



Pastor's Page

An Eye Test

As I'm sure you know I'm not a great fan of Hospitals. Don't get me wrong I think they are wonderful places for those who are unwell and I feel privileged to be able to spend much of my time visiting patients. I also believe that we are very blessed and fortunate in this country to have such a thing as the National Health Service. However, I'm still not fond of going to hospitals for myself, especially if anyone with a syringe is going to come within 100 yards of me! So how come I recently booked myself in for a minor operation that involved a medical person inserting two needles very close to my eyes? (sorry I'll just have to sit down for a minute I've come over all faint!) Well the answer to the question is.....vanity!

Let me explain; Quite a few months ago I noticed a tiny spot or wart just under one of my eyes, but didn't really take much notice of it. Then a fairly short time afterwards I noticed another one on my other eye lid. Much as I disliked them I thought they'll probably go away if I just ignore them. (I'm sure you can see the logic in my thinking!) However, they didn't go away in fact they seemed to me to be getting larger and I was getting to dislike them more and more. However, I told myself "you're overreacting, probably nobody else in the world has noticed them" This theory of mine held up until my 19 year old nephew made a comment about them! That was it - the game was up – they were visible to the whole world! So it was at this point that I decided that drastic action must be taken. I asked my doctor to book me in for an appointment with an eye specialist and subsequently on the morning of 16 July I went to the City Hospital for the showdown!

At the hospital there was the usual two hour wait before I was called in. As I approached the theatre (or whatever it's called) I noticed a guitar sitting on a chair. Desperately trying to take my mind off eyes and needles I said to the porter, "whose guitar's that?" "Mine" he said, "you don't play do you?" "Yes", a bit I replied. "You can't play the blues can you?" "Sure" I said (feeling very blue at that moment) "Go on" he said "please play the blues" So in my attractive hospital gown with this porter clapping along I played a really mean blues! He loved it and it definitely took my mind of the operation! (so much so that I almost missed the op!) However, the man with the needles did his worst (actually he did a great job) and after a nice cup of tea, a bit more of the "blues" I made my way home. And the result? - Well I got a nice eye patch some bruising around the eyes but thankfully a perfect physical appearance! (only joking!)

Now this is the challenge for me - If I'm prepared to go this far (letting a man stick needles in my eyes!) to deal with a physical blemish, how far will I go in order to deal with a spiritual blemish? Jesus talked about cutting off hands and gouging out eyes if they cause us to sin. (Matthew 5:27-30) This is graphic and metaphorical language used by Christ to demonstrate the deadly nature of sin. Jesus died upon the cross in great pain in order to deal with sin and pay the price for our wrongdoing. Only he could do this. We receive this salvation as a gift from God. (1 Corinthians 9:15) Then we have to live out the Christian life - "Running with perseverance the race marked out for us - throwing off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles" (Hebrews 12:2) This is the challenge. We have to run, we have to persevere and we have to get rid of hindrances - and if a particular sin has so entangled us, we may need some spiritual surgery too!

It will be painful, but believe me, you can trust the man holding the needles!

29th July 2007