

TAKE OFF THE BLINDERS

2 Corinthians 4:1-6

EVERYONE WHO IS IN CHRIST AND SERVES CHRIST IS DUE SOLELY TO THE MERCY OF GOD

- *“Therefore, since we have this ministry because we were shown mercy, we do not give up. 2 Instead, we have renounced secret and shameful things, not acting deceitfully or distorting the word of God, but commending ourselves before God to everyone’s conscience by an open display of the truth.” (2 Corinthians 4:1-2)*
- *“For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God’s word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.” (2 Corinthians 2:17)*
- **Because of God’s mercy in saving us and calling us, our lives should be marked by an unwavering perseverance, a commitment to rejecting secretive shameful actions, deceitful behavior, and distorting God’s word for selfish reasons.**

ONLY THE TRUE GOSPEL OF JESUS CAN SAVE US

- *“But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.” (2 Corinthians 4:3)*
- **There is no hope for the person who rejects salvation through Christ alone.**
- *“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Anyone who believes in him is not condemned, but anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God. 19 This is the judgment: The light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil.” (John 3:17-19)*
- **Many reject the gospel of Jesus because they are not willing to surrender their will to the will of God.**

SATAN HAS BLINDED THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO REJECT THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

- *“In their case, the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

- Satan is not a real God with omnipotent power, but rather the “god of this age” with crafty methods of deception and an agenda to blind countless people to the truth of the gospel.

OUR LIVES AND SPEECH SHOULD POINT PEOPLE TO JESUS

- *5 For we are not proclaiming ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’s sake.” (2 Corinthians 4:4-5)*
- *“I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” (1 Corinthians 2:2)*
- *“Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory because of your faithful love, because of your truth.” (Psalm 115:1)*
- **Because people are perishing, entering eternity not knowing Jesus as Lord, we should have a sense of compulsion to live and proclaim Jesus every day.**

THE SAME GOD WHO SPOKE LIGHT INTO EXISTENCE POURS HIS LIGHT INTO OUR HEARTS WHEN WE BELIEVE THE GOSPEL THROUGH FAITH

- *“For God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God’s glory in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:1-6)*
- *“God dispels darkness at both creation and re-creation; he eliminates the darkness in the physical realm by means of the created sun and the darkness in the spiritual sphere through his uncreated Son.” – Kistemaker*
- *“This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light, and there is absolutely no darkness in him. 6 If we say, “We have fellowship with him,” and yet we walk in darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth. 7 If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.” (1 John 1:5-7)*
- **Satan strives to keep people in “darkness” by blinding them to the truth of the gospel, but God does not relent in calling you into the light of salvation and redemption in Christ.**

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

Observation:

- What does Paul say motivates his ministry, and what practices does he say he has rejected? (vss. 1-2)
- What has happened to those who cannot see the truth of the gospel, and who does Paul identify as working to blind their minds? (vss. 3-4)
- What two things does Paul say about the focus of his message and his relationship to the people he serves? (vs. 5)
- What picture does Paul use in verse 6 to describe what God does in the heart of someone who comes to know Christ?

Understanding

- How does remembering that your salvation and opportunity to serve God are both products of His mercy change the way you view Christian service?
- Why is integrity especially important for Christians who want others to believe the message they proclaim?
- In a culture where people may believe that all spiritual paths ultimately lead to the same place, why can the exclusive claims of the gospel be difficult to communicate? How can we remain uncompromising about the truth of Jesus while communicating that truth with humility, compassion, and love?
- How does recognizing the spiritual dimension of unbelief affect the way we respond to people who reject Christianity? Does it make you more frustrated with them, or more compassionate toward them?
- How should this truth influence the way we pray for people in our lives who do not yet know Christ?
- What are some ways God's light changed your thinking, priorities, relationships, desires, or direction when you came to know Christ?
- Where is God currently calling you to walk more fully in His light rather than returning to old patterns of darkness?

Homework:

Consider this and talk with someone you trust this week about it:

- Is there any area where your private life and your public profession of faith are not completely aligned? What would bringing that area into God's light look like?

Loving Outward:

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?

ADDITIONAL NOTES

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