

JOHN 9:35-41
SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 9 as we continue our in-depth study of the Gospel of John.

As we have seen in our study of John chapter 9, Jesus heals a man who was born blind. All his life he could not see but now that has all changed.

And you would think there would be great excitement over this from family and friends. But instead, for those who knew this man, there was much confusion. Is this the one who was born blind, they just couldn't believe it and they even began to argue about this.

Finally, they asked this man if he was the one born blind, and he said to them that he is the man!

They then brought this man who was born blind but now sees to the Pharisees and they interrogate him for a time.

And this was so hard for some of them to believe that they said, “**... ‘This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.’ Others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?’ And there was a division among them.**” John 9:16.

Why did they have such a hard time accepting the fact that Jesus healed this man?

Because of their traditions, what they made the Sabbath day to be, and it was not what God intended it to be as we already talked about in our previous studies.

It was to be a day of rest, of coming together with family and with God. But they made it into a heavy burden because all that they added to the Sabbath day!

And thus, Jesus could not be of God because He did not keep the Sabbath or obey the Sabbath law, which they made and thus He is a sinner, and He could not be of God!

Now let's think about this for a minute. In the Old Testament there was never a healing of a blind person.

And now, all of a sudden here is a Man who healed a man born blind and none of the Jewish religious leaders thought about what the Scriptures say about the Messiah, when He comes He will heal the blind!

Why did that not come to them? Why did they not think about that?

Because traditions kept them from the truth!

What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah and healing the blind?

Let me show you.

In Psalm 146:8 we are told, "**The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; The Lord raises those who are bowed down; The Lord loves the righteous.**"

What I want you to get from this verse is who does the healing! It is *YAHWEH* who heals the blind! Thus, Jesus must be Almighty God, He must be Yahweh!

Then, in Isaiah 35:5 we are told of what Yahweh will do, "**Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.**"

And lastly, again this is what Yahweh will do here in Isaiah 42:7-8, "**To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house. I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.**"

So there is no reason for them not to see this except for their unwillingness to see it, to believe it and thus, they were in spiritual darkness!

I have called our study this morning – ***SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!***

And I have broken the verses we will be looking at into two main points and they are as follows,

LORD, I BELIEVE – JOHN 9:35-38

I DON'T BELIEVE – JOHN 9:39-41

Let me share this with you and you will see how the enemy can blind us to the truth and take us out of the battle, make our witness ineffective.

We are told,

“Blinding Laser Weapons” are weapons that are designed to blind soldiers on the field of battle. Most countries adhere to international law to minimize the power of their lasers. China, however, instead of limiting the power of such weapons, took full advantage of the potential, developing the battery-powered ZM-87 Portable Laser Disturber.

Its desired effect was to injure or dizzy the eyes of enemy combatants. By seeking to blind the enemy, they render them unable to fight.

I’ve never thought much about the tactics of war, but it makes a lot of sense that a soldier doesn’t have to be *destroyed* in order to be rendered useless. Blinding them is enough.

Though effective in its main objective of blinding the target, the weapon had several technical glitches and was subsequently retired. No doubt, however, the Chinese will continue their efforts to perfect a reliable model.

Satan doesn’t have to get rid of us to take us out of the battle. All he needs to do is render us useless by blinding us to the truth.

“The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

- bit.ly/3Jn72JD

How true that is. That is why we need to walk in the Light as He is in the Light! We need to follow Jesus because, as He has said, “**. . . ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.’**” John 8:12.

Now, in saying all that, remember what we closed with last time. The Jewish religious leaders were grilling this man who was blind and now sees and they just can’t believe it has happened and they certainly did not believe Jesus was a man of God or should I say God!

And this blind man who now sees challenges them saying that it is amazing that they don’t know about this Man named Jesus who has healed him. No sinner could do this and thus, this man must be from God. No one has done anything like this. In fact, he said, “**If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.**” John 9:33.

And these men of God, these Jewish religious leaders, instead of having compassion on this man and seeing what God has done, they call him a sinner, that he was born in sin and that is why he was blind, and they did not want to hear it any longer, they did not want to be taught by a sinner!

Interestingly enough, this man was completely right, but they could not handle the truth and thus, they excommunicated him from the Temple, from the synagogue and thus, he lost everything!

As we are going to see this morning, this man lost nothing. In fact, what he is going to gain is far more important than him gaining his sight, as we will see.

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in John chapter 9, beginning in verse 35 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word, and we look at this topic –

SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!

JOHN 9

VERSES 35-38

Remember what I have called these verses – ***LORD, I BELIEVE!***

And as you go through this chapter, and you see what the religious leaders did to this man who was born blind and now he sees, you have to love it!

What do I mean by that?

Think about it. The blind or ex-blind man gets kicked out of the world, its religious system and who comes to find him?

JESUS!

We need to understand that the religious system will not like you, they will mock you, make fun of you, say things about you that are not true, but if Jesus has accepted you, that is all you need.

Here is this man who entered this world blind; he was born in this condition.

How does that relate to us?

On a spiritual level, every one of us are born blind, spiritually speaking, spiritual blindness, just as this man was.

Now, how did Jesus heal this man?

In regard to his physical blindness, we see that Jesus spit on the ground, made some clay out of the spit and the dirt, placed this clay on this man's eyes and then had him wash in the pool of Siloam. As he did his physical eyes were opened, he could see.

Now, as I have said, even though he could see physically, he was still spiritually blind, he couldn't see.

Thus, as Jesus finds this man once again, He asks him **“Do you believe in the Son of God?”**

In the Greek it is emphatic; it is a call to commitment!

The man who was born blind wants to believe and he asks who is this person that he might believe.

And Jesus responds by saying **“You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.”**

Now we may miss this, but that phrase, **“the Son of God”** is speaking of the fact that Jesus is Almighty God!

That is one of the reasons that the Jewish religious leaders were so mad at Jesus, because He being a man made Himself equal with God!

We see that played out for us in John 5:18, **“Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”**

And this is important for us to understand, what this means, this phrase “*Son of God.*” So let me share this with you. We are told,

Is Jesus the Son of God? In the Bible, Jesus is often called the Son of God, which means that He is God made manifest in human form (John 1:1, 14).

Jesus is the Son of God because He was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), who is God.

In Jesus’ time, the phrase son of man was used to signify a human being. In relation to that, Jesus being the Son of God, means that Jesus is God.

Jesus possesses the same attributes as God and both are honored equally.

John 5:21-23 says, “For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.”

Both the Father and the Son perform the same works. John 5:24-27 confirm this: “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.”

Are there biblical reasons why I should believe that Jesus is the Son of God? Is there evidence that Jesus is the Son of God?

The devil referred to Jesus as the Son of God - Matthew 4:1-3 says, "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.'"

The demons called Jesus the Son of God - Matthew 8:28-29 says, "When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. 'What do you want with us, Son of God?' they shouted. 'Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?'"

The disciples referred to Jesus as the Son of God - Matthew 14:32-33 says, "And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'"

The centurion proclaimed that Jesus is the Son of God - Mark 15:39 says, "And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, 'Surely this man was the Son of God!'"

An angel called Jesus the Son of God - Luke 1:35 says "The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.'"

Paul repeatedly referred to Jesus as the Son of God. Here is one instance - Galatians 2:20 says, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

John gave Jesus the title Son of God - 1 John 4:14-16 says, “And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.”

Can you call Jesus the Son of God?

- bit.ly/3qg59a5

So when you see that phrase speaking of Jesus, it is speaking to the fact that He is Almighty God, and we have seen that in our study of the Gospel of John.

Now, it is at this point I believe this man gives his life to the Lord, he surrenders his will to the Lord’s will, and he has that saving faith.

Why do I say that?

Because of the response of this man.

In verse 38 of John chapter 9 we are told of this man’s response, “**Lord, I believe!**” and **he worshiped Him.**”

You see, his words were not empty, but they lead to action on his part.

James puts it this way, “**Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.**”
James 2:17.

You see, real faith will lead to real works, actions on our part and it should lead to worship, the worship of God. And Jesus accepted the worship and thus, He must be God!

Now, let me be clear on this. Works don’t save us, but they do show that we are saved! This man had a choice to make. To either accept what Jesus had said or to reject it, and he chose to receive all that Jesus said. His heart was open to the truths of God.

People today have to come and see that Jesus is Lord. They have to recognize that their sin has separated them from God.

Listen to what the Bible says of our condition, because many people feel they are good.

But Paul tells us in Romans **“There is none righteous, no, not one; . . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”** Romans 3:10, 23.

That is our problem, sin; it has separated us from God, and no matter how good we may think we are, we still fall far short of the glory of God, of His righteousness. It is a hopeless condition, just as hopeless as this man who was born blind.

But Paul tells us **“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”** Romans 5:6.

You see, we were totally hopeless in this condition we were in, and yet God stepped in and did for us that which we could not do, save us, open up our eyes.

Again, in Romans Paul tells us, **“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned . . . Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”** Romans 5:12, 18-19.

You see, we have a choice to make just like this man had to do here in John chapter 9. And that choice is simple, to either receive the free gift of life that God has given to us or to reject it. To have your spiritual eyes opened or remain blind!

Paul put it this way in Romans 6:23, **“For the wages of sin is death, but the [free] gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

You see, if you want to receive what you are due in this life, you will receive death, eternally separated from God.

On the other hand, if you receive the free gift of God, you will receive eternal life with Him, that life that is only found in Jesus, your spiritual eyes will be opened!

How do we do this, how do we obtain this eternal life?

Paul gives us the answer as he says “**that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**” Romans 10:9-10.

You must confess with your mouth, and you must believe in your heart and your spiritually blind eyes will see once again!

Be open to what God has for you and you will see! The world may cast you out, make fun of you, mock you, persecute you, make you an outcast of society because of what you believe, but understand this, Jesus will receive you just as He received this man, all you must do is come to Him!

And Jesus is drawing out the faith of this man who was blind. Keep in mind that Jesus is always searching, looking for those that are His sheep.

In Revelation 3:20 we are told, “**Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.**”

Yes, Jesus is speaking to the apostate church who has locked Him out and He is knocking on the door for them to let Him in.

But I also see that Jesus does this in people's lives as the Holy Spirit is drawing people to Jesus, knocking, in a sense, on the door of their heart and asking if He can come in and be on the throne of their heart, to guide them and lead them!

We are told in Isaiah 55:1-3, **“Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you - The sure mercies of David.”**

And lastly, this comforting invitation from Jesus in Matthew 11:28-30 where He tells us to, **“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”**

What a comfort, what rest we find in Jesus.

And yes, this man was born physically blind, and Jesus opened his eyes, but spiritually speaking he was still blind, he was still dead in his trespasses and sins until his spiritual eyes were opened. He needed to come to that saving faith that only Jesus can give to us.

And as much as the religious leaders would not let this man worship in the Temple, Jesus allows him to worship right there. And think of it, no Jew would worship a man like I have said, but now this man has come to see Jesus who He really is, the Son of God and thus, he begins to worship Jesus.

How many people today worship everyone and anyone except Jesus. He alone deserves our worship; may we not forget that!

One more thing before we move on. I want you to notice the progression of this man's faith as it reached the point that his spiritual eyes were opened.

First, he said that Jesus was a "man" in John 9:11.

Then he sees Jesus as a "prophet" in John 9:17.

Then he sees Jesus as a "man from God" in John 9:33.

And lastly, as he is saved, he sees Jesus as the "Son of God" who is worthy of worship in John 9:38.

And listen to how rich, how deep this belief is. Tenney tells us, *"The question 'Do you believe in the Son of [God]?' is a summons to commitment. The Greek pronoun su ('you') used with the verb makes the inquiry doubly emphatic. It demanded a personal decision in the face of opposition or rejection."*

The religious leaders said, *"You can't worship with us at the temple."*

Jesus said, *"I will receive your worship."*

Isn't that awesome and that is what God is saying to us. We worship the Lord, not some building. That is why we don't have a lot of things in this building so that your attention is to the teaching, from hearing God speak to you through His Word. We don't want distractions; we want to worship Jesus!

Now let's look at our last point in this and that is the Jewish religious leaders – ***IDON'T BELIEVE!***

VERSES 39-41

Jesus starts out by telling these Jewish religious leaders that He has come to bring judgment into this world.

What does that mean?

Doesn't that contradict what Jesus said in John 3:16-17, "**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn [judge] the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.**"

This is not a contradiction; you have to look at the context of what this chapter is all about.

In fact, if you read on in John chapter 3 Jesus does speak of judgment upon those who reject Him.

Here in John chapter 9 Jesus is speaking of how some accepted Him, and some rejected Him and that brought about division, it was like a dividing line.

And we have seen the divisions in this chapter as well as others that Jesus brought between those who received Him and those who rejected Him!

One writer put it like this, that Jesus is like the Continental Divide in the Rocky Mountains. It is here that the path of water flow is decided. Thus, in a sense, Jesus is "*the pivot on which human destiny turns.*" (Tenney)

And Morgan wrote, "*His statement that He had come to judge the world meant that He would be the separating One, the One through whom God would judge.*"

Thus, as you look at the context of this chapter, He is speaking of those who admit their spiritual blindness, their need for a Savior, that He will open their spiritual eyes so they may see.

But, on the other hand, for those that don't see their spiritual blindness, who feel they are just fine the way they are without Jesus, they will remain spiritually blind to the truths of God, and they will die in their sins!

And for these Pharisees, if they could admit their spiritual blindness they then could be forgiven, and they could see. And thus, Jesus brought division amongst the various groups of people!

For the Pharisees, they refused to do that, to come to Jesus and their sin remains, and they are blind!

Now it doesn't come out in the English but in the Greek, they expect a negative response to their question to Jesus, "**Are we blind also?**"

You see, they thought, why I don't know, but they did, that Jesus would say something like this, "*No, no, you are not blind, you are holy men of God!*"

That is what they expected but, as we have seen, that is not what Jesus said to them!

Listen again to what Jesus said to them. "**Jesus said to them, If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.**" John 9:41.

Can you imagine the expression on their faces when Jesus said that! They thought of themselves as holy, as righteous, as men of God. In fact, the people thought if anyone would make it to heaven it would be a Scribe and a Pharisee and now Jesus tells them that they are spiritually blind, that they are in sin! They were not going to make it into heaven!

I wonder the expressions of the people in the crowd when they heard that!

Warren Wiersbe gives us insight to what was going on here as he wrote,

Our Lord's reply was a paradox. "If you were blind, you would be better off. But you claim to see. Therefore, you are guilty!" Blindness would at least be an excuse for not knowing what was going on. But they did know what was going on. Jesus had performed many miracles and the religious leaders ignored the evidence to make a right decision.

Jesus is the Light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5). The only people who cannot see the light are blind people and those who refuse to look, those who make themselves blind. The beggar was physically blind and spiritually blind, yet both his eyes and his heart were opened. Why? Because he listened to the Word, believed it, obeyed, and experienced the grace of God.

The Pharisees had good physical vision, but they were blind spiritually. Had they listened to the Word and sincerely considered the evidence, they too would have believed on Jesus Christ and been born again.

In what sense did the Pharisees "see"? They saw the change in the blind beggar and could not deny that he had been healed. They saw the mighty works that Jesus performed. Even Nicodemus, one of their number, was impressed with the Lord's miracles (John 3:2).

If they had examined the evidence with honesty, they would have seen the truth clearly. "If any man wills to do His [God's] will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:17, literal translation). "And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40).

John 10 is actually a continuation of our Lord's ministry to the Pharisees. The healing of the blind beggar is the background (John 10:21). In fact, the word translated "cast out" in John 9:35 is translated "puts forth" in John 10:4.

The beggar was cast out of the synagogue but taken by the Good Shepherd and added to His flock! The emphasis in John 10 is on Jesus Christ, the Good and True Shepherd, as opposed to the Pharisees who were false shepherds.

We never meet this healed beggar again, but surely the man followed Jesus closely and was among those who witnessed for Him. We hope that he was able to win his fearful parents to the Lord.

While being excommunicated from the synagogue was certainly a painful experience for him, he certainly found in his fellowship with Jesus Christ much more spiritual help and encouragement than he could ever have found in the Jewish traditions.

Even today, there are people who must choose between Christ and family, or Christ and their traditional religion.

This blind beggar made the right choice, even though the cost was great.

“The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (Prov 4:18).

- Warren Wiersbe, The Wiersbe Bible Commentary – NT, pp. 262-263

“To be so self-deceived as to shut one’s eyes to the light is a desperate state to be in: the light is there, but if people refuse to avail themselves of it but rather deliberately reject it, how can they be enlightened? As Jesus said, their sin remains.” (Bruce)

This reminds me of what is said in Proverbs 30:12, “**There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness.**”

People today feel they are basically good people, that they will go to heaven but without Christ they are lost in their sins; they are not washed from their filthiness, they are spiritually blind!

But that can all change as a person gives their life to Jesus because Jesus alone can heal our blind eyes.

What are those things that hinder people from coming to that saving faith or can hinder us from growing in the Lord?

I think there are at least three, there may be more but these three we will look at this morning.

The things that hinder a person from coming to the Lord are: ***Religious traditions***, ***Preconceived ideas*** or forming an opinion beforehand or in advance of the truth, and ***Prejudices*** or forming a judgment or opinion that is in opposition to the truth or facts.

These are all very real problems that people can have that either keeps them from the truth, faith in God or keeping us from growing, experiencing all that God has for them.

The first one, which is a huge obstacle for people to overcome and receive Jesus, is ***Religious Traditions***.

Now tradition is not necessarily bad, but when it supersedes the Word of God or goes in opposition to the Word of God, then it is bad, then it is evil!

Notice what Jesus said in Mark 7:6-9 regarding this issue of false religious tradition.

We read, **“He answered and said to them, ‘Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: “This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men - the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.’ He said to them, ‘All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.’”**

First of all, they go to church thinking that by going to church they are saved, and Jesus says they are wrong, they are living a life of hypocrisy.

How many people today do that very thing, they go to church on Sunday and the rest of the week they live like the devil thinking they will enter heaven smoking just a little from playing so close to the fires of Hell, what they have embraced on this earth. And Jesus says to them and to us, ***“You are sadly mistaken!”***

Also, in regard to ***Religious Traditions***, it can relate to holding onto these things to save them, traditions that go beyond God’s Word, things that are contrary to God’s Word.

What does that mean to us today?

It could speak of those who believe that by sprinkling some water upon a person or immersing them into water, the waters of baptism that will save them.

And yet that is not what the Bible teaches, baptism doesn’t save us, Jesus does!

For others it can be any number of sacraments, the lighting of candles or whatever, and you once again won’t find this in the Word of God. Jesus put it this way and it is very simple as He says, **“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am [He], you will die in your sins.”** John 8:24.

In other words, if you don't believe that Jesus is the *GREAT I AM*, that He is God and receive Him as your Lord and Savior, it is then you will die in your sins!

Folks, God's Word is our plum line, it keeps us on track and if we are doing something to earn our salvation, doing something that is contrary to God's Word, then it is truly empty, it won't save, because, like I said, Jesus alone saves us!

Some of you may be offended by that and that is not my intention at all, but if you can show me in the Scriptures that I am wrong, I will believe you.

But you can't!

Now you can tell me what this person has said, or that person, but it is empty.

One of the things that drives me crazy is when people speak of their faith by the church they go to. I am a Baptist! I am a Lutheran! I am a Methodist! And the list can go on. Please don't say I am a Calvary Chapelite or whatever!

I don't want to offend anyone, okay, maybe I do. There are no Baptists, Lutheran's, people who go to Calvary Chapel in heaven!

You know who are in heaven – *CHRISTIANS!*

May we not forget that!

Don't hold up a church, hold up Jesus!

And in regard to the traditions of man, Paul warned us as he wrote in Colossians 2:8-9, **“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”**

The Living Bible puts these verses this way, **“Don’t let others spoil your faith and joy with their philosophies, their wrong and shallow answers built on men’s thoughts and ideas, instead of on what Christ has said. For in Christ there is all of God in a human body; so you have everything when you have Christ, and you are filled with God through your union with Christ. He is the highest Ruler, with authority over every other power.”**

I wonder how many people are on their way to Hell, thinking they are going to heaven, by keeping religious traditions that are contrary to God’s Word, keeping the traditions of men and not of God?

Don’t let your traditions keep you from the Kingdom of God; don’t let them keep you in spiritual blindness!

The second problem these religious leaders had, and many have today is *Preconceived Ideas* or forming an opinion beforehand or in advance of the truth.

These religious leaders already had their opinion of Jesus, that He was not of God, that He was of the Devil, a sinner, so it didn’t matter what Jesus said or did, their opinion was made already!

People do the same today.

They say things like, *“I’m basically a good person, so God will have to accept me!”*

Or *“When I get to heaven the Big Guy and I will have a talk and it will all work out!”*

Or *“If God is so good why is there so much evil in the world? Therefore, God must not be good, or He doesn’t exist!”*

And the list can go on and on, and it does!

How many of you when you were growing up believed in those old wives’ tales? I’m sure many if not most of you.

Now, as adults, do you still believe them?

Maybe not all of them, but I'm sure some of them still remain with you; you just can't let those old wives' tales go.

Now I shouldn't tell you this, but I will because it helps to illustrate the point.

When I was young my mother told me not to drink milk if it was hot outside and the reason being is that if it was hot out the milk would sour in your stomach.

So I didn't!

Then, after I got married, living in hot Arizona, my wife was surprised when I didn't drink much milk when I went to do things outside.

I explained to her the reason why I didn't. You see, it can sour in your stomach.

I thought she was going to hurt herself she was laughing so hard.

Can you believe that Julie laughed at me?

I'm sure you are doing the same thing, it is funny, it is silly, but I believed it!

But I did try to explain to her the reason why and trying to make her believe. She didn't!

Julie told me that what I said made no sense because as you drink this milk it goes into your stomach that is filled with hydrochloric acid to help digest it.

You know what, even though what she said made sense, I still held onto that until it finally sunk in, the light went on. You see, I had a hard time believing this was an old wives' tale! But it was!

Now we can also apply that to our spiritual lives because for many today, in regard to God, they hold onto things regarding God that are untrue, they have formed opinions and when you share the truth with them, they refuse to see it. They would rather hold onto their lies, those old wives' tales you might say.

Notice what Jesus says in regard to God's Word in John 8:31-32, **“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’”**

You see, God's Word will set you free from all those preconceived ideas you have, the light will expel the darkness and as you let those things go you will not only grow in the Lord, but you are set free!

And lastly, another thing that held those religious leaders back from the truth and what many today still struggle with is *Prejudices* or framing a judgment or opinion that is in opposition to the facts.

Let me show you what I mean with the religious leaders once again.

In Matthew 22:41-46 we are told, **“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, ‘What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?’ They said to Him, ‘The Son of David.’ He said to them, ‘How then does David in the Spirit call Him “Lord,” saying: “The LORD said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? If David then calls Him “Lord,” how is He his Son?’ And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.”**

And we have talked about this before. But in that culture a father would never, ever call his son *“lord.”*

Now a son would call his father *“lord”* as a term of respect, but not the other way around.

Sounds very simple, especially living in those days, they knew this very well.

And as simple as it is, it caught these religious leaders off guard, something they never thought about.

You see, Jesus asks these men whose Son will the Messiah be. And they answered and said the Son of David!

And they were right, good answer for these guys, they didn't even have to phone a friend or ask the audience for help on this one!

Now, Jesus brings up a little problem here. If He is the Son of David, how can David call Him Lord!

He can't! It is not kosher!

Are the Scriptures wrong?

Not at all.

Their preconceived ideas were wrong about the Messiah. You see, the Messiah was to be the *Son of David*, and He also was to be the *Son of God*, and thus, David could call Him Lord because He was much more than a Son of David!

Paul clears this up for us by telling us in Romans 1:3-4, where he says, **“concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”**

You see, Jesus was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, but He also was the Son of God by the Spirit!

The Scriptures themselves testify of this and it should have been very clear to these religious men, but they had their prejudices, an opinion of the situation that went against what the Scriptures said.

They rejected the truth because of that!

Do you see how dangerous this can be?

I hope so.

You see, at this point the religious leaders just kept quiet.

Why?

Because what Jesus was saying and what the Scriptures were saying went against what they wanted to believe, and even though the truth exposed their error, they still refused to see, to receive it and they remained in their sins!

People do the same things today.

Again, look at science and the complexity of life, and because of prejudices, they come to the conclusion that life just happened from non-life.

The evidence does not support that, but that is what they want to believe and thus, they refuse to let it go and they believe a lie and die in their sins!

Again, do you see how dangerous this can be?

Don't be blinded by religious traditions, by preconceived ideas or by prejudices.

Be open to God and His Word and allow Him to teach you the truths of God from the Word of God.

Be open to the Spirit of God as He instructs us in the Word of God, and it leads us to the truths of God that we can apply to our lives and grow in the Lord!

But, too often people go through life as this story illustrates for us. We are told,

On November 30, 1991 fierce winds from a freakish dust storm triggered a massive freeway pileup along Interstate 5 near Coalinga, California. At least 14 people died and dozens more were injured as topsoil whipped by 50 mile-per-hour winds reduced visibility to zero. The afternoon of the holocaust left a three-mile trail of twisted and burning vehicles, some stacked on top of one another 100 yards off the side of the freeway. Unable to see their way, dozens of motorists drove blindly ahead into disaster.

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Too many people are driving blindly into disaster regarding their spiritual lives because they refuse to come to Jesus, for whatever reason, they refuse to admit they are blind, they are sinners separated from God and that they need Jesus to come and set them free!

Spurgeon says this regarding why people don't come to Christ, what hinders them. He wrote, *"It is not our littleness that hinders Christ; but our bigness. It is not our weakness that hinders Christ: it is our supposed light that holds back his hand."*

This blindman who was now healed by Jesus knew he needed more, and he saw his weakness and came to saving faith. He was blind and now he sees, spiritually speaking.

For the Jewish religious leaders, they thought they could see, they did not see their sin and they were blind, spiritually speaking.

Let me leave you with these words from Jesus as He said, **"Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."**

Don't remain spiritually blind but come to Jesus so you can clearly see once again!