

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM

JAMES 3:13-18

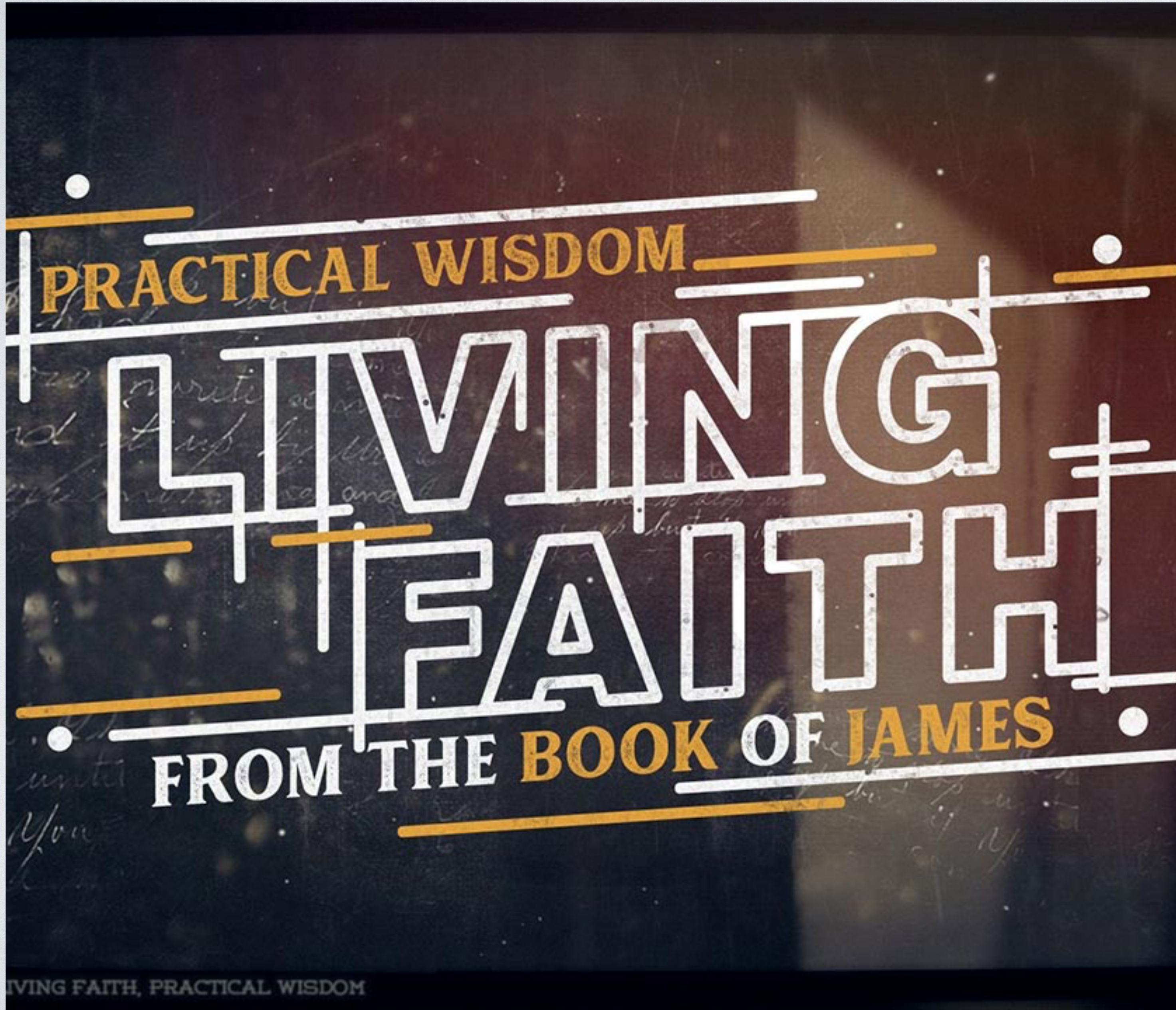
FAITH

WORKS

THE BOOK OF JAMES

¹³ Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom.— James 3:13 (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: LIVING FAITH / PRACTICAL WISDOM



- **TRIALS** (1:2-12)
- **TEMPTATION** (1:13-16)
- WE MUST BE **DOERS OF THE WORD** - (1:17-27)
- THE SIN OF **PARTIALITY** (2:1-13)
- SAVING FAITH IS AN **OBEDIENT FAITH** — FAITH VOID OF OBEDIENCE DOES NOT SAVE (2:14-26)
- POWER OF **THE TONGUE** (3:12-14)



WISDOM

FROM

ABOVE

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM

EARTHLY
SENSUAL
DEMONIC

JAMES 3:13-18

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM

Heavenly? ... or Earthly, Sensual, Demonic?



- **We should all want to have wisdom.** “Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.” - Prov 4:7
- **How do we know whether or not we have true wisdom?** Wisdom is known by deeds rather than words. (James 3:13)

James 3:13–18 (NKJV)

¹³ Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there. ¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸ Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

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A WARNING TO TEACHERS



- “Among the Jews, Sophos (“wise”) was a technical term for the teacher, the scribe, the Rabbi” (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. 7:505)
- Jewish disciples wanted to be teachers (3:1)
- James is still dealing with the tongue - but goes beyond the sins of the tongue to the source of those sins.

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A WARNING TO TEACHERS

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What qualifications should one meet to be a teacher? (cf. Deut 1:13)

- ▶ Wisdom in handling the scriptures (2 Tim 2:15; 2 Pet. 3:16-18)
- ▶ Wisdom in handling difficult situations would be important (Jude 1:22,23; James 1:5)
- ▶ Wisdom is necessary in promoting unity & harmony (Jam 3:13-18)

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Defining Wisdom

Thayer Definition: G4678 – σοφία - sophia

1) wisdom, broad and full of intelligence; used of the knowledge of very diverse matters - 1a) . . . acquired by acuteness and experience, . . . 1a5) skill in the management of affairs - 1a6) devout and proper prudence . . . 1a7) the knowledge and practice of the requisites for godly and upright living

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Defining Wisdom



VINE'S Definition:

sophia (σοφία, 4678)
is used with reference to (a) God, ...
(b) Christ, ... (c) "wisdom"
personified, ... (d) human "wisdom"
**"Sophia is the insight into the true
nature of things,"**

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TRUE WISDOM EXPRESSED

James 3:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom.

■ Not ONLY WORDS - but also DEEDS

- ▶ “**Good conversation**” (KJV); - “**good conduct**” (NKJV); “**good behavior**” - (NASB) - (cf. Eph 5:15-17; 1 Tim 4:12-16)
- ▶ **Works** - (Mt 7:24; Tit 2:14 - in contrast cf. Mat. 6:1-18; 23:2-5; Tit 1:16)
- ▶ **Meekness** - the opposite of arrogance - (Mat 20:25-28; Gal. 6:1; 1 Tim 6:11)

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EVIDENCE OF UNGODLY WISDOM (3:14)

James 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.

- **“Bitter envying”** - ② pert. to being bitter in feeling or attitude, bitter, embittered, harsh, [BDAG] — “an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy” (Thayer. 271)
- An intense feeling due to perceived wrongs resulting in an intense, cynical, antagonism, which translates into open hostility toward others.

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- ▶ 1 Cor 3:3 - For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?
- ▶ Galatians 5:20 - . . . contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,
- ▶ Rom. 13:13 - Let us walk properly . . . not in strife and envy. .

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EVIDENCE OF UNGODLY WISDOM (3:14)

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- **“Self seeking”** - “faction” (ASV), “strife - (KJV), “selfish ambition” (NASB), - “denotes ambition, self-seeking, rivalry, self-will being an underlying idea in the word; denotes party-making” (Vine. 2:68).
- One who is interested in promoting self over the needs of others or wellbeing of the whole; creating division & parties.

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WISDOM FROM ABOVE IS NEITHER ENVIOUS OR SELFISH ...

James 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.

Philippians 2:1–5 (NKJV)

¹ Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, ² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. ³ *Let* nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM

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SOURCE OF UNGODLY WISDOM

James 3:15
(NKJV)

¹⁵ This wisdom
does not descend
from above, but *is*
earthly, sensual,
demonic.

- **Origin: “Earthly”** - “... the wisdom of man, liable to error and misleading” - (Thayer. 236-7). (cf. Phili. 3:18-20)
- ▶ Wisdom that is according to the world's standards, lusts, and goals.
- ▶ Such limited understanding cannot be relied upon and is foolishness to God (cf. - 1 Cor 1:20-24,25.26; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 John 2:15)

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- **Appeal: “Sensual”** - “. . . principle of animal life, which men have in common with the brutes. b. governed by the. . . sensuous nature with its subjection to appetite and passion” (Thayer. 677-8). - cf. Jude 17-19
- Appealing to the senses, the emotions, the passions — resulting in the increase of carnality and the decrease of spirituality!

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- **Nature: “devilish”** - “resembling or proceeding from an evil spirit, demon-like” (Thayer. 124) - cf. John 8:44
- ▶ Does not require denial of God & spiritual things, just a promotion of worldly, carnal & sensual things above the spiritual.
- ▶ Satan did not seek to make Eve an atheist, but to demote God in her mind (Gen 3)

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM

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RESULTS OF UNGODLY WISDOM

James 3:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there.

- **Confusion** - “instability..., denotes a state of disorder, disturbance, confusion, tumult ... revolution or anarchy” (Vine. 1:227)
- **Every evil work** - worthless, vile, wicked, base — “for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?” (1 Cor. 3:3)

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM

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WISDOM FROM ABOVE

James 3:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

God is it's source and is attained from:

- ▶ God - 1 Kings 4:29
- ▶ A respect for God - Ps 111:10
- ▶ Bible Study - Ps 119:97,98
- ▶ Obedience to God's will - Ps 107:43
- ▶ Maturity - Heb 5:14

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■ NATURE OF WISDOM FROM ABOVE:

- ▶ **Pure** - "not contaminated" (Vine. 3:231); cf. Mat 5:8; 1 John 3:3; Gal 1:8-9
- ▶ **Peaceable** - cf. Matthew 5:9
- ▶ **Gentle** - "equitable, fair, moderate, forbearing, considerateness - looks reasonably at the facts (cf. Phil 4:5)

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■ NATURE OF WISDOM FROM ABOVE:

- ▶ **Willing to yield** - Does not yield faith - but opinions - considers the evidence & yields to the truth
- ▶ **Mercy** - kindness or good will towards the miserable and afflicted, joined with a desire to relieve them - cf. Mat 5:7

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■ NATURE OF WISDOM FROM ABOVE:

- ▶ **Good fruits** - fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-24); works (Eph. 2:10); Both in the heart and in the life; two of which are immediately specified;
- ▶ **Without partiality** - cf. James 2:1
- ▶ **Without hypocrisy** - genuine, sincere

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WISDOM FROM ABOVE

James 3:18

(NKJV)

¹⁸ Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

■ RESULT OF HEAVENLY WISDOM:

- ▶ The **fruit of righteousness** is sown (Ephesians 2:10)
- ▶ In **peace** [as much as depends on us] (Romans 12:18)
- ▶ By them that make peace (cf. Mat. 5:9; Rom. 5:1; 1:16-17; Eph. 4:1-3; Phili. 4:7)

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM / TWO KINDS OF FRUIT

FROM EARTH

ENVY

SELFISH

CONFUSION

SENSUALITY

EVIL

FROM ABOVE

PURE / PEACEABLE

GENTLE / WILLING TO YIELD

MERCIFUL / GOOD FRUITS

IMPARTIALITY / SINCERE

PEACE

JAMES 3:13-18

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM / TWO KINDS OF FRUIT

WISDOM IS PROVEN BY ITS FRUIT
WHICH DO WE EXHIBIT?

FROM EARTH

FROM ABOVE

JAMES 3:13-18

WISDOM
FROM
ABOVE

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM

EARTHLY
SENSUAL
DEMONIC

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WATCH YOUR MOUTH

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Philippians 3:15–21 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. ¹⁶

Nevertheless, to *the degree* that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. ¹⁷ Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

Philippians 3:15–21 (NKJV)

¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.