Raise Your Eyes to Heaven

Materials Needed for Each Student

copy of *Raise Your Eyes* p. 2; pencil or pen

Prepare in Advance

Print copies and gather pens.

New Church Concept People and Animals

Human beings, regarded in themselves, are no different from animals. The five senses, appetites, natural desires and affections are similar. Their good loves are similar, such as loving companions, offspring, and loving married partners. Human beings are superior to animals in that they have an inner life which does not and cannot exist with animals. That life is the life of faith and love from the Lord. Unless that life were present in the smallest characteristic they would not be different. If the life of love from the Lord were not present in the will, and the life of faith from the Lord in the understanding, a person would not be human. See *Arcana Coelestia* 714



When Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream and urged him to change so the dream would not come true, Nebuchadnezzar ignored the advice. A year later, while saying how great he was, his life changed and he became like an ox for seven years. When he finally raised his eyes to heaven—to the Lord—his reason returned. The difference between an animal and a person is that a person can think and act in freedom, looking to the Lord and acting from Him. The New Church teaches that people become like wild animals when they are dominated by selfishness, greed, or a desire for power. Engage the students in a discussion that invites them to "raise their eyes" and think of ways to go beyond fight or flight responses to common situations.

1. In what ways are people and animals similar? In what ways are they different?
2. New Church teachings tell us that our ability to raise our minds to the Lord, and to live *from Him,* and not ourselves, is what makes us human.
3. Every day we experience situations in which we choose how to respond to others. We are going to look at some common experiences and think about ways we could deal with them that are natural (animal), and ways we could respond that are spiritual (truly human).
4. Give each student a copy of *Raise Your Eyes* (p. 2) and a pen or pencil.
5. Look at line 1: Someone just pushed in front of me in line. One natural response might be, "They've got a nerve! I was here first!" A spiritual response that considers the Lord and others might be, "This isn't a big deal. Perhaps that person had a good reason to need to get through the line faster. He or she can go first."
6. Divide students into pairs. Give them 5-10 minutes to complete the table. *Optional*: assign pairs of students several rows each if you are short on time.
7. Gather the class and invite students to share and discuss their responses.

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Raise Your Eyes

Scenario	Natural (Animal) Response	Spiritual (Human) Response
Someone pushes in front of you in a line.	How dare they! I was here first.	This isn't really important. Being friendly is more important than being first. And he or she might have a good reason to be in a hurry. He/she can go first.
You make an embarrassing mistake.		
You score a goal!		
Someone took two candies and you didn't get any!		
Someone is trying to open a door with full hands.		
Someone bumps into you.		
A person on your team just did something that made you lose.		
You want to connect with friends but your phone is lost.		
You are afraid of spiders and someone shows you one.		
A parent asks you to help while you're busy.		
You're put in a project group with someone who is lazy.		

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