



Fig. 37.

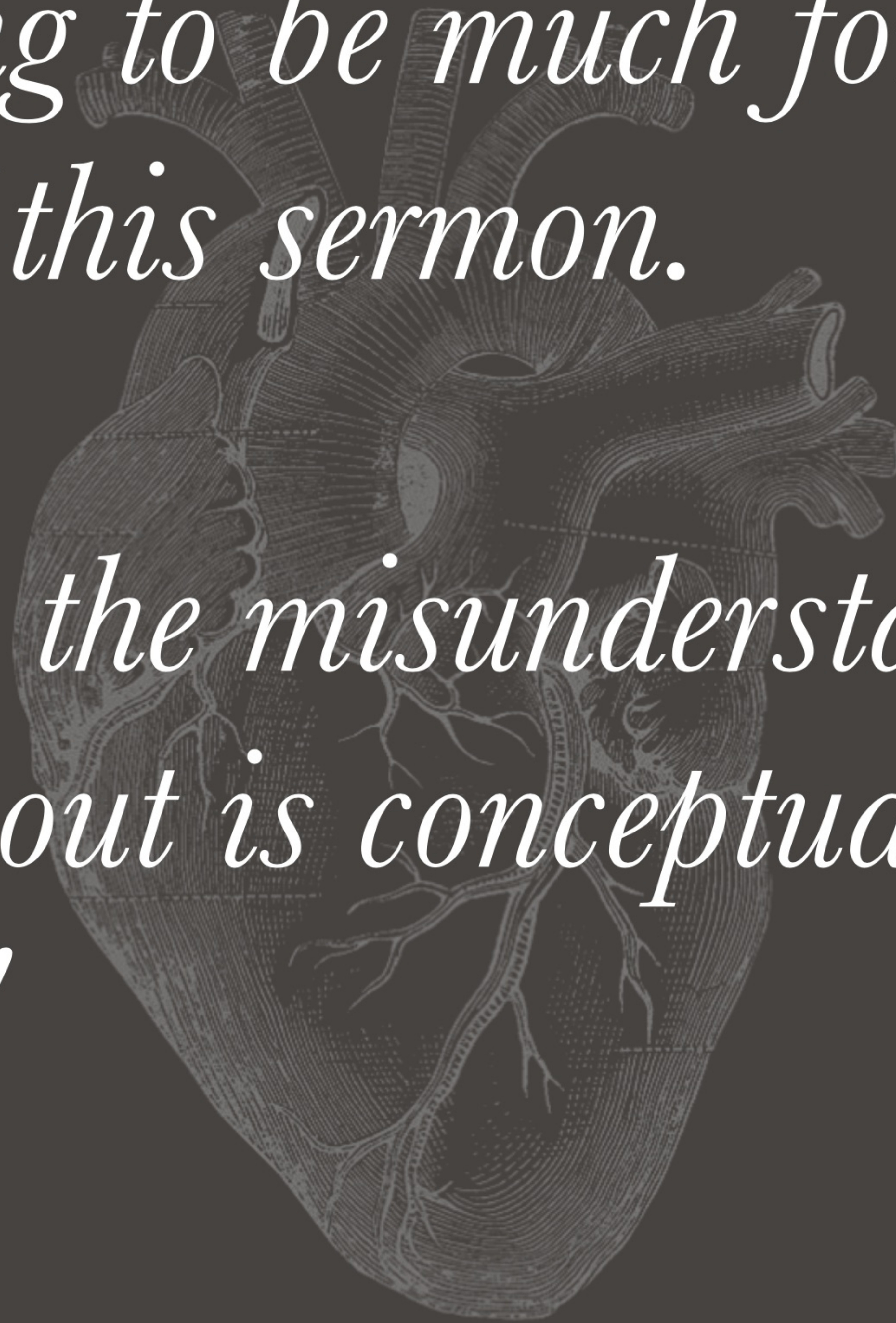
Love

THE FOGGOD



*There isn't going to be much for scripture in the first part of this sermon.*

*This is because the misunderstanding I'm going to talk about is conceptually "pre-scripture."*





*God loves you. (!)*

The 20-th century evangelistic crusades

The 4 Spiritual Laws: #1 "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life"

John 3:16





*"I know your  
dirty little  
secret about  
the love of  
God."*





*"God loves you"...though true...*



Doesn't **DO ANYTHING** for people internally  
Doesn't trigger positive emotion or devotion  
Doesn't water the affections  
Doesn't evoke or trigger our imagination



*Meanwhile: There are things that*  
*DO DO SOMETHING for us...*

A man or woman, a hobby, a sport, drink, food,  
time of year, a TV show...there ARE things in our  
lives that trigger strong positive emotion.

So what gives?



# *Causes emotional flatness for...*

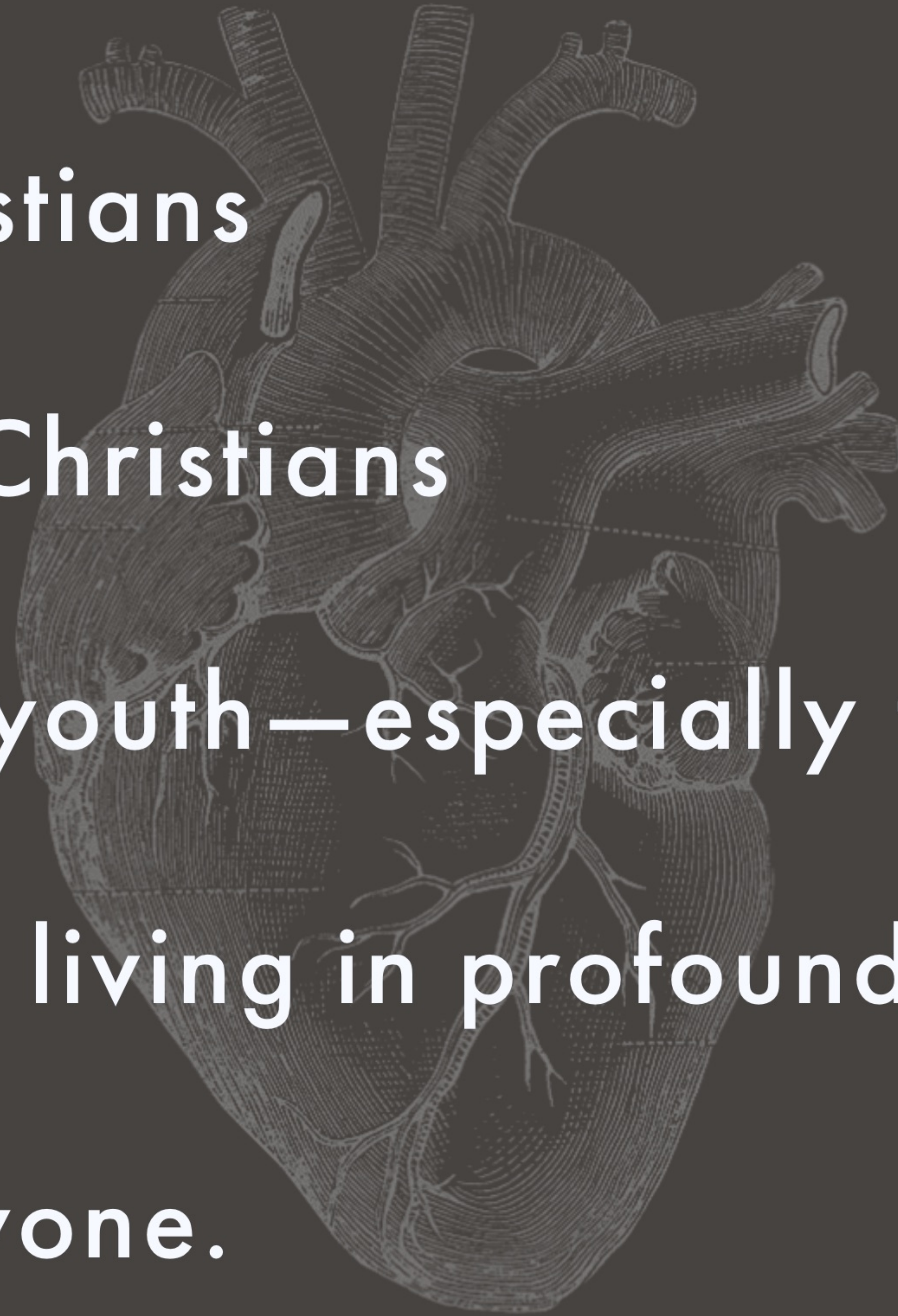
Non-Christians

Nominal Christians

Christian youth—especially from Christian homes

Christians living in profoundly secular cultures

...and anyone.





# *Why is this the case?*

## 2 Things this series isn't about:

1. God's love has not changed
2. Our world has changed—but also hasn't

*There is a simpler, nearer explanation we should consider first.*



*We have forgotten  
how humans feel.*





*When we bond with deep truths  
through experiences and  
imagination, we feel them deeply.*

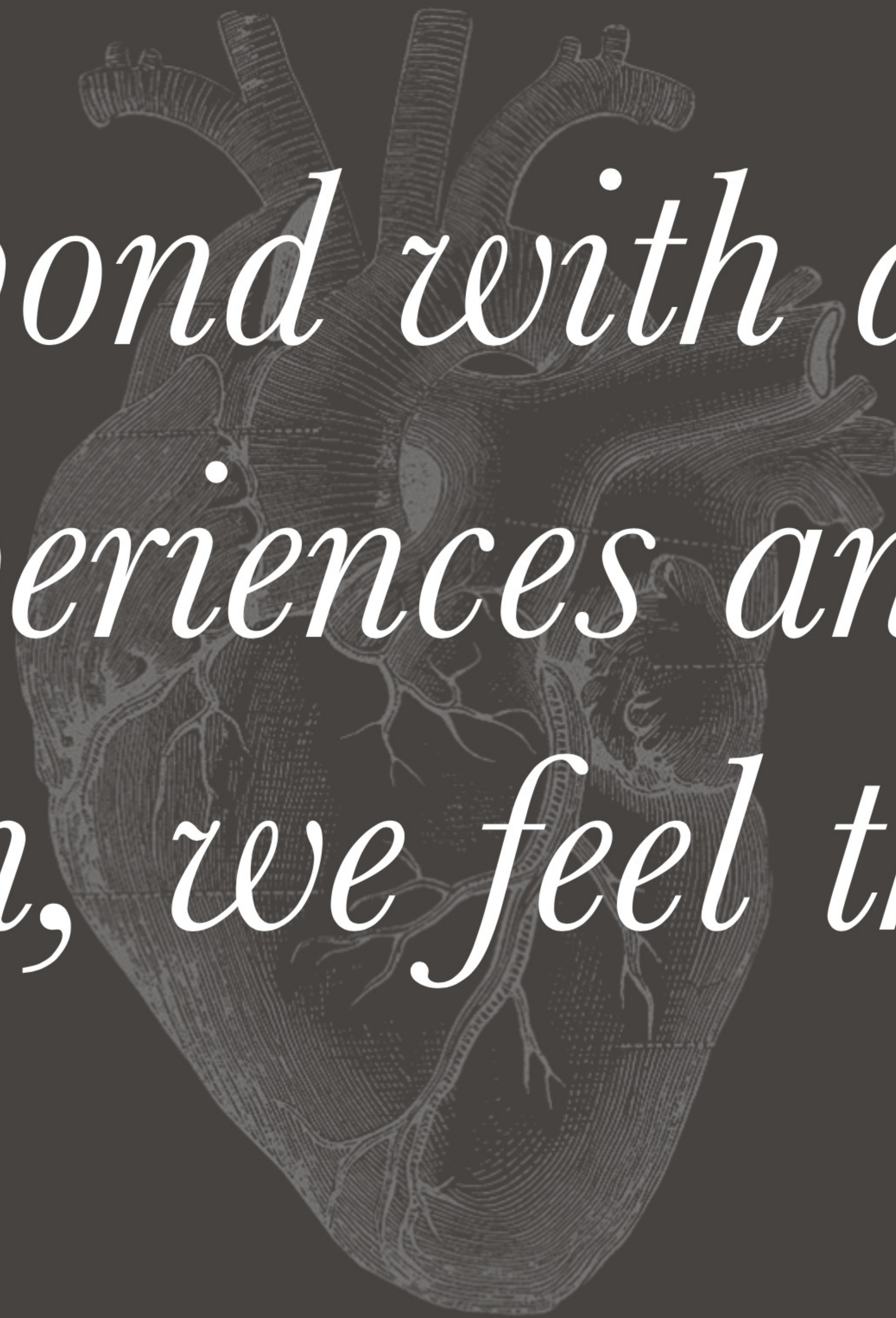






Fig. 37.

Love

TO HEAL OF GOD



*1. How do people feel  
deeply about anything?*





# *How do personal affections develop?*

Concrete  
personal  
experiences



Sympathetic  
imagination



# *Concrete Personal Experience*

- Home life affects emotions about marriage and family
- Work experience affects feelings about vocation
- Parents affect emotions about authority and God
- Experiences with traditions affect feelings about tradition
- You prefer your alma mater...and your kids

*How you feel about almost everything is shaped by your previous experiences—for good or ill.*



# *Sympathetic Imagination*





# *Sympathetic Imagination*



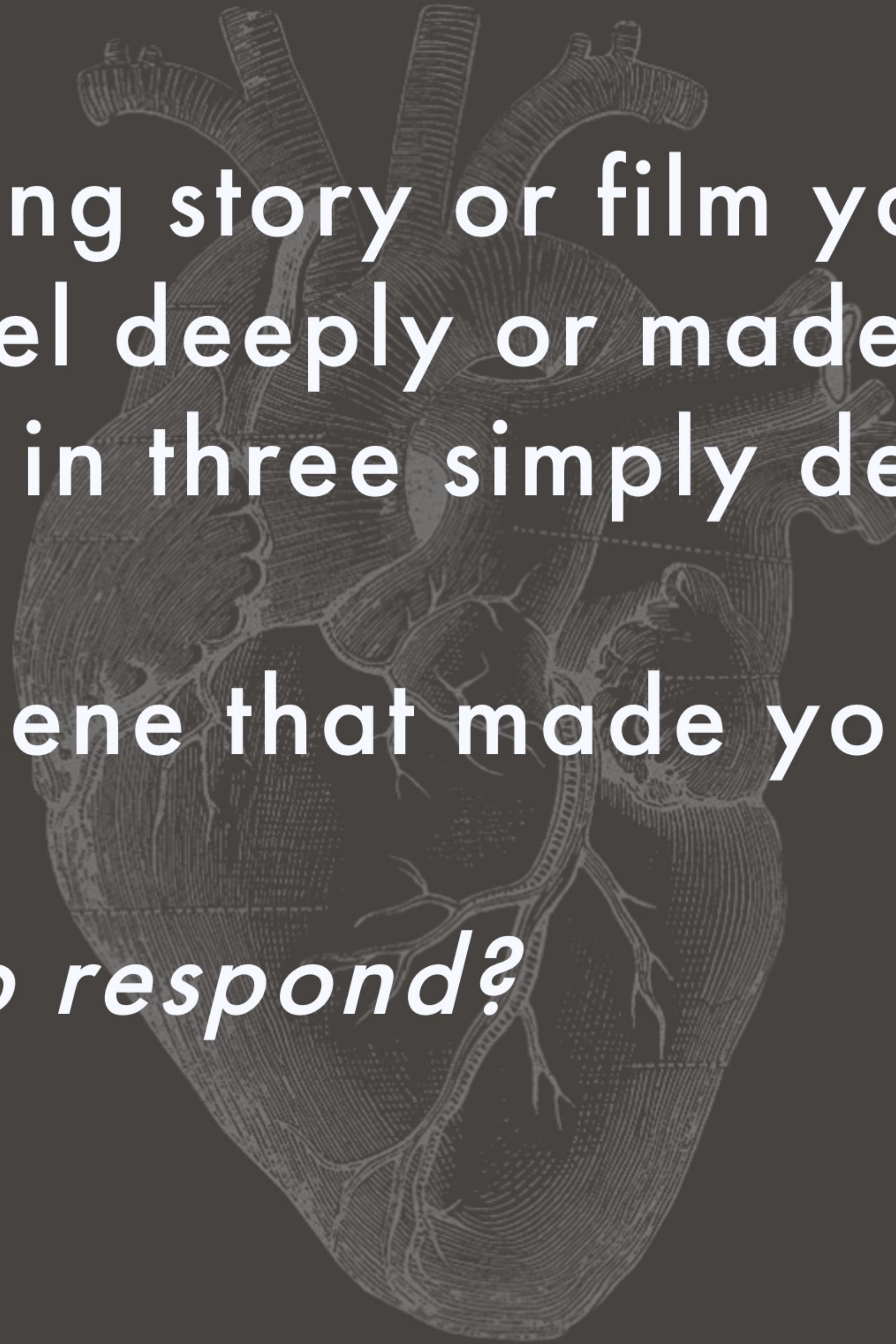


# *Telling the end for tears...*

Think of the most moving story or film you've ever read or seen. One that made you feel deeply or made you cry buckets. Now, tell someone the story in three simply descriptive sentences.

Or just tell them the scene that made you cry.

*How are they going to respond?*





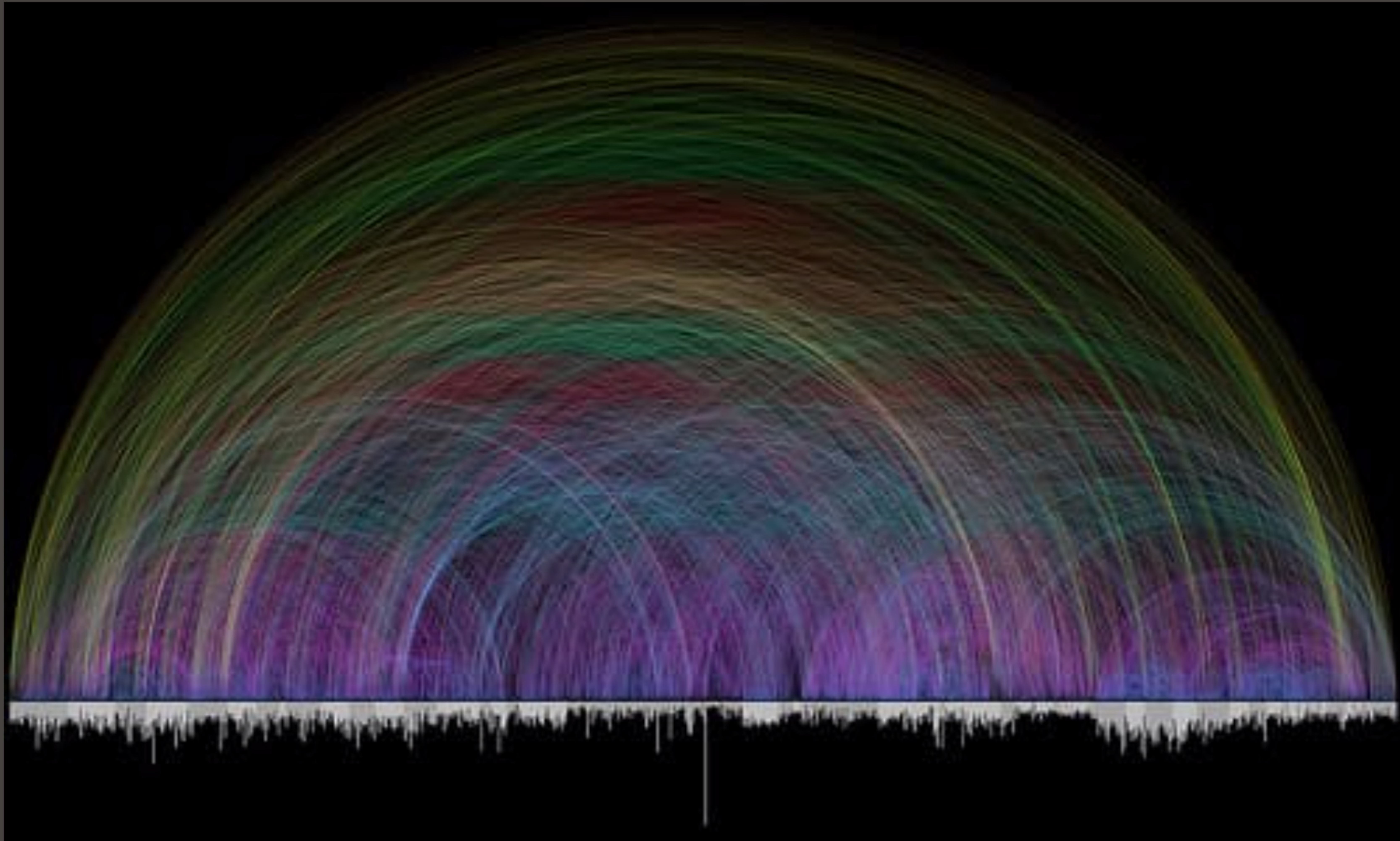
# *Sympathetic Imagination*



"Driving can be dangerous."  
"Kids can break your heart."



# *Sympathetic Imagination*





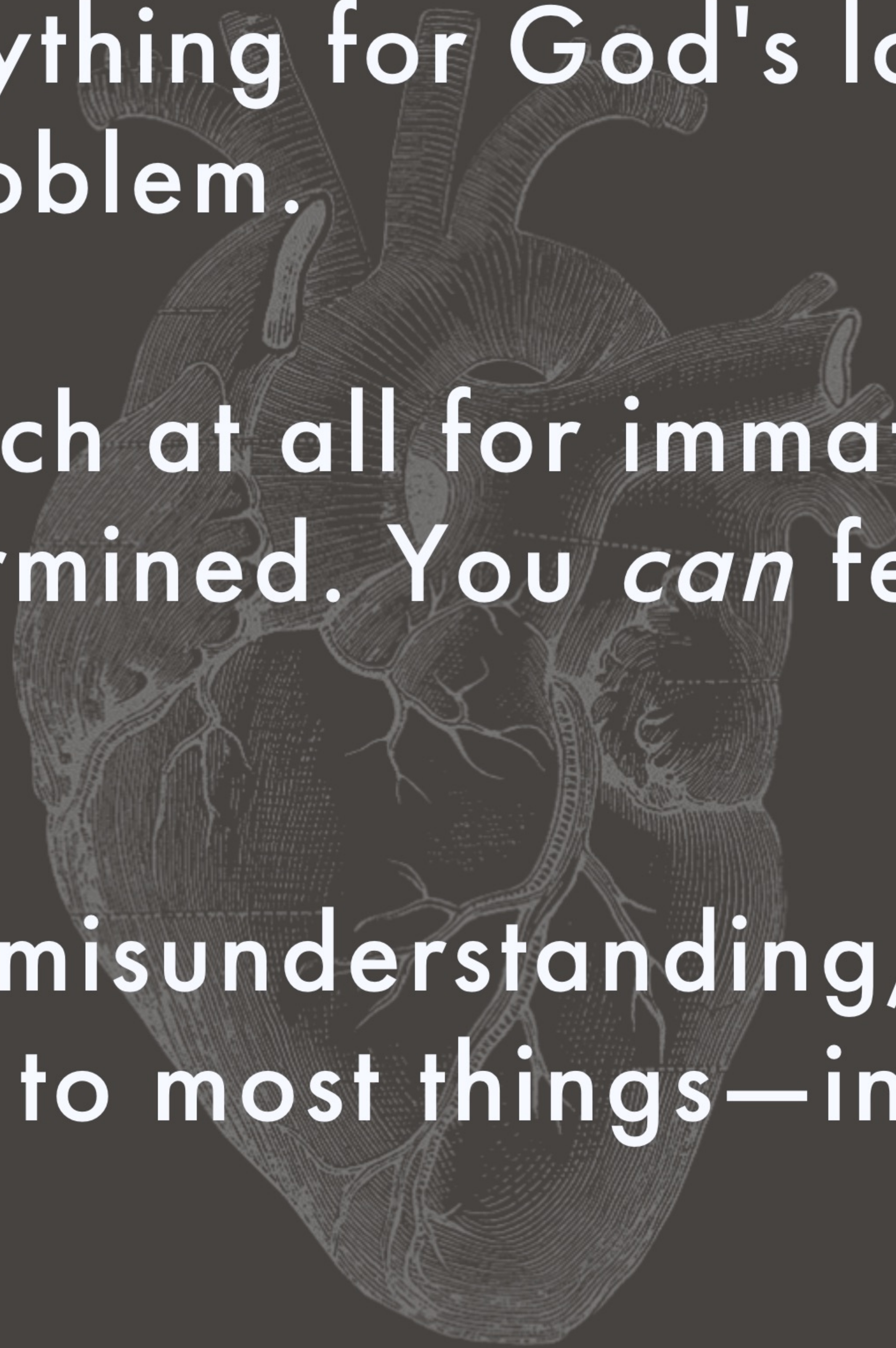
*We have forgotten  
how humans feel.*





# *So What?!?!*

1. If you don't feel anything for God's love, neither you nor God may be the problem.
2. If you don't feel much at all for immaterial/non-gladular things, it's not determined. You *can* feel deeply about deeper things.
3. If you clear up this misunderstanding, you can change your feeling relationship to most things—including God.





2. *How do we form a deep affection for God's love?*







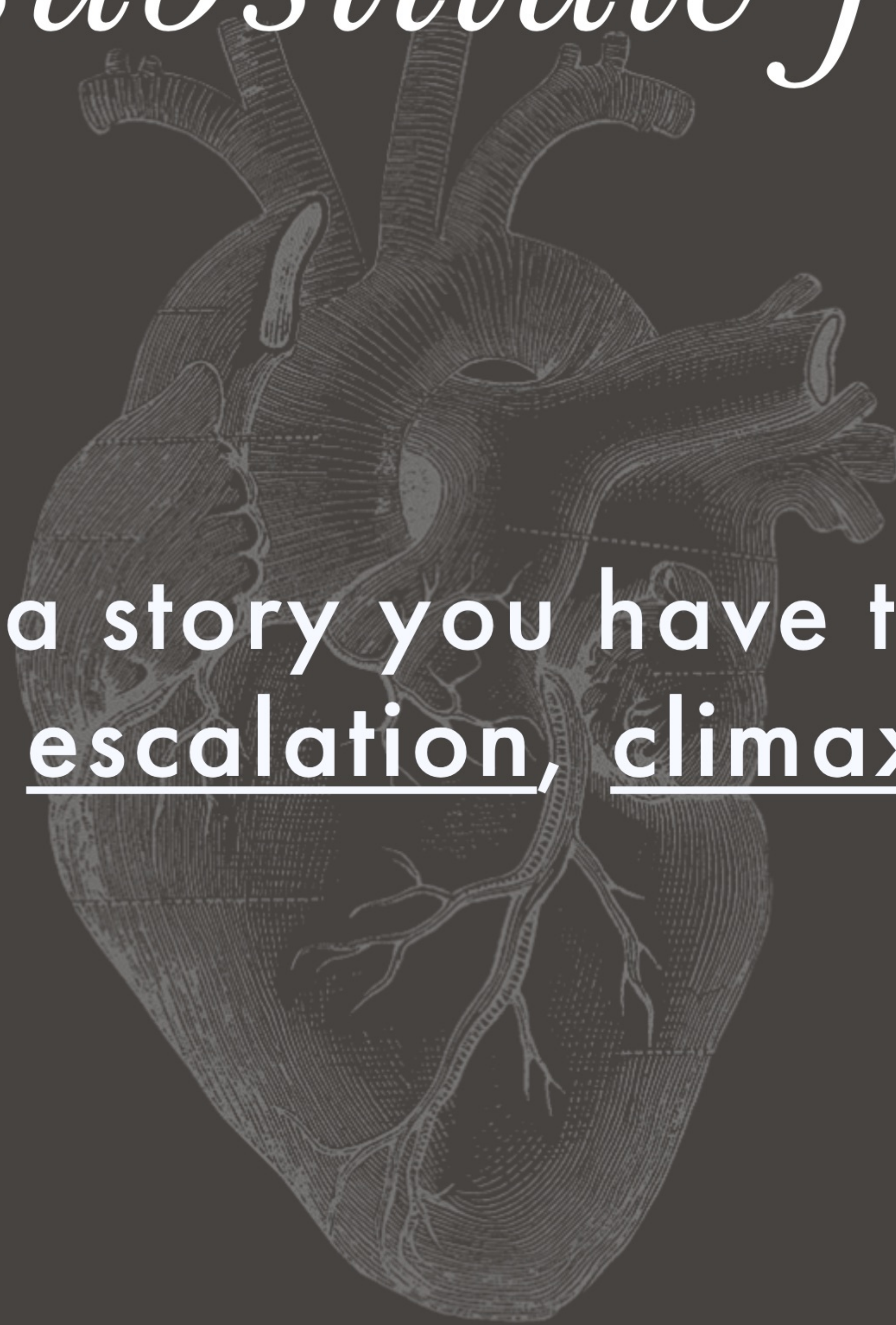






*There is no substitute for knowing  
the story.*

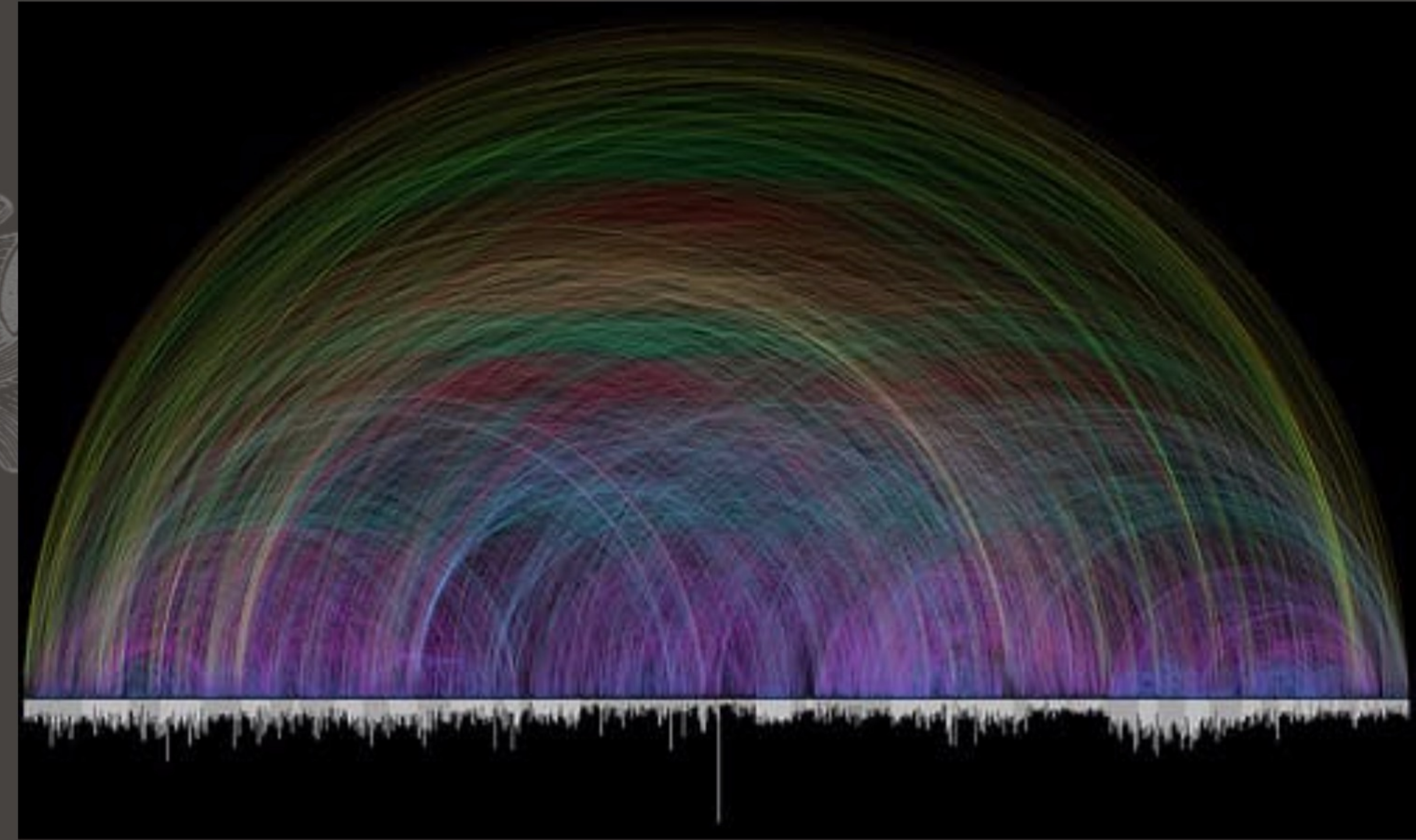
To feel anything for a story you have to know the setting,  
characters, conflict, escalation, climax and you'll want to  
know the resolution.





# *The Gospel and God's Love*

- Know you for what you are
- Know God for who he is
- Know what has happened
- Know what is coming



*If these are full of ignorance or misunderstanding, then there can be no appropriate affection and devotion.*



# *Jesus' claim on us...*

The story of the park is TRUE. (but worse and better)

- We don't know ourselves (Romans 1:18-23)
- We don't recognize God (John 1:10)
- We have forgotten and twisted every truth

And so we feel nothing, or sickness, or hatred

This is precisely what Jesus has come to change.





Fig. 37.

Love

THE FOGGOD