

## Mark 8:11-13, Matthew 16:1-4 – A Demand For A Sign

### Introduction

1. How do you explain a thirst and hunger for God's Word, His righteousness, the longing to know the Lord, the desire for spiritual truth, and the disposition to please and serve God? Spiritual Vision
2. The Gospel writers convey the truth of spiritual blindness through the Pharisees, the disciples, and a physically blind man
3. The crowd at the feeding of the 4,000 had spiritual hunger because they had spiritual sight: They saw the truth of Christ
4. Lack of spiritual hunger is due to a lack of vision; stubborn disbelief resulting from spiritual blindness

**Main Idea Spiritual blindness is a moral issue. Everyone is responsible for their own spiritual blindness. The reason is all suppress the truth in unrighteousness and love the darkness. All refuse to come to the light for they love the darkness and if they do come to the light, their evil deeds will be exposed. The darkened heart is at enmity with the Creator and believes itself arrogantly secure, safe, and strong, when in reality that person is in great peril.**

### Unbelieving Character (Mark 8:11, Matthew 16:1, 4a)

1. Unbelief does not not love God or the things of God, sees Christ as abominable
2. The religious leaders are arrogant, rude, irritable insisting on their own way, do not rejoice in the truth, are pushy, demanding, hate the truth
3. Their motive is to test and catch the Christ; they hate the light of Christ
4. They are volatile, hostile, and violent, not wanting to be exposed (**John 3:20**) – they come to Jesus with religiosity, high status, pomp, position
5. They are offended by Jesus because they are spiritually blind
6. Jesus calls them blind fools and guides (**Matthew 23:16-26**)
7. The Lord broadens the scope of this blindness – all people, everyone, even the most religious without Christ are blind and love the darkness (**John 3:19**); people without Christ love what is damning to their souls
8. The nature of unbelief is opposed to God's moral order God's hierarchical order, natural and created order
9. The Nature of Unbelief refuses to repent of sin, otherwise they would have to embrace God and His narrative for the world and His Son
10. The unbelieving know God creates, but suffocates truth (**Rom 1:18-20**)
  - a. There is no gratitude for breath, and beauty, and food, etc
  - b. There is only insult, ignoring the Provider
  - c. They reject God's Word, it is just *Cat in the Hat*
11. The unbelieving willfully reject Christ – it is a blameworthy blindness
12. The only hope is the One being rejected – to come to the light of an Almighty, Gracious God who opens spiritually blind eyes
13. The Pharisees demand a sign – not a miracle; they already attribute His works to Beelzebub (**Mk 3**) – they want a celestial phenomenon to confirm Jesus' identity and authority, but do they really?

14. They subject God the Son under their authority and rule to be examined
  - a. The creature dictates and assesses the Creator – this is an erroneous thought of a position of strength, not seeing reality: Their peril!
  - b. They are diabolical and twisted to seek the Lord, not to hear truth, but to control God; their motives are evil
15. Their seeking is not a struggling sincere doubt, but rank disbelief; their minds are made up: Jesus is phony & they need an excuse to reject Him
16. The unbelieving heart is never convinced, antagonistic against Truth
17. The world has not changed – it hates Jesus, it hates you (**John 15:18-20**)
18. Willingness to know the Truth precedes the knowledge of the Truth

### Unaided Grace (Matthew 15:13-14, 2 Corinthians 4:3-6)

1. What/Who makes a man willing? God does – the reason the Pharisees oppose Jesus is because the Father did not plant them
2. The unbelieving need the light of the Gospel, New Birth, to be decisively declared by God in their souls to spiritually see and receive the Truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ
3. The will of the unbelieving is warped and enslaved to sin – God must free them and enable them to come to Christ
4. The Gospel is veiled to the unbelieving and Satan keeps them from seeing the Gospel; Only God overcomes this darkness by His voice
5. We do not sit around and wait for God to move – we read the Word, seek the Lord, confess, repent, pray
6. God makes the eyes see spiritual Truth of the Gospel

### Unresponsive Christ (Mark 8:12a, Matthew 16:2-4a)

1. Jesus does not commend Himself to the Pharisees; He knows their heart
2. Jesus sighs deeply – this is not a sigh of compassion like He had for the crowd at the feeding of the 4,000, but one of frustration and grief
3. The Pharisees are playing a game of, “Gotcha!” and Jesus will not play
4. God does not submit to microscopic examination and will not do the bag of tricks you request
  - a. What will happen the next time your emotions of inadequacy and doubt do not line up with reality? Or when you don't feel loved?
  - b. There is a difference between struggles with sincere doubt and disbelief that masquerades for a search for Truth
5. The Pharisees are not satisfied with the evidence given, nor ever will be
6. God operated on the basis of faith and will not jump through the hoops whenever and however to give you what you want – that is a magician, not the King!
7. Jesus does not answer the Pharisees demands, they are to answer to His
8. Jesus will not subject Himself to the scornful and mocker
9. Jesus will only give them the sign of Jonah – an empty tomb!
10. The problem is not enough information, but spiritual sight

### Unfortunate Consequence (Mark 8:13, Matthew 16:4b)

1. Jesus leaves the Pharisees in their sin, on their way to Hell
2. You have enough evidence – the written special revelation of God! (**See Luke 16 - the Rich Man and Lazarus**)