

## **Catch Phrase- I Once Was Blind, But Now I See**

If you asked most people which sense they most hate to lose, it's sight. Losing sight & becoming blind has been feared since the dawn of time. And the word blind has a powerful meaning & shows up in many idioms. "Blind as a bat", "Turn a blind eye", "Blind date", "Blind spots", "Flying blind", "Blind leading the blind", "Blind alley". The question is are we blind? Are we blind to the people & trouble around us? Are we blind to the God who made us & made everything for that matter? And finally, are we blind to problems within us?

See we can easily "Turn a blind eye" to the people around us & blind to the troubles they face, not noticing, not caring. We could choose to see them & help them, but we're happy just being "blind as a bat."

We can have many "blind spots" about aspects of our own lives too: faults in us that we don't acknowledge, bad behavior patterns & habits we don't recognize & hypocrisy we simply don't see. Our "blind spots" hurt those around us, harm our relationships & hold us back.

And we can be blind to God too. In the mid 1800s, humanity went on a "blind date" with Charles Darwin & other materialist scientists, philosophers & social theorists. But, hey, these were smart guys & their ideas looked good on the surface. These guys were generally atheists who said there is no God & we have no need for God either. They were "flying blind" on their own pride, intelligence & science. We didn't realize (& many still don't) that it was a case of "the blind leading the blind". Evolution blinded people to the god-given value of life. Unfortunately for humanity, their theories & ideas influenced atheist political leaders who led humanity down a very dark "blind alley": **Mao Ze-Dong** 49-78 million murdered, China/Tibet, 1958-69; **Jozef Stalin** 15 million murdered, USSR 1932-39, **Adolf Hitler** 12 million murdered Europe 1933-45, **Pol Pot** 1.7 million murdered Cambodia, 1975-79; **Kim Il Sung** 1.6 million murdered North Korea 1948-94. Another person influenced by Darwin et al. was **Margaret Sanger**, whose organization, Planned Parenthood, made abortion easily available. This dark "blind alley" led to **55 million** unborn babies to die by abortion in the US since 1973 & **1-2 billion** world-wide!

There have been many people who've been blinded to the sufferings of others, blinded to their own faults & blind to God. Once such person was John Newton. An adventure-seeker, Newton left for the sea at age 11. He was fired from his first job because of "unsettled behavior and impatience of restraint"- a pattern that would persist for years. Later by age 19, after being flogged & imprisoned by the Royal Navy for desertion, Newton convinced the Navy to transfer him to a slave ship. But he remained arrogant and insubordinate, and he lived with moral abandon. Newton confessed, "I sinned with a high hand and I made it my study to tempt and seduce others." He eventually became a captain & owner of a slave-ship. Newton was blind to the evils of slavery, to the pain his human cargo faced. He was blind to his arrogance & wild sin. And He was blind to God. But during a terrible storm at sea that almost destroyed his ship, John Newton met Jesus. He finally broke down & turned his life over to Jesus Christ, his blindness was cured. Newton later became a champion in ending slavery in Britain, influencing politician William Wilburforce. Although Newton died in 1807, Wilburforce & others succeeded in ending Britain's slave trade in 1833. But Newton's best known for a song that contains this line: "*I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.*" This lyric from one of the most famous songs of all time: *Amazing Grace*.

So my question for you is this: Do you want to be blind: to others & their troubles, to your own failings, & blind to God. If the answer is "No!" Jesus is the answer to all blindness. That fact of the matter is that Jesus quite literally came to restore sight to the blind, but not just those who'd lost their eyesight (**Lk 4:18**). Jesus cures us of our blinds towards others & the troubles of this world (**Ez 36:26**). And Jesus exposes the blind spots within us to our own shortcomings, problems & failings (**Lk 6:42**). Finally, being in relationship with Jesus opens our eyes to the devil's tricks & to godless leaders who are trying to lead us astray (**2Cor 4:4**; **Mt 15:14**). Knowing Jesus opens our eyes to God & God's way for us (**Jn 12:44-46**). So if you really want the cure for your own blindness, turn to Jesus & trust in Him. He will give you new vision.

### **Key Verses**

**Luke 4:18** "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free..."

**Ez 36:26** I will give you a new heart & put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone & give you a heart of flesh.

**Jn 15:12-13** My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

**Lk 6:42** Jesus said, "How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

**2Cor 4:4** Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.  
**Mt 15:14** [Jesus said], "Leave them; they are blind guides. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit."

**Jn 12:44-46** Jesus shouted to the crowds, "If you trust Me, you are trusting not only Me, but also God who sent Me. For when you see Me, you are seeing the One who sent Me. I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in Me will no longer remain in the dark."

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Tonight's topic is blindness. Do you know anyone who is physically blind? What is life like for them?

2a. Are people often blind towards others & their struggles & troubles? What happens because of this kind of "blindness"?

2b. Read Lk 4:18, Ez 36:26 & Jn 15:12-13. How can Jesus alone cure the problem of our blindness towards others?

3a. Read Lk 6:42. What did you think about the skit & being blind to our own faults? Why are these personal blind spots so bad?

3b. Read Lk 4:18. How can Jesus alone heal your personal blind spots? Has Jesus healed your blind spots? What happened?

4. Read 2Cor 4:4 & Mt 15:14. Did you read some terrible statistics tonight about the results of following godless, anti-Christ leaders.

Where does being blind to God lead in our world? How could being blind to God affect our life?

5. Read Jn 12:44-46. Do you want to be free from blindness towards others, towards your faults & towards God?

**PRAYER:** Dear God, we confess to You: we've been blind towards others, towards You & towards our own faults. We trust in You and in Your Son, Jesus Christ to cure our blindness. Help us to see others as you see them, to love them more & to love You more. Expose our blind spots & help us to see with honesty, clarity and humility. Amen.