

“Open Our Eyes Lord”
Mark 8:11-26

I. When it comes to the teachings of Jesus one of the challenges disciples face is coming to a true and complete understanding of what our Lord is teaching us.

II. The problem is, we sometimes possess a sort of blindness to the message. That is we have a difficult time understanding the message.

III. This lack of understanding or blindness happens for several reasons.

1. Hardened heart, **Mark 6:52**
2. Mind in the world, **1 Cor. 3:1-3**
3. Lack of spiritual growth, **Heb. 5:12-14**

IV. In our lesson today we are going to consider three events that are all tied to blindness.

V. These three events provide insight into spiritual blindness.

1. **The blindness of the Pharisee’s** (Hardened Heart) **Mark 8:11-13**
2. **The blindness of the disciples**, (Mind in the world) **Mark 8:14-21**
3. **The blindness of a blind man.** (The cure to spiritual blindness) **Mark 8:22-26**

VI. The first two events show us the sources of spiritual blindness and how it can affect one spiritually. The third event shows how we can resolve the issue of spiritual blindness.

V. What we glean from this is that ...

Spiritually growth, through faith in Jesus, helps us to see spiritual things clearly.

Trans: This is an old adage, “There are none so blind as those who will not see.” This is what we find in the first account of blindness Mark records

1. The blindness of the Pharisee’s , Seen in a Hardened Heart

A. Mark 8:11-13

B. As usual the Pharisee’s are not seeking truth but Jesus’ demise.

1. **Mark 3:2**
2. **Mark 3:22**
3. Here they are seeking a sign from heaven to “test” him.

C. Jesus had performed a multitude of miracles in the presence of the Pharisee’s and yet they come seeking a sign.

1. The idea of a sign denotes sight, something visible on which to put their faith in.
2. In asking for this they show they were blind to the miracles He has already worked, yet they were now seeking to see something they believed to be greater than the miracles, a “sign from heaven.”

D. Their request and reason for it show the real problem, Mark 3:5-6

E. Jesus’ reaction to what they ask is also an indicator of their spiritual blindness.

1. Mark 8:12,
 - a. He sighs deeply “in His spirit”
 - b. Thayer, “to draw breath from the bottom of the breast.”
 - c. This sigh would also seem to be audible

2. **Matt. 16:2-4**

- a. He is saying you are able to determine the weather from what you see in the sky. But you cannot discern the signs of the times.
- b. He is questioning why they can't see clearly what is taking place through his hands. It's as clear as the color and condition of the sky, which they profess to understand.

Illust: Voltaire once said, "Even if a miracle should be wrought in the open market place before a thousand witnesses, I would rather mistrust my senses than admit a miracle."

Appl: This was the heart of the Pharisee's. The hardened heart of the Pharisee's had led to a complete spiritual blindness.

No matter what Jesus taught or did there were some who would never admit to see Him for what He was.

Their hardness and subsequent blindness rendered them unable to see the truth and no sign was going to fix that.

To this kind of heart enough is never enough.

Trans: Mark now shows a second event involving blindness. This is our second point.

2. **The blindness of the disciples, Seen in a Mind in the world**

A. **Mark 8:14-21**

B. As Jesus and His disciples set sail from the district of Dal-manutha, His disciples begin to discuss the fact that they had forgotten to take enough bread along.

C. Having just dealt with the Pharisee's and His disciples aware of this, Jesus uses their conversation as the means to teaching a spiritual lesson, v.15

D. Jesus says "Watch Out"

1. In this phrase He is indicating the need to "see" or understand
2. His disciples needed to see these people for what they were, **Matt. 16:12.**

E. The disciples response to Jesus' comments regarding the leaven of these rulers exposes their blindness.

1. They begin to discuss the fact that they had no bread,
Mark 8:17
Matt. 16:7
2. Jesus being aware of what is being said points out their blindness.
 - a. In **Matt 16:8** Jesus refers to them as "men of little faith"
 - b. In Mark 8:17 he refers to their blindness in a question.
 - 1). Do you not yet see or understand?
 - 2). Do you have a hardened heart?
 - c. In Mark 8:18, He quotes Ezek 12:2 referring to the lack of ability to see.
 - d. In Mark 8:21 he asks again, "Do you not yet understand?"

F. The point is there is no reason for them not to understand what He is referring to when He speaks of the leaven of these rulers, **Mark 8:19,20**

1. What happened with the feeding of the 5000 and the 4000 should have made the issue of not having bread the farthest thing from their mind.

2. They should have gained enough spiritual insight from these miracles to know Jesus wasn't referring to bread.
3. But, because of the hardness or dullness of their heart they were blinded to any spiritual insight and didn't understand what Jesus was saying about the leaven of the rulers.

Illust: A good illustration of this is seen in what happens immediately following these events, Mark 8:31-33.

Appl: The minds of the disciples, at times, were still in the world. On this occasion, when confronted with an opportunity to gain some spiritual insight, all they could think about was a lack of food.

When we allow the world to become our focus our senses will become dull to spiritual things. It then makes it difficult for us to glean the true spiritual insight from God's word. This happens because our mind is not focused on spiritual things.

Consider these verses

Rom. 12:1,2

Col. 3:1-2

Phil. 4:8

Trans: Having dealt with two events involving spiritual blindness we come to the only individual with a legitimate reason for being blind. This is our third point.

3. The blindness of a blind man. The cure to spiritual blindness

A. Mark 8:22-26

B. Some people from Bethsaida bring a blind man to Jesus. They believe in Jesus' power and are looking for a healing, **v. 22**

C. Notice how Jesus responds

1. Jesus takes the blind man by the hand and leads him out of the city, probably away from the crowds.
2. Jesus spits on his eyes and touches the man's eyes.
3. The taking by the hand, the touching of the eyes and the spit are all ways Jesus uses to let this blind man know that He is with him and about to do something.

D. The first time Jesus does this He asks if the blind man could see anything? The man responds in the positive, but indicates that his vision is not completely clear, **v. 24**

E. Jesus touches him a second time and his vision was restored and he began to see everything clearly, **v.25**

F. Some raise the question as to why Jesus had to touch Him twice. The answer is found in the blindness seen previously.

1. There is no question that Jesus could heal him completely, He does this anyway.
2. But, by healing the blind man in this way Jesus has another opportunity to teach a spiritual lesson to His disciples.

G. There is a connection between what Jesus is able to do in our lives and our faith in Him.

1. This man comes to Jesus with no indication of faith on his part.
2. But when he allows Jesus to touch him the first time he gains partial sight.
3. The blind man recognizes what Jesus has done, now Jesus completes the job.

Illust: Think about a child jumping into his fathers arms from a high perch. The child recognizes the possibility of getting hurt and might even hesitate, but after the first jump, and the father catching him, the child quickly returns to his perch ready and anxious to jump again.

Appl: Clearly Mark uses the healing of the blind man as the means to conveying a greater spiritual message.

Undoubtedly the healing of the blind man is a real event, but this real event is found at the conclusion of two events dealing with blindness and it possess a spiritual message.

Once we take the hand of Jesus and allow him to touch our lives; when we allow Him to lead us where He wants, we begin to gain spiritual insight. As we continue to allow Jesus to work on us we will ultimately see all things clearly.

Con: Spiritual blindness is a reality in our world today and even affects God's children.

We can have blindness because of hardness
We can have blindness because of worldliness

Yet as these events show, **Spiritually growth, through faith in Jesus, helps us to see spiritual things clearly.**

There is no need for any one to be blind to spiritual things.

We must simply come to God with open eyes seeking the Masters hand and then allow Him to guide us. If we do this with an honest heart we will begin to see spiritual things clearly.