Physical blindness is a handicap that no right thinking person would wish upon himself. It is indeed a tragedy when a person cannot see the beauty of God's creation. An even greater tragedy, however, is one who can see, but chooses not to see.

The Jews of Jesus' day were eagerly awaiting the coming of the Messiah, but then refused to accept Him when He came. Such an attitude of the people prompted Jesus to say, "And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; And seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, And their ears are dull of hearing, And their eyes they have closed; Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And should turn again, And I should heal them" (Matt. 13:14-15).

There is no greater tragedy than that of one who chooses to be willfully ignorant of God's Word. The Jews of Christ's day saw His miracles and heard His preaching and concluded that He was no different from any other man. Likewise, there are many today who hear the gospel message in its purity and yet refuse to accept what they have heard.

Many today profess to believe in the Bible as God's authoritative Word, but continue to stubbornly uphold the doctrines and creeds of men. When such a one is confronted with verses of Scripture that contradicts his erroneous doctrine, he closes his eyes to the truth and says, "I just do not see it that way." The truth of the matter is that he is refusing to see at all - he is willingly blind to the truth.

It is a challenge to keep oneself from becoming spiritually blind. Such must be done, however, if Heaven is to become a reality and the soul is to be saved. Let us now note some areas where many who claim to believe the Bible have become spiritually blind.

"I just don't believe that baptism is necessary for one to be saved." The apostle Peter had the privilege of preaching the gospel on Pentecost in Jerusalem, 33 A.D., and said to those who inquired what they must do to be saved, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Peter also spoke of the ark, "wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water ..." (1 Pet. 3:20), and said, "which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism ..." (1 Pet. 3:21). Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth and is baptized shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). Only the spiritually blind will reject water baptism as a prequisite to salvation.

"I believe that there is but one Christ, but I just don't believe that there is only one church." Only tradition and prejudice can so blind one to the truth. First, Christ promised to "build" His church (Matt. 16:18). His church was "purchased" with His blood (Acts 20:28). The apostle Paul affirms that Christ "put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). Christ has promised to save only His body (Eph. 5:23), of which there is but one (Eph. 4:4).

In view of such Scriptures, how can one profess to love and honor Christ while believing that His church (body) is unimportant? One cannot have the head without the body, or the body without the head! Christ and His church cannot be separated because of man's whims and wishes.

"I just believe that it is more meaningful to partake of the Lord's Supper only once a month." How can one profess to love the Lord and then think that what he believes is more important than what God says? An approved example, which is as binding as a command, is found in the book of Acts. Luke records, "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul dis-
coursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7). Ask the same denominational preachers and leaders if it is also "more meaningful" to give only once a month! Most will affirm, and rightly so, that the "first day of the week" in 1 Corinthians 16:2 means just that - the first day of every week. It is indeed inconsistent, is it not, that many believe "the first day of the week" in Acts 20:7 can mean monthly, quarterly, or even annually.

"I just believe that instrumental music sounds better." Notice that the Scriptures commands us to sing - not play (Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26; Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Heb. 2:12; Jam. 5:13; Rev. 5:9; 14:3; 15:3). There is Bible, authority to sing, but no Bible authority to "make music" any way one pleases.

It will be sad in the Day of Judgment for those who have chosen to be spiritually blind to God's glorious truths!