



# *A Beautiful Mess*

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1 CORINTHIANS

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- The Corinthian church was a messed up group of people- but they were God's beautiful mess!
  - Theme: grace in difficulties & love in hostility
  - 1 Corinthians 6:20 & 15:58
- What hinders these things from being a true reality for us?
  - Pride
- We want to pursue maturity in Christ while shedding off self and pride

## 1 Corinthians 3:1–4 (NASB)

1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? 4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men?

- Paul gives us a clearer explanation of the natural and spiritual man
  - Natural
  - Spiritual
  - Flesh/infants
- The human condition is to make ourselves the CENTER
  - Comparison
  - Validation
  - Bitterness

## 1 Corinthians 3:5–9 (NASB)

5 What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. 7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

- Paul wants to begin to work us away from being the center
  - Away from being the ultimate source of our worth
- Gardening has 2 factors that determine its success:
  - Acts of the gardener
  - Environment...but God gives the increase!
- Are you not growing due to your own negligence?
- What is the quality of your gardening?
- What is the quality of your calling on the Master Gardener?

## **1 Corinthians 3:10–11 (NASB)**

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. 11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

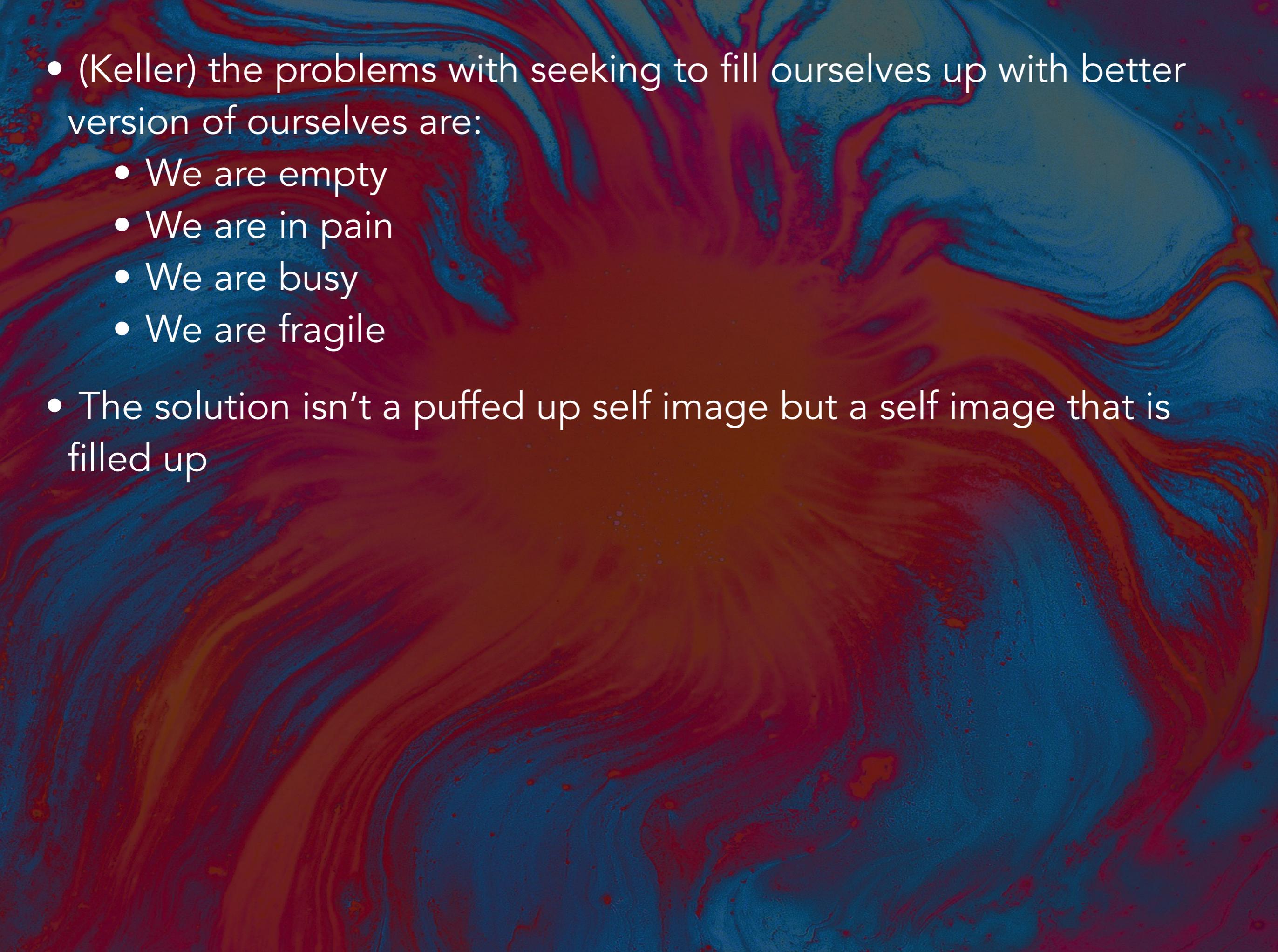


## 1 Corinthians 3:18–23 (NASB)

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, "He is the one who catches the wise in their craftiness"; 20 and again, "The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless." 21 So then let no one boast in men. For all things belong to you, 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things belong to you, 23 and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God.

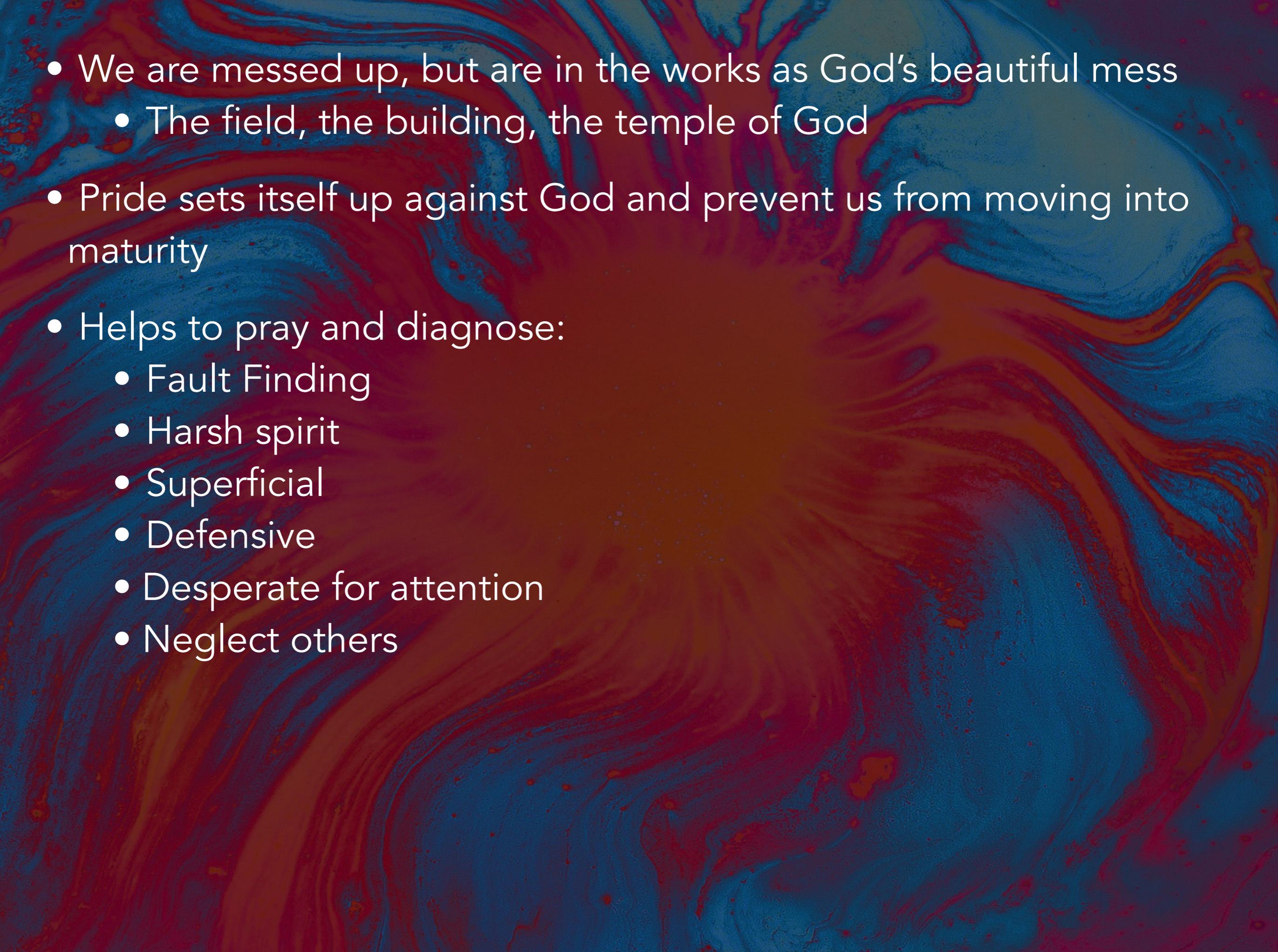
- **Pride:**

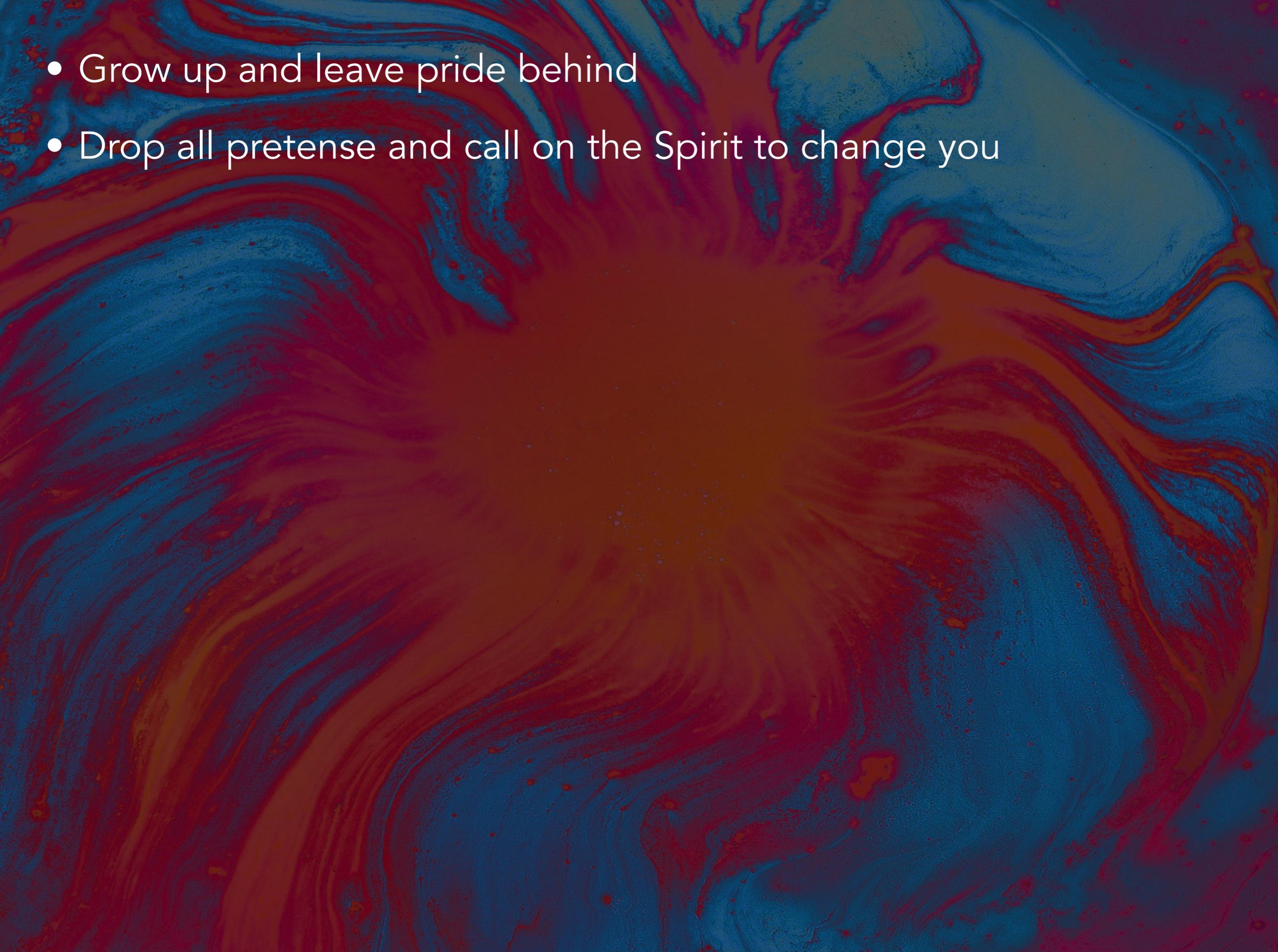
- The quality of having an excessively high opinion of oneself or one's importance
- A person or thing that is the object of a feeling or deep pleasure or satisfaction
- Almost every culture determined man's biggest problem was his ego, his hubris, his pride
  - Modern man has determined his biggest problem is a lack of self-esteem

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- (Keller) the problems with seeking to fill ourselves up with better version of ourselves are:
    - We are empty
    - We are in pain
    - We are busy
    - We are fragile
  - The solution isn't a puffed up self image but a self image that is filled up

## 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 (NASB)

16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

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- We are messed up, but are in the works as God's beautiful mess
    - The field, the building, the temple of God
  - Pride sets itself up against God and prevent us from moving into maturity
  - Helps to pray and diagnose:
    - Fault Finding
    - Harsh spirit
    - Superficial
    - Defensive
    - Desperate for attention
    - Neglect others

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- Grow up and leave pride behind
  - Drop all pretense and call on the Spirit to change you