

Message Transcript

SPIRITUAL BLINDSPOTS | THE KINGDOM REVEALED

AARON BROCKETT | SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

Hey, what's up Traders Point family? How are we doing today? You guys good? You guys awake? Alright, man. Hey, I've been preaching my guts out all weekend and this is the last service for me. So, I'm going to empty the tank, man. I'm going to empty the tank. I'm fired up to preach. I don't know if you're fired up to listen, but I'm fired up to preach, man. That was an awkward silence.

So, good to have you. Hey. I want to welcome everybody across all of our locations, online, wherever you may be joining us from or if this is your first time. Today is a big day because we launched our Westfield campus today, man. Come on. Let them feel the love through the screen. I've been receiving pictures and videos from the Westfield campus. It looks amazing, the turn out there. I'm so excited to get a final report of all that God is doing there.

And if you've been in our church over the last few weeks, I've just been urging and encouraging those of us in our church, if you live in the Westfield city limits and you are a part of our church family, specifically if you attend our Carmel campus, we've just been asking if you would consider making Westfield your home campus.

And I just want to thank you because so many of you have said, "Hey, man. We'll do that. We'll clear the way. We'll give up our parking spot and our seats and go over to Westfield." And I want to thank you for that. God's going to do an incredible thing through the Westfield location.

But I also want to acknowledge something I just don't want us, as a church family regardless of whatever campus you may be a part of, to miss. In a sense we are a multiplication movement and so what Carmel has essentially done is it has given birth to a daughter campus. What that means is, Northwest you are a grandparent now. That's what that means.

I've never experienced this personally, but I know lots of ladies who have given birth to a child and they are very grateful for that child. Right? Wow. Some of you are like, "On most days. On most days." So, you bring this child into the world and it's amazing and yet, at the same time, it costs you something. It takes a toll on you.



In a very similar way our Carmel location very graciously birthed this Westfield campus. So many Difference Makers from Carmel have gone over to Westfield and what's happened... I just want to acknowledge this.

Hey, Carmel, I know you are listening to me right now. Thank you so much for your sacrifice and your generosity. I know it's hard emotionally. You've had people you may be in a group with and they are going to go to Westfield. People that you worship with that used to sit next to you; they are in Westfield. We just want to acknowledge the sacrifice and the cost that you are making. God is going to come back and He's going to refill that. Watch Him do it, man. Watch Him do it. We want to thank you for that.

I also want to say this as well. At any new location, if you've been attending for a while, and you are like, "You know what? We've gotten healed up and God's been speaking and we've been the recipients of something here," and you've not yet jumped in to be a Difference Maker and serve, this would be a perfect time to do so, especially those of you at Carmel. Because of the fact that you all have taken me seriously and many have gone, and it's left some gaps at Carmel. In fact, last week we had to turn families away from Kids Ministry because we didn't have enough Difference Makers. So, I just want to invite you into this.

Last weekend at all of our locations we honored our Difference Makers. If you were here, you remember. We had them stand all over the room. And it was amazing. And we clapped for them. And I just noticed that we had more people sitting down than standing up. There is no shame and no shade, just an opportunity. So, maybe it's time for you to put on your Difference Maker jersey and say, "I'm ready to get into the game." Man, it got quiet in here. Let me pray.

Father, we come to You right now and we thank You for the launching of the Westfield campus. I pray that whatever it is that it cost us out of Carmel, that You would fill that back in relationally, emotionally, and otherwise. And, Father, I just pray that today in these next few moments that You would just simply help me amplify what it is that You have said and are saying in Your Word. And I pray that whatever it is that we brought in here with us, maybe some of us came in here tired or distracted or anxious or worried or fearful and we've got a lot of things swirling around in our heads and our hearts are somewhat troubled, God, I pray that in these next few moments that we would have an encounter with the living God. And that we would lean in and that we would hear what it is that You want us to hear.

And that for some of us, we might have our eyes open to see something that maybe we've been blind to. We ask this in the power of Jesus' name. And everybody said: Amen.



Hey, if you have a Bible go ahead and find Mark, chapter 10. That's where we are going to be together today. Mark 10, beginning in verse 32. And as you are turning there and settling in...

In the fall of 1783 there was a man who stood at the height of acquiring more power than any human being had ever held in nearly two centuries. And he was about to do something with it that almost nobody in history had ever done with it. His name was George Washington. That stoic looking picture on your one dollar bill. Remember those?

And he'd just led a rag-tag Colonial army through eight brutal years of war and defeated the most powerful military on earth. At the age of 51 he commanded the loyalty of every soldier in that army and he was beloved by most of the country. For all practical purposes, the newly formed United States of America had no functioning government strong enough to stop him from doing, really, whatever he wanted to do next.

And what people expected him to do was to become king. Some of his own officers quietly proposed it. Other new nations freshly liberated from a monarchy had immediately installed a new one. So humanly and historically speaking it would have been the obvious move for him. Power and position were well within his reach and something for him to grab ahold of.

However, what he would do next would take everybody by surprise. On December 23, 1783, Washing rode into Annapolis, walked into a session of the Continental Congress and resigned his commission as commander in chief of the Continental Army. And he handed his sword back to a room full of civilians and he went home to farm at Mount Vernon and live as a private citizen. King George III, the very king who Washington had just defeated, by the way, when he was told that Washington intended to give up all of that potential power and go back to farming, said, "If he manages to do that, that would make him the greatest man in the world." That's exactly what he did.

But then he got called back in to become president. Six years later the country came calling on him to become the very first president of the United States. And when his second term ended in 1797 people were expecting and even begging him to stay on for a third. There was no precedent for a two-term president. He did it again. He let go of power and walked away. Two different offices. Two different decades. Both times at the peak of his position and power he chose to do what very few people would have had the discipline or humility to do. He laid it down.

And it would have been so tempting for him to say, "You know what? I've kind of earned it. I fought for it. I sacrificed for it. I gave up time with my family for it. I deserve to keep this."



But he didn't. Twice he had the power to hold on, twice he let it go. And it's largely that decision, not just the outcome of the war, that impacted not only the shaping of our nation, but how history remembers and defines his greatness. In fact, for a guy willing to give up power and position, it's kind of surprising that there are just a few things named in his honor today. Have you noticed? One U S state. Over 30 counties, over 200 cities, 15 mountains (like, one would be enough) numerous universities, colleges, and schools, multiple sports and military installations, a national forest, scores of streets and avenues, several highways, city parks, plazas, and squares, entire city neighborhoods—not bad for a guy who, at the height of his potential power chose to lay it down.

And it shouldn't surprise us because in the meat of our passage today, we're going to get there eventually, Jesus is going to drop this principle that if you want to be a leader, you've got to be willing to be servant of all. You can't grab ahold of power for yourself, you've got to be willing to leverage it for others. In our passage today, two of Jesus' disciples, James and John, do the opposite of what George Washington did. Long before those days, they see an opportunity for power and position and they reach for it, ironically, when Jesus, who they've been following, is on His way to Jerusalem to lay those things down to go to a cross. But they didn't see it because they had a significant blindspot that was keeping them from seeing it.

I don't know if any of you can relate to me, but the older I get the worse my eyesight becomes. Any of you with me? I've always had pretty good eyesight until, I don't know, maybe a year-and-a-half ago. We were at a restaurant and my kids pointed it out to me. So grateful for them.

I did one of those things, any of you relate to this? I was looking at the menu and I was doing kind of a trombone with the menu. And I realized, "Man, I can't see as well as I once did." I needed to do something about it. Get some lenses to kind of clear that stuff up.

Sometimes our eyesight isn't very good. And I'm not even talking about the literal. I'm talking about the spiritual, the emotional. Like to be able to understand reality. Or maybe what we might call...

The title of this message is Spiritual Blindspots. And there are different kinds of blindspots.

A literal blindspot is a limitation in someone's eyesight

The one that automatically may come to most of our minds when we think of a blindspot, it would be a literal one and that would be a limitation in your eyesight. Most commonly that space between the review and the side mirrors in your car that you can't see until you begin to drift over in the lane next to you and someone blares their horn and scares the stuffing out of you. You know what I'm talking about? That literal blindspot.



A figurative blindspot is a limitation in someone's insight

More than just a literal blindspot, there would be something called a figurative blindspot. It's not a limitation in your eyesight; it's a limitation in your insight. It's your awareness, your emotional intelligence. It's your judgement. Here's the thing about this type of a blindspot. Oftentimes it's very clear to others, but it is not clear to you. That's why it is called a blindspot. You can't see it.

Maybe this blindspot is because of pride or insecurity or over familiarity. Maybe you have gotten hired into a company, a corporation, a business and you walked in and you see all kinds of things that need to be fixed but nobody else seems to notice them because it's become familiar to them—blindspot.

A spiritual blindspot is a limitation in someone's discernment

So there is a literal blindspot that is a limitation in your eyesight. There is a figurative limitation in your insight. But the one we're talking about today is a spiritual blindspot. That is a limitation in one's discernment. It's a gap in our ability to rightly perceive reality, to rightly perceive the world in which we live, to rightly perceive ourselves, to rightly perceive God.

And most often there is something that is blocking it. Maybe it's pride. Maybe it's ambition aimed in the wrong direction. Maybe it's fear. Maybe it's unconfessed sin. Maybe it's a hurt of some kind.

The Bible says that there is a way that seems right to someone but in the end it leads to death. That's a blindspot. And a blindspot occurs, not because of a lack of knowledge or information, but something that is obstructing us from applying that knowledge or information. That's what the prophet Jeremiah is driving at when he is referring to Israel in chapter 5, verse 21. It says:

"Listen, you foolish and senseless people, with eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear." (NLT)

Or Paul, in his second letter to the Corinthians, says this:

Satan, who is the, "lower case g, "god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News." 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (NLT)

They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ who is the exact likeness of God. So, maybe this is why you have family members or a close friend or a coworker and when you begin to share with them what Jesus has done in your life they just look at you like you've got a third eyeball. They don't see it. They don't get it. There is something that is blinding them.



In fact, if you are saved, if you've given your life to Jesus, please understand, your salvation is a miracle in the sense that the Spirit of God gave you eyes to see the need, otherwise you'd be blind to it. And the text says, very specifically, that Satan, who has a limited domain in the world right now, blinds the eyes of unbelievers and they don't see it.

The Bible says this in another way in Corinthians. It would say that the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. They hear it. They are not stirred by it. They laugh at it.

A couple of weeks ago I was just teaching straight through the text, trying to teach whatever was next, and we were talking about divorce and marriage. And I talked a little bit about co-habitation and having sex before marriage, that studies show, even outside of Christian teaching, that if you do that then the odds of divorce only increase. And that little sermon clip went online and as you might imagine it got a number of different comments. It was really fun.

And one of the comments, in particular, was from guy (I just couldn't help but notice this one) where he just said, "That's crazy, dude." And he said, "How about this? Don't ever get married and just continue to live and sleep together. Then you won't have to worry about getting a divorce. What you are saying is crazy." And I didn't bite. I didn't respond. But I wanted to say, "Hey, listen. If making a life-long covenant with somebody else out of selflessness instead of selfishness for the good of the family, the stability of the kids, the fabric of society, if that's crazy, call me crazy. But it's a blindspot. It sounds foolish, "There is something that is keeping me from seeing."

And here's the thing about blindspots. They are unsettling, even downright dangerous. We know that to be true with a literal blindspot. If you've ever been in a car and you've maybe gotten into an accident because somebody came into your blindspot. You know how detrimental that can be to your health. But then other blindspots can be detrimental to your relationships, your friendships, your marriage.

But then there are some blindspots that can be detrimental to your eternity. When God is trying to speak but you don't listen. When He's trying to show you something you can't see. When He's wanting to move but you stand still. When He's bringing you to this place of breakthrough in your life but you can't see it. And in those moments you've got to have the humility to ask Jesus, "Help me see what I cannot."

I want you to know that every single week before every single service there is a little space backstage where I stop and I pray and I ask God, "What I am getting ready to do next it is an honor that I do not deserve, and this might be the last time that I ever get to do this."



And what an honor. And I will preach as a dying man to dying people. And, God, would You just help me to illuminate what it is that You 've said. And maybe there might be somebody listening to this for the very first time whose eyes would come to see."

Psalms 119, verse 105 says this about God's Word. It says:
"Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." (NLT)

I don't know if any of you have ever been out to the American west, maybe Montana or Wyoming. I try to get out there at least once a year. It's good for my soul. And if you've ever been out there when the sun goes down it's striking how dark it gets when there are not city lights to kind of bounce off the sky. And it's so dark that at times you can't see your hand in front of your face.

So, I've got a Garmin watch that's got a little light on it and I'm always really grateful for that thing. I'll just kind of click the light on. It doesn't necessarily provide light where I can see everything, just enough light to where I can see a step or two in front of me. And I'm always really grateful for that so that way I don't trip over a rock or step on a rattlesnake or something.

Isn't it interesting that's how God's Word describes itself. It doesn't say that God's Word is a spotlight that illuminates everything. See, most of the time I think that what are asking from God when we go to His Word is, "God, would You please predict what is going to happen by the end of the year?" And He goes, "How about this. How about I give you enough light so you can take the next step of faith?"

We live in a really dark world, man. Can you feel it? If you don't feel it then your head is in the sand. The darkness is crouching around us. Things are becoming more confusing and scary and anxious. Some of you carried it in with you. Right now we are shrouded in darkness. And whenever you keep your Bible closed, the light is off. And when we urge you to do your Daily Bible Reading, that's not some gimmick. That is to turn the light on in your life.

Some people will come up to me and say, "Hey, you know I really want to read the Bible. Where should I start? What daily Bible reading plan should I use." And I am like, "I don't know, man. Don't over think it. It's not rocket science. Just do the one you'll actually do." I don't care if it's only like five verses a day. Just open it up and just read God's Word.

And sometimes I wonder when people are like, "I've been praying and God won't come through." Or, "I'm really facing this addiction or this thing or this fear or this relationship thing," I just want to go, "Man, is the light on? Or are you still trying to walk your way through shrouded in the darkness?"



That's what is so important about our time together. Listen, man. I am not up here to entertain you. I'm not up here to try to keep your attention. I'm not up here to try to impress upon you what I know because I don't know much. I'm not up here to tell you my opinion. I am simply up here to try to amplify what God has said and is saying because it says that His Word is living and is active, it's sharper than a double edged sword.

Preaching: giving voice to what God wants said with power, conviction, and urgency

And my favorite definition of preaching is just simply this. Giving voice to what God wants said with power, conviction, and urgency.

My wife said this to me a couple of weeks ago. She said, "You talk really fast." And I'm like, "Well, I kind of have to because the faster I talk the faster my mind goes." And sometimes I'm up here and I'm not trying to... It's not like I'm all amped up on pre-workout, although I have had my pre-workout. But it's that I feel a sense of urgency, preaching as a dying man to dying people.

Guys, this is real. What we are talking about is real. What's God trying to say to you, man? He's saying something. He's talking. The question is: Can I see and can I hear?

Well, Jesus has been saying stuff to the disciples. And He's been saying stuff now for the last few weeks as we've been journeying through Mark. He's been saying stuff to them for the past three years of His ministry. And they had all of the information. It wasn't for a lack of knowledge.

But something was keeping them blind. They couldn't see. They were struggling to apply what it was that Jesus was telling them. And His 12 disciples who literally were with Jesus every waking moment for three years, if they had a blindspot what makes you and I think we won't?

Man, they'd seen some amazing things as we've been journeying through Mark. They've seen Jesus walk on water. They've seen Jesus calm storms. They've seen Him feed 5,000 people. They've seen Him raise a little girl from the dead. They've seen some incredible, impressive things and yet they still had a blindspot.

And Jesus, there is a sense of urgency in Him. If you've been here over the last few weeks, you've noticed that Mark is telling us He's trying to get to Jerusalem. And something keeps stopping Him. And right after that he would say but He stopped because He wanted to teach His disciples more. Why did Jesus do that? Because He knew that He was getting ready to go to a cross and His time on earth with them would be over. He wanted them to be ready.



How many of you (I'm just curious) how many of you over the last month or so have dropped one of your kids off at college? Yeah, we're praying for you. That's hard. I've done it. Any of you moving them into the dorm room and you're trying to keep it together because it's not cool for mom and dad to cry in the dorm room. And then you get in the car and you drive away and you let it all go. And what's on your mind? You're thinking, "I hope they are ready. I hope I prepared them well."

And that's what Jesus is thinking in our text today. He knows He's on His way to Jerusalem. He knows that He's going to get ready to go to a cross. And He's going to hope that they are ready. And, unfortunately the answer is: No, they are not ready. Look at verse 32:

"They were now on the way up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. The disciples were filled with awe, and the people following behind were overwhelmed with fear. Taking the twelve disciples aside, Jesus once more began to describe everything that was about to happen to him.

"Listen," he said, "we're going up to Jerusalem, where the Son of Man," He's talking about Himself, "will be betrayed to the leading priests and the teachers of religious law. They will sentence him to die and hand him over to the Romans." Listen to this description, "They will mock him, spit on him, flog him with a whip, and kill him, but after three days he will rise again." Mark 10:32-34 (NLT) What I want you to see is that this is the third time in Mark that Jesus predicted His death. The first time was in chapter 8, where Jesus tells us that He was going to die. The second time was in chapter 9, when He says when He is going die. The third time is here in chapter 10 where He describes how He was going to die.

And this one is the most graphic description of it in emphasizing the cruelty of His crucifixion. So, Jesus would say, "They are going to mock Me, spit on Me, flog Me." And I want you to know that flogging was not like a little whipping. They didn't just whip Jesus; it was a flogging.

What's the difference? Well, a flogging was designed by the Romans, who would bring about excruciating pain, I'm not going to get too graphic. But I will tell you this. It was not just a little whip, but it was a nine-leather strand—they called it the cat of nine tails. And embedded in the leather were pieces of sharp glass, stone, and rock that were inside of it designed to grip flesh.

And they would basically remove your clothing, stretch you out; your back would be stretched. And they would just lay the cat of nine tails over it. And you go, "Oh, that's not so bad." And it wasn't so bad until they pulled it up taking flesh with it.



And Jesus said, "I'm going to be crucified in that way." He's describing it to them for the first time. And yet, I want you to see this, Jesus doesn't say this as some helpless victim. He is totally in charge. No one would take His life, man. He willingly laid it down. He is a substitutionary sacrifice.

What kept Jesus on the cross was not Roman force. What kept Him on the cross was not the nails. What kept Him on the cross was the thought of you and me. And He was like, "If I don't do this, they will have to atone for their own sin, and that's impossible." Jesus was atoning for sin so that you wouldn't have to. Aren't you grateful for that? He took your place, man.

Some of you may be reading this and you're going, "Why?" Maybe you've had this thought, "Why was the cross not just necessary, but why was it so gruesome and painful?" And there are two reasons for that. One is factual one is spiritual.

The first one is the fact that the Romans were stone cold killers. They had perfected the art of murder as a statement to the rest of the empire to not mess with them. The Romans knew, they did this every day, they knew how to bring somebody up just to the line of death and keep them alive so they could maximize the amount of pain they would experience. And then they would nail people to a cross and then they would leave those crosses up, people barely hanging onto life and those who passed and were decomposing.

They'd leave them up as billboards. Like our billboards today when you are on a road trip on the interstate will advertise where you can fill up, where you can have it your way, where you can get the corn dog and the slushy. Billboards during the first century in Rome were crosses making the statement: Don't mess with us. That's part of the reason why it was so gruesome and painful.

But the spiritual reason why it was so gruesome and painful and the reason why the cross was so brutal is because sin is brutal. Unconfessed, un-dealt with, unacknowledged sin dismembers people's lives, marriages, emotions, and finances. And I think you know it. And Jesus took all of that on Himself and He absorbed it on our behalf so that we wouldn't have to. It was the ultimate act of sacrifice and grace.

This is an extremely profound thing that Jesus is saying to His disciples that we just read. And I wonder if as Jesus is describing this to them, the Son of Man will be betrayed and He will be mocked and He will be spit upon and be flogged, I wonder if His voice cracked with emotion and His eyes get all sweaty thinking about them and thinking about you.



The human side of Him probably would have been overwhelmed with loneliness and fear and a little bit of anxiety. And what do you think the disciples' response to what Jesus just said to them would have been? What would your response have been if Jesus confronted you telling you this for the first time? I think gratitude would probably have been a good response, like, "Wow, Jesus. We're so grateful." Empathy would have been right on, "Jesus, that sounds really, really hard, man. We're here for You. What can we do?" Nope. Not these geniuses. Look at their response in verse 35: "Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came over and spoke to him, 'Teacher,' they said, 'we want you to do us a favor.'" (NLT)

Talk about tone deaf. Jesus has just described how He is going to be crucified. And they are like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sounds super hard, Jesus. Say, are you still going to be around next weekend to help us move?"

Hey, I'm kind of curious. Have any of you been at a social gathering maybe at a football game or a wedding or something and you're just making small talk with people. And you are talking and you can tell that they are looking at you but they are not listening. They are just waiting for your mouth to stop moving so they can say some words. That's what this is. They are so checked out, man. They were just thinking about themselves. They weren't listening to a word He said.

In Luke's gospel as he describes this scene to us, he tells us very specifically the disciples didn't understand what He was talking about. The significance of His words were hidden from them. That's how Luke says it. They failed to grasp the meaning of what He said.

Think about this for a minute. If you huddled up your closest friends around you and you were getting ready to share with them the fact that you were entering into maybe one of the most difficult, hardest seasons of your life, you are Rob Mobile with them and you say, "Hey, I'm really going through some stuff," and you are sharing it with them, and they are tone deaf and they ask you for a favor, what would your response be?

I thought about that this week. I was like, "Man, I think I would be angry." I think I would be like, "Man, I'm done with you guys." I'd walk away really dramatic like that. Aren't you glad I'm not God? Listen. I love this. We miss it. We miss it in the text. Look at Jesus' response to their selfishness in verse 36: "What is your request?"

I just want to stop right there, man. Wow. I don't think He's being passive aggressive. I don't think He is being facetious. I think He's being genuine. I think He's being compassionate. He's looking at these boys with their blindspots and He's like, "Wow, that hurt. You know what? What is your request?"



That's the heart of God, man. I don't know if your view of God is like that. Some of you have a very unfavorable view of God. That is the heart of our God. He is God in the flesh.

"They replied, 'When you sit on your glorious throne, we want to sit in places of honor next to you, one on your right and the other on your left.'"

In other words, "Jesus, can we sit in the box seat with You?" Now, in Matthew's account of this conversation he points out that it was their mom who made this request. They put mom up to it. She's the original helicopter parent. She's the soccer mom on the sidelines, "Put my boys in. I want them to have the best." A little too close to home?

So, why didn't Mark mention mom? Well, aside from the fact that we know, if you've been with us all year, this is called The Urgent Kingdom and Mark is the briefest of the four gospel writers. He just gives us the facts. He kind of removes other details that the other gospel writers give us.

Do you want to know the reason why I think Mark eliminates mom from this conversation? It's because he's like, "No, no, no, man. I'm actually not going to blame mom. James and John are big boys. Let's keep the onus on them." That's right. It was their misguided ambition. Let's not put this off on mom.

Now, one of the most consistent blindspots for all of the disciples throughout Jesus' ministry is they could never fully grasp the concept of the Kingdom of God that Jesus kept talking about. Part of our mission statement or our vision around here is that we want to take ground for Jesus' Kingdom across Indy and beyond. And Jesus keeps talking about the Kingdom. And they thought Jesus' Kingdom was a present day, earthly kingdom with financial backing, court side season tickets and all of the perks that come with power.

And I think part of the reason they couldn't hear what Jesus was saying, quite honestly, isn't because they didn't understand the word, it's that didn't want it to be true. Think about it. James and John...

Several months ago I walked through all of the disciples' biographies and James and John, it even mentions it here in this passage, the sons of Zebedee, ran a lucrative fishing business.

They had left the lucrative family business to follow Jesus. And now, all of a sudden Jesus is talking about—after three years in—"Hey, I'm getting ready to die." And they didn't want that to be true. "Jesus, You don't understand. We left a pretty good 401K plan with full health benefits with dad. Now you're talking about dying. We don't want this to be true."



And in verse 38 Jesus said to them:

“You don’t know what you are asking!” Blindspot. “Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink? Are you able to be baptized with the baptism of suffering I must be baptized with?” (NLT)

Listen to this naïve response:

“Oh, yes,” they replied, “we are able!” Mark 10:39 (NLT)

The irony is that the moment of Jesus’ greatest glory, His justice, His love, we could arguably say it was on the cross. And there would be somebody on His left and his right. It wouldn’t be James and John, it would be two convicted criminals, one of which He said, “You will be with Me in paradise today.”

And the fact that these guys were like, “Oh, yeah Jesus. We can do this,” tells us right there: A—it was a blindspot, they didn’t understand what he was saying. B—they were thinking that Jesus was saying, this was an exaggerated way of saying, “Hey, the power that you are looking for is on the other side of a little bit of pain. So, if you can just endure—you know the axiom, no pain no gain. A little bit of sweat equity. Roll up your sleeves and then you’ll get all of the power you’re looking for.” I think that is what they were thinking. I think that is why they said, “Oh, yes. We can do this.”

And then Jesus tells them:

“You will indeed drink from my bitter cup and be baptized with my baptism of suffering. But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or left. God has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen.” Mark 10:39-40 (NLT)

And that would turn out to be prophetic. Because James would be the first apostle who would lose his life. Acts, chapter 12 tells us that Herod Agrippa beheaded him in A.D. 44.

John was the only disciple who was not martyred. He died of old age. But there was plenty of suffering in his life. In fact, under Roman persecution early church tradition recorded from Trapolian tells us that John was thrown into a vat of boiling oil in Rome, but he survived it. I bet you there were days when he wished he hadn’t.

And then eventually he was exiled to the island of Patmos where he received the revelation from the angel and he wrote the book of Revelation and he spent his days in exile on Patmos. And it says this, “Because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus. Jesus knew exactly what He was talking about after all.

And then in verse 41 it says:

“When the other disciples heard what James and John has asked, they were indignant.”



I bet they were. They were upset.

"So Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them.'"

In other words, He's telling us how the world works. People in power cling to more power. But then He says this:

"But among you it will be different."

Who is you? He's talking about disciples. Salt and light. People who are following Jesus, ushering in His Kingdom. And then He said:

"Whoever wants to be," here's the meat of the passage, here's the principle: "Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. For even the Son of Man," talking about Himself, "comes not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:41-45 (NLT) As I read this you may be saying, "Man, I feel like I'm experiencing a little bit of Déjà vu." That's because we covered this three weeks ago—Mark, chapter 9. Remember? The disciples were arguing about which one of them was the greatest. And Jesus essentially says the same thing to them there. And now, we're just one or two chapters away from that and Jesus is essentially saying the exact same thing.

Any of you ever talk to somebody and it goes in one ear and out the other? That's exactly what is happening. It's almost as if they've forgotten. It's like their minds have been scanned with that little flashing mind eraser that Will Smith used in Men in Black.

Actually, I don't think that they'd forgotten. I think that Jesus is reiterating the thing that He needs them to know before going to a cross. And He says, "I did not come to be served, but to serve and give My life as a ransom for many." I want you to know who said that. Jesus is God in the flesh. And if anybody would have been entitled to have everyone else serve them, don't you think it would be God? And God in the flesh said, "I've come not to be served, but to serve and give My life as a ransom for many." Right then and there He's giving us the principle for how life works and where fulfillment can be found. And we keep forgetting that. Don't we?

In my own pride and selfishness there are times... It's not that I see it as clinging for power and position, it's just that I want to be significant. So, I have a tendency to get a little self-absorbed at times and I think about (I'm sure I'm not the only one) that all of life is a movie and I'm the primary actor and everybody else are extras. And I just want to live a happy life. And in the pursuit of happiness, it keeps eluding me because I keep the focus on myself.



And Jesus said, "Man, if you can just manage to put the focus on other people, there is something fulfilling about that." How that works, I don't exactly know. But He's telling us a universal principle that is true. Part of why is because He is the Creator God. He knows how life works. This isn't just some cute axiom you put on a wall. If you are looking for fulfillment in all of life, this is how you find it. It's when you stop becoming the primary focus of your focus.

There was an article back in 2007 that the New York Times ran called "Happiness 101" and it was describing something called positive psychology, which is a branch of psychology that seeks to take kind of a scientific or empirical approach to what makes people happy.

And surprise, surprise the researchers found that if you focus on yourself and if you focus on doing things that give you fulfillment alone, that happiness keeps eluding you. In fact, the term that they use in the article was a hedonic treadmill. You become kind of addicted to it. You become sort of self-focused. You need the next thing to make you feel fulfilled. And you never fully feel satisfied. Have you ever noticed this? The people who only focus on themselves at times seem to be some of the most miserable people. And according to the article scientific studies have shown that the best way to increase your happiness is to actually do acts of selfless kindness for others by pouring yourself out for them.

Wow. Duh. We need fancy research for that? Jesus tells us this. We know this intrinsically. Most of us probably know it. I'm not telling you anything you don't already know. But at times we get blinded by our own selfishness, pain, fear, insecurity, or entitlement.

That's a big part of what is wrong with this kind of coming to church only to receive something that you'll get out of it. And please don't misunderstand me. I want you to receive something out of it. We pray and we plan and I study and I write and I give it my all because I want you to receive, I want you to receive something.

But if your only goal here is to receive something without ever contributing in any way, if the focus is on you, your pain, your hurt, what you need when you come here and you come late and you duck out early and you've never contributed in some way, I'm telling you that that will not be fulfilling. Fulfillment will keep eluding you. And where it can be found is when you place the focus on others.



And I get all of the arguments of like, "Well, I've been hurt before." Or, "Others have abused my trust." And that is really unfortunate. Sometimes godly people do ungodly things. But it doesn't defeat the principle behind it. When you just continue to keep yourself at the forefront without serving other people, then fulfillment, happiness, and purpose will continue to elude you.

Man, if you want your spiritual life to become vibrant, don't just come and take up a seat. Figure out how you can begin to contribute. Look around. If you are like, "Hey, did anybody say hi to me today?" Ask yourself this, "Did I say hi to somebody today?" Somebody else might need that as well.

And some of you, I get it, man. You hear about the call out for Difference Maker Meet Ups and you are like, "And I really want to do that. But you don't understand my schedule. It's crazy. This season of life is bananas. The kids are in diapers." Or, "The kids are running around for soccer trips. And I just don't have the time to serve." "And, honestly, Aaron, I've got a lot going on at work right now. I'm kind of a big deal. And I've got dreams and aspirations. And I look at all of the things to do to serve and I see serving in Kids Ministry, you know pediatric purgatory, and serving at the door as a greeter—you don't understand. I'm kind of a big deal at what I do. I can't just like be greeting at the door."

Listen, man. Maybe you are a big deal. And maybe you have more talent in your little finger than the rest of us have in our entire body. And maybe you are going to do something significant. Can I just tell you, man:
If serving is beneath you, then leadership is beyond you.

If serving is beneath you, then leadership is beyond you. The best leaders never say, "That task is beneath me." Jesus, God in the flesh, said, "I've come not to be served, but to serve others."

Jesus has been talking to His disciples who are spiritually blind. I'm going to wrap up by looking... We're going to meet a guy here in a second (I don't think it's any accident that Mark puts it here) he is literally blind, yet, ironically, he has more sight than Jesus' disciples. Look at verse 46:

'Then they reached Jericho, and as Jesus and his disciples left town, a large crowd followed him. A blind beggar named Bartimaeus (son of Timaeus) was sitting beside the road. When Bartimaeus heard that Jesus of Nazareth was nearby, he began to shout, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!'"

So, here you have a guy named Bartimaeus whose blindness has led him into poverty and Mark tells us that he was blind but, ironically, he's got more sight than our boys James and John because he cries out to Jesus, "Son of David," which is a messianic title.



And notice the people around, their response. They say:

"Be quiet!" many of the people yelled at him," But I love his heart, "...he only shouted louder, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' When Jesus heard him, he stopped and said, 'Tell him to come here.'"

And then notice the fickleness of this crowd:

" So they called the blind man. 'Cheer up,' they said, 'Come on, he's calling you.'" Glad I found that funny. I just want to point out the fickleness of the crowd. They just told him to shut up. And now they are going, "Hey, man. Cheer up. Jesus is calling you."

"Bartimaeus," listen to this, "threw aside his coat, jumped up, and came to Jesus." And Jesus said the same thing He said to James and John, "What is your request?"

"What do you want me to do for you?" Mark 10:48-51 (NLT)

He threw aside his coat. That is something in the text that is so easy for us to read right past. I just want to point this out. For a blind beggar to have a coat in the first century, that would have been extremely valuable. That was probably one of the most treasured, practical possessions that he had.

And he threw it aside. And I just thought this week when I looked at that, "Man, that took a lot of courage. That took a lot of faith. Because how is he going to find it again? He's blind. And he's on a busy road. People are heading into Jerusalem for the Passover. The rip rap. Somebody could have stolen it." And yet, he discards it. He's so devoted to Jesus he's like, "I'm not letting anything get in my way."

And I can't help but find how ironic it is that last week we covered the rich, young ruler who could not let go of all of his possessions. This guy had more faith than that. And Jesus said, "What do you want Me to do for you? What's your request?" The same question to James and John:

"My Rabbi," the blind man said, 'I want to see!' And Jesus said to him, 'Go, for your faith has healed you.' Instantly the man could see, and he followed Jesus down the road." Mark 10:51-52 (NLT)

Instantly! What had he done to deserve this? Did Jesus say, "Well, I just need to know, do you believe that I am the way, the truth, and the life?" "Hey, just a second. Let me spit in the dirt, make some mud, and smear it on your eyes." "Let me do this whole ceremony. Abracadabra." He didn't do any of that stuff. It was a simple faith and Jesus responds to it and He said, "Your faith has healed you."



The word there is, get this, this connotation of healing, but the Greek word there is *sōzō*, which literally means saved. Mark is telling us with this word that the guy's faith saved him. This is a salvation moment, not just a miracle.

And I love this because he demonstrated he had some ambition. Listen. Ambition is not the problem. Misguided or misdirected ambition is the problem. And here's the thing. It's that this guy comes to Jesus and he wants to see. And James and John...

Here's the question I want to pose to you right now. Do you want Jesus to give you sight or are you still asking Him to do you favors? James and John are asking for favors. They are blind. Jesus is like, "Guys, you don't know what you are talking about." Bartimaeus comes to Jesus and he could have been demanding, he could have been asking Jesus for favors. He doesn't couch it that way. He says, "I want to see."

And I just want to put this in front of you, man:
Your whole life will be determined by what you believe are God's intentions toward you

Your whole life, your whole life will be determined by what you believe God's intentions toward you are. How is your view of God?

I wonder if any of you are like me. There have been significant seasons of my life where I know all of the theology, but the path from my head to my heart blocks some things. I know that salvation comes by grace through faith, and yet I still keep trying to perform for it. Why? Because deep down...

Any of you ever feel this? I feel like there is this imposter syndrome that I don't deserve it. That it's too good to be true. Yeah, I know I'm saved by grace through faith. And I know God loves me. And I know He forgives me. He's God. That's kind of His job. But He doesn't like me because I'm kind of a screw up. I've told Him over and over and over again that I'm sorry, that I will never do that again. And I find myself doing the very thing that I told Him I would never do. He's got to be disappointed in me.

Here's what I just wonder. I just wonder for any of you listening to the sound of my voice right now, that if you are cynical or maybe a little bit of entitled, or maybe you're bitter, or maybe you're kind of keeping God at arm's length, I wonder if the reason why is because deep down you believe in God, you love God, but you are afraid that maybe He's going to reject you so you're going to reject Him first.



Jesus is a tender, compassionate God who even in the face of our selfishness and rebellion looks at us and says, "What is your request?" Here's what I want to leave you with. Do you want to see? Then ask God today, "Are there any blindspots in my life that I can't see? You're going to have to show them to me." By the way of the Spirit. Maybe by a trusted friend. Maybe something I said during the sermon, through the preaching of God's Word that's revealed something to you, "What's my blindspot?" I just want you to spend a little bit of time with that question.

Here's the second question, "What's my coat that I'm holding onto that is actually keeping me from really following after Jesus?" Maybe you need to throw that coat aside. I don't know. Whatever it is, man. It's a little bit of what we talked about last week with the rich, young ruler. What is your coat that you are holding onto?

And I just want you to know, if it's felt a little bit like I've of been preaching with a lot of urgency, preaching a little faster and louder than normal, I just want you to know what God is kind of doing in me right now. There is this sense of urgency within me because I understand, as I look at the world right now, it's shrouded in darkness and confusion, and it only seems to be getting darker and more confusing.

In Ephesians, chapter 4 it says this. The Bible talks about the blindness of the mind. And it says it this way:

"Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him." Ephesians 4:18 (NLT)

And there is this growing sense of urgency within me that we want to take ground for the Kingdom across Indy and beyond. It's to recognize that, quite possibly Jesus, I mean, He could return in our lifetime. And listen, man. Jesus even said that He didn't even know the hour. He'll come like a thief in the night, "I don't want you to spend a lot of time trying to anticipate when, exactly, I will come. I just want you to be ready."

And I'm old enough to know back in the 80s this was a big craze. There was like a book Eighty Eight Reasons Why Jesus Will Return By 1988. That book stopped selling. And then, you know, Y2K. Any of you remember that whole craze going from 1999 to 2000. We were like, "Oh, Jesus is going to return at midnight and all of our computers are going to shut down." That didn't happen.

And I don't know if Jesus is going to return soon. I don't know if He's going to return today. I don't know if He's going to return in 50 years or 100 years from now. But I do know this.



He's coming. And the Bible doesn't tell us the exact time, but it does tell us the signs. And the signs are very evident. It describes it this way, like labor pains. It's getting more and more and more painful as Jesus is beginning to return.

This summer, man. As I was away on sabbatical, guys, I was so productive, I did so much planning. Some of you know me well. You know that I'm a windshield guy, I'm a visionary. I'm thinking about the future. I'm not a rearview mirror guy. I'm just thinking about the future. And I've got sermon series planned all of the way out through 2027. I know where we are going, man. I did my two day life plan with a facilitator and I laid out a plan for the next eight years of my life. And like all of this productivity.

I was going for a walk one morning, and the Spirit of God just very gently kind of came alongside of me and He said, "Hey, Aaron. Really proud of you. Way to go with the sermon series stuff. I don't know what I'd do without you. Awesome you planning out the next eight years of your life, Aaron. Hey, don't be blinded by that because I could come tomorrow."

I don't know when He's going to come. I do know that's it's kind of interesting to me that the days from Creation to Abraham are roughly 2,000 years. The days of God making a covenant with Abraham to the days of Jesus roughly 2000 years. Jesus' resurrection and ascension, depending on what calendar you look at, is about 2000 years in 2030 to 2033. I don't know. Kind of interesting. I'm not going to write a book about it.

With all of the AI stuff going on right now, that none of us can control, by the way... I heard somebody say online, "Hey, the experts say that AI will take over the world in the next seven years, by 2030." I don't know. I don't know. I don't say any of that to scare you. I simply say it for this. I don't have a lot of control over what happens in this world, but I feel like the Spirit of God is saying to me, "Hey, Aaron. I need you to get ready, start with yourself, clean house here. What's going on? Get your family ready. Get your church ready. Because one day I'm going to return." And I don't know when.

We've got wars and stuff going on. Politics isn't getting any better. It's just continuing to get more divisive. We've got AI stuff going on. But I think this begins to explain why the Bible describes when Jesus returns again.

For the first time He came as a baby. The second time He comes He's going to come as a war general on a white horse with fire coming out of His eyes and a sword coming out of His mouth. And He's going to have a sweet tattoo on His thigh (for those of you who have a problem with tattoos, take it up with Jesus. He's going to have one). It says King of kings and Lord of lords.



And it says that He is dressed in white linen with Lord of heaven's army behind Him. All dressed in white linen. Who wears white to a fight? The kind of warrior who knows the other guy is going to get blood on him.

And I don't know, man. The craziness of the world that's why in Revelation 19 it says that Jesus is going to return as a Warrior King. Will you be ready? And I want our church to be ready. I want Jesus to come back and I don't want Him to look at me and say, "Hey, Aaron. You were so afraid of offending people, you were so nuanced, that you weren't clear. Just be clear. Be loving. Be clear. Gracious and true. Point people to Me."

And I want us to be ready. Taking Ground For The Kingdon Across Indy And Beyond is not some cute slogan. Guys, we are not playing church, man. I want us to be ready.

Are you blind? Do you have a blindspot. If you do, that's okay. Welcome to the human race. What is it? What coat are you holding onto that you need to let go of?

Here's what we are going to do. I'm way over time. I want to ask us to stand to our feet right now across all of our locations. Come to the altar if you need it. Ask Jesus, "Would You help me to see?" "Will you help me let go of my coat as I lay it down before you?"

Father, we come to You right now. We ask that You would help us to see. In a world of darkness and confusion and lies, would You give us the eyes to see the truth that only You can reveal to us? That we would be ready both individually and as families and as a church. That we would not give in to a spirit of fear but of power, of love, and of self-control. Because we know that You are King of kings and Lord of lords to the glory of God the Father. We ask this in Jesus' name. And everybody says: Amen.

