

January 3/4, 2025

“Blind Spots”

Pastor Brad Holmes



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2026 Focus: 12 Months of Prayer | January: Prayers of Praise

Each month, journey through a different biblical model of prayer.

Day 1 [John 9](#) | Blind Spots

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.” John 9:3

Jesus is in the middle of his public ministry. He is teaching, healing and traveling from place to place. Crowds follow him closely, while the religious leaders oppose him and look for a reason to stop him. Along the way, Jesus meets a man who has been blind since birth. When the disciples see him, they ask a familiar question: whose fault is this? The question reflects a common belief of the time—suffering must always be the result of someone’s sin. Jesus gently corrects this thinking. He explains that this man’s blindness is not a punishment. Instead, God will reveal his mercy and power through this man’s life.

This story sounds modern. We still ask the same questions. Why did this happen? Who caused it? Where is God in the pain? We often look for explanations before we look to Jesus. But Jesus redirects our focus. Rather than assigning blame, he invites us to trust that God is present and at work, even in suffering we do not understand. Jesus shows us what God is like. God is not distant or cruel. He is compassionate, attentive and powerful to redeem what is broken. Even when the reason for pain is unclear, God’s purposes are not absent. He is working for our good and for his glory. This week, we will see that God can be trusted—especially in moments of confusion and hurt.

TODAY: Invite Jesus into whatever pain you are carrying. As you reflect, worship with Ada Bible Worship and listen to the song “[I Speak Jesus](#),” allowing its words to remind you that Jesus is present and powerful in every circumstance.

Day 2 [John 9:1-7](#) | Physically Blind

“Go,” he told him, “Wash in the Pool of Siloam” (this word means “Sent”). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. John 9:7

Jesus and his disciples pass a man who is blind from birth. Blindness means total dependence—no steady income, little dignity and isolation. Many believe suffering like this is a punishment for sins, either the man’s or his parents’. Jesus rejects this idea. Instead of offering an explanation, Jesus acts. He bends down, makes mud from dirt and saliva, and puts it on the man’s eyes. Then Jesus tells him to go wash in the Pool of Siloam, about a half mile away. The man is not healed right away. In fact, things seem worse. Walking that distance requires help, effort and courage. Still, the man obeys. He trusts Jesus without knowing what will happen. Only after he washes does he receive his sight.

This story challenges how we think about suffering. We often want reasons and quick answers. But Jesus is not interested in simple formulas. He is after our trust. He invites us to follow him, not only when life is clear and comfortable, but when it is confusing and painful. Sometimes, obedience does not bring immediate relief. Sometimes, trusting Jesus feels harder before it feels better. Yet, God is still at work, even when we cannot see it. Jesus calls us to trust him in the dark places—in struggling marriages, with wayward children, during job loss or in lingering grief. He does not ask us to understand everything, only to follow him.

TODAY: Pray: *Lord, help me trust you with all my heart. When life is joyful, keep me grateful. When life is heavy, help me hold on to you. Give me faith to walk forward, even when I cannot see the way. Amen.*

Day 3 [John 9:7-11](#) | Spiritually Blind

He replied, “The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see.” John 9:11

Jesus heals the blind man even though the man does not ask to be healed. Jesus notices him, approaches him and meets him right where he is—in darkness, dependence and need. The man trusts Jesus enough to obey. He goes and washes, and his physical sight is restored. Later, something even greater happens. Jesus seeks the man out again and reveals his identity as the Son of Man. The man responds with belief and worship. His eyes were opened once, but now his heart is opened too. He doesn’t just see *again*—he truly sees.

This is the heart of the gospel. We often assume we must clean ourselves up before coming to God—fix our habits, solve our problems or prove ourselves worthy. But this story reminds us that Jesus always makes the first move. Scripture tells us that “while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” ([Romans 5:8](#)). Grace always comes first. Jesus lived the perfect life, died in our place on the cross and rose again so we could have new life. We do not walk by sight, but by faith—trusting him even before everything makes sense.

TODAY: If you feel like you are “seeing” Jesus for the first time, respond in faith. Tell him you trust him and receive his grace. Tell someone what God is doing in you. If you already follow Jesus, thank him for restoring your spiritual sight. Journal three specific ways you are grateful for his work in your life today.

Day 4 [John 9:13-41](#) | Willfully Blind

Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?” Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.”

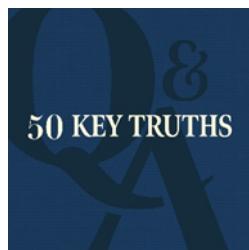
John 9:40-41

The religious leaders are furious. Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath, and does it by making mud—an act they consider “work.” Instead of rejoicing in a miracle, they interrogate the man. Eight times, they question him, hoping he will change his story. He doesn’t. All he can say is simple and honest: “I was blind, but now I see!” Still unsatisfied, they question his parents. Even with overwhelming evidence, they refuse to believe Jesus is from God. Their problem is not a lack of information; it is hardened hearts. They remain willfully blind.

This story warns us that spiritual blindness can exist alongside deep religious knowledge. We may know Scripture, attend church and follow the rules, yet resist the very change God wants to bring. The gospel can slowly become familiar instead of life-shaping. Like the Pharisees, we may cling to control rather than surrender. Jesus invites us to something better: humility, openness and repentance. He wants to open our eyes, especially in the areas where we prefer not to look. Growth often happens when we allow God and other believers to lovingly reveal our blind spots.

TODAY: Confess and repent for the ways you resist God. Ask him to open your eyes to where pride, fear or comfort keep you from obeying him. Turn from sin and trust him. One practical step toward openness is

studying God's Word with others. Consider joining a small group in 2026. New groups are forming this month—an opportunity to grow, be known and see more clearly together.



Day 5 [Exodus 15](#) | Praise for Salvation

This year in Beyond the Weekend, journey through different biblical models of prayer—one each month. January's focus is Prayers of Praise.

“The Lord is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.” Exodus 15:2

Israel has just escaped the Pharaoh's grip and the Egyptian's pursuit. The Red Sea shines behind them, a watery grave for their enemies. The Israelites stand on the opposite shore, in awe of God's mighty hand to rescue them and judge their oppressors. They respond with fear of the Lord and trust in him ([Exodus 14:31](#)). Their first act as a rescued people is to sing praise to the Lord for their salvation. They praise God's strength, power as a warrior and his rescue. They can't help but sing of his unfailing love that leads and guides them as his redeemed people.

Just as the Lord rescued his people from Egypt's power, he has rescued us from sin and death through Jesus Christ. We were enslaved to sin, helpless to free ourselves from guilt, shame and sinful patterns. We faced spiritual death and separation from God. But through faith in Jesus's death and resurrection, God rescued us and brought us into his family. We are forgiven, loved and given new life. No matter what else is happening, we can always praise God for this greatest rescue. When we feel overwhelmed, praising God for our salvation anchors us in what is most true. It reminds us that the God who saved us is faithful and powerful to carry us through every trial.

TODAY: In your journal or mobile device, write a prayer of praise for how God has rescued you from sin and death and saved you through the blood of Jesus. Write out specific ways you've seen his rescue and praise him for his mighty power to save.