

# The Blind Men and the Elephant

While many versions of the fable below have been told, shared, and published, this is a famous poetic version written in the nineteenth century by John Godfrey Saxe. Read the fable, and when you have finished, look in particular at the penultimate stanza and explain, in two to three sentences, what is happening in those lines.

It was six men of Hindustan  
To learning much inclined,  
Who went to see the Elephant  
(Though all of them were blind)  
That each by observation  
Might satisfy the mind.

The First approached the Elephant  
And happening to fall  
Against his broad and sturdy side  
At once began to bawl:  
“Bless me, it seems the Elephant  
Is very like a wall.”

The Second, feeling of his tusk,  
Cried, “Ho! What have we here  
So very round and smooth and sharp?  
To me ’tis mighty clear  
This wonder of an Elephant  
Is very like a spear.”

The Third approached the animal,  
And happening to take  
The squirming trunk within his hands,  
Then boldly up and spake:  
“I see,” quoth he, “the Elephant  
Is very like a snake.”

The Fourth reached out an eager hand,  
And felt about the knee.  
“What most this wondrous beast is like  
Is mighty plain,” quoth he;  
“’Tis clear enough the Elephant  
Is very like a tree!”

The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,  
Said: “E’en the blindest man  
Can tell what this resembles most;  
Deny the fact who can,  
This marvel of an Elephant  
Is very like a fan!”

The Sixth no sooner had begun  
About the beast to grope,  
Than, seizing on the swinging tail  
That fell within his scope,  
“I see,” quoth he, “the Elephant  
Is very like a rope!”

And so these men of Hindustan  
Disputed loud and long,  
Each in his own opinion  
Exceeding stiff and strong,  
Though each was partly in the right  
And all were in the wrong.

So oft in theologic wars,  
The disputants, I ween,  
Rail on in utter ignorance  
Of what each other mean,  
And prate about an Elephant  
Not one of them has seen!

What is happening in the lines of the second to last stanza?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Handout 10-B

## Getting to Know Jesus

**Directions:** We get to know Jesus by drawing from a variety of sources, including Scripture, prayer, people, and others. Consider the sources below, and write what they have helped you come to know about Jesus. Add additional sources from your life.

Source: Gospels	Source: Book of Revelation
Source: Acts of the Apostles	Source: Letters of St. Paul
Source: Letter to the Hebrews	Source:
Source: Catholic Letters	Source:
Source: _____	Source: _____
Source: _____	Questions I still seek to answer in my life about Jesus: