

# 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:** The statue, in the Welsh town of Bala, is of Thomas Charles. See page 93.

## The Young People’s Magazine

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# The Young People's Magazine

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## The Most Serious Sin

Cambuslang lies just south east of Glasgow. It was the scene, in 1742, of a remarkable turning to God. During this revival, many people were converted. At least one book, 256 pages long, has been written about it. How did the revival happen? The most important answer is that the Holy Spirit worked powerfully, applying the truths of God's Word to the hearts of many of the hearers. Various ministers – including the local pastor, William M'Culloch – preached to large congregations. He was not an outstanding speaker, but the Lord blessed his preaching – not least a series of sermons, about the new birth, which lasted for about a year.

McCulloch persuaded more than 100 of those who seemed to have been converted at that time, under the preaching in Cambuslang, to write down an account of their experiences. One of them, Janet Reid, noted that she used to go away from a service thinking of how well the minister had preached; she was not applying to herself the truths that she heard. But this all changed. Now sermons often made her think, "How ill [badly] I have lived", focusing her attention on herself and the sins of her life. What she heard also made her think of "God's wonderful love in Christ to such a poor, wretched sinner as I". She was thinking too of the source of salvation from sin.

Another woman who told about her experiences was Margaret Lap. She spoke of what grieved her "more than any or all other sins". Had she been stealing, or telling a lie that got someone into serious trouble, or even guilty of murder? No, it was none of these things. What she saw as her greatest sin was despising the gospel. "I had never received Jesus Christ," she confessed, "in His offers of Himself in the gospel." When the minister was preaching – reminding the people that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners and calling them to trust in Christ for salvation – she was rejecting Him.

Was Margaret right? Or was she being too hard on herself? However serious other sins might be – for instance, the sins mentioned in the last paragraph – you should always think about the person who is affected. There is the person from whom something is stolen, the person who was falsely accused by the liar, and obviously the one whose life was taken away by the

murderer. But whatever the sin, God is affected; every sin is against God. The sinner is breaking at least one of His commands and so is rejecting His authority – which is a very serious sin.

But when sinners reject Christ's offers of salvation, they not only reject His authority, they despise His kindness. Paul tells the believers in Corinth: "Ye know the *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). Christ the Son of God was infinitely rich, from all eternity, but He came into this world in spite of all its poverty and suffering, so that sinners might be spiritually rich in this world, and perfectly so in heaven above, when this life is over.

These Corinthian believers, because they were believers, recognised the *grace* of Christ – His love and kindness, which they most certainly did not deserve. They did not despise the kindness of God in providing salvation for sinners; they did not reject the blessings of salvation. Instead they received these blessings by faith, trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered instead of them, enduring the punishment that they deserved.

How do we react to God's kindness in sending His own Son into a sinful world to suffer and die instead of sinners like us? Do we obey Christ when He calls us to trust in Him, to come to Him, to look to Him, to believe in Him (all different ways of saying the same thing)? Or do we despise Him? Do we reject Him and the blessings of salvation, which He so freely offers to us? If we are rejecting Him, continuing in unbelief, we are committing the same serious sin which so disturbed Margaret Lap in Cambuslang.

Some people will promise themselves that they will trust in Christ at some time in the future. But what about today, this very moment? This is when they ought to trust in Christ. If they do not so trust, they are obviously not willing to receive the blessings He offers to them. They are despising Him and His blessings. How good it would be if the Lord would teach us, as He taught Margaret Lap, that to reject Christ is a most serious sin!

Do you remember Felix, the Roman governor to whom the Apostle Paul spoke very seriously. As Paul warned him about the danger of going on in sin, Felix trembled. Yet he did not really feel his need before God, though he felt afraid. He did not believe, but he promised to continue his conversation at what he called "a convenient season". That seemed hopeful, but he was thinking of a time which would be convenient to himself, not the time – that very moment – which God had appointed for trusting in Christ.

Yes, he often spoke with Paul afterwards, but he seems never to have trembled again; all he was interested in was that Paul would pay a bribe. That would have been wrong and, in any case, the Apostle probably did not

have the money Felix was looking for. God left Felix in his unbelief. Have you considered the danger of going on to eternity still despising Christ and salvation through Him? A minister in Brechin, in north-east Scotland, once said that God is never so much dishonoured as by unbelief.

Ask God to bless you by working in your soul by the Holy Spirit. Then you will no longer despise Christ; you will become willing to trust in Him. How wonderful it would be if the Lord would again pour out His Spirit on a large scale, as He did in Cambuslang in 1742! And how much more wonderful if He would work on a much larger scale, until the whole earth is filled with His glory! He is able to do so. And He will.

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## Joshua – Successor to Moses

### 3. Leading Israel into Canaan

*Rev Neil M Ross*

In the second part of this paper, printed last month, we saw Joshua set apart as Moses' successor. The paper was given to the 2015 Youth Conference.

Joshua's first task as leader was to take his people across the River Jordan into Canaan, the land God had promised to them. Joshua gave precise instructions to prepare for that important event. Some of the Israelite tribes had already received their inheritance east of Jordan; Joshua ensured that they kept their promise to help the other tribes conquer Canaan.

But did Joshua really know what kind of territory was west of Jordan? He wisely sent spies into Canaan to reconnoitre the fortress city of Jericho, which guarded entry to the heart of the country. The spies reported to him how Rahab the harlot sheltered them when they were pursued by the agents of the king of Jericho; they told about their solemn promise, under oath, to protect her and her family when Israel would invade the city. Most importantly, they informed Joshua: "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us" (Joshua 2:24).

Now came the day for crossing Jordan into Canaan. The people and their leaders were ready. The princes and priests of Israel promised Joshua: "All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go" (Joshua 1:16) – and that promise they faithfully kept.

What an amazing and wonderful sight it was! The vast multitude of Israelites – at least two million people, it is thought – approached the river, led by the priests carrying the ark of the covenant. As soon as the feet of the priests touched the edge of the water of the overflowing Jordan, the waters

miraculously parted. The water which flowed down toward them on their right hand ceased its progress and piled upward as if halted by an invisible dam, while the water on their left hand flowed away from them. Then, as Scripture tells us, “the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan” (Joshua 3:17). So Joshua and his people arrived in the promised land just five days short of the 40 years since their exodus from Egypt.

The Psalmist poses this question about that miraculous parting of the water: “What ailed thee . . . Jordan, that thou wast driven back? (Psalm 114:5). The implied answer is, of course, that God was with His people and exercised His power on their behalf.

As surely as God fulfilled His promise to be with Joshua and the Israelites, and to bring them to the promised land, so He will be with His believing people in every age as they journey to the “better country”, even heaven. He will show Himself to be the mighty God who is on their side, helping them to conquer their foes and overcome obstacles. He will certainly bring them to glory, for He is faithful who has promised.

The day that Israel crossed into Canaan was also the day when God publicly honoured Joshua. We read in Joshua 4:14: “On that day the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life”.

Let us never forget that all who honour God will be honoured by Him. On the other hand, God warns us: “They that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed” (1 Samuel 2:30).

After arriving in Canaan, Joshua and his people camped at Gilgal between the Jordan and Jericho. There they erected a pillar of twelve stones, taken from the bed of the river, as a standing witness to following generations, of how God mercifully and miraculously made a dry path through the swollen river until they all safely passed over. They were never to forget what great things God had done for them (see Joshua 4:22-24).

Ought we not to remember what God has done for us? Believers, as it were, set up a pillar by acknowledging, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us” (1 Samuel 7:12). You may remember, as this verse tells us, that after the Israelites conquered the Philistines at Mizpeh, Samuel “took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it *Ebenezer*, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us”. Even those who are not yet born-again believers are to remember God’s goodness to them all the days of their lives and be grateful for it.

All of us, young as well as old, must remember how God blessed us as a

nation at the Reformation, especially by giving us the pure gospel. And must we not be conscientious in passing on the Reformed faith to future generations? Rev Donald Macfarlane, one of the founding fathers of the Free Presbyterian Church, although he himself had no children, was very concerned that coming generations would have the truth handed down to them – which was one reason why he made the noble stand he did in 1893. We today are indebted to those who have gone before us, but especially to the God of all grace who gave them the grace to do their duty toward us.

Before Joshua proceeded inland to take the rest of Canaan, he ordered all the males to be circumcised. The generation of Israelites born in the wilderness did not undergo this rite, which God appointed as the sign of their consecration to Him. When God commanded Abraham to be circumcised, He promised that in Abraham's seed [that is, the Messiah] all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Another promise was, "Unto thy seed [in this instance, Abraham's descendants] have I given this land [Canaan]". Now, when Abraham's descendants were actually in Canaan, they had to observe the token of the covenant, circumcision, and thus be solemnly dedicated to the Lord.

Those of you whom your parents have dedicated to the Lord by the sacrament of Baptism now have a responsibility. You are personally and fully to dedicate yourselves to the Lord, if you have not yet done so, by believing in the Saviour, denying yourselves, taking up the cross and following Him. You are to seek grace from God to enable you to be for Him and not another. Those who have been baptised but do not yet have the blessings of which the sacrament is a sign are but dead branches of the vine; they are fit only to be cut down, cast away and burned, as Christ tells us. It is essential for us to be living branches, engrafted by the new birth and faith into the true vine, Christ Himself.

How thankful Joshua must have been when, not only the rite of circumcision was observed, but also the Passover. This was done on the appointed day, the first day of the second month, and just five days after they crossed the Jordan. It was a graphic reminder to them of their safety in Egypt exactly 40 years earlier, when they were under the shelter of the blood of the Passover lamb on that fateful night when the Lord smote the Egyptians.

Matthew Henry says, "Joshua opens the campaign with one act of devotion after another" – which teaches us that we ought to start our various enterprises with prayer at least. In making all our plans and putting them into effect – whether for studies, work, friendships or anything else – we are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, as Christ tells us, believing that all other things, as God sees fit, shall be added unto us.

## “Christ Came to Save”

A revival was beginning. Many people who once did not come to church were now asking what they must do to be saved. Among them was a young man who had lived a careless life; indeed, he was very much opposed to religion. He always treated a godly, humble deacon badly. Yet he was in church each Sabbath morning and seemed to listen carefully to the sermon; some people said that this was so that he could find fault with what he heard.

One evening, the young man appeared at what may have been a prayer meeting and sat down. Everyone thought that he had come only to find something that he could make fun of. When the meeting was over, he went to speak to the deacon: “I wish to go home with you; are you going directly to your house?”

“I am”, answered the deacon and told him he was welcome to come.

After reaching the house, the young man asked abruptly, “Is there any use in my trying to be saved?”

The deacon was so astonished by the unexpected question that he said nothing for some time. He stayed silent for so long that the young man decided that the deacon could think of no encouraging answer to give him. So he asked, “You think my case hopeless then?”

“Hopeless! My dear young man, no. Christ came to save just such sinners as you are.”

“What must I do?”

The deacon pointed out that it is Christ who must save. But before saying more he wanted to ask God for His help and direction. So they went down on their knees and the deacon prayed. After sitting down again the deacon began: “Now, my young friend . . .”.

“You have not much reason to call me ‘young friend’.” The young man was feeling guilty about the way he had treated the deacon in the past.

“Never mind”, the deacon answered kindly; “the matter we have to talk about is between God and your soul. You are convinced you are a sinner and need salvation?”

“I am.”

“You feel that God might justly punish you for your sins?”

“I feel that I deserve hell.”

“What are you willing to do for salvation?”

“I don’t know. I can do nothing good.”

“Why not?”

“Because I have become hardened and used to sin.”

If you are a sinner, and so great a sinner that you can do nothing towards



your salvation, your case is hopeless – unless someone comes in on your behalf who has the necessary ability. Do you believe that Christ has that ability?”

“I believe He is all-powerful.”

“You believe then that He is able to save you. Do you believe that He is *willing* to save you?”

“I do not know; I have sinned wilfully against great light.”

“Whether He is willing to save you or not depends not on what you have done, but on what He has said.”

The deacon then picked up his Bible and read some verses. The first was: “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Timothy 1:15). Then he said, “You see, He did not come into the world to *help* sinners to save themselves; He came to save them. He did not come to save small sinners, but the chief of sinners.”

Then the deacon quoted: “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7). He pointed out clearly that Christ declared that God will answer prayer, and added, “He could not make the matter any clearer”.

The deacon then quoted these further words of Christ: “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37), and said that anyone therefore who doubts that Christ is willing to save makes Him a liar.

Then another verse: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). Then the deacon commented, “The case seems to be a very plain one. You are a lost sinner; Christ came to save such people. He has sought you out by His Spirit, for you would have gone on in your blindness if He had not awakened you. What you need is a humble and contrite heart, faith, the spirit of obedience and love; you need to be made over again throughout. Is it not so?”

“Yes.”

“Well, you can’t do that for yourself, and there is nobody can do it for you but Christ.” Then the deacon encouraged the young man, pointing out that Christ is willing to save sinners, telling him also to ask Christ to save him.

The young man recognised that Christ was willing to save him if he would trust in Christ. “But”, he added, “I don’t know that I am willing to do that; my heart is so steeped in sin.”

“The more need of a new heart. You must ask Christ for the spirit of trust. The fact is: you need everything that is involved in salvation, and you must go to Him for everything. If you wait till you get something yourself, you will never go. Don’t you see that you need Christ to do everything for you?”

“Yes, and if He does not do it, I am lost.”

“Undoubtedly.”

“There is no reason why He should do it.”

“Certainly not. But, on the other hand, many reasons why He should not.”

Again the deacon pointed to the Saviour's willingness to save and said that they should pray.

The young man doubted if he could be saved at that time.

“Why not? Christ has to save you if you are saved, and it is as easy for Him to save you tonight as at any other time.”

“But will He?”

The deacon warned the young man about adding to his sins by doubting what Christ has said. Then they prayed. And it would seem that the young man trusted in Christ that night.

There is nothing in the Word of God to encourage a sinner to continue in unbelief, rejecting Christ. To do so is to keep on down the road to a lost eternity. And *we* are told to come to Christ now, not at some other time.

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### For Junior Readers

## Choose Life

From your earliest days you have had, I hope, a great privilege. What a blessing it is to have your parents at home, and your minister in church, set the Word of God before you! But you are responsible for how you respond to the truths of the Bible. Moses said to the Israelites near the end of his days: “I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live”.

“Therefore *choose life*” – that is what Moses told the people, young as well as old! As one poet said:

“O happy is the man who hears  
Instruction's warning voice;  
And who celestial wisdom makes  
His early, *only* choice” [*celestial* means heavenly].

There was a boy called John Munro who lived in the north of Scotland many years ago. He had godly parents who brought him up to read the Bible and to attend church.

One day, when he was only 9 years old, he was out playing and enjoying himself as any child of that age would do. But then he was called inside – the minister had arrived in the village to catechise the families who lived there. He would ask everyone questions from *The Shorter Catechism* and

expect them to answer. John was not very happy about this and felt rebellious inside, not wanting to give up his fun for any religious duty.

He then felt very guilty, realising that this reaction was wrong. When it was his turn to repeat a *Catechism* answer, he was asked Question 38: “What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?”

He repeated the answer: “At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgement, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity”. As John did so, the Lord melted his heart and gave him the desire to obtain this blessedness for himself.

From that day, aged 9, he began to choose spiritual things and to follow on to know the Lord. By God’s grace, he chose life. When he grew up, he became a respected minister of the gospel. He preached Christ until the week before he died, aged 79.

What about you? In the Book of Proverbs, God very solemnly describes what will happen to those who do not choose life: “Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh . . . for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord . . . Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.”

Will you not “choose the fear of the Lord” when you are young lest you be left to your own ways and devices? A family friend of the famous minister, Robert Murray M’Cheyne, was one of those who chose the world when she was young. He was so saddened by this that he wrote a poem about her choice. Will you not listen to his warning?

She has chosen the world, and its paltry crowd;  
She has chosen the world, and an endless shroud!  
She has chosen the world, with its misnamed pleasures;  
She has chosen the world, before heaven’s own treasures. . . .

For the human heart can never conceive  
What joys are the part of them who believe,  
Nor can justly think of the cup of death  
Which all must drink who despise the faith.

Away, then – O fly from the joys of earth!  
Her smile is a lie – there’s a sting in her mirth.  
Come, leave the dreams of this transient night,  
And bask in the beams of an endless light.

*J van Kralingen*

# Heaven and Hell

## 7. The Place Prepared for the Devil and His Angels

*Rev J B Jardine*

The sections of this Youth Conference paper which were printed in this *Magazine* over the last two months described something of the blessedness of heaven.

When they die, wicked people will be driven at once to the place prepared for the devil and his angels. The damned will have the company of devils in their miserable state in hell. They will continue there, consciously enduring pain and shame for an eternity which absolutely will never end. The strongest terms are used to express this pain: “fire that shall not be quenched”, “everlasting fire”, “the worm that never dies”, “the bottomless pit”, “weeping and gnashing of teeth”, and “the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night”.

After they are condemned, the “second death”, which the wicked will experience, involves the total, absolute and never-ending destruction of their beings. This is their everlasting death.

The misery of lost sinners is dreadful beyond what we can imagine, when they are abandoned to their own feelings of remorse and despair, along with their own raging evil passions, which are out of control. Hell, the state of misery, is a place of “outer darkness”, a “lake of fire and brimstone”.

The only thing that keeps the wicked out of hell for any period of time is the mere good pleasure of God. This mere good pleasure is His sovereign will, which is not restrained by any obligation or hindered by any difficulty.

There is no lack of power in God. He can send the wicked to hell at any time. The wicked deserve to be sent to hell. God's justice never stands in the way of His power to destroy the wicked. Indeed, justice calls for their sins to be punished. Jesus spoke, in a parable, about the owner of a vineyard who said “unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?” (Luke 13:7). Only God's longsuffering holds justice back. “The Lord is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works” (Psalm 145:9).

The wicked are already under sentence of hell. God has pronounced that sentence against them; they justly deserve to be thrown into hell at any moment. They are reserved for hell according to God's righteous rule. “He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). Hell is the right place for all who

continue unconverted. It is the place to which God's justice, His Word and His unchangeable law sentences them.

The wrath of God burns against them. As Jonathan Edwards in his sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God", says, "Their damnation does not slumber, the pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them; the flames now rage and glow".

Everyone thinks they will escape hell through their own strength and ability, yet to no avail. But by trusting in their own strength and ability they are trusting in nothing more than a shadow. Hell is full of those that thought they could escape it by their own power. The next paragraph is what a wicked man in hell might say when reflecting on his position, according to Jonathan Edwards:

"No, I never intended to come here. I thought I had a good plan for myself: I thought my strategy was good. I intended to take sufficient care; but it came upon me unexpectedly. I didn't expect it at that time, and in that way; it came as a thief. Death outwitted me; God's wrath was too quick for me. O my cursed foolishness! I was flattering myself, and pleasing myself with vain dreams of what I would do after the life on earth; and when I was saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction came upon me."

God has not *promised* anyone any more time in this world, beyond this present moment. Only through trusting in Christ can anyone be sure of escaping eternal destruction, which is so near. All the wicked are, as it were, held in the hand of God over the pit of hell. The devil is waiting for them. Hell is open for them. The flames are ready to grasp hold of them.

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*For Younger Readers*

## One Very Cold Night

Thomas Charles was a godly minister in a place called Bala, in Wales. God used his preaching to turn many people from their sins, so that they followed Christ. One night he was walking home through the mountains, probably after preaching somewhere. It was very stormy, and the ground was covered with snow.

Mr Charles walked on, holding the reins of his horse. Later, when it was easier for the horse to carry its rider, the minister would ride on it again. As he walked, the thumb of his left hand became colder and colder. At last frostbite set in – when the flesh becomes damaged because of the great cold.

He reached home, but he became ill. Mr Charles went to see many doctors, but none of them could help him to get better. He was so ill that people were afraid he was going to die. At last he had to get his thumb cut off.

But he was still very ill. What could the people do?

They decided to have a special prayer meeting to ask God to make the minister better. One godly old man remembered King Hezekiah's prayer in the Bible. Hezekiah too was ill; he was likely to die. But he prayed to God. God promised Hezekiah that he would live for 15 more years. And that is what happened.

So the godly old man asked God very earnestly to leave Mr Charles with them for 15 more years. He wanted the other people in the church to get good from Mr Charles's preaching. And he wanted other people in Bala to get help from the minister's work.

And God heard that prayer too. Good Mr Charles got better; he was no longer ill. He went about preaching just as he used to do.

But everyone must die, even those who love God and serve Him. So the time came when Mr Charles died and went to heaven. How long did he live after the good old man prayed?

He lived for 15 more years. God helped the man to pray and, in great kindness, he gave the man what he prayed for.

God still hears people when they pray. And we should always be asking God to give us what we need. More than anything else, we should ask Him to take away all our sins, to make us trust in Jesus Christ and to be obedient to Him.

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## The Pickpocket God Arrested

Many years ago a Bible Association was set up in Shoreditch, a district in central London. Some time later, two men went out to collect money for the Association. They called on a woman who ran a small grocery shop. She was always glad to make a payment to help distribute Bibles.

As they were going away, she told them about a young man who was a lodger in her house. He was "always poring over the Bible", she told them. She was sure he would give them a donation. She was right; he gave them a guinea, a little more than £1 – but this was at a time when a week's wages

were about £1 – and he offered to give a further sixpence to the Association every week. The collectors were amazed; they felt that he was giving more than he could afford and that they should give back some of the money.

But the young man told them: “No, I owe my all to the Shoreditch Bible Association”.

About a month later, the committee which ran the Association decided to increase the number of its members. They believed that this young man would be an excellent choice. But he refused very decidedly and told them that, if they needed more money, he was very willing to help them. They then wanted to know why he would not join the Committee, but he refused to tell them.

About a year later, he spoke again to the collectors. He was going to leave for America the very next week and he gave them a donation of over £5. He was now willing to tell them his story.

“Two years ago,” he said, “I was one of the worst young men in London. I was a common pickpocket.” As they were passing by a church one day, he and some friends had noticed that it was full. It was a special meeting of the Association.

“[We] entered,” he explained, “in order to pursue our thieving. From the crowded state of the church, we were separated; and I got into the middle aisle, just in front of the speakers. The first words I caught were: ‘Thou shalt not steal’. My attention was fixed, my conscience was touched, and tears began to flow. In vain did my companions make their signals to begin our [pickpocketing] operations.

“As soon as the meeting closed, I hurried away, got into the first coach I found, drove to my lodgings in the west end of the town, paid my rent, took away all my things, and came into this part of the city, in order to hide myself from my companions.” He would have wanted to get away from any temptation to join them again in the wicked work of removing money or wallets or anything else from people’s pockets.

In God’s kind providence, the young man found the house where he was then living. He asked at once for a Bible, and for the first time in his life he began to read it. As he read, he found himself convicted more and more of the evil of what he had been doing. And he added, “I hope I have now found peace and rest in believing on that Saviour whom the Bible reveals”.

We should notice the power of God’s Word in what happened. The young man had no intention of listening to what was being said at the meeting, but God used just four words to touch his conscience. He felt the authority of God’s law. And God further used the Bible, applying it to the man’s soul, to bring him to trust in Christ.

Let us notice also God's perfect timing. If the words of the Eighth Commandment had been spoken a little sooner, the man could not have heard them. If they were much later, perhaps the man would have been so engrossed with picking someone's pocket that he would not have heard them. God has all these things under His control.

Because the young man had got so much good from the Bible, he was anxious that other people would receive Bibles also. We also should be concerned that Bibles would be sent throughout the world and we should be willing to make donations to make that possible. The Trinitarian Bible Society is one organisation that seeks to provide translations that really are faithful to God's inspired words as these were originally written in Hebrew (the Old Testament) or in Greek (the New Testament).

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## Looking Around Us

### Foolish Confidence

Two young men were stealing thousands of pounds from gambling machines. They took care to hide their faces with balaclavas when carrying out the robberies. But they took pictures of themselves on their mobile phones, with broad grins on their faces. It seems so stupid, but they were obviously confident that nothing would happen if someone looked at the pictures on their phones. They even posted them on social media, including Facebook.

Probably they never thought of God bringing them at last to judgement. Yet He will. And, unless we repent of our sins, they will be brought against us on the Day of Judgement. Clearly the men were also very confident that no one would bring them to human justice after looking at the pictures.

But God, in His providence, may order events so that those who expect to escape all punishment will find out that they were terribly wrong. One night, about midnight, police officers from the North Yorkshire police force stopped the two men in Skipton for speeding. In the car, the officers found more than £3000 in cash, including 1000 pound coins. The men have admitted conspiracy to steal and have been sentenced to terms in prison, but in the case of one of them, the prison sentence will not come into effect unless the man commits a further offence.

A senior policeman said: "These offenders carried out a string of crimes with no thought for the businesses they were targeting. But ultimately their greed, arrogance and affinity for selfies proved to be their downfall." He did not speak of sin, but the men sinned before God in stealing. Yet gambling is wrong, and it is wrong to run a business which makes gambling possible.



What we all need is to live in obedience to God's commands, not depending on ourselves, but on His grace – which is brought to sinners through the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We should not delight in sin. We should live as those who will appear before God in judgement. And we must be humble, not arrogant – especially before God.

## Scripture and Catechism Exercises 2015-16

### Exercise 3

All answers from overseas should be sent to *Miss Naomi Clemence*, 67 Clobberhill Road, Glasgow, G13 2LB. The correctors should have your answers before the end of June. These exercises are based on: Joshua 14 to 1 Samuel 25, and Acts 20 to 2 Corinthians 4.

#### 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. Read 1 Samuel chapter 4.
  - (a) What did the Israelites hope to achieve by bringing the ark of God into the camp? (2)
  - (b) What was wrong with their reasoning? (2)
  - (c) What effect did the arrival of the ark have on the Philistines? (2)
  - (d) What was the result of the battle? (1)
  - (e) What happened to the ark? (1)
  - (f) What effect did this news have on Eli and on Phineas' wife? (2)
2. Now read chapters 5 and 6.
  - (a) Describe briefly how the Philistines were affected by having the ark. (4)
  - (b) What conclusion did they come to? (2)
3. Now read chapter 7.
  - (a) What was the eventual effect of the absence of the ark on the Israelites? (2)
  - (b) What confession did they make at Mizpeh? (1)
  - (c) How did they then fare in their battle with the Philistines? (1)
4. There are several lessons to be learnt from this episode in the history of Israel. Try to explain one in your own words. (3)

#### New Testament

Read Romans chapter 12

1. In verses 1 and 2, we have a description of true godliness. Explain it briefly in your own words. (5)
2. In verses 3 to 8, Paul exhorts the Romans to have a sober opinion of themselves. What reasoning does Paul use to give support to this advice? (5)
3. From verse 9 onwards, Paul advises the Romans about their duty towards their friends and enemies, their employers and colleagues.
  - (a) With regard to their friends, which of the exhortations advocate the following:
    - (1) affectionate love (2) respectful love (3) charitable love (4) sympathising love
    - (5) united love (6) condescending love (7) peaceable love? (7)
  - (b) How are we advised to treat our enemies? (4)
  - (c) What Christian virtues should we aim to show in our work and in our business dealings? (3)

#### Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 105 in the Shorter Catechism: What do we pray for in the Fifth Petition? (3)

### Intermediate Section (13 and 14 years old)

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

#### Old Testament

1. Complete the following quotations from Ruth:
  - (a) "Intreat me not to leave thee . . ." (2)
  - (b) "Call me not Naomi . . ." (2)
  - (c) "Why have I found grace . . . ?" (2)
  - (d) State (1) who spoke these words (3)
  - (2) to whom they were spoken (3)
  - (3) why they were spoken. (6)
2. Read 1 Samuel 1 and 2.
  - (a) Why was Hannah sad? (2)
  - (b) In what ways did Elkanah try to comfort her? (3)
  - (c) To whom did she go in her trouble? (2)
  - (d) What did she plead for? (2)
  - (e) What did she promise? (2)
  - (f) Why was Samuel called by that name? (2)
  - (g) Write down statements which tell us of Samuel's progress. (3)
  - (h) What lessons can we learn from the life of Hannah? (4)

#### New Testament

1. Read Romans chapter 12.
  - (a) What should be our attitude to evil? (1)
  - (b) How should we act in trouble? (1)
  - (c) In what way should we carry out our daily work? (2)
  - (d) What advice is given about prayer? (1)
  - (e) How should we treat our enemies? (2)
2. Read 1 Corinthians chapter 15.
  - (a) What basic truths had Paul set before the Corinthians in his preaching? (verses 1-4) (2)
  - (b) Why did he consider himself "the least of the apostles"? (2)
  - (c) Who saw Christ after His resurrection? (3)
  - (d) Why is Christ's resurrection such an important part of the Christian faith? (verses 13-19) (3)
  - (e) What advice and encouragement is given to those who abound in the "work of the Lord"? (3)

#### Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 86 in the Shorter Catechism:  
What is faith in Jesus Christ? (3)

### 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 Judges chapter 7.
  - (a) God raised up Gideon to deliver Israel from which enemy? (1)
  - (b) How many soldiers did Gideon have at first? (1)
  - (c) Why did God say that this number was too many? (1)
  - (d) How many of the soldiers turned back because they were afraid? (1)
  - (e) How many did he have when he went to fight? (1)
  - (f) What three things did each soldier carry when he went to fight? (3)
2. Read Ruth chapter 1.
  - (a) Give the names of the family of four who went to live in Moab. (4)
  - (b) Which of them died in Moab? (3)
  - (c) When Naomi left Moab, who went with her? (2)
  - (d) Who stayed with Naomi until she reached Bethlehem? (1)
  - (e) What did Naomi wish to be called by the people of Bethlehem? (1)

- (f) What reason did she give for wishing to be called by that name? (1)

### New Testament

- Read Romans chapter 12. How are we commanded to behave
  - towards that which is evil
  - towards that which is good
  - in business
  - in tribulation
  - towards those who persecute us
  - to those that weep
  - to those that rejoice?
- Read 1 Corinthians chapter 15, from verse 35 to the end.
  - Corruption* is one word used to describe the body of a believer as it is “sown”, or laid in the grave at death. Find three more words used to describe the believer’s body at death.
  - Now find four words used to describe the same body as it is raised again at the resurrection.
  - Verse 45 mentions the first Adam and the last Adam. Who was the last Adam? (Verse 47 will help you.)

### Memory Exercise

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

## Upper Primary Section (9 and 10 years old)

UK answers to *Mrs M Schouten, 58 Fairfield Road, Inverness, IV3 5QW.*

### Old Testament

- Joshua has died and we now find out what happens to the nation of Israel. Read Judges 2:11-16.
  - What did the Israelites do which angered the Lord?
  - How did He punish them?
  - Whom did the Lord “raise up” to help them?
- After reading the Bible verses, write in the table below the answer to the following questions: What is the name of the judge? Who was the enemy of Israel? How many years was there peace in the land during the rule of the judge?

<i>Read</i>	<i>The Judge</i>	<i>The Enemy</i>	<i>Number of Years</i>
(a) Judges 3:8-11			
(b) Judges 6:12-14 and 8:28			
(c) Judges 11:4-6 and 12:7			
(d) Judges 13:1,24,25 and 16:30,31			

(12)

### New Testament

The last few chapters of Acts tell us about Paul, now a prisoner but still a preacher.

- Read Acts 24:24-27.
  - What did Paul speak to Felix about?
  - Why did Felix tremble?
- Read Acts 26: 24-29.

- (a) What question did Paul ask King Agrippa? (1)
- (b) What answer did Agrippa give? (1)
- (c) Paul had one desire for Agrippa and all those listening to him. What was it? (1)
- 3. Read Acts 28: 30-31. How did Paul spend the two years in Rome? (1)
- 4. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 telling us of the institution (setting up) of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
- (a) From whom did Paul receive it? (1)
- (b) On which night did the Lord begin it? (1)
- (c) What did He do before breaking the bread? (1)
- (d) What does the broken bread tell us about? (1)
- (e) What does the cup of wine tell us about? (1)
- (f) For how long is His death to be remembered in this world? (1)

### Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write down the answer to Question 92 in the Shorter Catechism:  
What is a sacrament? (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. What was the name of Hannah's husband? (1 Samuel 1:8)
- 2. What was the name of the priest of the temple? (1 Samuel 1:9)
- 3. Fill in the missing words: And she was in bitterness of s\_\_\_\_ and p\_\_\_\_ unto the L\_\_\_\_. (1 Samuel 1:10)
- 4. Hannah knew God would hear her prayer. Fill in the words: the woman went her way and did e\_\_\_\_ and her countenance was n\_ m\_\_\_\_ s\_\_\_\_. (1 Samuel 1:18)
- 5. What did Hannah call the son that she had prayed for? (1 Samuel 1:20)
- 6. Fill in the missing words: I have a \_\_\_\_\_ h\_\_\_\_ of the L\_\_\_\_. (1 Samuel 1:20)

### New Testament

These questions are about Paul. Fill in the missing words.

- 1. Paul was on a ship. They were tossed with a t\_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 27:18)
- 2. The angel of God said, F\_\_\_\_\_ n\_\_\_\_, Paul. (Acts 27:24)
- 3. The shipmen were about to f\_\_\_\_\_ out of the s\_\_\_\_. (Acts 27:30)
- 4. Paul said: Except these a\_\_\_\_\_ in the s\_\_\_\_, ye c\_\_\_\_\_ be s\_\_\_\_. (Acts 27:31)
- 5. What did Paul give thanks to God for, before he ate it? (Acts 27:35)
- 6. Did the others take something to eat too? (Acts 27:36)
- 7. When the ship broke up, did they all escape safe to land? (Acts 27:44)

- (a) What question did Paul ask King Agrippa? (1)
- (b) What answer did Agrippa give? (1)
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