

-16<sup>th</sup> July 2006

Speaker - Alan Lockhart (Kinross Gospel Hall)

Reading - John Chapter 9 verses 1-41

Mr Lockhart referred to this passage of the bible as containing one of the greatest miracles performed by the Lord Jesus Christ. This chapter focuses on the miracle where a man blind from birth receives his sight through the Lord.

The man had been in darkness the whole of his life. Just imagine never having seen the beauty of nature: the stars of the sky, the birds of the air, the diversity of flowers or even the horizon. There were no state benefits in those days and the man was reduced to begging. Mr Lockhart considers this miracle to be so great because the blind man who had never heard or seen the Lord was given something he had never had before - the gift of sight. He compares this miracle to another sight giving miracle recorded in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 20 verses 29-34 where the blind cried out saying "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David". In this miracle it is clear that the blind man had a prior knowledge of the Lord and his ability to heal.

The Jewish people at this time in history thought that physical imperfections such as blindness were the direct result of sin. In the bible blindness and other physical or emotional issues are a picture of sin. Sin is still the problem with society today. The media have given much attention to medical issues of late and often describe people as being HIV negative or positive. Men do not want to acknowledge sin but we are all SIN positive. The bible teaches that we ourselves cannot do anything about our sin and it is found in every level of society. Politicians will speak of their private lives remaining private in order to keep their sin secret but often in their autobiographies their lack of integrity and their secrets are revealed proving that they behave differently in public. The Lord Jesus Christ was sinless perfection in public and private. The only solution for our sin is the Lord who was the only sinless man on the face of this earth.

The people in this passage ask the Lord “who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”. The Lord answers by saying “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him”. The Lord is not saying that the man or his parents were sinless but that his blindness was not caused by their sin. The Lord is indicating that the man was born to be healed and that it had been divinely planned that this man would be healed for eternity. It was not just a coincidence that the Lord was passing that way this is true of situations today but men of today try to find reasons to explain problems that they have. This is a comforting thought for us that any problem we may have in our lives is not a result of something we have done and more importantly that God knows about it.

The Lord says “I am the Light of the world”. The world was and still is in darkness but while the Lord was on the earth he was the light and when he left this world the light remained due to the giving of the holy spirit (reference).

Mr Lockhart recalls a story he heard regarding a Holman Hunt painting depicting the Lord in a long robe carrying a lamp, standing knocking at a door. This painting is representative of the situation we are in where the Lord is standing at the door of our heart asking for admission. In Mr Lockhart’s story a man is in a gallery sitting in front of a copy of the painting and overhears the curator telling them the original sold for a large sum of money. The man seizing the opportunity to tell this group about the Lord said “ Actually the real thing sold for 30 pieces of silver”. This comment refers to a passage in the bible which tells of the betrayal of the Lord Jesus Christ by one of his own disciples named Judas Iscariot, which led to the arrest and eventual crucifixion of the Lord. (Reference).

We have great faith in what the doctors say about our health and submissively accept what they suggest. In a similarly submissive way the blind man in this chapter accepted what the Lord did and complied fully with what the Lord asked him to do. The Lord made clay with his spittle and applied it to the man’s eyes then instructed the man saying “Go. Wash in the pool of Siloam”. The blind man did what was asked of him and he

received his sight. The last time the Lord moulded clay is recorded in the first book of the bible which is Genesis. Adam who was the first man was formed from the dust of the earth” (Genesis 2 v 7) by the creator by who’s hand everything was made (Genesis chapter 1). We have a similar option to the blind man regarding our eternal destination. The man was asked to do something and he immediately did it we are asked to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and we will receive salvation in fact we can have our spiritual eyes opened (reference). The blind man did not hesitate or protest and Mr Lockhart compares this miracle to a situation in the old testament section of the bible. A man named Naham had leprosy another picture of sin and was asked by the prophet Elisha to wash in the river Jordon seven times. In this situation Naham questioned the solution to his problem because the Jordon was not the cleanest river but it wasn’t the water that would heal him but his faith in doing what was asked of him through the Lords prophet. Naham did eventually wash in the river and was made whole. (reference).

When the blind man was healed he went back amongst the people and they had trouble recognising him. Its amazing how eyes can change ones appearance. Mr Lockhart told us of a time he visited his local sandwich shop and the regular assistant had decided to wear coloured contact lenses instead of her glasses. The assistant must have registered Mr Lockhart’s shock at her new appearance and asked him whether he liked her new look. In point of fact he didn’t but searching for the right words he replied by saying “its different anyway”. This only illustrates that when eyes are opened or changed especially in someone who has been blind the recovery of sight changes appearance and demeanor.

The Lord healed the blind man on the Sabbath day and this caused a division in the attitudes of the people “therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them” (John 9 v 16). There is still a division among people today, those who reject him and even swear using his name and those who accept him as their saviour. When the religious leaders questioned him on what had happened and how he’d received his sight.

The man laid down the facts saying “one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see” The religious leaders cast him out of the temple for being a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When the Lord heard he had been cast out he sought him and asked “Doest thou believe on the son of God?” The man had never seen the Lord before and answered saying “ Who is he, Lord that I might believe on him?”. The reply to this question was “thou hast both seen him and it is he that talked with thee.” Mr Lockhart wondered if perhaps his eyes may have welled up for the first time at the sight of the son of God before the man fell on his face and worshipped the Lord Jesus Christ. The blind man’s life had been transformed forever. Our lives can also be changed through salvation. It is not just a ticket to heaven and everlasting life it is the opportunity to know the only true god. (reference).

To finish Mr Lockhart shared with us a situation he had been in when someone had asked him if he believed in God. His response to this individual was “ Do I believe in God? My friend I know him. I can address him as my father and am one of his sons”. This privilege is available to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.