

The Young People's Magazine

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

“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



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A Cry for Help

The woman was not an Israelite, and we do not know her name. But she recognised Jesus as the Messiah, the One whom God had promised, in the Old Testament, to be the Saviour of His people. (We know that she recognised who Jesus was because she called Him the Son of David – everyone at the time who knew anything about the Scriptures knew that the Messiah was to be a descendant of David, indeed *the* Son of David.) The woman cried after Jesus, for she was in trouble. Her daughter was possessed with a devil, and it was a very serious case. No wonder the woman was upset!

Jesus did nothing for her at first; indeed He seemed to put her off completely. But He was not being unkind; He was testing her. Was her faith strong enough to stand up to Jesus' testing? That was the question, and in the end He answered the question Himself. He told her: "O woman, great is thy faith". God was giving her grace to trust in Jesus.

There are many lessons we can learn from the way that Jesus dealt with this woman and how she reacted to Him. But let us focus on just one point: what the woman said as Jesus was testing her faith. She pleaded with Him: "Lord, help me".

Sometimes, when we pray, we think we know exactly what we want God to do for us. And it is often right for us to ask for definite things; you find many definite prayers in the Bible. One reason why these prayers are preserved in the Bible is that we may use them when we pray. Yet we may often be wrong when we decide what is the best way for God to bring us out of the difficulty we find ourselves in. But if we simply ask God to help us, we are acknowledging that He knows, far better than we do, what we really need and the best way to bring it about.

You may have difficulties with your studies; you may not be making the progress you would wish. Perhaps the answer is obvious: you are not working as hard as you should. If that is so, you should try to apply yourself more seriously to your work and pray to God that He would make you willing to do so – and that He would bless you as you work.

Perhaps you *are* working hard, but still you are not keeping up with the

course and you do not know what to do. Ask God to help you; He knows what the answer to your difficulty is. That answer may be very different to the one that you are expecting; but if you sincerely set the matter before God, He will give a wise answer – one that will be good for you.

Or you may have difficulties at work. Perhaps some of your workmates are unkind to you; you just do not know what to do about it. Of course, you should take every difficulty in your life to God and pray about it. But, you ask, how should I pray in my present position? Just say, as the woman who came to Jesus did, “Lord, help me”. Remember too – and that was what the woman experienced – that God may not give you an answer at once; He may want you to become more dependent on Himself. Or He may wish to test you: are you willing to keep on praying to Him even when He does not at once take away your difficulty?

Take encouragement from what Jehoshaphat did when several armies attacked him together. He prayed, and this is what he said: “O our God, wilt Thou not judge them? For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon Thee” (2 Chronicles 20:12). The opposing armies were much stronger than his; he could not possibly expect to conquer them in battle. He just did not know what to do. But he knew that God could help him; so Jehoshaphat asked for His help. And God did answer him. His enemies started attacking each other; so Jehoshaphat and his forces did not even need to fight.

The greatest difficulty you can ever experience is trouble of soul – when you feel your sin, when you cannot escape its guilt, and when you do not know where to turn. You may know that you should pray, that you should believe in Jesus Christ, that you should turn away from your sin. But you are painfully conscious that you cannot do so in any way that is pleasing to God.

What should you do? You must not trust in yourself; you are right to feel that you have no power from yourself to believe in Jesus. But God, through the Holy Spirit, is able to help you. So ask Him, just as the woman did, “Lord, help me”.

Long ago the nation of Israel departed from God and followed idols. And God said to them, “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself”. But He did not stop there; He did not send them all at once to a lost eternity. Instead He encouraged them: “In Me is thine help” (Hosea 13:9). God speaks to you in the same way: you have destroyed yourself through your sins, but He encourages you to cry to Him for help. Even when you do not know what to do, look to Him for help. Ask Him to help you *for Jesus' sake*.

Remember, He can save the worst of sinners. Jesus still assures you: “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37).

Peter, the Apostle of Hope

2. The Hope Established

Rev J R Tallach

The first section, last month, of this Youth Conference paper dealt with the hope held out to Peter.

Any hope that will stand must be established on a gospel sense of sin and a gospel understanding of the Saviour. So it was with Peter

In Luke 5:1-11 we read of the incident where the Lord made use of Peter's boat to preach to the multitude. After the sermon had ended, Jesus instructed Peter to take his boat out into the deep and to put down his net for a catch of fish. Simon stated that they had been fishing all night and caught nothing – implying that, from their knowledge of fish and fishing, this further attempt was likely to be fruitless. At the same time he was willing to obey the Lord's command and did so. The huge catch of fish which resulted was so evidently a sign of the divinity of Jesus that Peter fell at His knees and cried out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord".

This response brings words of Isaiah to mind. Christ was lifted up and His glory displayed – a glory infinitely greater than that of the angels who never fell. The effect on Isaiah made him cry out, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 6:5). Isaiah felt his unfitness to declare God's holy words as a prophet, because his lips were unclean. His calling was, after all, to serve a holy God by declaring His holy law. How could he do so with unclean lips?

Peter too, after this demonstration of the divinity of Christ, felt his sin and how unprepared he was, as a sinner, to serve such a divinely holy Master. "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord." As Isaiah's lips were cleansed by an angel taking a coal from off the altar and applying it to the lips of the prophet, so Peter writes, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Peter 1:18-22).

It is to such a man, who sees no hope in himself because of his sin, that hope is given in the Word of God. And Jesus said unto Simon, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men" (Luke 5:10). See what great things the Lord accomplished, in fulfilment of His promise, on the Day of Pentecost,

when Peter's spirit was submissive and repentant. Three thousand souls were that day caught in the net of the gospel.

Peter's hope was further established by his faith in Jesus. In John 6, we are told how Jesus fed five thousand people with five loaves and two small fish. This led on to a timely sermon on Himself as "the bread of God which cometh down from heaven Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. . . . My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." Jesus was using the idea of eating to illustrate the work of faith in Himself as bringing life to the soul.

The multitude had been bent on making Him king after the miracle of the loaves and fishes, but now even His professed disciples turned away from Him. "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" they said. "From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." Christ was commending the language of faith, but they did not know it and had no desire to learn it. It was in the midst of such clear, widespread unbelief that Jesus asked His disciples, "Will ye also go away?" The Lord knew what was in the heart of Peter and the other disciples but He asked them in order to establish that faith and define it. Peter answered, speaking for the rest, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

In a similar exchange (in Matthew 16:13-20) Jesus commended Peter's profession of faith in Himself and called him "blessed". Into that blessedness was poured all the blessings the Lord speaks of in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5): comfort to those that mourn, the kingdom to the poor, the earth to the meek, the vision of God to the pure in heart. The work of Jesus' Father in heaven is laid bare: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto you, but My Father which is in heaven".

Peter was, of course, to go on to establish, under God, the New Testament Church among the Jews on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and among the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10). The authority Jesus gave to Peter (Matthew 16:19) He also gave to the other apostles: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 18:18). Indeed the Church at large appears to bear somewhat of that authority, as we see in verse 17 of that chapter: "If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican".

Peter counts himself an elder among other elders (or an overseer among other overseers). He says, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder . . . neither as being lords over God's heritage but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:1,3). This language is far from supreme

authority – and three crowns to rule over heaven, earth and hell – being given to him. Yet Pope Leo XIII, who claimed to be Peter’s successor, declared in 1885 that the pope holds “upon this earth the place of God Almighty”. Peter goes on in that chapter to warn elders against taking to themselves an authority which does not suit them: “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility.” All 12 apostles, resting on Christ as the foundation stone of the spiritual Jerusalem, are seen in Ephesians 2:20 as foundational to the Church: “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone”.

To the same effect we read in Revelation 21:14, “And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the lamb”. Christ speaks of the “gates of hell” not prevailing. Conferences were held and cases settled at the gates of ancient cities, as when “Boaz went up to the gate and sat him down there” (Ruth 4:1,2). It was there that the case of Ruth and Naomi, and the land left after Elimelech’s death, was settled. The chief men of the city would gather there and make decisions, in their wisdom, which would be for the good of the city and in accordance with the law of Israel.

And in hell the chief devils would gather together and confer with a view to prevailing over the Church of God. But their most subtle plans, thought up by their best generals and executed with single-minded and evil intent would not prevail against the Church of God.

Peter’s hope was established by repentance and faith.

The Runaway Husband Brought Back

C H Spurgeon

An extract, with editing, from *C H Spurgeon: The Full Harvest*, the second part of the preacher’s life story. Spurgeon was the famous minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, who died in 1892.

At the close of one of our services, a poor woman came, with two of her neighbours, to my vestry in deep distress. Her husband had fled the country; and, in her sorrow, she had gone to the house of God, and something I said in the sermon made her think that I knew about her case. Of course, I had really known nothing about her; I had made use of a general illustration which just fitted her particular case.

She told me her story, and a very sad one it was. I said, “There is nothing that we can do but kneel down and cry to the Lord for the immediate

conversion of your husband". We knelt down, and I prayed that the Lord would touch the heart of the deserter, convert his soul, and bring him back to his home. When we rose from our knees, I said to the poor woman, "Do not fret about the matter. I feel sure your husband will come home and that he will yet become connected with our church."

She went away, and I forgot all about her. Some months afterwards, she re-appeared, with her neighbours and a man, whom she introduced to me as her husband. He had indeed come back, and he had returned a converted man. On making enquiry and comparing notes, we found that, the very day on which we had prayed for his conversion, he stumbled most unexpectedly on a stray copy of one of my sermons. He was at that time on board a ship far away on the sea. He read the sermon; the truth went to his heart; he repented and sought the Lord. As soon as possible, he came back to his wife and to his daily calling. He was admitted as a member at the Tabernacle, and his wife, who up to that time had not joined the church, was also received into fellowship with us.

That woman does not doubt the power of prayer. All the infidels in the world could not shake her conviction that there is a God that answers the petitions of His people. I should be the most irrational creature in the world if I had the slightest doubt on the subject, as every day of my life is full of experiences just as remarkable. I do not regard it as miraculous; it is part and parcel of the established order of the universe that the shadow of a coming event should fall in advance on some believing soul, in the shape of prayer for it to come about.

What the Bible Teaches About Faith

3. What Comes with Faith?

Charles Hodge

This is another article taken, with editing, from *The Way of Life*. In last month's article the writer was discussing various meanings of the word *faith* before pointing to what Paul calls the faith of God's elect, "which arises from a spiritual grasp of the truth, or from the testimony of the Spirit with the truth in our hearts".

The Bible often speaks about this faith. Christ said, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes (Luke 10:21). The outward revelation was made to the wise *and* to the babes. But the babes were given light in their souls which made them able to see the excellence of the truth, and this brought them to receive it with joy. When Peter confessed

his faith in Christ, He said to Peter: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17).

Paul was a persecutor of the Church but, when it pleased God to reveal His Son in him, Paul at once preached the faith which he used to destroy. He had an outward knowledge of Christ before, but he experienced an inward revelation on his way to Damascus. And, at once, it brought about a change in his whole character. There was nothing unusual in his actual conversion, although the way Christ appeared to him and spoke to him was highly unusual.

Paul speaks of all believers as having the same divine illumination. "God," he says, "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, [as it shines] in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6). On the other hand, he speaks of those whose minds have been blinded by the god of this world, "lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them".

In 1 Corinthians 2, he has much to say on this subject. He teaches that human wisdom could not discover the divine wisdom of the gospel; but he also teaches that when the gospel comes to us, we need the Spirit so that we may know the things freely given to us of God. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned".

Hence he prays for his readers that the eyes of their understandings – their hearts – might be opened, that they might know the hope of their calling, the riches of their inheritance, and the greatness of God's power which they had experienced. Again, he prays that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. By spiritual understanding he means that insight into the nature of the truth which is the result of the Spirit's influence on the heart.

Since faith is founded on this spiritual grasp of the truth, Paul says he did not preach "with enticing words of man's wisdom". This was because a faith which resulted from such preaching could at best be only accepting that what he said was true, nothing more. But Paul preached "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power", that the faith of his hearers might "not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Corinthians 2:4,5). So faith is said to be one of the fruits of the Spirit, the gift of God. These ideas from the Scriptures are in line with the experience of God's people. They know that their faith is not founded on the testimony of others. They believe because God's truth appears to them both true and good, because they feel its power and experience its comforts.

It is obvious that a faith founded on a spiritual grasp of the truth must also differ from every other kind of belief in its effects. Of the multitudes who believe the Bible on someone else's authority, how few pay attention to its commands and warnings! To say that such people do not believe is true in one sense, but not in another. They do believe; the Bible calls it faith – but it is dead faith. This conviction that the Bible is true makes people attend to the duties of religion and to keep the commandments in an outward way. The faith which is founded on the power of conscience produces still more marked effects: either temporary obedience and joy; or the despair and opposition shown by the convinced, the dying and the lost; or a religion which is just laborious slavery.

But that faith which is the gift of God – when He opens someone's eyes to see the excellence of the truth – has joy and love with it. These feelings must always go along with this kind of faith. Thus faith is said to work by love. And as this faith receives all revealed truth, every truth must have an effect on the heart. If we believe what is made known about God's being, perfections and glory, we will love, worship and trust in Him, and we will want to be made like Him. So Paul says, "We all, with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of God, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

If we believe God's threatenings, realising that they are just, that they are in harmony with His perfections, and that sin deserves to be punished, then we must fear and tremble. So His people are described as those who tremble at His Word. If we believe God's promises, because He is faithful and powerful, because these promises are in harmony with all He has revealed about His purposes, and because they suit our needs, there must be confidence, joy and hope.

This was the faith which made Abraham leave his own country to go to a strange land, and which led Moses to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. This was the faith "of David also, of Samuel, and of all the prophets, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens".

This is the faith which leads all the people of God to confess that they are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth", and that they look "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God". This is the faith which overcomes the world, which leads the believer to set his affections on things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. It enables him to glory

even in tribulation, while he looks “not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal”.

What shall we say of a faith in Jesus Christ which is founded on a grasp of the glory of God, as it shines in Him who is the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth? And what shall we say of that faith as one which sees the Redeemer clothed in our nature, the Firstborn of many brethren, dying for the sins of many, rising again for their justification, ascending into heaven and now seated at the right hand of God, where He ever lives to make intercession? Such a faith, Paul tells us, must produce love, for he says, “Whom having not seen ye love, and in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory”. The soul gladly receives Him as a Saviour, as He has just been described. It wishes to be conformed to His will and to make known the unsearchable riches of His grace to others.

The Scriptures speak about human sin and what it deserves. No one can believe this and grasp properly the holiness of God without feeling condemned and always hungering and thirsting after righteousness. It may be said of all the truths in the Word of God that, so far as people have a spiritual grasp of them by faith, they will influence the heart, and so also the life. The sun must give heat as well as light; so such a faith must also produce good fruits. This faith leads to all right feelings and all holy living; without it all religion is dull and formal, the activity of a slave. So God’s people are said to live by faith, to walk by faith, to be sanctified by faith, to overcome by faith, to be saved by faith. And the grand point about them is that they are *believers*.

For Junior Readers

When No One Could Pray

The girl was 10 years old. She thought seriously about what she learned in Sabbath School. One evening, after going to bed, she remembered that she was a sinner and the thought worried her.

At midnight she was so concerned that she went to awaken an older girl who was working in her house. The older girl asked what was wrong.

The 10-year-old answered, “I feel I am a great sinner”. She then asked the older girl to pray for her.

The older girl had to confess that she could not pray. So the 10-year-old sent for her father.

When he came into his daughter’s room, she asked him to pray for her.

But he too could not pray; he did not properly understand about sin and the remedy for sin; he did not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yet he was sorry for his daughter. So he asked her mother to come to their daughter's bedroom. What a blessing for the girl! Here was someone who could pray, someone who had many, many times gone to God in prayer. And now she poured out her heart to Him in prayer for her girl.

God heard her prayer and the girl was converted. We do not know any more than that – just that she believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and was saved. God was very good to her.

This had a good effect on the older girl. She too became concerned for her sins. And the father seems to have been converted also.

But what about you? You too have sinned. You need to be forgiven. You need to look to Jesus Christ, who died instead of sinners like you. You must seek Him earnestly. The Bible tells you: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved".

The Stolen New Testaments

He was a colporteur, going around selling Bibles and perhaps other good books. One day he was carrying 50 New Testaments as he went about the district. A band of Jews set on him and stole the Testaments. They did not believe that Jesus is the Messiah who was promised in the Old Testament; so they wanted to prevent people being influenced by men like the colporteur – and by the Scriptures they were trying to spread about in the district. At first the colporteur wanted to take to court the men who had attacked him, but his friends persuaded him to wait to see what God would do.

About six weeks later, two men came to the colporteur's headquarters in the middle of the night. One of them was an old man called Moses. He looked frail and walked with a limp; his hair and his clothes showed that he was an Orthodox Jew. The other man was his son.

Moses told the colporteur that he was a businessman and president of his local synagogue. He went on to confess that it was he who had organised and led the attack on the colporteur; at the time he thought he was performing a deed that deserved God's favour.

"How I have been punished for this," Moses exclaimed, "and yet how it has been overruled for my blessing!" He had brought the Testaments to his Rabbi. They did not really know anything about what was in them; so at once the two men set to and examined them together. They were so happy at the thought of avenging themselves on the missionaries who, as they

thought, were putting their people wrong. And they arranged to have the Testaments destroyed the next day.

Moses described what happened next: “As I left the house, it was growing dark, and I stumbled over the parcel of books which was lying on the floor. I fell with such force that I was too badly hurt to rise.” A doctor had to be called; he realised that Moses had a broken bone in his leg.

As he was going away after treating the patient, the doctor said, “Moses, this is the finger of God. In the book you intended to destroy, you will find the best medicine for body and soul. In this book it is written: ‘Behold, this child [Jesus] is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel’. Look, my dear Moses, this New Testament has already proved a fall; may it also serve as a rising! If you will only read it, your unbelief will vanish and you will find Him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote.”

Moses explained what happened next: “His words reached my heart and I could find no rest. Next day I sent for the books, but they had already been destroyed. My agony was great. I now wanted the book, but did not know where to get it. After a while, the good doctor brought me a copy he had received from you. This was a great joy to me. I read it repeatedly. My eyes were opened. I saw a new world. I did not recognise myself. I began now to see the true covenant God of Israel in Christ Jesus, the promised Saviour, who died for our sins and rose again for our justification. I said to Him: ‘My Lord and my God’. I have come now to confess my misdeeds and to pay fourfold for the books I took, and I will confess the Lord Jesus publicly before friend and foe and seek to love and serve Him to the end.”

When old Moses did confess the Lord Jesus, his wife and children began to persecute him, and so did some of his Jewish friends. But in God’s kindness, several of his family and several other friends were brought to believe in Christ, because of what he had said to them. For the colporteur to wait for God to work was indeed well worthwhile.

For Younger Readers

Jesus Is Glorious

Jesus was coming into Jerusalem. He was riding on an ass. Lots of the people who were following Him began to praise God. They were thinking of all the wonderful works that they had seen Him do.

There were some other people who did not like Jesus. They asked Him to tell His followers to be quiet. What did Jesus say? His answer was that, if His followers kept quiet, then the stones would cry out at once.

Have you ever heard a stone speak? Of course not. Stones do not speak. But Jesus could make them speak. He was able to do anything He wanted.

Ask God to make you want to praise Jesus always. He is so glorious that He can make stones speak. And He can make you love Him.

Salvation in *The Pilgrim's Progress*

4. Faith and the Fear of God

Rev Roderick MacLeod

This is another section of a paper on John Bunyan's book, given at this year's Youth Conference. Last month's article was about perseverance: "Keeping on Till the End". This theme is continued in this article.

P*erseverance and the fear of God.* Let us listen to Bunyan's pilgrims speaking about the new birth. They are doing so in the light of one of its greatest effects: it brings about the fear of God in the soul. Hopeful says that the basic difference between true Christians and others is: Christians have a gracious fear to offend God; others do not. This fear, he says, "tends much to men's good and to make them right at their beginning to go on pilgrimage, for the Word [of God] says so: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom'".

Hopeful describes the fear he is talking about in these terms: "True fear is discovered [that is, made known] by three things. One, by its rise; it is caused by saving conviction of sin. Two, it driveth the soul to lay fast hold of Christ for salvation. Three, it begetteth and continueth in the soul a great reverence for God, His Word and ways, keeping the soul tender and making it afraid to turn from them to the right hand or to the left, to anything that may dishonour God, break its peace, grieve the Spirit, or cause the enemy to speak reproachfully." Does the reader not agree that these words are a most useful key to examine our religion by?

There is something that those who fail to persevere to the end do not possess: it is the presence of "the fear of God" in their hearts. Whatever else they have, they do not have that principle of the fear of God working in their souls.

Hopeful says that many people have had their natural conscience awakened and they became religious, yet their heart was not changed – like King Saul. So when their sense of guilt wore away, their religion ceased. As their sense and fear of a lost eternity faded, so their determination to persevere to the end faded too, because the fear of God was not planted in them, by the Spirit, in the new birth.

Those who go back, Hopeful says, do not understand what they must flee to and so cannot love it. They flee from what they hate – that is wrath – but not to something they love. Once the fear of God's wrath fades in a soul that is not born again, the natural hatred of the soul to God and to His ways recovers its usual strength.

Christian suggests that the matter could be reduced to this: those who begin well, and then go back, do so because there was no real spiritual change in their mind and will. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

The fear of God must be implanted as a living, active, energetic power or principle in the soul, which motivates and governs a person's will. Religious feelings accompany this great work of the Spirit in the soul, but these feelings are like the tides that ebb and flow on the shore. What they who persevere to the end possess, and others do not have, is the immovable rock of the new birth.

This identifies the supernatural change which enables one to persevere unto the end while, solemnly, others go back to their old sinful ways. May we all possess this greatest of all gifts! How we ought to be afraid of the "evil heart of unbelief", which departs from the living God!

Perseverance and Faith in the Word of God. When God gives a sinner a new heart, that sinner is born again. This new nature which God plants in the soul needs nursing. A new-born baby needs to be nourished by food suitable to its nature. The babe in the soul of the believer must be nursed on milk suitable to its spiritual nature: the milk of the Word. This strengthens it.

One of the most interesting parts of *The Pilgrim's Progress* speaks about the Interpreter's house. Here Christian is taught solemn lessons in doctrine and practice by the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God. The Holy Spirit persuades and enables us to believe the Word as it is read and preached; He does so in a practical and saving way. By His grace, true pilgrims tremble at the things in the Bible which should make the living soul tremble. By His grace, the believer is enabled warmly and willingly to go on embracing by faith the things in the Bible which should make him trust in God: for example, the invitations and the promises. By the Spirit he is sweetly and powerfully made willing to obey the commands of His beloved Saviour. This is how the soul feeds on the sincere milk of the Word.

Others read the Bible and they do not tremble at the threats; they do not trust in the promises; nor have they any desire to obey His commandments any more than suits them. But the believer has an Interpreter who works faith in him, and that faith enables him to see the truth in its real nature. In the Interpreter's house, Christian sees things that should impress him deeply

and so should steel and strengthen him, prepare and equip him for the hardships he is going to meet in his pilgrimage. This is very important.

When we read the Bible or when we are under the preaching of the Word, we are told things that God has designed to strengthen and prepare pilgrims for this journey. Ask the Lord to bless the Word to you in a saving and practical way. Read the Word of God often and pray over it. Do not count how many pages you read; rather ask: What impression should be made on my mind by the part of the Word I have read? Is my soul feeding on its savoury doctrine, its good counsel, its wholesome warnings or its sweet promises? This is what prepares the heart of those who are true pilgrims and strangers in this world for their journey to glory.

Looking Around Us

To God's Glory?

If something goes wrong with your heart, it can be very serious. And if surgeons have to operate on someone's heart, they have to cut through the chest and pull up each side of the rib cage, so that they can reach the heart and work on it. This can be too much for those who are in poor health.

One man who had serious heart problems benefited from a new way of reaching the heart, through a vein, to get done what his heart needed. Later he was so glad to be able to look forward to some more years of life.

Everyone is to live to God's glory. So did the man value these years as an opportunity to do so, and to thank God for His goodness? There was no such suggestion in what he and his wife said. What a pity!

You too must seek to live to the glory of God. But remember that you cannot do so unless you trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to save your soul.

Scripture and Catechism Exercises 2013-14

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 2013*. 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 they may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE). It is very important for you to read God's Word every day. The exercises this year are based on readings from cards C and D.

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. This set of exercises is based on Job 27 to Psalm 128, and Luke 1 to John 6.

Senior Section (15 years old and over)

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

Old Testament

1. (a) Mention four characteristics of the godly man described in Psalm 15. (4)
- (b) Mention four characteristics of the ungodly man described in Psalm 10. (4)
2. In Psalm 73 the Psalmist tells of a temptation which troubled him greatly. Explain briefly:
 - (a) the nature of the temptation (verses 3-14) (2)
 - (b) how he was delivered from the temptation (verses 15-20) (2)
 - (c) what he gained from the temptation (verses 21-28). (2)
3. Mention five petitions offered by the Psalmist in Psalm 25. (5)
4. Quote verses from Psalm 119 where the Psalmist:
 - (a) asks to be taught by God
 - (b) prays to be kept from being tempted to sin
 - (c) prays to be kept in the ways of God
 - (d) expresses his love for the Word of God
 - (e) expresses his attachment to the people of God. (5)

New Testament

1. The exhortation "Fear not" appears seven times in Luke's Gospel. Give the references and, in each case,
 - (a) say who spoke the words, and to whom they were addressed (7)
 - (b) state the message which accompanied the exhortation. (7)
2. Quote the 3 sayings of Jesus on the cross mentioned in Luke 23, and state briefly what you think each of these reveals about Jesus as the Saviour. (9)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 21 in the Shorter Catechism:

Who is the Redeemer of God's elect? (3)

Intermediate Section (13 and 14 years old)

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

Old Testament

1. Read Psalm 119.
 - (a) Who are described as "blessed"? (2)
 - (b) What special advice is given to a "young man"? (2)
 - (c) What people have "great peace"? (2)
 - (d) What was "sweeter than honey" to the psalmist? (1)
 - (e) How many times a day does he praise the Lord? (1)
 - (f) What does he love more than gold? (1)
 - (g) Why do "rivers of water" run down from his eyes? (1)
 - (h) How many times are the words "teach me" used? (3)
 - (i) Why do you think the Psalmist repeats them so often? (2)
2. Quote what is said about "the Lord" in the following:
 - (a) Psalm 23 (1)
 - (b) Psalm 27 (3)
 - (c) Psalm 28 (2)
 - (d) Psalm 91. (2)

New Testament

1. Read Luke chapter 12.
 - (a) Why did the rich farmer decide to build greater barns? (2)
 - (b) How did he plan to change his way of life? (3)
 - (c) How did this prove a foolish decision? (2)
2. From your reading about the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 answer the following:
 - (a) What did the younger son ask his father for? (2)
 - (b) What did he then decide to do? (3)
 - (c) How did he occupy his time "when he had spent all"? (2)
 - (d) When he "came to himself", what thought struck him? (2)
 - (e) What did he then plan to do? (2)
 - (f) In what way did his father welcome him back? (3)
 - (g) What two reasons did the elder son give for wanting a feast for himself? (2)
 - (h) What three lessons can we learn from this parable? (3)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 42 in the Shorter Catechism:
What is the sum of the ten commandments? (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. From your reading of Psalm 33:
 - (a) How were the heavens made? (1)
 - (b) In what way does the counsel of the heathen contrast with the counsel of the Lord? (2)
 - (c) What is a "vain thing for safety"? (1)
 - (d) What does the Psalm say about the eye of the Lord? (2)
 - (e) Write out the verse from the Psalm beginning with the words: "Blessed is . . .". (2)
2. Read Psalm 34.
 - (a) Who have many afflictions? (1)
 - (b) How are they delivered from them? (1)
 - (c) Who will not want (meaning *lack*) any good thing? (1)
 - (d) What happens to those who hate the righteous? (1)
 - (e) Who is the Lord nigh unto? (1)
 - (f) Who have the face of the Lord against them? (1)
 - (g) What does the Psalm say about the eyes and the ears of the Lord? (2)
 - (h) Write out the verse from the Psalm which warns us about how we should use our tongues and our lips (2)

New Testament

1. In Luke chapter 24, from verse 13, we read about the two who were walking to Emmaus.
 - (a) We are told the name of one of them. What was it? (1)
 - (b) What were they discussing and why were they sad? (2)
 - (c) What did Jesus talk about after He joined them and how did they feel then?
(We are told about their feelings in a later verse) (2)
 - (d) What argument did they use when they asked Jesus to stay with them rather than
continue His journey? (1)
 - (e) At what point did they recognise Jesus? (1)
 - (f) What did they do immediately after Jesus left them? (1)
2. Read about Jesus turning water into wine in John 2:1-11.
 - (a) Name three people or groups of people who were at the marriage (3)
 - (b) Who told Jesus that they had no wine? (1)
 - (c) What did Mary the mother of Jesus say to the servants? (1)
 - (d) How do we know that the wine Jesus made was very good? (2)
 - (e) What effect did this miracle have on the disciples? (1)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 86 in the Shorter Catechism:
What is faith in Jesus Christ? (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 Psalm 51:1-10, which is a psalm of David.
 - (a) Whom did David sin against? (1)
 - (b) Write out three of David's short prayers.
 - (1) Have _____ loving kindness.
 - (2) Wash _____ snow.
 - (3) Hide _____ iniquities. (3)
 - (c) Write out the prayer which shows us that David was especially concerned
about his heart sins. (1)
2. Read Psalm 78:6-16, which tells us of God's wonderful works.
 - (a) Tell me about three of these miracles. (The clues are sea, cloud and rocks.) (3)
 - (b) Which verse tells us why we should not forget these wonderful works? (1)
3. Read Psalm 90:10-17 which is a prayer of Moses.
 - (a) What are you to "number"? Tell me why. (2)
 - (b) What do you need "early" in your life? Tell me why. (2)

New Testament

1. Read Luke 2:8-20. Verse 20 tells us that the shepherds returned "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen". Write in each part of the table any three things which the shepherds saw and heard (think as well about the words that were spoken).

What the shepherds saw	What the shepherds heard

(6)

2. Read Luke 15:11-24. Write down which of these sentences are true and which are false:
- The son left home and spent all his money.
 - Afterwards he had plenty to eat and did not need anything.
 - He saw he had sinned against God and his father.
 - He decided to stay in the far country.
 - His father welcomed him home. (5)
3. Read Luke 23:32,33 and 39-43, a conversation between Christ and the two malefactors (two men who did what was evil). Tell me who said which of the sentences below; was it the unbelieving malefactor, the believing malefactor or Jesus?
- "If thou be Christ save, save thyself and us."
 - "This man hath done nothing amiss."
 - "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." (3)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write down the answer to question 22 in the Shorter Catechism:

How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man? (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

- Whose law is perfect? (Psalm 19:7)
- What does it convert? (Psalm 19:7)
- Who is the King of all the earth? (Psalm 47:7)
- What should we sing with understanding? (Psalm 47:7)

Fill in the missing words from these verses of Psalm 51

- Purge me with h____, and I shall be c____: w____ me, and I shall be whiter than s____. (Psalm 51:7)
- Create in me a clean h____, O God; and renew a right s____ within me. (Psalm 51:10)

New Testament

- What event was Jesus attending with his disciples in Cana of Galilee? (John 2:1,2)
- How much wine was left? (John 2:3)
- What did Jesus tell the servants to fill the water pots with? (John 2:7)
- What was the water turned into? (John 2:9)
- Who came to Jesus by night? (John 3:1,2)

What did Jesus say to him? (Fill in the missing words).

- Except a man be b____ again, he cannot s____ the kingdom of G____. (John 3:3)
- For God so l____ the w____, that he gave his only begotten S____, that whosoever b____ in him should not p____, but have everlasting l____. (John 3:16)

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