

6pm HC Sunday 5th October 2025

Neh 2 and John 9 – *Witnessing to Jesus as simply as “see it, say it, sorted” can open hearts*

If you’ve travelled by train in the last few years, you will be very familiar with the public safety message encouraging train travellers to speak up if they think they’ve seen anybody acting strangely, who might be intending to cause harm. Emblazoned on posters in trains and on stations and often on the tannoy: the message of ***see it, say it, sorted***.

The implication is that it is easy to describe what you’ve witnessed, and having done that, to rest easy, knowing you’ve done what you could, and that what to do next is now in somebody else’s hands.

Tonight’s gospel reading is undeniably long, but I suggest that the message contained within it can be summed up in those five short and simple words: ***see it, say it, sorted***.

So why, then, does tonight’s reading from the gospel need to be quite so long? Perhaps John gives us such a full account so that we can see that different people respond to Jesus differently. (And whilst John’s gospel contains fewer incidents than the other gospels the story-telling is always richer).

In this story, we discover why some people are open to hearing the good news about Jesus, and yet others hold back; afraid to give up long-cherished certainties, or social acceptance, or the comfort of the familiar.

And we learn why sharing with others how Jesus has changed our lives is in some ways so simple: just a case of ***see it, say it, sorted***. And yet it will lead us into an even deeper encounter with the one who has opened our own eyes, because God ***listens to [the] one who worships him and obeys his will***.

The storytelling is straightforward: scene 1 is Jesus making the blind man see again, when he ***spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes***, told the man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, which he does, and is then able to see.

In scene 2, neighbours and people who knew him as the blind beggar ask him ***how were your eyes opened?*** And he tells them what happened.

In scene 3, it is the Pharisees who want to know ***how he had received his sight*** and he again tells them what happened. The Pharisees are confused; they know that anybody who could do such a thing must be from God, but Jesus cannot be from God, because ***he does not observe the sabbath***.

In scene 4, they question the parents, who know that what Jesus has done begs the question of who Jesus is, but will only say “*No comment*”. They don’t want to be put out of the synagogue for saying Jesus is the Messiah.

In scene 5, ***for the second time [the Pharisees] called the man who had been blind***, who tries at first not to get involved in whether Jesus ***is a sinner***, but who can’t help but say what

to him seems obvious: that everybody who sees and hears what has happened **would want to become [Jesus'] disciples**. And suddenly the blind beggar is articulating the Pharisees' biggest fear: **only the one who has come from God could open the eyes of a person born blind**. And the Pharisees, in their fear, **they drove him out**.

But scene 6 – the final scene – ends on a positive and hopeful note. Jesus, when he **heard that they had driven [the man] out, ... found him**, and the beggar born blind believes and worships Jesus. Jesus, who says that he has come **into the world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those do see may become blind**. And some of the Pharisees who hear this conversation start to wonder whether it is them who are being blind.

Something has shifted and changed.

In some ways, talking about how our faith in Jesus has changed our lives is as simple as **see it, say it, sorted**.

And yet, the reality is that every time we share our faith in Jesus, we cannot know how people will respond.

The appointment of the new Archbishop of Canterbury gives each one of us a fantastic opportunity to talk about why we're Christians; to talk about the Church and what the Church means to us. About why it is important that there should be a Christian voice at the heart of national life, and what the Church has to offer.

There will be some for whom the appointment of a woman as Archbishop will be very difficult, and others to whom it is a breath of fresh air. Seize the moment. Share what you yourself think and why this appointment matters - not just to you but to everybody across the country and across the world - and trust in God to open hearts to Jesus.