

Sunday 27th March 2022
John 9:1-11
Rev.Scott Burton
Brightons Parish Church

Sermon keypoints:

- asking our questions
- trusting Jesus
- journeying towards life to the full

Well boys and girls, it is so good to have you, our uniformed organizations, with us this morning and great to mark these high achievements of the Queen's Badge awards but, also on Friday night, we had a great night with the Boys Brigade Company marking so many other achievements and awards and it was lovely to be a part of that and see that. I know that, in the week coming, there's the Anchor Boys final evening, there's also the Girls Brigade coming together on Wednesday night, and I'm sure those will be full of special moments too.

But beyond helping you develop and achieve and recognizing that hard work, another point part of Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade is having a little fun and I think we should give Billy one last chance to have a little fun don't you. I think we should maybe give him a chance because after this well, the fun level's just going to dive off a cliff, Billy. So, should we get them up front to give us a wee hand? How about a wee game? Right Billy, come on up.

I thought I'd avoided this.

You must have known something like this. So, Billy the plan is that we're going to have a little game. Have you ever played the game 20 guesses or 20 questions? Okay, so I have picked a character and it could be a real-life character or a make-believe character, it could be male or female and you have to ask us 20 questions and the answers are yes or no, that we can give you. Now, I'm going to show us all the picture of it, in a moment. Mister Rankine will close his eyes so he's no peeking. You've got your glasses off.

I could put my glasses on and I wouldn't see.

Don't.

Don't say it okay, don't even whisper it, because I'm sure he's got really good hearing and despite him getting slightly on in years you know, but he'll be grand, so I will show you and then you can help me answer the questions so he's got his eyes closed.

Okay right so 20 questions.

I can open my eyes again.

So yes or no, yes or no answers, is all we can give him.

Is it a male?

Is it male? 1 oh it's not me that's good! That's not my question. Is it a real life character?

Is it real life?

No not real life.

It's a cartoon character. Is it a Disney cartoon character.

Yes.

So female Disney cartoon character.

You're doing well.

Can I get my daughter to come down and help me?

No! We won't use that as a question.

Right is it a recent Disney cartoon.

No.

Okay. So, I've got a reasonable chance.

I've tried to play it in your favor.

Okay, dear me, I really could do with Eilidh's head. Let me see, is it's a real, it's a human. What is it? Right, so is it an animal, a female animal character?

No, not an animal.

Quick, that was a good question coming up. Is it a cartoon that's still on the go just now?

No. 10. No, well you can watch it but it's not going to go.

Okay, so that's a bit more senior Netflix or something, yeah,

It's not a human. So, it's an animal, didn't say that is that an animal, no, no. Right and you said it wasn't it said - my memory is going here as well. Did you say was it a female, human, cartoon character.

No, human's a bit of a broad term, I'd say, I'm not quite sure it's human.

Is it a ship?

No.

That wouldn't help me much anyway, I'm really, I'm really struggling here.

Got dust dust.

Would it be a fairy type character.

Yes.

Would it be based on a very old book. That should not go out after midnight.

I don't know okay, you must be thinking another guy.

No Cinderella?

No.

Okay, no Cinderella. No, I was banking on it being Cinderella there folks.

I obviously was at Boys Brigade too much when you were watching Disney characters.

Mark, can you help.

There's a famous boy in it and he can fly.

Ah right, okay. So, there was a there's a ship involved in this? There is character, yeah, I'm just gonna, I'm gonna take this right now. So there's a kind of Peter Pan type character involved here.

You're getting very close.

And I can't really remember the name.

Begins with a T.

Ah yes indeed, yeah, we'll get there the second part of it would ring possibly?

Yes it would ring our bell maybe yeah.

Yeah. So, that would be Tinkerbell!

Good job! Right, you can say you're safe. Yes, Tinkerbell. Well done, we got you there eventually. So, good, good sport, good sport.

So part of your time is about learning and development and recognizing that part of it is about fun but there's another part to Girls and Boys Brigade, and that is also learning about Jesus. And in some ways that's the most important part and that's what we hope to pass on and to share with you and what we aim to do as a church family as well.

In our story today Jesus did something amazing. What did he do? Can anybody remember? What did he do? Anybody from the front? Okay. No, what did he do in our story today? What did he do in our story today? Can anybody remember from the Explorers or the Anchor Boys? Yeah, what did he do today? We can hear from the back then.

Yeah, He made the man see again. And what did He, what did He do? What did He use to him to make him see? Can you remember? What did He do? What did He do? Daniel? He put him right in his eyes, He got some mud and used some saliva like 'Jesus. come on, what are you doing? That's just we've been yucky!' But Jesus was doing some odd things He was doing some amazing things and people were beginning to go 'Who is this guy? What is he about? Is he just a teacher? Is he a more than that, is he a prophet? Is he even more than a prophet?' And so, people were guessing and guessing and guessing and they probably were doing an even worse job than Mister Rankine. Now, some people got it right. Who got it right in our story today? Who got it right in the story? The blind man didn't he. He managed to guess it eventually who it was and so eventually he bowed down in worship of Jesus. So, who did the blind man think that Jesus was? What would be another name that we might use? God, that's right. God had come in a human body and His name was Jesus. This is what he eventually understood and so though he had been blind at the start, he was the first to see with the eyes of his heart, to see the truth about Jesus, and part of our church family, part of the Girls and Boys Brigade is to help you ask your questions, to help us ask our questions about Jesus so that we can come to trust Him and worship Him for ourselves.

But, did you notice in the story the man had to do something to show his trust. What did he need to do? Jesus made that little mud pack and put it on his eyes. What did he have to do next? Can anybody remember? What did he do next? What did he do? Lauren - he had to go and wash it off, that's right. He had to go and wash it. It was an act of trust. Now, that man was born blind. Explorers and Anchor Boys, can you think what would he have seen for the first time? What would he have seen for the first time that would be so amazing? What do you think? Yeah, that. What he would have seen? The water. He'd never seen water before. What else would he see, what else even beyond that little pool, what other things would he see that would be so amazing? What do you think he might have seen? Some fish, and he'd never seen fish before. What else he might have seen not just at that moment but going back as he went back home? What would he have seen? What do you think? His food, his home, his family, his friends. He'd never seen any of that. What are the things that you think you look at and are so amazing? What other things do you think are so amazing? Right at the back. Yeah, yeah definitely. He would have seen the fish. He would have seen like the sun, like we're on a sunny day, never had seen the sun before. So, Jesus has given this man not only his sight but given this man life, new life, amazing life and in the very next chapter of the Bible he goes on to say 'I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.' That's why Jesus came, part of why He came, part of His purpose, to give us life to the full. We'll never experience all of it in this life but He came that we might have life, we might be on a journey towards fullness of life, it's part of the reason He died on

the cross, and part of the reason He rose again, so that we could have life to the full and it all begins by trusting Jesus, by choosing to trust Jesus in our everyday lives, trusting what He says in the Bible, putting that into practice, trusting what He says about Himself in the Bible, that He's the light of the world, He's the good shepherd and He is with us every day.

Boys and Girls, I hope this past year in Boys and Girls Brigade, that you have asked your questions and if you've got questions about Jesus then make sure you ask your officers, make it really tricky for them, I know they love the questions and if you've got questions in church then come ask your questions as well, ask your questions, that you can grow and trust and so that we remember, as we journey towards Easter, that part of the reason Jesus came was to bring us into fullness of life. I pray it may be so. Amen.

Now on your way in did you get a little candle? And if you're in the pews for our uniformed organizations there were some put at the end of the pew. So, if you can pass them along. Don't switch it on yet and Richard, we can skip on to the prayer bit, so maybe a second slide. So, there's a little black switch on the bottom that's how you switch it on, but don't use it yet, Okay, and what we're going to do is that we are going to pray together using this candle, okay. We're going to pray three short simple prayers so let's put off the light just now, okay, but during the prayer I'm going to invite you to switch it on, okay, as a sign of asking for God's light to come in to the world in different situations.

So can you try and think of someone, nice and quiet, think of someone who maybe needs help just now. Maybe they're sad, maybe they're unwell, maybe they're angry with something, maybe they're scared, maybe someone at school, might be someone in the church family, maybe someone in your family. Can you quietly think of someone. Maybe close your eyes just to help you think and to know that we're going to pray. Okay. So, let's pray together:

Heavenly Father, we're thinking of someone that we want to pray for, someone that we want Your light to come into their life and so we switch on our candle as a sign of that prayer. Please, our God, shine Your light into their life to bring hope, to bring life, to bring your peace. May fear and anger or despair or sadness go. May they know that You are near and you are the light of the world Lord Jesus. Amen.

Okay, let's switch it off again, switch it off again. Okay, I want you to think of something in the big wide world, maybe a situation that you know about, maybe someone who needs some help in the big wide world. So, not someone at school or in your family, something in the big wide world where you want God's light to come. Okay, can you try it in the quiet, just think of someone or something.

Okay, let's close our eyes again and let's pray:

Heavenly Father, we're all thinking of something that needs Your light to come into it. It might be the war in Ukraine. It might be a situation in the news we've heard about today. And so, we switch on our candles as a sign of asking for Your light to come into that

situation, to bring truth, to light, to bring Your wisdom to bear, to lead forward on a path of righteousness and peace. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

All right, switch off. One last prayer. Today is Mother's Day in case you forgot but we're not just thinking about mums, we're thinking about people who have had a positive impact in our lives. It might be your officers. It might be your mum. It might be a granny or an aunt. So, it could be someone who's helped you, who's a good role model to you, someone that's really been a good influence in your life. Can you think of someone. Someone that you're thankful for. Yeah, right, let's close our eyes and pray one more time:

Our God, we want to thank You for this person who's been a part of our life. They might not be with us anymore or they might be, and we thank you for their influence in our lives, We thank You for how they brought Your light into our lives. Maybe they shared something of You, maybe they shared something of Your image because they're made in Your image, something of Your light. And so, we put this candle on one last time to remember the light that's shown in them, Your light shining into our lives. We thank You for them and we ask that what they passed on to us, that You would help us to live out in our day-to-day lives. We want to thank You for all the officers and staff of the Girls and Boys Brigades. Thank-you for all they give and the light that they shine to the generations here in Brightons, in the wider Braes area. We ask your blessing upon them and upon each of our children and young people who are part of the Brigades. We ask that Your light would go with them across these summer months and they would come back in September full of stories and of joy, are full of having grown again and ready for a new session to begin. Guard them and keep them we pray. For we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.

You can switch it off and you can take this home. Maybe at home at night time you might want to say a little prayer and just switch on that candle as a sign that you are asking for God's light to be in your life. It's an act of trust. Faith is all an act of trust, of holding onto God and asking for His light and life to be in our lives.