

# The Young People's Magazine

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

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



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**Cover Picture:** An Edinburgh street scene. See page 6.

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# The Young People's Magazine

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Number 1

## The One Who Can Really Help

A minister was preaching on the words of Jesus: “For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in Me, And He was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning Me have an end” (Luke 22:37). The preacher referred to many of the incidents when Jesus was treated as if He was a sinner (a transgressor) Himself: when He was, for instance, brought before the chief priests, before Herod and before Pilate – and especially when He was crucified at Calvary. Yet He was perfectly holy; He was completely without sin. It is we who are sinners that need to be saved; so the minister, as he brought his sermon to a conclusion, called on the congregation: “Put your case into the hand of Christ”.

Let us look at our need in four different ways. Each time let us consider why we should go to Christ with our need and see how He is able to help us: for He is an Advocate, Teacher, Physician and King.

1. If you were accused of something serious and were to be brought before a court, you would very soon say to yourself, I need a lawyer. You would need someone to plead before the court on your behalf. An *advocate* is just a name given to some lawyers, and the word is used to describe Christ as someone who represents sinners before God, in what we may call the court of heaven. Unless by faith you have already put your case into Christ's hands, you are guilty of many sins and you stand condemned before God. What a serious position to be in! Unbelieving sinners are condemned to suffer for ever in a lost eternity. Then there can be no hope of escape.

What can we do? If we wait until we enter into eternity, it will be too late. And when the end of the world will come and we will have to appear before the judgement seat, we cannot then put our case into the hands of Christ. He will not appear on the judgement day as an advocate; He will not put in a plea for anyone. He will then be the Judge, not an advocate.

But now, while we are in this life, He acts as an advocate. That is what John tells us: “If any man sin, we have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1). Yet He will not argue that the sinner is innocent, that he did not commit transgressions; He will not argue that the

sinner should get away with a lower penalty. Jesus is perfectly true and perfectly just in all that He says.

Do you realise that you are a sinner? Then come to Christ, believing that He is indeed an effective advocate, and “put your case” into His hand. And what will He say on behalf of the sinner who comes trusting in Him? He will say something like this: I was numbered with the transgressors; I died instead; I endured his punishment.

And what will happen to the sinner who trusts in Jesus? The sinner will not be punished. The sinner will be justified – in other words, he will be treated as if he had never sinned; indeed he will be treated as if he had always kept the law of God perfectly. And all because of what Christ has done in the place of sinners. How foolish not to put your case into the hand of this glorious Advocate, who has never lost a case, and never will!

2. Perhaps you are very conscious of another need: you are beginning to realise how ignorant you are. You ask yourself: How can I get to heaven? How can I get a new heart? Perhaps your questions are endless. There is so much you do not know; so you read your Bible in the hope of getting an answer to your questions. And that is what you ought to do. But as you go on reading, perhaps your sense of ignorance is only increasing. And while you may learn many facts from the Bible, you also realise that there is a great deal that you do not understand.

The minister's advice is relevant here too: “Put your case into the hand of Christ”. He is, Moses said, the *Prophet* that was to come into the world. It is not so much that prophets could foretell the future, though they certainly did so often. They spoke especially about Christ Himself; the minister's text quotes from one of Isaiah's prophecies about Him. The main work of the prophets was to bring a revelation from God. That was a great work, which no ordinary person could do. But Jesus Christ is a greater Prophet still.

He can speak to your heart and teach you all that you need to know about spiritual things. When He comes to teach you, He works by the Holy Spirit. No matter how ignorant you feel, no matter how much you feel you do not know, no matter how much you cannot understand, bring all your needs to Christ. Look to Him as the one who is able to teach you all that you need to know so that you will get safely to heaven at last.

3. We need something more than teaching. If you are learning about yourself as a sinner, you will realise that you have a bad heart and that you need to be put right. You may feel that you can put some parts of your life right, that you can stop committing some sins. But perhaps you realise that really you cannot stop sinning; especially you cannot stop thinking sinful thoughts and you cannot get rid of your unbelief. The Bible tells you to stop

sinning – to “cease to do evil” (Isaiah 1:16); and you cannot do so because you have a sinful, corrupt heart.

You need to be healed, but you cannot bring that about yourself. So this should again remind you that you ought to “put your case into the hand of Christ”. Jesus said, “They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick” (Mark 2:17). He was making a comparison: people do not go to the doctor unless they are unwell; so people do not go to Christ, the Great *Physician*, unless they realise that there is something wrong with their souls. How necessary for us to realise that there is something very seriously wrong with our souls! And how necessary for us to go to Christ to be healed! There is no other physician who can heal our souls.

Just as He healed very many who suffered from various illnesses and disabilities when He was on earth, He still heals all kinds of spiritual diseases. Working by the Spirit, He takes away a hard, unbelieving heart and puts in its place a heart that is responsive to the Word of God and can believe in Christ and love God. He heals sinners who can do nothing but sin and makes them more and more holy until, at last, they are perfectly fit for heaven.

4. Notice too how ready we are to go astray from what is right, to go away into sin – in what we do and say and think. We need someone to rule over our souls. Parents may try to restrain their children from doing what is wrong, but they are limited in what they can do. And when children grow up, parents are even more limited. We need someone who can exercise a real, lasting restraint on us. Here is another call to “put your case into the hand of Christ”. He is an all-powerful *King* who can bring us under His authority. He is able to make us willing to keep God’s commandments, to want to do what is right. No other power can do that, certainly not our own!

We should note too that God’s children need to *go on* putting their case into the hand of Christ. They have continuing needs. So they need Christ again and again – indeed they need Him always – as an Advocate, a Teacher, a Physician, a King and for every other possible lack. And they will continue to find out how much they need Him.

James Myers was a missionary for 50 years, probably in China. He spent the last six months of that time in a Japanese jail. This happened during the Second World War, when Japan invaded China. Dr Myers wondered why God had sent so much suffering after all these years when he had been trying to serve Him. The missionary needed Christ to teach him further. And He did. The Lord brought these two verses into the suffering man’s heart: “All things work together for good to them that love God”, and, “What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter”. May we too experience the power of Christ to do us good!

# Robert Murray M'Cheyne

## 2. Conversion and Studies

*Frank Daubney*

Last month's article dealt with M'Cheyne's childhood and youth.

**C**onversion. There was, apparently, nothing sudden or dramatic in Robert's conversion; he said later that he was led to Christ through deep and ever-abiding convictions, but that they were not awful or distracting. But it was not his sense of sin or feelings of his need and danger that removed him from the broad way. He came to realise that it is "he that comes to Christ that is saved".

It was by reading the *Sum of Saving Knowledge* (a brief summary of Christian doctrines included with the *Westminster Confession of Faith*) that he was brought to a clear understanding of the way of salvation. Three years later he wrote in his diary: "Read the *Sum of Saving Knowledge*, the work which I think first of all wrought a saving change in me. How gladly would I renew the reading of it, if that change might be carried on to perfection."

Following his conversion, the Holy Spirit continued to deepen in him the conviction of his ungodliness and the pollution of his whole nature. He viewed his original sin, not as an excuse for his actual sins, but as an aggravation of them all.

Van Valen writes that "the great change in Robert's life didn't go without notice. Perhaps some were surprised because they already viewed him as a genuine believer. The complacent and popular student now appeared to everyone as a humble Christian who was deeply aware of his own sinfulness. In times past he had relied on his own self-righteousness, on his own moral sense. His friends were amazed at his intense and well-meant fear of God. He urged them to pursue the same things. The contents of his poems also changed. Instead of seeking to charm his many admirers, he demonstrated the necessity of accepting Christ."

**Student for the ministry.** David, his oldest brother, used to tell Robert that the ministry of the gospel is the most blessed work on earth. He often said that his greatest delight was the hope that one day Robert might become a minister of Christ. "And now," wrote Bonar, "with altered views, with an eye which could gaze on heaven and hell, and a heart which felt the reconciled love of God, Robert sought to become a herald of salvation."

In November 1831, M'Cheyne enrolled as a student in Edinburgh University's Faculty of Divinity. By then he desired to devote his life to the Lord. He wrote in his diary a month later: "What right have I to steal and

abuse my Master's time? 'Redeem it!' He is crying to me." He had completed his course in Arts with flying colours but now his desire for knowledge was to be channelled into seeking after the Lord. He wrote, "Beware of the atmosphere of the Classics [ancient writings in Latin and Greek]. It is pernicious indeed; you need much of the south wind of the Scriptures to counteract it. True we ought to know them; but only as chemists handle poisons to discover their qualities, not to infect their blood with them."

M'Cheyne would have liked to become a missionary to the heathen and thought that this was God's purpose for him. He was greatly impressed with the self-denial and sacrifice of David Brainerd, the missionary to the Indians of North America. Although his desire was not realised he never lost his interest in the mission field.

Among his lecturers at university was Thomas Chalmers (a powerful leader of the Evangelicals in the Church of Scotland and one of the founding fathers of the Free Church in 1843). Chalmers was extremely popular with the students. James Dodds, one of M'Cheyne's fellow students, said, "It was impossible to be in his classroom without feeling the influence of the spiritual and intellectual atmosphere which pervaded it. God's grace, founded on the finished work of Christ on Calvary's tree, was the centre and the basis of his theology."

M'Cheyne's greatest friends in life and at university were Andrew Bonar and Alexander Somerville. They were almost inseparable and their closeness continued through all the ups and downs of their lives as ministers.

***Jehovah Tsidkenu.*** M'Cheyne suffered from tuberculosis, which severely affected his lungs and caused him great problems. With modern antibiotics, tuberculosis can usually be successfully treated, but at that time it was a very weakening disease and usually caused the death of the sufferer.

In November 1834, aged 21, M'Cheyne was in the third year of his divinity course. As he was recovering from one of his attacks of fever, he wrote the poem, "Jehovah Tsidkenu – The Lord our Righteousness". Reflecting on the uncertainty of life, the poem was written from his experience. Many of us will have heard of this poem, or even know it, and some will enjoy singing it. It relates the experience of every child of God, to some degree or other. Have you ever really considered the meaning of the poem? I thought it might be helpful to go through it and highlight some aspects of it.

M'Cheyne begins with a look back at that part of his life when he was a stranger to God's love and utterly thoughtless about sin and its dreadful, eternal consequences.

I once was a stranger to grace and to God,  
I knew not my danger and felt not my load;

Though friends spoke in rapture of Christ on the tree,  
Jehovah Tsidkenu was nothing to me.

While he enjoyed reading the Scriptures and derived pleasure from them, and even comfort, these were the emotions of a naturally tender-hearted person. As yet he had no grasp of the sinfulness of his own heart; there was no closing in with Christ.

I oft read with pleasure to sooth or engage,  
Isaiah's wild measure and John's simple page;  
But e'en when they pictured the blood-sprinkled tree  
Jehovah Tsidkenu seemed nothing to me.

Like tears from the daughters of Zion that roll,  
I wept when the waters went over His soul;  
Yet thought not that my sins had nailed to the tree  
Jehovah Tsidkenu – 'twas nothing to me.

He lived his life without any regard to his true situation before his Creator, or any knowledge of it. He had a false sense of peace. But then he was awakened from that slumber which will carry us all to a lost eternity if we are left to ourselves.

When free grace awoke me, by light from on high,  
Then legal fears shook me, I trembled to die;  
No refuge, no safety in self could I see –  
Jehovah Tsidkenu my Saviour must be.

The law came to his conscience, and he trembled under it. He was brought by divine grace to see his need of the righteousness of another and to embrace the Saviour.

My terrors all vanished before the sweet name;  
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came  
To drink at the fountain, life-giving and free –  
Jehovah Tsidkenu is all things to me.

He was now free from the condemnation due to sin. Christ had become Jehovah Tsidkenu, the Lord our Righteousness, to him personally. He was now able sing a song of triumph.

Jehovah Tsidkenu! my treasure and boast,  
Jehovah Tsidkenu! I ne'er can be lost;  
In Thee shall I conquer by flood and by field –  
My cable, my anchor, my breastplate and shield!



This godly man who feared that his life would be cut short, and that his usefulness in the cause of Christ would be brief, was given remarkable grace in the face of death; he could conclude:

Even treading the valley, the shadow of death,  
This “watchword” shall rally my faltering breath;\*  
For while from life’s fever my God sets me free,  
Jehovah Tsidkenu my death-song shall be.

[\*He describes *Jehovah Tsidkenu* as the *watchword*, or motto, of the Reformers.]

## Through the Alphabet with the Bible

Here are five verses from the Bible using the word:

### Visit

Simeon hath declared how God at the first did *visit* the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name (Acts 15:14).

**Precept.** Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To *visit* the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world (James 1:27).

**Promise.** The fear of the Lord tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be *visited* with evil (Proverbs 19:23).

**Prayer.** Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O *visit* me with Thy salvation (Psalm 106:4).

**Encouragement.** The Lord their God shall *visit* them, and turn away their captivity (Zephaniah 2:7).

## The Fifth Commandment

### 5. The Law of Love

*Rev Donald Macdonald*

Last month’s article included a section on marriage. This final section of a Youth Conference paper contains the last of ten main points made in the paper and is followed by a conclusion.

(i) **The parent’s legacy.** When parents die, they must part from their children. In some cases, children die before their parents, though this is the exception rather than the rule. It is the desire and hope, particularly of every Christian parent, that they have left a good example to their children.

There is one great matter in connection with our offspring that we should

never lose sight of: sin has been conveyed to them by natural generation. While children are God's gifts, something to rejoice in, yet there is a sad side to this – they are made in our image because of the Fall; they possess a corrupt nature and are children of wrath.

Thomas Boston, a noted Scottish minister, gives several pieces of advice for when parents leave their children behind at death.

(1) Parents are to leave them with the Lord, a covenant God, whether they are rich or poor.

(2) Parents are to testify against sin and the vanity of the world. If they have experience of true religion, they are to commend Christ and the way of the Lord to their children. If they know the evil and the bitterness of sin, they should show them the evil of it and warn them of its bitterness.

(3) When they are dying, parents should advise them to make choice of Christ and follow holiness as their way, if they have not already done so.

(4) Parents should arrange their temporal affairs so that they may not be a snare to their children or a bone of contention that would set one against another.

We should note here Question 131 of *The Larger Catechism*: “What are the duties of equals?” The answer is: “The duties of equals are to regard the dignity and worth of each other; in giving honour to go one before another; and to rejoice in each others' gifts and advancement, as their own”.

Again, Question 132 asks, “What are the sins of equals?” The answer is: “The sins of equals are, besides the neglect of the duties required, the undervaluing of the worth, envying the gifts, grieving at the advancement or prosperity one of another; and usurping pre-eminence one over another” – that is, taking a higher place than someone else, to which one has no right. These questions about the sins and duties of equals have a wider application, although I bring them in at this particular point.

**Conclusion.** Again let us go to *The Larger Catechism*. “What is the reason annexed to the Fifth Commandment, the more to enforce it?” (Question 133). The answer is: “The reason annexed to the Fifth Commandment, in these words, ‘That thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee’, is an express promise of long life and prosperity, as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good, to all such as keep this commandment”. “That thy days may be long” may not mean that all who honour their parents will have a long life literally. It may mean that, if we obey God, then this blessing extends to several generations.

When we view the landscape of this commandment, we see how broad it is. If we are rightly exercised and examine our hearts, we will see our own sins and realise how far short we have come of God's glory. While many

parents, apart from God's saving grace, do excellent work in bringing up their children, this is due to civilisation and culture and especially to God's restraining grace. Yet if we are to fulfill the law of love to God's glory, there must be a new creation; the law must be written on the heart by the Spirit of God, not only on tables of stone. We should always seek this.

We finish by quoting from an address that John "Rabbi" Duncan gave at the Lord's table. His subject was the law of Love: "'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us' (1 John 4:10). Had we loved God, that would not have been worth talking about, because He is so amiable. But herein is love, that God loved us who did not love Him. Now who can tell the hatefulness of not loving God? And yet here is the wondrous display of love, surpassing surely the law's display of it (which is a display of it) that God loved us, and so loved us as to send 'His Son to be the propitiation for our sins'. For God could not put aside the law of love, because God is love. God is justice, and justice maintains law.

"But what is law? The demand of love: He could not in love put love aside. He could not put aside the law of love. Justice it is that maintains law, and the summary of the law is: 'Thou shalt love'.

"He could not in love put love aside, because of His great love to breakers of law, and the violators of love, in breaking the law. He could not put love aside: it could not be that the loving God could put the claims of love or the interest of love aside. But He so loved as to give His Son to maintain the law of love, when He loved His enemies, giving His Son to be a propitiation.

"Love is a wondrous thing. High is the praise which Paul gives of it to the Corinthians, and still higher the praise which John gives of it in the words, 'God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. . . .'

"The whole exhibition which God has made of Himself to man, as a spiritual being . . . is in His law and in His gospel. And what is the summary of the law? Shortened into ten precepts in compassion to our poor faculties, and shortened again for our poor faculties into the two great commandments, it is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

"And what is the uniting principle of this, the summary in the two great commandments? It is: 'Thou shalt love'; God is love. The summary of His whole law is: 'Thou shalt love'. And what is the summary of the gospel? It is: 'God so loved'.

If this ideal is set up in the heart, it will reveal itself in all areas of human life: first to the Creator and then to our neighbour. "Love worketh no ill to

his neighbour, for love is the fulfilling of the law.” If we come to know the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, that gospel will bring us back to the law: “O how I love Thy law; it is my study all the day”.

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*For Junior Readers*

## Geraldine's Motto

Geraldine was born in the 1860s. Her father travelled around preaching. Later he settled down in East London and started a training college for missionaries. He had a great desire for the salvation of his children; he not only prayed for them but he also spoke to them, on their own, about their soul at suitable times.

Many years later, Geraldine recalled one such time. “I wonder whether you have chosen a motto for your life?” he asked her.

As she did not answer, he went on to explain what he meant by taking a motto and then what it means to follow it out in life. “Let me tell you what has been my life motto”, he went on: “Live for the glory of God and the good of many.”

He explained what “the glory of God” means and emphasised the need to reach out to as many as one possibly could with the gospel. That was his aim in life. Geraldine was so impressed both by what her father had said and by the way he spoke to her that she went straight up to her bedroom; she pulled out her little bed from the wall and wrote in pencil on the wallpaper. She wrote the precious motto round the petals of a flower where no one else would notice it, so that she would see it every morning when she woke up.

Another time, when she was a bit older, she received a letter containing an important question. She had to answer the question. It suggested attractive possibilities for Geraldine.

As she was thinking it over, her father came into the room and said kindly, “My child, in this, as in every other question in life, let me give you one great guiding principle: ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you’” (Matthew 6:33). Without another word he left the room – but it was enough. She was able to give the right answer to the letter, although it cost her many tears.

These two principles that Geraldine's father pointed out are very suitable for you this January; are they not? As you begin another new year should you not be thinking about your purpose in life?

What does the *Shorter Catechism* call it? Man's chief end! “Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever.”

Would that not be a good motto for you to carry through this new year? And when decisions have to be made or you have to decide what is more important – one thing or another – remember what the Bible tells you: Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Always put God first! Will you not pray for God’s help to do this, like the Psalmist in Psalm 119:

“Teach me, O Lord, the perfect way  
of Thy precepts divine,  
And to observe it to the end  
I shall my heart incline.  
Give understanding unto me,  
so keep Thy law shall I;  
Yea, even with my whole heart I shall  
observe it carefully.”

*J van Kralingen*

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## “I Will no Longer Tell a Lie”

The man reached the police station almost out of breath. “Come, come,” he reported, “Blackball is drunk and raging mad. Come quickly or he will kill somebody.” Soon five policemen were on the scene and, after a violent struggle, Blackball – whose real name was Job Morley – was under arrest, and not for the first time.

Morley was born in a village near Huddersfield, in Yorkshire. His father was a drunkard, an ungodly man, but his mother was kind and loving and sometimes took him to church. But Job followed his father’s example when he grew up. He not only drank too much, he became a gambler and a thief, moving about the country to escape the attentions of the police. Then he joined the army and was sent to Ireland. Because his behaviour was so bad, he was punished severely. The punishment only made him more rebellious; he deserted and wandered from place to place gambling, begging and stealing. In Ireland he married a woman as lawless as himself.

Back in England, Morley organised groups of thieves. He also became a ringleader among poachers, which resulted in fierce fights with gamekeepers trying to protect the birds Morley wished to take for himself. Once he was left for dead in a ditch. Another time a gamekeeper was killed and Morley was one of those tried for murder; he narrowly escaped being hanged.

In fact he was never convicted of any crime, although he was often arrested and kept in prison until his trial. His wife would visit him faithfully – and spend the night with him in his cell if she was allowed. And, no matter how much it cost her, she would always arrange for the best lawyer to defend him

from the charges against him, normally drunkenness or violence – and the lawyer was always successful.

One day, as he was recovering from the terrible effects of a drinking spree, someone told him that he had nearly gone to hell.

“Do you think I believe in either heaven or hell, God or devil?” Morley answered. “If there is a God, I wish He would send the devil to me this minute.” It was a wicked, unbelieving reply.

At once the room seemed to fill, Morley remembered, “with smoke, fire and brimstone, and mocking, grinning fiends [devils]”. His terror was dreadful; no longer did he question that there is a God.

And he obviously remembered something of what his mother had taught him or of what he had heard in church. So, he said afterwards, “I cried mightily to God for mercy, cried for deliverance, cried for pardon for my fearful blasphemy, cried to Jesus Christ, my mother’s Saviour, that Jesus of whom in childhood she had often told me. For hours I cried, until the sweat poured down my trembling body. It trembled until the bed and room shook as if shaken by an earthquake. The fire, smoke and brimstone seemed to pass away, but still I trembled, and I buried my face in the bedclothes. And though almost smothered, I still cried for pardon, confessed how fearfully wicked I had been, but pleaded through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, my mother’s Saviour, for mercy, forgiveness and peace.

“At last a great change came. I rose up, dressed and, to escape the room of my horrid blasphemy, in the dead of night I went out into the street. A flood of light seemed to come down from heaven; my soul was filled with joy and I began to shout aloud and praise God with all my might.

“A policeman caught hold of me and asked me my name. I at once replied, ‘Job Morley’.”

“O indeed!” the policeman replied, not believing what he was told. “You call yourself Job Morley; you are sometimes called Blackball; we know your name too well; Joseph Taylor is too often written in the police books. What fresh villainy are you after now that you change your name to deceive us?”

“The new convert explained, “My true name is and always was Job Morley; I will no longer tell a lie; I feel I cannot. O praise the Lord; help me to praise the Lord for His great mercy to me. My sins are pardoned. I hope you will have no more trouble with me. O praise the Lord!”

The officer would not have been surprised to have found Morley doing damage to property or to human beings, but he was amazed at the idea of this hardened criminal praising God. He burst out in loud laughter.

When the Sabbath came, Morley set off for church. As he sat in a pew, he remembered his mother and wept for thankfulness at the thought of God’s

wonderful mercies. Morley knew the power of alcohol over him and he resolved never to drink again. He prayed to God to keep him from it. But one day, perhaps forgetting his need for God to keep him, he was tempted and gave in to the temptation.

After he sobered up, he was very upset. But a sympathetic friend heard what happened, went to see him, spoke kindly to him and brought him to church on the Sabbath. After the evening service, Morley confessed his sin before the whole congregation and asked them to pray for him. Many did so, and he prayed earnestly for himself. He believed God heard his prayers and he rejoiced. Someone wrote that his sin “taught him how weak he was and how he needed the firm hold of a stronger hand. Though he again rejoiced, he rejoiced with trembling.”

Before he was converted, Morley had settled in Sheffield; he bought and sold birds such as hens, ducks, turkeys and pigeons, but many of them were stolen. After the Lord changed his heart, Morley continued his business, but now everything was done in an honest way.

And he had a new attitude to the Sabbath; so he got someone to paint a sign announcing that no business was done on Sabbaths. Some people thought this was funny; others mocked him – including his wife. She could not understand what had happened to her husband. She could join with him in cursing and swearing, stealing, gambling and drinking, but it did not make sense to her when Job spoke without swearing, read the Bible, went on his knees to pray, attended church, and kept the Sabbath Day holy – giving up the chance to make money on God’s day. He found her attitude very difficult and it was not easy for him to keep control over his temper.

One day she so annoyed him that his first thought was to grasp a new, very sharp axe hanging on the wall and attack her with it. At once, he said, “the thought brought a cold chill on me”, and he went out for a long walk. “How I prayed for help,” he said, “prayed that God would never leave me to myself in my home trials, but give me power to be patient and silent, whatever she might say or do.” He prayed too that God “would change her heart and open her eyes that we might live together in peace”.

Some days later, Morley was drawing a bucket of water from the well to give his pony a drink. His wife had been lashing out against the church and his friends, using “all the filthy, stinging words a mouth could utter”. Then Morley’s patience snapped; he emptied the bucket over his wife and walked away without saying anything. She ran upstairs, took off her wet clothes and went to bed. She stayed there for a fortnight without speaking to him. Morley knew he had done wrong; he said, “Our dear Master tells us not to be revenged, but to rejoice when all manner of evil is spoken against us falsely

for His name's sake. I thought of His words and the sufferings He endured for me and felt I had done wrong. For several days my mind was darkened and I had to ask my wife's forgiveness and often went down on my knees to God before my peace of mind returned."

Most people thought it was very strange to find that a wicked man like Morley had changed completely, and many of them laughed. When he heard this, he announced that he would go on a Sabbath afternoon to Hay Market Place at 4 o'clock to tell the people of Sheffield what God had done for him. Thousands of people gathered and a few of his church friends stood around him to give him support. Morley told the crowd about his past wickedness and how ashamed he was of it all. He told them he had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and had been saved. He spoke of the power of saving grace and told the people that it could reach, and snatch from hell, "either a dying thief or a living thief" – not just the thief on the cross beside Jesus, but himself.

Morley's was an altogether unusual conversion. It shows the power of the grace of God, as he himself acknowledged. But it also shows why children and young people should pay attention to what they hear at home, in Sabbath school and in church about the teachings of the Bible, especially about the way of salvation. Yet do not think that, because people like Morley were converted after years of being careless about their souls, that you are free to indulge in any kind of carelessness yourself. Do not assume that you can safely turn your back on the religion in which you were brought up and live an ungodly life, hoping at last to get to heaven. God is very gracious, but let us pay attention to what He tells us: "*Now is the accepted time*".

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*For Younger Readers*

## **"I Have Been a Great Sinner"**

**T**he little girl was 7. She went to speak to her minister. She said: "I have been a great sinner all my life. I have lived seven years without God and without Christ. Do you think such a sinner as I can be forgiven?"

Many people would have said that a girl of her age could not be a great sinner. But the girl was right. God was teaching her. So she knew that it was very sinful of her not to believe in Christ.

The minister told her, in a simple way, how a sinner can be saved. She could be saved from her sins by believing in Jesus Christ. She believed, and God forgave her all her sins. She grew up to be a godly woman, and her children too began to trust in God when they were young. You must ask God to save you from all your sins, for Jesus' sake, even when you are young.



## “He Is a Leper”

*A Moody Stuart*

This is an edited piece from Moody Stuart's book, *Capernaum*, which deals with incidents in Jesus' life around Capernaum. He here deals with the leper who came to Jesus saying, “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean” (Matthew 8:2). (The “Happy Islands”, where Moody Stuart saw the lepers, are the Canary Islands.)

Everything great on earth is made worthless by the leprosy of sin, unless it is cleansed by the blood of Christ. We can clearly see this truth in the case of the Syrian general, Naaman. He was great and honourable with his master for his faithful service, famous in the army for his bravery, and beloved by his country for the deliverances the Lord wrought by him. Yet a sore blight marred both his personal happiness and his public honour. This one terrible exception to his peace spoiled it all – the appalling fact: “but he was *a leper*”. And in all that man counts good or great on earth, the blight of sin on the soul turns the milk and honey into what is tremendously bitter.

I was on one of those islands in the Atlantic, not far from the African coast, which people long ago are said to have called the Happy Islands because of their climate and their beauty. Many years ago I saw four or five poor, miserable women seated together on a bench near the wayside. My interest in them was awakened by the remark of a doctor friend, “Those are lepers; that is the true eastern leprosy”.

We looked for a moment; but the scurfy white skin, the swollen lips, the face foul with blotches of corrupt flesh, were too revolting for the eye to linger on. And there was this sad aggravation to their misery: although not living within the deserted lazaret house [a leper colony], they evidently lived together apart from everyone else, and each of them saw her own image in her companion's marred face, as in a mirror.

Within a short distance stood the palace of the chief nobleman of the island. It was such a mansion as one might see anywhere, but its surroundings were exceptionally beautiful. Amongst other attractions, rows of great palm-trees adorned the grounds, and their lofty tops waving in the breeze seemed to greet the princely owner.

Yet the sad whisper, “He is a leper”, tainted all the scene; must he too be slowly reduced into such a wreck of manhood as those poor women near his gate? He had a family of beautiful, loving daughters, whom he deeply loved; and people spoke with much kindness both of himself and them. But he was a leper; and by the severe law of the country, his leprosy might lead to all his possessions being taken away. So his family, it was believed, lived in constant fear of being cast out of their inheritance, as if they were defiled.

Our party rode through beautiful scenes, like those of old in the Land of Promise. There grew “the cedar, the shittah tree [the acacia], and the myrtle, the oil tree, the fir tree, the pine, and the box tree together”. But the thought, “He is a leper”, always returned to the memory and threw a shadow of sadness over it all. One valuable part of his estates was a vast grove of orange trees, whose fruit was famous for beauty and flavour. Few sights on earth are more pleasant than this bright golden fruit shining through the darkness of the dense green foliage. As we moved along, admiring and delighted, the thought recurred, “He is a leper”, and this tarnished all its loveliness.

The worst outward leprosy is a faint image of the leprous soul, and any other evil is slight when contrasted with the fruits of sin. How many people – with wealth and social status, or without them – have everything that is fitted to make them happy on earth, and yet it is all tainted by the foul leprosy of sin. Of how many relatives or friends can you say, He has comfort at home and honour elsewhere; he has health of body and power of mind, and every other element of happiness; but he is a leper: his soul is stained with unforgiven sin; he has no part with the people of God.

How many of you must take the same charge to yourselves? You have a loving wife or husband, dutiful sons and daughters, or kind parents and caring brothers and sisters; but you are a leper. You have an honourable calling, a pleasant house, a farm, perhaps, or a garden – or you are just like a little maid waiting on Naaman's wife, yet with various earthly blessings suited to your condition and making you happy. But you are a leper. The inward taint may be less or more visible to others, but your soul is sick, with a conscience not cleansed and a heart not renewed. And your fatal illness goes on increasing and shall be everlasting, unless you are healed.

If you are unchanged, you can have no access to that world of light into which there enters nothing that defiles; your eyes can never behold the King in His beauty, and your feet can never stand within the holy place in the Jerusalem above. Your place is outside, among the dogs, and your soul shall be gathered with sinners, with all the leprous and the unclean. Over you the tremendous doom is already written: “They shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against Me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh” (Is 66:24).

Will you not even now, like the man full of leprosy, follow Jesus into some solitary place and there kneel down before Him and cast yourself at His feet and cry as for your life: “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean”. He will be very gracious to you at the voice of your cry, and will answer you: “I will, be thou clean”.

# Scripture and Catechism Exercises 2015-16

## UK Names for Exercise 1

**Senior Section.** *Aberdeen:* Sarah Somerset. *Barnoldswick:* James and Rebecca Ross. *Edinburgh:* Mairi Campbell, Annabelle MacDonald. *Glasgow:* Rachel Smith. *Kyle:* Nathan Whear. *Tonbridge:* Heidi and James Playfoot.

**Intermediate Section.** *Aberdeen:* Rachel Somerset. *Barnoldswick:* Christopher and Lily-Ann Metcalfe. *Dingwall:* Hannah Mackenzie, Laura Macleod, Matthew Ross. *Edinburgh:* Anna Campbell. *Gairloch:* Roddie Wyatt. *Glasgow:* Kenneth Macpherson, Jessica and Jonathan Norris. *Guildford:* Susanna Risbridger. *Inverness:* Daniel Maton. *Kyle:* Sarah J Whear. *London:* Henry Munns. *Stornoway:* Lucienne Doig, Cara MacLeod. *Tonbridge:* Katie Playfoot. *Trowbridge:* Abigail and Daniel Broome.

**Junior Section.** *Barnoldswick:* Robert Metcalfe. *Cheadle:* Henry Johnson. *Dingwall:* Esther Ross. *Edinburgh:* Ross Campbell, Bradley Morrison. *Gairloch:* Kyrene and Josh Tallach. *Glasgow:* Iain Macpherson, Louise Norris. *Inverness:* Jessica Maton. *North Tolsta:* Ruth Morrison. *Snizort:* Jonathan Macleod. *Stornoway:* Jamie Doig, Matthew Macleod. *Tonbridge:* Joseph Playfoot.

**Upper Primary Section.** *Aberdeen:* Jane Somerset. *Barnoldswick:* Claudia van Essen. *Beauy:* Deborah Maclean. *Brighton:* Katherine Hills. *Dingwall:* Lydia Ross. *Edinburgh:* Esther Campbell, Fraser Morrison. *Glasgow:* Grant MacLennan, Hugh Macpherson, Cameron Ross, Rebecca Smith. *Inverness:* Victoria Maton. *Kyle:* Mark Whear. *London:* David and John Munns. *Ness:* Rachel Murray. *North Harris:* Hannah Jardine, Neil Morrison, Cara and Connor Macdonald. *Snizort:* Andrew Macleod. *Stornoway:* Fraser Macleod.

**Lower Primary Section.** *Barnoldswick:* Timothy Metcalfe, Bethan and Calvin Middleton, Daniel van Essen. *Dingwall:* Catherine Campbell, Thomas Ross. *Edinburgh:* Fraser Campbell, Jenna Campbell. *Garrabost:* Lydia and Susanna Macdonald. *Glasgow:* Susie Macpherson, David Norris, Hugh Ross. *Halkirk:* Annelise Hymers-Mackintosh, Donald and Grace Maclean. *Inverness:* Lois Maton, Callum Arie Morrison. *London:* Manow Fox, Sarah Munns. *Ness:* Katie Macinnes, Angus Murray. *North Harris:* John Chisholm, Ruairidh Morrison. *North Tolsta:* Angus and Uilleam Morrison. *North Uist:* Mairi Macdonald. *St Clements:* Daniel Ross. *Stornoway:* Jeni Macleod, Owen Morrison. *Tain:* Abigail and Benjamin Reynolds. *Trowbridge:* Samuel Broome.

## Looking Around Us

### Will Machines Take over?

Professor Stephen Hawking, one of Britain's best-known scientists, has said that efforts to create thinking machines – using full artificial intelligence – “could spell the end of the human race”. He agrees that the early forms of artificial intelligence developed so far have already proved very useful, but he fears the consequences of creating something that can match the abilities of human beings or surpass them.

The professor accepts the theory of evolution, firmly believing that all life has developed from a single cell that was somehow produced from the chemicals it is made from. He assumes that the development of these machines stage might reach a stage when their “evolution” might take off, slipping out of human control. “Humans, who are limited by slow biological evolution,”

he argues, “couldn’t compete” with such advanced thinking machines; they would lose out in the competition he would see as part of evolution.

Yet Professor Hawking obviously accepts that the development he imagines might occur in advanced thinking machines is at least based on the work of the human beings who first produced them and then developed them further. These machines needed, so to speak, a creator or creators. Yet he and those who think like him are completely unwilling to accept that a thinking Being was necessary to create humanity – God Himself. It did not even happen gradually, over a huge period of time, but on the sixth day of the creation week. We know this because God has revealed it to us in the Bible: “The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7).

And God has also revealed how human existence in this world will end: not because out-of-control thinking machines may evolve to become more powerful than human beings and destroy them. The world will end when Jesus Christ will come to this world the second time. He will call everyone who has died out of their graves, and bring all who have ever lived to the judgement seat. “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

However brilliant individuals may be, we are not to listen to them when they go against what God has revealed in the Scriptures. But we can rely absolutely on what the all-knowing God has said. What is more, all that He says in the Bible is “profitable” (2 Timothy 3:16).

What profitable lessons can we learn from the verse in Genesis? God has total authority over us because He created us, and so we must submit to all that He says to us in Scripture.

And from the verse in 2 Corinthians? Each of us must give account for everything we have done in this life. And it reminds us of our great need to have all our wrong-doing forgiven – in the way that God has appointed: by believing on Jesus Christ as the One who died in the place of sinners.

### **2015 Youth Conference**

This year’s Youth Conference will be held, God willing, at Abernethy, Barcaple, Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire, DG7 2AP, from Tuesday, April 7, to Thursday, April 9. Further details are to appear in next month’s *Young People’s Magazine*.

**Price £1.00**