

# John 9:39 to End. Christ Accuses the Pharisees of Willful Blindness.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*The sermon explores the theme of willful blindness to spiritual truth as exemplified by the Pharisees in their rejection of Jesus.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 23:27, Mark 8:18, Luke 2:34, John 9:39, John 9:41

**Topics:** "Judgment And Salvation", "Spiritual Blindness"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about Jesus coming into the world for both salvation and judgment, revealing the hearts of people through their response to Him. The outcast who recognized his sinfulness and need for a Savior was saved, while the proud Pharisees who rejected Jesus remained blind to the truth. Those who willfully shut their eyes to the light of Christ and claim to see will face severe consequences, with their eyes being sealed in darkness.

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## Transcript

We know not in what circumstances the interview between Jesus and the poor outcast took place, whether it occurred when they were alone, or surrounded by Pharisees.

Soon afterwards, however, we find Jesus again addressing his enemies in these words--"For judgment am I come into this world." But did not he come into the world for salvation? Yes, salvation with judgment; that is, with distinction of character. He did not save all, but those only who received him. He came in such a form, and in such a way, that the world would not receive him. Had he come in splendor and glory, then all would have received him; but he came adorned with the beauty of holiness, and not with the pomp of kings. By coming in this manner he tried men's hearts. The aged Simeon, when he blessed the infant Savior, declared, "He shall be a sign that shall be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

The proud and worldly-minded rejected the lowly Savior; the humble and contrite loved and followed him. The man who had just been cast out of the synagogue was one of those whom Jesus came to save. He knew he was a sinner, and that he needed a Savior. The Pharisees who cast him out, thought they were holy, and needed no Savior. The Lord drew the characters of the outcast and of his persecutors in these words--"For judgment am I come into this world; that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind." The Pharisees rightly supposed that the Lord alluded to them in the latter part

of this declaration, and they insolently inquired, "Are we blind also?" Jesus returned a mysterious answer--"If you were blind, you should have no sin; but now you say, 'We see;' therefore your sin remains." In one sense the Pharisees were blind,--in another sense they were not blind. They saw not the glory of God--but why? because they willfully shut their eyes.

God will condemn none of his creatures for ignorance which they cannot avoid. "If you were blind," said the Savior, "you should have no sin." But it is an aggravated case when a sinner shuts his eyes against the light, and at the same time declares that he sees. In such conduct, rebellion, and pride, and falsehood are combined. Yet this was the way in which the Pharisees acted. They were determined not to acknowledge Jesus to be the Son of God. Whether he cast out devils, or raised the dead--whether his lips poured forth divine wisdom, or his countenance beamed with celestial goodness, they had made up their minds they would not believe in him, and they would hinder the people also from believing. They would never renounce the high character they had obtained among men; they would still persist in saying, "We see." What would be the punishment of such wickedness? It would be this--the eyes they willfully shut would be sealed up in sevenfold darkness.

Those are in a dangerous state who refuse to think of religion; but those are in a much more dangerous state who have a form of religion, and call it true religion. They are the most bitter enemies to the truth. Careless sinners often have a kind of respect for devoted Christians, and express a wish that they resembled them; but those who put their trust in an outward show of piety, despise and hate real believers. While they willfully close their eyes against the spiritual doctrines of Christ, they confidently assert that they see, and they alone. What will be the astonishment of Pharisees and hypocrites when their eyes are opened, and they behold in another world the believers whom they despised seated with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, around the throne of God! Devils believe, and, in hell, wicked men believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Truths they would not understand in the land of gospel light, shall be clearly seen in the land of outer darkness, amid the fire that never shall be quenched.

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Source:

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