



But What if You Just Can't See It?

Matthew 7:4: (NASB) *Or how can you say to your brother, let me take the speck out of your eye, and behold, the log is in your own eye?*

Sometimes no matter how hard we try, there are just some things in life that we are not capable of seeing. Whether our blind spots are caused by personal prejudice, experience, ignorance, our personality type, or the circles with which we associate, we all fall into the trap of blind spots. So, if having blind spots is the disease, what is the cure? While we are not in a position of being able to fix such issues, we are certainly in a position to focus on the godly, scriptural principles that can fix such issues! So, what's better than that?



First off, how would we define "blind spots"?

Source "Maximum Impact" CD Lesson, John Maxwell (leadership author):
"The Blind Spot: An area in the lives of people in which they continually do not see themselves or their situation realistically. This unawareness often causes great damage to the people around them."

How do we begin to understand blind spots? Let's start by looking at someone who didn't have any and see what he said about them - Jesus!

Jesus readily acknowledged the existence and danger of blind spots, as taught in the context of today's theme Scripture. Matthew 7:1-5: (NASB)



Verse 1: **The warning** - *Do not judge so that you will not be judged.*

Verse 2: **The consequences** - *For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.*

Verse 3: **The sin of faultfinding - the "observation stage" - why are we even looking?** *Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?*

Jesus used an exaggerated picture to make a point.

Verse 4: **The sin of faultfinding - the "communication stage" - why are we even speaking?** *Or how can you say to your brother, let me take the speck out of your eye, and behold, the log is in your own eye?*

Verse 5: **The sin of faultfinding - the "revealing stage" - we have become hypocrites!** *You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.*

Jesus is telling us blind spots are not seeing reality as reality but as a distorted picture that has its basis in reality.

What can we use to help us take the distortion out of our picture?

Philippians 2:3-5: (NASB) ³*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;* ⁴*do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.* ⁵*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.*



Don't be self-centered; act out of humility.

We will examine just three areas where blind spots can be cultivated today:

1. *Jealousy/what we feel*
Example: Cain
2. *Our own nature, drives and passions/who we are*
Example: King David
3. *Culture and the expression of values and differences/what we stand for*
Example: The early church

What do we get when we let jealousy take hold of our hearts?

Cain: Revealing the blind spot of jealousy

Proverbs 27:4: (NKJV) *Wrath is cruel and anger a torrent, but who is able to stand before jealousy?*

Two brothers - same God, different vocations and different approaches:

Genesis 4:2-8: (NRSV) ²...Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground. ³In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴and Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Neither brother is inherently wrong in how they live, but God is asking for sacrifices to show their devotion to Him. Cain's sacrifice was not acceptable. Now what happens? God intervenes to straighten out the matter.

Jealousy

IS WHEN YOU
COUNT
SOMEONE ELSE'S

blessings

INSTEAD
OF YOUR OWN

We can see the resentment and lack of humility rising within Cain as a test is put before him:

⁶The LORD said to Cain, why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it.

God let Cain know he could still do well - there was no reason to be angry. There was a solution to find what would work. God left a wide open door for Cain to walk through and be acceptable.

What is wrong with vegetables? Nothing, but they were not an acceptable sacrifice; the lamb was. It would point to Jesus later in time, so the picture was in place. Because Cain and Abel were the offspring of those who cast the world of mankind into sin and death, God was looking for the sacrifice as a picture of what would be acceptable to bring them all back to favor. Paraphrasing God's conversation with Cain: "You've seen what works. You brought the wrong thing. No problem. Go do what is right and you will be accepted." God gave him a chance, but Cain was way too jealous.

The opportunity to be pleasing to God was present and simply needed to be grasped! What did Cain do?

⁸Cain said to his brother Abel, let us go out to the field. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him.



Cain's reality was that Abel was better, had shown him up before God and had to be removed! The *true* reality was he simply needed a different sacrifice - the beam vs. the speck! He saw Abel as the enemy rather than Cain's offering of the wrong sacrifice.



Proverbs 14:29-30: (NKJV) ²⁹He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, but he who is impulsive exalts folly. ³⁰A sound heart is life to the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones.

Song of Solomon 8:6: (NKJV) ⁶Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame.

So, where did the blind spot of jealousy lead Cain?

Genesis 4:9-16: (NRSV) ⁹Then the LORD said to Cain, where is your brother Abel? He said, I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?

Now Cain lies to God! Yikes! He is getting further and further away from innocence and the consequences are getting deeper.

¹⁰And the LORD said, what have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground! ¹¹And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹²When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.

Cain lost his livelihood and one of the great passions of his life. His blind spot would not allow him to see that God showed him a different way.

¹³Cain said to the LORD, my punishment is greater than I can bear! ¹⁴Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me.

Cain became hidden from God and a fugitive from society! Jealousy makes us see things incorrectly, say the wrong things and do the wrong things. Therefore we lose sight of the actual reality.

¹⁵Then the LORD said to him, not so! Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold vengeance. And the LORD put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him. ¹⁶Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Cain's jealous rage literally marked him for life! Jealousy is about as blind and destructive of an emotion as there can be.



Can our own passion and strength be a blind spot as well?

James 3:14,16: NRSV) ¹⁴*But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth.* ¹⁶*For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind.*

How do we cope with such bitterness? We need help!

Galatians 6:1-3: (NASB) ¹*Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, **you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness**; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.* ²*Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.* ³*For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.*

We do not want to get trapped in someone else's blind spot. We may not end up being jealous, but we could end up with spiritual pride. Those who lend a hand should do so with deep humility and a God-fearing approach.

Sometimes what we do and how we do it can be a blind spot in our lives, for we wrap our identity up in these things. When faced with the reality of a course that simply needs altering, we can choose to alter our *path* or alter *reality*. Cain altered his reality. We must be shown a new way and then we must choose. God opened the door for Cain to see a different way, but he rejected God's offer and chose his own way. That is the power of jealousy.

We cannot force people to change, but we can give them the opportunity.



A caller from Connecticut suggests: **Psalms 51:10:** (NIV) *Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

King David: Revealing the blind spots of our own nature, drives and passions

Romans 8:5: (NASB) *For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.*

Sometimes we as Christians can have blind spots when we set our minds on things of the flesh instead of things of the Spirit.

2 Samuel 11:2-5: (NASB) ²*Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. (He saw!)* ³*So David sent and inquired (He inquired!) about the woman. And one said, is this not Bathsheba... the wife of Uriah the Hittite? (He desired!)* ⁴*David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her... (He acted!)* ⁵*The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, I am pregnant. (Now the consequences!)*

This was wrong on soooo many levels! The blind spot of David was the depth of his fleshly passions. David was a man after God's own heart because of his depth of passion for God - his depth of passion was his greatest asset AND his greatest liability.

From here King David tries to cover his sin. When that doesn't work, he arranges for the death of her husband. The blind spot of our unchecked desire can lead us down a path of complete destruction! David has Uriah killed in battle.



Sight and light are sent in the form of Nathan:

2 Samuel 12:1-7: (NASB) ¹Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, there were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. ³But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb which he bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and his children... and was like a daughter to him. ⁴Now a traveler came to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.

Nathan comes to David with a made up story and asks the King for his judgment.

David reacts with indignation at this injustice that happened in his kingdom!

⁵Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, as the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. ⁶He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion.

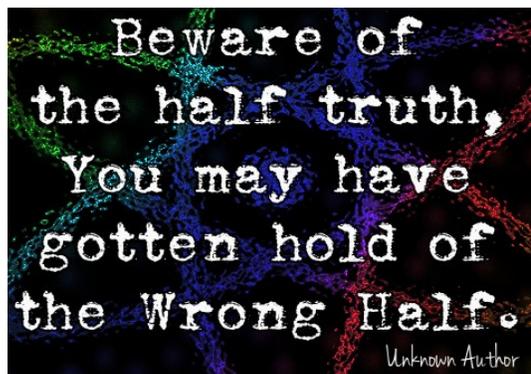
David essentially proclaims his own judgment without realizing it.

Blind spot revealed!

⁷Nathan then said to David, you are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul...

Nathan reveals this to be a parable and not a real event. Can you imagine the tension of this moment? Nathan has to proclaim the powerful king is a devious sinner before God.

What does King David need? Enlightenment and repentance! Nathan convicted David by David's own words and reaction with a story involving a much lesser sin.



Once the blind spot is revealed, it can then be thoroughly disclosed:

2 Samuel 12:9-14: (NASB) ⁹Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah... have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. ¹⁰Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house... ¹¹Thus says the LORD, behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. ¹²Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun. ¹³Then David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said to David, The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die. ¹⁴However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die.



Psalm 51 is about David's sins, written some years after this event. Did he write it down in a private journal? No. Let's read the biblical introduction:

For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

This was put to music and sung before all of Israel! That shows his great depth of repentance. He committed a sin in secret, God exposed that sin and the pain and suffering brought by his blind spot was shared with the nation. The words of his pain are given to the choir director for all to hear.

David, now seeing the blind spot and its dire consequences, boldly shows his weakness and God's strength to all of Israel! First, the comparison:

Psalms 51:1-6:(NASB) ¹Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your loving-kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. ²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. ³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

Second, God's worthy justice:

⁴Against You, You only, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are justified when You speak and blameless when You judge...

Third, the transformation of a blind spot to wisdom:

...⁶Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom.



It is easy to see what we think are blind spots in others, but we need to focus on ourselves. When our blind spots are revealed to us, may we have the heart of David to turn around and honor the Lord.



The Early Church: Revealing the potential blind spots of our cultures and values

Philippians 2:3-4: (NASB) ³*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

Sometimes we think that the early church had everything made to order - there were Apostles, miracles and those who had directly walked with Jesus.

Yet, the issues of cultures and the expression of Christian values were constant and difficult to an extreme:

Acts 15:1-2: (NKJV) ¹*And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved. ²Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.*

This was a major issue dealing with the cultural differences between the Jewish and Gentile heritages, and their coming together under Christianity.

What do you get when you pile peer pressure on top of cultural differences?

...You get so much pressure that even an Apostle could get sucked into the mess! Here is what happened between the Apostles Paul and Peter...

Long before there were denominations, there were the Jewish and Gentile Christians, each seeing their "brand" of following Christ as the better way:

Galatians 2:11-14: (NKJV) ¹¹*Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; ¹²for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. ¹³And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.*

The result was a choosing of sides and the spiritual bruising of those who knew better!

¹⁴*But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, if you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?*

Do we have the strength to boldly (and humbly!) stand for that which is true in the midst of confusion?

John 8:31-32: (NASB) ³¹*So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed him, if you continue in my word, then you are truly disciples of mine; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.*

Does this mean the truth will make us free from our blind spots? Only if those blind spots are revealed and we act accordingly. Inherently we need help.



A caller from Connecticut suggests: **Psalms 66:18**: *If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. A blind spot blocks us from living our full life in Christ. We let some aspect of our personality run us, like Saul before he was Paul. We let our values become God's. Psalms 119:45: I shall walk at liberty for I have sought your precepts. Blind spots hide behind pride. We might be proud of being smart and get angry at others' mistakes. We might be proud of being just and turn judgmental. We might be proud of being a good parent and become harsh. The Christian asks for blind spots to be removed so we can see God. Acts 9:17: Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on your way here has sent me so that you may redeem your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.*

How do we scripturally deal with the powerful influences of differing cultures and values? We suggest five principles to deal with differences within our fellowship.

Romans 14:4-8: (NKJV) *Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls...*

First principle: We all answer to God, first and foremost!

...Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

Second principle: God can lift one to faithfulness in spite of their weaknesses!

⁵One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.

Third principle: Teach what you believe to be truth and honor the conviction of those who differ.

Warning! Sometimes we confuse "conviction" with "convenience." Let us here discern the difference between a spiritual, scripturally-based conviction and a carnally-minded, spiritually lazy position. We are to be pushing a higher standard for ourselves.

Carnal-mindedness = death

Spirit-mindedness = life and peace

⁶He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks. ⁷For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

Fourth principle: Appreciate the spiritual zeal of those with whom we disagree!

⁸For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

Fifth principle: Find the unity in the body that is Christ's!



1 Corinthians 8:1-2: (NKJV) *¹Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. ²And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.*

Knowledge has to work in the context of Christian love in order for it to be spiritually effective.

Does the darkness of Satan's world create a massive blind spot?

Difference in culture and expression of values are some of the most difficult blind spots, as they center on tradition and history and not merely us. Here, the combination of experience, observation and counsel will help us to see what has previously been invisible. It becomes very emotional: "This is the way we have always done it." We need to compare our traditions against the higher scriptural standards.

The core value to help melt blind spots within our Christian fellowship:

Galatians 3:26-29: (NRSV) *²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. ²⁷As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.*

Remember, sometimes what we stand for can be a blind spot in our lives. This is truly devious, for that which we stand for is what many others have stood for, yet in the light of the truth of the Gospel, it may be revealed as merely tradition, or worse, it may be revealed as a blatant deception. It is only the wisdom of Scripture that can change our warped reality to the straight line of truth.

In the history of Christianity, there were many places of massive blind spots where the Christian "church" misrepresented the true call of Christ with tradition and not truth.

Blind spots that deceive:

2 Corinthians 4:3-4: (NASB) *³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

Satan is responsible for a lot of the blind spots relating to the true value of Christianity.

1 Timothy 4:1-3: (NASB) *¹But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, ²by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, ³men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.*

It was prophesied that the blind spots of worldly thinking would permeate the world of Christian thinking. This happened with the Scribes and Pharisees who started making their own rules. In many cases, Christianity has added on as well. We need to go back to the pure word of the Gospel to see if the things we always believed in are truly part of the Gospel. Satan is hard at work keeping as many blind as he possibly can!



Ephesians 6:10-12: (NASB) ¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

What better way to be protected from the damage of our earthly blind spots than to be armed with the armor of God! We cannot let our guard down.

¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

We must learn to “see” the enemy with spiritual eyes. Our beliefs must line up with God’s qualities as shown through Jesus and living a sacrificial life as Jesus did. We give up our will in exchange for God’s will. That is what Jesus and the Apostles taught us to focus on to avoid our own blind spots.

Finally, here is what we know:

1 John 5:19-21:(NASB) ¹⁹We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. ²⁰And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. ²¹Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

So many blind spots involve our worship of the created and not the Creator.

Here is what will happen with all blind spots caused by the darkness of Satan’s world:

Isaiah 60:2-3: (NASB) ²For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the LORD will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. ³Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

According to prophecy, the deep darkness of the blindness Satan put upon the world is destined to come to an end. Eventually, these nations will fully see the goodness and greatness of God Almighty. Imagine the people of our world now who look upon God with great disdain because they do not understand Him or do not believe in Him. Imagine the wonderment when they not only see how great and powerful He is but how His plan of salvation encompasses all of them. His plan of resurrection holds them accountable for their blind spots but will grant them all an opportunity for life!

This program examined just three of the many areas where blind spots can grow in our lives:

- 1. Jealousy/what we feel**
- 2. Our own nature, drives and passions/who we are**
- 3. Culture and the expression of values and differences/what we stand for**

Blind spots exist. Most of the time we are not going to be able to figure them out on our own. We need God and fellowship of like precious faith to see them, understand them and choose to walk away from them into the bright light of the Gospel.



**So, what if you just can't see it?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!**



**And now even more to think about...
only in the Full Edition of CQ Rewind!**

More on the blind spots of the early church:

1 Corinthians 3:1-7: (NRSV) ¹And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, ³for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? ⁴For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, I belong to Apollos, are you not merely human? ⁵What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

Ephesians 2:11-20: (NKJV) ¹¹Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands ¹²that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.

1 Corinthians 8:4-13: (NKJV) ⁴Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one. ⁵For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), ⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live. ⁷However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. ⁹But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ¹⁰For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? ¹¹And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? ¹²But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.



A look at another blind spot of pride, featuring the Apostle Peter:

Matthew 26:30-35: (NKJV) ³⁰And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ³¹Then Jesus said to them, all of you will be made to stumble because of me this night, for it is written: I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. ³²But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee. ³³Peter answered and said to him, even if all are made to stumble because of you, I will never be made to stumble. ³⁴Jesus said to him, assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times. ³⁵Peter said to him, even if I have to die with you, I will not deny you! And so said all the disciples.

Proverbs 16:18-19: (NKJV) ¹⁸Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. ¹⁹Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Proverbs 11:2-3: (NKJV) ²When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom. ³The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.

Isaiah 14:12-15: (NKJV) ¹²How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! ¹³For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. ¹⁵Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit.

Luke 18:9-12: (NKJV) ⁹Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ¹⁰Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortionist, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.

How many arrogant people do you know who just wake up one day and see their pride and decide to change? (Does this ever happen?) It takes an experience to open our eyes to pride!

John 21:15: (NRSV) When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you **love <agape>** me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I **love <phileo>** you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs."

	<p>The Question: Do you "agape" love me? The Answer: You know that I "phileo" love you... The Mission: "Feed my lambs." (the young, the beginners in the way needing the "milk of the word")</p>	
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Peter thus states his personal attachment and devotion to the Lord, but refrains from claiming the highest love for which our Lord inquired. This humility was an excellent sign, showing Peter had learned a needed lesson and had ceased to boast and feared his own weakness.

This mission would only be given to one who is trusted, one who has been given a new name (from Simon to Peter).



John 21:16: (NRSV) *A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you **love <agape>** me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I **love <phileo>** you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep."*



The Question: Do you "agape" love me?
The Answer: You know that I "phileo" love you...
The Mission: "Tend my sheep." (the more mature followers who need guidance and direction)

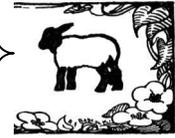


This mission would only be given to one who is trusted, one who has taken on a new vocation and direction.

John 21:17-19: (NRSV)¹⁷*He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you **love <agape>** me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you **love <agape>** me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I **love <phileo>** you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." ¹⁹(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."*



The Question: Do you "agape" love me?
The Answer: You know everything, you know that I "phileo" love you...(Peter knows he can't go beyond where he is.)
The Mission: "Feed my sheep." (the weak sheep, weak in faith who are to be fed and cared for.)



This mission would only be given to one who could understand weakness and give what is necessary to overcome it. Peter would not make a confession he was not yet capable of, but Jesus was willing to work with him. (Note that Jesus asked him three times - just as Peter had denied him three times. Peter was also drawn to the Lord at three different times.)

Psalms 34:18: (NKJV) *The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.*

Matthew 5:3: (NKJV) *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*