



fingerprints

Seeing What We Will

"...and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'"

Acts 17:26-28

GOD'S WORD, FILLED WITH marvelous stories of men and women seeking after and finding Him, makes it clear that He desires close communion with His people. God wants to have a personal relationship with His children. To that end, He wants us to look for Him—to find Him where He is.

We see what we will. We see what we choose to see.

One summer, Linda and I watched a young fawn grow out of his spots. At some time during most evenings the rambunctious youngster would arrive with his mother in tow. They came for the salt lick, to drink from the pond, to munch fallen acorns, and to

browse upon Linda's flowers and shrubs—but mostly they came because they knew that here on our property they would be safe.

The young fawn was a handful for his mother, always gamboling off, getting into trouble, and generally sticking his nose where it didn't belong (which is one way we knew him to be a boy). He hadn't the experience and maturity of his mother, so wasn't as cautious as he should be; he had not yet learned to be afraid. The young one was a little too eager to come snooping close to the house, not yet understanding that most people will not be his friend.

Reflections
by the Pond

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**Sin has so clouded the
lenses of our hearts that
we cannot see that other
reality, the City of God,
shining around us.**

A. W. Tozer

...if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.



The doe was a good mother. She always kept at least one eye on her youngster and one eye out for danger. More experienced than her son, she heard potential danger in the snapping of twigs, in the flash of light-colored fabric through the windows of the house, in any sound she could not immediately identify.

The fawn's mother was a good protector. One evening Linda was out weeding her vegetable garden while I was in the house fixing dinner. Out the window I spied the doe and her fawn; they approached, rounded the corner of the pond, and headed through the woods toward the garden. There was no way for me to alert Linda to their presence without also alerting them, so I just waited to see what would happen.

The mother led the way toward the garden; soon I lost sight of her in the trees, but I could still see the fawn bringing up the rear. Suddenly the little one froze and his mother let loose with a loud snort—a clear sign that she had discovered my wife, and was expressing her displeasure over Linda's presence. After a few more indignant snorts from his mom, the fawn turned and ran back the way they had come, while his mother guarded his retreat.

When she made it back over the barbed-wire fence ahead of him, the little one faltered, not sure his spindly legs would get him over the barrier. Hearing his frightened bleating, she returned to the fence, grunting encouragement, trying to convince him he could make it on his own. When the fawn decided he didn't even want to try, his mother leaped back over the fence and patiently led him to a place where he could get through without jumping over.



"Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows."

Matthew 10:29-31

We see what we will. Some may look upon that doe and fawn and see little more than pretty wildlife, a momentary amusement. Some may see infuriating pests—voracious vermin that decimate cash crops. Still others may see a prime target through the sights of their shotgun or hunting bow. But I prefer to see God in the patient care and nurturing of that mother deer. I see how God watches over us, protects us, all the while trying to teach us lessons that will cause us to grow up healthy and strong—and making correct decisions.

Our Father challenges us to learn His ways, so that we might know Him more intimately. But when we falter along the way, when we stumble—when we are too afraid to make that leap of faith—He patiently returns, takes us by the hand, and leads us to safety.

