

## Sermon for Thursday March 26th

### John Chapter 9 verse 4

'I must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work.'

At the weekend some of us put a lit candle in our window where it could be seen by those outside and we are encouraged to do that every Sunday night at 7 o'clock as sign of the presence of Jesus, the light of the world.

Sometimes in these strange times, it might feel as if we have reached the moment when 'night has come and no one can work.' May I say straight away that I don't believe that. Even though we are isolated from each other, and I'm not even allowed to celebrate in our own church, 'The Lord is our light and our salvation, whom then shall we fear? The Lord is the strength of our life, of whom then shall we be afraid?'

Someone did ask me last week if God was punishing us by sending covid-19. There is a very clear answer from Jesus. When they ask him, 'Who sinned? Whose fault is it that this man is born blind?' he says 'No one.' No one sinned - there's a completely different reason and it's not to do with blame. In fact, it's to do with life and redemption - and he goes on to heal him. There is a sense of urgency in what Jesus says and does. It's urgent to heal, to preach, to reach more people, but it is not urgent to lay blame - except to point out to those who think they know that actually, they are blind.

Walking in the light, seeing, and actually seeing, hearing and actually hearing, are recurrent motifs in John's Gospel. The blind man is first given the gift of sight, and then, when he meets Jesus again - he is given a second gift of sight. He sees him, really sees him, for whom he is, and worships him. One of the reasons the church is so important, important enough for me to be streaming this from our 'Upper Room' at home, is not that we have the answers - of course we don't. We in the church have failed to see. We been wrong about slavery racism, antisemitism - so many things. But we do have something. The reason the church is important and must remain visible and active through this crisis is that we have a light to guide us, Jesus the light of the world, Jesus who said as his accusers closed in on him, 'Night is coming when no one can work. But as long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.'

And now, in this time of coronavirus, we are the light of the world. If we fix our eyes on Jesus then his light will shine in us and through us and like the candles in our windows, out into the world.