

SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS



Chapter 9

- Blind Man Healed – Physical vs. Spiritual Blindness
- Sin as it relates to Illness
- Work of God - Evangelism
- Spiritual Blindness

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Principle of Spiritual Blindness in Evangelism

- Unbelievers are spiritually blind and cannot see the truths of God.
- Jesus explained this in the story of the Rich Man & Lazarus:
 - “...**neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’ ”**
- Many people try to argue with unbelievers about various aspects of Bible theology (i.e. why does God allow suffering, what about other religions, hell is not real, etc.). This is a useless exercise before they are saved through putting their faith in Jesus because they will not be able to see the truths no matter how well explained.
- Before a saving faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, a person cannot see spiritual truths. This is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- The Gospel is the power of God to Salvation (Romans 1:16)
- Therefore, first preach the Gospel, the Cross and the Resurrection.

John 9:1-12

Man Born Blind is Healed

- Jesus has just declared, in John 8:58 that He is the I Am, that He is God Himself. They were so infuriated at what they saw as blasphemy that they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself from them and went out of the temple.
- Now, as He goes out of the temple, as He passes by, He sees a man, blind from birth.
- The blind man is a **picture of the spiritually blind man** who has no capacity to see Jesus.
- This blind man is helpless and at the mercy of somebody who chooses to help him.
- He's like the sinner. God has to take the initiative.
- God's grace - we're lost, dead, blind and God sees us. He comes in compassion, grace, and gives spiritual sight.

John 9:1-12

Man Born Blind is Healed

- **The gospels record more cases of blind people being healed than any other specific ailment.** There were no healing of Blind people in the OT, not until Jesus did it.
 - There's **one** healing of a **deaf-mute**.
 - There's **one** healing of someone with **palsy**.
 - There's **one** healing of someone with a **fever**.
 - There are **two** healings of **lepers**.
 - There are **three** people **raised from the dead**,
 - **But there are five separate accounts of blind people.**

John 9:1-12

Messianic Sign/Prophecy Fulfilled

- **Isaiah 29:18**

- “In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book,
And the **eyes of the blind shall see** out of obscurity and out of darkness.

- **Isaiah 35:5**

- “Then the **eyes of the blind shall be opened**,
And the **ears of the deaf** shall be unstopped.”

- **Isaiah 42:7**

- “**To open blind eyes**, To bring out prisoners from the prison,
Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.

- **Matt 11:4-5**

- Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: ⁵ **The blind see** and *the lame walk*; *the lepers* are cleansed and *the deaf hear*; *the dead are raised up* and *the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

John 9:2

“who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind? Jesus answered. **Neither....”**

- Their theology was if something's wrong with you, it's a sin issue. Not an indirect one, but a direct one. (like the Eastern philosophy of karma)
- All illness is related to the fall of Adam, but you can't make a direct link between illness and specific sins.
- They believed that parents' sins could show up in children's guilt and punishment (**Ex. 20:5**). This is not about personal judgement, but a general principal that generations of kids are influenced by their parents upbringing.
- **Ezekiel 18:1-4, 18-20** - sin is an individual responsibility.
- **Jesus settles the matter with finality: v.3 “Neither this man sinned, nor his parents.”**
- Not all disease and suffering comes from personal sin. It can. You can be a believer, and if you just keep sinning, the Lord may make you weak, and sick, and take your life.

John 9:2

“who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind? Jesus answered. **Neither....**”

Why Did the Disciples Ask this Question:

3 Views of This

1. Prenatal Activity

- Gen. 25:22 (Jacob & Esau); Luke 1:41 (John Baptist in womb)
- Rabbis developed theories that children could sin prenatally

2. Parents Lifestyle Affects Children

- **Exodus 20:5** (if mother is a drug addict/alcoholic....)

3. Sin & Sickness are Related in the New Testament

- John 5:14; James 5:15-16
- **“There is a sin leading to death.” 1 John 5:16** (not a specific sin, but continual unrepentant sin). <https://www.gotquestions.org/sin-unto-death.html>

Exodus 20:1-17

The 10 Commandments = “The Law”

(1st Four are Love God; last 6 are about Love your Neighbor)

• **And God spoke** all these words, saying: ² “I *am* the LORD your God, **who brought you out of the land of Egypt**, out of the house of bondage.

1. • ³ “You shall have no other gods before Me.
2. • ⁴ “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—...⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. **For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me**, ⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.
3. • ⁷ “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain,...
4. • ⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
5. • ¹² “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land...
6. • ¹³ “You shall not murder.
7. • ¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery.
8. • ¹⁵ “You shall not steal.
9. • ¹⁶ “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
10. • ¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, ...nor anything that *is* your neighbor’s.”

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 18-20

Sin is an Individual Responsibility

- The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, ² “What do you mean when you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying:
 - ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are set on edge’?
 - ³ “As I live,” says the Lord GOD, “**you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel.**
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- ⁴ “**Behold, all souls are Mine**; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; **The soul who sins shall die.**
 - ¹⁸ “*As for his father, Because he cruelly oppressed, Robbed his brother by violence, And did what is not good among his people, Behold, he shall die for his iniquity.*
 - ¹⁹ “Yet you say, ‘Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?’ Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live. ²⁰ **The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son.** The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

John 9:3

“but that the works of God should be revealed in him.”

- **The purpose of the man’s blindness is to reveal the miraculous power of God through Jesus to validate His claims to be the Messiah.**
- **This is incredible – Jesus is saying that the entire purpose of this man’s life was to be born blind so that God could be glorified by this healing!**
- **Has God used suffering in your life to His glory?**
 - Meditate on this and you may be amazed at what you discover.

John 9:4

“the night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

- Jesus is not talking about physical night, but the end of your life. We only have a brief time in this life.
- We don't know how much time we have. Months? Years? **It's time to work for the Kingdom of God NOW! (Eph. 5:16)**
- He's going to use His power to give this man physical light. But more importantly, He's going to give this man **spiritual light**. (Light of the World meaning in context).
- V.38, the man himself said, **“Lord, I believe, and worshipped Him.”** Jesus not only heals the blind man (physical sight); He saves him (spiritual sight).

John 9:3-4

The Work of God? What is it?

- The “Work of God” is mentioned 3 times in this passage. What is it?

John 6:28-29

- ²⁸ Then they said to Him, “**What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?**”
- ²⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, “**This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.**” (Mark 16:15-16 – The Great Commission).
- **The Great Commission – Salvation of Souls & Evangelism is the Work of God!!**

John 9:3-4

What is Not the Work of God?

- **The Social Gospel:**

- Is the work of God to deliver social service programs without mentioning Jesus Christ? NO!!!! Even atheists do that. How does that glorify God?
- The “social gospel” is probably the biggest corruption and deception to influence the church in history, resulting in a great falling away from sound Bible doctrine, missions work and evangelism. (amillennialism)
- **Without the Gospel of Salvation**, social programs (food banks, divorce counselling, financial courses, etc.) are not the work of God!! This is the evil doctrine referred to as the “Social Gospel or Social Justice”, which is good human works without the saving power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Is not sharing the gospel when you have an opportunity,... **Sin?**
- This is not the purpose of the church. The purpose of the church is the evangelization of the world. When good works are combined with good deeds, that is the work of God.
- Mark 9:41 ⁴¹ **For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name**, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

John 9:3-4

The Work of God? What is it?

- If you are opposed to supporting evangelism and missions, then you are opposed to the will of God!!
- If you are giving your time and money to activities that do not **DIRECTLY** spread the gospel (the full Gospel – the resurrection, judgement, heaven, hell, the 2nd coming), you are not doing the work of God and are wasting your time and money!!
- The **“Social Gospel”** is not what Jesus taught.
- How is your personal & your church’s budget & volunteer resources being spent?
- Are you or your church ashamed/afraid to publicly proclaim your faith in Jesus & the Bible? Mark 8:38

John 9:6-7

Clay/Saliva & Pool of Siloam

- **Clay & Saliva** – why did Jesus do this?
 - No one knows for sure, although many theories have been proposed by Bible scholars over the centuries. Saliva was known for healing properties and religious practices in that time, and some think the clay may be symbolic of Gen 2:7 when God created man from dust of the ground.
- **Pool of Siloam**
 - as discussed in Chapter 7, the water pouring rites of the Feast of Tabernacles were drawn from this pool. **Symbolic of washing in the cleansing waters at Calvary.**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-J8PPbldHc> – Hymn – Nothing But the Blood of Jesus

John 9:13-34

Pharisees Investigate

- V. 14 - John says the healing took place on a **Sabbath**
- The Pharisees launch a formal enquiry and they split into two groups:
 1. Those who focus on the Sabbath issue
 2. Those who believe that only God could heal a blind person
- Unlike the man in Chapter 5, this healed man sides with Jesus, calling Him a prophet in v.17
- The “**Jews**” in v.18 still refer to the **Pharisees**, and they now question the man’s parents. The parents confirm this was indeed a miracle and the son was blind from birth, however, they preserve their relations with the Pharisees (to not be expelled from the Synagogue) by putting the question of “how he was healed” back to the boy.

John 9:13-38

Who is Blind & Who Can See?

(Which one are you?)

• The Pharisees

- they can see Moses, but not the “one like Moses”. They attribute Jesus’ miracles to Satan in other Bible references.

• The Parents

- they believed their son was healed, but due to “**FEAR of MAN**”, they did not believe if from God.
- Who do you Fear? Matthew 10:28 (“fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell”)

• The Man

- John 9:11 – “the man called Jesus” – he doesn’t believe initially
- John 9:17 – “He is a prophet.” – He is starting to believe.
- John 9:33 – “If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.”
- John 9:38 – “**“Lord, I believe!”** And he worshiped Him.”

John 9:13-34

A Picture of Salvation

- V.25 **“One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.”**
- The account of Jesus healing a blind man beautifully **illustrates the salvation process.**
- **We sit blinded by sin, begging. We can't see God.**
- We have no capacity to recognize the Savior, Jesus Christ.
- And then, God or Jesus Christ, in His mercy; finds us and He reaches out to us in our blindness, and He gives us sight.
- **And all He asks is a simple act of faith**, which He empowers.
- **And He washes us**, regenerates us and we are born again spiritually and we can see.
- First, the physical healing came, and then the soul blindness was removed.

John 9:35-41

Spiritual Blindness

- Throughout the whole Bible, blindness is used metaphorically to represent the human condition of fallenness, spiritual ignorance and the inability to comprehend God and divine truth. Isaiah 43:8, 56:10; Jer. 5:21
- **All people are naturally spiritually blind and living in darkness until they believe & see the Light of Jesus.**
- **God came to give sight to the Blind:** [John 9:39](#); Acts 26:18; Eph 4:18

3 Kinds of Blindness

1. **Natural Blindness** – Adamic nature of the unsaved man.
2. **Satan's Double Dose of Blindness** – to those trying to see the light
3. **God's Blindness as a Judgement** to those who persistently reject the Light

John 9:35-41

3 Kinds of Blindness

1. Natural Blindness – Adamic nature of the unsaved man

1 Corinthians 2:14

¹⁴ But the natural man **does not receive the things of the Spirit of God**, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because **they are spiritually discerned**.

Psalm 82:5 ⁵ **They do not know, nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness;**

John 3:19

¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and **men loved darkness rather than light**, because their deeds were evil.

John 8:12

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. **He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness**, but have the light of life.”

John 9:35-41

3 Kinds of Blindness

2. Satan's Double Dose of Blindness – to those trying to see the light.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

³ But even if **our gospel is veiled**, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ **whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe**, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Mark 4:14-15

¹⁴ **The sower sows the word.** ¹⁵ And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. **When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.**

John 9:35-41

3 Kinds of Blindness

3. God's Blindness as a Judgement to those who persistently reject the Light.

John 12:36-40

³⁹ Therefore **they could not believe**, because Isaiah said again: ⁴⁰ **“He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts**, Lest they should see with *their* eyes, Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.”

Isaiah 44:18

They know nothing, they understand nothing; **their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand.**

Mark 4:11-12

“To you it has been given to know the **mystery of the kingdom of God**; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, ¹² so that **‘Seeing they may see and not perceive, And hearing they may hear and not understand;**
Lest they should turn, And *their* sins be forgiven them.’ ”

Mark 4:25

Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

Why don't many things in the world make sense to people?

- Why is it so many people refuse to believe in Jesus, the Gospel and the Bible?
 - **Parable of the Sower explains** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZEO_Ls2ERs
 - **Spiritual Blindness**
 - **Hard Heartedness** <https://www.gotquestions.org/hardened-heart.html>
 - **Rom. 1:18-32 (suppressing the truth of God)**
 - **John 3:19-20 (Evil deeds hate the Light)**
- Why don't people understand why strange things in this world are happening, while others do?
 - **Lack of understanding of Bible Prophecy**

Hard-Heartedness

- **Hard-Heartedness is a source of Spiritual Blindness.**
- **Sin causes hearts to grow hard, especially continual and unrepentant (unconfessed) sin, such as Pride and Unforgiveness.** (i.e. Pharaoh, King Nebuchadnezzar)
- If we relentlessly continue to engage in sin, there will come a time when God will give us over to our “debased mind” and let us have it our way. (Romans 1:18-32)
- **The cure for a hardened heart** is we have to recognize the effect that this spiritual disease has on us (admit we are sinners in need of forgiveness). God will help us to see our heart’s condition when we ask Him: **“Search me O God, and know my heart...see if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting”** ([Psalm 139:23–24](#)). God can heal any heart once we recognize our disobedience and **repent of our sins.**
- Sin alienates us from God, and since we are all sinners, we are all alienated from God — not because he rejects us, but because we reject him. Unless God himself takes the initiative to reconcile us to him (grace), we remain helpless, with no future beyond death. That is exactly what He has done in Jesus Christ.
- Jesus taught that stubborn, hard-hearted people cannot understand the things of the kingdom of God even when they are taught in the plainest possible language. It takes a new heart, a heart only God can give - **NEW COVENANT** - ([Ezekiel 36:26](#)).

The New Covenant

(promised a New Heart)

- The Old Covenant that God had established with His people required strict obedience to the Mosaic Law. Because the wages of sin is death ([Romans 6:23](#)), the Law required that Israel perform daily sacrifices in order to atone for sin. Man was incapable of keeping the law.
- Ezekiel & Jeremiah predicted that a God would give man a new heart through a Messiah:

Ezekiel 36:26-27

²⁶ I will give you a **new heart** and put a new spirit in you; **I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.** ²⁷ **And I will put my Spirit in you** and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Jeremiah 31:31, 33

³¹ “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, when **I will make a new covenant** with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. ³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. **“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.** I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Mark 14:24 (Last Supper)

²⁴ **“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,...”**

John 9:35-41

Jesus Affirms His Deity

- V. 35 – “...**He found him**” – **Salvation Begins with God finding us** - Luke 19:10; John 15:16; Matt. 18:11
- V.35 – “**Do you believe in the Son of God.**” – **Salvation requires Faith!**
- V.38 – “**Lord, I believe! And he worshipped him.**” – **Salvation requires confessing that Jesus is Lord and worshipping Him. (John 4:20-24)**
- V.39 – similar to “I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” Mark 2:17 – contrasts with John 8:59 and the Pharisees rejection.

John 9:39

Spiritual Blindness brings Judgement

- John 9:39 “³⁹ And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”
- similar to “I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” Mark 2:17 – contrasts with John 8:59 and the Pharisees rejection
- While Jesus came to save, His salvation in itself becomes a dividing reality. There is a judgment bound up in it. This is not final judgment.
- In John 3:18, He says, If you reject Him, you’re already judged. If a person hears that Jesus who died on the cross for salvation, and sees nothing desirable, that is a judgment on that person. That’s self-condemnation.