

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



October 2014

Vol 79 • No 10

Contents

Weighed in the Balance	183
The Bible's Teaching on Professing Religion:	
3. What Are Sacraments?	185
The Fifth Commandment:	
2. The Example of Jesus	187
Singing New Songs	189
For Junior Readers:	
"From My Youth"	192
For Younger Readers:	
Where Is God not?	193
Through the Alphabet with the Bible:	
Search	194
Looking Around Us	194
Scripture and Catechism Exercises 2013-14:	
General Information 2014-15	196
Exercise 1 2014-15	196
Overseas Prizes and Awards 2013-14	200

Cover Picture: *A corner of Lochcarron.* See page 193.

The Young People's Magazine

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

Editor: Rev Kenneth D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271; e-mail: kdmacleod@gmail.com. All unsigned articles are by the Editor.

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

Subscriptions, Renewals, Changes of Address should be sent to the General Treasurer: Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; e-mail: wc.fpchurch@btconnect.com; tel: 0141 332 9283. The subscription year ends in December, and subscriptions should be sent in January each year for the following 12 months. Subscription rates, including postage, are: F P Magazine £26.00 (£2.00 per copy); Y P Magazine £15.00 (£1.00 per copy); both magazines £39.00. All queries should be directed to the General Treasurer, not to the printer.

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

The Young People's Magazine

Volume 79

October 2014

Number 10

Weighed in the Balance

Can you imagine a set of scales for weighing things? It has two pans hanging from a bar. In one pan you put what you want to weigh, perhaps a package; in the other you put metal weights. If the pan containing the package goes down and the one with the weights goes up, you have not put in enough weights. If the other pan goes down, you have put in too many weights or the package is too light. If the pans balance each other, you count up the weights and you know how heavy your package is.

Daniel, whose book we find in the Bible, served under a king in Babylon called Belshazzar. One day the King held a feast, and a thousand important men joined him. At least one thing was very seriously wrong: Belshazzar commanded his servants to bring in the golden and silver vessels which an earlier King, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from God's temple in Jerusalem. These vessels were holy; they had been set apart for God's worship. But Belshazzar, an ungodly man himself, gave them to the ungodly people who had gathered for the feast. And while they drank wine from the vessels, the King was praising his idols, his false gods.

As this was going on, something quite unexpected happened: the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote some words on the wall. The King was very disturbed. His knees began to shake. He called for magicians to be brought in, in the hope that they could interpret the words. But none of them could help him. Then the Queen remembered Daniel, a godly man, who had told Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of his dreams. He was able to do so because God had revealed their meaning to him.

Daniel came in and spoke to Belshazzar about his ungodly behaviour. Then he explained the meaning of each of the words that had been written on the wall. One of these words was "Tekel". What message did it bring? This is how Daniel explained what God was telling him: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting"; the King was found lacking.

It was God who was weighing; so we can be sure that He did so properly. If we think of the balance – and we would have to think of a very large balance – Belshazzar was placed in one pan and weights were put in the

other. But no matter how small the weights in that pan, it was heavier than the pan which held Belshazzar. This is how the ungodly are described: "to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity" (Psalm 62:9).

If Adam and Eve were weighed just after they were created, everything would have been different – and remember we are talking about spiritual weight. Each of them, so to speak, would have some definite weight; they had a real righteousness: their original righteousness. God examined them and He was satisfied. In every way they were as He had made them.

But that did not last. Adam and Eve fell into sin, and at once they lost their original righteousness. When laid in the balance, they were now lighter than vanity. Because of Adam's fall into sin, none of us have an original righteousness. So, unless God provides another righteousness for us, we will be altogether lighter than vanity when He places us in the balance – what He is doing all the time, for He always considers what we are spiritually.

Many people – like Paul, before Jesus met him on his way to Damascus – think they are keeping God's commandments very well indeed. But they are looking to their own righteousness. And when God weighs it, it is altogether lighter than vanity. Because they have no desire to glorify God, they have no real righteousness. It cannot bring them to heaven.

What can God do for us so that we may have some real spiritual "weight"? But first, think of Christ. He was weighed in the balances; God the Father examined Him continuously, and we can see the result of that weighing in the words that came twice from heaven: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased". Christ's was a perfect righteousness; He kept all the commandments; He obeyed the will of God perfectly. And that obedience to God's will included His dying in the place of sinners, at Calvary, to bear their punishment.

Now think of Peter or Paul, Mary or Martha, or anyone else who has looked to Christ by faith. They now have no confidence in themselves; they are trusting in the righteousness of Christ, what He did in their place. So, when God weighs any of these believers, in His balances, what does He find? They come up to the full weight. But not because of what they are in themselves; it is only because of the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed to them. In other words, because Christ's righteousness is put to their account, it is treated as if it was their righteousness.

There will come a time when, so to speak, there will be a public weighing of every human being that has ever lived – on the day of judgement. How tremendously important not to be found lacking on that day! How necessary to look to Christ in time! He is calling to *you* to trust in Him as the One who has provided a righteousness which is exactly what you need. Do not delay.

The Bible's Teaching on Professing Religion

3. What Are Sacraments?

Charles Hodge

Last month's section from Hodge's book, *The Way of Life*, spoke of confessing Christ. It pointed out that one way of doing so is to keep Christ's commands.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper have important purposes. But the Bible clearly teaches that their special purpose is to be a way of publicly professing faith in the gospel. When someone takes part publicly in the practices of any religion he professes to belong to that religion. So Paul charges with idolatry the Corinthians who, in heathen temples, ate the sacrifices offered to idols (see 1 Corinthians 10:15-21). And for someone to join in celebrating the ordinances of the gospel is to profess the religion of Christ. He places himself in communion with the object of worship and with all his fellow worshippers. "For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread."

So Paul adds, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils". It is impossible to be in communion with Christ and Satan at the same time; so it is altogether inconsistent to receive at the same time Christ's ordinances and the sacrifices of devils. All this assumes that to be involved in Christian ordinances is to profess the Christian religion.

When Christ commanded the apostles to make disciples, "baptizing them . . .", He obviously intended Baptism to be a badge of discipleship. By it His followers were to acknowledge their relation to Him. This is the prominent idea in the words: To baptize in the name of anyone. So Paul reminded the Corinthians that they were not *his* disciples, not *his* followers; he asked them: "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

We must now ask further: What are these ordinances and why were they given? It has long been usual to call Baptism and the Lord's Supper sacraments. But this term does not give much light, because it is not a word used in the Bible, and because the oldest writers used it in a very general way. The Romans called the oath by which soldiers devote themselves to military service *sacrament*; and in the Latin-speaking Church it could mean the gospel itself, the calling of the Gentiles, and the future conversion of the Jews. So the Christian sense of the word must be decided from what the Scriptures teach about the ordinances for which the word is now used.

(1.) Sacraments are *what God has appointed*, and not man. When Christ was about to ascend into heaven, He said, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy

Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world". So Baptism was established by Christ, and is to continue as long as disciples are being made, even to the end of the world. And on the night in which He was betrayed, Christ instituted *the Lord's Supper*, saying, "This do in remembrance of Me", and commanded it to be observed until He comes again. Thus nothing is a sacrament, in the Christian sense of the word, unless it was appointed by God and is to be permanent.

(2.) The Bible teaches us that the sacraments are *signs of spiritual blessings*. They are designed to represent inward, spiritual gifts by outward actions. The great blessing offered in the gospel is union with Christ, so that sinners are freed from the condemnation and pollution of sin.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are designed to represent this blessing. So it is said: "As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" – which implies union with Him (Galatians 3:27). Believers are said to be baptized into one body (1 Corinthians 12:13) – that is, by Baptism they are made one body. But they are one body only because of their union with Christ. "Know ye not", Paul asks, "that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?" – that is, so as to be united with Him in His death (Romans 6:3).

As union with Christ is the great blessing signified by Baptism, and pardon and sanctification flow from that union, so Baptism symbolises these two great blessings also. Thus on the day of Pentecost, Peter said to the people: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). And the reference of Baptism to pardon is very clearly expressed in many similar passages. It is the same with sanctification, as the passages from Galatians and Romans just quoted, plainly teach. There it is declared that Baptism represents, not only union with Christ, but also death to sin and living unto God.

And in the Epistle to the Ephesians, Christ is said to sanctify His Church "with the washing of water by the word" (5:26), for water is the common means of cleansing. Both the guilt and pollution of sin, are represented in Scripture as defilement; so they are washed away by the blood and the Spirit of Christ. It is this twofold purifying that is so appropriately represented by Baptism.

The same truths are shown forth in the Lord's Supper. When Christ said, "This is My body . . . this is My blood", He was stating clearly that the bread represents His body and the wine His blood. And by taking the bread and wine, we are receiving what they represent. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which

we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread” (1 Corinthians 10:16,17). Here too believers are declared to be one body, because, by partaking of the Lord’s Supper, they express their communion with the Lord Jesus. God has appointed both Baptism and the Lord’s Supper to be symbols of union with Christ, and of the benefits which flow from His mediation and death.

The Fifth Commandment

2. The Example of Jesus

Rev Donald Macdonald

In last month’s article, we saw that people’s duty to honour their parents holds all through their lifetimes. Not to honour our parents is a sin before God.

4. *The new covenant and the gospel.* The form of the commands in God’s law is, “Thou shalt”. The new covenant takes the form of God saying, “I will” (Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:10). This is what brings people, not only into a right relationship with God, but into the law of love. Obedience to the law through love is more than just carrying out one’s duty, which an unconverted person may do because of restraining grace.

We now turn our attention to Him of whom we read in Psalm 40: “Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart”. The New Testament tells us of the scribe who came to Jesus and asked, “Which is the first commandment of all?” The account continues: “Jesus answered him . . . Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:28-31).

This shows us that love to God and to man is the fulfilling of the law. The Lord Jesus is glorified in the fulfilling of prophecy, because He magnified the law and made it honourable. Thus we may be brought into that law of love, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

(a) *The foundation laid.* The only glimpse we have of the Saviour growing up is to be found in Luke’s Gospel 2:42-52, when the child Jesus stayed behind after the feast in Jerusalem, and His parents had to turn back to seek Him sorrowing. His reply to their question was: “Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?” He was conscious that He was God and knew

the work He had to do. But we read that “He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them”. Here is a great wonder: the One who is the uncreated God of eternity in human nature, the Maker of heaven and earth and the lawgiver, was subject to His own law in fulfilling all righteousness. So He honoured His parents.

We should also note that in His agony, when He was accomplishing the world's redemption, Jesus made provision for His mother in her old age (John 19:25,26). He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps. Thomas Boston speaks of relative duties – duties in relation to others as the test of Christian character: “A man is that really which he is relatively”. He goes on: “It is necessary as a piece of conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not a complete Christian that has not received of Christ grace for grace. We must prove our union with Him by our conformity to Him (1 John 2:6). He stood in various relations, and therein was a pattern to us. He is a loving husband to the Church (Ephesians 5:25), a faithful servant to His Father, a kind and affectionate master to His servants, a dutiful subject to the magistrate, an obedient child (Luke 2:51).”

(b) *Our relationship to our parents is not confined to when we are growing up.* A lot of young people think – even within a Christian context – that when they come to the age of maturity and responsibility, they are no longer responsible to their parents. You cannot put old heads on young shoulders, people say, and the young heads think they know better. This philosophy became prominent in the 1960s; the independence of the youth culture that developed over the next 50 years led to the breakdown of society in Britain and of Western civilisation in general. I think this is referred to in 2 Timothy 2:22: “Flee youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart”. The words, “Flee youthful lusts”, in their particular context, refer not only to sexual sins but to the youthful tendency to think, I know better than those above me.

(c) *Setting out in the world.* In a sense, the step from infancy into education is the beginning of setting out in the world. If we learn to honour our parents in a true, biblical sense, we will know to honour our teachers. They are to be respected for the office they hold in school. We are to honour them especially if they have a Christian character; if not we must still honour them if that is to the honour of God and for our good. We are not to do what is against God's commands.

Parents do not have a right to challenge teachers in defence of their children if they know that their children are in the wrong. They must avoid the modern disease, “My child is always right”. This has a dangerous influence on a child's future place in society. A young person's life and

character are moulded in the home and school. Especially if he is under a Christian influence, his character will be carried on into his working life. It will influence his relationships with his employers and the whole variety of contacts he will make in the world.

He must pay due respect to all lawful authority, including that of the Church and the state. This involves doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong. He must seek to be a good citizen of his country and a subject of the King of kings. If the journey we are setting out on in the world is the journey of faith, we will have our eye constantly on this, that we have a Master in heaven. If we live to please Him and fulfil our obligations to Him who is our Father in heaven, it will show in practical ways that we are the children of God. So we will begin to fulfil the obligation to love our neighbour as ourselves (Ephesians 6:1-9, Colossians 3:17-25.)

Singing New Songs

Thomas Chalmers was once one of the best-known ministers in Scotland. But for the first six years of his ministry – at Kilmany, in Fife – he thought he could get through all his duties in just two days a week. He then felt free to spend the other days teaching maths and chemistry in St Andrews.

Then he took ill, and in the long days of his sickness he found that the principle on which he had based all his sermons was now of no help at all to him. In effect he had been preaching, Do this and live. But he now saw that it could give him no peace of soul, and he realised that he would never be able to perform any true and worthy obedience before God. He learned that his religion must begin with the teaching of Paul and Silas: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”. God enabled him to believe; he was turned from his own ways to serve the living God.

Chalmers’ preaching changed completely, and one Sabbath in the spring of the next year, 1812, he took as his text John 3:16: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”.

Two young men came out of Kilmany church that Sabbath and, after they found themselves alone on the road, one of them asked his friend: “Did you feel anything particular in church today?” The one who spoke was Alexander Patterson, a farmer’s son. He went on: “I never felt myself to be a lost sinner till today, when I was listening to that sermon”. His friend Robert Edie replied, “It is very strange; it was just the same with me”.

The road led past a wood, and they went among the trees as they talked.

When they were sure that no one on the road could see them, one of them suggested that they pray together. They did so, and they both believed that they were converted that very day.

Alexander was a weaver, like his father. Whatever Alexander did, he did it earnestly. That was true of his weaving; he worked harder than anyone else and produced better-woven cloth. But, some time before the memorable sermon in Kilmany church, Alexander became unwell, and in his illness he became troubled. He probably thought that it would soon end in his death. His father was concerned about him and asked Chalmers, himself just recently converted, to pay Alexander a visit. The minister of Kilmany was now giving all his time and energy to the work of the gospel. His desire now was to give himself "to the great work of preparing people for eternity".

But Alexander did not welcome a visit from the minister. Probably he was afraid that the minister would disturb his conscience. So, when he saw Chalmers coming towards his house, he got away as quickly as possible. But the time soon came when Alexander realised that he needed the minister's help and went to visit him at the manse; he had become serious about his soul. By now Alexander was reading a book about conversion. He told Chalmers what was now disturbing him: that he could not "obtain a clear view of Christ". The minister too was concerned: because he had no experience of dealing with people who were disturbed about their sins. So he prayed to God to make him more able to help such people.

Robert vividly remembered how intense Chalmers would become when he visited the Edie household. He would unconsciously move forward to sit on the very edge of his chair as he earnestly tried to teach the family and their servants "the eternal things which so filled his own soul".

After recovering from his illness, Alexander had gone to work as a ploughman on a farm some miles away from Kilmany. That winter, both Alexander and Robert often visited their minister. Chalmers' preaching had touched not only Alexander's heart but Robert's also. He treated them in a kindly way, for he did not grudge the time that he spent explaining the way of life to them. Indeed, so engrossed did they all become, as they talked about such important spiritual subjects, that it might be 2 o'clock the next morning before they parted. So it might be time for Alexander to start his day's work when he reached the farm; it would then be too late to go to his bed.

One day Chalmers noted in his diary that Alexander had called on him that evening, and the previous day also. His visitor told him that he had obtained more comfort. He would now have had a clearer sense that his sins had been forgiven. In a letter to Robert, Alexander spoke of a very near sight of the Saviour. He would not have been describing a vision, or anything of

that nature; but he was telling his friend that he had been made able to receive, by faith, the truths about Christ as a Saviour, which he was finding in the Word of God. "I felt", he added, "joyful communion with God."

Soon both men were to confess their new-found faith and go to the Lord's table. Some days before they did so, Alexander wrote to his friend: "We must pray to God for His Spirit to help us in the time of need. And this is a time of great need, for the devil will be going about like a roaring lion to cast us down into the pit. . . . What think you of Christ? Do you find some warm love burning in your breast?"

Some time after the Lord's Supper, Alexander wrote again: "I hope you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. We have enlisted ourselves to be His faithful soldiers, to fight under Him; and He will be a faithful captain." He hoped that both he and Robert would be faithful to "Him who is worthy to receive all honour and glory". He hoped too that sin would not be on the throne of their hearts, though it "has so much dominion over us. May we live no longer to ourselves, but to Him who died for our sins, but is risen again."

Feeling his spiritual weakness, Alexander went on to say, "We must be Christians, not in word only, but in deed also". He knew that it was not enough for him to *say* that he was a believer; he must act as a believer would. And he prayed, "O God, do Thou take up Thy abode in each of our hearts. Perfect Thy strength in our weakness and make Thy grace sufficient for us. Hold up our goings; let not our footsteps slip out of Thy ways."

Someone noticed how earnestly Alexander used to listen from his seat, just in front of Chalmers' pulpit, as he absorbed the truths of God's Word. He and Robert still walked away from the church together after the Sabbath services. When they reached a wood not far from the church, they walked into a quiet place screened from the road by trees. There they knelt down and prayed for an hour.

At that time in Scotland, the unmarried men working on a farm would live together in what was known as a bothy. These were generally ungodly places. Alexander stayed in a bothy at a place called Cruvie. He began to read the Bible to the other men. One of them spent a lot of time collecting ballads and learning them by heart so that he could sing them as he ploughed the fields. Sometimes this man interrupted Alexander's Bible-reading as he sang these songs.

Alexander used to get up in the mornings before the other men, so that he could read the Bible, meditate on it and pray. One morning this man wanted to know what Alexander was doing. The man then asked him to read out loud. Alexander did so in a very solemn way and, wonderfully, the man was made to feel the seriousness of his sins. His whole life changed and he burnt

his large collection of ballads. So he needed new songs. Instead of singing these vain songs, he began to learn the Psalms and to sing them as he worked in the fields.

Later, Alexander went to work near the village of Dairsie. One of his duties was, once a week, to drive a cartload of meal to a shop in a nearby village. To arrive at the village in time, Alexander had to leave the farm about midnight. If it was a bright, moonlit night, he would really enjoy the drive, as he was then able, because of his good eyesight, to study the Bible. At one time, the shopkeeper was in bed as a result of a bad fall and so could not get to church. He looked forward to Alexander's visits, as they could then spend some time talking about spiritual things.

It would be evening when Alexander would get back to the farm. He would then set off for a prayer meeting, in one of several villages, perhaps some miles away. Many people would attend them as this whole area was one where there were almost no ministers who preached the true gospel – just as, in the past, Chalmers had been one of these unspiritual men who did not know the danger of sin or the way of escape from it. At any rate, they did not know these things by experience.

At these meetings, Alexander would exhort the people, and God blessed his efforts. It should be no surprise that a man who was earnest in his unconverted days would be earnest in spiritual things afterwards.

For Junior Readers

“From My Youth”

Do you know who Obadiah was? Perhaps you will first think of the book of the Bible called by this name – it is a very short book of only one chapter near the end of the Old Testament.

But there was also another Obadiah. You can read about him in the First Book of Kings. He was an official in the palace of Ahab, the wicked King of Israel, and of his wicked wife, Queen Jezebel. In spite of living and working among all these worshippers of the heathen god Baal, Obadiah was a man of God.

We are told two things about him in 1 Kings 18. The first is that he “feared the Lord greatly”. This could not have been easy in the land of Israel at that time, when the prophets of God were being persecuted and killed.

What did Obadiah do? Far from ignoring these godly men in their time of need, he helped to find hiding places for them – where they would be safe from the wicked king and queen. He hid 100 of them in caves and fed them

with bread and water to keep them alive. No doubt he risked his own life in doing this, but the Lord preserved him.

The second thing we are told about him is that, in his own words, I “fear the Lord from my youth”. He came to know the Lord in his early years, like Samuel and David. Is it not the best time to seek the Lord? The Word of God tells you: “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth” – before the world ensnares you. You are to remember God before you get so taken up with the duties and the pleasures of this life that you have no more interest in religion.

What did the Saviour say? Not only were adults and young people welcome to come to Him – but who else? Little children! “Suffer little children to come unto Me,” He told His disciples, “and forbid them not.” And there is a special promise to encourage children and young people. God says, “Those that seek Me early shall find Me”.

Do not ever think you are too young to seek the Lord. There was once a godly minister in Lochcarron, on the west coast of Scotland, called Lachlan Mackenzie. He was only 8 years old when he began to believe in Christ. So he too “feared the Lord from his youth”. For the rest of his life, like Obadiah, he “feared the Lord greatly”. He was very useful in preaching the good news about Jesus Christ.

Will you not pray that God would make you like the happy man who makes heavenly wisdom “his early, only choice”? Then you will be able to say with David, “Thou art my hope, O Lord God; Thou art my trust from my youth” (Psalm 71:5).

J van Kralingen

For Younger Readers

Where Is God not?

The boy was sitting in his Sabbath school class. His teacher asked him if he could think of a place where God was not.

The teacher probably wanted him to say something like this: No, God is everywhere.

That is perfectly true. But though God is everywhere, we cannot see Him. He has no body – no flesh and bones. That is why we call God a spirit. Jesus said, “A spirit hath not flesh and bones”.

But God can see us. He sees us when we do wrong, and He is displeased when we do wrong.

The boy in the Sabbath school gave a different answer when

the teacher asked the question. He said, "Not in the thoughts of the wicked". He was right; God is not in the thoughts of the wicked.

The boy was probably remembering a verse which speaks about someone wicked: "God is not in all his thoughts" (Psalm 10:4). Wicked people do not think about God; they do not want to think about Him.

But we should always try to think about God. And as we think about God, we must be guided by what the Bible says about Him. And the Bible is all true.

Our own ideas about God will be wrong. So He must tell us about Himself. That is what He does. In the Bible, God tells us all we need to know about Himself. How good of God to give us the Bible! Let us make good use of it and ask God to bless it to us!

Through the Alphabet with the Bible

Here are five verses from the Bible using the word:

Search

I the Lord *search* the heart (Jeremiah 17:10).

Precept. *Search* the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me (John 5:39).

Promise. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall *search* for Me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13).

Prayer. *Search* me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts (Psalm 139:23).

Encouragement. For thus saith the Lord God; Behold I, even I, will both *search* My sheep, and seek them out (Ezekiel 34:11). S

Looking Around Us

A Cruel Master

The average Briton spends almost a year of their lives nursing a hangover. So Macmillan Cancer Support, a British charity, claims, on the basis of a survey of 2000 British adults. The charity estimate that people spend, on average, 315 days of their lives suffering from headaches and a feeling of sickness, through drinking alcohol. In fact, since some people do not drink

to excess, others face more 315 hangovers. Indeed the charity reckon that one person in 14 will have more than 3000 hangovers in their lifetime.

It all shows how serious a problem drinking too much alcohol is. And some people never learn. Of course, alcohol is addictive. The major problem with drinking too much is that people lose a great deal of their self-control, and this begins to happen before drinkers become drunk. To lose one's self-control is especially dangerous because it leaves one more open to sin. Even when completely sober, people are easily enough tempted to sin. How much more easily people are tempted to sin when they are drunk.

How much we need God to protect us from sin. We should always pray, "Lead us not into temptation". But how can we so pray to God if we do not take all possible steps to avoid danger? To do what will lower our self-control and then expect to be kept from sin is to insult God.

Alcohol can very easily become a master, a very dangerous, cruel master. It has ruined multitudes. That is why no one under the age of 18 is allowed to buy alcohol in the UK. We need either to avoid it altogether or use it with extreme caution.

The Blessing of a Christian Heritage

Chinese people are sharing on the internet a video in which a young man refuses to give up his seat on a bus and is then beaten by several elderly passengers. He was sitting on a yellow seat; those doing so are expected to give it up to elderly people. But younger passengers often break this rule.

One young man was using a yellow seat on a bus in central China when an older man began to shout at him, telling him to let another man have it. The young man refused and began to shout back. Then elderly passengers pushed and hit him several times (without injuring him seriously).

No doubt everyone was at fault in this incident. And such events are becoming common in China. It may be worth noticing that China has no Christian heritage. Yet the efforts of missionaries in the nineteenth century, following on from men like Robert Morrison and W C Burns, did result in significant numbers professing Christianity. The whole country came under Communist domination. Under Chairman Mao, from 1949, huge efforts were made to root out all religion – but he put himself at the centre of a system of idolatry! Though he could not remove Christianity completely from Chinese life, conditions became very difficult for professing Christians.

The effect of this was to leave most people without a proper basis for morality – they had no sense of the authority of God lying behind their principles for dealing with each other. This is surely one main reason for the use of violence by the old people and the poor behaviour of the young man.

In countries with a Christian heritage, we may often be surprised how kind and respectful people are to others. Let us be thankful for this and let us seek always to be patient, and considerate of the needs of others.

Scripture and Catechism Exercises

General Information 2014-15

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 2014. 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 D and A: Exercise 1: Jeremiah 37 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 2014-15

All answers from *overseas* should be sent to *Mrs C E Hyde, 2 Belts Wood, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 9GL, UK*. The correctors should have your answers before the end of November.

Senior Section (15 years old and over)

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

Old Testament

1. The answers to the following questions are to be found in Jeremiah chapters 37-39.
 - (a) Who asked: "Is there any word from the Lord?" (1)
 - (b) What reply did he receive? (1)
 - (c) To whom was the question addressed? (1)

- (d) Where was this person around this time? (1)
- (e) Why was he there? (1)
- (f) When exactly was his prophecy fulfilled? (see chap 39) (1)
- (g) What good deed did Ebed-melech perform? (2)
- (h) What promise did he receive as a reward? (see chap 39) (2)
- 2. Quote verses from Lamentations 3 which refer to (a different verse for each):
 - (1) the mercies of the Lord (2) the goodness of the Lord (3) the compassion of the Lord. (3)
- 3. Read Ezekiel chapter 33 verses 1-16.
 - (a) What is the duty of the watchman? (2)
 - (b) Who is to be held responsible for the death of a person
 - (1) if warning was given? (2) if no warning was given? (2)
 - (c) Explain how this applied to Ezekiel. (3)
 - (d) Quote the verse which contains God's message to the house of Israel. (1)
 - (e) What responsibility do we then have, who have heard the warnings of God's Word? (3)

New Testament

The questions are based on Ephesians chapter 2.

- 1. Paul outlines the condition of the natural man in verses 1-3. Describe this in your own words. (5)
- 2. What change had taken place in the experience of the Ephesian believers? (2)
- 3. What distinction does Paul draw between faith and works? (4)
- 4. What had been the condition of the Ephesians as Gentiles? (5)
- 5. From verse 13, Paul describes the great saving work of Christ. Which particular aspect of that work would you say is being emphasised by Paul? (2)
- 6. What great privileges of believers are mentioned by Paul at the end of the chapter? (5)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 25 in the Shorter Catechism:
How doth Christ execute the office of a priest? (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 Daniel 1.
 - (a) Why did Daniel refuse to eat the King's food? (1)
 - (b) What did he eat instead? (1)
 - (c) What was the result? (2)
- 2. Read Daniel 2.
 - (a) Why was King Nebuchadnezzar not able to sleep? (2)
 - (b) Why did he become angry with the magicians? (2)
 - (c) What did he threaten to do? (2)
 - (d) How did Daniel deal with the King's problem? (3)
 - (e) Which verses show that Daniel acknowledged the Lord's help? (2)
 - (f) What had the King to say about Daniel's God now? (2)
 - (g) What honour was given to Daniel? (3)
 - (h) What lessons can we learn from what Daniel did? (2)

New Testament

- 1. Complete the following verses:
 - (a) "Abstain from . . ." (1 Thessalonians 5) (1)
 - (b) "But my God shall supply . . ." (Philippians 4) (1)
 - (c) "This is a faithful saying . . ." (1 Timothy 1). (6)
- 2. Read Colossians 3.
 - (a) List five evils which Christians should "put off". (3)
 - (b) List five graces which Christians should "put on". (3)
 - (c) Why especially should we forgive one another? (2)

3. Quote two verses from Ephesians 2 which show that salvation is all of grace. (3)
4. Read 2 Timothy 2.
 - (a) What is Timothy called to "shun" and to "avoid"? (2)
 - (b) Why should he obey these commands especially? (2)
 - (c) What is he called to "study" and to "follow"? (4)

Memory Exercise

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

Junior Section (11 and 12 years old)

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

Old Testament

1. Read from Ezekiel chapter 8:15 to the end of chapter 9.
 - (a) What did Ezekiel see in the inner court of the Lord's house? (3)
 - (b) What did the six men mentioned in chapter 9:2 have in their hands? (1)
 - (c) One man among them was dressed in a different way. What material was he clothed with and what did he have by his side? (2)
 - (d) What was this man commanded to do? (2)
 - (e) What were those who went after him told to do and what were they told not to do? (2)
2. Read Daniel chapter 2.
 - (a) Why was Nebuchadnezzar "angry and very furious"? (verse 12) (1)
 - (b) What "mercies" did Daniel ask his three friends to "desire of the God of heaven"? (verse 18) (2)
 - (c) Give the names of his three friends (3)
 - (d) What did Daniel thank and praise God for, in verse 23? (2)
 - (e) What did Daniel ask of King Nebuchadnezzar in verse 49? (1)

New Testament

1. In Ephesians chapter 6 Paul tells the Ephesians to put on the whole armour of God.
 - (a) Why do they need this armour? (1)
 - (b) Which part of the body should be protected with (1) truth and (2) righteousness? (2)
 - (c) What is compared to a shield? (1)
 - (d) What would they be able to do with this shield? (1)
 - (e) What is the sword of the Spirit? (1)
2. In Colossians chapter 3 what duty is required of:
 - (a) husbands (b) wives....(c) children (d) fathers (e) servants? (10)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 63 in the Shorter Catechism:
Which is the fifth commandment? (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 Lamentations 3:22-28.
Match the words on the left with the correct words on the right.

(a) The Lord's mercies are new every morning	to bear the yoke in his youth.
(b) The Lord is my portion	to the seeking soul.
(c) The Lord is good	Great is thy faithfulness.
(d) It is good for a man	I will hope in Him. (4)
2. Read Ezekiel 36:25-28, which tells us of God's precious promises to His people.
 - (a) What will He sprinkle on them?
 - (b) What will He cleanse them from?
 - (c) What new thing will He give to them?

- (d) What will He take from them?
- (e) What will He put within them?
- (f) What does He promise to be to them? (6)
- 3. Daniel 3 tells us of three men who were put into a burning furnace. Read verses 26-30.
 - (a) What were the names of the men?
 - (b) How do we know the fire had no effect on them?
 - (c) In whom did they trust?
 - (d) What did King Nebuchadnezzar have to say about this God? (4)

New Testament

- 1. Read Hebrews 11:4-8 These verses tell us of Enoch and others who "pleased God". Say how the following people, by faith, pleased God:
 - (a) Abel (b) Noah (c) Abraham.
 - (d) Write out the verse which reminds us that there is no other way to please God. (8)
- 2. Read Hebrews 11:23-28.

Write out this paragraph and fill in the blank spaces from the words in the line below it: The parents of Moses were _____. They feared God rather than the King. Moses, when he grew up, did not wish to be a _____ in the Palace. Instead, he _____ to be a friend of the people of God. He would rather endure the reproach of _____ than have all the treasures in Egypt. He left Egypt trusting in the invisible _____. He _____ God, by keeping the Passover and sprinkling the blood as he was commanded.

Prince, chose, Christ, faithful, obeyed, God. (6)

Memory Exercise

- Learn by heart and write down the answer to Question 37 in the Shorter Catechism: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death? (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 2013-14

Senior Section

Prizes: *Connecticut:* Rachel and Rebecca Mack. *Grafton:* Duncan Marshall. *Mbuma:* Zibisiso Sibanda. *Zenka:* Moyo Velani.

Awards with Merit: *Chesley:* Esther Schuit. *Connecticut:* Sarah Mack. *Mbuma:* Rebecca Khona Mkwanzani, Matron Tshuma.

Awards: *Gisborne:* Annika van Dorp, Emma van Dorp. *Mbuma:* Sandulelo Khumalo.

Intermediate Section

Prizes: *Auckland:* Claudia Campbell. *Mbuma:* Sanelisiwe Masuku, Shanaz Masango.

Awards with Merit: *Auckland:* Rita de Bruin. *Mbuma:* Sithabile Mphoko. *Singapore:* Nehemiah Chai Yong.

Awards: *Chesley:* Josiah Smith. *Mbuma:* Ruth Masango, Ivyne Ndlovu.

Junior Section

Prizes: *Auckland:* James Campbell, Monique Jago. *Grafton:* Calum Marshall. *Mbuma:* Nokuthaba Sibanda, Sijabulisiwe Ndlovu. *Zenka:* Pedina Mathenjwa.

Awards with Merit: *Chesley:* Joshua Schuit, Abigail Smith. *Grafton:* Rachel van Dorp. *Mbuma:* Buhlebenkosi Sibanda, Evelyn Ndlovu.

Awards: *Mbuma:* Bongiwe Ndlovu.

Upper Primary Section

Prizes: *Auckland:* Danielle Jago. *Grafton:* Hugh Marshall. *Mbuma:* Thamsanqa Sibindi, Zibusiso Masuku, Thabisile Sibindi, Zanele Masuku, Gracious Sibanda, Mxolise Ngwenya.

Awards with Merit: *Auckland:* Rachel Campbell. *Gisborne:* Sarah van Dorp. *Mbuma:* Sehliselo Mpofu, Simosenkosi Ndlovu, Thandeka Dube, Mqondisi Mpofu, Nomsa Khumalo, Talent Ndlovu, Dean Annah Shoko. *Singapore:* Owen Heyer Chai Yi.

Awards: *Auckland:* Abby de Bruin. *Grafton:* Jared McAlpine. *Mbuma:* Lizwilenkosi Gumpo, Talence Bhebhe, Hloniphani Khumalo, Sizalobuhle Gumpo, Thando Gumpo, Sidumisile Moyo.

Lower Primary Section

Awards: *Auckland:* John and Peter Campbell, Megan de Bruin, Amelia Smith. *Chesley:* Kara Zekveld. *Connecticut:* Nathanael Mack. *Grafton:* William Marshall. *Mbuma:* Melissa Dube, Beauty Gumpo, Buhlebenkosi Gumpo, Pheleliso Gumpo, Mbongiseni Khumalo, Innocent Masango, Prosperus Masango, Naomi Masuku, Nompikhelelo Moyo, Nobukhosi Ncube, Tholakele Ncube, Nokukhanya Sibanda, Silethubuhle Sibanda, Silokuthaba Zikhali. *Singapore:* Naomi Ruth Chai Shi.

Price £1.00