Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Spiritual Sight or Spiritual Blindness?
Scripture: John 9:35-41
Code: 1527

This morning as we examine the Word of God we come to the concluding verses of the ninth chapter of John which deal with the final conversation between Jesus and the man born blind whom Jesus has just healed. For you who are visiting with us, we at Grace Church believe in studying the Word of God, not in studying man's opinion, but in studying verse by verse through the Word of God. We have been studying the gospel of John for some months now and find ourselves in chapter 9 at this point in our study.

All throughout this gospel of John, we have seen Jesus Christ making His claims to be the Son of God, to be the Messiah, to be the Savior of the world, to be the Christ of Israel. We have seen Him make those claims and verify them by miracles and by His own teachings and things. And then we have seen how men responded to them. And in this particular passage, this morning, we are going to see the ultimate end of the miracle that Jesus performed on the man born blind whom He met just outside the temple.

Now the whole subject of blindness is a very important subject in the Bible. All through Scripture, blindness is a spiritual metaphor. And it is used to represent the spiritual inability to see God's truth. As a man is physically blind, he cannot see God's visible revelation. That is he can't see the trees and the earth and the sky. But as a man is spiritually blind, he cannot see God's invisible revelation; love, truth, holiness, forgiveness, blessing, eternal life, grace, joy, peace, etc. As the blind does not see the vast blue of the clear sky, so the blind spirit does not see the vast holiness and purity of God. As the blind eye does not perceive the blanket of green that covers the earth, so the blind spirit cannot see the grace of God. As the blind eye does not see the immensity of creation, so the blind spirit does not see the limitless power of God. And as the blind eye sees no rainbow of colors that speckles the earth, so the blind spirit sees not the love of God which colors every revelation. As the blind eye cannot see light, so the blind spirit cannot see the light, the light of the world, Jesus Christ.

And so, blindness becomes scripturally a metaphor for spiritually being in the dark, unable to discern God or God's truth. And sadly but truly, spiritual blindness is the norm; spiritual sight, the exception.

Now, the subject of spiritual sight and spiritual blindness is then the theme really of chapter 9 of John's gospel. And I believe one of the reasons that it is included here, as I mentioned to you last week, at least the lengthy story is included, is because it so clearly portrays by analogy and metaphor the character and the nature of spiritual blindness and spiritual sight. And the whole area of darkness,

or of spiritual blindness, is emphasized throughout Scripture as typical of this situation of not recognizing sin and seeing God.

In fact, in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, the Apostle Paul characterizes the whole scheme of salvation by making a comparison to blindness. In verse 3 of 2 Corinthians 4, Paul says, "If our gospel be hidden, it is hidden to them that are lost." In other words, if as we preach the gospel of Jesus Christ it is hidden, the ones to whom it is hidden will be those that are lost. Why? Because they are those in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds. The reason men do not understand God or God's truth is because they are spiritually blinded by the God of this world, lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine unto them.

Later on in verse 6, Paul says it is we Christians who have seen the light. God has commanded in us that light should shine out of darkness. But in the case of unbelievers, they are in darkness, their minds blinded by the God of this world to prevent the light of the gospel from shining unto them. And thus it is hidden to them. When salvation comes along, it opens the eyes of the soul or the spirit to understand light and to comprehend God's truth.

This is clearly illustrated by Paul when he was talking to Agrippa in the twenty-sixth chapter of Acts. He says this, "I came to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light." That was Paul's mission, to take spiritually blind people and give them spiritual sight. Now the Scriptures teach us that it is only those who know and love Jesus Christ who have spiritual sight. There are a lot of people in the world who are religious and think they see. The Pharisees did. They were super religious. And they thought they had everything pigeonholed. They thought they could see and comprehend every spiritual truth in existence. They thought they knew everything. And in fact they knew nothing. They were totally blind. And it's a kind of a strange thing, paradoxic perhaps, but blindness is bad enough, but when you add to natural born blindness spiritually the blindness of a false system of religion, then you have a double blindness and a difficulty in penetrating that double blindness. It's bad enough to try to communicate the truth of light to someone whose just born blind by sin nature, but then to try to confront someone who is doubly blinded in some systematic religious Satanic devise makes the blindness even more impenetrable sometimes. And so rather than people being in religion finding light, they veil themselves with a double darkness and we find it even more difficult to bread through, we cannot--apart from God--commanding the light to shine out of that darkness. And we'll see how that works in a few minutes.

But, basically, get this in your mind, the only people in the world who see truthfully are those who know and love Jesus Christ. You say that's very narrow minded. You're right, absolutely the most narrow minded possible conception, it just so happens it's also the truth. Now if you want, I'll be broad minded but it won't be the truth. The truth is, only those who know Jesus Christ can see. People say to me, "Well, that Jesus is the most narrow-minded individual I ever saw." That's right, He was narrow minded cause He was always right and was never wrong. "And the Bible's the most narrow minded

book I ever read." Absolutely correct, it is absolutely the most narrow minded book ever written. "And God is the most narrow minded God I ever heard about." That's right, He is absolutely and stands no competition. After all, who's there to argue with Him?

But listen, God doesn't tell us all these things to be narrow minded, He tells us these things to be true. And if two and two is four, it's not narrow minded to say it's four, it's stupid to say it could be three, five, six or thirteen and a quarter. If it's true, let's be true. And if the only way to have spiritual light is through Jesus Christ, if the only way to God is through Jesus Christ, if the only way to understanding is through Jesus Christ, then I am compelled to tell you that and not to water it down and say something else that is not the case. Peter says this, emphasizing the same point, in chapter 2 of his first epistle in verse 9, listen to it, "Ye are a chosen generation--talking to believers--a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of His own--I like that, belong to God--that you should show forth the praises of Him--watch this--who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

Listen, did you know that light is the possession of God? God is..what?..light. And in Him there is no darkness at all. And the Apostle Paul carefully points this out, 1 Thessalonians 5, "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you." You got your eschatology in the right brackets, you know when Christ is coming. "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night when they all say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, there's travail upon a woman with child and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that the day should overtake you as a thief, you are sons of light and sons of the day." You who know Christ, you are the sons of light.

And then the Apostle Paul also writing to the Colossians said this, "Giving thanks unto the Father who hath made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son." The only people who know light are those who know Jesus Christ, for His is the kingdom of light.

So, the world is divided into two groups: those that are in darkness, the spiritually blind and those that have sight, the spiritually seeing. There are only two kinds of people. There's no half sight. There are no partially blind. You either see or you are totally blind. My dad told me that my grandfather used to say there's only two kinds of people in the world, the saints and the aints, and that's all. Now this entire issue of blindness and the entire issue of sight is really what governs chapter 9 of John.

Just to review so you know where we are in John 9. As we come to verse 35 which is where we'll begin our discussion today, we have already seen several things take place. Jesus, back in chapter 8, confronted the Pharisees, He incensed them so much by His claims that they finally grabbed stones to stone Him. And since the temple was usually in repair somewhere, they probably had access to stones lying around, it was built of stones. And so they grabbed these stones and Jesus just vanished out of their sight. And on His way out of the temple He saw a blind beggar. The blind

beggar didn't ask any favors, just sitting there blind begging. Jesus decided by sovereign divine initiative to heal the man and He did.

The man having been healed went to his neighbors to show them what had happened and to his home. They were astounded. They took him right away to the Pharisees and said, "Hey, what's going on here? How did this all happen?" And besides that, it happened on the sabbath and that's a no, no. So they reported it to the Pharisees for a judgment on the part of the Pharisees to see what they could possibly bring to light in this particular case.

Well, the blind man finally was sought by the...was questioned by the Pharisees. Then his parents were questioned. Then he was questioned again. And they refused to believe that Jesus had done it because the Pharisees had already concluded that Jesus was a sinner. How did they know that? They just decided it, they didn't have to be told. They knew everything. So they denied the testimony of the blind man and they kept harassing the blind man. The more they harassed him, the stronger his testimony became till finally they had deteriorated to the lowest levels of conflict. They started calling him names, cursing him. And then they picked him up bodily and threw him out of the building they were in and unsynagogued him. Which means they put him out of the life of Israel. They eliminated him. They wouldn't tolerate his testimony for Christ. They would not tolerate it because they said...they made a rule: if anybody said Christ is the Messiah, they're out of the synagogue...aposunagogos, unsynagogued. And they did it to him. His testimony was clear and concise and they rejected it and threw him out.

Well, they had just cast him out, verse 34 ends and they cast him out. Verse 35 begins and Jesus found him. And that's where we pick up the narrative. Jesus has already healed his physical sight and now He's about to heal his spiritual blindness. He's about to give him spiritual sight. The passage divides into two parts, if you have an outline in your bulletin you might want to follow along and take some notes.

First of all, spiritual sight, verses 35 to 38. Then spiritual blindness, 39 to 41. And incidentally, in each of these categories, spiritual sight and spiritual blindness, they are characterized...there are some details given as to what they really are and what they result in. Now spiritual sight is illustrated by the beggar. Spiritual blindness illustrated by the Pharisees.

First of all, let's notice spiritual sight, verses 35 to 38. There are four features of spiritual sight that I have seen in this passage. They may not be all there are in all of the revelation of God, but they're all that we see right here. Four things characterize spiritual sight. A person who can see spiritually really has these four features involved in that sight. Number one, spiritual sight rises in divine initiative. Secondly, it requires faith. Thirdly, it recognizes Christ. Fourthly, it results in worship. Now those four things we want to consider.

First of all, spiritual sight rises in divine initiative, verse 35. Now just mark this in your mind, giving sight is God's work. Now look at verse 35. "Jesus heard that they had cast him out." Now how He heard it I don't know and I don't particularly care, it's enough to know that He heard. "And when He had found him," Jesus actually went after the man. That, my friends, is divine initiative. It does not say, "And when they cast him out he found Jesus." Jesus found him. Jesus went after him, sought him and found him and confronted him with a question: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

Now, sight results from divine initiative. It rises out of divine sovereignty. Jesus sought that man. Even that man's physical sight was purely an act of divine sovereign grace. He was blind sitting by the temple, begging. Jesus walked by, bent down, put clay in his eyes, said go wash and he saw and he never said a word and he never asked to be healed and he never ran after Jesus to find Him and he never sought anything. Christ sought him out, healed him physically. Turned right around, sought him out, healed him spiritually. It was all divine initiative.

In Luke 19:10, Jesus says, "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." John 15:16, Jesus said to His disciples, "You have not chosen Me, I have chosen you and ordained you." In Matthew 18:12, the Bible says, "For the Son of Man," the words of Jesus, "is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine and go to the mountains and seek the one which is gone astray?" All throughout the life of Christ, He is ever and always the seeking Savior. He is always seeking the lost. It is divine initiative that brings spiritual sight. And the miracle of the beggar's spiritual sight depended on a seeking Savior.

Remember back in chapter 5, the man 38 years lying by the pool and was impotent, having a disease for 38 years? Jesus healed him, said rise up, take up your bed and walk. He walked, he ran into the Pharisees...they said, "Wait a minute, you can't carry your bed on the sabbath, drop your bed. Who told you to carry your bed?" They couldn't have cared less that he was healed, all they cared about was some of their ridiculous little traditional rules that they had on the sabbath. Oh the pain of legalism.

A little while later the Bible says, "And Jesus found him in the temple." Jesus went after the man because He had only begun the work with the physical healing, He went to the temple and met him and talked to him about his soul. And He does the same thing right here. By divine initiative He healed the blind man. By divine initiative He sought him out. Jesus does the seeking, not you, not me. You can't begin to seek God until God has already sought you and revealed Himself to you. Then when you seek, you only seek to experience all that He has already sought and revealed to you. The physical miracle and the spiritual miracle were both divine initiative.

You see, in the physical sense, a blind man has no capacity to give himself sight. The impotent man has no resource to cure his own disease. The water has no power to make itself into wine. The dead pickled fish from the Sea of Galilee don't have the ability to reproduce so they can feed 15 to 20 thousand. Barley cakes don't reproduce to feed that many either. Spiritual sight depends on God's initiative and God's power offered in divine and sovereign grace. And it's interesting that no amount of light effects blindness. A blind man in a dark room is a blind man as well as a blind man in daylight. You can pour light into blind eyes and that's not the cure. All the light in the world doesn't make blind eyes see.

Boy, the Pharisees illustrate that spiritually, don't they? Jesus gave them every bit of light they had, every bit of light He had. They saw everything from the external. They saw all His miracles, heard all His words, watched His person, had all the light He could give and they never saw anything. You see, the only thing that can cure blindness physically is not light, but the surgeon's scalpel or maybe some kind of a transplant and that, of course, would be another kind of operation or a miracle. And spiritually it is a miracle. The only thing that can change spiritual blindness is a miracle...a divine miracle. Man had no capacity. Paul says no man seeks after God, God does the seeking, divine initiative. So, spiritual sight then begins in divine initiative.

I want to add a footnote here. I like this man because he got cast out. He really stood his ground. He isn't even a disciple, you know. He doesn't even know who Christ is yet. He doesn't even know who the Son of God is. All he knows is Jesus healed my eyes and He must be something and I'm going to stick up for Him. And you know what it does? It cost him everything. They threw him out of the life of Israel. He couldn't attend any religious functions. He had no economic power to buy or to purchase things. He was ostracized from all the social life of his country. His parents didn't want a thing to do with him. This guy paid the supreme price to stay true to a man named Jesus that he didn't even know was the Son of God. Now that is some kind of loyalty.

And as I began to study over that, I thought to myself, "Boy, does that put most Christians to shame." We who have received the full revelation of who Christ is, who know every single thing about Him, who have received all of His blessings and all of His mercies and all of the things that He could give us, we have totally revelation, we have so-called total commitment to Christ and yet we aren't even willing to make such an uncompromising stand that it would cost us something. And this blind man was when he didn't even know that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. I like him because he doesn't compromise. I like him because he's got some character. He's got some courage. And even though he doesn't understand all of who Christ is, he is willing to pay whatever cost there has to be paid to be fair and to be true to the one who gave him his sight. Boy, there's no place for compromise in the life of a Christian...no place at all for compromise with the world. How can I expect God to honor me if I dishonor Him?

And so, the man was thrown out. It shows the depth of his commitment and puts us to shame as Christians who have far more revelation than he does and not any of that kind of character so often.

Well, Christ asked him an important question. He said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" Now he didn't really know who the Son of God was, and Christ doesn't really tell him now. He just says do you believe on Him? Do you believe on the Son of God? The man had shown boldness. He had shown courage. He was really a tough guy to tangle with. He had declared that his teacher was from God. He had declared that his teacher was a prophet. He had declared that Jesus was doing God's will and that He couldn't be from anywhere but God if He did the things He did. He really stood up for Christ.

And now Jesus says, "Do you believe on the Son of God?" And right there Jesus is beginning to give him revelation. He's beginning to unfold full revelation of who He is. Although He doesn't give the final thing, He starts it. Christ sovereignly, divinely initiates spiritual sight. The man didn't say, "Who are You? Who is the Son of God?" Jesus says, "Do you believe?" He took the initiative on the Son of God. Christ has the initiative. Sight, spiritual sight, begins in divine initiative. And so we see it in that verse.

But then the other side of the coin is in verse 36. Sight not only rises in divine initiative, but it requires faith. We're involved. And verse 36, there's the human side of it. Sure, salvation comes from divine initiative. Spiritual sight comes from divine initiative and God's ability to give it. But we must respond. That's the balance of salvation. Look at it, verse 36. "He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" Boy, I like that, that is really terrific. That is outstanding. That man is really right there. He is one of the most prepared people I've ever met. That guy is so ready for salvation, it's just a matter of "Lord, what do I do now?" he is literally a little ball of faith waiting to stick somewhere. He just wants to know where do I attach. That's all. I'm ready, point it out. Listen, he had so much confidence in Jesus, he would...if Jesus said, "There's the Son of God," whish...he'd be there. If Jesus said, "There's..." schew...he'd just...whatever you say....where? I'll go.

You say, "Well, how come he had so much confidence in Jesus?" Well, before he said He's a prophet, didn't he? He said He came from God. Add those two to the third one, He made me see, and you've got a good reason why he thought Jesus Christ could be trusted. He believed Him. He believed He could be trusted. He said, "You just show me where to stick and I'll stick, I need an object for my faith." He was just a bundle of faith that needed an object. "Lead me to Him, where is He? I'm ready." What a beautiful illustration of a prepared heart. I don't know if in your witnessing you've ever run into one of these kind of prepared hearts, but it's shocking...really shocking.

I was in South Carolina one night witnessing. I started out preaching on a street corner at the bus depot and I had to do it as my assignment. And I had to preach on this bus depot corner every single weekend. And it was very difficult. Makes a lot of noise with buses and no one ever listened anyway.

And I was yelling at the top of my voice, preaching away, you know. Finally decided it's kind of dumb to do this. And so I decided I'd just go around and do some personal witnessing instead. And I, you know, it was much more effective. It took me about a month to learn this and a lot of people thought I was really crazy. But anyway, I met this one guy in a storefront and I just went back in the store, I said, "Can I talk to you for a minute?" And he was kind of a little guy and he looked at me and said, "Yeah," you know, he thought I was going to mug him, you know. So we went in the little storefront and he just was kind of real shy. He was on his way to a dance at the Y.M.C.A. which was next door and it was blasting out with noise. And he was on his way to this dance. And I pushed him in a corner and I said, "I'd just like to talk to you a minute."

He said, "You would?" I said, "Yeah," I said, "I just want to tell you about Jesus Christ."

"You do?"

I said, "Yeah, I just.." and I stood there for about five minutes to tell him about Jesus Christ. And I said, "Would you like to receive Jesus Christ into your life?" He said, "Yes." I said, "You would?" Wait a minute, I didn't get to the fourth one yet, you know. I mean, this guy was so prepared. I said, "Really?" He said, "Yeah." He said, "I've been praying that somebody would come along to share with me these things."

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

Right there he invited Jesus Christ into his life. He looked at me and said, "I don't think I'm going to go to the dance," he said, "my mom's got a Bible at home, I think I'm going to go home and read it." He was gone, it was the last I ever saw him. I mean, talk about a prepared heart. You run into a prepared heart and you just don't know what to do with it, see.

But this man was just faith walking around looking for somewhere to stick. And he said, "Where, Lord, just show me, I'm ready." You contrast that kind of attitude with the Pharisees, see, who didn't want...they knew it all. Their kind of unbelief was willful, his unbelief was unwillful. He wanted to believe. He just wanted to know in what to believe. See, there's different kinds of unbelief. There's that kind of unbelief that's hard, cold, dead, willing, ignorant unbelief. And then there's that kind of searching hungry unbelief that God meets every time. And so, he said, "Show me, where do I go? My faith is ready, just point the object." And he trusts whatever Jesus says.

You know, his faith is the necessary complement to the sovereignty of God. Even though divine initiative brings spiritual sight, even though Christians are elected, predestined, chosen before the foundation of the world, even though your name was written in the lamb's book of life before the

foundation of the world was ever laid, even though every bit of that is true and in the Scripture, it is still true that you must respond by personal faith to Jesus Christ. Why Romans 10:9 and 10, the Apostle Paul says that we must believe in our heart and confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth, with the mouth confession is made unto righteousness. That's the human side, see. That's the balance of salvation. It's all in the divine initiative but it demands a response from us, doesn't it?

Jesus clearly indicates that. Chapter 6, verse 38, look at it...chapter 6 verse 38, "For I came down from heaven not to do Mine own will but the will of Him that sent Me." Jesus says I came to do the Father's will, that's why I'm here, that's why I came to do My Father's will.

Now, verse 39, look at it, verse 39, "And this is the Father's will who hath sent Me, that of all that He hath given Me, I should lose nothing." Now there you see a very interesting principle. Salvation happens as a result of God granting certain people salvation. Jesus says the Father has given Me certain ones, that's election, that's predestination. The Father has given them to Me and I will lose none of them but raise them all at the last day. That's the election side.

Now look at verse 40. That's the will of God, to give Me these and I'll keep them. But look at 40, "This also is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes on Him may have everlasting life and I'll raise Him up at the last day." You see? Now there's the human side. Not only given of the Father but everyone who believes. So you have those two things, they exist together in Scripture, they're both sides of salvation. God's will sovereignly and man's response. And so spiritual sight, comprehension of all God's mercies, rises in divine initiative, requires faith.

Thirdly, and rapidly...third thing about spiritual sight, it recognizes Christ. It recognizes Christ. Verse 37 and the first part of 38, verse 37, "And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him," remember he just said who is it? Who is this Son of God? "You've seen Him and it is He that talketh with thee." And he said, "Lord, I believe." No hesitation. "Oh, Lord, how do I know? Oh, prove it, Lord. How can I be sure?" None of that. "Lord, (schew) I believe." All he wanted to do was know. He was so ready. The initiator of sight is Christ. The object of faith is Christ. So obviously, anybody who is going to come to Christ has to recognize Him. Anybody who is going to have spiritual sight must recognize Christ. Christ said, "I'm the one." He said, "That's right, You are, I believe." He recognized Christ right off.

You say, "Well, how did he do that? I mean, how could he just (snap) recognize Christ? I mean, how could he...right out of the blue...You're it, I know?" You know how? Divine miracle, that's right, divine miracle. Is salvation a divine miracle? You better believe it. Listen to this one. Jesus talking to the disciples in Matthew said, "Who do men say that I am?" They said, "Oh, some say You're Elijah, Jeremiah, one of the prophets." "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, listen to what he said, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," right? How did he know that? Jesus said, "Flesh and

blood did not reveal that unto you but My Father which is in heaven." You know how you can recognize Jesus Christ? One way and one way alone, by divine miracle. You know how that blind man could say, "I believe"? God showed him that that was Christ. Removed every trace of doubt in his brain.

And so He says, "You see Him," which is kind of a little thing thrown in there because the blind man hadn't seen all his life. He says, "You've seen Him and it's He that talks with you." Tremendous revelation. He is saying in effect, I am the Son of God. I am the Son of God. What a claim. Four times in John's gospel, 5:25, 9:37, 10:36, and 11:4, those four times Jesus says I'm the Son of God. And you better know that John put it down every time cause that's what John's trying to get across to us that He's God. He is the Son of God and the man who comes in honest faith recognizes that and receives spiritual sight.

And I love the fact that he says, "Lord, I believe." A poor beggar, poor beggar who saw nothing all his life clearly recognized the Son of God and a whole lot of religious leaders who thought they saw everything couldn't recognize their own Messiah. And the reason is spiritual sight is a gift from God given to willing faith, not to static determined ignorant willful unbelief. And what a blessing, to first see Christ is to become like Him. Did you know that? Did you know that's...you knew that, that's what the Christian's life is all about, becoming like Jesus, isn't it? Just to see Him is just to begin the process to become like Him. That's 2 Corinthians 3:18, one of my favorite verses. See, what it says is we behold His glory looking into the Word, we are changed into His image by the Holy Spirit. That's what the Christian life is. It's becoming like Christ as the Spirit changes us as we gaze into His glory.

So, spiritual sight rises in divine initiative, requires faith, recognizes Christ. Fourthly, spiritual sight results in worship. Just quick, verse 38, look at it, the end of the verse, "And he...what?...worshiped Him." Just fell on his knees, worshiped Him. Beautiful....spiritual sight, he just fell down and worshiped. What a...what an interesting thing that is in comparison with verse 59 of chapter 8 where the Pharisees pick up stones to stone Him. Boy, Jesus drives men to the poles, doesn't He? One group's got rocks in their hands and the other one's kneeling at His feet.

Beautiful climax to the history of the blind beggar. And it isn't a tremendous truth that what God begins, He completes? God started with that man and followed him around until He found him again and completed His work. He was sought by the Lord, he was given sight, he went and testified to his friends. Pharisees got him. They turned him out, threw him out of their country. And Jesus found him and he fell at His feet and worshiped Him. You know, that could be a spiritual biography for any saved believer, any person who knows Christ. Sought by the Lord, given spiritual sight, went to witness and share it, thrown out of the world, ostracized from the world, sitting at the feet of Jesus Christ. That's really what ought to be our spiritual biography.

So, we see the man receive his sight spiritually. What a glorious thing and all the world of God and Christ and all the glorious truth opened up to that blind mind. And he could see the inner revelation of God with his spirit and he could see the external revelation of God with his eyes...full sight.

Then Jesus contrasts with it spiritual blindness and this we're going to look at and plan to very briefly because it's so obvious. Verse 39 to 41, spiritual blindness, and it has four features: it receives judgment, refuses to admit its blindness, rejects the sight when it's offered and results in doom. We'll look at them one at a time.

First of all, the man who is spiritually blind, Jesus says receives judgment, verse 39, "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world that they who see not might see and they who see might be made blind." This is almost an ironic statement and I want to add some words to give you the meaning of it. Watch it, verse 39, Jesus said, "For judgment I am come into this world," now listen, "That they who know they can't see might see and they that think they see might be confirmed in their blindness." You see this? Jesus came to give sight to those who knew they couldn't see. If a man won't recognize his blindness, Christ can't give him sight, is that right? And that was the Pharisees problem. They would not admit their blindness. Jesus says I came to give sight to those who know they need it and I came to those who think they see to let them know they're really blind and if need be to confirm them in their blindness.

When Jesus sees this man worshiping at His feet and He compares the humble confiding heart of that beggar with the hostility and stubborn hatred of the Pharisees, He admits that that's the way it's going to be when He comes. When I come, there's going to be judgment...slash, right down the middle, this group will believe and see, this group will be obstinate and will not see and will be confirmed in their blindness.

I read that over and then I thought to myself, "For judgment I am come into this world." And then I thought to myself, "That can't be," because I remembered chapter 3 verse 17 and I went back to it and I read it and it said this, "For God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world." Now wait a minute. Jesus said I came to judge and God says I didn't send Him to judge, what's the deal? Contradiction....no...Jesus didn't come to judge the world, He came to do what? Save the world, but the other side of the coin is this, by virtue of bringing salvation and by what men did with that salvation, judgment resulted. And what Jesus is saying in chapter 9 verse 39 is just this, having come to bring salvation instead of all men coming to salvation, it became judgment to those who refused it. Jesus didn't come into this world to judge men. You want to know something? If Jesus had wanted to judge men, He wouldn't have had to come into this world, would He? He could have stayed right where He was and judged them. He came to save them. But by virtue of some men rejecting Him, they brought judgment on themselves. That's chapter 3 to the next verse. "He that believeth on Him is not judged," or condemned, same word, "But he that believeth not is judged." Jesus says I didn't come to judge, but if you don't believe you'll be judged by your own unbelief.

Did you know that by what a man does with Jesus Christ he determines his own destiny? That's right. Simeon said as he held the baby Jesus in his arms, "This child shall be for the falling the rising of many in Israel." This child will put a slash through human society. Christ didn't come to judge men, that wasn't the purpose of His incarnation. He came to save men but by the very virtue of His coming to save, some men refuse it and consequently were judged. I mean, if a man doesn't see in Jesus something to love, he's condemned himself. If a man doesn't see in Jesus something to desire, to trust, to put his faith in, he's condemned himself. If a man thinks that he knows it all and he doesn't recognize anything in Christ at all, he sees no purpose or rhyme or reason for Christ and denies His claims, that man has judged himself by his own willful blindness. So though Jesus came not for the expressed purpose of making people blind, the result of His coming was blindness to some, confirming them blind, judgment condemnation.

Now I want you to notice two words at the end of verse 39: made blind. That's a judicial statement. Do you know that Christ came into this world and where He found willful blindness in its obstinance(?), it was confirmed as judicial blindness? In other words, what starts out often as a willful rejection of Christ becomes a judicial thing. The man who won't be saved can't be saved. You say, "What do you mean?" I'll show you. Matthew 13, now don't look it up, I'm just going to read it to you, but write it down...Matthew 13:13 to 15, and you can study it later. Listen to this. Describing Israel, describing Israel, mark this carefully, Christ says, "I'm describing them as Isaiah did, by hearing you shall hear and shall not understand, and seeing you shall see and not perceive, for this people's heart is gross--that's fat--their ears are dull of hearing, their eyes have closed lest at any time they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, be converted and I should heal them."

In other words, they've closed their minds, they've closed their eyes, they've closed their ears. They cannot be converted. They've chosen to reject Me. But then you get a shock as you go to John chapter 12, it hits like a thunder bolt. Listen to the difference. John 12:37 to 40, here's the same passage from Isaiah but look at the different emphasis, "But though He had done so many miracles before them," same Israel, "yet they believed not on Him." No, their ears were fat, their eyes were closed, they didn't see it, they didn't believe.

Now, verse 39, "Therefore they..what?..could not believe." Verse 40, "He hath blinded their eyes, hardened their hearts that they should not see with their eyes, understand with their heart and be converted and I should heal them." You see, what starts out as willful blindness becomes judicial blindness and God made blind those who willfully were blind. Boy, that is a serious, serious thing.

So, mark it. Spiritual blindness receives judgment by virtue of its own choice. Willful judgment becomes judicial judgment.

Second thing about spiritual blindness, it refuses to admit its blindness, verse 40, and this is very obvious, just a reference to it. But it won't recognize its problem, verse 40, "And some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words and said unto Him," and here's a question in the Greek that demands a negative answer, "Are we blind also?" Do you get the implication? "We...we, the super leaders of religious matters of Israel, we are not like the accursed rabble who don't know the law, you mean, we learned spiritual folks are blind? You don't mean that. We, the constituted, recognized guides of the people are blind?"Jesus says, "Yes, you're blind." But the saddest case is to be blind and not know it. They did not know they were blind. Did not know.

Third thing about it, verse 41. Not only does spiritually, the spiritually blind people receive judgment and refuse to admit their blindness, but, thirdly, they reject sight even when it's offered. Of course they would reject it since they don't know they're blind. Jesus said unto them, 41, "If you were blind, you should have no sin." In other words, if you only knew you were blind I could take care of your sin, see. If you just knew. If you knew you were blind then I could take care of you, but you're stuck in your sin because you think you can see. Oh, this is a tragic statement. They were so blind to sin and they didn't know it and Jesus says I can't help you...I cannot do a thing with you if you don't recognize your blindness.

Well, it's a tragic thing to meet men and women and young people who don't understand that they don't know God, who don't understand that they're in sin, who don't understand that they're spiritually blind and you can't show them sight because they don't even know they can't see. All the truth they've had and they can't even see it.

So, spiritual blindness receives judgment, refuses to admit its blindness, rejects sight. Lastly, at the end of verse 41, spiritual blindness results in doom...results in doom, verse 41 in the middle, "But now ye say we see," ever confident smug, what do you mean we're blind, we know it all, we see everything. Then this doom, "Therefore your sin remaineth." Earlier He said to them, "You shall die in your sins and where I go you'll never come." He says you keep saying we see, therefore your sin remaineth.

Now if I can add an uninspired P.S., it would be this: good bye, you've had it. You say, "That's a lot of liberty, MacArthur, what gives you the right to say that?" Because I know what Jesus did with this kind of unbelief. What started out as willful unbelief, this kind of obstinacy became judicial unbelief and Jesus said good bye, pshew...your sin remains, I'm through with you.

I'll show you a verse that will shock you. Matthew 15 and this is the last verse and we'll close. Matthew 15 verse 12, "Then came His disciples and said unto Him, Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?" Lord, You are really offending the Pharisees. "But He answered and said, Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up, let them alone." The saddest words you'll ever read. Did you see that, verse 14? Tremendous shocking

statement. Forget them, let them go. That's Jesus...loving, kind, saving, seeking Savior...let them alone.

What do You mean let them alone? Let them alone, they are blind willfully and now judicially. They're confirmed in their blindness, they've chosen it, they are kept in it...let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

I don't know about you, but those three words "let them alone" are shocking words coming from Jesus Christ. But listen, my friend, that's how Christ treats willful, obstinate, stubborn unbelief. He'll just turn away and walk off, let them alone. Compare that with how He treats the eager heart of the blind man who says, "I want to know, please show me." Light was come into the world but men love darkness rather than light. And they went on in their blindness.

You have a choice, spiritual sight or spiritual blindness. The result of spiritual sight is worship. The result of spiritual blindness is doom. And I trust that no one will leave this place this morning who does not see spiritually.

Father, we thank You for Your truth this morning, for clarity with which we see it in Your Word. Lord, we pray fervently with great concern that there would be no people here who would go from this place with such obstinate, hard, cold, prolonged unbelief that they would be in danger of judicial unbelief where You would walk away and say, "Let them alone, they're blind leaders of the blind." Father, work and by Thy Spirit convict, beseech and beg the hearts of men to come to Christ to see the light. Meet the need of eager faith as You promised by revealing the truth of Yourself to them. We pray, Lord, that each heart right here in this place this morning shall be set right with You and each spirit shall see Your truth and Your light, we pray it in Christ's name...amen.

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