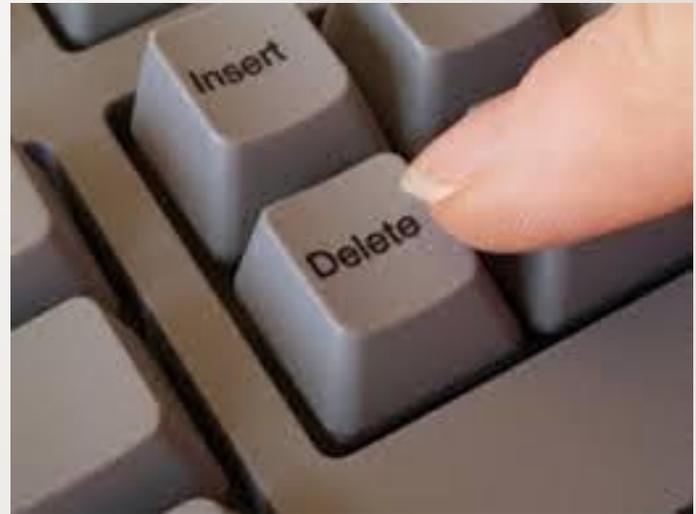


Spirituality of the 12 Steps

Step 6 **The Chicken or the Egg: Which Comes First?**

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON
RICHARD ROHR'S
BREATHING UNDERWATER



• **Were entirely ready to have God remove all of these defects of character.** — Step 6 of the Twelve Steps

“This is what I shall tell my heart, and so recover hope: the favors of Yahweh are not all passed, his kindnesses are not exhausted. They are renewed every morning.” — Lamentations 3:21–22

“Not that I have become perfect yet: I have not yet won, but I am still running to capture the prize for which Christ Jesus captured me.” — Philippians 3:12

“The only thing that counts is not what humans want or try to do, but the mercy of God.” — Romans 9:16

“If I will it? Of course I will it! Be healed.” — Jesus (Luke 5:12)

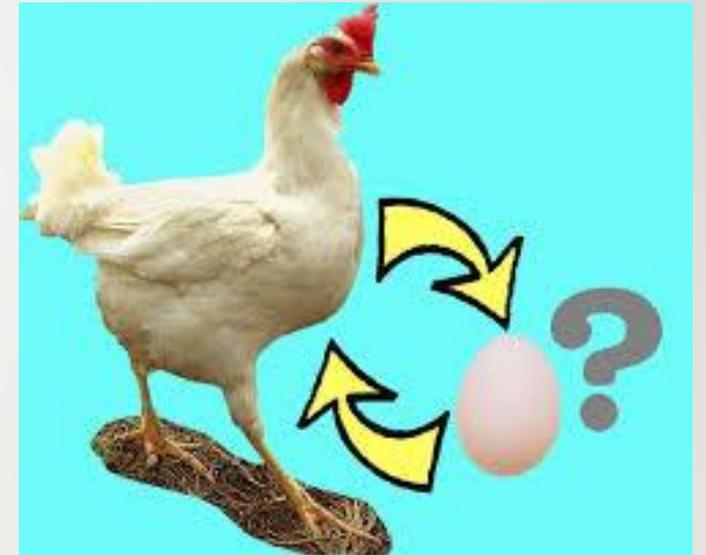


[Step 6] struggles with—and resolves—the old paradox of the chicken and the egg. It first recognizes that **we have to work to see our many resistances, excuses, and blockages**, but then we have to fully acknowledge that **God alone can do the “removing”!** Grace or responsibility?

we had to run and “work for our salvation in fear and trembling”



God’s love is a totally free gift



Paradox

The seeming paradox was summed up in an old aphorism:

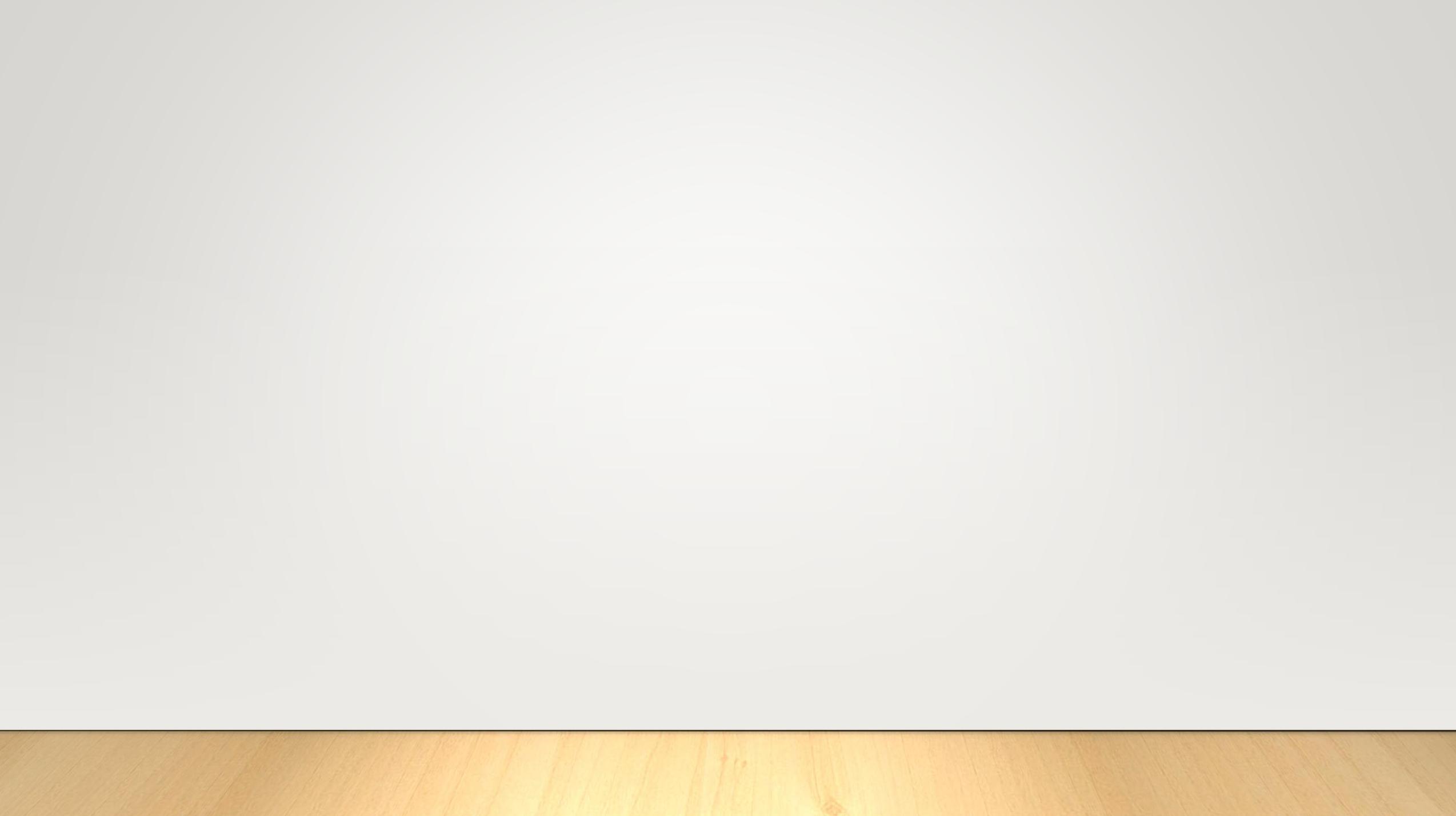
“No one catches the wild ass by running after him, yet only those who run after the wild ass ever catch him.”



Christians actually revel in paradoxes without even realizing it:

- Jesus is totally human and totally divine at the same time,
- God is both one and three at the same time,
- Mary is both virgin and mother at the same time,
- the bread is both wheat and Jesus at the same time.

We must pray as if it all depends on us, and work as if it all depends on God (yes, you read that correctly!).





Questions for Reflection

Do you tend to focus more on the work you need to do to live a full life or do you focus more on God's gracious gifts? Do you focus more on grace or responsibility?

Do you like things "black and white" or do you prefer ambiguity?