

Sunday School
August 26, 2012

As Christians dealing with a limited understanding of who God is and how He operates, we need to recognize our need for a great deal of humility in all things. Here is the formula we need to remember.

Limited knowledge + Limited Perspective = Faulty Assumptions and Misguided Decisions

Let's see how this plays out scripturally.

The Israelite spies...

Numbers 13:25-29

25 At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. **26** And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh. They brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. **27** And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. **28** However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. **29** The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan."

Jonah at Nineveh...

Jonah 3:6-4:3

6 The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. **7** And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, **8** but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. **9** Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish." **10** When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

4 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. **2** And he prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. **3** Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."

The Pharisees...

Matthew 9:10-11

English Standard Version (ESV)

10 And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. **11** And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

Matthew 12:1-2

12 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. **2** But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath."

Matthew 15:1-2

15 Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, **2** "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat."

Peter and Cornelius...**Acts 10:9-16**

9 The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. **10** And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance **11** and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. **12** In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. **13** And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." **14** But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." **15** And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." **16** This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

Elisha and his servant...**2 Kings 6:8-17**

8 Once when the king of Syria was warring against Israel, he took counsel with his servants, saying, "At such and such a place shall be my camp." **9** But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are going down there." **10** And the king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God told him. Thus he used to warn him, so that he saved himself there more than once or twice.

11 And the mind of the king of Syria was greatly troubled because of this thing, and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not show me who of us is for the king of Israel?" **12** And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom." **13** And he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and seize him." It was told him, "Behold, he is in Dothan." **14** So he sent there horses and chariots and a great army, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

15 When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" **16** He said, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." **17** Then Elisha prayed and said, "O Lord, please open his eyes that he may see." So the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

What are we dealing with here?

Exodus 19:9-20

9 And the Lord said to Moses, “Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever.”

When Moses told the words of the people to the Lord, **10** the Lord said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments **11** and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. **12** And you shall set limits for the people all around, saying, ‘Take care not to go up into the mountain or touch the edge of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death. **13** No hand shall touch him, but he shall be stoned or shot; whether beast or man, he shall not live.’ When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain.”

14 So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people; and they washed their garments. **15** And he said to the people, “Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman.”

16 On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. **17** Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. **18** Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. **19** And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. **20** The Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

Isaiah 6:1-4

6 In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. **2** Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. **3** And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.

Job 38:1-33

38 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:

2 “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

3 Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me.

4 “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding.

5 Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it?

6 On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone,

7 when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

8 “Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb,
9 when I made clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band,
10 and prescribed limits for it and set bars and doors,
11 and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed’?

12 “Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place,

13 that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it?

14 It is changed like clay under the seal, and its features stand out like a garment.

15 From the wicked their light is withheld, and their uplifted arm is broken.

16 “Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep?

17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness?

18 Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth? Declare, if you know all this.

19 “Where is the way to the dwelling of light, and where is the place of darkness,

20 that you may take it to its territory and that you may discern the paths to its home?

21 You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is great!

Philip Yancey in Finding God in Unexpected Places

I sometimes wonder how hard it has been for God *not* to act in history. How must it feel to see the glories of creation – the rain forests, the whales, the elephants, -- obliterated one by one? How must it feel to see the Jews themselves nearly annihilated? To lose a Son? What is the cost of God’s restraint?

What Story Does Each Photo Tell?

Actress And Anti-War Activist Jane Fonda Speaks to a crowd of Vietnam Veterans as Activist and Former Vietnam Vet John Kerry (LEFT) listens and prepares to speak next concerning the war in Vietnam (AP Photo)
(Original images © [Corbis](#))



Raising the Flag at Iwo Jima
Photo taken by: Joe Roesenthal
February 23, 1945



The Execution of a Vietcong Guerilla
Photo taken by: Eddie Adams
February 2, 1968

