

Work for the night is coming

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[0 : 0 0] John chapter 9 and as Jesus passed by he saw a man who was blind from his birth and his disciples asked him saying master who did sin this man or his parents that he was born blind Jesus answered neither hath this man sinned nor his parents but that the works of God should be made manifest in him then these words I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day the night cometh when no man can work I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day the night cometh when no man can work John 9 and verse 4 now these words of our text were drawn from the Lord Jesus Christ by a question from his disciples they asked who did sin this man or his parents that he was born blind our

Saviour's attention had been arrested by the sad but very common spectacle of a blind beggar and this particular blind beggar was blind from his birth it was congenital so that he had known nothing all his days but physical darkness it was therefore a pathetic sight and this condition in the blind man stirred as we would expect the very heart of the Lord Jesus and he was full of compassion but for the disciples this blind man's condition only seemed to pose for them a theological problem their position was that back of every defect was a particular sin and in this case it was either the man sin or his parents and so they said they posed this theological problem who sinned this man or his parents that he was born blind that he was born blind but Jesus ruled this out completely and indicated that this man's blindness happened for a purpose that the works that is the miraculous works of God might be displayed in the removal of the man's blindness and what Jesus did in fact at this point notice this carefully was to turn the thoughts of his disciples from their theological problem and from the theological speculation to practical Christianity he challenged them to work instead of speculate and to do something for God and man for the night is coming said Jesus when no man can work I must work the works of him who sent the me while it is day for the night cometh when no man can work. Well now looking at this very well known verse notice first of all the man who sees the work to be done. The man who sees the work to be done. I must work. That's what Jesus said. I must work. And it's a great thing to see that there's work to be done with a view to shouldering that work. And that's what we have before us here.

I must work. Notice first then the identity of the man who speaks. The identity of him. This is not the risen and glorified Christ who is speaking.

It is the man Christ Jesus. Jesus while on earth. When he says I must work he is referring here to his earthly ministry. To the day that was given him by God the Father within which he had to work.

To the day he was given to open blind eyes to raise the dead to heal the sick. There was an hour given Jesus which was to strike. There was a day given to him in which he had within which he had to work. And he is speaking here of his earthly ministry within that day.

[4 : 4 6] And he says elsewhere my Father worketh hitherto and I work. In other words my Father has always been at work and I too am at work. For I and my Father are one.

Now the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus is the worker in chief.

No one was ever given work to do as he was given. No one was ever asked to shoulder responsibility as he was asked to shoulder it.

No one ever gave obedience to the will of God at the level which he gave obedience. He said my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish the work.

Now this same Son of Man is not only the worker in chief but he is also our example in chief and encourager in chief.

[5 : 58] The encourager in chief of all who have ever worked in the vineyard for the Lord. The Lord Jesus came and he was sent principally to do God's work.

But at the same time he became an example for every one of us. An example in diligence and devotion and faithfulness to the work of God and to God himself.

So what do we have here? Just this that not only are we co-heirs with Christ, heirs together with him, but we are also co-workers.

Jesus ever associates his disciples in his work. And this association is given weight in this particular verse.

By the fact that in many ancient manuscripts it is the pronoun we that is used in this text and not the pronoun I.

[7 : 07] So that it runs, we must work the work of him who sent me while it is day for the night comes. Be that as it may, for many other parts of scripture we know that we are workers together with God.

And my dear friends, the responsibility is breathtaking. As is the privilege. Workers together with our divine Lord.

I wonder if every one of us here tonight is in that position. Are we all in this position that we are workers together with Christ?

Do we all share this privilege? We've got to remember that working for him and working with him Presupposes that we have already come to him for grace and for salvation.

For our Lord Jesus Christ is most particular about his workers. And he will have none who are not at one with him through faith, by grace, united to him in their effectual calling.

[8 : 26] Is that our position therefore? We say we are workers, we are doing our bit but the great issue is do we really belong to the Lord Jesus?

Are we united to him by faith? If so then we are co-workers and we work the works of him who was sent. Or it is day for the night is coming when no man can watch.

That's his identity then. But notice now his sense of urgency. He says here I must work the works of him who sent me.

I must. For Jesus it was not I may if I wish or I can if I like. It was I must.

It was a divine imperative. And it was an imperative that came from himself and it was an imperative that he put upon himself. I must work the works of him who sent me.

[9 : 32] Now this sense of urgency in the Lord Jesus was no new departure in his development in the development of his nature and character. For this sense of urgency was inbred.

It was part of his sinless nature. He was only 12 years of age when this came out very clearly. In these well known words wish he not that I must be about my father's business.

And so this stealth need to serve and to do his father's business was with him right on to the very end. And so we read in the scriptures such things as I must preach the kingdom of God.

I must abide at your house. So must the son of man be lifted up. Other sheep I have which are not of this fold them also I must I must bring.

So he must need to go through Samaria. I must work.

[10 : 45] His sense of urgency. One writer sees in this particular phrase he sees in these words a kind of early rising bell.

A work bell. You can hear the bell rousing the workers from their beds. I must work. And there was indeed a work bell as it were for the Lord Jesus.

What was it? It was I believe his great compassion and concern for those in need. You see it was when he saw two blind eyes before him that he said I must work.

Two sightless eyes spoke eloquently to him of the need and they were a summons to him they called him to work and before the blind man ever uttered one word Jesus saw the blinders and he said I must work.

The urgency he felt the necessity he felt and what a lesson this is for all of us. wherever we see suffering let it not be a matter for speculation as to the why and therefore but a matter for help.

[12 : 11] I must work. I must help. Wherever there is trouble within the little sphere in which we live and move let us not say well I would like to help but I really haven't the kind I must.

I must work. I must help. Whenever there is a Macedonian cry come over and help us a cry to come and help in the work that is set then we must give deep to that cry and we must say to ourselves I must work I must help in every way I can.

Whatever the call is for distribution of literature output putting a nail in putting on paint or whatever I must if I can. But above all let there be an urgency about our work of pain and our work of witnessing and our work of teaching for Jesus says he who heals you heals me and he who heals me heals him who heals me.

My dear friends may this spirit of the master get him to all of us. I must I must work I must help that was the spirit of the master he was no spectator looking on from a distance nor he was nor was he a sinner of theory he was no athelium who spent his time in nothing else than to tell her he was of some new things he was the rest of the truth he said I must work and he who did so wonderfully on earth in a short time given him continues that work in heaven for we have not a high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmity but we do have a high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmity we have a great high priest who knows our frailty our weakness and has fellow feeling with us in our temptation for he was hunted in all points like us we are yet without him and in his high priestly office he continues the one and he works for all for whom he said his perfect black that's the first thing the one the man who sees the work to be done now we come to the second part of the question which is the God who gives the work to be done for Jesus says

I must watch the what of him he comes the what of him who is what now let's take that to the top and to works that are of the same order I must watch my father's work for that reason says Jesus what I said and I believe that this is the supreme reason for the urgency that Jesus felt and said I must watch simply because the works were not his own they were his father's works and he came to do his father's will and to do his father's works and he did them with them well then that were the works that Jesus came to do well for one thing there is a basic work of

[16 : 10] God for that Jesus was sent into the world there was a basic one and there is still a basic one in chapter 6 of this gospel and verse 29 the people you remember said to Jesus what must we do to what the works of God and Jesus said this is the works of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent you see there is the basic work it is the work of him that we might believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and Christ what for which the father sent him into the world was to perform this basic work in us in other words to make believers of us for by nature we have no faith by nature we have no belief in Christ but he was sent to make believers of us and to make believers of us is indeed the work of

God Father Son and Holy Spirit for the faith of God is not of ourselves it is the gift of God and it's this work that becomes this thing from all other works for God to see the work of faith and Jesus was sent into the world to make believers of us to call us to himself so that we might believe on him and have everlasting life so there is a basic work of God for which Jesus was sent into the world but now we look at this that there are therefore subsequent subsequent works of God for which Jesus was sent into the world now think of what the world and first of all as far as the Lord Jesus was concerned I must work the work of him who sent me well those works were for one thing

Christ's very human work his very human work work as the one who was born of our bones and flesh of our flesh who took our nature so that he wept with those who wept he rejoiced he comforted he controlled he taught the children and so on God the worker is one who has shallow healing with us and he is a worker in a very human way drawing alongside understanding our weaknesses our temptations he makes sense to him even if they don't know this makes sense to ourselves he understands us he knows our pain and he remembers we are dust and he draws near in his controlling power and grace he he but of course principally there were his miraculous works that is works that were according to the will of the father and he says

I must watch the work of him he sent me the works that him miraculous works according to his father's will feeding the sick raising the dead controlling the elements feeding the hungry and the greatest of all saving the lost for he came into the world to seek them to save that sick was lost and my dear friends before the Lord Jesus Christ ever came into this world and ever came to this earth he had another miraculous what given him to do this time in the realm of creation for the scripture ascribed creation not only to the father but also to the son and this same writer John in his gospel says for example in verse 3 of chapter 1 all things were made by him by the word by the

Lord Jesus and without him was made not and without him nothing was made and then in verse 12 we read these in verse 10 we read these words he was in the world and the world was made by him Paul said by him where all things made by him and for him and by him all things consist they cohere and they hold together I must watch the work of him who helped me and creation was part of his work but not only was he given the work of creation by the father but also the work of recreation of making out of sinful men and women a new creation in himself look at this blind man for one thing this man had a deficiency of sight so

[21 : 33] Jesus created sight and the man came here and the same Lord Jesus did the same thing for the deficiency this man had of inward sight he was an unbeliever and yet before the Lord had finished with him this man said to Jesus Lord I believe and he was with him now that was the work of God that Jesus did in his man to his man sight and his man soul but not only did this man have a deficiency of sight he also had a deficiency of life because he was a ignorant man all he knew of Christ was his name Jesus and that he opened his eyes that anything more he wasn't sure of at all and so he said to

Jesus Lord who is he that I might believe I don't know who he is I don't know how he is he was a man who had a deficiency of life and so Jesus created inner light illumined his soul so that he could say Lord I believe and worship him another work of God the Father and this work Christ will go on doing until the end of the day giving sight and light giving captivity and liberty by bringing into captivity every thought to his obedience the work of him is sent great work marvellous work stamped by the divine sight work of God the work of him he sent you back into the world right now if we are here to worship men's gift created inside

Jesus again we remember that we are associated with him in the world we cannot watch miracles and we certainly cannot save a soul that is his work and his alone but other areas of service and other areas of work are open to us for example there is the nurturing of those whose eyes have been opened and into whose darkness has come the light of the gospel building them up in their most holy faith teaching them the things of God not but but if we feel unequal to us there are still many avenues of service and work open to us there is much work to be done and we do all as And listen to it.

As ever in the great past masters I, for there's work there to be done, you in your small corner, and I in mine.

What's the second thing you notice then? The man who sees the work to be done, and the Lord who gives the work to be done, is work.

[25 : 10] And now lastly we notice, the law that governs the work to be done. The law that governs the work to be done. I must watch the work of him who sent me, while it is day, the night comes when no man can watch.

Now the work of God is governed by the will and purpose and law of God. And first of all, it is governed as to time. The work of God is governed as to time.

I must watch the work of God while it is day. While it is day. Well, the Lord Jesus on earth had a day.

And the length of that day is given in the next verse of our text. Verse 5, where Jesus says, as long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world, there was Christ's day while he was in the world.

This was the time given into one. Now this was an appointed day. For the day of redemption is as surely appointed as the day of judgment.

[26 : 32] God has appointed a day in which he was judged the world in righteousness by that man he was ordained. But he also appointed a day within which Christ had to watch to provide and to purchase redemption.

It was an appointed day he had. It was a short day. Only 33 years old he was when it closed. 30 years of it were given over to preparation and only 3 years were taken up with the actual accomplishing of his warfare and the finishing of his work.

But on what was wrought in that short time I would guess to me last that I gave what he did in that brief prayer.

And the day that Jesus did was not only appointed and short but sufficient. He needed no extension of time. There were no extenuating circumstances that required such a thing.

His day was sufficient because it was never swandered. He was always about his power's business. And so must we.

[27 : 45] I must be about my power's business. Our day like Jesus is appointed and it's short yet it's sufficient.

Its sufficient time has been given us in the mercy of God for a moment of life. For preparation for eternity. and also sufficient time to do the works of God.

One person said Oh God give me works till the end of my life and life till the end of my work.

And so Jesus was governed as to time. I must watch the works of him who sent me while it is day.

That's where we are now. But in this of his next time that Christ's work was governed not only as to time but as to opportunity. the night is coming then no man no man can watch governed as to opportunity.

[29 : 01] Well the night came for Jesus. It was night when Jesus was betrayed. And then on the cross there was darkness over all the earth from the trip into the night hour.

and the darkest part of that night was when Jesus said My God My God why hast thou forsaken me?

And the final part of that night was when he said It is finished. Father into thy hands I commend my spirit. And when he said this he gave up the ghost he gave up his spirit.

The night comes when the watch is finished when no man can watch. And so it is for us the night of death comes when our work is finished.

And when the night comes for us there are no exemptions and there are no exemptions and opportunities opportunities for service are over forever.

[30 : 19] As far as this world is concerned the night comes when no man can watch. But my dear friends it is simply because of this very fact this very truth of God it is because of this that the night is coming when we come at God that whatever now our hand finds to do we must use with all our might for there is no watch or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave to which we are then.

the very fact that the night is coming when no man can watch and that we are to watch quite a thing today this is a call to break with drowsiness and slatheriness and slouchness in the affairs of God.

You will have a strong urge to heed this call and to take this to heart and to break with each thing forever. My dear friends if we do not have our nerve to do this then we have great need to examine our conscience to examine the reality of our conscience for surely our real son wishes to be the will of his father who is in heaven.

We must watch why is his day because the night is coming what till the last beam paid us paid us to buy no more what for the night is coming hence man's work is all.

Well there's a message we have this great example set before of the work of the supreme worker who did all things well and who has committed to those who are his workmanship the great task of carrying it on not on our own but by his great and almighty grace.

[32 : 37] Let us take these words away with it. I must work the works of him who sent me while it is there for the night comes when no man can yet.

May the very fact of this fill us with a sense of urgency so that we say not I will if I may I can if I like but I must because the night comes when no man can yet.

Let us pray. Our gracious God we pray that by which impress upon our hearts and our minds tonight the great privilege we have in having a worker such as Jesus and we thank you oh Lord that because he is a divine worker that those who are his are his worshipers.

May we all know what is it that we have been created made new in Christ Jesus and through his divine power and grace.

And we pray oh Lord that we would see him as our great exemplar as the one who sets before us an example of devotion and of faithfulness and of earnestness and of urgency.

[34 : 24] We are reminded all around us in so many ways that time is short that the night is coming and that we are to serve thee while it is day.

And Lord may we do that basic work and may we have that work of pain in the Lord Jesus Christ and then may we spend out years in a labour of love for him who loved us and gave himself for us.

We pray that thou will bless us as we enter into this new week. Pray that thou will guide us and direct us in everything. And as we go through the week may these words of our Lord come ringing to us come home to our minds when we are inclined to be slovenly or slack or lackadaisical help us Lord to remember what thou hast been saying to us this evening so that we would not do anything this week or any other week that would bring dishonor to thy name or that would be so out of line with the example of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray that thou will bless the work of the church this week. We pray to remember the very ordinary and mundane work of the church this week as the various committees meet as men come from all over the country to meet here in order to discuss the affairs of thy kingdom.

Give wisdom and guidance we humbly pray. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon all that is done and may that work as every other work within the church of Christ be done orderly and devotedly and with faithfulness to give it.

[36 : 28] We pray that thou would bless each one of us now before this. Bless us in our homes much over us without going out and coming in and as the evening shadows lengthen and as this day comes to its close grant us that peace that passeth all understanding and all these things we ask in Jesus name and for his name Amen.