

Title: HEALING OUR SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS, MARK 10:46-52  
(Chatham, NJ; 10/25/15, AM) [E – Topical, Narrative Analysis]

Theme: Healing the blind was a theme adopted by the prophets to describe God's activity, and in the ministry of Christ it was fulfilled literally for physical blindness and metaphorically for spiritual blindness.

Purpose: To encourage us to admit our spiritual blindness and allow Jesus to heal it.

Introduction:

1. Matthew 4:12-17 draws on Isaiah 9:2 to define Jesus' purpose: to bring light where darkness once resided.
2. Jesus pointed out the darkness of humanity's deeds (John 3:19), and he called himself the "light of the world" (John 8:12).
3. He came to bring light where darkness covered the minds of men.
4. For people who have grown accustomed to the darkness it is a shock to our system to deal with the light.

## I. Seeds of Prophecy

- A. Isaiah raises the awareness of blindness
  1. Isaiah 29 – the prophet predicts that blindness will overcome the people (9-14)
  2. But he allows that God will change their blindness, 18-19, in a day when God brings about judgment and righteousness
  3. In the spirit of redemption Isaiah 35:5-6 offers freedom from blindness
  4. When Jesus began, he defined his work in Luke 4:18 by quoting Isaiah 61:1-2
- B. What would be the effect on later generations?
  1. In Luke 4, at least, the words sounded gracious to his listeners
  2. When John, the Baptist, wondered whether Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus answered with allusions to prophecy, Mt. 11:4-6 and Luke 7:22
  3. Essentially he says to John, "You know what the prophets say about this."
  4. Sight for the blind was a part of the Messianic mission

## II. The Encounter with the Blind Man, Bartimaeus, Mark 10:46-52

- A. Jesus, on the way to Jerusalem
  1. In fact, he was leaving Jericho
  2. A blind man cries out when he hears Jesus is passing by (picture the crowd)
  3. Jesus' reputation is known to him
  4. Though the crowd tries to suppress him, Jesus has him come to him
  5. Jesus cures his blindness, and he follows
  6. "Sight for the blind" becomes a literal reality, but it points to a deeper form of healing: healing for spiritual blindness
- B. What might have been the effect on the people then?
  1. He is named by Mark because he may have been known to the early church
  2. Matthew describes two men whereas Luke describes him as a "beggar"
  3. He could have had personal influence among many of the believers in and around Jerusalem: what would a conversation with him sound like? Did he talk to many young people to influence them?
  4. How would his story affect others?
  5. Two things stand out: first, his plea for mercy reflected the plea of a sinful people, and second, he followed the one who cured his blindness

## III. The Challenge of the Man Born Blind, John 9

- A. This story is filled with the effect on others
1. After the healing people couldn't decide if it were really the same man they knew, 8-12, though he readily admitted it
  2. His parents admitted it was him, but threw him under the bus by not committing to his story about how he was healed, 18-23
  3. The scribes and Pharisees:
    - Divided but persistently doubtful of his testimony, 13-17
    - A second interrogation: you would not listen (27)
    - An appeal to their own doctrines and logic: 30-33
    - Their pride was wounded, 34
  4. More importantly, their preconceived ideology prevented them from seeing the obvious: Jesus must have been a prophet
  5. The blind man: "I was blind but now I see"; he worships (38)
- B. The affect on us
1. "That those who do not see may see," 39 – the desired effect
  2. Jesus wants us to see him and the truths of his teachings
  3. The unbelieving world is darkened in its understanding, Eph. 4:18, Rom. 1:21
  4. 2 Thess. 2:9-12, they refuse to love the truth
  5. Have you had the "eyes of your heart" opened, Eph. 1:18?

Conclusions:

1. Look through the dark lens of evil to see the light of the Gospel.
2. Be humble enough to see the truth about Christ.
3. Be honest enough to admit that evil resides in your heart.
4. Have faith enough to believe that Jesus is the light and can lead you out of the darkness.
5. Jesus is the light that you need; respond to him today.