

Fourth Sunday of Lent – Year A (2026)

I know what you're thinking. That was a long Gospel! Forty-One Verses! But at least you get to sit down.

But that also means that there is a lot of good stuff packed into it. Sin and inherited guilt, working on the Sabbath, what it means to be a prophet, Jesus' power to do miracles, whether God listens to sinners, and Pharisees looking to find another reason to have Jesus killed.

Of course, at the heart of the story is the concept of "blindness".

What most preachers do on this day is talk about how we are all sometimes blind to the needs of others, or blind to our prejudices, or blind to what is most important in life.

But there is one thing we are "blind" to that hardly ever gets mentioned. Our own blindness. That's right. **We are often blind to the fact that we are blind.**

And truthfully, this is one of the few things (or maybe the only thing) Jesus had a major problem with in all of Scripture.

This is the kind of blindness that leads us to believe our opinions are superior to others'.

- Or that we are somehow better than other people.
- Or that we know more.
- Or that we are more faithful.
- Or that God loves us more.
- Or that our way is always the best way.
- Or that the way we see a particular situation or issue is the “right” way.

Put simply, it's a kind of self-righteousness that says to the world, “I see just fine. I'm not someone who needs to change. Others do.”

Jesus is incredibly forgiving toward many of the sins we find hard to forgive. He doesn't really get angry at thieves, adulterers, tax collectors, Romans, or almost any other group.

In fact, he shows tremendous compassion toward those people—reaching out to them, counseling them, healing them, and embracing them.

Conversely, he saves his strongest language for one particular group: the people who are convinced of their own goodness, the people who, in a very real sense, are blind to their own blindness.

And so, entering the second half of Lent, we use this time to take a hard look at where we are in our relationship with Jesus and at the ways we have failed to love. What person or persons am I looking at in the wrong way?

On what issue or issues do I refuse to consider any counterarguments, convinced that I am 100% right and that people with alternative views are 100% wrong?

- Why do I feel the need to “win” every argument, need to have people come around to my point of view (and never the other way around)?
- Who do I feel superior to? And why?
- In what areas of my life do I need a big dose of genuine humility?
- And what in me needs to change in order to make this world a better place?

As the great English novelist, Thomas Hardy, once said, **“There is only one condition worse than blindness, and this is, seeing something that isn’t there.”**