The Worst Form of Blindness



John 9:13-41 *(*v.25)*
2-2-2025

Introduction: vv.1-12

Take a spiritual sight test! Are the symptoms of spiritual blindness in your life?

What keeps people spiritually blind to the truth?

I. ***People remain spiritually blind due to:*** **LEGALISM (v.13-16)**
(Many twist the purpose of God's Law by adding man-made rules & traditions)

II. ***People remain spiritually blind due to:*** **CLOSED-MINDEDNESS (v.17-20)**
(Many are too stubborn to believe the clear & available evidence about Christ)

III. ***People remain spiritually blind due to:*** **THE FEAR OF MAN (v.21-23)**
(Many are intimidated by others and therefore do not come to Christ)

IV. ***People remain spiritually blind due to:*** **PRESUMPTION (v.24-25)**
(Many jump to premature conclusions about Christ without honestly examining the facts about Him)

V. ***People remain spiritually blind due to:*** **STUBBORN PRIDE (v.26-34)**
(Many smugly pride themselves in their associations to religious big shots and look down upon no-name disciples)

VI. ***People remain spiritually blind due to:*** **SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS (v.39-41)**
(Many assume that they are OK the way they are; They sense no spiritual sight problem)

Conclusion: v.35-38

The former blind man was **open** to the truth (v.35-36)

The former blind man was **responsive** to the truth (v.37-38)

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The Lord uses this passage to teach us about a much more serious form of blindness than physical blindness.

There is a blindness that goes deeper and lasts longer. A blindness which is so hideous that it conceals itself from those suffering from it. You see, when one is physically blind he knows it, but when one is spiritually blind he does not know it. I'm speaking of a blindness of the soul toward God and the things of God.

The blindness of which I speak today is a "mind blindness" whereby the mind of the unbeliever has been successfully lied to by the enemy of our souls.

2 Cor. 4:3-4
But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: [4] In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Paul in no way excuses the spiritually blind, but makes a point that such blindness is due to <u>deliberate ignorance</u>. Many simply don't want to see the truth, so that they might continue in their vanity and unrestrained godless living.

Ephes. 4:17-19
This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, [18] Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: [19] Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

The Bible warns us about the dangers of the "blind leading the blind" – that both would fall into the ditch.

Take a spiritual sight test! Are the symptoms of spiritual blindness in your life?

What keeps people spiritually blind to the truth?

I. ***People remain spiritually blind due to:*** **<u>LEGALISM</u> (v.13-16)**
(Many twist the purpose of God's Law by adding man-made rules & traditions)

v. 13
The restored blind man is brought to the Pharisees because they were the spiritual authorities that were to test the validity of this miracle. What a dilemma they would find themselves in!

If you want to be technical, their bringing this man to the Pharisees and the Pharisees' diligent inquiry into the situation was more a form of exertion and work than the application of spit and dirt to one's eyes.

v. 14
The Sabbath was meant for man's benefit as a day of rest and relief from occupational work.

This was not the only miracle Christ did on a Sabbath day.

1) He also healed a paralytic on the Sabbath (John 5)

2) He had cured a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath (Mk. 3:3-5)

3) He also healed a demoniac (Lk. 4:31-37)

Traditions of the Sabbath:
"Slipping in between the Old and New Testaments, the Pharisees amplified the Sabbath law by adding thirty-nine categories of unpermitted work, along with a number of tedious restrictions. These became part of the traditional teachings of the rabbis, who then enforced them among the people. Yet these requirements stretched considerably beyond God's original intent. For example, notice how obsessive the restrictions have become in just this one regulation.

"If a man removed his finger-nails by means of his nails or his teeth, and so, too, if [he pulled out] the hair of his head or his moustache or his beard; and so, too, if a woman dressed her hair or painted her eyelids or reddened [her face] – such a one [Rabbi] Eliezer declares liable [to a Sin-offering]. (Shab. 1-:6)" (Swindoll, p. 70-71)

Although the Jews had added a multitude of rules and regulations regarding the Sabbath, God basically instituted the Seventh Day (Saturday) to be a day of rest for Israel.
1) The Sabbath was to be a sign of Israel's relationship to God (Ex. 31:12-18)

2) The Sabbath was made for man's benefit; man was not made for the Sabbath
Mark 2:27 And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:

3) The Sabbath (like any other day) was the perfect day to help others
Luke 6:9 - Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

Some Details regarding the Sabbath:

--The Sabbath was only for the nation of Israel (**Ex. 31:12-18**; Deut. 5:15; Ezek. 20:12).

--The Sabbath was only a shadow of the reality which is in Christ (Col. 2:16, 17).
Col. 2:16-17
Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: [17] Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

--The Sabbath was not an issue over which Christians should judge one another (Rom. 14:4-5).
Romans 14:4-5
Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. [5] One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

--Paul seriously questioned the salvation of those who depended on keeping of Sabbaths and holidays for salvation (Ga. 4:9-11).
Galatians 4:9-11
But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? [10] Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. [11] I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

--The early church met on Sunday, evidently in commemoration of the Lord's resurrection (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2).

--There is <u>no</u> command for New Testament Christians to keep the Saturday Sabbath. (See: Romans 13:9)

v. 15
Again for the second time (cp. V. 10) they interrogate the man as to <u>how</u> he was healed. The big question is not “how” but “<u>who</u>”?

So many are quick to find out the methodology of ministries rather than the Man of successful ministry, which is Jesus Christ.

v. 16
So as to avoid looking into this case and honestly evaluating the evidence and the significance of that evidence, the Pharisees quickly write it off as a bogus miracle due to some <u>technicality</u>. They throw the case out and dismiss it completely over a technicality (like so many of our judicial cases of today).

“Legalism” is the sin of adding man-made rules to the Law of God and then judging yourself and others’ spirituality or right-ness with God based on your conformity to such rules.

The Seventh-day Adventists even to this day base their spirituality on their keeping of the Old Testament Law and particularly the Sabbath, and view others who violate the Sabbath as people who have received the "mark of the Beast."

Beware of man-made traditions (rules that are passed on that have no basis in Scripture).

Matthew 15:6B-9
Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. [7] Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, [8] This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. [9] But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

II. *People remain spiritually blind due to:* CLOSED-MINDEDNESS (v.17-20)

(Many are too stubborn to believe the clear & available evidence about Christ)

V. 17

"What sayest thou of Him?" – What is your opinion about him? Who do you view Him to be?, they ask

It's not that they were open to his opinion (they were very closed to his opinion (they were very closed to any good statement he might make about Jesus). Perhaps they thought he might not regard Jesus too highly. A foolish expectation in light of the greatness of the event that Jesus did for this man.

The man knows He (Jesus) is of God (at the very least, "**He is a prophet"**).

Someone who is spiritually blind. . .

--Can't (or refuses to) see the works of God

They were predisposed not to see (they didn't want to see).

v. 18

"You were not really blind from birth," they say. "You are making this story up!"

'Where are this guy's parents?" Even with their testimony (v. 19-21), they will refuse to believe.

Reason: People tend to believe what they want to believe. Their minds were all ready made up about Jesus. No amount of evidence would sway them.

The same response by the closed-minded religious leaders came after the notable miracle of Lazarus' resurrection. Rather than believing the facts of the case, they decide to erase the facts and kill Lazarus to cover up the evidence (Jn. 11:53).

Don't ever be closed-minded in regard to truth; you don't need to fear truth, even if that truth goes contrary to your own ideas or lifestyle.

III. ***People remain spiritually blind due to:*** **THE FEAR OF MAN (v.21-23)**
(Many are intimidated by others and therefore do not come to Christ)

v. 21
You would think that if someone restored th4e sight of your blind son, you would promote that person for the rest of your life.

Here was their chance to publicly testify on behalf of Christ, but they blew it! Why? Because of the "fear of man."

Proverbs 29:25
The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.

The fear of man led Abraham to lie about his wife (Gen. 12:12);
The fear of man motivated Peter to lie about his relationship to Jesus;
The fear of man caused Nicodemus to come to Jesus by night rather than the day.

John 12:42-43
Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: [43] For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

The Lord Jesus said:
Luke 12:4-5
And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. [5] But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

Matthew 10:32
Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

Fear of man will keep multitudes from coming to Christ. (What will my family think? What will my friends do? How will my co-workers react? What will I risk losing by coming to Christ?)

Remember Rev. 21:8 – the first word used to describe those who will be eternally engulfed in the flames of the Lake of Fire is the word "fearful."

v. 22
"The Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus, and the parents were trying to avoid a trap; but all of them were only ensnaring themselves" (Wiersbe, p. 326).

IV. *People remain spiritually blind due to:* <u>PRESUMPTION</u> (v.24-25)

(Many jump to premature conclusions about Christ without honestly examining the facts about Him)

v. 24

Satan in no way wants Jesus Christ to be glorified. **"Give God the praise"** (the generic "God" – which could apply to anyone's version of God).

"We <u>know</u> this Man is a sinner" – On what basis did they "know" this? No one ever saw Jesus sin.

"Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" our Lord asked.

v. 25

Beware of ever jumping to a conclusion about someone or something without objectively checking out the facts.

V. *People remain spiritually blind due to:* STUBBORN PRIDE (v.26-34)

(Many smugly pride themselves in their associations to religious big shots and look down upon no-name disciples)

v. 26
Now for the third time they interrogate this man over how his sight was restored (cp. 9:f10, 15).

Not that they are willing to examine the facts and believe the evidence. Rather, they are hoping that this man might change his story, sot hat they might have further reason to dismiss the case.

v. 27
With a bit of wit and sarcasm, the restored blind man asks his question.

v. 28
'They reviled him" – Notice that they could not counter the truth of his statement and attack the question itself, so they turn on the speaker himself.

"We are Moses disciples" – they smugly say.

If they were, they would be humble and meek as was Moses. However, they display just the opposite character. Note, if they were truly Moses' disciples they would have obeyed his Law (Jn. 7:19). If they were Moses' disciples they would also believe what he wrote and not add to it; also they would believe on Christ, for "he wrote of Me," Jesus said.

v. 30
Again the healed man smartly and boldly answers their folly in v. 30-33, and defends Jesus Christ.

v. 34
They now look down their long Pharisaical noses and basically ask, "How dare you think that you could teach us!? You no-name disciple, you! Your blindness from birth shows you to be a sinner from birth, unlike us! Who do you think you are to question us?"

Multitudes will enter the dark abyss of the damned because of their pride.

--Too proud to admit you were wrong

--Too proud to take correction

--Too proud to change your opinion

--Too proud to admit your need for Jesus Christ.

"They cast him out" – The very thing that his parents feared (v. 22) was now his reality. He had been officially ex-communicated from the synagogue. It's the price you pay for coming to Jesus Christ. No real loss to worry about, however!

VI. ***People remain spiritually blind due to:*** **<u>SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS</u> (v.39-41)**
(Many assume that they are OK the way they are; They sense no spiritual sight problem)

v. 39
Although Jesus' main purpose in coming was not to condemn the world but to save it (Jn. 3:17), His pursuit to save those who would believe, most also be accompanied by His judging those who do not.

--His purpose for speaking in parables was to hide the truth from those who refused to listen to plain teaching.

--His purpose for giving his first century disciples the sign gift of tongues (1 Cor. 14:20-22) was to hide the Gospel from those who refused to hear it in their own language.

They which see" – the word "see" is to be understood in quotes. They <u>assumed</u> to see; they <u>thought</u> they saw (according to v. 41).

They "saw" according to man's standards of spiritual vision.

v. 40
"Are we blind also?" – They ask this only to see Christ's opinion of them, not that they were willing to recognize their own blindness by his answer.

v. 41
Jesus saves those who admit to their lostness and hopelessness; but tot he self-righteous who see no spiritual lack in themselves, Jesus can do nothing but let them remain in their sins.

Conclusion: v.35-38

The former blind man was **<u>open</u>** to the truth (v.35-36)

This man's openness is evident by his honest question and humble attitude.

The former blind man was **<u>responsive</u>** to the truth (v.37-38)

His response is one of <u>truth</u> (faith) and <u>worship</u>

Note: For Jesus to accept worship, He must be God (since only God was to be worshipped - Dt. 6:13, 10:20; cp. Mt. 4:10)