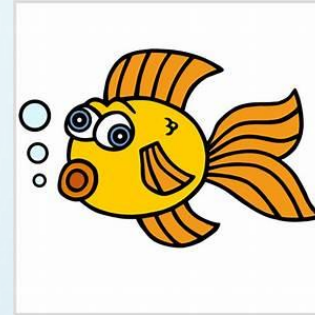


THE GOD IMPULSE III

LUKE 6:36 BE MERCIFUL, JUST AS YOUR FATHER IS
MERCIFUL. NIV

THE GOOD SAMARITAN **SAW AND “FELT”** MERCY
FOR THE BEATEN ENEMY!

HUMANS VS. GOLDFISH



Eight seconds. That's the average attention span of a human today, according to a study from Microsoft. Researchers say that goldfish are more attentive than we are.

Think again of the Good Samaritan. Before he could bandage up the traveler's wounds and take him to the inn, what had to happen? **He had to see him. He had to feel an inkling to help. "And when he saw him, he had compassion" (Luke 10: 33)**

THE WOOL OVER OUR EYES



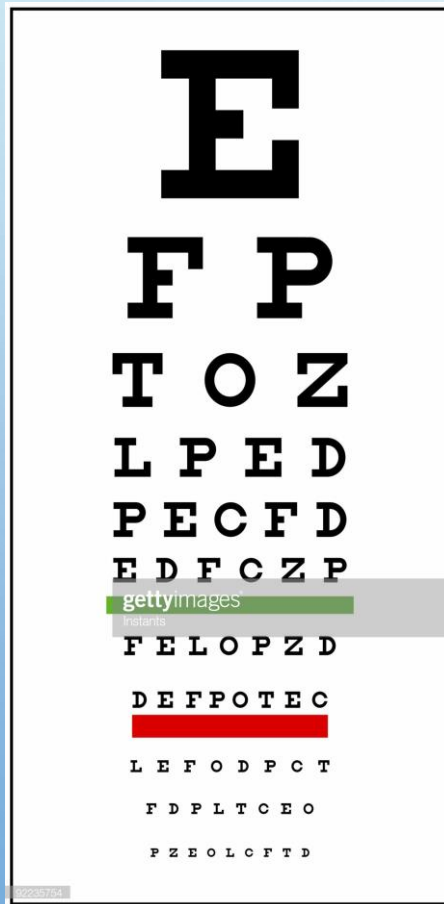
Vision

Sheep depend heavily on their vision. They have excellent peripheral vision and can see behind themselves without turning their heads. However, they have poor depth perception. They cannot see immediately in front of their noses. Some vertical vision may also have been sacrificed in order to have a wider field of vision. For example, it is doubtful that a sheep would be able to see something in a tree.

Heads down – We can't see what is right in front of us! Danger or needs!

SEEING LIKE GOD DOES

- WHILE BATS RELY ON THEIR SENSE OF HEARING AND SHARKS DEPEND ON THEIR SENSE OF SMELL, WE HUMANS LEAN ON OUR SENSE OF SIGHT. WE FILTER THE WORLD THROUGH OUR EYES,



1 Corinthians 13:12 Now we see things imperfectly as in a cloudy mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely. NLT

Barne's Notes -Paul here makes use of another illustration to show the imperfection of our knowledge here. Compared with what it will be in the future world, it is like the imperfect view of an object which we have in looking through an obscure and opaque medium compared with the view which we have when we look at it "face to face."

4 LENS NEEDED TO SEE:

HEARING WITH AN UN-CALLOUSED HEART

- **MATTHEW 13:11-17** HE REPLIED, "YOU ARE PERMITTED TO UNDERSTAND THE SECRETS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, BUT OTHERS ARE NOT. 12 TO THOSE WHO LISTEN TO MY TEACHING, MORE UNDERSTANDING WILL BE GIVEN, AND THEY WILL HAVE AN ABUNDANCE OF KNOWLEDGE. BUT FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT LISTENING, EVEN WHAT LITTLE UNDERSTANDING THEY HAVE WILL BE TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM. 13 THAT IS WHY I USE THESE PARABLES,
- **FOR THEY LOOK, BUT THEY DON'T REALLY SEE. THEY HEAR, BUT THEY DON'T REALLY LISTEN OR UNDERSTAND.**
- 14 THIS FULFILLS THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH THAT SAYS, 'WHEN YOU HEAR WHAT I SAY, YOU WILL NOT UNDERSTAND. **WHEN YOU SEE WHAT I DO, YOU WILL NOT COMPREHEND. 15 FOR THE HEARTS OF THESE PEOPLE ARE HARDENED, AND THEIR EARS CANNOT HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES— SO THEIR EYES CANNOT SEE,** AND THEIR EARS CANNOT HEAR, AND THEIR HEARTS CANNOT UNDERSTAND, AND THEY CANNOT TURN TO ME AND LET ME HEAL THEM.'
- 16 "BUT BLESSED ARE YOUR EYES, BECAUSE THEY SEE; AND YOUR EARS, BECAUSE THEY HEAR. 17 I TELL YOU THE TRUTH, MANY PROPHETS AND RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE LONGED TO SEE WHAT YOU SEE, BUT THEY DIDN'T SEE IT. AND THEY LONGED TO HEAR WHAT YOU HEAR, BUT THEY DIDN'T HEAR IT.

THE UPSIDE-DOWN KINGDOM – VALUING WHAT GOD VALUES

- **THE POOR IN SPIRIT.** “BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN” (MATTHEW 5: 3 NIV).
- **THE LITERAL POOR.** “BLESSED ARE YOU WHO ARE POOR, FOR YOURS IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD” (LUKE 6: 20 NIV).
- **CHILDREN.** “TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, UNLESS YOU TURN AND BECOME LIKE CHILDREN, YOU WILL NEVER ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. WHOEVER HUMBLER HIMSELF LIKE THIS CHILD IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN” (MATTHEW 18: 3–4).
- **SERVANTS.** “THE GREATEST AMONG YOU SHALL BE YOUR SERVANT. WHOEVER EXALTS HIMSELF WILL BE HUMBLER, AND WHOEVER HUMBLER HIMSELF WILL BE EXALTED” (MATTHEW 23: 11–12).
- **SLAVES.** “INSTEAD, WHOEVER WANTS TO BECOME GREAT AMONG YOU MUST BE YOUR SERVANT, AND WHOEVER WANTS TO BE FIRST MUST BE YOUR SLAVE” (MATTHEW 20: 26–27 NIV).
- **ALL THE PEOPLE AND THINGS THE WORLD ENCOURAGES US TO IGNORE, GOD WANTS US TO SEE.**
- THAT’S WHAT MAKES THE GOOD SAMARITAN STORY SO POWERFUL; **HE SAW AND RESPONDED TO THE BEATEN MAN WHO WAS, TECHNICALLY, HIS ENEMY. HE REACHED DOWN TO HELP SOMEONE WHO WAS POOR AND VULNERABLE.**

- **UNDERSTANDING THE PARADOXES** - A "PARADOX" IS DEFINED AS A SEEMINGLY SELF-CONTRADICTIONARY DECLARATION BUT IS IN FACT TRUE.
- THE BIBLE CONTAINS "GOD'S THOUGHTS" WHICH ARE STRANGE AND YET MARVELOUS SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS. AMONG THEM ARE PARADOXES.
 - **EXALTATION THROUGH HUMILITY** - **JAMES 4:10** HUMBLE YOURSELVES BEFORE THE LORD, AND HE WILL EXALT YOU. ESV
 - **STRENGTH THROUGH WEAKNESS** - **2 CORINTHIANS 12:10** FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST, THEN, I AM CONTENT WITH WEAKNESSES, INSULTS, HARDSHIPS, PERSECUTIONS, AND CALAMITIES. FOR WHEN I AM WEAK, THEN I AM STRONG. ESV
 - **RECEIVING THROUGH GIVING** - **ACTS 20:35** IN ALL THINGS I HAVE SHOWN YOU THAT BY WORKING HARD IN THIS WAY WE MUST HELP THE WEAK AND REMEMBER THE WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS, HOW HE HIMSELF SAID, 'IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.'" ESV
 - **FREEDOM THROUGH SERVITUDE** - **ROMANS 6:18-19** YOU WERE MADE FREE FROM SIN, AND NOW YOU ARE SLAVES TO GOODNESS. 19 I USE THIS EXAMPLE BECAUSE THIS IS HARD FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND. IN THE PAST YOU OFFERED THE PARTS OF YOUR BODY TO BE SLAVES TO SIN AND EVIL; YOU LIVED ONLY FOR EVIL. IN THE SAME WAY NOW YOU MUST GIVE YOURSELVES TO BE SLAVES OF GOODNESS. THEN YOU WILL LIVE ONLY FOR GOD. NCV

- **GAINING THROUGH LOSING - PHILIPPIANS 3:6-9** I WAS SO ZEALOUS THAT I HARSHLY PERSECUTED THE CHURCH. AND AS FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS, I OBEYED THE LAW WITHOUT FAULT. 7 I ONCE THOUGHT THESE THINGS WERE VALUABLE, BUT NOW I CONSIDER THEM WORTHLESS BECAUSE OF WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE. 8 YES, EVERYTHING ELSE IS WORTHLESS WHEN COMPARED WITH THE INFINITE VALUE OF KNOWING CHRIST JESUS MY LORD. FOR HIS SAKE I HAVE DISCARDED EVERYTHING ELSE, COUNTING IT ALL AS GARBAGE, SO THAT I COULD GAIN CHRIST. NLT
- **LIVING THROUGH DYING - JOHN 12:24** I TELL YOU THE TRUTH, UNLESS A KERNEL OF WHEAT IS PLANTED IN THE SOIL AND DIES, IT REMAINS ALONE. BUT ITS DEATH WILL PRODUCE MANY NEW KERNELS—A PLENTIFUL HARVEST OF NEW LIVES. NLT
- **FINDING THROUGH LOSING - MATTHEW 10:39** IF YOU CLING TO YOUR LIFE, YOU WILL LOSE IT; BUT IF YOU GIVE UP YOUR LIFE FOR ME, YOU WILL FIND IT. NLT
- IF WE WANT TO EXPERIENCE THE HEALING BALM OF MERCY, ONE OF THE WAYS WE DO SO IS BY EXTENDING THAT MERCY TO OTHERS! **GIVING UP OUR PERCEIVED RIGHT, OR DESIRES FOR REVENGE, AND MOVING DOWN THE PATH OF FORGIVENESS FORM OUR HEART!**

KNOWING THE HEART OF OUR FATHER! MERCY

- **THE PRODIGAL SON – LUKE 15:1-32**

- VS. 17 HE DECIDED TO GO BACK HOME AND **BEG FOR HELP—FOR MERCY, IF YOU WILL.**
- BUT WHEN THE PRODIGAL SON DID COME HOME, A CURIOUS THING HAPPENED. HIS FATHER RAN TO HIM. RAN TO HIM IN LOVE.
 - **KEEP IN MIND THAT A FATHER RUNNING TO GREET HIS SON WAS SEEN AS SHAMEFUL, EVEN SCANDALOUS. ACCORDING TO THEOLOGIAN MATT WILLIAMS IN BIOLA MAGAZINE, “A MIDDLE EASTERN MAN NEVER—NEVER—RAN.”**
 - WILLIAMS SUGGESTS THAT THE FATHER RAN TO PROTECT THE SON FROM THE CONDEMNATION OF THE COMMUNITY; HE SHAMED HIMSELF TO PROTECT HIS SON FROM SHAME. THAT’S MERCY.
- THE PRODIGAL SON CAME HOME THINKING HE NEEDED A JOB. **WHAT HE REALLY NEEDED WAS MERCY.** A PLACE OF SAFETY AND HEALING. HE NEEDED THE STRONG ARMS OF A FATHER, EVEN THOUGH HE DIDN’T DESERVE THEM.

- REMEMBER THAT IN THIS PARABLE, WE'RE THE PRODIGALS. WE REBEL. WE SQUANDER GOD'S GIFTS. AND THEN WHEN WE REALIZE WHAT A MESS WE'VE MADE OF OUR LIVES, WE BEG FOR FORGIVENESS.
- **THE PRODIGAL SON PARABLE PAINTS A VIVID PICTURE OF THE WORST YOU—THE ONE WHERE YOU ARE LAID BARE, ALL YOUR SINS ARE ON THE TABLE, YOU ARE GUILTY, AND YET YOU ARE LOVED AND ACCEPTED.**
- **THE OLDER SON**
 - LUKE 15:25-29 "NOW HIS OLDER SON WAS IN THE FIELD, AND AS HE CAME AND DREW NEAR TO THE HOUSE, HE HEARD MUSIC AND DANCING. 26 AND HE CALLED ONE OF THE SERVANTS AND ASKED WHAT THESE THINGS MEANT. 27 AND HE SAID TO HIM, 'YOUR BROTHER HAS COME, AND YOUR FATHER HAS KILLED THE FATTENED CALF, BECAUSE HE HAS RECEIVED HIM BACK SAFE AND SOUND.' 28 BUT HE WAS ANGRY AND REFUSED TO GO IN. HIS FATHER CAME OUT AND ENTREATED HIM, ESV

- BOTH SONS WERE LOST—THE YOUNGER IN REBELLION, THE OLDER IN MORALISM.
- A MORALIST BELIEVES THAT WE CAN SOMEHOW EARN OUR WAY INTO GOD'S GOOD GRACES.
 - “IN EVERY OTHER WORLDVIEW, SALVATION IS EARNED. GOOD DEEDS HAVE TO OUTWEIGH YOUR BAD DEEDS. YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS HAS TO EXCEED YOUR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS. KARMA HAS TO BE PAID.” (RZ)
 - THE OLDER BROTHER HAD NEVER ENJOYED THE LOVE OF THE FATHER, EVEN THOUGH HE HAD LIVED UNDER THE SAME ROOF.
 - HIS SELFISHNESS WAS THE CAUSE OF HIS CONDITION. THEREFORE, HE WAS UNABLE TO EXTEND JOY OR THE LOVE OF THE FATHER. (RZ)

- REBELS USUALLY END UP WITH THE PIGS WHERE THEY CAN COME TO THEIR SENSES.
- MORALISTS THINK THEY HAVE NOTHING TO REPENT OF; THEY'RE PRAISED FOR THEIR GOOD WORKS AND GOOD SENSE. THEY CAN BE LIKE THE PRIEST AND THE LEVITE IN THE GOOD SAMARITAN—"GOOD" PEOPLE WHO TOTALLY MISS THE POINT.

BACK TO THE FATHER!

- "BE MERCIFUL, JUST AS YOUR FATHER IS MERCIFUL," JESUS SAID IN LUKE 6: 36 (NIV).

17%
of Christians...

A recent Barna study revealed that only 17% of Christians believe it's their job to show mercy. Most thought the work should fall to churches, nonprofits, and government programs. Yet, when surveyed, the pastors of churches overwhelmingly thought that the recipients of mercy should be the poor and victims in distress rather than people who have hurt us or society. By a factor of more than 5:1, pastors and Christians thought that those who are incarcerated and those who have wronged us personally were less deserving of their compassion. **Has the church over-indexed on truth at the expense of biblical mercy?**

- **WHAT ABOUT MERCY AND FORGIVENESS?**
- **CAN YOU HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER?**
- **IS UNFORGIVENESS (NOT FORGIVING) AND A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OR APPLICATION OF MERCY TIED TOGETHER?**

- NOW, THINK ABOUT HOW MANY TIMES THE BIBLE REFERS TO GOD AS A MERCIFUL, COMPASSIONATE GOD. DEUTERONOMY 4:31 SAYS, “FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD IS A MERCIFUL GOD.”
 - “THE STEADFAST LOVE OF THE LORD NEVER CEASES; HIS MERCIES NEVER COME TO AN END; THEY ARE NEW EVERY MORNING; GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS,” **LAMENTATIONS 3: 22–23.**
 - MERCIFUL IS, IN FACT, OFTEN ONE OF THE FIRST WORDS HE USES TO DESCRIBE HIMSELF. **THINK FOR A MINUTE ABOUT HOW WHEN SOMEONE ASKS YOU TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF, INDICATE TO YOUR AUDIENCE WHAT YOU FEEL IS MOST CRITICAL ABOUT WHO YOU ARE.**
 - **WHAT DOES GOD LEAD HIS RESUME WITH? HOW DOES HE DEFINE HIMSELF? I CARE FOR YOU. I LOVE YOU. I WILL STOOP DOWN TO CARE FOR YOU. HE DEFINES HIMSELF BY HIS MERCY.**
- ” EVEN WHEN WE’RE AT OUR WORST, GOD WAITS FOR US WITH OPEN, MERCIFUL ARMS.
 - “**JOEL 2:12-13** THAT IS WHY THE LORD SAYS, "TURN TO ME NOW, WHILE THERE IS TIME. GIVE ME YOUR HEARTS. COME WITH FASTING, WEEPING, AND MOURNING. 13 DON'T TEAR YOUR CLOTHING IN YOUR GRIEF, BUT TEAR YOUR HEARTS INSTEAD." RETURN TO THE LORD YOUR GOD, FOR HE IS MERCIFUL AND COMPASSIONATE, SLOW TO GET ANGRY AND FILLED WITH UNFAILING LOVE. HE IS EAGER TO RELENT AND NOT PUNISH. NLT



- **“BE MERCIFUL, JUST AS YOUR FATHER IS MERCIFUL,” JESUS SAID IN LUKE 6: 36 (NIV).**

- WHAT ABOUT ME? YOU? US?
 - CAN AND I AND DO I EXTEND MERCY TO THOSE WHO NEED IT?
 - CAN I EXTEND GOD’S MERCY IN FORGIVING THOSE WHO HAVE WOUNDED OR HURT ME?
 - HAVE WE RECEIVED HIS MERCY AND FORGIVENESS?
- 