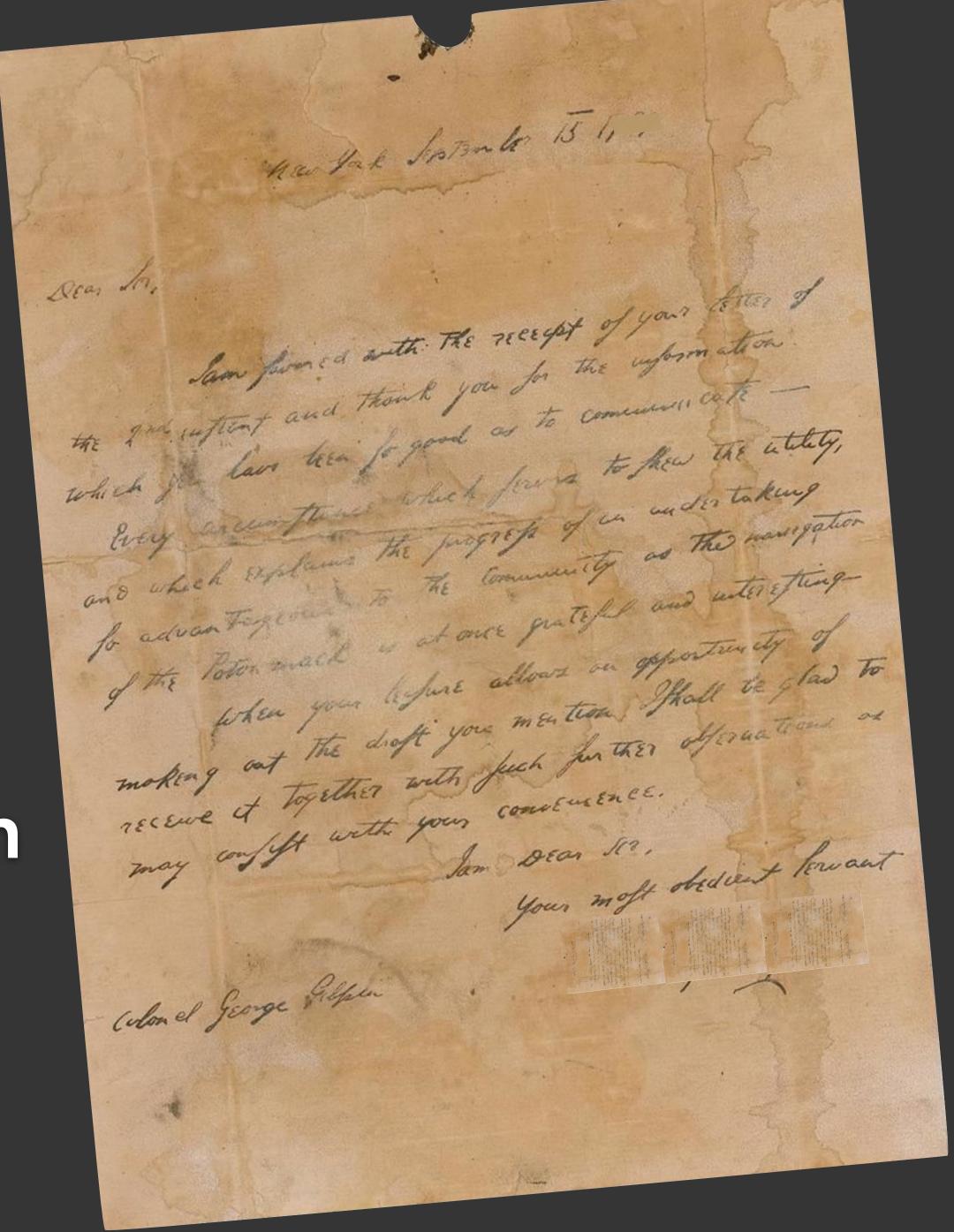
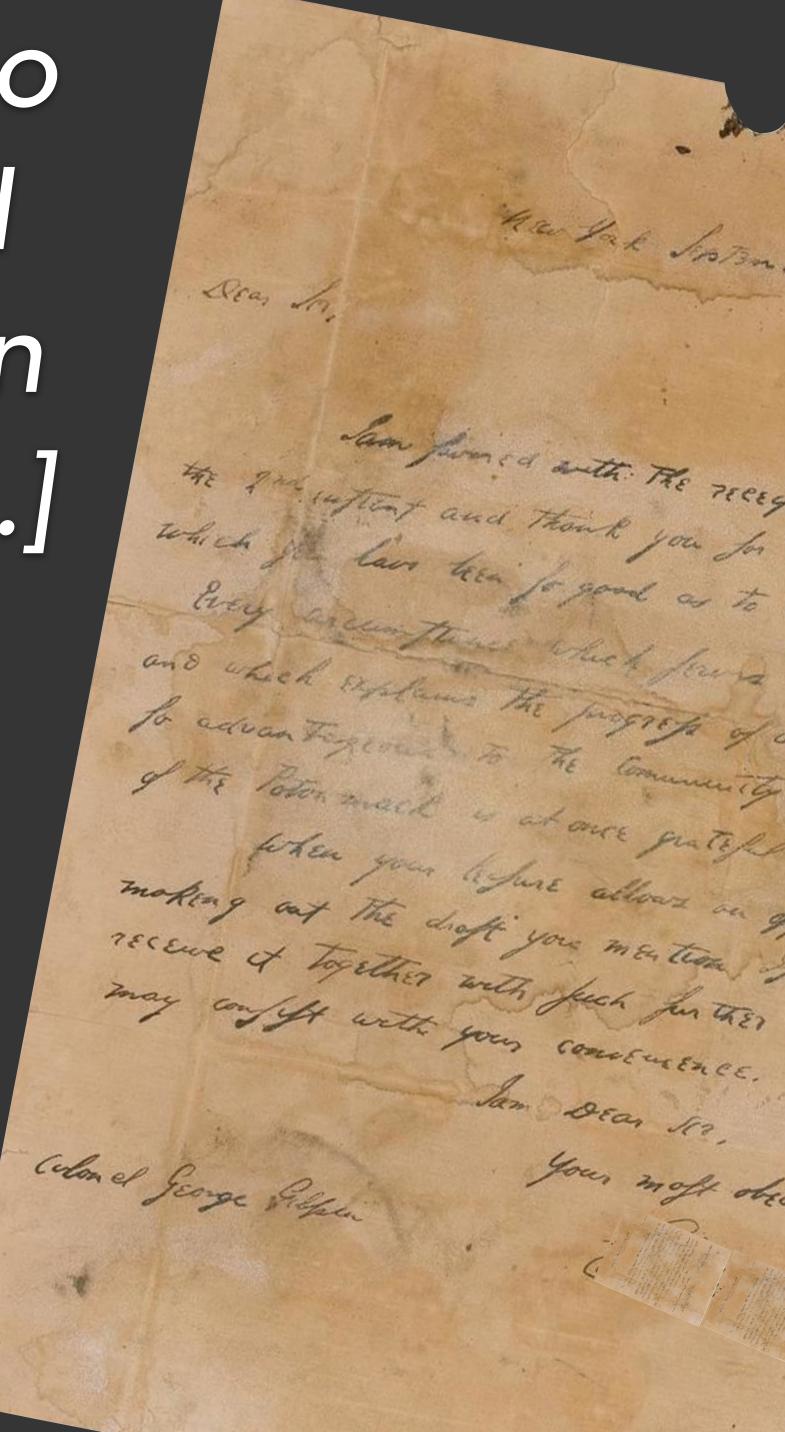


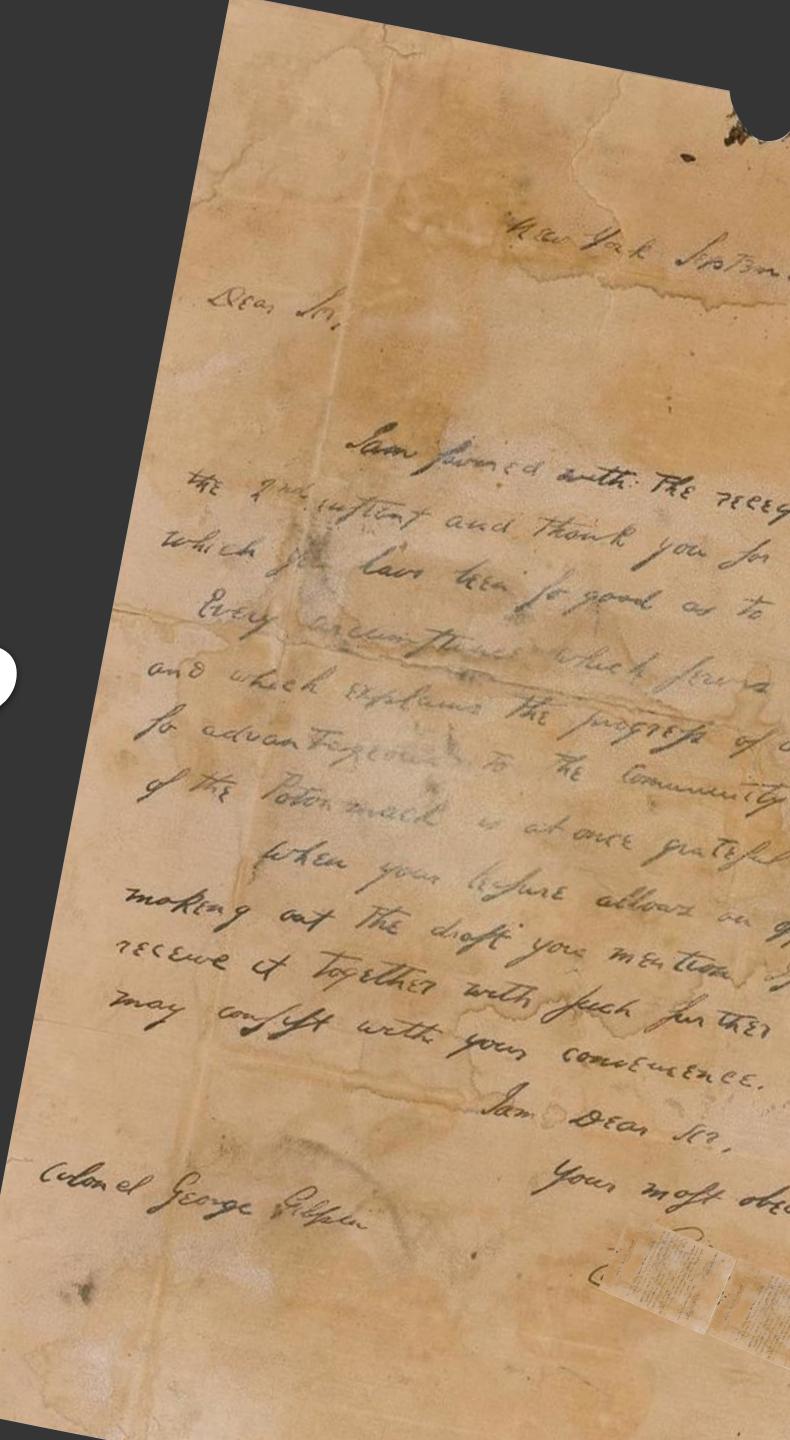
In 1850, Abraham Lincoln's step brother John D. Johnston wrote him a letter asking for money...

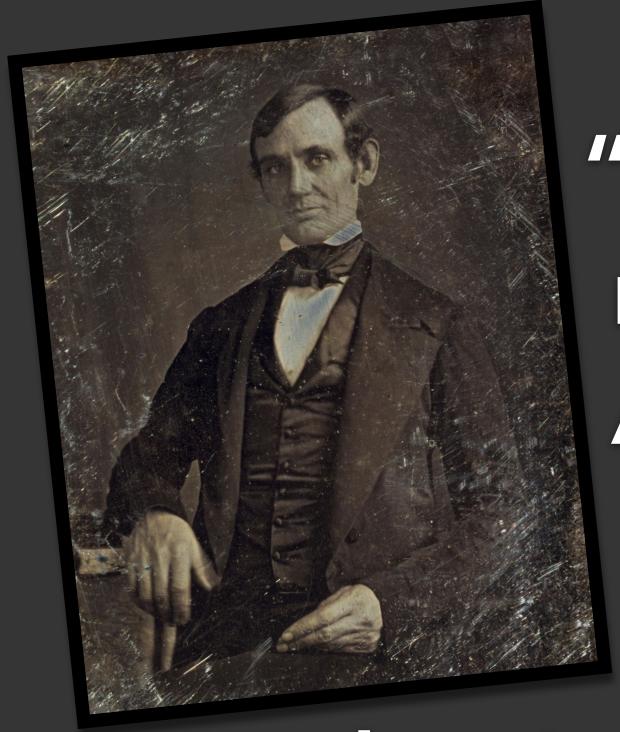


"I am dund & doged to Death so I am all most tired of Living, & I would all most swop my place in Heaven for that much money [...] I would rother live on bread and wotter than to have men allways duning me [...] If you can send me 80 Dollars I am willing to pay you any Intrust you will ask."



Hey Abe— Can you spare me another \$80 bucks? l'a appreciate it, Brother John





"Your request for eighty dollars I do not think it best to comply with now. At the various times when I have helped you a little you have said to me, 'We can get along very well now';

but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now, this can only happen by some defect in your conduct.
What that defect is, I think I know.
You are not lazy, and still you are an idler.

"I doubt whether, since I saw you, you have done a good whole day's work in any one day. You do not very much dislike to work, and still you do not work much merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; it is vastly important to you, and still more so to your children, that you should break the habit. It is more important to them, because they have longer to live, and can keep out of an idle habit before they are in it, easier than they can get out after they are in.

"You are now in need of some money; and what I propose is, that you shall go to work, 'tooth and nail,' for somebody who will give you money for it. Let father and your boys take charge of your things at home, prepare for a crop, and make the crop, and you go to work for the best money wages, or in discharge of any debt you owe, that you can get; and, to secure you a fair reward for your labor, I now promise you, that for every dollar you will, between this and the first of May, get for your own labor, either in money or as your own indebtedness, I will then give you one other dollar.

"By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean you shall go off to St. Louis, or the lead mines, or the gold mines in California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles County. Now, if you will do this, you will be soon out of debt, and, what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again. But, if I should now clear you out of debt, next year you would be just as deep in as ever.

"You say you would almost give your place in heaven for seventy or eighty dollars. Then you value your place in heaven very cheap, for I am sure you can, with the offer I make, get the seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months' work. You say if I will furnish you the money you will deed me the land, and, if you don't pay the money back, you will deliver possession. Nonsense! If you can't now live with the land, how will you then live without it? You have always been kind to me, and I do not mean to be unkind to you. On the contrary, if you will but follow my advice, you will find it worth more than eighty times eighty dollars to you.

Affectionately your brother,

A. Lincoln

When brother John was willing to his part— Abraham Lincoln was willing to do far more!

In many ways... That's what God says to us.

"You do your part, and I'll do far more."



Ephesians 3:20-21 might sound familiar to you—

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

When we do our part, God will do more than we can even dream of.

We move... and then God moves more.

- The Israelites & the walls of Jericho.
- The widow and the jars of oil.
- The blind man washing in the pool.

As we obey... God gives us more strength.

Philippians 1:27-28

Paul (God) is calling us to live a life worthy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

How do we do this?

How do we do this?

- Unity. (Phil 2:1-3a)
 - Humility. (Phil 2:3b-11)

Jesus did His part (humility & obedience)... God the Father then did far more.

("Therefore God" v. 9)

When we move... God moves more.



Working Out With Personal Trainers

Philippians 2:12-30



Philippians 2:12-18

12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose. Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation."

Philippians 2:12-18

15 Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

When we do our part*... God will do His part.

*(don't think for one second that this means we somehow "earn" our salvation!)

"Verse 12 is often misunderstood. People frequently suppose it means that Christians are responsible for doing things which will earn them their salvation, on the principle of 'the Lord helps those who help themselves.' (which is not, of course, a text from the Bible!).

N.T. Wright

"But that's quite out of line with what Paul says anywhere else. Salvationas he goes on to stress in the next verse —is God's work from start to finish. No: he wants the Philippians to work out for themselves what this business of being saved will mean in practice."

N.T. Wright

what this business of being saved will mean in practice?

- v. 12 "work out your salvation with fear and trembling."
- v. 14 "Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure—children of God."

what this business of being saved will mean in practice?

Q: Do you grumble or argue?

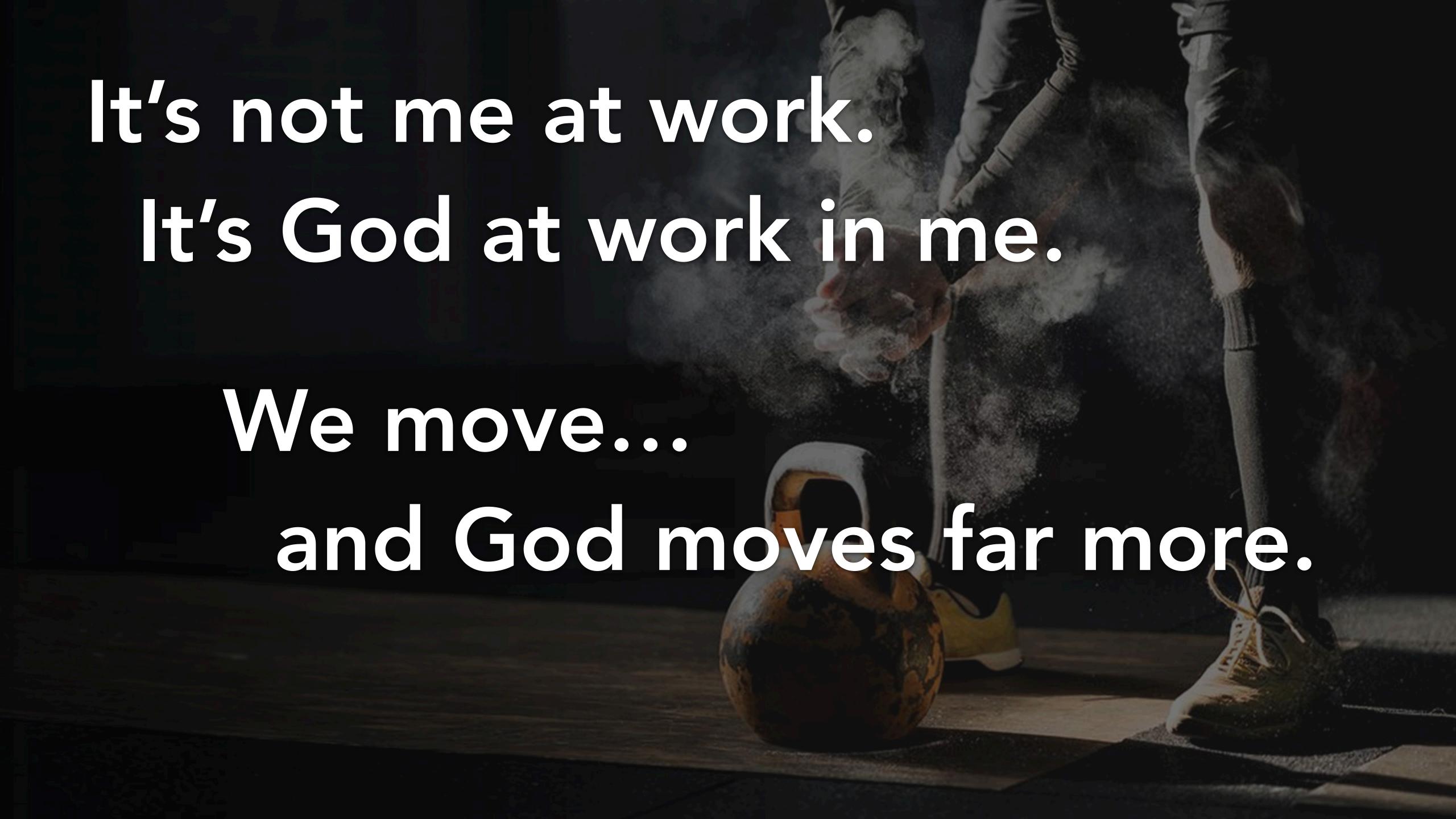
Yes

God calls us to be humble. He requires that we be unified. He tells us not to grumble or argue. How's that working out?

We're failing on every count. What do we do?

That's the point of Philippians.

We have help.
We have hope.
We have reason for joy.



It's not me at work.

It's God at work in me.

Philippians 2:13

"It is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose."

It's not me at work.

It's God at work in me.

Philippians 4:13

"I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

It's not me at work. It's God at work in me.

Philippians 1:9-11

"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <u>filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ</u>."

And what about these "personal trainers"?

• Timothy

• Epaphroditus

Philippians 2:19-30

19

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the Gospel.

Philippians 2:19-30

²³ I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon. But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. Indeed he was ill, and almost died.

Philippians 2:19-30

²⁷ But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.

• Timothy

- He was young.
- He was probably timid.
- He certainly felt overwhelmed.
- * He cared. That's what matters.

• Epaphroditus

- His death would have ruined Paul.
- "Rejoicing always" doesn't mean we don't grieve...or struggle. It means we trust. And hope.

