

“Spiritual Sight or Spiritual Blindness”

June 14, 2026

John 9:35-41

I. Introduction

Today’s Scripture is the conclusion of the story of the healing of a man who had been blind from birth. These verses are also the conclusion of Jesus’ teaching about His being “the Light of the world” (John 9:5). Jesus Christ’s miraculous healing of this blind man was an amazing display of His divine power, and a life-changing event for the formerly blind man. But physical sight was not all the Lord was planning to give this undeserving beggar. As the Savior of the world, Jesus had something even more amazing to offer him—spiritual sight and eternal life.

Throughout Scripture, spiritual blindness is used to represent fallen man’s inability to comprehend divine truth, i.e., to “see” or understand God’s Word. In Isaiah 43:8 God calls fallen man “those who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf.” Jeremiah 5:21 described the “foolish and senseless people, who have eyes but do not see.” The only cure for spiritual blindness is saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Old Testament predicted that the Messiah would bring spiritual sight to His people. Isaiah 9:2 says, “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light, on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.” Then, in Luke 1:72, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, prophesied that the Messiah would “shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.” In John 12:46 Jesus said, “I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.” In today’s Scripture both spiritual sight and spiritual blindness are seen.

It’s interesting that the healing of physical blindness was instantaneous, but the healing of spiritual blindness took time to occur. This change is seen as the unblind man’s understanding of “who Jesus is” was transformed over time. In the beginning of this story in John 9:11, the man identified the one who healed him as “the man they call Jesus.” A little later, in verse 17, after being

questioned the 1st time by the Pharisees, the man said that Jesus “**is a prophet.**” Then, after being questioned a 2nd time by the Pharisees in **verse 33**, he identified Jesus as “**a Man of God.**”

It was because of the unblind man’s calling Jesus “**a Man of God**” that the Pharisees officially excommunicated him from the local synagogue; “**they threw him out.**” This meant that the man was cut off from friends and family and looked on by the Jews as a “**publican and sinner.**” He was an outcast, just like a leper. But Jesus came for the outcasts—in **Luke 19:10** Jesus said, “**For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.**” As the Good Shepherd, the Son of Man always cares for His sheep. Jesus knew that the man had been ex-communicated, so, as He had done earlier, Jesus found the man. Since the man knew Jesus’ voice, but he had never seen His face, Jesus came and revealed Himself to the unblind man. As this story comes to a close, we see characteristics of spiritual sight and spiritual blindness. First, characteristics of spiritual sight.

II. Characteristics of Spiritual Sight

A. Spiritual sight begins with God coming to man. Just as He did when He gave the man his physical sight, Jesus took the initiative which led to the opening of the man’s spiritual eyes. When “**Jesus heard that they had thrown him out,**” Jesus “**found the man.**” Spiritual sight begins with God coming to man. If God didn’t take the initiative in salvation, no one would be saved—**Rom. 3:11** says, “**There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.**” In **John 6:44** Jesus said, “**No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.**” Spiritual sight begins with God coming to man.

B. Spiritual sight responds in faith. But it isn’t enough to believe that this Miracle-Worker is “**a man called Jesus,**” or “**a prophet**” or even “**a man of God.**” **1 John 5:1** says, “**Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.**” So, after finding the man, Jesus asked the formerly blind man the critical question, “**Do you believe in the Son of Man.**” By using the pronoun “**you,**” Jesus emphasized the man’s need to do something, too. He needed to make a decision. To be healed spiritually, the man needed to place his trust for forgiveness and salvation not in a man called Jesus, or

a prophet or even a man of God, but in the Son of Man, the Messiah or Christ, i.e., “the Son of God” (Mark 1:1). In faith, as Romans 10:9 says, the unblind man had to make Jesus his Savior and Lord. This is the 2nd characteristic: Spiritual sight responds in faith.

The man’s reply, “Tell me so that I may believe in Him,” revealed a heart prepared to believe in God’s Son—the Messiah. Not yet fully aware of whom the Messiah was but convinced that Jesus was a messenger from God who did know, the man trusted Jesus to direct him to the One in whom he was to believe. He was ready to respond with faith, and this faith would lead to his salvation, just as it does for anyone who believes. As Jesus said in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life”—“whoever believes in Him.” Spiritual sight responds in faith.

C. Spiritual sight recognizes Christ. This leads to the 3rd characteristic: Spiritual sight recognizes Christ. When “Jesus said, ‘You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you,’” like He did to the Samaritan woman at the well, Jesus identified Himself as the Messiah, the Object of saving faith. As Jesus said in John 11:25, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.”

Without any doubts or hesitation, the man said, “Lord, I believe.” The Spirit of God opened the man’s heart to the truth. In faith, the unblind man recognized Jesus as the Christ, the One sent from God—“The way and the truth and the life.” He was able to see spiritually as well as physically; the only way to the Father and eternal life was and still is Jesus Christ.

D. Spiritual sight results in worship. As the last traces of spiritual blindness disappeared, the eyes of the man’s heart were opened, and he saw clearly who Jesus was. Just like everyone who sees Jesus as He really is—like Doubting Thomas in the locked room in John 20:28—the unblind man worshipped the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the last characteristic of spiritual sight: spiritual sight results in worship.

If Jesus Christ was not God, then why did He accept worship? Peter, Paul and Barnabas, even the angels didn't accept worship ([Acts 10:25-26; 14:11-15; Revelation 22:8-9](#))—as Jesus told Satan in the wilderness in [Matthew 4:10](#), “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” By accepting the worship of the unblind man and others, Jesus emphasized that He is God; He is worthy of worship.

III. Characteristics of Spiritual Blindness

A. Spiritual blindness receives judgment. In contrast to the healed man's spiritual sight, in the responses of the Pharisees are seen four characteristics of spiritual blindness beginning with spiritual blindness receives judgment.

Jesus' statement in [verse 39](#), “For judgment I have come into this world,” appears to contradict [John 3:17](#) which says, “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” The reason for Jesus' coming to earth was salvation—in [Matthew 20:28](#) He said, “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many.” But the result of His coming to earth and His subsequent crucifixion will be judgment—condemnation—of those who would not believe. [Turn to John 3:18-21](#). To reject Jesus' peace is to receive His punishment; to reject His grace is to receive His justice; to reject His mercy is to receive His wrath; to reject His love is to receive His anger; and to reject His forgiveness is to receive His judgment. While Jesus did come to save and not to condemn, those who reject His gospel condemn themselves and subject themselves to judgment. In [John 3:36](#), John the Baptist summarized it this way, “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.”

B. Spiritual blindness refuses to admit its condition. When the religious leaders heard the things Jesus said about blindness, they took it personally and said, “What? Are we blind too?” As *THE* religious leaders of Israel, they were confident that they did not lack spiritual perception. This is the second characteristic of spiritual blindness: spiritual blindness refuses to admit its condition. The

religious leaders were blind and would not admit it. They were blinded by their pride, their self-righteousness, their traditions, and their false interpretations of the Word of God. Turn to

1 John 1:5-10. The Pharisees confirmed their blindness by their hatred for the only One who could save them from their sins and from Satan. Turn to John 1:10-11.

C. Spiritual blindness rejects spiritual sight. Not only does spiritual blindness refuse to admit its condition, but Spiritual blindness also rejects spiritual sight. Jesus had already answered the Pharisees regarding their blindness; in Matthew 15:14 He had called them *“the blind leading the blind.”* So, He answered them with the statement, *“If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin.”* In other words, Jesus was saying, *“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, but the religious leaders ignored the evidence and facts and refused to make a right decision. They were like those Solomon described in Proverbs 26:12, *“Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”* By rejecting the spiritual truth of who Jesus was, they rejected spiritual sight.

D. Finally, Spiritual blindness results in tragedy. Jesus finished by saying that *“Now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.”* They could not plead ignorance or lack of opportunity. Since the Pharisees were unwilling to acknowledge their blindness, but claimed to see, they remained guilty and unforgiven for all their sin, including their unbelief in the Son of Man. *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”* Their spiritual blindness would result in tragedy —God’s wrath. Turn to Matthew 13:36-43. This is the tragedy of all those who reject Jesus as Lord and Savior—an eternity of weeping and gnashing of teeth.

IV. Conclusion

John 8:12 says, *“When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’* Jesus is the Light of

the world. The only people who cannot see the light are blind people and those who refuse to look, that is, those who make themselves blind. In the beginning, the unblind man was physically blind and spiritually blind, yet through the healing of Jesus, both his eyes and his heart were opened. Both his eyes and his heart were opened because he listened to the Word—he listened to Jesus, he believed, he obeyed, and he experienced the grace of God—in the opening of his eyes and in the cleansing of his heart. In both cases, he admitted his need, and so he received both physical and spiritual sight.

The Pharisees had good physical vision, but they were blind spiritually. By choice they refused to listen to the Word; they refused to listen to Jesus. By choice they refused to seriously consider the evidence before them. So, by their choice they were condemned. In [John 5:39-40](#), Jesus said, “**You diligently search the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.**”

The situation for people today is no different. [Turn to Romans 1:18-25](#). These are the spiritually blind. Like the Pharisees, they choose to love darkness rather than the Light. They wander aimlessly, lacking any spiritual vision. In [Joshua 24:15](#) Joshua said, “**Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.**” So, what is your choice? If you say that Jesus and His Word are a myth or a lie, Jesus/God says that you are allowing yourself to be blind and that you are on the path to eternal punishment—an eternity in hell.

If you claim that Jesus is your Savior and your Lord, is that seen in what you do and say? [Ephesians 2:10](#) says that doing good is what follows salvation—how about your life? What about the priorities in your life? If Jesus is truly the Lord of your life, He must come first. To what extent is Jesus glorified and worshiped in your heart, your life—not just on Sunday mornings, but every day of your life? As has been asked before, is there enough evidence in your life to prove that you are a Christian? Do you choose spiritual sight or spiritual blindness?