



gracefellowship

Blind Spots
July 21, 2019
Hypocrisy

:: Proverbs 16:17-18

17 The highway of the upright avoids evil; those who guard their ways preserve their lives.

18 Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

- Pray

Introduce new teaching series

As the summer comes to a close we are going to look at things in our lives that can be blind spots not only for our lives, but also for our faith.

A blind spot is an area outside your field of view that can often contain danger.

The thing that probably comes to mind most naturally when thinking of blind spots is driving a car. It's the things we can't see that can most hurt us! Our spiritual lives are no different.

The problem with blind spots is that we often don't recognize them until it's too late!

In this series we aren't talking about physical blind spots, we are dealing with spiritual blind spots. Spiritual blind spots are places where sin has taken root so deeply in our lives that we don't even recognize we have dangerous issues to be dealt with. What is interesting about blind spots is that very often people around us see the danger we are facing more clearly than we see it ourselves.

This is why we need Christian accountability in our lives!

- Good friends will lovingly point out the dangers they see in your life that you have become blind to.
 - Bad friends won't say anything...or might even take advantage of your blind spots!
- Illustration: Andrew Ward- blind in one eye. We would stand in his blind spot and see how long it took him to notice us- and usually scare him in the process! Or we would use the knowledge of his blind spot to scare him

when he was driving and changing lanes- we would yell like there was a car he didn't see!

If you aren't aware of your blind spots spiritually you are in danger of ruining your own life and wrecking the lives of people close to you.

“Sin plays havoc with our spiritual vision.” - Paul David Tripp

Because Satan is a liar, he will do everything possible to keep you from seeing clearly. Sin distorts reality. The result is that we become blind to the effects and consequences of our sin. During this series we are going to look at 4 different areas of life that Jesus points out in Luke 12 where people develop blind spots. This chapter serves as a warning to us...and I'm going to issue a warning of my own: Jesus steps on toes in this passage! Mine have been stepped on a lot preparing for this series and it's only fair I get to return the favor!

Let's check out the first blind spot Jesus warns us about in Luke 12.

:: Luke 12:1-3

1 Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.

3 What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.

Jesus warns us about the blind spot of hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy can be extremely dangerous because at our core, none of us want to believe we are capable of being a hypocrite.

Definition: a pretense of having a virtuous character, moral or spiritual beliefs, or principles that one does not really possess.

Websters definition: **Behavior that contradicts what one claims to believe or feel.**

Literally in the Greek this means playing acting or playing a part. It's the descriptive for a stage actor.

We've all been around people who we would consider hypocrites, right? They say one thing, but believe and do another.

Illustration: I had a freshman basketball coach who would tell us in practices: “Don't chew tobacco, boys! It's bad for you- you'll get cancer! If I ever see one of

you chewing tobacco you're suspended for a game." That's a really important message for freshmen boys to hear. The problem was that as he was delivering the message he was carrying around a 30-gallon trashcan, spitting tobacco into it.

Hypocrisy is outward expression without inner commitment.

Prior to what Jesus said in Luke 12 there was a long conversation he had with the Pharisees and teachers of the Law in Luke 11.

:: Luke 11: 37-52

37 When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table.

38 But the Pharisee was surprised when he noticed that Jesus did not first wash before the meal.

39 Then the Lord said to him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.

40 You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also?

41 But now as for what is inside you—be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.

42 "Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.

43 "Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and respectful greetings in the marketplaces.

44 "Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which people walk over without knowing it."

45 One of the experts in the law answered him, "Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us also."

46 Jesus replied, "And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them.

47 "Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your ancestors who killed them.

48 So you testify that you approve of what your ancestors did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs.

49 Because of this, God in his wisdom said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.'

50 Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world,

51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held responsible for it all.

52 "Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to

knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering.”

53 When Jesus went outside, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions,

54 waiting to catch him in something he might say.

The Pharisees and teachers of the Law thought they had everything together. They were extremely zealous for the Law and saw the keeping of the Law to the smallest letter as the way to be right with God. Jesus comes along and shoots holes in their entire paradigm. They were being hypocrites because all they were doing religiously wasn't driven by a heart that was burning for the glory of God! They were much more concerned about themselves and their public image and playing religious games.

Jesus knew this was a danger for all who would desire to follow Him. The Church gets a bad wrap in our world for being full of hypocrites. In fact, maybe you've left a church before because you saw the hypocrisy in the lives of people. If so, I'm sorry that happened to you. I can't promise this church will be any different because it's full of broken, sinful people. In fact, God's been pointing out to me this week some areas of my life where I am a hypocrite. I wear the same mask a lot of you do when we come to church! Outwardly we look at each other and think we all have our acts together- because that's what we tell people and that's the look we give off. But the reality is, there are hurts and needs and sins we are dealing with that we keep in the dark.

Hypocrisy is the enemy of integrity.

If we want to deal with the blind spot of hypocrisy we have to be willing to take off the mask of perfection.

Jesus knew this would be an area we would struggle so He warned us about it. In fact, notice who the message is for in verse one.

1 Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

The crowd had gathered, but Jesus had a message privately for the disciples. The hypocrisy outside the church is not our concern. We should be concerned with the hypocrisy that exists in our own hearts!

Jesus told His disciples, “Be on guard against the yeast of the Pharisees...”

- What is yeast? It's a living organism we most commonly think of in relation to baking bread. When added to dough, yeast gives off a gas, which causes the dough to rise. Those little pockets of air in your bread are yeast farts! That'll change the way you think about bread, won't it? But

- yeast makes bread amazingly good to eat!
- One interesting thing about yeast is how little it takes to work all the way through a batch of dough. A small amount of yeast can cause a large amount of dough to rise.

I think Jesus uses this illustration of yeast to say to us: "A little hypocrisy can corrupt every aspect of your life."

Jesus knew that hypocrisy is a dangerous blind spot for us to have in our lives to the point that he told his disciples to guard against it. Some of your translations simply say "Beware!"

The Greek word implies holding your mind towards something (paying close attention).

To be watchful against something and on guard against hypocrisy, we have to ask if hypocrisy is present and growing in our lives. Let me give you some questions to think through to help guard against hypocrisy

Questions to help guard against hypocrisy:

1. **Do my words and my actions match up?**
2. **Do I act one way at church and another way almost everywhere else?**
3. **Do I deny my own sin but point out the sin of others?**
4. **Do I publicly pretend my life is great when, in fact, privately it's a mess?**
5. **Am I self-serving and using people for my gain?**

Why is this important? Because, like any blind spot, this has the potential to hurt you and others you love. Hypocrisy in the life of a Christian can keep people from finding salvation. Notice what Jesus said to the experts in the Law in Luke 11:52:

"...you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering."

* We are the ambassadors of Jesus' Kingdom. When the world looks at us they see a representation of Jesus. When we represent Jesus by acting one way at church and another way in our jobs and in our homes and in the community, it pushes people away from the Savior we represent.

Illustration: I'm reminded of a story I once heard: An arrogant church leader once tried to impress upon a class of boys the importance of living a Christian life. He asked the boys, "Why do people call me a Christian?" After a moment's pause, one young man said, "Maybe it's because they don't know you!"

Ouch! This church leader was apparently claiming to be a godly person at church, but those who knew him did not think his life reflected Jesus when he was away from the church.

The great author Nathaniel Hawthorne said, **“No man, for any considerable period can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be true.”** – Nathaniel Hawthorne

If you are under the impression that you can live a duplicitous life and maintain the hypocrisy of acting like a follower of Jesus at church but being a son of Satan everywhere else, you need to hear what Jesus has to say: our falsehood will be exposed.

:: Luke 12:2-3

2 There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.

3 What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.

:: Proverbs 10:9

9 Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.

To guard against hypocrisy we have to allow the Holy Spirit to illuminate some dark places in our hearts to show us where we are being hypocrites.

Hypocrisy is always exposed under the intense light of Jesus' glory.

The danger of blind spots is that we don't know there is danger around us because we can't see it in our own lives. This is why Christian community is so important. In Christian community we can open ourselves up to people who love us and want what is best for us and ask them to look at our lives and tell us what they see that we have become blind to. The people who know you and love you will be able to talk with you about blind spots in your life with grace and compassion. That's important, but the very first place we need to go is to the Holy Spirit, asking Him to search our lives and reveal the things we are doing that don't match up to the things we say we believe. Only as God makes those things known to us will we be willing and able to repent of them and turn from them to walk fully in God's light.