

2020 Vision

Spiritual Blindness

World Outreach Church
Sermon Discussion Guide
Sunday Sermon: **April 23, 2023**



Spiritual survival—we don't just want to survive; we want to flourish no matter what's coming—whatever disruptions and expressions of evil. You see, no matter how intimidating the threats, Jesus came to this earth and offered Himself as a sacrifice so we might display His victory. Scripture says He leads us in a "triumphal procession." So, I read the statistics about the Church in our nation—articles about a post-Christian this and that. In response, let's be the generation that humbles ourselves before the Lord in such a way that He responds in unprecedented ways, so the lives of our children and grandchildren are transformed by the power of a Living God.

I. VISION PROBLEMS

Ezekiel 12:1–2 ¹ *The word of the Lord came to me: ² "Son of man, you are living among a rebellious people. They have eyes to see but do not see and ears to hear but do not hear, for they are a rebellious people.*

Romans 1:20–22 ²⁰ *For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and **their foolish hearts were darkened.** ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools.*

1. **What does it look like to "lead with faith" in your day-to-day life?**

II. SPIRITUAL AWARENESS — A NEW KIND OF SIGHT

Habakkuk 2:1–2 (NASB95[®]) ¹ *I will stand on my guard post And station myself on the rampart; And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me, And how I may reply when I am reprov'd. ² Then the Lord answered me and said, "**Record the vision** And inscribe it on tablets, That the one who reads it may run.*

Revelation 1:10–13 ¹⁰ *On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and **I heard behind me a loud voice** like a trumpet, ¹¹ which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea." ¹² **I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me.** And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.*

Romans 11:8 *As it is written: "**God gave them a spirit of stupor**, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day."*

Isaiah 29:9–13 ⁹ *Be stunned and amazed, blind yourselves and be sightless; be drunk, but not from wine, stagger, but not from beer. ¹⁰ The Lord has brought over you a deep sleep: He has sealed your eyes (the prophets); he has covered your heads (the seers). ¹¹ For you this whole vision is nothing but words sealed in a scroll. And if you give the scroll to someone who can read, and say to him, "Read this, please," he will answer, "I can't; it is sealed." ¹² Or if you give the scroll to someone who cannot read, and say, "Read this, please," he will answer, "I don't know how to read." ¹³ The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.*

Deuteronomy 4:9 *Only be careful, and **watch yourselves closely** so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.*

2. **What are some ways you can begin intentionally reaching out to those in your life who are not walking with the Lord—especially those who claim to be Christians?**

III. LEARNING TO SEE & UNDERSTAND

Ephesians 4:17–24 ¹⁷ ***So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do**, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹ Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. ²⁰ You, however,*

did not come to know Christ that way.²¹ Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.²² You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds;²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Hebrews 5:11–14¹¹ We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because **you are slow to learn.**¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Matthew 15:14 *Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.”*

Mark 8:14–21¹⁴ The disciples had forgotten to bring bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat.¹⁵ “Be careful,” Jesus warned them. “Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod.”

¹⁶ They discussed this with one another and said, “It is because we have no bread.”

¹⁷ Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: “Why are you talking about having no bread? **Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened?**¹⁸ **Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear?** And don’t you remember?¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?” “Twelve,” they replied.²⁰ “And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?” They answered, “Seven.”²¹ He said to them, “Do you still not understand?”

3. In what ways has the Lord opened your eyes spiritually, particularly in the past few years?

4. What misconceptions do you have about spiritual forces and the impact they can have on your life?

IV. LISTEN TO JESUS

Matthew 23:1–22, 33–36¹ Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples:² “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat.³ So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.⁴ They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

⁵ “Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long;⁶ they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues;⁷ they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them ‘Rabbi.’

⁸ “But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have only one Master and you are all brothers.⁹ And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven.¹⁰ Nor are you to be called ‘teacher,’ for you have one Teacher, the Christ.¹¹ **The greatest among you will be your servant.**¹² **For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.**

¹³ “**Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites!** You shut the kingdom of heaven in men’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.

¹⁵ “**Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites!** You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are.

¹⁶ “**Woe to you, blind guides!** You say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’¹⁷ You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred?¹⁸ You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is bound by his oath.’¹⁹ You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred?²⁰ Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.²¹ And he who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it.²² And he who swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by the one who sits on it. . . .³³ “You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?³⁴ Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town.³⁵ And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.³⁶ I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation.

5. How does Jesus model leadership in the Bible? What are some things you can begin to implement in your own life to lead more like Jesus did?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I want to see Your Kingdom extended on the earth in my day. Now is my moment to say yes to You. Give me the wisdom, courage, and discernment I need to align with Your plan and go where You lead. I will step out in faith to follow Your leading. I will lay down my fears, ambitions, and status for the honor of serving You and seeing my generation transformed. In Jesus’ name, amen.