
SERMON NOTES April 30, 2023

Today's notes also available at CCPL.life/Connect

**Matthew 12:22-32
Willfully Blind
Pastor Mike**

I. The danger of being blinded by _____

Too often we only see what _____

II. The revealing of _____

a. Jesus' _____ and _____

b. The _____ nature of the miracle

c. Two contrasting _____

III. Logical _____ to irrational _____

IV. Our _____ regarding Jesus

V. The _____ of God's limitless grace

a. Don't pit God's _____ against his _____

b. The power of _____

-A closing word of _____

-A closing word of _____

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. In Matthew 12:22 Jesus performed a miracle which no one could deny that demonstrated his spiritual power over both physical disease and spiritual powers. While most of the people who witnessed it attributed Jesus' power to God, thus implying he was from God, the Pharisees attributed his power to Satan.
 - a. Why couldn't the Pharisees see what was obvious to everyone else?
 - b. The Pharisees were the religious authorities of their time. Do you think this position of authority contributed to their rejection of Jesus?
 - c. Many in positions of 'authority' today (the 'elite' of education, of entertainment, and the wealthy) still reject Jesus today. Is there something about being in positions of power and influence that make it harder to trust in Jesus?

2. Like the Pharisees of Jesus day, people still often come to Jesus not with an open mind to look into the truthfulness of his life and teaching, but with prejudices that blind them to what would otherwise be obvious truths.
 - a. In your experience, where have you dealt with this "prejudice" against the truthfulness of Biblical truth and how have you dealt with it?
 - b. In your experience and opinion, what drives people to this willful blindness, so that they choose not to see what is obviously true?
 - c. Is it possible that you are willfully blind to some spiritual truths? How can you defend yourself from this danger, and/or allow God to expose and heal this blindness?

3. The problem with the religious leaders in Jesus' day was that they did not want to embrace Jesus as the Messiah because he did not fit their expectations and assumptions about what the Messiah would be.
 - a. This is something that we still struggle with to this day, not just outside the church, but even within it.
 - b. What are ways that you have seen believers (in your own life, or by observation of others) struggle to embrace and accept God for who he is? What false or distorted views of God do people try to hold on to?

4. In Matthew 12:30 Jesus said, "*Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.*" He is teaching that there is no such thing as being neutral toward Jesus; If we do not accept him, then we are in reality, rejecting him.
 - a. Are there people who try to be neutral towards Jesus? What is this passage teaching about these people?
 - b. What does it mean to be with Jesus?

5. In Matthew 12:31-32 Jesus warns us about the "unforgivable sin."
 - a. What is the unforgivable sin? Practically, what does it mean to commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?
 - b. What would you say to a Christian who came to you expressing worry that they may have committed the unforgivable sin?
 - c. In his message, Pastor Mike said that this passage shouldn't be the source of worry for Christians, but should be the source of confidence regarding our standing in Christ. What did he mean by that?
 - d. What is the practical warning that Jesus is giving us in these verses?