

A BLIND SPOT

A few days ago I almost caused a wreck when I was changing lanes on Highway 153.

- a. Before I started to change lanes I glanced in the rear view mirror, and then in the side mirror, and I did not see a car in the lane I was wanting to change to.
 - ▶ But there was a car in that lane, and his front bumper was almost even with my rear bumper.
- b. Fortunately, I glanced back over my shoulder as I started to change lanes and when I saw him I quickly corrected back into my lane and avoided causing a wreck.
- c. The problem was that my side mirror was not positioned correctly and it left me with a “blind spot.”
 - ▶ If the mirrors on your car are positioned correctly you’ll be able to see cars behind you and on the side of you without having to look back over your shoulder -- you’ll be able to see everything you need to see.
 - ▶ But, if you don’t have your mirrors positioned correctly, you’ll have a “blind spot” -- and having a “blind spot” is very dangerous.
 - And that’s not only true with regard to the mundane affairs of our lives, it’s also true with regard to spiritual things.

As you travel down life’s highway, you will be in grave danger if you have “a blind spot.”

- a. Matt 23:16-26 -- “Woe to you, **blind** guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.’ ¹⁷ Fools and **blind**! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? ¹⁸ And, whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.’ ¹⁹ Fools and **blind**! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? ²⁰ Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. ²¹ He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. . . . ²³ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. ²⁴ **Blind** guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! ²⁵ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. ²⁶ **Blind** Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.”
 - ▶ When Jesus accused the Jews of being “blind” He wasn’t saying they were completely blind and could not recognize any spiritual truth at all.
 - He was accusing them of being “blind” with regard to some things -- not all things.

- In **Rom 11:25** Paul said that **“blindness in part has happened to Israel . . .”**
- b. That can happen to any of us.
 - ▶ In fact, there are many, many people in our society today who have a blind spot in spiritual matters.
 - ▶ So, we must study the word of God diligently, and examine ourselves in the light of what it teaches, and make whatever corrections need to be made.
 - ▶ Our attitude must be: **“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; ²⁴ And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting”** (Psa 139:23-24).

For the time that remains, I want to talk about some of the spiritual blind spots that are so common among people in our society.

1. There are many people who simply cannot “see” their own weakness and sinfulness -- they have a blind spot.

There are many examples in the Bible of people who were blind to their own weakness and sinfulness.

- a. Example: The Pharisee who invited Jesus into his house to eat with him.
 - ▶ **Lk 7:36-50**
- b. Example: The Pharisee in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican.
 - ▶ **Lk 18:10-13** -- **“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector (publican). ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men -- extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’”**
- c. Example: The church at Laodicea.
 - ▶ **Rev 3:17-18** -- **“Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’ -- and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked -- ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.”**

Anyone who has this blind spot -- unable to see his own weakness and sinfulness -- is in great danger of spiritual ruin, because . . .

- a. He will not have the humility he ought to have.
 - ▶ **Lk 18:9** -- **“Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: . . .”**
 - ▶ **Gal 6:3** -- **“For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”**
 - ▶ A good example of the kind of humility we ought to have would be the sinful woman in **Lk 7:36-50**.

- v38 -- “. . . stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil”
- ▶ Example #2: The publican in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican.
 - v13 -- “And the tax collector (publican), standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’”
- ▶ Example #3: The prodigal son.
 - Lk 15:21 -- “And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’”
- ▶ Example #4: Simon Peter.
 - Lk 5:8 -- “When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!’”
- ▶ Example #5: Paul.
 - 1Tim 1:15 -- “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”
- ▶ Song: Amazing Grace!

*Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.*
- b. He will not have the right attitude toward others who are guilty of sin.
 - ▶ Gal 6:1-2 -- “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. ² Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
 - ▶ Matt 9:10-13 -- “Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. ¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, ‘Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?’ ¹² When Jesus heard that, He said to them, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.’”
 - ▶ Lk 15:1-7 -- “Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. ² And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, ‘This Man receives sinners and eats with them.’ ³ So He spoke this parable to them, saying: ⁴ ‘What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’ ⁷ I say to you that likewise there will be

- more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”
- c. He will not love God the way he should.
 - ▶ Lk 7:47 -- “. . . he who has been forgiven little loves little.”

2. There are many people who simply cannot “see” what their obligations and responsibilities are -- they have a blind spot.

Some husbands do not “see” the responsibility God has placed upon them to (1) be head of the house (Eph 5:23), (2) provide for the family’s physical necessities (1Tim 5:8), and (3) be the spiritual leader of the family (Eph 6:4) -- they have a blind spot.

- a. Some men seem to think they can work out a different arrangement with their wives and that will be ok with the Lord.

Some husbands can only “see” the authority God has given them in Eph 5, but the part about loving their wives with the sacrificial love with which Christ loved the church, and loving their wives like they love their own bodies, and nourishing and cherishing their wives is in their “blind spot.”

- a. They don’t “see” that part of the chapter; or, they don’t “see” how to apply it in a practical way in their everyday living.

Some wives do not “see” the responsibility God has placed upon them to (1) love their husbands (Tit 2:4), (2) respect their husbands (Eph 5:33), (3) submit to the authority of their husbands (Eph 5:22-24) -- they have a blind spot.

Some fathers and mothers have a blind spot with regard to their children.

- a. God has placed very serious responsibilities upon parents to (1) teach their children, (2) set rules for their children, (3) discipline their children, (4) spend time with their children.
 - ▶ Deut 11:19 -- “You shall teach them (these words of Mine, v18) to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”
 - ▶ Prov 29:15 -- “The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.” (NRSV: “The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a mother is disgraced by a neglected child”).

Some church members do not “see” the responsibility God has placed upon them to do “the work of the Lord” (1 Cor 15:58) -- they have a blind spot.

- a. It is not enough to be baptized, and be a member of a faithful congregation, and attend the services, and put money in the collection plate.
 - ▶ Our responsibilities to the Lord and to the church go far beyond that.
- b. “The work of the Lord” is evangelism, edification, and benevolence – and every Christian must “abound” (1 Cor 15:58) in that work.

Some church members do not “see” the responsibilities we have to “one another” in the family of God -- they have a blind spot.

- a. As Christians we are “members of one another” (Rom 12:4-5); we have a special relationship to one another, and special responsibilities that grow out of that relationship.
- b. The responsibilities we have to one another in Christ are many, and they are vitally important.
 - ▶ Remember what Jesus says in Matt 25:40, 45 -- “And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me’” (v40) and “‘ . . . inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me’” (v45).
 - love one another (Jn 13:34)
 - be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving (Eph 4:32)
 - comfort one another and edify one another (1 Th 5:11)
 - be hospitable to one another (1 Pet 4:9; Rom 12:1)
 - be submissive to one another (1 Pet 5:5)
 - consider one another to stir up love and good works (Heb 10:24)
 - teach and admonish one another (Col 3:16)
 - exhort one another (Heb 3:13)
 - bear one another’s burdens (Gal 6:2)
 - each Christian is to esteem others better than himself (Php 2:3)

3. Some Christians cannot “see” how to apply Bible principles to everyday situations -- they have a blind spot.

Let me give 2 examples of what I’m talking about.

- a. Women are commanded to dress modestly in 1Tim 2, and dressing immodestly is forbidden.
 - ▶ 1 Tim 2:9-10 -- “. . . in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, ¹⁰ but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.”
 - ▶ Every Christian must agree that women are to dress modestly; but many women (and their husbands) do not “see” how to apply the teaching -- they have a blind spot.
 - They don’t “see” how modern-day swim suits, hemlines above the knees, exposed cleavage, and form-fitting skirts and dresses are immodest.
 - They don’t “see” the difference in dressing like a woman professing godliness and dressing like a woman professing worldliness.
- b. Lasciviousness is everywhere condemned in the Bible, and those who practice lasciviousness “shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal 5:21).
 - ▶ Gal 5:19 -- “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness (lasciviousness), . . .”
 - ▶ Every Christian must agree that lasciviousness (that which tends to produce lewd and lustful emotions) is wrong, it’s sin.
 - But many men and women, even in the church, do not “see” how to apply the teaching -- they have a blind spot.

- They don't "see" how modern-day swim suits, hemlines above the knees, exposed cleavage, and form-fitting skirts and dresses tend to produce lewd and lustful emotions.
- They don't "see" how modern dancing tends to produce lewd and lustful emotions.
- They don't "see" how nudity and sex scenes in movies and TV tend to produce lewd and lustful emotions -- they have a blind spot.

4. Many people cannot "see" their inconsistency (even glaring inconsistency) in doctrinal matters -- they have a blind spot.

Let me give 2 examples of what I'm talking about.

- a. Calvinists teach the doctrine of "justification by faith only."
 - ▶ But most Calvinists, if asked, "Don't we have to repent of our sins in order to be saved?" will answer "Yes. Certainly."
 - Most Calvinists, if asked, "Don't we have to confess faith in Christ in order to be saved?" will answer "Yes. Certainly."
 - ▶ But then they will deny that baptism is necessary for salvation -- "because salvation is by faith only."
 - ▶ And they cannot "see" that they are being terribly inconsistent.
 - They have a blind spot.
- b. Calvinists teach the doctrine of "once saved, always saved" -- but they also teach saved people to pray for God's forgiveness when they sin.
 - ▶ But, if their doctrine of "once saved, always saved" is true, the Christian who sins is automatically forgiven and his sins do not place his soul in any jeopardy.
 - His sins are forgiven before and without repentance, and his sins are forgiven before and without praying for forgiveness.
 - If "once saved, always saved" is true, repenting and praying have nothing do with being forgiven.
 - ▶ But they cannot "see" that they are being terribly inconsistent.
 - They have a blind spot.

5. Many people cannot "see" their hypocrisy (even when everyone else can see it so clearly) -- they have a blind spot.

Matt 23:1-3 -- "Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, ² saying: 'The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. ³ Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.'

Rom 2:21-23 -- "You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? ²² You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³ You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?"

6. There are some Christians who cannot “see” their immaturity and childishness -- they have a blind spot.

They are frequently having problems in their marriage, problems with their supervisors and co-workers, problems with their brethren in the church and in the business meetings -- but they don't “see” that much of it is because of their immaturity and childishness.

- a. They have a blind spot.

2 Pet 1:5-9 -- “But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge **self-control**, to self-control **perseverance** (KJV, ASV: patience), to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸ For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to **blindness**, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”

7. There are many people who cannot “see” what God has done for them and how God has blessed them -- they have a blind spot.

How we “see” God's blessings has a great deal to do with how we live our lives.

- a. Psa 34:8 says -- “Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!”
 - ▶ The one who “sees” and appreciates the good things God has done for him and the good things God has given him is the one who will put his trust in God and live his life for God.
- b. 1 Pet 2:1-3 -- “Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, ² as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”
 - ▶ The one who has “tasted that the Lord is gracious” is the one who will be diligent about studying God's word so that he can rid his life of the things that would be displeasing to God and so that he can grow into the person God wants him to be.
- c. As Paul says in the Roman letter, “the goodness of God leads you to repentance” (Rom 2:4).
 - ▶ “Seeing” and truly appreciating all the good that God has done for us will cause us to repent and turn to God.

Conclusion.

Before I bring the lesson to a conclusion, I want to say something about what causes a person to have a blind spot.

When you think about it, I believe it will become apparent to you that the two main causes of spiritual blind spots are (1) ignorance and (2) dishonesty.

- a. Ignorance.

- ▶ Rom 10:1-4 -- “Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. ² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³ For they being **ignorant** of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.”
- ▶ 2 Pet 3:16 -- “. . . and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation -- as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, ¹⁶ as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.”
- ▶ And it is often the case that the ignorance causing the blind spot is willful ignorance.
 - 2 Pet 2:5 -- “For this they willfully forget: . . .”

b. Dishonesty

- ▶ Ac 28:24-27 -- “And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. ²⁵ So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: “The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, ²⁶ saying, ‘Go to this people and say: ‘Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive; ²⁷ For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.’”