

pJohn 9:26-41

The Miracle of Saving Faith and the Tragedy of Unbelief pt.2

John 9:24–41

²⁶ Then they said to him again, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”

²⁷ He answered them, “I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear *it* again? Do you also want to become His disciples?”

²⁸ Then they reviled him and said, “You are His disciple, but we are Moses’ disciples. ²⁹ We know that God spoke to Moses; *as for this fellow*, we do not know where He is from.”

³⁰ The man answered and said to them, “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! ³¹ Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. ³² Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. ³³ If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.”

³⁴ They answered and said to him, “You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?” And they cast him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, “[Do you believe in the Son of God?](#)”

36 He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”

37 And Jesus said to him, “[You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.](#)”

38 Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.

39 And Jesus said, “[For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.](#)”

40 Then *some* of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, “Are we blind also?”

41 Jesus said to them, “[If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.](#)”

Introduction:

The Reformation Wall located in Geneva Switzerland is the international monument to the Reformation and the great leaders of that Reformation. The main statues are of William Farel, John Calvin, Theodore Beza, and John Knox.

The monument also includes important events and documents that changed the world as we know it today. The monument was built in 1909 for John Calvin's 400th birthday.

Behind the statues runs the motto shared by the Reformation and Geneva:

Post Tenebras Lux ("After Darkness, Light")

The Great light of the Reformation, brought the church out of the Dark Ages.

We are indebted to that great movement of God that brought clarity to the gospel and brought the Light of Christ to a very dark world.

But today, we are in need of another Reformation. Darkness is spreading like an insidious cancer

Studies show that unbelief is indeed on the rise these days. We are living in increasingly secular times, and, unfortunately, those who do not believe in the truth of Scripture often seem to have the loudest voices in the public domain. Skeptics are becoming bolder and more vocal, and their influence is seen in education, entertainment, court systems, and government. They have made significant progress toward their goal of having God's name entirely removed from the public realm.

Add to this the fact that we are living in what some call the most “biblically illiterate times,” and it’s apparent why unbelief is on the rise and why moral standards continue to deteriorate. Other factors contributing to today’s unbelief include the pervasiveness of secular humanism, the church’s halfhearted adherence to the hard truths God’s Word, the significant growth of [New Age](#) and Eastern religions, the attempts to redefine the family, the [postmodern](#) rejection of absolutes, and the aggressive rise of the New Atheists.

The bottom line is this—we live in a fallen world, and “the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel” ([2 Corinthians 4:4](#)). As history moves forward, many will move further away from sound biblical doctrine, and unbelief spreads.

“The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons” ([1 Timothy 4:1](#)). There are plenty of false teachers to keep the lost blinded and aid them in their flight from God ([Matthew 24:10-11](#); [2 Timothy 4:3](#); [1 John 4:1](#)).

The sad truth is that most people do not see the Bible as the absolute authority anymore. As God’s Word continues to be marginalized, unbelief will continue to increase around the world.

The Bible warned against unbelief and [apostasy](#) nearly two thousand years ago: “[People] will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths” ([2 Timothy 4:4](#)). Along these lines, John MacArthur has stated, “Our society has grown steadily darker; and the message the church is now giving to the world is more confused and confusing than perhaps any time since the Dark Ages.” His conclusion: “*The church needs to get back to the Word of God.*” Indeed, getting back to the Word is the only solution; to do anything less is to hide our light under a bushel ([Luke 11:33](#)). If we want people to believe, we must give them something to believe in.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/>

Review:

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, “[Do you believe in the Son of God?](#)”

36 He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”

37 And Jesus said to him, “[You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.](#)”

38 Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him

Here we have the MIRACLE OF BELIEF

John's account of this incident reveals four characteristics of spiritual sight:

- 1.it requires divine initiative,**
- 2. responds in faith,**
- 3. recognizes Christ,**
- 4. and results in worship.**

Lesson:

³⁹ And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”

⁴⁰ Then *some* of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, “Are we blind also?”

⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.

I. The Declaration

II. The Deception

III. The Determination

I. The Declaration

³⁹ And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”

I have come

The words *I have come*, or something similar, recur in this Gospel to express the purpose of Jesus’ mission. Although the words themselves do not necessarily **presuppose pre-existence**, it would be wrong to overlook that overtone in the context of Johannine theology (*cf.* 5:43; 7:28; 8:42; 10:10; 12:27, 46–47; 16:28;

Carson, D. A. (1991). [The Gospel according to John](#) (p. 377). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

John 16:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.”

John 5:43 (NKJV)

⁴³ I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

John 8:42 (NKJV)

⁴² Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

³⁹ And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world,

Formally, the entire clause *For judgment (krima) I have come into this world* (seems to) stand in contradiction with 3:17, 'For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn (*krinō*) the world' (*cf.* also 12:47). The charge is superficial.

John 12:47 (NKJV)

⁴⁷ And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.

John 3:17–21(NKJV)

¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

¹⁸ “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

Even 3:17 is immediately followed by 3:18–21, with its contrast between darkness and light and its implicit threat of judgment (*cf.* also 3:36). Jesus’ point in 9:39 is not that the very purpose of his coming was to condemn, He came to save, not condemn (12:47). But saving some entails condemning others. In that derivative sense, Jesus has indeed come *for judgment*.

‘This is the paradox of the revelation, that in order to bring grace it must also give offense, and so can turn to judgment. In order to be grace it must uncover sin; he who resists this binds himself to his sin, and so through the revelation sin for the first time becomes definitive’ (Bultmann, pp. 341–342).

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 377). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

For judgement (εἰς κρίμα [*eis krima*]). The Father had sent the Son for this purpose (3:17). **The κρίμα [*krima*] (judgement), a word nowhere else in John**, is the result of the κρίσις [*krisis*] (sifting) from κρίνω [*krinō*], to separate. The Father has turned over this process of sifting (κρίσις [*krisis*]) to the Son (5:22).

Robertson, A. T. (1933). [*Word Pictures in the New Testament*](#) (Jn 9:39). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

Judgment (κρίμα). Not the *act* of judgment, but its *result*. His very presence in the world constitutes a *separation*, which is the primitive idea of judgment, between those who believe on Him and those who reject Him.

Vincent, M. R. (1887). [*Word studies in the New Testament*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 188). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

The coming of Christ with his sinless life, complete obedience to the Law, Preaching and teaching of the truth, confrontation of error and hypocrisy, will naturally lead to consequences.

His very presence brings a division, a sifting, a separation.

Illustration:

The stated purpose a the President to come to Columbia SC if for the support of the Governor, but the consequences of that coming, bring lots or security, traffic problems on the ground, air traffic for 30 mile radius is shut down.

So although he did not come for that purpose, it comes with the package.

Wiersbe, W. W

The *reason* for our Lord's coming was salvation, but the *result* of His coming was condemnation of those who would not believe. The same sun that brings beauty out of the seeds also exposes the vermin hiding under the rocks.

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [*The Bible exposition commentary*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 327). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

The same sun that melts the wax, hardens the clay.

No one is so blind as he who will not see, the one who thinks he has “all truth” and there is nothing more for him to learn (John 9:28, 34).

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [*The Bible exposition commentary*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 327). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

³⁹ And Jesus said, “**For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.**”

In this sense, the second half of the verse must be understood as a purpose clause, not merely ‘so that’ but ‘in order that *the blind will see and those who see will become blind*’.

Carson, D. A. (1991). [*The Gospel according to John*](#) (p. 377). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

The language is borrowed from two texts in Isaiah (6:10; 42:19; *cf.* Mk. 4:12, where parables are assigned the same purpose)

Carson, D. A. (1991). [*The Gospel according to John*](#) (p. 377). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

that those who do not see may see,

who do not see

Tense: Present

Mood: Participle

Voice: Active

may see,

Tense: Present

Mood: Subjunctive

Voice: Active

At the spiritual level, *the blind* refers to those who are in spiritual darkness, and are therefore lost, and know it (just as the blind man repeatedly emphasizes how little he knows, vv. 25, 36). Jesus came to open their eyes, to give them the ‘light’ of revelation that will enable them to see.

Pastorally speaking, John is again stressing the point that a certain poverty of spirit (*cf.* Mt. 5:3), an abasement of personal pride (especially over one's religious opinions), and a candid acknowledgement of spiritual blindness are indispensable characteristics of the person who receives spiritual sight, true revelation, at the hands of Jesus (*cf.* notes on 7:17).

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 378). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

and that those who see may be made blind.”

those who see —-those who claim to see

Tense: Present

Mood: Participle

Voice: Active

may be made blind.”

Tense: Aorist

Mood: Subjunctive

Voice: Middle

This blindness is middle voice, and is a result of actions taken by the subject on itself.

*This is the action of the subject leaving the light
rejecting the light. Not that the light was withheld*

*But as a result of the rejection of the Light that God
as offered. He will and can judicially permanently
Blind*

*The first willful rejection blindness is you going in to a
well lit room and closing your eyes,
The second Judicial blindness comes with God turns
the light off in the same room..... Permanently*

the danger faced by those who think they see is that their rejection and unbelief is irreversible, and they **may become** permanently **blind**. The sobering truth is that those who willfully reject the light of salvation in Christ may find themselves fixed in their condition by God

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). [John 1–11](#) (p. 416). Chicago: Moody Press.

and that those who see may be made blind.”

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Carson, D. A. (1991). [The Gospel according to John](#) (p. 377). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

Mark 4:9–12 (NKJV)

⁹ And He said to them, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

¹⁰ But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. ¹¹ And He said to them, “To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, ¹² so that

‘Seeing they may see and not perceive,
And hearing they may hear and not understand;
Lest they should turn,
And their sins be forgiven them.’”

John 12:37–40 (NKJV)

³⁷ But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

“Lord, who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been
revealed?”

³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts,
Lest they should see with *their* eyes,
Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and
turn,

So that I should heal them.”

Matthew 11:23–27 (NKJV)

²³ And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. ²⁴ But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

²⁵ At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. ²⁶ Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. ²⁷ All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*.

Romans 11:7–10 (NKJV)

⁷ What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. ⁸ Just as it is written:

*“God has given them a spirit of stupor,
Eyes that they should not see
And ears that they should not hear,
To this very day.”*

⁹ And David says:

*“Let their table become a snare and a trap,
A stumbling block and a recompense to them.*

¹⁰ *Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see,
And bow down their back always.”*

2 Thessalonians 2:9–12 (NKJV)

⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Romans 1:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;

³⁹ And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”

II. The Deception

⁴⁰ Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, “Are we blind also?”

Are we blind also (μὴ καὶ ἡμεῖς τυφλοὶ ἐσμεν)?
The *also* belongs with *we*. The interrogative particle has the force of *we are surely not*, and the *we* is emphatic

Vincent, M. R. (1887). [*Word studies in the New Testament*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 188). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

They don't see themselves as part of either group
John 9:39 (NKJV)

³⁹ And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that

- (1) those who do not see may see, and that those
- (2) who see may be made blind.”

They believe can see and surely they aren't going to be made blind

They were blinded by their pride, their self-righteousness, their tradition, and their false interpretation of the Word of God.

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [*The Bible exposition commentary*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 327). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

John 9:34 (NKJV)

³⁴ They answered and said to him, “You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?” And they cast him out.

Matthew 15:12–14 (NKJV)

¹² Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?”

¹³ But He answered and said, “Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴ Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.”

Matthew 23:13–15 (NKJV)

¹³ “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those

who are entering to go in. ¹⁴ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

¹⁵ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

Matthew 23:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.

Romans 2:17–24 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, ¹⁸ and know *His* will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, ¹⁹ and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, ²⁰ an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. ²¹ You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? ²² You who say, “Do not commit adultery,” do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³ You who make your boast

in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? ²⁴ For “*the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,*” as it is written.

Romans 10:2–4 (NKJV)

² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³ For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Revelation 3:16–17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

III. The Determination

41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.

41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin;

The Lord’s answer must have surprised the Pharisees, who no doubt expected a more direct answer to their question. But Jesus’ point was that **if** the Pharisees would confess that they **were** spiritually **blind** (thereby admitting their need for Christ, the true Light) they **would have no sin**, because it would be forgiven (Ps. 32:5; Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9).

Psalms 32:5 (NKJV)

⁵ I acknowledged my sin to You,
And my iniquity I have not hidden.
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,”
And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Proverbs 28:13 (NKJV)

¹³ He who covers his sins will not prosper,
But whoever confesses and forsakes *them* will have mercy.

1 John 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

As John Calvin explained,

He is *blind* who, aware of his own blindness, seeks a remedy to cure his disease. In this way the meaning will be, “If you would acknowledge your disease, it would not be altogether incurable; but now because you think that you are in perfect health, you continue in a desperate state.” When he says that *they who are blind have no sin*, this does not excuse ignorance, as if it were harmless, and were placed beyond the reach of condemnation. He only means that the disease may easily be cured, when it is truly felt; because, when a *blind* man is desirous to obtain deliverance, God is ready to assist him; but they who, insensible to their diseases, despise the grace of God, are incurable.

(Commentary on the Gospel According to John, translated by William Pringle [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003], 393. Italics in original.)
MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (p. 417). Chicago: Moody Press.

Unfortunately, the Pharisees were like those of whom Solomon said, “Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him” (Prov. 26:12; cf. 12:15; Isa. 5:21). Many, by stubbornly refusing to admit their blindness, doomed themselves to darkness forever.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). [John 1-11](#) (p. 418). Chicago: Moody Press.

41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.”

In what sense did the Pharisees “see”? They saw the change in the blind beggar and could not deny that he had been healed. They saw the mighty works that Jesus performed. Even Nicodemus, one of their number, was impressed with the Lord’s miracles (John 3:2). If they had examined the evidence with honesty, they would have seen the truth clearly. “If any man wills to do His [God’s] will, he shall know of the doctrine” (John 7:17, literal translation). “And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life” (John 5:40).

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#): (Vol. 1, p. 328). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Since the Pharisees were unwilling to acknowledge their blindness, but claimed to **see**, they remained culpable and unforgiven for all their **sin**. They could not plead ignorance or lack of opportunity. In particular, the **sin** in view here, and the one that always damns, is that of unbelief. Jesus’ pronouncement that their **sin**

remains (cf. Matt. 12:32; Heb. 6:4–6; 10:29–31) carries with it a sense of finality. It may be that at this point He permanently confirmed them in their willful spiritual blindness

but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.

νῦν δὲ λέγετε ὅτι Βλέπομεν· ἡ ἁμαρτία ὑμῶν μένει.

the sin of you remains

The sin of unbelief

Hebrews 6:4–6 (NKJV)

⁴ For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,
⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

Hebrews 10:26–27 (NKJV)

²⁶ For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of

judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.....

Hebrews 10:29–31 (NKJV)

²⁹ Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?.....³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Those who, like the blind beggar, acknowledge their spiritual blindness and turn to the Light “will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life” (John 8:12). But those who, like the Pharisees, persist in loving the darkness rather than the Light (3:19) will continue to wander aimlessly in the gloom (12:35; 1 John 2:11), bereft of any spiritual vision (Matt. 6:23). The first group is destined to spend eternity in the glorious light of heaven (Rev. 22:5); the latter will be condemned to the horrifying darkness of eternal hell (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). [John 1–11](#) (pp. 418–419). Chicago: Moody Press.