

S

SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

By
Buddy J. Duncan

Table of Contents

Introduction	page 2
Spiritual blindness explained	page 3
What causes spiritual blindness	page 5
Examples of spiritual blindness	page 6
Unbelief is the cause	page 9
Leads to all kinds of evil	page 10
Identifying the spiritual blind	page 13
Overcoming spiritual blindness	page 17
Christians are delivered from blindness	page 24
Removal of blindness illustrated	page 27
Conclusion	page 29

Introduction

A popular television advertisement for a cell phone company of yesterday was; "Can you hear me?" Hearing is a very important part of one of the seven senses that God has given us. One advantage of this sense is that with it we are enabled to hear the gospel: (Revelation 3:20) "*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*" Being able to hear Jesus when the gospel is presented to us is of utmost importance. But in the verse I notice one tiny word that Jesus spoke; the word I have in mind is the word "if". This is a very short word but it carries a tremendous load. When Jesus said; "If a man hear my voice" he is suggesting that not all men will hear his voice. We have seen both men and women who hear the gospel proclaimed but to no avail; they hear the words spoken but they don't really hear. All too often when people hear Romans 3:23 quoted; "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*" they don't apply it to themselves. In their minds they think of someone else who they consider to be a sinner. They are thinking the speaker cannot be referring to me. In other words they hear but they don't hear. What a shame that there are so many that do not use their God given ability to hear and understand!

Our topic for this writing is another God given ability as the words on the cover suggest we will be considering the sense of "Seeing". It almost seems as though our eyes play tricks on us at times, we see but we don't really see. It is like the eyes send a false picture to the brain. We might say that our eyes are out of focus. Several years ago I was involved in an auto accident; a witness reported what she thought she saw and it turned out that she really didn't see what she said she saw. The insurance company said that I was at fault but not to the degree of the false witness. We need to be very careful in deciding what our eyes tell us they have seen; sometimes things aren't as they appear. Our eyes can play tricks on us!

Our topic is "Spiritual Blindness". Not being able to see things as they really are is certainly a handicap; not being able to see at all is a definite handicap. But I believe that "spiritual blindness" is the greatest handicap of all blindness. What are some of the causes of "spiritual blindness"? One cause can be the ears; this can often be the fault of false teachers. Another cause can be the eyes; they see the inspired words written but they see a false picture of themselves. We must be very careful that we do not allow ourselves to become "spiritually blind."

The best preventive for "spiritual blindness" is the word of God, the Bible. I would like to go to the Bible at this time to see what "spiritual blindness" is and to find God's prescription for this dreaded spiritual disease. Whether or not you think you have this disease I would encourage you to read on.

Spiritual Blindness Explained

I feel that this is the proper place to begin and I do so by turning to the gospel according to John 1:5 *“And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”* If you have ever been in total darkness I think you will believe that you need light in order to see. If you will recall darkness was one of the ten plagues of Egypt: (Exodus 10:21-22) *“And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. (22) And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:”* This was a darkness that was so deep and so intense that it could be “felt” [verse 21]. Just how intense was this darkness? Read verse 23: (Exodus 10:23) *“They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.”* Light is essential in being able to see; God was aware of this in creation: (Genesis 1:3-4) *“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. (4) And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.”* God knew that the light was “good” because now His creation would now be able to see one another and they would also be able to see the truth.

Referring back to John 1:5 John wrote that *“the light shineth in darkness”*; the light will out shine the darkness if we will allow it to penetrate the darkness of sin. Sadly man finds himself in darkness because of sin. Man was created a knowing creature but man has allowed the darkness of sin to creep in and blind his ability to see. What is light? Jesus said he is the “light of the world”: (John 8:12) *“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”* Jesus is the light that overcomes darkness; he is the light that can and will overcome “spiritual blindness.”

What Causes Spiritual Blindness?

The effect of sin is the cause of “spiritual blindness”: (Matthew 6:23) *“But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”* If your thoughts and eyes only focus on sin then your “eye be evil” and your judgment will be influenced by what you see. Jesus said “how great is that darkness” meaning that your entire body and thoughts are full of darkness. If a person’s aim in life is only focused in darkness and sin it is the factor that determines his or her character. Have you ever heard of double vision? Spiritually speaking a person with double vision pretends

to be serving God while in reality they are servants of Satan: (Exodus 34:14) *“For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:”* You cannot serve two masters: (Matthew 6:24) *“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”*

Read the words of Jesus (John 3:19) *“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”* John says that because men love darkness instead of light they bring condemnation upon themselves. I venture to say that the only reason that man rejects the light that is offered to him is caused by the wickedness that lies within mankind. This passage is not making reference to the natural light that all enjoy; rather it is referring to “spiritual light.” Spiritual light is offered to us through Jesus Christ who is the “light of the word.” Since Jesus has ascended to heaven the light that he represents is given to us through the gospel. I have no way of determining how many have rejected this light since it was once offered; but I do know that the number of those who have rejected this light is far greater than God desires: (1 Timothy 2:4) *“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”* Paul knew it was impossible to save all men but he did everything in his power to bring as many as possible to the revealed light: (1 Corinthians 9:19) *“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.”*

Examples of Those Who Are Spiritually Blind

The first example that I present is a person by the name of Pharaoh: (Exodus 5:2) *“And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.”* In Egypt the Egyptians had and worshipped many so called gods; Pharaoh has no higher regard for Jehovah God than he has for any of Egypt’s many false gods. Some would excuse Pharaoh by saying he had never heard of Jehovah God but I believe it was through spiritual blindness that he was unaware and ignorant of the Almighty creator. Pharaoh considers himself to be of the highest of monarchs and he refused to be enlightened. It appears that Pharaoh had no fear of Jehovah God.

There came a time that the nation of Israel became “spiritually blind”: (Deuteronomy 32:28) *“For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them.”* What a sad commentary this is of the people whom God had delivered from the bondage of Egypt. Would you not think that they would remember how they suffered as slaves? Would you not think that this was a time

when the story of their deliverance would have been told over and over again; from generation to generation? There was no “understanding in them”; but we find a lot of people today have no “understanding” of the gospel and are sunken deep into “spiritual blindness.”

Samson was a man who at one time had been a great hero through great strength given to him by God; but he too became “spiritually blind”: (Judges 16:20) *“And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him.”* His extraordinary strength is ascribed to God: (Judges 13:25) *“And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.”* Not unlike Samson many men are led astray by a woman. Moses wrote that Samson did not know that the Lord had departed from him [Judges 16:20]. Again I find that many today are unaware that the Lord has departed from them; but I must remind that God did not depart from Samson or anyone of this present time before they departed from God. What a shame that Samson became “spiritually blind” because of a woman. But in all fairness we must also realize that many women also become “spiritually blind” because of man. It all depends upon what you are seeking: (Matthew 6:33) *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”* By simply allowing our affections to turn away from God brings about “spiritual blindness.”

For some a lack of interest causes “spiritual blindness”: (Job 21:14) *“Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.”* This resulted from their life style! They were affected by their surroundings and neighbors. We can find many in the same situation today; we are often no better than the company we keep: (1 Corinthians 5:9-11) *“I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: (10) Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. (11) But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.”* Of course Job is making reference to their prosperity; our nation has been living in abundant prosperity for the past several years; could this be the reason that so many are blinded when it comes to spiritual matters? Job says their message to God is “depart from us.” What a sad commentary this is to their spiritual blindness. They would be happy if they never heard the name God again. Again you won’t have to search very hard in any neighborhood to find this same attitude. What a shame it is for people to treat their Creator in such a way.

Unbelief Is The Cause of Spiritual Blindness For Many

Paul wrote in his epistle to the Romans that some were blinded just as it had been written: (Romans 11:8) *“(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.”* This same thought may be found in Isaiah 6:9-10 *“And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. (10) Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.”* Expressions where God is said to have an agency that produces ignorance and stupidity in sinners are common [Cf. Romans 9:17,18; Matthew 13:15; Mark 4:11, 12; 2 Thessalonians 2:11]. In their slumber they had neither concern nor worries about their spiritual blindness and the danger they were in. In their blindness they could neither recognize the sin they were committing nor were they even aware of their need for a savior. These people have sunken so deep into sin that they were spiritually blind. What is the fate of the spiritual blind? The only conclusion that can be made is that if they remain in this condition they are lost: (2 Corinthians 4:3) *“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:”* Through spiritual blindness they cannot see the gospel which is able to save their souls. Is there any hope for those who are spiritually blind? Yes their eyes can be opened; or as the Bible says they can be “enlightened”: (Ephesians 1:18) *“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,”*

Spiritual Blindness Leads To All Kinds of Evil

(Ephesians 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.”* In verse seventeen Paul begins to finish his thoughts of verse one where he exhorts them to walk worthy of their calling. To walk in such a manner they must walk as some of the Gentiles were walking. Spiritually speaking these Gentiles were blind; they were walking in vanity [I.e. empty]. It is as if they had never heard about God, His love, His grace and their walk certainly

proved that they did not believe in Jesus nor his saving blood. Paul declares that their understanding was darkened; resulting in their being alienated from the life of God. Paul goes so far as to say they were ignorant or at least they were allowing themselves to be guided by the “ignorance that is in them”. The central cause of their ignorance was “blindness”. They had allowed their hearts to be blinded. Paul continues to write how this blindness affected them. They were “past feeling”; it was as if their consciences had been seared with a red hot iron. In other words they had lost all sense of sin; they felt no guilt of sin. Quite to the contrary of guilt of sin they committed sin without any concern and they even gloried in sin often being boastful of the sin they committed.

Paul in verse nineteen describes their conduct; he says they are “past feeling” and that they had “given themselves to lasciviousness”. By saying they had given themselves over to lasciviousness Paul is inferring that they had done so voluntarily. It was not forced upon them by anyone or anything it was self-inflicted. Lasciviousness is a word that we do not use in our everyday language, however, there are many who are as guilty today of lasciviousness as some of the Gentiles were when Paul was inspired to write these words. The word lasciviousness simply means all manner of lusts. Anyone who is guilty of this does so without any restraint. We all have known people like this; haven’t we? In our nation I know of very few public places that you can go without hearing God or His Son’s name being taken in vain. Friends this is nothing other than lasciviousness. I have known some who curse without even being aware of doing so. Paul gives them a name doesn’t he? Those who swear without even thinking about it would also give themselves to all sorts of uncleanness even doing so with greediness. All too often they become slaves to sin; what a shame that anyone has so little concern for their eternal soul! If we could only convince people that their souls are the most valuable possessions they have: *(Matthew 16:26) “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”*

As bad as we hate to admit it there those who claim to be and are actually leading others who are spiritually blind. *(Matthew 15:14) “Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”* Of course Jesus is referring to the Scribes and Pharisees but we have many today who are just as guilty of leading others astray as were the Scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day. No one would question that these Scribes and Pharisees claimed to be God’s spokesmen. Do you know what the greatest problem of today is? I believe the greatest problem today is that no one questions what is being said and taught by the many blind teachers. All too often we take what is being taught as the truth without consulting with the Word of God. When it comes to spiritual

matters I prefer a “thus sayeth the Lord” to put it another way I want book, chapter and verse. God is not divided (Ephesians 4:5-6) *“One Lord, one faith, one baptism,(6) One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”* If this is true and it is we should not allow ourselves to be led astray by blind teachers. Jesus warns us to “let them alone” don’t listen to them; don’t give heed to their false doctrines. Jesus even gives us the motivation for leaving them alone; not only will the blind leader fall into a ditch but so will those who give heed to them.

Identifying The Spiritual Blind

You do not have to be some kind of an engineer to recognize that the wicked are spiritually blind. The Psalmist wrote that the wicked walk in darkness: (Psalms 82:4-5) *“Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked. (5) They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.”* Because the wicked chose to walk in darkness they actually became blind leaders who led the blind. The Jews have a saying, that a judge that takes a bribe, and perverts judgment, does not die of old age, or till his eyes become dim: (Deuteronomy 16:19) *“Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.”* The gift here mentioned is really a bribe. At the time this was written there were many judges who would readily accept a bribe and then give a favorable judgment to the briber; there is a lot of things that not even time can change. After accepting a bribe the judge would close his eyes [I.e. be blinded] to the truth and justice. Aren’t you thankful that we have a righteous judge to make our final judgment? (2 Timothy 4:8) *“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”*

The wicked willingly become blind: (Romans 1:19-21) *“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. (20) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: (21) Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”* Paul shows how the truth about God can be known by simply looking at creation. Creation is visible to everyone; therefore you must choose to deny the existence of God, when you make the choice to deny God you are doing so willfully. The sad thing that is state

in verse twenty one is they had at one time known God yet they willfully chose not to glorify Him. Paul also states that their hearts were “foolish” and had become “darkened”; to paraphrase Paul’s inspired words they were wicked and had become blind. A good description of what happens to such is found in (Psalms 69:23) *“Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.”* Paul puts it this way: (Romans 11:10) *“Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.”* We should not take Paul’s statement literally; they were not to be struck blind as the men of Sodom were struck blind by the angels; rather he is making reference to their understanding. In Jesus’ days they were so blinded that they could not recognize who he was; they did not even understand why he had come to earth, they were only looking for the earthly kingdom to be restored to Israel. It was blindness that caused them to crucify him because if they had truly known him to be the Son of God I doubt that they would have shouted “Crucify him”.

Sometimes the Lord even closed the eyes of some so that they would be blinded: (Isaiah 29:10) *“For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.”* Again we are not to take this passage literally; God did not literally blind their eyes, He actually blinded their understanding. When Jesus walked and performed miracle and fulfilled prophecy they could not see or understand that he was fulfilling Old Testament prophecy; therefore they failed to recognize him as the promised Messiah due to blindness.

Another illustration of God blinding some can be found in (Isaiah 44:18) *“They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand.”* Some think that this verse is referring to the devil who is the god of this world; they explain that Satan had blinded their eyes to recognize the sin of worshipping idols. Another thought [which I prefer] is that God gave them over to a reprobate mind because they did not like to retain Him in their minds (Romans 1:28) *“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;”* Paul gives a perfect description of such: (Titus 1:16) *“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”* Even though we are not to judge I believe we have all known and recognized both men and women who claimed to be Christians yet they are disobedient. People of this character think nothing of forsaking the assembly, taking what they excuse as a social drink, telling a tainted joke or not even choosing who they keep company with: (1 Corinthians 15:33) *“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good man-*

ners.” We should take the advice of Paul: (Romans 12:9) *“Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.”*

Jesus quoted Esaias saying this: *“Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.”* ¹⁴*And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:”* (Matthew 13:13-14) The words are a prophecy concerning the people of the Jews, which began to be accomplished in the times of Isaiah. Jesus the “light of the world” shone upon them as light had never shone before; but because they had closed their eyes they could not see. They heard him because he taught as had never been taught before, but they “heard not”. It was not that they never heard Jesus but they did not apprehend what Jesus was speaking to them. When a person reaches this stage they are morally incapable of heeding the words of any teacher or preacher even if they speak the very words of Jesus. Whenever a person reaches this point it is very difficult to convert and it becomes impossible for Jesus to forgive their sins: (John 12:40) *“He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.”* The only hope they have of salvation is to repent: (Luke 13:5) *“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”* They need to open their eyes and allow the gospel to enlighten their understanding.

Overcoming Spiritual Blindness

Assuming that the spiritual blind have had their eyes enlightened and now see the truth; are they eternally destined to remain in blindness? Of course we know that God desires all men to be saved: (2 Peter 3:9) *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”* If God is “not willing that any should perish” surely He has provided a way for even those who are spiritually blind to be saved. What provisions has God made; this is what we will consider in this section!

The Psalmist suggests that we pray: (Psalms 13:3) *“Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;”* First we notice that he pleads with God to “consider and hear” him. How could God “consider and hear” him unless he spoke to God in prayer? According to verse one he was desperate at this point of his life: (Psalms 13:1) *“How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt*

thou hide thy face from” me? How would you feel if you thought God had forgotten you and would not so much as look upon you? Having borne his trouble as long as he could he cried out for God to hear his prayer. If you ever feel forsaken by God it is high time that you get down on your knees and do some serious praying. He felt as though if his vision was not restored he was going to die not being able to see or know the truth. The Psalmist did not wish to die being blinded. His last resort was to pray. When you feel as though God has forsaken you and you are afraid of dying while remaining in darkness God has provided us with the avenue of prayer.

Perhaps you are thinking; “I do not know how to approach God in prayer concerning spiritual blindness” Once again we can turn to the book of Psalms to find how we should approach God concerning this matter: (Psalms 119:18) “*Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*” The Hebrew means to make known or to reveal. In times past God opened eyes of men in a miraculous way: (Numbers 22:31) “*Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.*” Today God reveals His will for us through His inspired Word; this is how God opens our eyes today! We speak to Him in prayer and God speaks to us in prayer. I am a firm believer that God hears our prayers and is very capable of answering our prayers today! If you are spiritually blind read your Bible and pray!

God has also provided another remedy for the spiritual blind; God who created the heavens (Isaiah 42:5) said he would provide a means to open the eyes of the spiritual blind: (Isaiah 42:7) “*To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*” Since man often does not see his real condition it is necessary for someone to enlighten them; who would do this? Jesus declared that he was the one who is capable to open the eyes of the blind: (Luke 4:18) “*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,*” Notice if you will that Jesus said he was sent by God to “preach the gospel” and it was through this preaching that the blind are able to recover their sight. Since Jesus was sent by God and since Jesus accomplished what God sent him to do it can surely be stated that God has fulfilled the words of Isaiah 42:7; where God promised to open the eyes of the blind. It is worthy to note that God has made provision for both the Jew and Gentile to regain their sight! Sinners are most often held prisoners to sin; they are blind, ignorant and insensible to their true condition. It is through the gospel that Jesus was able to give them knowledge and insight to their condition. The won-

derful thing about the gospel of Jesus Christ is that we are in possession of that gospel today and it is still capable of opening the blind eyes of sinners. The words of Paul remain true today: (Romans 1:16) *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”* It is through the gospel that Jesus opens eyes of sinners and give them spiritual sight; and it is then possible to set them free from the prison of sin. If you are living in sin and you are feeling wretched then obey the gospel’s command and Jesus will set you free; he came to this earth for that very purpose.

John recorded the words of Jesus when Jesus declared he was the light of the world: (John 8:12) *“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”* Jesus is the light from where all intellectual and spiritual light proceeds. If we go back to verse two we find that it is now early morning and the sun is shining brightly: (John 8:2) *“And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.”* As the sun arose that morning to give its light to the people that they need not to walk in darkness any longer; Jesus also would let his light to shine forth that they no longer would need to walk in spiritual blindness. Dear friends; there is no excuse for anyone to walk in spiritual blindness today as the “light of the world” has shone forth.

The apostle Paul wrote a very interesting statement: (2 Corinthians 4:6) *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”* The first part of this verse refers to (Genesis 1:3) *“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”* Just as God has given us the glorious light of the sun He has also given us the glorious light of the gospel. The gospel was not given to us by human knowledge; the gospel was given to us by God. Let it be known that it is through Jesus Christ that we can receive the “light of the knowledge”; it is through the appearance and person of Jesus Christ that mankind has been given this marvelous light. If you have received this light won’t you share it with others who may still be walking in spiritual blindness?

Those who are ministers of Christ may also give forth light to remove spiritual blindness. A good question to answer at this point is “Who is a minister”? A minister is one who serves. Allow me to answer this question with a question; “Aren’t all Christian to be servants of Jesus Christ”? In the truest sense everyone who obeys the gospel is to be a servant of Jesus; therefore we are all ministers. Some have the false idea that only one who gets behind the pulpit and preaches is a minister; when in reality everyone who has become a Christian is to serve

Christ; there is honor and reward in serving Jesus: *“If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. (John 12:26); (Luke 12:37) “Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.”*

If you have in past times been blinded by the world but have now been enlightened by the gospel we need to be walking as “children of light”; (Ephesians 5:8) *“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:”* No doubt you will come across those who will not admit to ever have been in darkness; the truth is they don’t know that they were at one time sinners: (Romans 3:23) *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”* If you have committed only one sin in your lifetime you are a sinner and you are walking in spiritual blindness [I would hate to be commanded to give a list of all of my sins]. Brethren, if you have received and obeyed the glorious light of the gospel provided by God through Jesus Christ’s gospel you are now “light in the Lord” and you should be walking as “children of light”. Let the world see that you are no longer living in darkness; instead let the world see and know that you are a child of “light”. Walk by faith: (1 Corinthians 16:13) *“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.”* Without preaching a single sermon or teaching one Bible lesson you will be shining forth the wonderful gospel message that is able to save souls. Wouldn’t you like to be a soul saver? You can be by simply walking in the glorious life.

Jesus instructed his disciples to “open” the eyes of those who were walking in darkness: (Acts 26:18) *“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”* Why would Jesus instruct these men to open their eyes? Would it not be because they were spiritually blind? Their understanding of the truth was blinded; Jesus wanted them to open their eyes from their spiritual darkness and to be guided by his light. Perhaps this version will help us to understand the words of Jesus better; the Ethiopic version renders it, "the eyes of their heart". In simple words to have their eyes opened was to have their understanding enlightened. Jesus desired that their eyes be opened so that they could see their lost condition and understand the sinfulness of their sin. To live in sin is to live in darkness; the apostles Paul wrote that we should have no fellowship with darkness: (Ephesians 5:11) *“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”* Did you notice that as Christians we are to reprove those who are

in darkness; therefore you can see that the work that the apostles were to do has not ended.

God has provided the means whereby those who are in blindness can have full vision. The only way anyone can overcome spiritual blindness is to turn to God and Jesus Christ himself who is the light of the world: (John 8:12) *“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”* Jesus knew that he would not be on this earth much longer; but he would remain to be light of the world until he departed to heaven: (John 9:5) *“As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”* Therefore, knowing his destiny he passed this duty on: (Matthew 5:14) *“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.”* So we can understand that God is yet today providing a way where the blind can receive their sight. Are you doing your part to share the light provided by Jesus? Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God and his apostles are all dead and gone so it is up to you and I to be the “light of the world”.

Christians Are Delivered From Darkness

I can make the above statement based upon the Words of Jesus: (John 8:12) *“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”* What is required of you and I to have darkness to be replaced in our lives is to “follow” Jesus. Those who love Jesus and follow after him spiritually no longer walk in darkness; instead they have become imitators of Jesus. They follow Jesus even though they may suffer hardships and persecutions. Regardless of what may come their way they still look to Jesus as their example, their guide and their captain. As children of God they do not walk in the darkness of sin; they continue to walk by faith. The world which is blind in itself cannot come to light except through Jesus Christ. Since this is the only way sinners can come to light it is of utmost importance that we take the gospel to the world: (Mark 16:15) *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”*

Paul wrote of those who had at one time been in darkness but who had been enlightened: (Ephesians 5:8) *“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:”* The faithful are called light, both because they have the true light in them which enlightens them, and also because they give light to others. Friends, light cannot be hidden; if you are allowing your light to shine it is going to be seen by others. If you a Christian your light should

be shining. Those who have obeyed the gospel's command and became Christians no longer walk in darkness but walk in truth, faith and holiness.

We have been "delivered from the power of darkness" and "translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son"; (Colossians 1:13) "*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*" This translation does not mean into the glory of heaven; while it is true Christians are heirs of heaven they have not inherited heaven yet. This being the case what could Paul be making reference to? We have been translated out of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son which can only be making reference to the church of Jesus Christ.

Paul informed the brethren at Thessalonica that they were not in darkness but were indeed "children of light": (1 Thessalonians 5:4-5) "*But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. (5) Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.*" It has been inferred by some that Paul refers to a notion that was very prevalent among the Jews that God would judge the Gentiles in the night time when utterly secure and careless; but he would judge the Jews in the day time. More to the point Paul is telling that they are people who have received their eye sight and they are people who have their eyes wide open in anticipation of the Lord's coming; in other words they will not be unprepared when the thief comes but are awake and prepared for the thief. Have you received sight and waiting prepared the Jesus when he comes again?

Peter wrote that they had been "called out of darkness: (1 Peter 2:9) "*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*" The people of God are often called a chosen generation. Using a different term Peter tells us the same thing: (1 Peter 1:2) "*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*" I find little difference in terms "chosen generation" and "elect". But we should also notice that Peter wrote in 1 Peter 2:9 that God had "called them out of darkness; how did God called us Peter? Let's allow Paul to answer this question: (2 Thessalonians 2:14) "*Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" God has made the gospel as preached by the apostles the means by which he calls mankind out of darkness [being blind] to light [receiving sight resulting in salvation who obey God's call of the gospel]. The word "calls" properly means an invitation. So what we have in the gospel is actually God's invitation for sinners to become Christians. So we now see another means by which God provides vision to those who

are blind. I might add that God not only calls the Jews He also calls the Gentiles: (Romans 9:24) *“Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?”* Being a Gentile I am extremely grateful to be included in God’s calling.

Removal of Blindness Illustrated

The first illustration that I refer to is when Jesus gave physical sight to a blind man: (John 9:1-7) *“And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. (2) And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?(3) Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.(4)I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.(5) As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.(6) When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,(7) And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”* I find it interesting to learn that while Jesus was on this earth that he found compassion upon the blind; but I know of no one who would dare to say that Jesus’ compassion ceased when he ascended up to heaven. The truth is Jesus continues to have compassion on those who are spiritually blind and through the gospel Jesus continues to give sight to the blind. Even after Jesus ascended to heaven there is the case where Jesus empowered Ananias to restore vision to Saul who had been blinded on the road to Damascus: (Acts 9:17-18) *“And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.(18) And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.”* Notice if you will that Ananias said that was sent by Jesus to restore Saul’s sight; thus proving that Jesus still has compassion upon the blind.

Look at the words of Jesus that he inspired the apostle John to write: (Revelation 3:18) *“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”* Jesus wanted their eyes anointed because they were blind: (Revelation 3:17) *“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:”* Jesus is referring to the church at Laodicea [verse

14]. Here we have those who were Christians who had gone astray and Jesus wanted their eyesight restored. The reference here is to spiritual blindness. The idea is that those who are spiritually blinded might through the gospel have their eyesight restored. What a loving Savior we have!

Conclusion

We have seen that it is entirely possible to be spiritually blind. We should never think of ourselves as being so wise that we will never become blind to the truth. We have shown that Jesus was troubled over an entire church at Laodicea that he gave John specific instruction to restore their eyesight. Friends if it could happen to members of the early church it can happen to us today.

The best advice that I can give to prevent spiritual blindness is to study: (2 Timothy 2:15) *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* But if you should find yourself blinded to the truth review this writing and see once again the many methods that God has provided to overcome spiritual blindness!