

# Spiritually Blind

by Anton Bosch

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*The sermon explores the concept of spiritual blindness, its causes, and the importance of humility and truth for gaining clarity.*

**Scripture:** Revelation 3:17

**Topics:** "Spiritual Blindness", "Humility"

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## Description

Anton Bosch preaches about the dangers of spiritual blindness, emphasizing how even long-time Christians can be blind to obvious truths, just like the Pharisees and religious leaders in Jesus' time. He highlights the root causes of spiritual blindness as pride and a refusal to be open to the truth, leading to a selective vision that distorts reality. The antidote to spiritual blindness is humility, personal reflection, seeking the truth in God's Word, and being open to honest feedback from others.

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## Transcript

Why can some people just not get it? Why can they not see things that are as clear as the nose on their face? Because they are spiritually blind. Even though some people may have been Christians for a long time, they are blind and cannot see those things that are obvious to other believers around them. I am sure you have come across people like that and have wondered how one can become so blind and what we need to do to stop this disease from attacking us and bringing us into this terrible darkness.

The saddest part about spiritual blindness is that the person who has it, cannot recognize that he cannot see! People who are physically blind are very aware of the fact that they are blind and that everything around them is dark. But the spiritually blind actually think they can see and, in fact, often think they can see better than anyone else. Is this not what Jesus meant when He spoke about the man with the two by four in his eye wanting to remove the speck from another's eye? (Matthew 7:5). Jesus also told the church in Laodicea you "do not know that you ... blind" (Revelation 3:17).

Religious leaders are often amongst those who are spiritually blind. Many times Jesus accused the Pharisees of being "blind leaders of the blind" (Matthew 15:14; 23:24; 23:26 etc.). Thus being religious, a christian or even a christian leader does not provide immunity from this ailment. It is even possible that religious people are more prone to catching this than other people and the more spiritual we think we are, the more likely we are to catch it. In a recent prayer meeting I heard someone pray a long, very pious prayer for someone else to see the light. That prayer would have been a very good prayer had it not been that his prayer actually applied to him and that he was the one whose eyes should be opened and who

needed to repent. (Don't worry, he won't even realize that this is about him because spiritual blindness is so destructive that people who have it just don't have a clue, even if you rub their noses in it!). Jesus said to the Pharisees that the very fact that they say they can see is proof that they are blind! (John 9:40-41).

There are a few things that cause blindness. The first is pride. Remember that "All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes" (Proverbs 16:2). After Saul had disobeyed the command of the Lord, he actually erected a statue to himself, and with the bleating of the cursed sheep in the background, greeted Samuel with the words: "I have performed the commandment of the LORD" (1Samuel 15:13). His arrogance had made him so blind that he really thought that wrong was right. Even after Samuel had clearly explained to Saul how he had disobeyed, he still did not get it. The story of the first king of Israel is a sad saga of a man who was so blinded by his arrogance that he never understood a single thing the prophet said to him. Even once David had been anointed in his place and clearly carried God's blessing, Saul still thought he could hold onto the anointing by killing David. How terribly sad.

The antidote to blindness that comes through pride is obviously humility. Take every rebuke personally and receive every message you hear for yourself. Read every word in the Bible as a personal message to you, especially those that contain admonition, warning and rebuke. Ask others to be honest with you and to tell you how they see you and be humble enough to listen to their advice. Above all, ask the Lord daily to open your eyes so you may really see. When you see others stumbling about in darkness, you should never look down on them, but rather allow it to be a warning and immediately flee to the Lord and ask Him to help you see and to keep you from developing blind spots. I have found preaching in some churches easier than others. One of the things that makes it easy in some churches is that no matter how direct the message, everyone goes away very happy because the message was for someone else they know. Of course it is easy because no one gets upset with you, but it is a total waste of time since no one got the message.

The second cause of spiritual blindness is when we refuse to be open to the truth. The human mind has a wonderful capacity to select what it wants to see, hear and remember. Television and the proliferation of images of blood, violence, suffering and trauma desensitizes people so they don't even notice those things any more. We watch the devastation of earthquakes, tornadoes, fires and famine, but are blind to the real and personal suffering of those depicted on the screen.

In the same way we develop the sad ability to see the specks in other's eyes without seeing the log in our own eye. We see so clearly how unruly other people's kids are but are blind to our own brats' disobedience. We see the addiction of others to drugs but cannot see our own addiction to shopping, eating or television. But it goes further. Whenever we hear or read the Bible, we see how all the positive things (promises, blessings etc.) apply to us and how all the negative things (rebuke, correction, admonition) applies to everyone else.

This kind of selective vision is very dangerous because it far too soon becomes permanent so that we are no longer able to see the realities even if we want to. Think of the theologian or scholar who just cannot understand the simplest concepts in the Bible because of training their eyes and minds over a lifetime to see just what they want to see. They see things, not the way they are, but the way they want them to be. I am told that if a person wears a pair of glasses that turn everything upside down, it only takes a few days for the mind to invert the image and to make everything look the right way up. The mind is powerful and it causes us to see wrong as right and black as white.

There are many optical illusions, both physically and spiritually. Here in California there are a number of "mystery" spots or houses where water seems to run uphill. To the eye it really seems true until you either place a spirit level next to the water flow or step outside the house and look at things from a clearer perspective. So the antidote to spiritual illusions is brutal honesty and comparing what we see with the absolute. If you just compare yourself with others around you, you may easily be convinced that you are really right, but when you place the plumbline of God's Word against your life, it becomes very apparent that things are not what they appear to be.

"I counsel you to... anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see" (Revelation 3:18)

(To be continued)

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