

## Spiritual Blindness

John 9:35-41

Rick Peterson

Within the context of the Gospels, the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees and their followers is defined as:

- Possessing genuine revelation (Law and the prophets), but distorting that revelation so as to support a human agenda.
- Failure to see one's inability to save one's self as absolute and Christ's finished work as all-sufficient; "I can save myself with the law," or "I can save myself, though I need Christ's help."

An essential theological definition of spiritual blindness:

- The inability to recognize the eschatological intrusion into human history of the new covenant as effected by Christ and as evidenced by the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost.

Spiritual sight therefore is:

- To see one's self as written into God's redemptive story in Christ, on the basis of grace alone, through faith alone, and the age to which one presently belongs as the new covenant age of the Spirit by which one lives out the life of the future as one awaits the final consummation.

This is what spiritual leaders fail to see, and therefore, fail to lead others to this reality. Spiritually blind leaders lead spiritually blind people into the ditch. And this is tragically the most common state today.

- John 3:9-14: Nicodemus as iconic of the spiritually blind Pharisee.
- What was it he did not understand? That with the coming of Christ, the new covenant age of the Spirit as prophesied by Ezekiel and Jeremiah had begun (Ezekiel 26:24-27; Jeremiah 31:31-37).

- Most of church history has occurred within the state-church system in which the gospel was distorted to fit the state's agenda; emperors and kings defined the gospel and not Christ alone. The Reformers failed to change this, and thus theological systems designed to accommodate state authorities remained in place, and then exported into the new world as "the gospel."
- We are in a time of recovery of the gospel. When God judges America, it will not be for any other reason than the churches have abdicated their role as stewards of the gospel and once again adopted political, business, and social agendas.
- If you are in a church led by spiritually blind leaders, get out. No matter how "nice" the ditch into which they have led you.

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