

# Spiritual Lemon Juice

## Pentecost

Rick Railston

May 19, 2013

As Dale so eloquently pointed out, one of the things we come here today to do is to memorialize the coming of the holy spirit. His sermonette is a perfect lead into this sermon. We didn't talk, but it just happens that way, and it's encouraging when that happens. When we think about it, it changed everything. It changed everything because God's spirit was now available to human beings that God would call.

Let's go to Acts, chapter 2. Dale was in chapter 1. I agree with what he was saying. They were probably expecting something totally different than what they got. Most of us would have our sword girded and we would be ready to go kill some Romans or something with Christ in the lead to restore the Kingdom of God. In Acts 2:1, this is what actually happened.

**Acts 2:1.** *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. (KJV)*

They were likeminded and unified. That's what we hope always to accomplish in the Pacific Church of God, to be with one accord, all together.

2) *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

3) *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues ... (KJV)*

This is something unique. The Greek word for "cloven" means *divided*, as a flame would be divided.

3b) *... like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*

4) *And they were all filled with the holy spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance. (KJV)*

Now obviously this was something totally unexpected, from the rushing wind to the flame over their heads, and it is obviously also a one-time event and it's a one-time event to signify the coming of God's holy spirit being available to those whom God would call. We ask the question, why a flame? What did that symbolize? What was the point of it? Why did God choose a flame to rest on the top of their heads? When you think about it, what does a flame do? It gives light and it rested over them. Where is your brain and where is your mind? It's right there. So the obvious symbolism is that the flame symbolized light. God's holy spirit is a force, a power, the nature of God that enlightens our mind. It brings light to the mind. It opens up our understanding and it opens up our understanding of God's word.

Now with that in mind, let's notice the following in 2 Corinthians, chapter 4. I'm going to read it from the Revised Standard because it's clearer than the King James. Flame gives light. It's symbolic of the enlightening of our mind through the power (as Dale pointed out) of the holy spirit. It is a spirit of power. Notice what Paul says.

**2 Corinthians 4:3.** *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing.*

*4) In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God. (RSV)*

Satan was able to blind the world, as we all know. He has deceived the entire world. But this blindness can't happen to us, right? We can't be blinded, can we? We can't be spiritually blinded by the world or by Satan. Well, I think you know the answer to that.

Let's go to Revelation 3 and verses 17 and 18. Christ is talking to the church in Laodicea. This is written by John and it's there for our admonition, for our teaching. Let's read this with the understanding of the subject of being spiritually blind.

**Revelation 3:17.** *Because you say ... (KJV)*

Meaning Laodicea.

*17b) ... I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. (KJV)*

He said, "Laodicea, you are blind but you don't know it. You don't understand it. And you are also naked. So because of that blindness", (we're going to focus on blindness rather than the others he mentioned). He said because of that blindness ...

*18) I counsel you (to do two things) to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and [that] the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; ... (KJV)*

But notice the second thing. It's very important.

*18b) ... and anoint you eyes with eye salve that you may see. (KJV)*

That you may have your eyes opened, because you are blind and you don't know it, he says. Now this is to the whole Laodicean era, so it applies to all of us. The Living Bible says of that last sentence,

*18b) ... My advice to you is to get medicine from me to heal your eyes and give you back your sight. (Living Bible)*

That's a very interesting translation. Christ says, "I want you to go get some medicine to use so that you can see once more."

Now the historian Strabo said that there was a medical school in the city of Laodicea. That was long before Christ ever lived. There was a very famous ophthalmologist (an eye doctor) that practiced in Laodicea. Laodicea lies within the boundaries of the province of Phrygia and from that area there was an ingredient of eye lotions that this ophthalmologist used. It was called Phrygian powder and it was very famous a couple of hundred years before Christ and on into the time of Christ and the apostles. This Phrygian powder was used to make eye salve. So this famous ophthalmologist was the originator of eye salve. So when Christ talked about eye salve and talked about Laodicea, the doctor that invented eye salve came from Laodicea and practiced in Laodicea a few hundred years before that time, so they would know what He was talking about.

The fact is that the church in the end days, the Laodicean era, we are told the church is blind. That is a very scary thought. So with the subject of blindness in mind; we haven't gotten to the point yet, this is still an introduction.

I'm going to tell you a true story. It happened in the United States a few years ago. The old saying, "truth is stranger than fiction", well this is stranger than fiction. It's laughable, but it's absolutely true. I'm going to quote from a New York Times article on June 20, 2010. The author says, "David Dunning, a Cornell professor of psychology was perusing the 1996 World Almanac and in a section called "Offbeat News Stories" he found a tantalizingly brief account of a series of bank robberies committed in Pittsburgh the previous year. This was in 1995. He says from there it was an easy matter to track the case to the Pittsburgh Post Gazette." So this David Dunning looked at the archives of the Pittsburgh Post Gazette and he found the following article. The headline was, "Arrest and Bank Robbery – Subject's TV Picture Spurs Tips." So now I'll quote from the Pittsburgh Post Gazette. "At five feet six inches tall and about 270 pounds, bank robber suspect McArthur Wheeler isn't the type of person who fades into the woodwork. So it was no surprise that he was recognized by informants who tipped detectives to his whereabouts after his picture was telecast Wednesday night during the Pittsburgh Crime Stoppers segment of the eleven o'clock news. At 12:10 p.m. yesterday, less than an hour after the broadcast, he was arrested. Wheeler had walked into two Pittsburgh banks and attempted to rob them in broad daylight. What made the case peculiar is that he made no visible attempt to disguise himself. The surveillance tapes were key to his arrest. There he was with a gun standing in front of a teller demanding money. Yet, when arrested, Wheeler was completely disbelieving of the fact that he got caught. He said, "But I wore the juice." Apparently he was under the deeply misguided impression that rubbing one's face with lemon juice rendered it invisible to video cameras. Now in a follow-up article (the guy who wrote the original article in the Pittsburgh Gazette) Reporter Fucose spoke to several Pittsburgh police detectives who had been involved in Wheeler's arrest. Commander Ronald Freeman assured Fucose (the writer of the article) that Wheeler had not gone into this thing blindly, but that he performed a variety of tests on this lemon juice prior to the robbery. Sergeant Wally Long provided

additional details, “Although Wheeler reported that the lemon juice was burning his face and his eyes and he was having trouble seeing and had to squint, he had tested the theory and it seemed to work. He had snapped a Polaroid picture of himself and wasn’t anywhere found to be in the image.” Then the author goes on and says, “It turned out that Wheeler had pointed the camera away from his face at the critical moment when he snapped the photo.” So he had the Polaroid out here, he was throwing lemon juice in his face and squinting and turning around and he snapped a picture and it got the wall behind him, but he was convinced that this lemon juice worked, if you can image that. Truth is stranger than fiction.

So remember this fellow Dunning was looking at the almanac and investigating this because he is a psychologist and he wanted to know what was going through this guy’s head. So it says, “As Dunning read through the article, a thought washed over him, an epiphany. If Wheeler was too stupid to be a bank robber, perhaps he was also too stupid to know that he was too stupid to be a bank robber.” Think about this for a minute. The article goes on, “That is, his stupidity protected him from an awareness of his own stupidity.”

I thought about this and thought what if we applied this concept to spiritual blindness? Think about that. This guy obviously had no business robbing a bank and is paying for his crimes right now, but we should ask the question, can our spiritual blindness keep us from realizing that we are spiritually blind, just like this guy’s stupidity kept him from realizing that he was too stupid to be a bank robber?

The title of the sermon is:

### Spiritual Lemon Juice

That’s just an attachment there, but the real question is, does our potential spiritual blindness keep us from being aware that we are spiritually blind? That’s a serious question. That’s something that I’ve thought about for years. Where are my blind spots and can I see my blind spots? If we ask the question another way, are we rubbing our face with spiritual lemon juice? We can’t repent of something we don’t know exists. We can’t repent of a sin or weakness that we don’t know exists, right? But we don’t know what we don’t know and we don’t know that we don’t know it. If we’re spiritually blind and we don’t know we are spiritually blind, then we don’t know we are spiritually blind and that is a scary thought.

Another way to ask the question is, over time have we become spiritually blind in certain areas of our life and because of our spiritual blindness, we don’t know and we don’t realize that we are spiritually blind in this area?

So let’s begin this study with a question. The first point we want to make is, can people of God be spiritually blind? What does the Bible say about that? Can the people of God be spiritually blind?

We are going to look at two examples.

**The first example I'd like to look at, point 1 if you're outlining, is the life of Samson.**

We don't often go there and I can remember back in the '50s Victor Mature starred in a movie of Sampson and they "Hollywoodized" the movie quite extensively, but it was fairly accurate in most ways I suppose, to a little kid anyway. Remember that an angel of God told Sampson's mother that she was going to give birth to a child and that the child should be a Nazarite consecrated to God.

With that in mind, let's go to Numbers 6 just to review what a Nazarite is and what the Nazarite vow is all about. We'll go from verse 2 to verse 8. A Nazarite was set apart and Samson's mother was told to set him apart from the minute he was born. This tells us what she was to do.

**Numbers 6:2.** *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when either man or woman shall separate [themselves] to vow a vow of a Nazarite, ... (KJV)*

Notice this.

*2b) ... to separate [themselves] unto the Lord: (KJV)*

They were separate unto God.

*3) He shall separate [himself] from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes or dried.*

*4) All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk. (KJV)*

This is very clear. Stay away from alcohol. Stay away from grapes.

*5) All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separates [himself] unto the Eternal, he shall be holy [and] shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.*

*6) All the days that he separates [himself] unto the Eternal he shall come at no dead body.*

*7) He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die: because the consecration of his God [is] upon his head. (KJV)*

He couldn't even come close to his relatives if they were to die while he was under a Nazarite vow.

*8) All the days of his separation he [is] holy unto the Lord. (KJV)*

So there were basically three rules.

First: Don't touch anything grape based. Don't eat it, don't drink it, don't touch it and don't come near it.

Second: Don't cut your hair.

Third: Don't go near any dead body.

Those were the three rules. Now the purpose of a Nazarite vow is that you were separated from men, but you were dedicated to God for a specific purpose. The angel told Samson's mom that he is to come under a Nazarite vow because God had set him apart for a specific purpose.

With that in mind, let's go to Judges, chapter 14 and we'll look at the story of Sampson. Remember the Philistines ruled Israel at this time. Israel, in the period of the judges, would go through cycles. During a judge they would come back to God and obey God for a period of time. The judge would die and then they would fall away, and then they would be conquered or somebody else would move in or subject them to slavery or whatever. Now this is a time where the Philistines ruled Israel.

***Judges 14:1.*** *And Samson went down to Timnath and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines. (KJV)*

Oh, boy.

*2) And he came up and told his father and his mother and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife. (KJV)*

The parents arranged marriages in those days and he said, "I want you to arrange this for me."

*3) Then his father and his mother said unto him (understandably), [Is there] never a woman among the daughters of your brethren or among all my people that you go to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? ... (KJV)*

Now we won't go back there for sake of time, but in chapter 13 and verse 12, his father, Manoah, asked the angel, "How should I raise my son? How do you want me to raise my son?" Obviously Manoah wanted to raise his son correctly, so Samson was taught God's law. I don't think there's any question about that, but yet here he goes and violates God's law by going to a woman of a nation that had conquered them and was subjecting them and he wanted her.

*3b) ... And Samson said unto his father (despite his father's objection), Get her for me; for she pleases me well. (KJV)*

The New American Standard Bible says: *She is right in my eyes.* So at this point, Samson didn't hate evil. He didn't consider it evil. He was just doing what his hormones told him to do and we could say he was throwing some spiritual lemon juice in his eyes because he wasn't focusing on God's law at all.

*4) But his father and his mother knew not that it [was] of the Lord, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel. (KJV)*

So what God was doing was using Samson's spiritual blindness for God's own purposes. He had a plan in mind. It didn't obviate the fact that Samson was spiritually blind.

*5) Then went Samson down and his father and his mother to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. (KJV)*

This is interesting why this story would be talked about right now, but we will see in a minute why.

*6) And the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid (a little baby lion, and he just tore it apart), and [he had] nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done. (KJV)*

This will be important in a second. Why this is mentioned we will soon see.

*7) And he went down and talked with the woman, and she pleased Samson well.  
8) And after a time ... (KJV)*

If you look at the history of that time, the custom was a year, the betrothal, the proposal and all of that was given and then a year later the marriage would take place.

*8b) ... he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion" ... (KJV)*

This is the lion that we just read about in verses 5 and 6.

*8 continued) ... and, behold, [there was] a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion. (KJV)*

*9) And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion. (KJV)*

The key here is he broke his Nazarite vow. He was to stay away from dead bodies and he broke his Nazarite vow. So we can say he has thrown some more spiritual lemon juice in his face. I'm sure he said to himself, "Nobody knows; nobody will see me."

Have we ever said that? Like many today, people are blind to the fact that God sees, God knows. Somehow people think that they can commit a sin or do something against God's law and nobody ever knows, but God knows. God sees everything. But again, Samson was spiritually blind.

*10) So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do. (KJV)*

So his father arranged the marriage. Their marriage occurred. I'm going to summarize now. He brought thirty men to the feast because remember this was held in Philistine territory. Samson gave a riddle to the thirty men and at stake was thirty outfits of clothing, thirty changes of clothing. If they could solve the riddle, Samson would give them thirty changes of clothing. If they couldn't solve Samson's riddle then they would give Samson thirty changes of clothing. Well he gave them a riddle and they couldn't figure it out and so they pressed his wife for the meaning of the riddle. She told them and the thirty answered the riddle and Samson obviously knew who gave them the answer and he was obligated then to give them their prizes. He was so ticked off that he went out and killed all thirty of them.

When he came back home later, he found out that she was given to one of his friends. She was no longer married to him. Now he was really angry and he burned the Philistines' field by tying foxes tails together. You know the story.

The Philistines are a testy lot and you don't do that to the Philistines. You don't burn down their fields without some kind of retribution. So the Philistines came back and they burned his former wife and burned her parents. Samson was upset about that and he went and killed many of the Philistines who did that to his former wife and to her parents.

So now we have this giant brouhaha. Many people have been killed and the fields have been burned and all of that. The Philistines come to Judah and say, "We're going to make your life so miserable. We're going to invade you and burn your fields." They made all kinds of threats. They said, "If you turn over Samson, we won't do this." So the leaders of Judah went to Samson and said, "Look, we're in a bind here. They want us to turn you over to them and we need to do this." Samson said, surprising to them, "Okay, as long as you don't kill me, you can turn me over to them, but I don't want to die at your hands." So that's exactly what they did. They tied his hands and they delivered him to the Philistines.

Let's go to chapter 15 and begin in verse 14 and break into this story.

***Judges 15:14. [And] when he came unto Lehi, ... (KJV)***



He was bound; taken there by the Jews.

*14b) ... the Philistines shouted against him: and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him and the cords that [were] upon his arms became as flax that was burned with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands.*

*15) And he found a new jawbone of a donkey, ... (KJV)*

What he did was he ripped off the jaw of a donkey that was alive. He ripped the jaw out and took that jaw and went after the Philistines.

*15b) ... and put forth his hand, and took it and slew a thousand men therewith. (KJV)*

Now historians will pooh-pooh this, but the fact is if this was of God as we see here, and the spirit of the Lord came upon him and he had a heavy jawbone in his hand, it could happen. It was a miracle, but it happened. Look at chapter 16, verse 1.

**Judges 16:1.** *Then went Samson to Gaza and saw there a harlot, and went in unto her. (KJV)*

Now talk about blind, talk about spiritual lemon juice, talk about not getting it. So he goes into a harlot.

*2) [And it was told] the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed [him] in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him.*

*3) And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put [them] upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of a hill that [is] before Hebron.*

*4) And it came to pass afterward ... (KJV)*

If that wasn't enough and he didn't learn a lesson.

*4b) ... that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek (she was a Philistine), whose name [was] Delilah. (KJV)*

You just hit your forehead and say, "What was this guy thinking? How blind can this guy be? He keeps throwing lemon juice in his face." He says, "This isn't going to hurt me. This isn't going to cause problems. Nobody is going to see me." Talk about the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life and gallons of spiritual lemon juice. Samson was blind to the fact that he apparently was addicted to certain kinds of women. He had this addiction and, because of his spiritual blindness, this addiction ultimately led to him being physically blind. I think we know the end of that story.

*5) And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, "Entice him, and see where his great strength [lies] and by what [means] we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give you every one of us eleven hundred [pieces] of silver." (KJV)*

We don't know how many there were, but this was a pile of money, a lot of money. So she tried four times to find the source of his power. In verse 6, the way she did it:

*6) And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray, wherein your great strength [lies], and wherewith you might be bound to afflict you. (KJV)*

She tells him her intentions! "Tell me your power so we can afflict you." Remember, she's in the land of the Philistines. How blind can he be? He was blinded by lust; he was blinded by selfishness and he was throwing more spiritual lemon juice into his face and eyes.

*7) And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs ... (KJV)*

That's in the King James Version. The New King James says "bow strings".

*7b) ... that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. (KJV)*

And we know she did that. The Philistines rushed in and he broke them as though they were nothing and he got away. They couldn't touch him.

The second time she tried it, she pressed him again and again, and he said, "Well, okay bind me with new ropes that have never been used (verses 10 and 12). Of course, that didn't work either.

Now the third time, things began to change a bit. He said to her, "Look, if you weave the seven braids of my hair into the fabric of your loom and you tighten the loom shuttle against it, then I will be powerless. That's verses 13 and 14. The fact is he is getting closer to breaking his Nazarite vow, because now he's talking about his hair. Of course, that didn't work and his Nazarite vow wasn't broken because his hair was not cut.

Then in verse 15, the fourth time, he begins now to get to the source of the Philistines' problem.

*15) And she said unto him, How can you say, I love you, when your heart [is] not with me? ... (KJV)*

Now she brings in the love equation. "How can you do this to me? You say you love me. How can you treat me this way?"

*15b) ... You have mocked me these three times and have not told me wherein your great strength [lies].*

16) *And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily... (KJV)*

We would use the term today, “nagged”. She nagged him and nagged him.

16b) *... with her words, and urged him, [so] that his soul was vexed unto death; (KJV)*

Blind, blind, blind. He was so enamored with this woman, he was about to die because she was unhappy with him.

17) *That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There has not come a razor upon my head: for I [have been] a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me and I shall become weak and be like any [other] man.*

18) *And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he has shown me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her and brought money in their hand.*

19) *And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, ... (KJV)*

The Hebrew word for “afflict” can mean *look down upon or brow beat*. So she began to mock him and look down upon him because now she had the strength and he was weak.

19b) *... and his strength went from him.*

20) *And she said, The Philistines [be] upon you, Samson. ... (KJV)*

The same as she said three times previously.

20b) *... And he awoke out of his sleep and said (Notice what he said. This is very instructive), I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. ... (KJV)*

You look at the origin of “shake myself”; in Hebrew it’s the idea of a lion rustling his mane, shaking back and forth as you’ve seen lions do, and usually roaring afterward. That’s what it implies. He says, “I’ll go out and shake my hair and I will just rip them apart.” Well, he didn’t know that the Lord had departed from him because he violated the Nazarite vow.

20 continued) *... And he knew not that the Lord was departed from him. (KJV)*

What he was saying is, “God’s law doesn’t apply to me anymore. I’m strong. Look at me. It doesn’t apply to me. I’m above the law.”

How many times have high ranking ministers in years past felt like, "I'm above the law. I don't have to do what the rest of you have to do. I can commit sins and get away with it because I'm so valuable to the work of God."

So he was totally blind that God meant what He said about the Nazarite vow and he says, "Nothing has changed. I'm going to go out and beat them all up." Samson was about to learn that God is serious when He says, "You reap what you sow." He was going to learn that. More lemon juice in the face.

*21) But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house. (KJV)*

That is not a pleasant thing. They had several ways of putting out the eyes, one was a dedicated scoop and they would go in and just scoop the eyeball out. Another way was they would clamp your head and slowly turn screws into the eye, or they would just poke it out. It was not a pleasant experience.

So they bound him and put him in the prison house grinding grain. He was brought to nothing. He was blind. Grinding grain in those days was a woman's job. So here this exceptionally strong man, in his mind was doing the work of a woman. That was humiliating. He is physically blind, but the key is, look how blind he was spiritually. Through the whole process how absolutely spiritually blind Samson was.

Now things begin to change in verse 22.

*22) Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven. (KJV)*

Now the fact that his hair is growing long, his Nazarite vow can be renewed. During this time, blind, grinding grain, humiliated, shaved head, finally, finally Samson began to see himself. The spiritual blinders came off and he began to be deeply converted at last.

In verse 28, Samson then did something that, up to this point, is not recorded in the chronicles of Samson. Samson called unto the Eternal. That never happened before.

*28) And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, Oh Lord God, remember me, I pray and strengthen me (Never happened before; no record of that ever happening), I pray only this once, Oh God, ... (KJV)*

So apparently this is the first time he has gone to God and said, "Have mercy on me. Remember me, help me. That never happened before.

*28b) ... that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. (KJV)*

This is the first time in his life he has ever looked to God. The first time in his life he has ever been humbled. The first time in his life he has needed God's strength.

*29) And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, ... (KJV)*

They were making fun of him, dragging him out to display him in front of the leaders of the Philistines. He grabbed hold of these pillars that supported the whole building.

*29b) ... of the one with his right hand and of the other with his left.  
30) And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with [all his] might; ... (KJV)*

Of course, a human couldn't do that. God had to be involved.

*30b) ... and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that [were] therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than [they] which he slew in his life. (KJV)*

What he did, because of that event, he took out the leadership of the whole nation of the Philistines. He took out the whole leadership. It took his eyes being horribly put out to see himself as he actually was. It took his eyes being put out for him to see who God was and ask God for help. It took that horrible thing for him to finally see himself.

Now Samson is a type of Laodicean, because remember we read in Revelation 3:17, "You don't know that you're blind." Samson didn't know that he was spiritually blind until he became physically blind and then all of a sudden, we would say, the light bulb went on.

We know in Revelation 12 that Satan is cast down. He goes to make war with the remnant of the seed. Guess who the remnant is. It's Laodicea. The fact is, what this tells us is that those who are spiritually blind are going to go into the tribulation. Those who are spiritually blind just like Samson. Break God's law; don't get close to God; don't cry out to God; don't have a personal relationship with God. They are going into the tribulation. Samson, you see, for ninety-nine percent of his life was spiritually blind. You look at all the days he lived (we don't know how old he was) but he only woke up in the last little fraction of his life. He had to go through his tribulation in order to become pure. He became spiritually strongest when he was physically weakest. I think we know that. Sometimes when we are physically weakest is when we can become spiritually the strongest. He finally substituted eye salve for lemon juice. He finally did that at the end of his life. He repented and Hebrews, chapter 11 tells us he will be in God's kingdom.

So in one sense this is encouraging because there is hope for us all. At the end of his life he turned it around and there is hope for us all. But the point is we don't have to go through the tribulation in order to see. We don't have to go through the tribulation to

have blinders removed. We don't have to go through the tribulation to have eye salve and then begin to see ourselves as God sees us. So, the first example is Samson.

The second example we want to look at is the life of David. This is a perfect example of what we are talking about. Let's go to 2 Samuel, chapter 11. This is in the spring of the year. They haven't been fighting for many, many months. It was over a year. 2 Samuel 11 and we'll begin in verse 1. This is a time, we read in the news today the Taliban announced this is the fighting season or warring season now that winter is over and they're going out to fight. Well, the same thing happens here.

*2 Samuel 11:1. And it came to pass after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth [to battle], ... (KJV)*

Winter is over. Troops are rested. They are well supplied and they're going out to do what they need to do. Okay, the kings go out to battle.

*1b) ... that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. (KJV)*

Now we have to stop and ask the question; why? David should have been out leading the troops. He's the king. He should have been out at battle. Why was he not out there leading the troops? Well, in hindsight, you can look back and see that David became separated from God for at least a year. David had gotten away from God. David wasn't very close to God. David allowed other things to come between him and God and he was in a deep, deep spiritual slump and he had doused his eyes with spiritual lemon juice. "I don't need to pray. I don't need to study. I don't need to write the Book of the Law as kings were instructed to do. I can get involved in this and that and take up all my time." Verse 2; he was in bad spiritual shape at this time. The army was out to battle. All the leaders were out to battle.

*2) And it came to pass in an evening tide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman [was] very beautiful to look upon.*

*3) And David sent and inquired after the woman. And [one] said, [Is] not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? (KJV)*

Now think about this. Bathsheba was the wife of Uriah. She was the daughter of Eliam. She was the granddaughter of Ahithophel, David's Chief of Staff. Now Eliam, Uriah and Ahithophel are all part of the thirty-seven mighty men mentioned in 2 Samuel, chapter 23. They were all in David's court, and if David invited somebody to court, they were actually coming there and they were paid to be in his court, to be his advisors, some to be his friends, some to party with him. They were paid and they were also given homes to live in for their families. So the fact is that David knew who Uriah was, knew who Bathsheba was and he knew where they lived because he probably set them up in the

house. This was not some kind of secret. He didn't just happen to bop out on the balcony and look over and, lo and behold, here's a woman I don't even know.

Now in verse 4, David because of his spiritual condition acted on his impulses.

*4) And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. (KJV)*

He commits adultery and she gets pregnant. Then he attempts to cover it up by having Uriah come back from the battle, get him drunk, have him go to her, have relations and then claim that the baby was due to that. Righteous Uriah refused to do that. He said, "How can I do this if the other men are out in the field. How can I do that?" So he wouldn't do it. So that plot failed.

Then David finally decided to have Uriah killed. Think how far he had drifted from God. Think about how spiritually blind he was at that moment. He knew God's law. Of course, he knew God's law. So he hatched a plan to have his military chief, Joab, cause Uriah to die in battle, the same as though David had put a knife in his heart. Let's look and see how spiritually blind he was. A messenger is coming back from the battle field announcing Uriah's death.

*22) So the messenger went and came and showed David all that Joab had sent him for. (KJV)*

Meaning to kill Uriah.

*23) And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.*

*24) And the shooters shot from off the wall upon your servants; and [some] of the king's servants be dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. (KJV)*

Now notice David's response, how scarred and far away he was from God.

*25) Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shall you say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another: make your battle more strong against the city and overthrow it: and encourage him (meaning Joab). (KJV)*

The Living Bible Says: *The sword kills one as well as the other. Fight harder next time, conquer the city and tell him he is doing well. (Living Bible)*

So what he's claiming is, he's denying, ignoring this plot that he hatched. He says, "Well, people die in battle. No big deal. I understand." You see his mind was very

close to being one hundred per cent seared at this point. Gallons of lemon juice were being thrown in his face by his own actions and he was blind as a bat ... blind as a bat.

Now we know David had God's spirit. There's no question about that. Let's go to Psalm 73 (you can keep your place here) and let's read the first two verses. This is what David wrote about this time. In the introduction to the Psalm it says, "A Psalm of Asaph," but in the margin, in the King James it says, "A Psalm for Asaph." It's obviously written by David. Notice what it says.

***Psalm 73:1.*** Truly God [is] good to Israel, [even] to such as are of a clean heart.

Now stop. Did David have a clean heart? Was David pure and innocent in this whole deal? He was as dirty as could be. Notice verse 2.

*2) But as for me, ... (KJV)*

Meaning he is contrasting himself to somebody who has a clean heart.

*2b) ... my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. (KJV)*

We would say today; David would say, "I came very close to losing it." And he did. He came very, very close to losing it all.

Now remember, as king, David was the highest judge in the land. He was the leader, yes, but we don't often think about the fact that, as king, he was the Supreme Court. He was the highest judge in the land. Look at 2 Samuel 8:15. We'll go back to chapter 12 in just a minute. This establishes the fact that David was the chief judge in Israel.

***2 Samuel 8:15.*** And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people. (KJV)

He was the chief, as we would say today, of the Supreme Court. Now it took God sending Nathan, the prophet, to wake him up. Now Nathan asked for an audience to see David, and my guess is that David thought Nathan was going to come and seek judgment at his feet. He didn't have a clue because he was so spiritually blind. Now let's go back to 2 Samuel 12 and begin in verse 1.

***2 Samuel 12:1.*** And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich and the other poor.

*2) The rich [man] had exceeding many flocks and herds. (KJV)*

He had more than he could use.

*3) But the poor [man] had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children;*



*it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. (KJV)*

We know today people have dogs and cats and pets that are that close, and children just love dogs and cats and they're like brothers and sisters almost to kids.

*4) And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock ... (KJV)*

He wouldn't dare take of his own flock or take of his own herd.

*4b) ... and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb and dressed it for the man that was come to him.*

*5) And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, [As] the Lord lives, the man that has done this [thing] shall surely die:*

*6) And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. (KJV)*

And then he should die. Now, remember he was supreme judge in Israel and what he had just done was pronounce the death sentence upon himself. "This man ought to die." Then, of course, we know in verse 7, Nathan said to David, "You are the man. You are the guy that you just said should die." I'm sure this hit David like a 2 x 4 between the eyes. The blinders started to come off because he had been in denial. He had been spiritually blind for over a year.

*7) And Nathan said to David, You [are] the man. Thus says the Lord God of Israel. ... (KJV)*

Now Nathan begins to dig the knife in a little deeper, God does. God is talking here.

*7b) ... I anointed you king over Israel and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul; (KJV)*

When he tried to pin you to the wall with his spear.

*8) And I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if [that had been] too little, I would moreover have given you such and such things.*

*9) Wherefore have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? ... (KJV)*

Now the truth comes out.

*9b) ... You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife [to be] your wife, and have slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. (KJV)*

So now it's all out in the open and David is confronted with his sins. He had ignored them, tried to bury them. The fact is most of Israel and certainly the court knew what went on, but now in front of everybody, in front of the court with Nathan there David is confronted.

*13) And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. (KJV)*

The spiritual blinders have come off, the eye salve replaced the lemon juice and the result is, as we know, David ended up to be a man after God's own heart. We see that in 1 Samuel 13, Acts 13, he wrote Psalm 51 which is a model of how we should repent and how we should feel when we sin and he is going to have a prominent place in the kingdom.

So in summarizing these two lives, can human beings with God's holy spirit be spiritually blind? Of course. If we are honest with ourselves and look into our own hearts, there have been times when we have been spiritually blind as well. We've been there and we've done that.

**Now, we're going to spend the remainder of the time on point number 2, learning some lessons from these examples that we can apply to us today.**

**The first lesson we need to learn, Point A, is that we have to realize as human beings that we will delude ourselves.**

We will do it. Human nature will do it. We will delude ourselves just as the lemon juice guy deluded himself. We will do it too. We know the scripture, Jeremiah 17:9.

***Jeremiah 17:9.** The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it? (KJV)*

Or who can understand it? The New English Bible says:

*9) The human mind is more deceitful than anything else. It is incurably bad. Who can understand it? (NEB)*

The mind is deceitful, and when we are deceived, guess what? We are blind. When we are deceived, we are blind. But the fact is, you see, God is never blind. God is never deceived.

Let's go to 1 Samuel 16. I'll just summarize. The context is Samuel is picking Saul's replacement and Samuel is mourning Saul and Saul's death. God says to Samuel, "Would you quit your mourning because I've rejected Saul. Now get your oil and get

your bottle and go to the house of Jesse the Bethlehemite because there is a king there that I want you to anoint.” So Samuel dutifully goes and parades the oldest in front and obviously he was a very impressive guy, and Samuel said to himself, “Surely this is the guy.” God said, “Don’t look on his countenance or on the height of his stature.” This is verse 7 if you want a reference. He said, “Because I have refused him. He is not the one. Because I don’t see as men see. I don’t judge the outward appearance, but I look on the heart.” God is never deceived. God is never blind. So you know the story. They paraded them all and God said, “Uh-uh, none of these.” Samuel asked, “Do you have another son?” Jesse said, “Yes, my littlest one. He’s out with the sheep.” They brought him in and he was the one.

You see, God was using a different lens than Samuel was. God’s lens is pure. God looks on the heart. What we have to do, you see, is ask God to give us the ability to see through His lens, so that we are not spiritually blinded versus the human lens that we see through and Satan can so easily deceive us if we look at life and ourselves through a human lens and Satan can blind us.

So the first lesson we can learn is that, as humans, we can be deceived. We can be deluded and we can be spiritually blind.

**The second point is that we have to come to see ourselves as God sees us, not deluding ourselves, not being spiritually blind.**

We want to see ourselves as God sees us and not as how we want to see ourselves. We have an image of ourselves and that image can be incorrect. You see, the carnal mind will go to any length to keep from looking honestly at itself. It will go to any lengths.

Today brethren get distracted by an undue (and I emphasize the word “undue”) focus on prophecy. We should study prophecy and we should be aware of prophecy, but if we have an undue focus on it where that just consumes us, then it distracts us from looking at ourselves, comparing ourselves to Jesus Christ and to see what we need to do to transform ourselves through the power of God’s spirit to be the Bride of Christ.

Brethren today get distracted by an undue focus on nutrition and health foods. When I came into the church in the mid ‘60s, that was a religion unto itself. There were more sermons on health foods and people spent more time on health foods and nutrition and all of that. It competed with the Bible almost.

Brethren get distracted by an undue focus on conspiracy theories and what’s happening over in Europe and what’s happening in the government and these secret societies and this kind of stuff, and that is a distraction from looking honestly at the self.

Brethren get distracted by an undue focus on other peoples’ faults and sins. Brethren point the finger at other groups and point the finger at other people. Christ had

something to say about that, "Why don't you remove the 2 x 4 from your own eye before you seek to remove the speck in your brother's eye."

But you see, unlike Samson, we don't have to go through the tribulation to see. So the question is: how can we see ourselves and remove the spiritual lemon juice? There are two ways. When I mention the two ways, some people (hopefully nobody in this room) will roll their eyes and say, "Oh boy, we've heard it too many times."

The first is through prayer. This is basic stuff. We have to ask God, "God help me to see myself the way You see me. Help me not to have spiritual blinders. Help me not to have lemon juice in my eyes. Help me to see myself as You see me. Give me Your mind so I can see myself, so I can see what I need to change." We need to see ourselves and see life around us as God and Christ see us and life around us. Otherwise, we are spiritually blind. We are deluding ourselves.

Let's go to Matthew, chapter 7. Christ says, "This is what I want you to do. This is what I want you to do. This is a very familiar scripture. There's nothing new here. Christ says:

**Matthew 7:7.** *Ask, ... (KJV)*

That's a command.

*7b) ... and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:*

*8) For every one that asks receives; ... (KJV)*

That is a promise, an absolute promise.

*8b) ... and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened.*

*9) Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?*

*10) Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?*

*11) If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? (KJV)*

And what is the good thing that we need to ask for? We should know it by heart.

**Philippians 2:5.** *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (KJV)*

The New International says: *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.*

So we must pray often and pray hard to have that mind. If we have the mind of Christ, everything falls into place; how we view the world, how we view the church, how we

view our neighbors, how we view our brethren, how we view ourselves, how we view our family. If we have the mind of Christ, it all falls into place.

There is no lemon juice in the mind of Christ. There is only eye salve, and so the first way that we can begin to see ourselves is through prayer. Ask God to give us the gift of the mind of Christ.

The second one, again, is very basic and that is studying the Bible. I have talked to people here recently that have gotten away from that. They just don't study much. They might feel guilty and read a verse or two before nodding off to bed. They don't study much. We're going to read verse 12 of Hebrews 4, out of the New King James. The reason study helps us overcome spiritual blindness is given right here.

**Hebrews 4:12.** *For the word of God [is] living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, ... (NKJV)*

Notice this last sentence.

*12b) ... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (NKJV)*

God's word allows us to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The New Living Translation says, *It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.*

Studying the Bible exposes that and an honest study of God's word will allow us to see ourselves as we are, as God sees us. It is our eye salve. God's word is our eye salve.

1 Corinthians 13:12. Let's go there. Paul is making a reference. In the King James it's translated "a glass". The Greek means *a mirror for looking into*.

**1 Corinthians 13:12.** *For now we see through a mirror (that's designed to look into), darkly; ... (KJV)*

He says we see "darkly". The Greek means *obscurely*. Then he says ...

*12b) ... but then face to face: now I know in part; but then (at that time) shall I know even as also I am known. (KJV)*

What he is saying is God's word combined with God's holy spirit is the spiritual lens that we can begin to see ourselves, and see ourselves as God sees us.

Let's go to James 1:22. This is the last scripture under this point of study.

**James 1:22.** *But be you doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. (KJV)*

Being spiritually blind. If you think you can just talk about it and not do it, you can hear it and not do it, he says you are spiritually blind.

*23) For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass (mirror).*

*24) For he beholds himself, and goes his way and straightway forgets what manner of man he was. (KJV)*

He forgot what he saw.

*25) But whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty, ... (KJV)*

That's God's word and God's law. If you study the perfect law of liberty...

*25b) ... and continue [therein], he being not a forgetful hearer, ... (KJV)*

Not to walk away from the glass and forget what he saw.

*25 continued) ... but a doer of the work, ... (KJV)*

What is that work? The work is becoming like Jesus Christ. The work isn't publishing magazines, it's doing the job of becoming like Jesus Christ.

*25 continued) ... this man shall be blessed in his deed. (KJV)*

We can't be blinded, especially in these end days, thinking, "I've studied for decades. I don't need to study anymore. I kind of know it all." I know an evangelist who said that. "I don't study much anymore. I studied for thirty years. I know everything. I know what I need to know." He stopped studying to his own peril. We can't do that. That's what Satan would like us to do. You see, God's word allows us to discern the thoughts and intents of our own heart. It's that mirror. So prayer and study are keys to our seeing ourselves as God sees us. They are keys to removing the blinders. They are keys to removing the spiritual lemon juice and they are the eye salve that helps us to see.

So let's conclude. Spiritual lemon juice, as we said in the beginning, means that we are so blind that we don't know we are blind. I've been there. There are times when I didn't realize that I was blind and I said things and I did things that I regret. I treated people ... I just cringe over, because I was spiritually blind at the time, thinking I was doing the right thing.

So the scary thought is, are we spiritually blind now like this lemon juice man? Walking into the bank; "Hey, here I am and you can't see me." Blind as a bat.

Remember the parable of the Pharisee and the publican where the Pharisee said (we won't turn there); in Luke 18, the Pharisee said, "I fast twice a week, I give tithes, I do

this and I do that. Look at what I do for You, God. I'm so thankful that I'm not like this publican over here, this creep over here. I'm so glad I'm not like him." The Pharisee had lemon juice all over himself. You remember the publican; he wouldn't even lift his head up and he beat on his chest and said, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." That means that he was using eye salve. He could see himself. "I'm a sinner. Be merciful to me. I can't even look at You. I'm not even worthy to be here."

Then Christ said, "Anybody who exalts himself, puffs himself up, is going to be brought down, and those who humble themselves someday will be exalted." The Pharisee was just squeezing lemon juice in his eyes and he saw himself as he wanted to see himself, not how God actually saw him. The publican was using eye salve. He knew who he was and he saw himself as God saw him.

As we get closer to the end time, and we are marching at an accelerated pace here, we can't be like the Pharisee. The fact is we've got to remember Christ's letter to Laodicea. He says, you (meaning Laodicea) are blind and you don't know you're blind. So you see on this day of Pentecost that memorializes the coming of God's spirit, the mind of Christ allows us to see, allows us to have eye salve. Prayer and study allow that to happen and the good news is, through the power of what came this day, we can have the mind of God. We can have the mind of Christ. We can see how God and Christ see. Through prayer and study all of that opens up.

But let's understand that Satan wants to blind us. He wants us to start seeing as we want to see and not as how God and Jesus Christ see. He has blinded the end-time church and we need to be aware of that. So let's remember this parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector and let's ask God every day, "Please help me to see as You see. Please help me to have the mind of Christ. Please help me to see myself as You see me." Because otherwise it's a joke, otherwise we are playing games, otherwise we have lemon juice all over our face and in our eyes and we can't see a thing.

So let's make sure that we stay away from the spiritual lemon juice and let's make sure that we drink in of what was offered on this day and use it to have the mind of Christ.