**The Jesus Life – Session two**

**“Buy from me Eye Salve”** (Rev. 3, 14-22)

1. **Your Perception determines your life**

1a) Today we’re thinking about Spiritual Blindness. Jesus told the Laodicean church they were blind. He invited them to buy from him eye salve so that they could see.

1b) How you look at the world determines how you live in the world. “As a man thinketh in his heart, so he is” (Prov 23, 7 AV). Henry Ford of motor car fame said; “Think you can, think you can’t, either way, you’re right.”

1c) 10 spies said “we can’t” and didn’t (Num. 13). A man called Paul said I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. That’s exactly what he did. (Phil. 4, 13).

1d) A whole army of warriors looked at a 9ft giant warrior and were dismayed. Every morning and every evening for 6 whole weeks as Goliath came out to make his stand. Twice a day, for 40 days, they ran away terrified (1 Sam. 17, 16).

 A 16-year-old shepherd boy looked at the same giant and said; “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God”. Armed with only a sling and a stone, he killed him. (1 Sam. 17, 26).

1e) Jesus said; “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! (Matt. 6, 22-23).

1. **A Difference of opinion**

2a) Jesus told the Laodicean church that they were blind. The most surprising thing was that they didn’t know it.

2b) You would think that someone who was blind would know that they were blind. With spiritual blindness, most often people don’t realise it. People usually believe that their spiritual outlook is right (otherwise they wouldn’t believe it). They become accustomed to the world they live in thinking this is how the Christian life should be.

2c) The Laodiceans thought that they were prospering spiritually. “I am rich” (in Christ). I have acquired wealth (I know more than I used to). I don’t need anything more”. I have all that I need in Christ. Sounds like many modern Pentecostals!

2d) Jesus had a different opinion. He said “I know your deeds” (v 15). You only think you are doing well spiritually because you are blind. You can’t see yourself how I see you. “You are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.” (v. 17).

1. **I’m doing fine because I’m a Christian**

3a) When Jesus calls them “Wretched, pitiful, poor blind and naked”, he is not talking about their **position**. He’s not saying that they aren’t saved. He’s talking about their **performance** (saying that they aren’t living “the Jesus life”).

3b) Most believers think “I’ve given my life to Jesus. I’m saved. I pray (a bit), I read my Bible sometimes (for a few minutes a week). I know I’m not Billy Graham, but my spiritual life is good enough. God is with me and will help me whenever I need it.

3c) Paul reminds us about the people of Israel under Moses (1 Cor. 10, 1-6). They were dramatically saved (from Egypt). They saw God part the Red Sea for them. They lived under the Shekinah presence of God, with God visible as a cloud by day and a fire by night. They had miraculous provision of bread and meat in the middle of a desert and drank water that miraculously sprang from a solid rock. They were in a closer walk with God than most of us. Yet none of them made it into the promised land. Their bodies fell in the wilderness. They never inherited the promises that should have been theirs. So why should it be any different with us if we don’t live the way that God wants us to?

1. **Eye Salve**

4a) Laodica was the ancient world’s centre for treating Eye diseases. It had a large and famous medical school whose most famous graduate was Demosthenes Philalethes, the author of the most influential work in the field of ophthalmology of the ancient period. His work, *Ophthalmicus*, which discussed the diseases of the eyes, was used for centuries, even into the Middle Ages.

4b) Laodicea was famous for the production of an eye salve (ointment) called “Phrygian powder”, made to a top secret formula. We know today that the local Rock salts, coming from the nearby geothermal pools of Pamukkale were rich in Zinc and aluminium sulphates, substances that are still used today to treat eye problems. The Laodiceans used to grind up the local rock salts and mix them with olive oil.

4c) Just like people with eye problems would come from all over the ancient world would come to Laodicea to buy Eye Salve, Jesus said to the church; “I counsel you to buy from me salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.” (Rev. 3, 18).

1. **The root of spiritual blindness**

5a) Spiritual blindness came into the world when Adam and Eve fell. That first sin came about through the serpent attacking Eve’s eyes. Jesus said that **your eyes are the gate through which either darkness or light comes into your life.**

5b) In the beginning Adam and Eve’s eyes were **the same as God’s eyes**. They looked at their world through God’s perspective. Everything was good and beautiful. Their lives were full of light. Even though they were naked they looked at each other and at God without fear, shame or lust. They had the same perspective as God.

5c) Satan suggested a different perspective to Eve. “There’s more that you could have. There’s something you’re missing out on. God is withholding something good from you”. That was how the world looked through his eyes.

5d) Remember Satan used to be the highest of the archangels, surround by beauty and light in the presence of God Himself, but through his eyes it wasn’t enough. (Isaiah 14,12-15; Ezk. 28,1-17).

1. **The tree of the knowledge of good and evil**

6a) “In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2, 9). All paths led to that place.

6b) There was the tree of life, which they were allowed to eat from as often as they wanted. Next to it was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which was forbidden. God told them if they ate from that tree they would surely die.

6c) One tree was the tree of life. The other was the tree of death. They were side by side. One was the tree of God (Jesus said “I am the life”). The other tree was the tree of the devil, who was curled up nestling in its branches.

6d) The tree was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve were already living in the knowledge of the good. The only thing that they could gain by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was knowledge of evil.

6e) The two trees were planted next to each other. They couldn’t eat from the tree of life without choosing not to eat from the tree of death.

1. **Looking at the world through the Devil’s eyes**

7a) The devil tried to put his perspective of the world on Eve. “I should be God. God is trying to stop me from having what is rightfully mine. I don’t need to do anything that God says. I don’t believe that what God says is true”. *“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Gen. 3, 4-5).*

7b) The devil is himself living in deception. Even when he knows the truth, he is a liar and he might not tell the truth. What he says is probably a lie, or at best a half truth. We should never believe the devil’s promises, because they almost never work out the way he says. The devil promised Adam & Eve that they would be wiser, happier, healthier, like God and that their eyes would be opened, but in fact the Bible tells us; *“Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then … they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden …So the Lord God banished them from the garden”.* (Gen 3, 7-9, 23). In that day they were banished from the garden, they lost their close relationship with God and with each other. Instead of becoming like God, they lost their likeness of God. From that day onwards, they started to become spiritually blind. Death and God’s curse came into their life from that moment onwards.

7c) You can’t eat from the forbidden fruit and still live unchanged in God’s garden.

7d) When it says “Their eyes were opened”, what it really happened was that their eyes were opened to evil. Now they started to see the world not through God’s eyes but through the devil eyes. Whereas before they could only see good, now they could only see evil. What had been good, safe and beautiful was now dangerous, frightening and shameful.

7e) At first we have a choice; whether to accept the devil’s perspective or not. After we’ve accepted the devil’s perspective a few times, God’s perspective fades and before long, we can’t see it at all. We see the world through the devil’s eyes.

1. **What is the world like looking through the Devil’s eyes?**

8a) Jesus said; “If your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is full of darkness” (Matt. 6, 23). Instead of love, joy peace, and all the other fruit of the Spirit, if your perception is wrong, you end up living in anxiety & bitterness with a critical spirit.

Here’s some of the characteristics of looking at the world through the devil’s eyes.

8b) **Dissatisfaction.** This was Satan’s first temptation, that things could and should be different for you. **Jesus says;** “I have learnt to be content in all circumstances” (Phil. 4, 11-12). “Do everything without complaining or arguing” (Phil. 2, 14)

8c) **Pride**. It is easy to think that we are better than we are and better than others (Rev. 3, 17). **Jesus says;** “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought”; “Consider others as more important than yourselves” (Rom 12, 3; Phil. 2, 3).

8d) **Fear.** It is easy to let fear determine what we think, say or do, rather than letting God lead us. **Jesus says;** “Do not be afraid”. This is the most frequent command in scripture, expressed in many different ways, repeated over 500 times.

8e) **Shame.**  It is easy to think that we are no good and that God could never use us. “They covered themselves because they were naked ... they hid from God” (Gen. 3, 7-8). **Jesus says;** “The Lord ..will take great delight in you; he will rejoice over you with singing.” (Zeph. 3, 17).

8f) **Unbelief**. We can easily think of reasons why our situation is too hard for God to change. **Jesus says;** “Nothing is too hard for God” (Jer. 32, 17).

8g) **Judging.** We often believe that we can judge what is good and bad in a person or circumstance, that we possess the knowledge of good and evil. **Jesus says;** “Do not judge or you too will be judged” (Matt. 7, 1).

8h) **Accusing**. Our judgments lead us to criticise, accuse and condemn. We side with the accuser of the brethren instead of God. **Jesus says;** “Accept one another, just as Christ accepted you” (rom. 15, 7).

8i) **Sinful Desires.** Satan encourages to take things for ourselves if we want them; material possessions (cars, new clothes, etc) sex, power, greed, selfishness etc. **Jesus says;** “Life does not consist in an abundance of possessions” (Luke 12, 15).

1. **Jesus wants to heal our spiritual blindness**

9a) Jesus says to the church “I counsel you to buy from me …salve to put on your eyes, so you can see” (Rev. 3, 18).

9b) When Jesus says “Buy from me” – he means make a costly investment of time and effort.

9c) Eye salve was made with a mixture of Rock and Oil. We need to spend time with the word and the Spirit. Read the word. Study. Talk to others. Worship. Prayerfully examine your attitudes. Work on changing your mindset.

9d) Just like ointment needed to be worked in, we need to work God’s eye salve into our thinking, our emotions, our relationships, our activities, our character.

9e) As we start to look at the world through Jesus’ eyes, the darkness will lift and the world will become a different place for us.

1. **Looking through Jesus’ eyes**
2. **Love**. Jesus always wants the best for people and to draw them close to himself.
3. **Grace & Forgiveness**. Whatever people had done wrong, Jesus forgave them and gave them a new start. He treated them with mercy, grace and kindness.
4. **Prophetic**. Jesus saw the inner treasure that was buried so that most wouldn’t even imagine it was there. He works to create a new identity within people (eg. Peter).
5. **Faith**. Jesus knew that God loved him perfectly, was always with him and was in complete control of the circumstances of his life. Nothing could happen to him out of his Father’s will. Nothing was too hard for God – hence the miracles.
6. **Truth**. Jesus was brutally honesty, telling Peter that Satan was speaking through him, calling others “a brood of vipers, hypocrites”, etc. “Fear of man” had no influence on his life.
7. **Justice.** Jesus was zealous against evil and opposed those who practised it. He actively worked to help the poor, the needy, the outcasts, the lost.