



JESUS answered them, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.* ³⁵ *And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.* ³⁶ *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* (John 8:34-36)

Perhaps one of the greatest debilitations a person can suffer is that of blindness. It renders the person dependent upon others for guidance in the paths of life. Like Bartimaeus, that one will need to be surrounded by caregivers who hopefully will love and see to his needs which may be above his ability to satisfy. But, as in the case of Fanny Crosby, physical blindness may train the eyes of the soul to see more astutely than any around whose vision is unimpaired. The wonderful hymns of Fanny spoke more often of seeing than any other aspect of sense. She spoke often of the prospect of seeing her Savior face-to-face because her soul's eye could see Him more clearly than any around who had to depend upon mere physical eyesight. Her vision, being closed off to all things physical, could see more profoundly the things that were spiritual. There is no brighter light than that singular point of the gleaming light of the evening or morning star when contrasted with a darkened canopy.

God's Creation is beautiful to behold, and He has given most of us the blessings of vision to see those things. Unfortunately, man often chooses, even then, the darkness of the sinner's ghetto to the celestial palaces of the mountain heights and majestic sunrises. Why do men choose darkness over light by purposefully closing off their vision to the magnificent beauty of God's Word and works? Perhaps, they have no choice. They are born of the contaminated blood of Adam flowing through their veins. They will remain burdened by the sin of Adam until the Holy Spirit one day illumines

their dark hearts to see and feel the call of the Lord Jesus Christ to a previously dead set of ears. Until that Day Star dawns upon their souls, they remain prisoners to the serpent of the tree. Those who walk the treacherous trails of life in darkness are in constant danger of perishing by the way, and will never arrive at their hoped for destination. Light reveals the Truth and the true Way!

The helpers of many of the blind are also blind. Instead of helping the circumstance of the blind victim, such leaders multiply their sorrows. Of the self-blinded Jewish clergy, Jesus said: *“Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”* (Matthew 15:13-14) Blindness may not always be the result of a physical incapacity of the eye to see – some blindness is the result of a complete absence of light around them. Light is a real physical manifestation of energy, but darkness is merely the absolute absence of light. Light is a positive force while darkness is the absence of any force.

Do we not see that physical darkness is a form of bondage to its victim? Spiritual blindness is a far greater form of bondage. We may enjoy 20/20 physical vision, but be blind as a bat spiritually. Spiritual blindness can lead to an eternity of darkness. Facing death under that blindness will lock our jaws forever, blind our eyes, stop our ears, and leave nothing but a barren desolation in our separation from that True Light which is our Lord Jesus Christ.

Samson was intentionally blinded by his captors as was Zedekiah and both placed in irons until the day of their death. But before surrendering to that specter of death, Samson was awakened by that inner light that enabled him to destroy thousands of the Philistine enemy in the Temple of Dagon.

There is no greater physical loss than to have one's eyes put out by the enemy. Such are unable to fully realize the depth of their own imprisonment and fondly dream of some imaginary hero coming to rescue them from the dark prison. The world is scattered with an over-abundance of such spiritually blind people, most of whom do not realize their blindness. They will even refuse the help of those who bring lamps of light for their path. A lamp is of little use to the blind. The reason is owing to their blindness. Even the light cannot pierce sin-blinded eyes. These are the blind who desire to remain so. To a great degree, it is not their own senses that rule their actions, but the sin-nature that rules in their hearts and which covers their consciences as flesh burned with a hot iron. Such a wound of the sinner is no longer able to feel compassion or sense the light without their darkened hearts. I call to the bar the following texts: *“¹ Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; ² Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; ³ Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”* (1 Timothy 4:1-3) Did this last verse above ring your ear, Mr. Pope! and *“²⁷ And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. ²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; ²⁹ Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, ³⁰ Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹ Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: ³² Who knowing the judgment of*

God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” (Romans 1:27-32)

A reprobate mind puts us beyond the bounds of seeking forgiveness. Not that God does not forgive, but that this kind of sinner has sealed his heart with sin in such a manner that he no longer responds to the heart strings of love.

Suppose you are a seaman upon the restless, dark billows of a storm-driven sea. You have no starlight with which to navigate, the compass is unreliable owing to the pitching of the ship and the electrical flashes of lightning assaulting constantly. The ship is weather-worn and showing signs of surrendering to the wind gales and blasts, and the relentless waves are overflowing the deck. Searching the dark horizon will yield no hope since all is obscured by darkness and confusion. Does this not represent the life of the sinner lost on the seas of life? But suddenly, a flash of light crosses your bow. You can scarcely believe it – perhaps it was lightning. But the flash grows stronger and reoccurs in regular intervals. You search the seas for the source, and you discover the bright beams of a Lighthouse beckoning the lost sailor to safe haven. You immediately adjust the mainsail and turn the bow toward the light. Where there is light, there is life. God is our Lighthouse beckoning across the stormy waves. We have no other navigation aid, but that Light. As we draw closer still to the Lighthouse, we begin to consider the possibility of shipwreck on the outlying reefs. But we soon discover that there are lower lights along the shore to help us navigate into harbor. These lower lights are those who labor for the Owner of the lighthouse. These are the ministers, evangelists, teachers, and other Christians who direct the approaching sinner to the safety promised by the Lighthouse.

The unrepentant sinner is blind to his need for repentance. He feels free to do precisely that which he desires. He drinks all night long if he pleases with little regard for the wife and children at home. There is no moral restraint to his commission of whatever sin he pleases. He FEELS free; but he is far from free. He is, in fact, a slave of sin. His will is not free, but rather governed by the dark Prince of the Air. His presumed free-will is a mirage of lies. He cannot help himself. He is dead to God and Truth.

There is only one kind of human will that is free, but what is it? It is the will that is wholly surrendered to God and which has taken upon itself the Mind that was in Christ! *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:”* (Philippians 2:5) This is an act and endowment of grace – not based on the merits of the called out one. When we have received that Mind of Christ, we now enjoy a freedom and liberty that exceeds all understanding. We are free to do precisely what we desire since all desire is born upon the desire of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our prayers will be answered without fail since those things we seek are precisely what the Lord would have us receive.

The new-found liberty of the newly chosen child of God provides an exhilaration and joy even in trials and hardship. This the world, being blind without spiritual eyes to see, cannot understand. They wonder at the comfort and satisfaction – the happy disposition – of the saint of God under what the world perceives as deprivation. We have a peace and comfort that is not subject to outside forces. It is an inner light and liberty that the world can never understand, or possess.