

Open Your Eyes
Isaiah 43:8-13

June 22, 2025 (Pen. 2-C)

St. Paul's Lutheran, North Freedom

Lead out those who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf. All the nations gather together and the peoples assemble. Which of them foretold this and proclaimed to us the former things? Let them bring in their witnesses to prove they were right, so that others may hear and say, "It is true." "You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior. I have revealed and saved and proclaimed—I, and not some foreign god among you. You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "that I am God. Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?" (Isaiah 43:8-13 NIV84)

In the name of the only true God, the LORD, dear fellow believers:

"Honey, where's the salt shaker? And I can't find my car keys!" "Open your eyes," the wife says. "It's right there on the counter!"

Sometimes we're blind even when we've got eyes to see. In the chapter before our text, the Lord God said of his people, Old Testament Israel, "Look, you blind, and see! Who is blind but my servant....? You have seen many things, but have paid no attention" (Isa. 42:18-20). The Lord will not put up with "blind" behavior of those he has chosen to see him, to believe and obey his Word. So he called out in our text, "Lead out those who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf." He's calling on us today: **"Open Your Eyes."**

First, our Lord wants us to open our eyes and see that the Lord alone is the one true God. God imagines us assembled in a court with all the nations and peoples and telling them, "Have any of your religions foretold things that actually happened? Bring in your witnesses!" But their silence shows that their religions are false, that their gods are false and non-existent. Blind were those in Isaiah's day, in Bible times, who chopped down trees, who chiseled out an idol out of the wood that was formed while the rest of it they burned to make a fire. The Lord says of them (recorded in the next chapter, Isaiah 44:18): "They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand."

Blind are those today who imagine their own gods, worshiping the so-called spirits of nature, or imagining that everything is in one way a god, called "Pantheism." Blind are those who claim that there is in fact no god and this world just happens to exist by itself, as atheists like to claim.

Blind also are we when we form our own idols, breaking the first commandment, "You shall have no other gods," when we fear, love and trust in anyone or anything more than the Lord God. Blind are we when we fear public opinion more than God's law, when we love the pleasures and treasures of this world more than the kingdom of God, when we trust in our mind and our wealth instead of God's promises in his gospel. How Satan and the sinful nature inside us make us blind!

Open your eyes! The Lord God has revealed himself in this world, in the heavens and the earth that he has made. The psalmist wrote, “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (Ps. 19:1). The Lord God has revealed himself in his Word, the Bible, every word of it coming from God the Holy Spirit through the writing of the prophets and the apostles. The Scriptures tell us that the Lord was there in the beginning, before all worlds: “Before me no god was formed.” They proclaim that there will not be another god to replace the Lord: “Nor will there be one after me.” The Lord alone is God, the First and the Last.

“You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD. A witness needs to have eyes, and to have those eyes opened. By the grace of God, you and I have seen and heard that the Lord alone is true God. He has revealed himself in the world, in the word of Scriptures, and in the Word—The Son of God, Jesus Christ. Let’s open our eyes, and be witnesses of this fact also, that He alone is Savior.

“I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior.” The Israelites of Isaiah’s day heard this, and still they kept trusting in their idols, or asking other nations to be their protector from the threatening empires of the east. But the Lord reminded his people: “I have revealed and saved and proclaimed—I, and not some foreign god among you.”

Jesus alone is our Savior. He alone is true God and true man in one person; he alone is the one able to obey the law’s demands, to fulfill the gospel promises, to rescue us from Satan’s dominion and to deliver us from the pangs of eternal death. At times we still need to open our eyes and see Jesus. At the last supper, when Philip asked him, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us,” Jesus replied, “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:8,9). Open your eyes, Philip! And all of us, too: Don’t shut your eyes to the one who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Thanks to Jesus, we can say with John Newton in *Amazing Grace*: “I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.”

Our sinful nature still wants to shut our eyes to this and pretend we don’t need Jesus in our lives. Thank God, the Holy Spirit has, in the words of the catechism, “called me by the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts.” The Spirit uses the gospel message to open our eyes to see and believe in our Savior. Paul recorded what the Lord Jesus told him to do as an apostle: “I am sending you to [the Gentiles] to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light” (Acts 26:17b,18a). The gospel message still does that today. In the Word and sacrament, the Holy Spirit opens our eyes, he gets us to see that Jesus is our Savior, and we believe and are saved.

“‘You are my witnesses,’ declares the LORD.” Witnesses need to have not only eyes open to see, but mouths open to speak. So let’s open our mouths to praise the one true God and the one Savior, Jesus. Let’s be ready to speak about our Savior to others and share what our eyes of faith have seen. And as we speak, trust that the Lord is there to open the eyes of those he has called, in Jesus. Amen.