



Bigger Than Our Brains

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What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy. Romans 9:14-16

Dogs are smart animals. They can understand simple commands like sit, roll over, and lie down. They understand when you tell them it’s time to eat or time to go outside. A dog learns to depend on its owner for food, protection, and care.

But have you ever tried to teach your dog algebra? He’ll tilt his head, stare at you blankly, or jump up and lick your face. Compared to our brains, dogs’ brains are much smaller and simpler. Even the best-trained dog cannot understand everything its loving owner does. Its owner understands things that are simply too big for the dog’s brain.

In today’s reading, the apostle Paul talks about something our brains can’t fully understand: Why do some people believe in Jesus while others reject him? The Bible gives us two clear answers. First, nobody gets to go to heaven because they have earned it or deserved it. We can’t work our way to heaven. It is only because of Jesus that we can go to heaven. We are saved only because of God’s mercy. God’s mercy is his forgiving love. God loves all people. Jesus died for all people and offers forgiveness and heaven to all people.

So, why do some people believe while others reject God’s promise?

Here is the second clear answer: when someone is saved, God gets all the credit. When someone rejects Jesus, that person is responsible. We must not change either truth to make them fit neatly inside our minds.

Just as people understand far more than dogs do, God’s understanding is infinitely greater than ours. We can’t understand everything God has revealed about himself. But we can trust everything he says because he never lies or makes a mistake.

Your faith is not something you earned or created. God brought you to Jesus through his Word and Baptism. He gave you his promises and made you his child. Your salvation does not rest on how smart, strong, or faithful you are. It rests entirely on God’s mercy. Some truths about God are bigger than our brains—but his promises are always big enough to trust.

Questions to Consider

- What are some things a dog can understand? What is something it can't understand?
- Who loves you, forgives you, and brings you to Jesus?
- What is God's mercy?
- Why can't we earn our way to heaven?
- If someone is saved, who receives all the credit? If someone rejects Jesus, who is responsible?
- What should you do when something in the Bible is bigger than your brain and you cannot fully understand it?