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**By Rev. Drs. Casey and Bob Baggott**  
**Community Church of Vero Beach**

### Birds' Eye View

How many times have you been told that the perspective you choose to take in life makes a difference, at least for your sense of satisfaction and your happiness? We've all heard that assertion so many times that perhaps we've begun to disregard or doubt it. If you are one who is skeptical about the importance of perspective and how you see the world, then consider this...

Dr. Eli Borden notes that two birds which fly over the same territories in the United States are the vulture and the hummingbird. But though they are neighbors, these birds have nearly opposite ways of focusing their attention. The vulture cruises the skies looking for dead or dying animals, while the hummingbird scans its environment for lovely and fragrant flowers. One has trained itself to see and to benefit from carnage. The other has evolved to seek out delicate, blossoming new life and savor it. Amazingly enough, both birds are able to find what they are looking for in the very same place.

The analogy to human beings is too obvious to ignore. How we focus our attention becomes what we see most readily. We may even begin to lose the ability to see beyond our usual focus. Perhaps there is far more in our environment than we have learned to acknowledge and appreciate. If so, then how we choose to direct our attention helps to determine who we will become.

So who are you? Are you vulture-like in being able to quickly spot the struggling, agonized and troubled people and places in life? Have you come to expect nothing else but more worry and woe? Have you come to think such misery is simply the way of the world, and have you found ways to live with all the misfortune and ask for nothing more? Or are you a hummingbird? Do you mostly notice the good around you and seek out the sweetness and pleasantness in your midst, finding it nourishes you as nothing else will?

Truth is, we may not be purely one or the other sort of bird. But we may recognize ourselves in their descriptions. Perhaps we need an occasional challenge to recognize that there is more than one way to view our lives. There is more than one perspective to take in nearly any circumstance. And the perspective we choose will have profound and lasting impact upon us.

Maybe that is why Jesus encouraged his disciples to "consider the lilies." Most of us could benefit from spending less time focusing on what is passing away, and more time enjoying the display of goodness springing forth in our midst all the time.

So if you had to name which bird best typified your way of viewing the world, what would it be? How would you describe your bird's eye view?