

# The Young People's Magazine

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**Issued by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland  
Reformed in Doctrine, Worship and Practice**

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*“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them” Ecclesiastes 12:1*



**October 2012**

**Vol 77 • No 10**

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**Cover Picture:** Loch Carron. See page 183.

## The Young People's Magazine

**Published by** the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Scottish charity number SC003545.

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**Material for the magazine** should reach the editor by the beginning of the previous month.

**Subscriptions, Renewals, Changes of Address** should be sent to the General Treasurer: Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; e-mail: wc.fpchurch@btconnect.com; tel: 0141 332 9283. The subscription year ends in December, and subscriptions should be sent in January each year for the following 12 months. Subscription rates, including postage, are: F P Magazine £23.50 (£1.80 per copy); Y P Magazine £14.00 (90p per copy); both magazines £35.50. All queries should be directed to the General Treasurer, not to the printer.

**Free Presbyterian Magazine:** The Church's main magazine is *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*. Send to the General Treasurer at the above address for a free sample copy. See above for subscription rates.

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Vol 77

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No 10

## Felix Trembled

A few months ago I had to leave home one afternoon to catch a ferry and travel to Lochcarron. That morning, after I got up, I thought about some of the things I would like to get done that day. It would have been good to have been able to attend to some things, but I was most unlikely to have time for them. Others were important, like doing a final check on the July issue of this Magazine and of *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* and then sending them away by e-mail, and it would have been very awkward if I had not got this done. But one thing was necessary: I had to get everything ready and pack my case, so that I could leave in time to catch the ferry. If I did not get to the ferry terminal in time, I would not have been able to get away to Lochcarron that day. I might have arrived only in time to see the ship sailing away into the distance.

So there may be many things we would like to do in life. Many of them are important; and some are necessary, like eating and drinking and sleeping. Yet there is only one thing which is *absolutely* necessary, and most people ignore it. That is to seek the Lord. If we do not seek Him, we will not be ready to die; we will still be unholy, without true love to God; and our sins will still be unforgiven. No one in that condition can enter heaven; the only place for them is hell, where they will be separated from God for ever and have to endure the punishment of their sins to all eternity.

Many people will promise themselves that they will seek God at some future time. Yet that time never seems to come; they keep putting the matter off. They never feel that it is really urgent; they always feel that there is plenty of time left, especially if they are young. There is no doubt that, in our time, people live longer. But not everybody does. Even young people may die. How important to be ready! The thought that there is always plenty more time to seek the Lord is one of the most dangerous of the devil's lies. He wants nobody to be ready to die. Do not listen to him.

Do you remember reading in the Bible about Felix? He trembled when Paul, who was his prisoner, was telling him about "righteousness, temperance, and judgement to come" (Acts 24:25). Paul was speaking to him about doing

what is right, about living in a sober and restrained way, and about appearing before the judgement seat of Christ at the end of the world. Felix was trembling because his conscience was telling him that Paul was right and he was wrong. But he did not like to have his conscience disturbed; he did not want to hear any more of these troubling thoughts from Paul. So he sent Paul away, but he promised that, at some other time – “at a convenient season” – he would again listen to his prisoner. That promise made his conscience feel a lot easier.

Felix saw Paul many times after that, but all he now wanted was a bribe; if Paul paid him some money, Felix would set him free. It is most unlikely that Felix ever kept his promise to listen to Paul again; so it is even more unlikely that his sins ever troubled him again in this life, or that he ever sought the Lord. Certainly the Bible does not tell us that he did so.

Felix stands in the Bible as a warning beacon to us all. *We* are to look at him, and we are to think. We are to think seriously. We are to take to heart that the way Felix reacted to Paul is the way that we should *not* react. It will do us no real harm to tremble in this life; indeed it may bring us to seek the Lord. But “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31) at death – which *will* happen if we are unholy, if we do not love God, if our sins have not been forgiven. So, unlike Felix, we should consider carefully what the Bible tells us; we should listen seriously to what preachers tell us on the basis of the Bible. And when the sermon is over and we go home, we must not forget what we have heard. We should think over it, because a scriptural sermon is a message from God Himself.

And we should pray about what we have heard. Even before we go to church, we should ask God to bless to us what we will hear there. We should pray that we will take seriously the warnings about sin and about a lost eternity. We should pray to be made willing and able to look to Christ by faith, when we hear about Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners. While we are listening to a sermon, we should be asking God to bless the truth to us. And when we come home again, we should try, if possible, to go aside and pray for God's blessing to follow the whole service. It is a special time when those who have not yet believed in Christ, as the Saviour of sinners, should seek the Lord. You might never have another opportunity.

Remember Felix; the most dangerous point about his reaction was that he hardened his heart against the truth; he resisted Paul's teaching, and ever afterwards he was far more resistant to the truth than he was before. He had plenty more opportunities to listen to Paul, but he was unwilling to take them.

Now is the time to seek the Lord; tomorrow may be too late. Do not despise your opportunities. Christ still calls: “Look unto Me”.

# God's Providence

## 5. More About Understanding It

*Rev W A Weale*

This is the last part of a paper, given at this year's Youth Conference, which had four main points: (1.) God's works of providence are ongoing; (2.) They are extensive; (3.) As to their nature, they are holy, wise and powerful; (4.) As to our interpretation of them, that they are mysterious. Last month's article began to discuss the last of these. It made two points: (1) We must exercise great care in interpreting providence; (2) We must never try to interpret providence without referring to God's Word. Now there are three more points.

**3.** We must acknowledge our limitations in all of this. There are many things that we just cannot explain. The prosperity of the wicked was a problem to Job, as it was to Asaph until he went to God's sanctuary and saw "their end".

Another great problem is why there is so much suffering in the world, and especially among believers, even allowing for Professor Murray's explanation, quoted in the last article. Some of us have read about the terrible sufferings in Europe – in France and the Netherlands and among the Waldensians in the sixteenth century. In the next century, the Covenanters experienced the same kind of sufferings in our own country. And these are just a small sample of such sufferings throughout the world, even to this very day.

Why did God permit His people to undergo such suffering in the past? Why does He do so now? In his booklet on providence, J J Murray asks the question: "What is the Lord seeking to teach us through these unpleasant experiences?" He gives six answers: (1) Sufferings are to try us. (2) Sufferings are to expose our sins. (3) Sufferings are to build character. (4) Sufferings are to bring us to know God better. (5) Sufferings produce fruit in our lives and prepare us for usefulness. (6) Sufferings lead us to make God our all and to prepare us for glory.

While these points may go some way to explaining the sufferings of nations and individuals, they obviously do not clear away all the mystery, as Job's trials highlight. Perhaps it will be fitting here to refer to the prophet Habakkuk. He was at a loss to understand why God was permitting His people to suffer by not dealing with the evils in Judah; there was such injustice, violence and evil of all kinds. In reply to his question, God said that He was about to send the Babylonian army to punish Judah.

This raised even more problems for Habakkuk. The Babylonians were worse than the people of Judah! Yes, replied the Lord, but He would deal with them also in His own time. But the great lesson taught to Habakkuk is

the great lesson we also must learn. It was this: "The just shall live by his faith". We must believe, even when we cannot understand and explain, that God does all things well and that all His works and ways are perfect. And we must trust Him even when His providences and His promises seem hard to reconcile.

Commenting on this, Thomas Watson, the great Puritan writer, says, "God is to be trusted when His providences seem to run contrary to His promises. God promised David to give him the crown, to make him king; but providence turns contrary to His promises: David was pursued by Saul, was in danger of his life. But all this while, it was David's duty to trust God. The Lord doth oftentimes, by cross providence [one that seems to cut across His promise], bring to pass His promise.

"God promised Paul the lives of all that were with him in the ship, but now the providence of God seems to run quite contrary to His promise. The wind blows, the ship splits and breaks in pieces; and thus God fulfilled His promise. Upon the broken pieces of the ship, they all come safe to shore.

"Trust God", Watson concludes, "when providences seem to run quite contrary to promises." We believe indeed that it is only in eternity that God's people will really come to see that His works of providence, in preserving and governing His creatures and their actions, are all "holy and wise and powerful".

4. We must learn to be content with God's providence. We see many instances in the Bible of the Israelites complaining in the wilderness and of God's anger against them for this. And in 1 Corinthians 10:11 we are told that "all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition". So we must learn that discontentment is a great sin – even discontentment with the weather, for instance, for it is complaining against God's providence. "Wherefore", asks Jeremiah, "should a living man complain?" (Lamentations 3:39), and Paul exhorts us to "be content with such things as ye have" (Hebrews 13:5).

5. We must seek true wisdom from God if we are to interpret providence rightly. In Psalm 25:4, David prays, "Show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths". From what he goes on to say later in that Psalm, it is clear that David was used to being given light on his ways: "The meek will He guide in judgement: and the meek will He teach His way" (verse 9); and again: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant" (verse 14). We are then to seek true wisdom through prayer.

What is this "true wisdom", that we need if we are to interpret providence rightly? Thomas Boston, in volume 1 of his *Commentary on the Shorter Catechism*, defines this wisdom as:

(1) *Spiritual wisdom*. “He that is spiritual judges all things” (1 Corinthians 2:15). “Carnal wisdom”, says Boston, “is no good observer of providence, as the blind man is no fit judge of colours.”

(2) *Scriptural wisdom*. For, Scripture is the pattern, and providence the work. Those who study the language of heaven in providence, must consult the Scriptures as the dictionary for that language.

(3) *Practical wisdom*. “The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein” (Psalm 111:2). “Even scriptural notions floating in the head”, concludes Boston, “will do but little service; but sinking into the heart, reduced unto practice, they will be of good use here.”

How are we to take note of the providences of God? A S Paterson, in his book on *The Shorter Catechism*, thus replies to this question: “The providences of God are to be observed with humility and reverence, under a sense of our weakness to penetrate into them (Romans 11:34); and with gratitude and thankfulness, because there is always some mixture of mercy with judgement in this life (Psalm 101:1)”.

Perhaps it is fitting, in conclusion, to note the two general points with which Martyn Lloyd-Jones concludes his chapter on providence in his *Great Doctrines of the Bible*. The first is made in the light of such verses as Romans 8:28: “All things work together for good to them that love God”. In the end, the whole of providence, everything that is going on in this world, is for the sake of God’s people. And were it not for His people, all would be destroyed. His second point is a warning about the danger of focusing too narrowly on any particular matter and to be “cautious, and have a great concern for the glory and name of God when we claim any particular event as an instance of His special providence, either with regard to us or our country”.

## “I’ve Found the Saviour Precious”

It was an autumn evening in the 1830s. A student was travelling back to college; he had been absent for several weeks because he was ill. It was now nine o’clock and, when he stepped out of the coach at an inn, he was exhausted; so he went straight to bed. In the room there were two beds, one diagonally opposite the other. He must have fallen asleep very quickly.

But about an hour later he was wakened when the door of his room was thrown open and someone hurried in. He had a candle in his hand but put it out at once, before the student could even look in his direction. The man dropped onto the other bed with a deep sigh. For four or five minutes he threw himself around on his bed in agony of mind, exclaiming, “O wretched!

O miserable! I'm lost, lost for ever." Then he knelt beside his bed and prayed earnestly to God for mercy. Again and again he threw himself on his bed expressing himself in the same words as before. Again and again he went on his knees to pray for mercy.

Naturally the student was disturbed. He began to tremble. At first he thought he would tell the other man that he was there – the other man probably assumed that he was alone in the room. Then the student thought of slipping quietly away. Instead he kept quiet and buried his head in the bedclothes. But he could not sleep now. He had no idea who the other man was or what was the matter with him. At last, at 2 o'clock, the man left the room, saying to himself, "I'll go back, I'll go back".

The student jumped out of bed, lit a candle, put on his clothes and hurried downstairs. He looked at his watch and saw that he would not have much more than half an hour to wait before the coach left again, at 3 am. He sat down on a sofa to wait. About 10 minutes later the door opened and the man walked in who had shared his room. The light was so dim that it was difficult to see his face, but he looked pale and sad. The student was so disturbed that he wanted to get away from him. He stood up to go, but just then the other man recognised him and spoke to him. They were classmates in college.

"Did you hear what the Lord is doing in the college?" he asked.

No, the first student had heard nothing.

His classmate explained, "There is an outpouring of the Spirit there", and he went on to list the names of several students who used to be among the most ungodly. Now, he went on, they were "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. But wretched, miserable me!" He stood up and paced the room, adding sadly, "There's no hope for me". This man too had been among the most ungodly and careless of the students, but now, clearly, the Holy Spirit was convincing him of his need of salvation.

What about the student who had been ill? He tells us: "I did not know what to say or what to do. I had never thought of religion myself, and I confess I felt, not only alarmed, but uneasy in his presence. I almost wished myself clear of him and that he would not return by that morning's coach." He asked the other student to sit down and pull himself together – the coach would be stopping at the door in just a few minutes.

The other student did so and confessed that he had been trying to run away from his convictions; he wanted to get "rid of his distress about his soul". He had no doubt been affected by the preaching at the College or by the conversation of other students.

The first student quoted a verse of Psalm 139: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" His classmate now



realised the truth of the words and exclaimed, “It can’t be done; it can’t be done. I’ll go back, and the Lord may do with me as He thinks best.”

Soon the coach drove up to the door and in a few minutes the passengers had climbed aboard. The first student describes the journey: “The driver cracked his whip, and we were rattling down the street, lined on either side by rows of tall, dark buildings, which seemed to frown upon us as we hurried by. My classmate was sitting in the corner, wrapped in his cloak. I was in the opposite corner, as far off as I could get; for, to tell the truth, I felt afraid of him. He did not speak to me, nor I to him, till it was broad daylight; though I could now and then hear him sighing, and in low whispers pleading with God for mercy.”

The only other passenger on the coach was a young woman. She had heard about the work of the Holy Spirit in the College. She lived locally and had decided to return home. The first student had met her before and she tried several times to speak about the revival. Each time, he tried to talk about something else; to speak about spiritual things left him uncomfortable.

The coach reached the College just as the bell was ringing; it was time for public worship in the church. Students and local people were crowding in to the building. The first student wrote: “My classmate instantly left the coach and, with his face still half-buried in his cloak, entered the church door. I sat still, as if riveted to the seat; I felt as if I could not possibly get out; I was very weak. At length I managed to get out and went into the church, scarcely knowing where I was or what I was doing.”

Just then an old minister stood up in the pulpit and began, very solemnly, to read a psalm. There was total silence in the congregation. The student sat in a pew near the door. When the service was over, he made for his lodgings, went to his room and stayed there alone.

There was a service again in the evening and he once more attended. He found it a very solemn time. “Eternity seemed just at hand.” The same old minister preached. As he did so, he pointed the people to a crucified Saviour and urged them to go to Him at once.

The next morning this student met his classmate. How different he was! His face was beaming with joy. “O, I’ve found peace,” he told his friend; “I’ve found the Saviour precious.” Then he shook his friend’s hand warmly, looked him in the eye and said, “If I am not mistaken, *you* are in distress”.

The first student wrote, “His words flew like so many barbed arrows through my soul. I knew it. I felt it – I was wretched, miserable – but that anyone else should know it seemed terrible. I made no reply but, releasing myself as soon as possible from his grasp, I hurried away to get myself out of his sight.”

We are not told how this student found deliverance from his distress. But he was one of 50 or more of the students who professed to find salvation, through Jesus Christ, during that powerful work of God's Spirit in the College. What a mercy that these students were convicted of their sin before God! It led them to seek salvation.

But how disastrous it could have been for the second student if he had continued on his journey away from the College, in an attempt to get rid of his convictions! Thankfully, God did not leave him to his foolish purpose; he went back to the College, where he could hear the Word of God preached. The only safe way for sinners to find deliverance from convictions is to go to Jesus Christ by faith. Otherwise, they will become harder and harder in their sins – making it more and more unlikely that they will ever be saved.

But no one should rest in their convictions; Christ calls: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Sinners are to obey this call at once; no one has any right to delay for any reason, even if they feel that their convictions are not deep enough. To delay is to continue in the terrible sin of unbelief.

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## The Bible's Teaching on Justification

### 1. What Does *to Justify* Mean?

*Charles Hodge*

Last month's *Magazine* brought to an end the series, "What the Bible Teaches About Sin". We now begin a new series on the important teaching on justification in the Bible. It comes from the same book, *The Way of Life*, and is edited.

People cannot long endure the conviction of sin. They feel they must find some way of satisfying the demands of their conscience. They begin to ask, "How can man be just with God?" The answer given to this question decides the kind of religion we will have. If, from the heart, we receive the teaching of the Bible, it will decide where we will spend eternity.

To give a wrong answer to the question is to take a way that does not lead to heaven. It is a mistake that cannot be corrected. If God requires one thing and we come to Him with another, how can we be saved? If we reject His way of salvation and insist on pursuing a different way, how can we hope He will accept us? At the judgement everyone must answer for himself, so everyone should be satisfied personally about what the Bible teaches on this subject. Religious teachers can do no more than help those who are anxious to learn the way of life. And the safest method is to keep strictly to the instructions of the Scriptures.

We must take the language of the Bible in its obvious meaning. The doctrine of justification is very often stated in the Scriptures; so all that will be attempted here is to state, as faithfully as possible, what the inspired writers of the Bible teach on this subject.

It is one of the main teachings of the Bible that we are under the law of God. This is true of people everywhere, whether or not they have a revelation from God through the Bible. But the knowledge of right and wrong, written on their hearts, has the nature of a divine law, and by it the heathen will be judged on the last day.

God has seen fit to attach the promise of life to obedience to His law. "The man that doeth these things shall live by them", is what Scripture says on this subject. The Saviour told the lawyer who admitted that the law required love to God and man: "Thou hast answered right. This do, and thou shalt live." And to the rich young ruler who asked Him, "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" He said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments". On the other hand, the law pronounces death as the penalty of sin. "The wages of sin is death."

This is what the whole of Scripture says on this subject. The obedience which the law demands is called *righteousness*, and those who give God that obedience are called *righteous*. To pronounce anyone righteous is the meaning of the word *justify* in the Bible. The word never means *to make good*, but always to pronounce just or righteous. Thus God says, "I will not justify the wicked". Judges are commanded to justify the righteous and to condemn the wicked. Woe is pronounced on those who justify the wicked for a reward.

In the New Testament it is said, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in [God's] sight". "It is God who justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" There is scarcely a word in the Bible whose meaning is less open to doubt. When God justifies someone, He *declares* him to be righteous. To justify never means to *make* someone holy. It is said to be sinful to justify the wicked, but it could never be sinful to make them holy.

As the law demands righteousness, to impute righteousness to anyone means the same as to justify him, in the language of the Bible. To be righteous before God and to be justified mean the same thing – as in this passage, "Not the hearers of the law are righteous before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified". The careful reader of the Bible, especially the reader who is concerned about sin, must notice that these various terms: to *be righteous in God's sight*, to *impute righteousness*, and to *justify*, are so often interchanged that they explain each other. This makes it clear that to justify someone is to impute righteousness to him.

## Submission to God, and More

It was 1658. A man called Thomas Goodwin was dying. (This was not the well-known minister of that time whose books are still being read today.) A friend visited him and told him that he should submit to the will of God. Goodwin agreed; that was indeed his duty. But he wished to go further. He wanted to be cheerful even when he was unwell and facing death. He knew that everything was under God's control, and so he should not only be content with what God was doing; he should also be happy with what God had chosen to do. He blessed God that the greatest mercies he ever experienced were connected with some great trouble in his life.

A few days before he died, he overheard his doctor telling someone that he was afraid Goodwin would not recover from this illness. This led him to examine himself very carefully. He was asking such questions as these: Was he converted? Was he ready to die? During the time when he was ill, Goodwin had been asking God to bless his soul. But now he began to search his heart thoroughly for evidences of grace. He said, "I bless God I find good old evidences though I am but a young man".

As he searched his heart, he felt that people thought his seriousness arose from a fear of death. He was unhappy about this; he did not want people to think he was afraid to die. He was not afraid. He could say as Paul did, at the end of his life, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). Goodwin too knew that he had believed in Christ, and he trusted that Christ would keep him to the end, even till the day of judgement.

Goodwin's last words, before he died, were: "Well, it is a sweet thing when he that speaks of Christ has Christ dwelling in him at the time when he speaks". Surely it was well with him when he died.

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### *For Junior Readers*

## "So Run that Ye May Obtain"

The London Olympics caused much excitement. Many pages of news coverage discussed the athletes' likelihood of winning their races and then the constant tallying up of medal totals – how many gold, silver and bronze medals each country had.

The Apostle Paul knew of games such as these. He would not have gone there. As a grown-up man, he would not have seen them as a good way to use precious time. But he saw that they could teach us some spiritual lessons.

At the beginning of Hebrews 12 he writes about “the race that is set before us”. And in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 he refers to running races and to the desire to be first and to win the prize.

The runners do not carry anything that would weigh them down or trip them up. So Paul teaches us that we should “lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us”. We should lay aside everything that would get in the way of our spiritual progress.

These may not always be sinful things; they may be things which are lawful in themselves but they take up too much of our time and attention. So they distract us from thinking about our souls and about eternity. Are there not some things in your life which you should lay aside or pay less attention to for the sake of your soul?

The race is set before us – we are not left to guess where or how we are to run it. It is marked out clearly in the Bible. The Psalmist, David, spoke about this; he said, “I will run the way of Thy commandments”. Are you running in the way of God’s commandments? Are you obeying God’s laws? And what are you focused on?

Again Paul tells us who we should be looking to if we are running in the way of God’s commandments: we should be “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith”. This is what David was doing when he said, “Before me still the Lord I set” – he kept God and the standards of His word always in view. Do you?

What do the Olympic athletes want most of all? A medal! Gold, silver or bronze medals are much coveted and boasted of when they are won. In the olden days the prize was a wreath of interlocking leaves to place on their heads. It was a very short-lived award; it would soon wither away – a “corruptible” prize. But how the runners strained every muscle to achieve it!

How much more should you want to strive for spiritual blessings. Paul says, “They do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible” – one that will *not* wither away. The Apostle Peter describes this prize as “an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away” – heaven and all its blessings. This is what lies ahead of the Christian. Is it not worth striving for?

If so much effort and attention is put into the games and competitive sports of this life – things that do not last, awards which are so temporary – what is the lesson for you?” It is this: *So run, that you may obtain*. Run as Christian did in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*: “the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on, crying, Life! Life! Eternal life! So he looked not behind him but fled.” Will you not flee to Christ, the only hope set before you in the gospel, and *flee now!*

*J van Kralingen*

## Through the Alphabet with the Bible

Here are five verses from the Bible containing the word:

### Follow

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith *follow*, considering the end of their conversation (Hebrews 13:7).

**Precept:** If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and *follow* Me (Matthew 16:24).

**Promise:** I am the light of the world; he that *followeth* Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8:12).

**Prayer:** In shadow of Thy wings I'll joy; for Thou mine help hast been.

My soul Thee *follows* hard; and me Thy right hand doth sustain.

(Psalm 63:7,8)

**Encouragement:** Then shall we know, if we *follow* on to know the Lord (Hosea 6:3). S

### For Younger Readers

## The Best Son

George was a farmer. His father was no longer very well, but he was sometimes able to do a little work.

One day George had even more work to do than usual. So he asked his father to do a few jobs around the house while he went to work on another farm. His father promised to do so.

Late in the day, George came home. He was working all day; so he was now very tired. His father told him that he had not done what he promised; he probably did not feel well enough to do so.

George felt angry. He was ready to speak to his father in an unkind way.

But he stopped himself. Instead he said, "It's all right, Father. I'm not very tired after all."

As George went away to do the work himself, his father called him back. He laid his hand on George's head and said, "George, you're the best son a father ever had. God bless you."

George finished the work and came back inside. His father was

no longer able to speak; he was seriously ill. How thankful George was that he did not speak to him in an angry way!

Ever afterwards, when George began to feel angry, he always remembered how his father put his hand on his head. And he was no more angry.

Try to remember this story when you feel angry with someone – perhaps your father or your mother. Remember that it is a sin to be angry. Ask God to keep you from being angry.

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## “Can You Pray All the Time?”

A group of ministers had gathered in a manse; they were going to discuss some difficult questions. One of them asked how someone could obey the command, in the Bible, to “pray without ceasing”. Various answers were suggested, and one of the ministers was appointed to write an essay on the subject, which would be read at the next monthly meeting.

A servant overheard what was being said and she exclaimed, “What! A whole month to tell the meaning of that text! It is one of the easiest texts in the Bible.”

“Well, well, Mary,” said an old minister, “what can you say about it? How do you understand it? Can you pray all the time?”

“O yes,” she answered.

“What, when you have so many things to do?”

“Why, the more I have to do, the more I can pray.”

“Well, Mary, do let us know how it is, for most people think otherwise.”

“When I first open my eyes in the morning, I pray that the Lord would open the eyes of my understanding; and while I am dressing I pray that I may be clothed with the robe of Christ’s righteousness; and when I have washed myself, I pray for the washing of regeneration; and as I begin to work, I pray that I may have strength equal to the day; and when I begin to kindle up the fire, I pray that God’s work may revive in my soul; and as I sweep out the house, I pray that my heart may be cleansed of all impurities; and while preparing and eating my breakfast, I desire and pray to be fed with the hidden manna and the sincere milk of the Word; and as I am busy with the little children, I look up to God as my reconciled Father in Christ, and pray for the Spirit of adoption that I may know myself more assuredly as His child; and so on all day. Everything I do gives me a thought for prayer.”

“Enough, enough,” exclaimed the old minister, “these things are revealed

to babes, and often hid from the wise and prudent. Go on, Mary, 'pray without ceasing'. And, as for us, my brethren, let us bless the Lord for this wonderful practical exposition, and remember that He has said, 'The meek will He guide in judgement'." After this, there was no need to write an essay.

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## Looking Around Us

### The Source of Real Help

Today I listened to an Australian woman telling about the difficulties she experienced after being involved in a road accident many years ago. Just 17, she was driving along and she hit a pedestrian, causing her death. She was naturally very disturbed by what happened.

She was so desperate that she phoned an organisation which gives advice to people in trouble. It was suggested that she should go to church and pray to God for forgiveness. Sadly, she turned down the suggestion out of hand. She even tried to commit suicide but, thankfully, she was unsuccessful.

If she had, for Christ's sake, cast herself sincerely upon God in prayer – and there was no need to go to church to pray – she would have found One who can, in spite of today's unbelief, give real help, including forgiveness.

Let us not, whatever our circumstances, neglect prayer. Nor let us neglect the Bible, which tells us about the One who hears prayer.

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## Scripture and Catechism Exercises 2012-13

### General Information

There will be three exercises, the first in this magazine, the second next February and the third in May. Study hard, search the Scriptures, and may the Lord bless His Word to you so that it would be mixed with faith in your hearts.

Please read the following rules very carefully before you begin:

1. Your section for the whole year is decided by your age on *1 October 2012*. Stay in that section for the three sets of exercises. You may miss a prize or award by changing sections.
2. Exercises are to be in the correctors' hands before November 30, March 31 and June 30. So you have about two months in which to do each exercise. Please send it in time in case you lose marks for being late.
3. Each entry is to be the work of the person whose name is on it, except for beginners in the Lower Primary Section, who are allowed a little help.
4. Prizes will be given in all sections except Lower Primary, and awards of books will be given to everyone in each section who does the three exercises. The names



of the award and prize winners will be published in *The Young People's Magazine*.  
5. Teachers and others working with young people can arrange for groups to do the exercises, and correctors will be glad to hear from them.

6. The exercises are based on the Bible Reading Cards which will be distributed through the ministers of the congregations (or which may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE). It is very important that you read God's Word every day. The exercises this year are based on the following Bible readings from cards B and C: *Exercise 1*: 1 Samuel 26 to 2 Kings 6, and 2 Corinthians 5 to Hebrews 13. *Exercise 2*: 2 Kings 7 to 2 Chronicles 18, and James 1 to Matthew 11. *Exercise 3*: 2 Chronicles 18 to Job 26, and Matthew 12 to Mark 16.

## Exercise 1

All answers from overseas should be sent to *Miss C E Dickie, c/o Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE, UK*. The correctors should have your answers before the end of November.

### Senior Section (15 years old and over)

UK answers to *Miss S M Gillies, 5 Balnabeen Drive, Dingwall, Ross-shire, IV15 9LY*.

#### Old Testament

The questions are based on 1 Kings 19.

1. (a) Why did Elijah flee to Beersheba? (2)
- (b) Given the events of the previous chapter, why was this behaviour remarkable? (2)
2. Describe Elijah's experience under the juniper tree. (4)
3. (a) Where was his next lodging place? (1)
- (b) What did God ask him? (1)
- (c) Give Elijah's reply in your own words. (2)
4. How did God refute this, in verse 18? (1)
5. What do you think God wanted to teach Elijah (and us) from his experience on the mountain (verses 11 and 12)? (2)

Now look at 2 Kings 2

6. How was Elijah to leave this world? (1)
7. Which three places did Elijah and Elisha pass through after leaving Gilgal? (3)
8. What was Elisha's last request to Elijah? (1)
9. What was Elijah's reply? (1)
10. Now read verses 11-12. Would Elisha's request be granted? Give a reason for your answer. (2)
11. What further encouragement did Elijah get (verses 13-14)? (2)

#### New Testament

The answers are to be found in Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

1. Name three graces for which the Thessalonians are recommended in chapter 1. (3)
2. Paul speaks of his great assurance of their election by God. Give four evidences of their faith, mentioned in verses 5-10. (4)
3. In chapter 3, Paul speaks about Timothy's visit to them.
  - (a) Why was he sent (verses 2-5)? (3)
  - (b) How was Paul encouraged by Timothy's report? (3)
4. In chapter 4, Paul exhorts them (and us) about outward behaviour. Give three examples of this advice. (3)
5. What warning does Paul give at the beginning of chapter 5? (2)
6. Which two items of Christian warfare are mentioned in chapter 5, and what do they represent? (4)

**Memory Exercise**

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 90 in the Shorter Catechism: How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation? (3)

**Intermediate Section (13 and 14 years old)**

UK answers to *Mrs E Couper, 17 Duncan Street, Thurso, Caithness, KW14 7HU.*

**Old Testament**

1. (a) Who anointed Solomon as king over Israel? (1 Kings 1) (2)
- (b) What did Solomon ask God for? (1 Kings 3) (2)
- (c) Why was he so aware that he needed these gifts? (1 Kings 3) (2)
- (d) What other blessings did God promise to give him? (1 Kings 3) (3)
- (e) Why did the Queen of Sheba go to visit him? (1 Kings 10) (2)
- (f) Quote a verse which suggests that she believed in Israel's God. (1 Kings 10) (2)
2. Read 1 Kings 17 and 19.
  - (a) Name the places where Elijah was fed in a special way (look in both chapters). (3)
  - (b) What were the "instruments" that God used to provide him with food and drink? (3)
  - (c) What type of food was provided in the two places? (3)
  - (d) Tell, in your own words, how Elijah brought the widow's son back to life. (4)
  - (e) What did this miracle prove to the widow? (2)

**New Testament**

1. Complete the following verses:
  - (a) "Abstain from . . ." (1 Thessalonians 5) (2)
  - (b) "But my God shall supply . . ." (Philippians 4) (2)
  - (c) "This is a faithful saying . . ." (1 Timothy 1) (2)
2. Read Colossians 3.
  - (a) List five evils that Christians should "put off". (5)
  - (b) List six graces that Christians should "put on". (6)
  - (c) Why especially should they forgive one another? (2)
3. Quote two verses from Ephesians 2 which show that salvation is all of grace. (3)
4. Read 2 Timothy 2.
  - (a) What is Timothy called to "shun" and to "avoid"? (2)
  - (b) Why should he obey these commands especially? (2)
  - (c) What is he called to "study" and to "follow"? (4)

**Memory Exercise**

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 37 in the Shorter Catechism: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death? (3)

**Junior Section (11 and 12 years old)**

UK answers to *Mrs C M Sutherland, Inchure, Saval Road, Lairg, Sutherland, IV27 4ED.*

**Old Testament**

1. Read 2 Samuel chapter 9.
  - (a) To whom did David say "Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake"? (1)
  - (b) What two acts of kindness did David say he would do for him? (2)
  - (c) This son of Jonathan's had weakness in part of his body. What was it? (1)
  - (d) Look up 2 Samuel 4:4 and say how this happened and how old he was at the time. (3)
  - (e) What was Ziba's occupation? (1)
2. Read 1 Kings 10:1-13.
  - (a) Who came to prove Solomon with hard questions? (1)
  - (b) Was Solomon able to answer her questions? (1)
  - (c) What did she give to Solomon? (3)

- (d) What did Solomon give to her? (2)
- (e) Write out the verse beginning: "Happy are thy men . . .". (3)

**New Testament**

1. Read 2 Corinthians 11:22-33. In this letter to the Corinthians, Paul tells them about some hardships he had suffered.

- (a) How many times did Paul receive lashes of a whip (called stripes) from the Jews? (1)
- (b) How many stripes did he receive on these occasions? (1)
- (c) How often was he beaten with rods? (1)
- (d) How often was he stoned? (1)
- (e) How often did he suffer shipwreck? (1)

2. Read Hebrews chapter 4.

- (a) Why did the word preached not profit those that heard it? (1)
- (b) What is sharper than a two-edged sword? (1)
- (c) Write out the verse which tells us that God sees everything. (3)
- (d) Who is the "great high priest"? (1)
- (e) What two things are we encouraged to ask for at a throne of grace? (2)

**Memory Exercise**

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 40 in the Shorter Catechism: How is the Word to be read and heard that it may become effectual to salvation? (3)

**Upper Primary Section (9 and 10 years old)**

UK answers to *Mrs M Schouten, 58 Fairfield Road, Inverness, IV3 5QW.*

**Old Testament**

1. Read 1 Kings 2 verses 1-4. What did King David charge (or command) his son Solomon before he died? (3)

2. Read 1 Kings 3 verses 1-4.

- (a) Was Solomon an obedient son? (1)
- (b) Why do you think so? (1)

3. Read 1 Kings 3 verses 5-10.

- (a) What did God say to Solomon? (1)
- (b) What does Solomon ask God to "give" him? (2)
- (c) Which verse tells us that the Lord was pleased with his request? (1)

Now read from verses 11-15.

- (d) God promised to give Solomon what he asked for, as well as three other things. What are they? (3)
- (e) How did Solomon show his thanks to God at Jerusalem? (1)

**New Testament**

1. Read Hebrews 1 verses 1-3. Complete the sentences using only one word.

- (a) In past times God spoke by the \_\_\_\_\_. (1)
- (b) Since then God has spoken unto us by His \_\_\_\_\_. (1)
- (c) From these verses say any two different things about Christ, the Son of God. (2)

2. Read Hebrews 11 verses 1-3.

- (a) What is faith? (2)
- (b) How was the world made? (1)

3. Read Hebrews 11 verses 4-7.

- (a) Who pleased God? (1)
- (b) How can we please God? (1)
- (c) Who will God reward? (1)

4. Read Hebrews 11 verses 8-16.

(a) How did Abraham obey God? Genesis 12 verse 1 will help you. (2)

(b) Abraham and all those who die “in faith” look forward to a “better country”.  
What country are they seeking? (1)

(c) Who has “prepared” that special place for them? (1)

#### Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write down the answer to question in the Shorter Catechism:

What is faith in Jesus Christ? (3)

### Lower Primary Section (8 years old and under)

UK answers to *Mrs R J Dickie, 11 Churchill Drive, Stornoway, Lewis, HS1 2NP.*

#### Old Testament

A poor widow told the prophet Elisha that she had no money to pay her debt.

So her two sons were going to be taken away.

1. What did she have in her house? 2 Kings 4:2

2. What kind of vessels or containers did Elisha tell her to borrow? 2 Kings 4:3

3. What happened to the oil when all the vessels were full? 2 Kings 4:6

4. What did Elisha tell her to do so that she could pay her debt and have money to live on? 2 Kings 4:7

5. A woman in Shunem prepared a little room for Elisha. Name two (or more) things she put in the room. 2 Kings 4:10

6. Elisha told her she would have a son. Did this happen? 2 Kings 4:17

7. While the boy was with his father and the reapers, he became ill. What happened at noon? 2 Kings 4:20

8. What did the woman ride on to go to tell Elisha? 2 Kings 4:24

9. When Elisha saw the dead boy, what did he do after shutting the door? 2 Kings 4:33

10. What did the boy do after sneezing seven times? 2 Kings 4:35

#### New Testament

Timothy’s grandmother and mother both had faith in God.

1. What was Timothy’s grandmother’s name? 2 Timothy 1:5

2. What was Timothy’s mother’s name? 2 Timothy 1:5

3. What did Timothy know from the time he was a child? 2 Timothy 3:15

4. Who was with Paul in Rome? 2 Timothy 4:11

5. What did Paul tell Timothy to take to him as well as the books and parchments? 2 Timothy 4:13

6. Fill in the words of this well-known verse: 1 Timothy 1:15.

This is a f\_\_\_\_\_ saying and worthy of a\_\_ acceptance that Christ J\_\_\_\_\_ came into the world to s\_\_\_\_\_ sinners; of whom I am c\_\_\_\_\_.

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