

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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Cover Picture: *Sydney harbour, where John G Paton landed in Australia.*
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Satan's Darkness

In a dangerous place, everything is so much more frightening at night. Out in a jungle, for instance, there may be wild animals prowling around, looking for a meal. But more dangerous might be a little insect whose bite may bring a serious, perhaps fatal, disease. No wonder one of the psalmists spoke of "the terror by night" (Psalm 91:5).

The Bible speaks of "the rulers of the darkness of this world" (Ephesians 6:12) – meaning the fallen angels, of whom Satan is the chief. He is, of course, as likely to tempt us through the day as at night. But the darkness referred to here is of a spiritual kind; it is the darkness of sin.

When God created this world and everything in it, it was all "very good" (Genesis 1:31). But Satan came prowling around that wonderful world in the form of a serpent. He came hoping to bring spiritual darkness to a world of bright spiritual sunshine, in which Adam and Eve were living holy, happy and fulfilled lives. He attacked them with doubt, confusion and lies. He questioned God's kindness and His truthfulness. By his lies, Satan persuaded them to commit sin – to eat the fruit which God had forbidden them to take.

This might not seem a big sin. After all, people will say, it was only eating an apple (though the Bible does not say what kind of fruit it was). But in eating the fruit, Adam and Eve were disobeying a clear instruction from God, who was their Creator and had provided them with everything they needed. So their action was rebellion against God, which *is* a serious sin. Before then they knew God and loved Him; yet they turned against Him and disobeyed Him. Satan had entangled them by throwing around them the darkness of his temptations. Jesus speaks of him as "a murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44); he attacked Adam and Eve and brought them into a state of spiritual death, which is the worst of all possible kinds of murder.

Into that spiritual darkness, all their descendants are born. It is dangerous darkness, in which Satan, "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). He goes about tempting young and old. He takes advantage of the darkness in the heart of every unbeliever, to lead them further into sin. And, wily creature that he is, he understands the advantages

of getting people to follow a course of sin and unbelief while they are still young. He feels confident that, if he can take a firm grip of them while they are young, he will have them for life, and throughout a lost eternity.

But what does that mean for you? It means that if, while you are young, you submit to temptation and are entangled more and more in the darkness of sin, you are more likely to go on to a lost eternity – to be sent away into “the blackness of darkness for ever” with Satan and his angels.

Satan will tempt you to go away from the pure light of God's Word and His commandments into the darkness of unbelief and sin. Just as he brought Adam and Eve into darkness in the Garden of Eden, so he will try to bring doubt and confusion into your mind. He wants to keep you from believing what God is telling you. He will try to make it fashionable to forget about God; he will tempt you to live without God and to commit whatever sins you find attractive. Beware, in a godless age such as ours, of the particular sins of Sabbath breaking and of adultery. To give in to temptation is to confirm yourself as a loyal subject of the kingdom of darkness. Remember, the further you go into sin, the more likely you are to become hardened in the ways of sin.

It is extremely difficult to turn back from a life of sin. So the younger you are when you leave the kingdom of darkness, the better. But do not trust in yourself for strength to leave sin and the service of Satan; you need divine power. In any case, Satan will not be too concerned if you give up various sins, so long as you do not trust in Christ and enter His kingdom.

When we hear about Christ and salvation through Him, or read about Him in the Bible, the pure light of truth is not far from us. He still tells us: “While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light” (John 12:36). If we believe in Christ, the true light of holiness and the knowledge of God will penetrate our hearts more and more, and the darkness of sin and doubt and unbelief will at last disappear completely.

We have good reason to be afraid of Satan's temptations. We are only safe when we take refuge in Christ. If we take refuge in Him, we are safe from Satan and from the darkness of his temptations. God's promise is: “Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night” (Psalm 91:5). Satan, powerful and wily though he is, is limited in what he can do. But there are no limits on what Christ can do. He can prevent Satan doing us harm; He has full power to rescue sinners from Satan's grasp, to bring them out of Satan's darkness into the marvellous light of God's kingdom.

Yet, in this life, Satan can still harass the followers of Christ; he can tempt them; he can even succeed in his temptations – remember how he tempted Peter to deny the Saviour. But we know that Peter, at that time, had a false

confidence in his own power to stay faithful to his Master. He had ventured outside the refuge, away from Christ. But Christ brought him back. Christ had prayed for him; so Peter returned to the refuge.

Satan still prowls around today, “seeking whom he may devour”. We are to resist him – not in our own strength, but looking to Christ. And if we are looking to Christ, we will be brought at last to a place of complete safety, in heaven. There Satan will not be able to reach us with his darkness – of temptation, doubt and unbelief.

The sooner we look to Christ by faith, the better. We will be protected from many a danger; we will be preserved from hardening our hearts in a course of sin. And we will be able, however weakly, to live the rest of our lives to the glory of God. God’s command is to seek Him now.

“Chosen not for Good in Me”

5. Visit to Palestine

Alex MacLean

This is a further part of a paper given at the 2006 Youth Conference on “the life and ministry of Robert Murray M’Cheyne”. After about a year as the assistant minister of Larbert and Dunipace in central Scotland, M’Cheyne was called to the new congregation of St Peter’s in Dundee.

Although a good number of M’Cheyne’s sermons have been passed down to us and are available for us to read, let us remember that he did not write them out himself. What is more, we cannot listen to *him* preaching them. Early in his ministry, while travelling to take a service in Larbert, he dropped his sermon notes and had to conduct the service without being able to refer to them. He had liberty in preaching and, from that day on, he stopped using his notes in the pulpit. But he did prepare his sermons diligently, setting them out carefully on paper.

M’Cheyne was at home in the pulpit and was strengthened by his Master as he set the Word of God before the congregation. But often, both before and after preaching, he was very conscious of his own ignorance and weakness. He had a remarkably clear and melodious voice and spoke earnestly; there was a fragrance of Christ about him. As he preached Christ, he was conscious that this is the One “from whom all doctrine shoots forth as rays from a centre”. M’Cheyne was an excellent speaker and gained the respect and attention of his hearers. But, beyond that, the Holy Spirit used him as he directed sinners to the blood of Jesus.

His preaching contained a vast amount of Bible truth and he gave much

attention to the practical effect and personal application of the Word. He addressed his hearers with tenderness, showing them the Saviour's love and compassion. He pointed out that the response to the gospel which God requires is a simple trust in Christ. He saw no inconsistency in preaching an electing God who calls "whom He will" to Himself and a salvation free to "whosoever will". He set forth God's sovereignty and man's responsibility, while also declaring the free grace and mercy of God, who makes salvation possible for even the worst of sinners.

Although he had spent a year labouring in Larbert and Dunipace and was now established in his ministry in Dundee, M'Cheyne still had a desire to become a missionary. He felt drawn to India, where Alexander Duff had been appointed in 1829 as the first Church of Scotland missionary, but this desire was not to be fulfilled. Eminent men such as Samuel Rutherford and Thomas Boston had a great interest in the welfare of the Jews, believing that when they were received back into the Church, it would be "life from the dead" to the Gentiles. M'Cheyne shared the same scriptural thoughts and spent time each morning praying that the Jews would turn to Christ.

The Church of Scotland agreed to send four ministers to Europe and Palestine to investigate the condition of the Jews and appointed a committee to arrange for this. At that time, M'Cheyne's health was not good; in fact he was so seriously ill that he had to take a complete rest from his work and returned to his parents' home in Edinburgh for a few months. The committee selected Andrew Bonar and M'Cheyne, along with two other ministers, to undertake the investigation. They hoped not only that M'Cheyne would be "useful to the Jewish cause", but that the change of climate would also help his health. He saw the Lord's hand in all these plans and, with his doctor's agreement, he set off on what was a demanding journey, even for a fit man. But his spirit was willing although his flesh was weak.

He began his journey on 27 March 1839 and arrived back in November 1839 after an eventful and at times life-threatening journey. The deputation visited France, Italy, Malta, Greece, Egypt (where Islam ruled supreme) and then went on to Palestine. Travelling by camel for more than 12 hours a day in exhausting heat sapped their energy and their general well-being. But their spirits were greatly refreshed on arriving at such places as Jerusalem, Jacob's well (which is actually a cave with a deep well) and Galilee – and on meeting with fellow believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and partaking of the Lord's Supper with them in an upper room.

There were about 10 000 Jews in Jerusalem; they were poor, but still waiting for the coming of the Messiah. They were more hostile to Christian missionaries than the Jews they met in other countries. But others professing

to be Christians – such as Roman Catholics, Greeks and Armenians – showed greater hatred to the Jews than even the Muslims did.

The deputation visited almost every town or city in Palestine in which Jews lived and then began their journey back home at the end of July. While in Palestine, M'Cheyne composed some of his well known poems and sketched various scenes. On the voyage through the Mediterranean he became dangerously ill, but the Lord raised him up again. Their return journey took them through Europe, and while in Germany waiting to embark on the ship to London, they heard that the Lord had visited His Church in Scotland. Dundee in particular had received His blessing. M'Cheyne considered it significant that the Lord visited His Church when it had shown an interest in His ancient people, the Jews.

Samson

6. A Memorable Example

Rev J B Jardine

This is the last part of a paper given at the 2008 Youth Conference. The paper was made as positive as possible. It would be helpful to read Judges 13-16.

Assessing Samson: If we still have any lingering doubts about Samson's spiritual state, then let us think of how many sinful incidents there are in our own lives. In dwelling upon the negative aspects of Samson's life we can forget the simple fact that God justified him. Perhaps his greatest failing was his not living up to his full spiritual potential. Is that not our failing too?

Paul mentions him in Hebrews 11 as one of the noted individuals who showed forth that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen". We may learn several important lessons from Samson's life:

(1.) From before his birth, Samson's parents had a genuine concern for him. One of the most beautiful prayers in the Old Testament is that of Manoah praying for guidance for raising his yet-unborn child: "O my Lord, let the man of God which Thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born" (Judges 13:8).

We should note that, even given the faults of his moral character, Samson was closely connected with the covenant. He was dedicated to God from before his birth. Like Samson, when baptized children come of age, they become responsible for fulfilling the vows of their baptism. Do you ever consider this? You are at an age when you ought to think about it.

(2.) Samson was anointed with the Spirit of the Lord. He was a great patriot and one who desired the Lord to avenge the wrongs done upon his people by the Philistines.

(3.) He was a man of prayer. When he prayed, the Lord answered him. He prayed for nourishment and the Lord provided it from the jawbone of the ass. He prayed to be allowed to die with the Philistines, and the Lord granted him his request. Samson performed feats which no ordinary man could carry out without the gift of spiritual life and power from God. But he was careless about this gift; he took it for granted. In moments of weakness he indulged in the pleasures of the flesh, and at last he sinfully told Delilah the secret of his strength. He did not appreciate that physical gifts, like spiritual ones, are from God and that God must be obeyed if they are to be retained.

(4.) Samson was lustful and therefore weak. He did not crucify his sinful desires as he should have done; rather he allowed them to run on unchecked. He could not resist the temptations that women presented to him.

(5.) Because of his faults, Samson could not bring about a permanent deliverance for Israel. Yet Samson prepared the way for Samuel, Saul and David. It was he who began to deliver Israel from the Philistines. As we have already said, we must judge him according to his times. Then each person did what they pleased. We read that "in those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6). Samson differed from those around him in that he was a hero of faith. He was as a Nazarite dedicated to God and yet he was still affected by the sin of his times – which, as in our own day, eats like a cancer. We must never forget that Samson was sent to deliver Israel and was ready to sacrifice himself so that his people's enemies might be overthrown. He was willing to lay down his own life for the sake of his fellows. His faults must be viewed in the context of his whole life.

In all of Samson's victories there is evidence of the exercise of strong faith. As Robert Gordon says, he exercised faith, "believing that a divine power would be forthcoming to sustain and give him the victory". The story of Samson shows how little could be done for Israel's permanent deliverance and security by merely physical strength, or by any other quality, apart from unswerving faithfulness to the covenant of God.

Like Samson we must learn the lesson of the whole burnt offering. The whole of our lives must be surrendered to the Lord and not just parts of them. We cannot mix the service of God with service to ourselves.

Samson is a memorable example. It is important for us that our hearts are right before God. If we are to prosper, it can only be through God's blessing.

I would like to end my paper with the words of the Apostle Paul: "And

what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of 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. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect” (Hebrews 11:32-40).

Separation from the World

1. A Subject of Vast Importance

J C Ryle

This is the first section of a chapter from Ryle’s first-class book, *Practical Religion*. It has been slightly edited.

The verse, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord” (2 Corinthians 6:17), points to a subject of vast importance in religion. That subject is the great duty of separation from the world. This is the point which Paul had in view when he wrote to the Corinthians, “Come out . . . and be . . . separate”.

The subject is one which demands the best attention of all who call themselves Christians. In every age of the Church, separation from the world has always been one of the grand evidences of a work of grace in the heart. Those who have really been born of the Spirit, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus, have always tried to come out from the world and live a separate life. Those who have only had the *name* of Christian, without the reality, have always refused to come out and be separate from the world.

The subject perhaps was never more important than it is at the present day. There is a widely-spread desire to make things pleasant in religion – to saw off the corners and edges of the cross and to avoid self-denial as far as possible. On every side we hear professing Christians declaring loudly that

we must not be “narrow and exclusive”, and that there is no harm in many things which the holiest saints of old thought bad for their souls. That we may go anywhere and do anything and spend our time in anything and read anything and keep any company and plunge into anything, and all the while be very good Christians – this is the rule of thousands. In a day like this I think it good to raise a warning voice and invite attention to the teaching of God’s Word. It is written in that Word: “Come out . . . and be . . . separate”.

There are four points which I shall try to show my readers in examining this great subject:

1. I shall try to show *that the world is a source of great danger to the soul.*
2. I shall try to show *what is not meant by separation from the world.*
3. I shall try to show *what real separation from the world consists in.*
4. I shall try to show *the secret of victory over the world.*

And now, before I go a single step further, let me warn every reader that he will never understand this subject unless he first understands what a true Christian is. If you are one of those unhappy people who think everybody is a Christian who goes to a place of worship, no matter how he lives or what he believes, I fear you will care little about separation from the world. But if you read your Bible and are in earnest about your soul, you will know that there are two classes of Christians: converted and unconverted. You will know that, what the Jews were among the nations under the Old Testament, is what the true Christian is meant to be under the New. You will understand what I mean when I say that there must be a difference between believers and unbelievers. To you therefore I make a special appeal this day. While many avoid the subject of separation from the world and many positively hate it and many are puzzled by it, give me your attention while I try to show you the thing as it is.

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

27. Aborigines

As Paton travelled around Australia talking to the different groups of Christians about his mission work, he came into contact with the Aborigine people. Many of the white settlers had not treated the Aborigine people well. In some places they had cruelly abused Aborigines and even murdered them. The white people excused themselves for these terrible deeds by saying that the Aborigines were not really human; they were more like animals. They came to this surprising conclusion because they said they had no evidence that the Aborigines took part in any form of worship. If they

did not worship any sort of god, they assumed, they were just like the wild animals, who were not capable of any spiritual activity.

Paton had an opportunity to make friends of some Aborigines at a place called Balmoral. He stayed there for several days as he waited for a friend to come and collect him. A gala day had been arranged by the local community and lots of people gathered, including many different Aborigine tribes. There was a law forbidding the sale of alcohol to the Aborigines because it caused them so many problems and they seemed to become quickly addicted to it. But many pub owners ignored the law and sold alcohol to the Aborigines.

The next day was Sabbath and the peace of the morning was broken by the fierce yells of the Aborigines as they fought each other. Some of the leading men of the community tried to get them to calm down but with no success. As the fighting continued many of the Aborigines were seriously wounded and some of them died.

In the afternoon Paton went to them and encouraged them to come and sit with him and have some tea and bread. After talking with them for some time they seemed to calm down. Paton then persuaded them to promise him to do whatever he asked. They all solemnly agreed.

Paton then said to them: "Now you have got your tea. And I ask every man and boy among you to lie down in the bush and take a sleep, and your wives will sit by you and watch over your safety!" Silence fell on the group. The Aborigines were dismayed. Stop fighting? Why, they were only half way through the battle and many had scores to settle. One had a wounded head and he wanted revenge; others showed their wounds, claiming they too must have revenge.

Paton spoke to them all, calmly telling them it would be best if they got some sleep, and reluctantly they all finally agreed. Paton stayed till he was sure they were all sound asleep; exhausted from their drinking the night before and from their fighting that day.

Before daylight the next morning, Paton and another local minister hurried to the place to prevent further fighting. But as the sun rose they saw the last of the tribes disappearing over the brow of a hill. A small group of the local Aborigines shouted to Paton that they had gone home and would not fight any more.

When he gave talks about his missionary work Paton used to show some of the weapons and idols from the people of Tanna – the island in the New Hebrides where he had been a missionary. Among these items he had four small, smooth, polished stones which some of the islanders had used as idols. He showed them to an Aborigine man. By the expression on his face, the man showed that he was afraid of the stones, but the only thing he would

tell Paton was that their holy men used stones like that. When Paton heard this, he decided to do some detective work. He wanted to answer once and for all the argument that Aborigines did not have the capacity to worship and so were sub-human.

In another place he showed the stones to a large group of Aborigines he was speaking to. They freely admitted that their holy men used such things and that the old people prayed to them. But there were no holy men in this camp so Paton had to go elsewhere in search of them.

Paton did finally meet a holy man and persuaded him to sell him some of the things he used in his ceremonies. When Paton showed them to another holy man, the man at first tried to pretend he did not know what they were. When Paton persisted, the man became angry and demanded to know who had given them to Paton. The lady who was with this holy man became very frightened. She was most frightened of one of the items and claimed that it would kill her. She then said about Paton: "That fellow knows too much! No white man see them. He no good!"

Paton also spoke to a converted Aborigine woman called Nora and showed her the idols he had purchased. Nora explained what the various items were used for. Another man who was with Paton asked Nora why he had never heard or seen these things before, although he had lived so long among the Aborigines and many of them were going about his house. She told him: "Long ago white men laughed at black fellows praying to their idols. Black fellows said, White men never see them again! Suppose this white man (Paton) not know all about them, he would not now see them. No white men alive now have seen what you have seen."

Paton now had enough evidence to prove to the white people of Australia "that the Aborigines, before they saw the white invaders, were not 'brutes' incapable of knowing God, but human beings, yearning after a god of some kind". He had a Christian view of people who did not have the privileges and opportunities he had. He did not look down on them and treat them cruelly, but he saw what their needs were and tried to help them.

The Fifth Commandment directs us how to behave to people who are above us (our superiors), or the same as us, (our equals), or below us, (our inferiors). Question 64 in the Shorter Catechism asks, "What is required in the Fifth Commandment?" The answer is: "The Fifth Commandment requireth the preserving the honour, and performing the duties, belonging to everyone in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors or equals."

Just because somebody is not as clever, or well off, or well dressed as you are, does not mean that you may despise them. In fact the opposite is true. If someone is not as clever as you, maybe you can help them with their

school work. And you should be kind to people who are not very well off or do not have many friends. We should follow Paton's example as he followed the example of Jesus who was a friend of "publicans and sinners" – the most despised groups of people.

S M Campbell

For Younger Readers

Out of Bed and Busy Working

“Margaret”, the minister called to his wife. It almost sounded as if he was giving her a row.

What was she doing? She was supposed to stay in bed. But her husband came home and found her up and busy working.

Margaret had a sore back; so the doctor told her to lie flat on her back in bed for several weeks. He hoped that, after a long rest, the pain would go away. Then she would be free to get up.

But there she was going about tidying the rooms in the house and putting away the rubbish. “You know you are supposed to be in bed”, her husband told her.

“I know, I know,” she answered him.

Then he reminded her about the group of women from their church who were coming to clean the house the next day.

“That’s just it,” Margaret answered; “I can’t let those women see all this dirt.”

The minister thought this was very funny indeed. Then he stopped laughing and became serious.

Why did he become serious? He thought of something else. He remembered what many sinners want to do when they think of their sins. They know they need to have their sins put away and to be forgiven. So they should come to Jesus Christ at once.

But no! They think they should make themselves a little better first. They think that if only they could stop some sins, then God would be pleased with them.

But we cannot really make ourselves better. We need God to do that for us. He is the only one who can really make us better.

And we should be asking *God* to do this for us. *You* must ask God, for Jesus Christ’s sake, to take away your sin.

Young People Need to Be Converted

C H Spurgeon

A chapter, slightly edited, from the book, *A Good Start*; by a famous London minister.

I want to say something to those of you who are unconverted. My great anxiety is that you should know the Lord at once; and my main reason is that it will prepare you for the world to come. No one is so prepared to launch out on that unknown sea as the one who is reconciled to God, believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, trusts Him, rejoices in the pardon of his sin through the great atoning sacrifice, and experiences in his own heart the marvellous change which has made him a new creature in Christ Jesus.

I think a very good reason for seeking the Lord is to be prepared for eternity. I saw an aged friend, who was 86 and her faculties failing; she said, "I have no fear; I have no fear of death; I am on the Rock; I am on the Rock Christ Jesus. I know whom I have believed and I know where I am going." It was delightful to hear the aged saint speak like that.

But there is another reason why we want our friends converted; it is so that they may be prepared for this life. I do not know what kind of life you have set before yourself. Perhaps some young people hope to devote their lives to learning and to be crowned with honour. But possibly some have no prospect but to work hard to earn their bread with the sweat of their brow; some have begun to lay bricks or use a plane and a saw. There are all sorts of ways in mortal life; but there is no better preparation for any kind of life on earth than to know the Lord and to have a new heart and a right spirit. He that rules millions will do it better with the grace of God in his heart; and he that has to be a slave will be happier in his lot if he has the grace of God in his heart. You that are young, you that are masters and you that are servants, true religion cannot disqualify you for playing your part in this life. But the best preparation for that part, if it is a part that ought to be played, is to know the Lord and feel the power of His grace on your soul.

Let me just show you how this is the case. Someone who lives before God, calls God his Father, and feels the Spirit of God working in him a hatred of sin and a love of righteousness – it is he who will be conscientious in his duties. And that is the kind of man and woman we need nowadays. We have many people who need looking after; they will do their work quickly enough if you stand and watch them, but the moment you turn your back they will do as careless and slow and bad a job as can be. They are eye-servants only. If you were to advertise for an eye-servant, I do not suppose anybody would come to you; yet there are plenty of them about.

A true Christian, someone who is really converted, sees that he serves

God in doing his duty to his fellow-men. "Thou God seest me", is the power that always influences him; he desires to be conscientious in his duties, whatever those duties may be. A servant girl said she hoped she was converted. Her minister asked her: "What evidence can you give of your conversion?" She gave this among many other proofs: "I always sweep under the mats". It was a small matter, but to carry out in daily life the principle of sweeping under the mats is the kind of thing we need. Many people have a little corner where they stow away all the fluff and dust, and the room looks as if it was nicely swept, but it is not. There is a way of doing everything so that nothing is really done, but grace in the heart makes people wish to live wholly to God, and serve Him in serving other people. If you get that grace, you will have a grand preparation for life as well as for death.

Anyone who has a new heart has a purity which preserves him in the midst of temptation. O this dreadful city of London! I wonder that God endures the filth of it. I often speak to young men who come from a country place to their first job in London; the first week they live in London is a revelation to them which makes their hair almost stand on end. They see what they never dreamt of.

Well, you young people who have just come to London, begin to follow Christ Jesus at once, for another week in London may be your damnation. Just one week in London may lead you into acts of impurity that shall ruin you for ever. Before you have gone into those things, devote yourselves to God and to His Christ, so that with pure hearts and right spirits you may be preserved from "the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noonday," in this terribly wicked city. There is no hope for you young men and young women in this great world of wickedness unless your hearts are right towards God. If you follow the Lamb thoroughly wherever He goes, He will keep you even to the end. But if you do not give yourselves to the Lord, whatever good resolutions you may have formed, you are doomed – I am sure you are – to be carried away with the torrents of iniquity that run down our streets today. Purity of heart, then, which comes from faith in Christ, is a wonderful preparation for life.

So also is truthfulness of speech. What a wretched thing it is when people tell lies! Now, the heart purified by the grace of God hates the thought of a lie. This is someone who speaks the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and he shall pass through life unharmed. He shall be honoured and, in the long run, successful. He may have to suffer for a time because of his truthfulness, but in the end nothing shall clear a way for him so well as being true in thought and word and deed.

If you love the Lord with all your heart, you will also learn honesty in

dealing with others; and that is a great help in life. I know that the trickster does sometimes seem to succeed for a time, but what is his success? It is only another name for ruin. If everyone could be made honest, how much more happiness there would be in the world! And the way to be upright is to be sincere towards God and to have the Spirit of God dwelling within you.

Again, true religion comforts people under great troubles. You do not expect many troubles, my young friend, but you will have them. You hope to be married, and expect that your troubles will then be over, but some say that they then begin. I do not endorse that statement, but I am sure that they are not over, for another set of trials begins then.

You are going to finish your apprenticeship, and then all will be right; yet will it? Those who have finished their training do not always find it so. But you do not mean always to work for someone else; you are going to own a business. Ask owners if everything is easy for them in these times. If you want to escape trouble altogether, you had better go up in a balloon; and then I am sure that you will be afraid of going up too high or coming down too fast.

Troubles will come, and what can better preserve anyone in trouble than feeling that things are safe in his Father's hands? If you can say, "I am His child, and all things are working together for my good; I have committed myself entirely into the hands of Him who cannot err and will never do me an unkindness," then you wear a breastplate which the darts of care cannot pierce, you are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and you may tread on the briars of the wilderness with an unwounded foot.

True religion will also build you up in firmness of character, and that is another quality I want to see in young people. I should not be afraid of some of them, that the devil would pervert them from the faith if he were to preach to them. And if every possible new heresy were to be proclaimed in their presence, they know the truth too well to be led astray. But, on the other hand, we have others who are led by their ears. If I pull their ear one way, they come after me; if somebody else pulls their ear the other way, they go after him. There are lots of people who never do their own thinking. These people are just like the chaff on the threshing-floor; away they go when the wind begins to blow. Do not be like that.

Dear young sons and daughters of church-members, know the Lord. May He reveal Himself to you at once; and when you do know Him and get a grip of the gospel, bind it to your heart and tie it about your neck. Say, "Yes, I am going to follow in the footsteps of those I love, and especially in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ. God help you to do so! But first believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; trust yourselves wholly to Him, and He will give you grace to stand fast even to the end.

The Young People's Magazine

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Editor: Rev Kenneth D Macleod

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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I Am a Debtor

When this passing world is done,
When has sunk yon glaring sun,
When we stand with Christ in glory,
Looking o'er life's finished story,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know –
Not till then – how much I owe.

When I hear the wicked call
On the rocks and hills to fall,
When I see them start and shrink
On the fiery deluge brink,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know –
Not till then – how much I owe.

When I stand before the throne,
Dressed in beauty not my own,
When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinning heart,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know –
Not till then – how much I owe.

When the praise of heaven I hear,
Loud as thunders to the ear,
Loud as many waters' noise,
Sweet as harps' melodious voice,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know –
Not till then – how much I owe.

Ev'n on earth as through a glass
Darkly, let thy glory pass,
Make forgiveness feel so sweet,
Make Thy Spirit's help so meet,
Ev'n on earth, Lord, make me know
Something of how much I owe.

Chosen not for good in me,
Wakened up from wrath to flee,
Hidden in the Saviour's side,
By the Spirit sanctified,
Teach me, Lord, on earth to show,
By my love, how much I owe.

Oft I walk beneath the cloud,
Dark as midnight's gloomy shroud
But, when fear is at the height,
Jesus comes, and all is light:
Blessed Jesus, bid me show
Doubting saints how much I owe.

When in flowery paths I tread,
Oft by sin I'm captive led;
Oft I fall, but still arise;
The Spirit comes – the tempter flies;
Blessed Spirit, bid me show
Weary sinners all I owe.

Oft the nights of sorrow reign –
Weeping, sickness, sighing, pain,
But a night Thine anger burns –
Morning comes, and joy returns.
God of comforts, bid me show
To Thy poor, how much I owe.

R M M'Cheyne

Australia and NZ Youth Conference 2009

The Conference will take place, God willing, at Merroo Christian Conference Centre, Kurrajong, NSW, from Tuesday, January 6, at 1 pm, to Thursday January 8, at 1 pm. Mr J van Praag will be Chairman.

Programme

Tuesday, January 6

2.45 pm

Arminianism

Rev D Macdonald

7.00 pm

Christianity and the first Fleet

Mr C Mackenzie

Wednesday, January 7

9.30 am

The Christian Church

Rev J A T van Dorp

12.30 pm

A Historical Tour

conducted by Mr H Optland

7.00 pm

Baptism

Rev D Macdonald

Thursday, January 8

9.30 am

Pentecostalism

Rev E A Rayner

Applications (the lower age limit is 16) should be made as soon as possible to Mr J van Praag, P O Box 5, Riverstone, 2765 NSW, Australia. Further information will be sent to each applicant about a week before the conference. If you have any queries, do not hesitate to phone Mr van Praag on (02) 96272651.

Price 70p