

The Young People's Magazine

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Rescued

Three fishermen from the town of San Blas in Mexico claim they spent about nine months at sea after the outboard engines broke down on their boat, which was just 25 feet (8 metres) long. They drifted for 5000 miles (8000 km), until they were close to the Marshall Islands on the far side of the Pacific Ocean. The men had set off from the west coast of Mexico on a shark-fishing trip meant to last for three weeks. They were eventually rescued, on August 9, by a tuna trawler from Taiwan.

From the trawler which picked them up, the fishermen told reporters that they had survived on rain water which they squeezed into their mouths from rags – and on sea birds and fish, which they had to eat raw. But, perhaps most interestingly, newspapers report that they “fended off despair with readings from the Bible”.

Certainly, no one who reads the Bible has any reason to despair. Yet what about the verse in Psalm 130 which asks: “If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?” The answer comes in the next verse, when the Psalmist is still addressing God: “But there is forgiveness with Thee”. However serious sin is – and the Bible makes it plain that sin is tremendously serious – God has made it just as plain that He is able to forgive even the worst of sins.

No doubt the Mexican fisherman were encouraged to read in the Bible of God's goodness – His willingness to help those in need, even in very serious need. No doubt that thought led them to hope that they might be rescued, even after drifting thousands of miles from where they intended to fish. That was no doubt what one of the fishermen meant when he claimed that he had “a lot of faith” in God. Yet the Bible teaches us that we should not presume on His kindness; we have no right to anything. We are all sinners. How emphatic the Bible is: “There is none righteous; no, not one”.

There is a danger of praying for outward help while forgetting about the needs of our souls – forgiveness, a new heart, a place in heaven, and much, much more. We must, as Jesus taught, seek first “the kingdom of God, and His righteousness”; we are to seek a place in God's kingdom and also the

righteousness we need if are to enter it. And we are to seek them as more important than anything else we may possibly want. We must get our priorities right: our souls first, and then our bodies; spiritual things first, and then what is outward; the kingdom of God first, and then the ordinary things of this life, like food and drink and clothes.

It is for Jesus' sake we must ask for every blessing. Because we deserve nothing, there is no reason in ourselves why God should answer our prayers – no reason why He should give us any of the things we ask for. But Jesus Christ, who died so that sinners could be saved from their sins, is altogether worthy. So, when we pray, we are not asking because of what we are or what we have done or what we may yet do. We must ask for the sake of what Jesus is and what He has done. He is the perfect Saviour and, through Him, we may go to God asking even for the supply of *all* our needs.

Yet, no matter how earnestly we pray, can we be sure that God will give us the answer we want? We can indeed be sure that Christ has promised not to turn away anyone who comes to Him for salvation. And that directs us to the main point here: has God *promised* to give what someone asks for? Did the three fishermen have a promise that God would rescue them? No, they did not. As it turned out, He was good to them. He did rescue them. It was because He is in control of everything that the men on the tuna trawler went to investigate, when they saw the Mexican boat.

But suppose it was you who was drifting on a boat far out in the ocean and praying to be rescued. What promise could you plead? If you have sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and so are believing in Christ, you could plead this promise: "All things work to together for good to them that love God". That is to pray in true faith, whether it is strong or weak. But to rescue you might not be what God sees best for you; it might be better to take you straight from that boat to heaven. He knows best in every set of circumstances, and we should be willing to let Him decide for us – and even believers should bear in mind that what they pray for is not necessarily what is best for them.

And what if you are still an unbeliever? Then you are resisting God's call to believe in Christ. You have no promise to plead before Him in asking, for instance, to be rescued. But you should still pray. Remember that God is good. He gives many good things to those who deserve nothing. Yet, especially if God gives what you ask for, do not forget to seek Him for your soul. If you refuse the greatest of His blessings, how ungrateful you are! You receive many gifts from God, such as food and drink, clothes and shelter. But how sinfully you are despising Him and His goodness, if you reject the gift of His dear Son, who came into this world to save sinners like you!

The Book of Ruth

92. A Beloved Child

Rev K M Watkins

Ruth 4:16. "And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it."

Boaz and Ruth were not alone in their love for their newborn son. The boy's grandmother Naomi also loved him. She had special reason to do so. It was her family that this boy was preserving. It was the name of her husband that would now survive through this boy. It was her two deceased sons that this boy was taking the place of. Naomi was not slow to show her great affection. "Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it."

If the baby boy had been able, he would have known two things as he lay in Naomi's bosom: her love and her care. As she pressed his tiny form close to her heart, her love for him was clear. The arms which held him would often be lifted up to God in prayer on his behalf, pleading for divine mercy and saving grace to become his.

As the days went by, Naomi would play her own part in caring for the growing boy. As his "nurse", she would often be responsible for his welfare, providing for him and protecting him. In due time she would help in his instruction and training. Along with his parents, she would help to bring him up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). Close to her heart, and safe in her arms, the little boy could be sure of Naomi's love and care at all times. If you have loving and caring parents and grandparents, thank the Lord for that blessing, and never think of it as small.

God's children are also greatly loved and cared for. When they have been born again and adopted into His own family, the Lord takes them, lays them in His bosom and nurses them. His love and care are with them all the days of their lives.

God loves His children. He presses them close to His heart in eternal affection and kindness. His love is so tender! "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Isaiah 40:11). As a loving shepherd gently takes up the young of his flock into his arms, presses them close to the warmth of his heart, and supports them when they are weak, so the Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, deals with His people in a spiritual way.

In this sense it is not only the apostle John who has the privilege of

leaning on Christ's bosom (see John 13:23). Every child of God has his own place in the Saviour's heart. When he feels unloved by the cruel world, when he cannot love himself because of his shameful sins, he may always turn to the constant love of His Saviour. When He feels himself in a spiritual wilderness, His beloved is always there with a strong arm to lean on (see Song of Solomon 8:5).

When the child of God feels prayerless, he can think of His loving Redeemer, who ever lives to intercede for him, and never forgets him at the throne of grace. Jesus is like Joseph, who presented his sons to aged Jacob for his blessing – Christ is continually presenting His children to the Father for His blessing and favour.

The Lord "nurses" His people. He protects them. He provides for them. He carries them in His strong arms. He is a Guardian to them, showing them the way that they should go. He nurtures grace in their souls, making it grow and deepen, for He has begun a good work in them and He will go on performing it until it is perfected. He is so wise and gentle in caring for their sometimes-fragile graces. "A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench" (Matthew 12:20).

Christians can rest secure in their Saviour's love and care, as Ruth's son could in Naomi's arms. Unlike Mephibosheth's nurse, who one day dropped him so that he became lame on both his feet, Christ will never fail His own little ones. They are eternally safe with Him, enjoying "the sure mercies" (Isaiah 55:3) of the covenant.

Who would not want to be one of God's children? No child in Bethlehem could have been as blessed as the child of Boaz and Ruth, and not least because he had such a loving and caring grandmother as Naomi. And no people are so blessed as the children of God! Who are loved as they are, in the bosom of the Almighty? Who are cared for as they are, nursed by the Lord Himself? "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help!" (Deuteronomy 33:29). Make sure that you are among them.

We cannot leave this subject without speaking of another Child, One who was much loved and much cared for. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6). We mean the "holy child Jesus" (Acts 4:30). As the only begotten Son of the Father, from all eternity He was the object of His Father's love: "The Father loveth the Son" (John 3:35). He could say, "Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight" (Proverbs 8:30). This Son is ever in the heart of His Father, in eternal communion and loving fellowship. He is "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18).

The Father cared for His Son. When He sent Him into the world to mediate, and to make peace, between God and men, He gave the Man Christ Jesus all His support, protection and guidance. Once and again the Father's assuring voice came from heaven: "Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). Jesus had a true mother according to the flesh, and Mary's husband Joseph was like a guardian to Him during His childhood, but the Saviour's true Guardian was His Father in heaven. His Father had spoken in prophecy long before, saying of Jesus: "Behold My servant, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth" (Isaiah 42:1). There is the bosom of love: "In whom My soul delighteth". And there is the care and support: "Whom I uphold".

We can hardly begin to understand how much the Father loves the Son. And yet, here is the marvellous wonder of divine grace. The Son prayed that His people would enjoy a portion of that same Fatherly love: "That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them" (John 17:26).

What is more, "God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32). Think of it! And keep thinking until your heart is deeply moved by God's love for sinners. God sent His own Son – His only Son, the Son He loved, the Son He cared for – He sent Him to the cross. He gave Him over to punishment and agony, to pain and shame. The Father left His beloved Son to feel forsaken. He left Him to taste the curse of the broken law. And all because He loved His elect from among the children of men, and was determined to have them in heaven with Himself, whatever the cost. Whatever the cost! Even the blood of His eternal Son! What love! What grace! Come, trust Him and love Him for ever.

Running the Race

2. The Contestants in the Christian Race and Its Start

Rev Neil M Ross

This is the second part of a Youth Conference talk, sub-titled, "some Bible teaching about the Christian life". Last month we looked at section one: the *kind* of race the Christian life is – basically a life of forsaking sin and following holiness.

The *Contestants in the Christian Race*. In a physical race only certain people may run – for example, those who are not too old or too young. But in this spiritual race it is not just true Christians who are directed to run – but everyone – as we shall see shortly.

Paul wrote, "Let *us* run the race". He meant: "Let you Hebrew Christians, and I myself, run the race". So he was exhorting the Christians of that day,

first of all. And Christians today, whether young or old, know that they too need to be directed to continue running this race. As in a physical race, so in the spiritual race, there has to be a constant pressing forward, and the Christian feels weary and faint at times. He will readily agree that he needs to be exhorted and motivated to press on.

The Apostle did not exclude himself from the race. As a minister in the Church of Christ, he knew that he had to be among the front runners. So we see him pressing on in the way of holiness. "I press toward the mark," he wrote, "for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). And he did so, not in his own strength, but in the strength which Christ gave him. A most solemn responsibility has been laid on all ministers: they are to be examples of godliness to fellow believers and to a watching world.

But what should we say of those who are Christians in *name only*? Are they to run the race? The Bible shows us that they are definitely not exempted. They too must run the race! They too must be holy! When God told the people of Israel, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," he was speaking to every single Israelite – not just to those who were already godly. God calls to unconverted people today to begin running the race. To *you*, young unconverted friend, God says, "Run the race".

To put it another way: whoever we are, we are *obliged* to run this spiritual race; it is not an optional matter which we can afford to ignore or attend to as we please. People have the right to refuse to run a physical race; but if we refuse to live the Christian life, it will be at our peril. The alternative to running the Christian race is to speed along the broad way which leads to destruction. Those who follow that course think it is the best one, especially when they see the majority of people on it. "There is a way that *seemeth* right unto a man" (Proverbs 16:25) – yet how solemn are the next words: "but the end thereof are the ways of death".

Someone may say, "I am not a committed Christian yet. I am quite interested in religion and the things of the Church, but that is all." Such a person may think that, because he is not a communicant of the church, he is free to do things a communicant would not do. How wrong he is! It is true that the unconverted person must be seeking the Lord, but he is also obliged to live in a Christian manner.

But let us remember that an unconverted person is not yet going towards heaven, although he may be trying to do what is right and avoid what is sinful. As unconverted, he has not entered – and he cannot enter – the kingdom of God. And as an unbeliever, the wrath of God abides on him. He is on the way to a lost eternity. He ought therefore to inquire seriously: "What must I do to be saved? How can I be a Christian, not just in an outward way,

but truly? How may I begin the Christian race and go in the right direction?" We will now look at answers to these questions.

The Start of the Christian Race. Three things are basic to making a right start to the race: regeneration, repentance and faith; they are essential to running the race. If these are absent, no start has been made, whatever appearances there are to the contrary.

Sadly, there are professing Christians who are not really Christians. Some of them know their Bibles well; they can talk intelligently about Christianity; and they may pray fluently; but their profession is an empty shell. Some of them have a high profile in their church and are praised as energetic Christians, but they are like Nicodemus. Although a well-known leader in the Church of his day, he did not have even the beginning of real religion. So the Saviour said to him, "Ye must be born again".

However confidently a person may be regarded as a Christian, he will never be accepted as such by God if he does not begin in the right way. In a physical race, there must be a correct start if one is to avoid being disqualified. So those who make a false start in the Christian race will be rejected at last in a most solemn manner. The Judge will pronounce, "I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:23). The prize cannot be theirs; the wages of sin will be given to them.

The right start consists mainly in the sinner believing the gospel and repenting. To repent is to turn about – to face away from the City of Destruction and face towards the Celestial City, or, as the Shorter Catechism puts it so well: "Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience" (answer 87). A sinner can never repent without apprehending – or laying hold on – the mercy of God in Christ, and he does so by believing in Christ.

So it is only when the sinner believes and repents that he begins the Christian life. How many make the mistake of thinking they have begun to live a good life, one that is pleasing to God, because they have stopped certain sins and have become careful about their general conduct and about religious duties. This is certainly a false start! Christ is the *only* door into the way of holiness. "I am the door," He said, "by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9). To enter in by Christ the door is simply to believe in Him.

Of course, the sinner can neither repent of his sins nor believe in the Lord Jesus Christ until God makes him able to do so. God makes the sinner able when, by His word and Spirit, the sinner is born again. The new birth

basically consists in God putting spiritual life into the soul of the spiritually-dead sinner, thus making him willing and able to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and repent of his sins.

His new birth not only results in his repentance and faith; it is also demonstrated by them. In 1 John 5:1 we read, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" – that is, the fact that he believes in the Saviour is the evidence of his being born again. But it is not the cause of his being born again, which is what many professing Christians think.

Although they are spiritually dead, some people may very much regret committing certain sins and they may believe the facts about Christ. But these are not substitutes for repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. These people have not begun to run the race. We might as well expect a man who is physically dead to run a race as expect someone who is not born again to enter in by Christ the door and begin in the way of holiness, which leads to life eternal.

It is one thing to begin the Christian race; it is another to carry on and persevere to the end. In the next issue we expect to begin examining the fourth main point: *continuing* in the Christian race.

Missionary to India

5. "Surely This is the Truth"

Alexander Duff reached Calcutta from Scotland in 1830. He quickly set about establishing a school so that young Indians would come in contact with the Bible. He soon showed himself to be a very effective teacher.

Other Indian boys now began to pester Duff for a place in his school. Some, in broken English, would plead: "Me good boy; O take me". Others: "Me poor boy; O take me". And others: "Me know your commandments: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before Me'; O take me". And many, as a final argument, would tell Duff that they would pray for him. But a choice had to be made; no teacher can be successful if he has too many pupils. So tickets were issued to those who had been selected and two men were placed at the door of the school to keep others out.

None of the boys who joined Duff's classes were in any sense Christians, but they had to study the Bible for an hour each day. They all knew they had no option if they were going to benefit from the other subjects taught in the school. And Duff also invited the parents to come and listen to his Bible lessons, he hoped to quieten their fears that Christian teaching would act like a form of magic, casting a spell on the pupils. Yet, of course, he hoped that

God's Word would act on the boys' souls by the divine power of the Holy Spirit, so that they would, from the heart, become new creatures in Christ Jesus and believe its teachings.

Duff and his pupils first studied together the Lord's Prayer and then went on to look at the parable of the prodigal son. They then moved on to consider 1 Corinthians 13, that wonderful chapter where Paul writes so powerfully about charity, or love. "Throughout," Duff commented, "all were attentive, and the minds of a few became intensely riveted." When they came to the verse which states that "charity endureth all things", one boy blurted out: "That is too good for us. Who can act up to that? Who can act up to that?" Of course, he was right. But, strange to say, this was the very boy who, just a few days before, had objected to having to read the Bible in school.

Duff then led his pupils through the Sermon on the Mount, beginning with Matthew 5. When they came to verse 44: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you," one boy was particularly impressed. For some weeks he could not help crying out: "Love your enemies! Bless them that curse you! How beautiful! How divine! Surely this is the truth!" He had indeed seen something of the glory of God's teaching in the Bible. And this was no passing, outward sense of wonder; He was brought to look to Christ for salvation; he was made a new creature in Christ Jesus. God was answering the prayers which Duff, and others in India and back in Scotland too, were sending up to heaven.

Some of the boys seem to have spoken rashly as they began to see that Christianity, not Hinduism, is indeed the true religion. This provoked a strong reaction among the Indians. One morning Duff was most surprised to see only six pupils in school, instead of the usual 300. Why was this? he asked. Someone showed him a copy of a local Bengali newspaper which carried forceful warnings about Duff's school, claiming that Hinduism was in danger. This was a newspaper which had originally been started to oppose British proposals to ban the Indian practice of suttee – burning the living widow along with her husband's dead body. (It was certainly not to Britain's credit that it took so long to outlaw this barbaric practice.)

It was even proposed that a yellow flag be placed outside Duff's school to warn people about the danger posed to those who would study there. But the fuss soon died down; within a week everything was back to normal.

Yet, before long, Calcutta was again in turmoil as a result of Duff's activities. He had organised a series of lectures on religion to be given in a room in his own house. Some of his pupils were there on the first night, and some from the government College. What angered the Hindu leaders was

that this had happened in spite of a government promise not to interfere with their religion. And they complained about the missionary from Britain who was ready, they believed, to put Christianity in the place of Hinduism. The result of these objections was that the students from the government College were forbidden to attend any such lectures again. Duff now decided there was nothing to be gained by continuing with these lectures for the time being. But when Indian boys set up their own debating societies all over the city, Duff was sometimes able to come and along and give them a talk.

Now that he did not have to spend time preparing lectures, he took the opportunity of improving his knowledge of the Bengali language. About a year later he felt able to preach a sermon in Bengali. But he left regular preaching in that language to others, and gave most of his energies to his work in the school, in the hope of being able to influence the boys of Calcutta for good, through teaching them from the Scriptures.

For Younger Readers

The House

Perhaps you can think of a house standing on its own far away from any other house. No one lives anywhere near it.

I know a road that goes on and on for a long time, and you cannot see a house anywhere near it. But at last you see one old house on its own. I think only the walls are standing now. Then the road goes on for a long time before you see another house.

Can you think of a house like that? You do not know who built the house. You do not know who lived in it. You do not know when it was built. And you do not know when the last people moved out of it. You do not know anything at all about its history.

But there is one thing you can be sure of. Somebody built that house. It did not just appear out of nothing.

Somebody laid the foundation and built the walls. Perhaps it was one man working on his own, or perhaps several men did the work together. Perhaps someone else put on the roof. And perhaps some other man did all the work inside. Or perhaps there were several men doing the other parts of the work too. Perhaps the same men built the whole house. You just do not know.

Yet, remember, one thing is sure. However little you know about

those who built the house, you can be sure that someone built it – one man or a number of men.

Think now about the world, and the sun and the moon and the stars. Can you really think that no one made them, that they just came to be where they are?

Of course, there was a Someone who made them. And you know who that Someone was. It was God.

Read chapter 1 in Genesis. It tells you that God made everything. “God made two great lights;” we are told, “the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night”. In other words, God made the sun and the moon; we see the sun during the day and we see the moon at night. And then the Bible says that God “made the stars also”.

God made everything in this world – all kinds of plants and flowers, all kinds of animals and birds and fish. And He made Adam and Eve, the first man and the first woman.

God made everything, and He made it all very good. How sad that, before long, Adam and Eve sinned. That was the beginning of all that is bad in the world.

For Junior Readers – Lessons from the Life of John G Paton

The Cruel Teacher

Nearly 200 years ago, in a little farm cottage, John Paton was born. He was the oldest of 11 children. The Patons were not a rich family; so they sometimes struggled to have enough warm clothes and food for everyone. In spite of this, John had happy memories of his family life and his loving, godly parents.

But life was tough. When he was 12 years old, John left school. He was a clever boy, coming first in some of his subjects. His teacher was sometimes kind to him. For instance, one evening he came to John’s house with a parcel of smart, warm clothes for him. But most of the time his teacher was unkind to him. When John should have got prizes for coming first in some subjects, these prizes were given to boys from rich families.

But the worst thing about this teacher was that he could be very cruel, beating John horribly for no good reason. After one of these beatings at school, John was so upset that he ran home. When he had calmed down, his mother managed to persuade him to go back. So, although John was worried

about what would happen when he got back to the school, he obeyed his mother and went. Sadly, he had good reason to be worried, for the teacher was still in a rage. When he saw John, he rushed at him and kicked him hard. John was so hurt and terrified by this attack that he ran home again. Even when the teacher came to his house to say sorry and begged John to come back to the school, John refused.

So, at the age of 12, John starting learning his father's trade – weaving stockings. He started work at 6 o'clock in the morning and he worked till 10 o'clock at night. Can you imagine working that long? I cannot! He stopped for half an hour at breakfast time and at supper time and for an hour in the middle of the day for his dinner. What a long, hard day! When John had these breaks for his food, do you think he played football or lay on his bed to relax? No, he did not! Any time left over after eating his food he used for studying. He was trying to learn Latin and Greek; so he would sit with his books trying to take in as much as he could. And he did so without the help of a teacher or school friends.

Let me ask you some things. You have the chance to learn at home and in school. But are you slow to settle down to your school work? When you have homework, do you moan and groan about it or do you just get on and do it? What about when you have jobs to do around the house? How do you react if your Mum or your Dad asks you to do a job like washing dishes or tidying your room? Do you say, "Yes, Mum," and go to do it straight away? Or do you tell her, "I didn't make that mess; it's not fair if I have to tidy it"? I hope you give the first of these answers.

And when you are doing a job for your parents, what attitude do you have in your heart? Are you grumbling inside yourself, saying, "I hate doing this! I shouldn't need to do this; it's not my job"? Remember that, although your Mum and Dad cannot see inside your heart, God can. He has commanded us to "honour our father and mother", and this commandment includes all people who have authority over us, including teachers and other adults.

I do not think John would have grumbled at his Dad for having to work so hard. I do not think he complained to his Mum about having to study in the little free time that he had. He loved his parents and wanted to help them as best he could. You love your Dad and Mum too, and the best way to show them that you love them is to obey them when they ask you to do things – to obey them at once, with a pleasant face and a happy heart. Not only is this the best way to show our parents our love for them, it is how God has told us to behave. I know it is not always easy to obey them, but we may always ask God to help us. We may pray: "Teach me, O Lord, the perfect way of Thy precepts divine" (Psalm 119:33).

S M Campbell

Looking Around Us

The Last Photo

A man was sent to prison recently for destroying a speed camera. He knew he had, once more, been caught travelling too fast – this time by this camera. He was a van driver and was afraid that he would no longer be allowed to drive and so would lose his job. He wanted to destroy the evidence.

Late at night, he went to the camera with chemicals he had taken from his workplace. But the part of the camera which recorded pictures was not destroyed. Indeed, for some reason, as the chemicals were taking effect on the machine, it burst into life for one last time. And what was on that last photo? It was the man's van sitting right in front of the camera.

The Bible tells us: "Behold, your sins will find you out". Here is one more instance of this truth. Let us ever remember that this will always happen – if not in this life, then certainly on the day of judgement, if we do not repent.

Scripture and Catechism Exercises

General Information 2006-07

There will be three sets of 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 heart.

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 2006*. 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. You therefore 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. Supplies of paper and envelopes will be distributed through congregations, but any suitable paper can be used.
5. 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*.
6. Teachers and others working with young people can arrange for groups to do the exercises, and correctors will be glad to hear from them.
7. The exercises are based on Bible Reading Cards which will be distributed through congregations. They may also 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 D and A: *Exercise 1*: Jeremiah 47 to Daniel 4, and 2 Corinthians 5 to Hebrews 13. *Exercise 2*: Daniel 5 to Malachi 4, Genesis 1-23, James 1 to Revelation 22 and Matthew 1-11. *Exercise 3*: Genesis 24 to Exodus 34 and Matthew 12 to Mark 16.

Exercise 1 2006-07

All answers from *overseas* should be sent to *Mrs N M Ross, F P Manse, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, Ross-shire, IV15 9JB, Scotland*. The correctors should have your answers before the end of November.

Senior Section (15 years old and over)

UK answers to *Miss C MacQueen, 32 Fraser Crescent, Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9DR*.

Old Testament

1. Read Lamentations chapter 3. Complete each quotation and give the number of the verse:
 - (a) "They are new every morning"
 - (b) "Wherefore doth a living man complain . . . ?"
 - (c) "Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee" (3)
2. Read Ezekiel chapter 33.
 - (a) Why do you think a "watchman" is a good name for a preacher? (2)
 - (b) What is the preacher's message called? (2)
 - (c) Who is to be held responsible for the death of a person
 - (1) if warning was given; (2) if warning was not given? (4)
 - (d) How ought we to react to the warnings of God's Word? (2)
 - (e) Give the number of a verse near the end of the chapter which describes those who are hearers but not doers of the Word. (2)
3. Read Ezekiel chapter 34.
 - (a) Why do you think a "shepherd" is a good name for a preacher? (2)
 - (b) Quote a verse which reminds you of Psalm 23. (1)
 - (c) Write briefly about these quotations:
 - (1) "the cloudy and dark day" (verse 12) (2)
 - (2) "there shall be showers of blessing" (verse 26) (2)
 - (3) "I will raise up for them a plant of renown" (verse 29). (2)

New Testament

Read the Epistle to the Philippians.

1. (a) Why was Paul confident that the Philippians would endure to the end? (2)
- (b) What good effect did his imprisonment have on other believers? (2)
- (c) Quote a short verse which sums up his outlook. (1)
- (d) With what choice was he faced? (2)
2. See chapter 2:
 - (a) How are believers advised about
 - (1) harmony (2) humility? (4)
 - (b) Write in your own words what Paul says about the Saviour's
 - (1) humiliation (2) exaltation. (4)
3. See chapter 3.
 - (a) Give three marks of the true Christian from a verse near the beginning. (3)
 - (b) At the end of the chapter what are we told about the resurrection? (1)
4. See chapter 4.

- (a) What is the remedy for over-anxiety, and what is the effect of that remedy? (2)
- (b) Quote the verse which tells where Paul's strength lay. (1)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 38 in the Shorter Catechism: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection? (3)

Intermediate Section (13 and 14 years old)

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

Old Testament

1. Look up the following verses from the book of Daniel:
 - (1) chapter 2:28 (2) chapter 2:47 (3) chapter 3:17 (4) chapter 3:28
 - (a) In each case, who spoke these truths about God? (4)
 - (b) On each occasion what caused them to speak about God in such a way? (8)
 - (c) What does this teach us about Daniel and his friends? (2)
 - (d) In what way can we take courage in the face of trouble? (2)
2. Read Lamentations 3.
 - (a) Who wrote the book of Lamentations? (1)
 - (b) Why do you think it is called *Lamentations*? (1)
 - (c) What are we told is "good for a man"? (4)
 - (d) Quote three separate verses (one for each part) which deal with:
 - (1) the mercies of the Lord (1)
 - (2) the goodness of the Lord (1)
 - (3) the compassion of the Lord. (1)
 - (e) Complete the verse: "The Lord is my portion . . .". (2)

New Testament

1. Read Hebrews 11.
 - (a) How is faith described at the beginning of this chapter? (2)
 - (b) What did Noah do that proved he lived by faith? (3)
2. For what is the shield of faith used? (Ephesians 6) (2)
3. Read 2 Timothy.
 - (a) What does Paul remember about Onesiphorus? (3)
 - (b) What does he wish for him? (chapter 1) (2)
 - (c) Who will receive a "crown of righteousness"? (4)
4. Read 1 Timothy chapter 6.
 - (a) What warnings are to be given to those who are rich? (2)
 - (b) What sound advice is given to those people? (3)
 - (c) What does Paul tell Timothy (1) to flee from? (1)
 - (2) to follow after? (3)
 - (3) to fight? (1)
 - (4) to avoid? (2)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 44 in the Shorter Catechism: What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us? (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 Jeremiah chapter 52.
 - (a) Who was king of Babylon when Zedekiah was king of Judah? (1)
 - (b) What city was besieged and eventually broken up by this king and his army? (1)
 - (c) After Zedekiah was captured how was he treated? (3)
 - (d) Who burned the house of the Lord? (1)

- (e) What happened to everything that was in the house of the Lord? (1)
2. Read Daniel chapter 2.
- (a) What effect did Nebuchadnezzar's dream have on him? (2)
- (b) What did he promise to anyone who could tell him the dream and interpret it? (2)
- (c) What threat did he make to the Chaldeans if they could not tell him the dream? (2)
- (d) Nebuchadnezzar had seen a great image in his dream. Of how many different materials was this image composed? (1)
- (e) Which part of the image represented Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom? (1)
- (f) What was remarkable about the way in which the stone was cut out of the mountain? (1)
- (g) What happened to the stone after it destroyed the image? (1)
- (h) Whose kingdom do you think the stone represented? (1)
- (i) Find and write out a verse (four consecutive lines) from Psalm 118 (metrical version) which speaks of this stone. (3)

New Testament

1. Read Philippians chapter 4.
- (a) Verse 6 says, "Be careful (full of care or worry) for nothing". What should we do instead? (2)
- (b) What promise is attached to acting in this way? (2)
- (c) Verse 8 says, "Think on these things". What are "these things"? (6)
2. Hebrews chapter 11 speaks of several Old Testament saints who had faith. Who, by faith,
- (a) chose to suffer affliction with the people of God? (1)
- (b) was translated that he should not see death? (1)
- (c) judged Him faithful who had promised? (1)
- (d) offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain? (1)
- (e) went out not knowing whither he went? (5)

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 Sheena Campbell, 2 Silverknowes Midway, Edinburgh, EH4 5PP.*

Old Testament

1. Read Daniel 1:1-7.
- (a) What is the name of the king of Judah who was taken captive by the king of Babylon? (1)
- (b) Write down four things about those young men of the children of Israel whom the king of Babylon wanted to be taught the ways of the Chaldeans. (4)
- (c) What food and drink did the king order them to eat? (2)
- (d) Why were they being given such rich and expensive food? (1)
2. Read Daniel 1:8-16.
- (a) Why did Daniel not want to eat the food ordered for them? (1)
- (b) Did the prince of the eunuchs like Daniel? (1)
- (c) What did Daniel and his friends want to eat and drink? (2)
- (d) For how many days did Daniel ask that he and his friends be allowed to eat the food of their choice? (1)
- (e) How did Daniel and his friends look after these days had passed? (2)

New Testament

1. Read Ephesians 6:13-20. Paul is describing how Christians can prepare themselves against Satan's attacks by putting on the armour of God. Copy and complete the table:

Protection	Description of Armour
For the loins	Girt about with truth
For the breast	
	Shod with the preparation of the gospel
From fiery darts	
For the head	

(4)

2. Paul gave lots of advice to the early Christians in his letters and this advice applies to us. Read Philippians 4:4-8 and answer the following questions:

- (a) Who are we to rejoice in? (1)
- (b) What do we have to be “careful” or worried about? (1)
- (c) How are we to make our requests known to God? (3)
- (d) What shall “keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”? (1)
- (e) Write down two things that we are to think about? (2)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write down the answer to question 11 in the Shorter Catechism:

What are God’s works of providence? (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

1. When Nebuchnezzar commanded everyone to worship the golden image that he had set up, did Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego obey him? (Daniel 3:12)
2. When Nebuchadnezzar threatened to throw them into a burning fiery furnace, what did they say that God was able to do? (Daniel 3:17)
3. What did the fire do to the men who threw them into the fiery furnace? (Daniel 3:22)
4. Did the fire harm Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? (Daniel 3:27)
5. Who was the first president in the kingdom of Darius? (Daniel 6:2)
6. Where were Daniel’s enemies going to put anyone who prayed to God? (Daniel 6:7)
7. How many times a day did Daniel pray as usual? (Daniel 6:10)
8. Who tried to save Daniel from the lion’s den? (Daniel 6:14)
9. What was put on the mouth of the den after Daniel had been thrown in? (Daniel 6:17)
10. Who sent his angel and stopped the lions from hurting Daniel? (Daniel 6:22)

New Testament

All these verses say something about salvation. Write down the missing words.

1. For by g____ are ye saved through f____; and that not of yourselves: it is the g____ of God. (Ephesians 2:8)
2. This is a faithful s____ and worthy of a__ acceptance, that Christ J____ came into the world to s____ sinners; of whom I am chief. (1 Timothy 1:15)
3. Not by w____ of righteousness that we have done, but according to his m____

- he saved us, by the w_____ of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.
(Titus 3:5)
4. Wherefore he is a ___ also to save them to the u_____ that come unto G____
by h____, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25)
5. So Christ was o____ offered to bear the sins of m____; and unto them that l____
for him shall he appear the second t____ without sin unto s_____.
(Hebrews 9:28)

Overseas Prizes and Awards 2005 -06

Senior Section

Prizes: *Auckland:* Jessica van Kralingen. *Grafton:* Cassandra van Dorp, Natalie White. *Holland:* Anne Bakker. *Sydney:* Alison and Laura Marshall.
Awards with Merit: *Auckland:* Susie Thomas. *Brisbane:* Sarah Brigden. *Dunedin:* Hayley Worth. *Gisborne:* Mark and Stephen Geuze. *Wellington:* Joanna Hicklin.
Awards: *Auckland:* Liana Sullivan. *Chesley:* Randy Winkels. *Gisborne:* Trudi Haringa. *Sengera:* Pius Obondi, Benmark Okioga, Lydia Momanyi.

Intermediate Section

Prizes: *Auckland:* Jonathan van Kralingen. *Chesley:* Martha Bouman. *Grafton:* Shelley van Dorp, Matthew White. *Holland:* Peter Bakker. *Jerusalem:* Jennifer Goldby. *Sydney:* Andrew Marshall. *Wellington:* Elizabeth Hicklin.
Awards with Merit: *Auckland:* Sam McCrae, David Thomas. *Dunedin:* Richie Worth. *Gisborne:* Louise van Dorp. *Holland:* Daniel van Draanen. *Sengera:* Jennifer Mosiria, Edinah Ombega.
Awards: *Brisbane:* Miriam Brigden. *Chesley:* Rachel Winkels. *Gisborne:* Anita Geuze, Herman Haringa. *Sengera:* Bernard Mosoti. *Sydney:* Madison van Praag.

Junior Section

Prizes: *Brisbane:* Mary Jean Brigden. *Chesley:* Audrey Zekveld. *Grafton:* Chloe van Dorp, Cameron White. *Sydney:* James Marshall. *Wellington:* Lydia Hicklin.
Awards with Merit: *Chesley:* Jenny Bouman. *France:* Julia Davenel. *Gisborne:* William Geuze, Alexander van Dorp. *Holland:* Jelle Bakker.
Awards: *Dunedin:* Gresham Worth. *Gisborne:* Heidi Haringa, Kirsten van Dorp. *Grafton:* Chelsie and Jackie Cameron, Abraham Wallis.

Upper Primary Section

Prizes: *Auckland:* Bianco Jago, Laura McCrae. *Brisbane:* Rachel Brigden. *Gisborne:* Anne-Marie Geuze. *Grafton:* Bethany McAlpine. *Holland:* Gerben Bakker. *Sydney:* Keith Marshall. *Wellington:* Abigail Hicklin.
Awards with Merit: *Auckland:* Amy Thomas. *Chesley:* Jacob Zekveld. *Connecticut:* Rachel Mack. *Gisborne:* William Haringa. *Holland:* Nathalie Macdonald. *Sengera:* Asher Kengere, Mary Mosoti, Maurine Okioga, Judys Kennedy.
Awards: *Sengera:* Joel Kembene, Kwamboka and Abram Nyasaka, Eusaphiar Ombega, Dickson and Salome Ontiri, Wilfred Onwonga. *Sydney:* Emily van Praag.

Lower Primary Section

Awards: *Auckland:* Claudia Campbell, Rita de Bruin, Jarrod and Monique Jago, Lachlan McCrae. *Connecticut:* Rebecca Mark, Sarah Mack. *Gisborne:* Hannah Geuze, Anna van Dorp, Annika van Dorp, Emma van Dorp. *Grafton:* Joshua Kidd, Alexandra van Dorp. *Holland:* Samantha Macdonald. *Sengera:* Josinah Aboki, Diviner Ayubu, Susan Babu, Dick Boiro, Janet and Salim Isaac, Eliud Juma, Nyangaresi Kengere, Jessy Maera, Margret Matara, Isabella Michieka, Finlay Mogari, Ericson Momanyi, Truus Moraa, Duncan and Peter Moses, Christine Mosoti, Linnet and Sisiria Nyabuto, Moraa Nyasaka, Andrew Obiri, Vincent Ombura; Nyaera, Patrick, Vincent and Wilkister Ondieki; Issaberah and Samuel Ontiri, Nyabonyi Orina, Veronicah Thomas. *Sydney:* Duncan Marshall, Heather, Nathan and Zoe van Praag, Kaitlyn van Praag. *Wellington:* Julia and Timothy Hicklin.