

FINDING BLIND SPOTS

Ephesians 5:11-14 (HCSB)

Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what is done by them in secret. Everything exposed by the light is made clear, for what makes everything clear is light. Therefore it is said: Get up, sleeper, and rise up from the dead, and the Messiah will shine on you.

intro: Bri grabs the door handle whenever a car veers into my lane...and with blind spots.

What our calling is

We must show each other our "blind spots"

...but instead expose them (v. 11)

The idea is that of "confronting somebody or something with the aim of showing him or it to be, in some determinate respect, at fault."¹

This verse is referencing those within the church, not non-believers.

Objection: "Don't judge me!"

We often reference Matt 7:1 "Do not judge, so that you won't be judged" (also about nons)

1 Corinthians 5:10-13 (HCSB)

I did not mean the immoral people of this world or the greedy and swindlers or idolaters; otherwise you would have to leave the world. But now I am writing you not to associate with anyone who claims to be a believer who is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or verbally abusive, a drunkard or a swindler. Do not even eat with such a person. For what business is it of mine to judge outsiders? Don't you judge those who are inside? But God judges outsiders. Put away the evil person from among yourselves.

We are called to open our lives up to the scrutiny of Christian relationships.

We are called to watch for each other's blind spots.

Why our calling is

"For it is shameful even to mention what is done by them in secret" (v. 12)

Paraphrased: things done in secret are shameful

i.o.w. You were used to denying your sin, but now...

"Everything exposed by the light is made clear" (v. 13)

You're being set apart

Because of the battle we are in

• Ephesians 2:2-3 **API!**

1. spirit of the age (culture)
2. demonic oppression (Satan)²
3. lust of the flesh (sin nature)

1. not everything that happens is demons; often it's us!

¹ Engberg-Pederson, quoted by Harold W. Hoehner. *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002). 678

² These three are shown in Ephesians 2:2-3

How our calling is AP!

Exodus 13:17-21

God redeemed his people from Egypt, but had to lead them out by cloud/fire. 1,000's of years later, this element of the story has not changed:

Sometimes, Egypt looks appealing to us.³
What are we to do??

Answer...

AP!

Hebrews 3:12-13 (HCSB)

Watch out, brothers, so that there won't be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart that departs from the living God. But **encourage each other daily**, while it is still called today, so that none of you is hardened by sin's deception.

Hebrews 3:15-17

As it is said: Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion. **For who heard and rebelled? Wasn't it really all who came out of Egypt under Moses?** And who was He provoked with for 40 years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness.

Hebrews 4:2

For we also have received the good news just as they did; but the message they heard did not benefit them, since **they were not united with those who heard it in faith.**

Hebrews 4:8-11

For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. Therefore, **a Sabbath rest remains for God's people.** For the person who has entered His rest has rested from his own works, just as God did from His. **Let us then make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall into the same pattern of disobedience**

What separates us from those who veer away is not the quality of our faith, but the object of our faith.

The pillar of fire still leads us away from Egypt! (all signs point to one)

Luke 24:26 (HCSB)

AP!

Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted for them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 10:1-6 (HCSB)

Now I want you to know, brothers, that **our fathers were all under the cloud, all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.** They all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from a spiritual rock that followed them, and **that rock was Christ.** But God was not pleased with most of them, for they were struck down in the wilderness. **Now these things became examples for us,** so that we will not desire evil things as they did.

³ Grame Goldsoworthy. "The exodus is the end of captivity, but it is only the beginning of freedom. God has yet much work to do in order to show his people what it means to live freely as his people." (According to Plan)" *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible.* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1991). 137

What we see in the exodus points to the greater redemption in Christ.

The cryptic hymn Paul closes with are thought to be an old song of repentance...⁴

***Get up, sleeper, and rise up from the dead, (v. 14)
and the Messiah will shine on you.***

The very one who causes dead people to rise provides the same supernatural light in Himself to wake them up!

ILLUST: ABBY when the lights go on --> JOY!

It is possible for Christians to fall “asleep”

Awakened from spiritual lethargy to holiness.

God uses others to flip the switch.

We are a community that gathers around Jesus (the true pillar of fire)

- If you keep looking at blind spots, you’ll crash. Keep your eyes on the road (Jesus)

We are a community that lovingly exposes sin in one other (little lights, v.13)

- this is an art form! We must be patient with one another.
- it gets better when we get to know and love one another.
- No one is blessed by the stranger who just wants to correct everyone!

But what about non-believing people?

1 Peter 2:12 (ESV)

Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, **they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.**

Matthew 5:16 (HCSB)

...let your light shine before men, so that **they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.**

Philippians 2:14-15 (HCSB)

Do everything without grumbling and arguing, so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are **faultless in a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world.**

This is what will sometimes minister to non-believers

⁴ This passage is debated. Some think it is a baptismal hymn used for those crossing over into the light, while others think it is a song used of the people of God for continual repentance. But there is stronger evidence to the latter. For example, Paul uses the same phrase he often uses to introduce the quotation of Old Testament Scripture---“Therefore it is said.” But the cryptic hymn that he quotes is only found in fragments of Isaiah--it’s not a direct quote--and all the verses it references has to do with a repentance. Further, the context of Ephesians 5:11-14 has to do with believers who are falling into old patterns of disobedience. Hoehner, 687.

Bible: there is something paradoxical, mysterious, and alluring about God's calling for his people in the world: they are called to be set apart in holiness, yet graciously open-armed to those outside of their community.⁵

Caveat: throughout history, the Church has been the best at this when we have operated from the margins of society, persecuted, or at best, simply ignored by the masses. It's when we've occupied the seat of power in politics, society, and culture, that we historically see the church losing it's most powerful influence.

We've been in the later for a century. **Visible without a voice.**

But the tide seems to be turning.

There may be a day when the church goes back to being the invisible gathering of believers on the margins.

Remember the Object of our faith.

Point: one of the reasons the local church exists is so we can check on each other's blind spots.

- This requires relationship (who are you in relationship with?)
- This requires humility (do you go into it wanting to fix others or yourself?)
- This requires vulnerability (we can all remain hidden in the dark if we want)

⁵ "The church is the realm of the light, the place where God dwells in power by his Spirit. As a church community fosters a redemptive dynamic of transformation, it will inevitably bump up against the surrounding culture." Timothy G. Gombis. *The Drama of Ephesians: Participating in the Triumph of God*. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010). 170