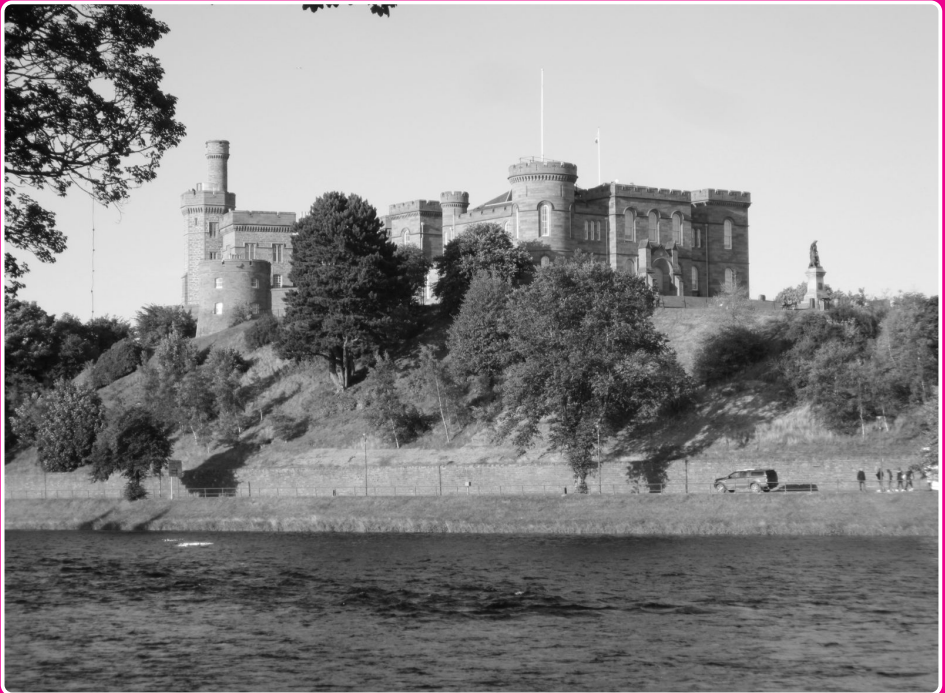


The Young People's Magazine

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

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



February 2018

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The Young People's Magazine

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Volume 83

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God Does Exist

What do atheists believe? They claim that there is no God. This is a very negative point of view, but one that is impossible to prove. But what the Bible says, twice over, is: “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Psalm 14:1, 53:1). God has revealed Himself, and it is tremendously foolish to try to argue against what He tells us.

It is indeed a very foolish way to speak. David, who wrote these Psalms, may not have heard anyone say out loud: There is no God. But he knew that people had said so in their hearts. They were living as if there was no God. They paid no attention to His commandments unless it suited them. They were not keeping in their minds the fact of a great Being who saw every movement they made, who heard every word they said and even every thought that went through their mind. At least, they did not *want* to believe that such a Being existed; they very much wished that there was no such Being. Then, they felt, they could live much more freely; they could do just what they wanted and say anything that they felt like saying.

David wrote about those who speak “proud things”: they “have said . . . Our lips are our own: who is lord over us?” (Psalm 12:3,4). In the human heart, there is this rebellious desire for freedom. It sometimes breaks out in anarchy, which is a situation where no laws exist – at least, where people pay no attention to any laws. And anarchy is dangerous; no matter how bad a government may be, it is almost certainly better than *no* government, when everyone does what seems best to themselves. Then the strongest individuals or the strongest gangs will be likely to terrorise everyone else, and the result will be widespread murder, robbery and other kinds of dishonesty.

We should always remember that “the powers that be are ordained of God” (Romans 13:1); governments have their authority from God. We should be very thankful if we have a government that follows the rule of law, when innocent people are not afraid of police or soldiers knocking on their door in the middle of the night, to arrest them and throw them into prison. And we are to bear in mind Peter’s direction: “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto

governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evildoers” (1 Peter 2:13,14). We are to obey those who rule over us – unless, of course, to obey them is to break one of God’s commandments.

To reject God’s authority does not lead to real freedom. For one thing, those who try to deny that God exists may be under the influence of those who do not have their best interests at heart. Thus they may suffer harm. If there is no God requiring us to love our neighbour as ourselves, why should anyone look after the interests of someone else? They can assume that there will be no judgement after this life and no punishment either. If everyone rejects the authority of a greater Being – which is what God is, an infinitely great Being – everyone is in danger from everyone else. No one would then have any sense of responsibility to anyone else. It is only because God restrains the evil that is in everyone’s heart, in one degree or another, that this world is not a far more sinful and dangerous place than it is.

But God does exist. He is eternal; He has never had a beginning; He has always had an existence. He has always been what He now is, and that is what He ever will be. He is unchanging.

The next thing to notice is that God made everything; in particular, God made us and every other human being. So we are responsible to Him continually, in relation to everything we do and say and think. Paul quotes from an earlier part of Scripture, from Isaiah’s prophecy: “As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God”. This is God speaking with very great emphasis and telling us that, sooner or later, everyone will acknowledge His authority.

As we look around us, we see very few who acknowledge the authority of God’s commandments, who seek to turn from their sins and look to Jesus Christ for salvation from these sins. So when will everyone who has ever lived, or will yet come into this world, acknowledge God, willingly or unwillingly? Paul gives the answer to this question when he draws a conclusion from his quotation from Isaiah: “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Romans 14:11,12). We must all appear before God in judgement, and no one will be able to resist the verdict to be delivered then; all must submit.

There are many who believe that God exists and yet are atheists in practice. Some of them live in exactly the same way as they would if they refused to believe that there is a God: they never go to church; they never trouble themselves about the Ten Commandments; they never feel their need to seek salvation through Jesus Christ. Other practical atheists may go to church, but this does not have much influence on how they live; they do not earnestly seek God’s blessing and the salvation He has provided. These practical

atheists are, no doubt, among the foolish people who say in their heart: "There is no God". How foolish it is to refuse to come to Christ to receive all the wonderful blessings He offers to sinners, not only in eternity, but also in this life!

Yes, the true God really exists. In spite of all their sin, God still calls to those who have been foolishly rejecting Him. He even calls to those who have been denying His existence. He says, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near" (Isaiah 55:6).

Trusting in God to Provide

Peter lived in a large Lancashire town. He had lived from childhood in ignorance and sin. Everyone knew him as a swearer and someone who was worn out through years of drunkenness and ill health. He suffered from asthma, which was so bad at night that he could not go to bed. When others lay down for the night, he had to stay sitting on a chair in front of a scanty fire in his poorly-furnished cottage.

Occasionally he might walk along the street, but he was so breathless that he had to support himself against the walls of the houses. One Lord's Day he noticed several Sabbath school children walking towards a church near his house. He followed them, keeping a short distance behind them as they made their way to a service which was meant for children only. When they had sat down in the church, he went in too and sat on the stairs that led up to the gallery.

The words of the preacher arrested his attention. For the first time in his life he began to think about his ungodly way of life, and he realised that he had a precious soul which must either be saved or lost. When the service was over he went home, his mind filled with anxious thoughts about what he had just heard.

The next Sabbath, Peter again went to the church and sat down on the stairs. He did this for several Sabbaths and the thoughts that God's truth had awakened in his heart were deepened and his interest in the gospel increased.

Peter became very anxious to understand the Word of God; so he was now very sorry that he had never learned to read. One day, he saw the minister of the church he attended passing near the house where he lived, and decided to speak to him about the matter. Peter shouted after him and then said to him: "You tell us that we ought to search the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation."

"Certainly", was the reply.

“But”, said Peter, “what is a man to do who cannot read?” He went on to tell how he had gone to the church, what he had heard, and what effect it had made on his mind. He told the minister he had a strong desire to be taught the way of salvation. He bitterly reproached himself for having been so great a sinner, and for having lived in sin even to old age. He spoke of the patience of God toward him and anxiously asked, just like the jailor in Philippi, what he must do to be saved.

The minister told Peter that he could not have too great a conviction of the evil of sin, nor take too low a place before God on account of his sinfulness. The minister, of course, did not stop there. He set Jesus before him as the only Saviour of sinners and told Peter that Jesus Christ is able and willing to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Him.

The minister also urged Peter to keep coming to church. And he encouraged Peter with the hope that, although he was nearly 70, he might probably learn to read.

After this conversation, Peter always attended the worship of God, and the minister often visited him at his cottage. Peter was ready to learn and now made great progress in Scripture knowledge. The secret of his progress was that he not only received human teaching, but the Spirit of God applied the truth to his soul.

Peter now became more and more anxious to search the Scriptures for himself. So he decided to try to learn to read and he spent much of his time trying to do so. Even when he was awake at night, as often happened, he was trying to read. At last he succeeded, and he was delighted. Someone then gave him a large copy of the New Testament. He enjoyed spending as much time as he could with this book and, day and night, he thought over what he learned from it. From this time, Peter's growth in grace and in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was rapid. He believed what he read, and the truth was blessed to him.

He experienced real spiritual joy, but he had painful trials. His wife was hardworking and supported him with the money she earned, as Peter was no longer able to work. But she would get drunk and often treated him very unkindly. Her bad language was also a great trouble to him. She would often hide his Sabbath clothes, both to annoy him and to keep him from going to church. But Peter so much loved going to church that he did not worry too much about his appearance; he believed it was better to go in his ordinary clothes, which were probably rather shabby, than give up an opportunity of hearing the gospel being preached. Yet he was always patient to his wife; however unkind she was to him, and he kept on praying to God that she would be converted.

Peter was very poor, but he was content with the little he had of this world's good things and acknowledged that he was unworthy of the least of God's acts of kindness to him. One day, his love for going to church was tested. A man for whom he had worked, when he was younger, offered him a comfortable home in one of his farmhouses out in the country. It was a wonderful offer, but to accept it would have made it impossible for him to attend public worship. Peter thanked the man for his kindness and told him how much he loved the church services; so he would rather remain in the town. He added, "I have trusted the Lord with my soul and I will trust in Him to provide for the needs of my body".

Peter lived for some time after he was converted. He lived a godly life and very much wanted to grow in his knowledge of what the Bible teaches. In a short period of time he learned much, for he was looking to the Holy Spirit to instruct him as he read the Word of God. He seemed to surpass many in the Christian life who had been in Christ before him, and to enjoy more of the blessings of the gospel. And after a time of great suffering, Peter died. He bore it all in submission to the Lord who had saved him, the One to whom he had committed his soul.

Thankful though Peter was to God for His goodness to him, there were at least two matters he must have been sorry about. First, he must have wished he had learned to read when he was young, though perhaps he did not have the opportunity. If it is possible – and consistent with your other responsibilities – it is right for you to make good use of all the educational opportunities that come your way.

Second, more importantly, he must have been really sorry that he did not seek the Lord when he was much younger. Then he would have been safe if an asthma attack or some serious illness had swept him away into eternity. Also he would have been a witness for Christ over a much greater part of his life, and perhaps have been able to serve Him in a way that was not possible for him in later life. And, as we have seen, he did express sadness for living in sin until so late in life. Remember the Lord's call, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near" (Isaiah 55:6).

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Matthew Vogan

Human life, body and soul together, filled David with wonder. The study of the uniquely-designed human being (Psalm 139:13-14) should bring us also to glorify God for His marvellous works.

In his book *Hallmarks of Design* (pages 164-194), the scientist Stuart Burgess gives ten unique features that God has given human beings:

1. *Upright posture*. Man is the only creature with arms that can move while he remains upright. Many uniquely-designed parts of the body contribute to the fine balance and posture necessary for this.

2. *Skilful hands*. Human hands are not just for survival but they are highly capable of delicate and amazing feats.

3. *Unique skin*. Our skin provides for fine temperature control and a sense of touch.

4. *Complex language*. Our vocal tract, tongue, lips and brains all uniquely combine to form complex language. This separates us from even the most intelligent of animals.

5. *Complex facial expressions*. The muscles controlling the face are uniquely able to communicate and express emotion.

6. *Unique intellect*. We are capable of conscious thought and huge complexity. The complexity of the brain itself challenges even those who study it.

7. *Unique genetic code*. Although some say our genetic makeup is similar to that of chimpanzees, there are 60 million units of information that make us different.

8. *Unique reproduction*. We have a relatively-long childhood compared to animals. We need this time to learn many mental, language, physical and social skills.

9. *Uniquely spiritual*. Human beings uniquely have a conscience and an interest in spiritual things, in contrast to animals.

10. *Unique beauty*. The face, neck and head have unique proportions and well-spaced, distinctive features. The proportions of the human body match the golden ratio, which is used in art, design and architecture.

How foolish it is to think that these things could have developed by random, chance accidents, through stages of evolution, from creatures that do not have these features! As Matthew Henry noted in his famous commentary, these unique features point to a divine Creator: "The frame and structure of human bodies, and especially the most excellent powers, faculties and capacities of human souls, do abundantly prove that there is a Creator and that He is God".

He also drew spiritual lessons from the fact that man is made to walk on two legs and looks upward and not downward (as the other animals). It is "because upwards his spirit must shortly go and his thoughts should now rise".

John Love was a minister in the Scottish Church less than a century after Matthew Henry. He drew many important lessons from considering the human

body, which you will find in the next article. It should bring us to think of God's glorious works in creation (forming it, in its complexity, from the dust), providence (sustaining its powers in operation) and redemption (even the last effects of sin will be taken away at the resurrection).

How I Should Think of God's Creation

John Love

This article is taken, with editing, from Love's *Memorials*, vol 1. The two volumes of his *Memorials* have been reprinted by Free Presbyterian Publications.

The Lord has permitted and planned that we should make use, in their due place, of all those discoveries of Himself which are made in the visible creation. We should do so according to the precepts of His Word, in order that we may see His glory. Thus I should use the discoveries made about the body:

1. So that I may praise God for His wonderful works in creating, forming and preserving me, even when I am in the state of sin. So the Psalmist does in Psalm 139:13-18.

2. So that I may understand the true weight and fullness of the evidence of God's power that appeared in the cures which Jesus and His apostles performed.

3. So that I may be humbled by the view of the monstrous instance of human depravity – the proof that we left our first state, in which we would have observed the works of God so as to give Him the due tribute of glory. And so that I may see the necessity of God's grace to sanctify this fact to me and make it profitable.

4. So that I may see the evil of sin, which has caused that such a beautifully constructed building [the body] must be dissolved; and has merited that it should, in all its parts, be tormented in hell for ever, as polluted and defiled, [if there is no repentance]. This is because it has been used in rebellion against Him who created and upheld it.

5. So that I may understand better one of the privileges which is reserved for the saints. For it will help my ideas of that glorious exhibition of God's creating wisdom and power, which will be made when these are exerted in all their perfection in the framing of those bodies [of believers at the resurrection]. They are to be made like Christ's body and are to last through eternal millions of ages. [I am to think of this] when I see how wonderfully framed our poor bodies are, which go to the dust [at death].

6. So that I may be deeply impressed with the thought that I must die, and

the thought of the uncertainty of my present life. I should also be deeply impressed that my body must decay in a little while. Such thoughts are encouraged by what we read in Ecclesiastes 12:1-7.

7. Let me think what a multitude of these wonderful human bodies are at once preserved in being, order and continual activity, and provided with a regular supply of food. This supply comes, as it were, from the sun, which is at so vast a distance from us, but it is necessary so that this food may be produced from the earth. Let me think of all these bodies as made of one blood – after the same model – all consisting of the same parts. What a multitude of them in every successive age! What a multitude have, from the beginning of the world, been reared up and have again fallen into dust, yet they shall all be raised up again at the last day!

For Junior Readers

“Unite My Heart”

“Unite my heart” is one of David’s prayers. You can find it in Psalm 86, at verse 11: “Teach me Thy way, O Lord; I will walk in Thy truth: unite my heart to fear Thy name”. Would that not be a good prayer for you near the beginning of another year?

David was a man of God, a godly man, but time and again throughout the Book of Psalms he prays for the Lord to teach him. He realised that there was so much he did not know and that he was always in danger of sinning.

So he wanted God to keep showing him the right way to behave and how to keep His commandments. He wanted God to teach him; he wanted to live in God’s school. Then he would walk in God’s truth. He would not just know in his head what is right, but actually practise it in his life. He wanted the whole of his behaviour to be controlled by God’s truth.

Would it not be good if your life and behaviour and speech were all governed by the Word of God? But, sadly, our hearts are “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked”, as Jeremiah described them. Apart from God’s grace, our hearts are attracted by sin and by the world and not by His commandments.

Would it not be good for you then to pray, “Unite my heart to fear Thy name”? Would it not be good that the one great aim of your life would be to fear God? Then God would keep your heart from wandering after sin and the world. When the Lord says to you (in the Book of Proverbs): “My son, give Me thine heart”, He does not just ask for a part of your heart. He wants it all. That is why you need to pray to Him to unite your heart to fear Him.

There was a young woman many years ago in England who had privileges like those I hope you have. She had been taught from God's Word when she was young but her heart was divided. The Lord was convicting her of her sins and of her need to seek salvation.

But what did she do? Did she seek the Lord? No. Her heart was divided, not united. She wanted to follow the world, to have worldly friends, to take part in worldly activities. So she did not follow her conscience and she gave her heart to the world. How sad!

Years later she became ill and realised that she was not ready to die, because her heart was not united in the fear of God. In her distress she warned her sister not to be like her. "O sister," she said, "I die without hope. Beware that this would not be your case!"

Is that not very solemn? Will you not then pray this prayer and earnestly ask God to unite your heart to fear His name? You could learn the verse from the metrical Psalms by heart:

"Teach me Thy way, and in Thy truth, O Lord, then walk will I;
Unite my heart, that I Thy name may fear continually." *J van Kralingen*

What the Bible Says About Itself

4. God's Command

Charles Hodge

The last article appeared in December. It spoke about the Bible's demand that we should believe whatever it says. And faith takes a spiritual grasp of the truths we believe. This series is taken, with editing, from *The Way of Life*.

Faith is described as the gift of God. The evidence in the Bible is indeed presented to all, but people are morally blind, and so the eyes of their understanding must be opened, so that they may understand the things which are freely given to them by God. So John tells his believing brethren: "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. . . . The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (1 John 2:20,27).

It is taught in these verses, as in other passages already quoted, that believers have received an influence, an "unction", from the Holy One, which convinces them of the truth and makes them know that it is truth. So Paul says his "preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power"; that the faith of his hearers

might “not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” – that is, that their faith might not be the effect of skilful reasoning, but of the spiritual experience of the truth.

Though the writers of the Bible appealed to various kinds of evidence in support of what they taught – to “signs and wonders, and . . . divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost” – yet by no means did they make these outward signs the main foundation for the duty to believe. In many cases, the prophets demanded faith from those who never saw miracles of any kind. When the Jews demanded a sign and the Greeks sought wisdom, Paul preached Christ and Him crucified, as the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. They always tried, by displaying the truth, to commend themselves “to every man’s conscience in the sight of God”. “But”, Paul said, “If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost” (2 Corinthians 4:3).

The Bible plainly teaches that we are to believe it because of the command of God revealed in it, in a way similar to how He reveals His perfections in the works of nature. Paul teaches that God’s eternal power and godhead are so clearly shown by the things that are made – what we see in the creation around us – that even the heathen are without excuse. He states that their unbelief is due not to the lack of evidence, but because they do not like to retain God in their knowledge. So we should not wonder that the far clearer revelation of God’s perfections in Scripture should be the ground of a more forceful command to believe.

It is the experience of true Christians in all ages and all nations that their faith is founded on a spiritual grasp and experience of the power of the truth. Many such Christians might find it difficult to say why they believe the Bible to be the Word of God, yet their faith is both strong and based on good reasons. They are conscious of its grounds though they may not be able to state them. They know that they believe, not because others believe or because learned men have proved certain facts which establish the truth of Christianity. They believe in Christ for the same reason that they believe in God, and they believe in God because they see His glory and feel His authority and power.

Thus if the truth of God contains a revelation of God’s excellence, the sin of unbelief is very great. Not to have faith in God, when He is clearly revealed, is the highest offence which anyone can commit against his Creator. To refuse to receive the testimony of God is to refuse loyalty to our Creator. This sin is common; so people usually pay no attention to it. They do not easily see the evil of the sins they can be charged with. Yet they are quick to recognise the faults of those who go beyond them in sin.

So such an unbeliever, who does not feel guilty for refusing to trust in the

Son of God, may hate someone who calls the Redeemer a deceiver. This unbeliever will wait for no explanation and will listen to no excuse. He finds the mere fact that someone who knows the Scriptures can speak of the Son of God in this way to be proof of a depravity which no one can argue against.

Yet how little difference there is between the one who calls the Redeemer a deceiver and the one who has no faith in what Christ says, who pays no attention to His promises and warnings, who does not feel them to be true and so treats them as fables! This lack of faith, of which people think so lightly, will be found the most unreasonable and perhaps the most serious of all their sins. It implies a hardness in the face of the highest kind of evidence, and involves the rejection of the greatest gift which God has ever offered to man: pardon, holiness and eternal life.

For Younger Readers

Do You Remember?

There was once a preacher in Wales whose name was Shenkin. One day he spoke about those who could scarcely remember anything they heard in church. He was sure they should be able to remember some of what they heard.

Mr Shenkin was also sure, he said, that “you remember what you sold your old white horse for at Llandaff fair three years ago. Six or seven pounds, was it? Certainly that has not escaped your memory. You can remember anything except the gospel.”

Do you remember anything you hear in church? Perhaps you feel that you cannot understand what the minister is saying.

Perhaps that is true for a lot of what he says. But surely you can remember something. I think you can remember what presents your parents give you; this is something that interests you.

But surely then you should be able to remember, at least, who the minister speaks about. He tells you about God, about Jesus, and maybe about Peter and Paul, or Abraham and Jacob, or David and Jonathan, or Mary and Martha.

Remember that the minister does not speak for himself; he stands in the pulpit speaking on behalf of God. So you can expect that what he says is very important indeed. And what he tells you is for your

good. So try to remember as much as you can, and tell your father and mother afterwards what you heard during the service.

“That Bank Ain’t Safe”

“**E**xcuse me, sir, that bank ain’t safe.” The man was speaking to a minister who was leaning against a big tree and watching the water of a wide river as it flowed among the reeds and water lilies at the foot of the riverbank.

The minister turned round slightly when he heard these words, and saw Mark Snawley, who was a labourer on the farm. He had just been paying a visit to Mark and his wife; they both seemed careless about their souls; there seemed to be nothing inward in their religion.

How did they view their situation before God? It was summed up in the idea that, if they were regularly at church every Sabbath morning, and were not guilty of any open sin, they were all right, and had no need of any “new-fangled notions about conversion which the new clergyman had brought into the parish”. The minister considered his visit had been a failure, and he felt depressed as he stood there idly watching the river flow by.

“Thank you, Mark,” he said, as he stood up straight and moved away from the edge. “I had no idea it was dangerous. Is the river very deep here?”

“Not so very,” said Mark, “but it’s the reeds and the willows that make it bad; they twine around your feet and hold you like a net, or maybe trip you up, and you lie on your face and can’t get up. I had a son drowned just there ten years ago. He was standing just where you were, and there was a slide; [the part of the bank he was standing on gave way] and in he went. We never knew till it was too late. I can’t bear to see anyone there ever since.”

“And so you warn folks, Mark? Well, that’s kind of you . . . Why, I might have slipped in and lost my life just as your son did if you had not taken the trouble to warn me.”

“Don’t mention it. It ain’t no trouble; it’s duty, that is.”

“Do you know, Mark,” said the minister, as he turned and walked back with the old man, “that’s just how I felt this morning when I came to your house? I felt you were standing in a dangerous place, and you did not know it was dangerous. Many have fallen in there and have been lost for ever. I want you to be safe, so I came to warn you. That is my work, you know, to tell people of their danger. ‘Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ You know who said that, Mark?”

“That’s a new way of looking at it. I’ll think about it.” And Mark did think

about his danger. He sought and found safety in Christ, the only Saviour of sinners. And he discovered that conversion was not a new-fangled notion after all.

Adapted From *Cheering Words*

Looking Around Us

Conscience Working

A woman walked into a Manchester police station a few days ago to tell officers she had killed a man several years ago. So the area police force are now investigating further, and the woman is to appear in court. Police have found a body in a garden.

What made the woman go to the police after all these years? Presumably it was because her conscience started to work, to tell her that she had done wrong. Conscience speaks on behalf of God – though conscience can stay silent when it ought to speak, and it can accuse when no sin is involved. So we must seek to have a well-instructed conscience, and that involves taking seriously what the Bible teaches about God's law.

Very Crowded About the Door

Two Welsh ministers were walking together over a hill. One of them was old and the other young. As they went along, they were talking together about faith and good works. After discussing the matter for some time, the younger minister said to the other: "I'll tell you what I think of it. We get to heaven, just within the door, by faith; but it depends on our good works how far we shall advance from the entrance."

The older man told him: "If that is the case, I fear it will be very crowded about the door" – the door of heaven. The younger minister accepted that he was not able to earn his salvation from sin by anything that he could do; he could never get to heaven by trying to do what is right. He knew that he had to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. But somehow he thought that his good works after conversion could earn him a better place in heaven.

Charles H Spurgeon, the noted London minister, commented that what the old man said "was a good answer to the folly of the young man. Who that trusts in this way to Christ for a bare salvation, and to himself for a high degree of it, can be said to trust in Christ at all? If any rise to greater heights than others, is it not because 'He giveth more grace' (James 4:6)?" Then Spurgeon emphasised that no one can have any spiritual blessing unless God

gives it. We must look to Him alone, not only at the beginning of spiritual life, but all the way to the end.

Scripture and Catechism Exercises 2017-18

Exercise 2

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 March. These exercises are based on Psalm 129 to Isaiah 40, and John 7 to Acts 19.

Senior Section (15 years old and over)

UK answers to *Mrs J Hicklin, 29 The Green, Edinburgh, EH4 5AF.*

Old Testament

Read Proverbs 15 and 16

1. Find and write out any verse (three verses altogether) encouraging:
 - (a) gentleness in speech (b) honouring your parents (c) accepting reproof. (6)
2. What gives a continual feast? (1)
3. What 4 things are said to be an abomination to the Lord? (4)
4. What temporal benefit is assured to the man whose ways please the Lord? (1)
5. What virtue is being commended in chapter 16:11? (1)
6. What do we read that kings delight in? (1)
7. What do we read comes before destruction? (1)
8. Find and write out a verse where gossiping is condemned. (2)
9. What do we read takes more strength than capturing a city? (2)

New Testament

Read Luke 7.

1. What positive things do we read about the centurion in verses 2-5? (3)
2. What do we read in verses 6-7 that shows the centurion:
 - (1) was a humble man? (2) had great faith in Christ's healing power? (1,1)
3. Read verse 8. What reason did the centurion give for believing that Christ did not need to come to his house to heal his servant? (2)
4. How was his faith rewarded? (1)
5. What message did John the Baptist send to Jesus when he heard about Jesus' miracles? (1)
6. What evidence did Jesus give His disciples to confirm that He was the Messiah? (6)
7. Read verses 36-50.
 - (a) What evidence did the woman that was a sinner give of her love to Jesus? (3)
 - (b) Why was Simon displeased that Jesus allowed this? (2)
 - (c) Summarise the parable Jesus told Simon, in your own words. (4)
 - (d) What did Simon's treatment of Jesus, and the woman's, show about the state of their hearts? (2)
 - (e) What comforting assurances did Jesus give to the woman? (2)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 87 in the Shorter Catechism: What is repentance unto life? (3)

Intermediate Section (13 and 14 years old)

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

Old Testament

1. From your reading of the book of Proverbs, write down what you learn about:
 - (a) a happy man (chapters 14 and 16, in second half of each) (2)

- (b) a foolish man (second half of chapter 15) (1)
 - (c) a just man (chapters 9 and 20, in first half of each) (2)
 - (d) a wise son (chapters 10 and 13, in first half of each) (2)
 - (e) a prudent wife (first half of chapter 19) (1)
 - (f) someone who is soon angry (first half of chapter 14) (1)
 - (g) a haughty spirit (second half of chapter 16) (1)
 - (h) the training of children (first half of chapter 22) (2)
 - (i) a faithful man (second half of chapter 28). (1)
2. From your reading of Ecclesiastes,
- (a) What is true of “all things under the sun”? (chapter 1) (2)
 - (b) In chapter 12 what are we told is our whole duty? (2)
 - (c) What special advice is given to young people? (2)
 - (d) Why would it be foolish to ignore this advice? (2)

New Testament

1. Read John chapter 12.
- (a) Quote a verse which speaks of eyes being blinded. (2)
 - (b) What did Jesus say is true of those who “walk in darkness”? (2)
 - (c) Who said, “Sir, we would see Jesus”? (2)
 - (d) Complete the statement: “I am come a light into the world . . . ”. (2)
 - (e) Who said these wonderful words? (2)
2. Read Acts chapters 17, 18 and 19.
- (a) How are the worshippers at Berea described? (2)
 - (b) How did they receive the Word? (2)
 - (c) What caused Paul’s spirit to be “stirred in him” at Athens? (2)
 - (d) In what way did the Lord encourage Paul in Corinth? (3)
 - (e) Quote a verse which shows the great effect of the Word at Ephesus. (2)
 - (f) Why was Demetrius anxious to stir up the people against “this Paul”? (2)

Memory Exercise

- Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 4 in the Shorter Catechism:
What is God? (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 Proverbs chapter 15.
- (a) What turns away wrath? (1)
 - (b) What kind of words stir up anger? (1)
 - (c) Who despises his father’s instruction? (1)
 - (d) Whose prayer is a delight to the Lord? (1)
 - (e) Whose way is an abomination to the Lord? (1)
 - (f) Who makes a glad father? (1)
 - (g) Who despises his mother? (1)
 - (h) What comes before honour? (1)
2. Read Ecclesiastes chapter 11, verses 9 and 10 and then chapter 12
- (a) What are we told about childhood and youth in chapter 11? (1)
 - (b) Fill in the blanks in this sentence (3 words in each blank):
We should remember our Creator in the days _____ before the _____. (6)
 - (c) When will the dust return to the earth as it was? (1)
 - (d) What will happen to the spirit (or soul) in that day? (1)
 - (e) What is a weariness of the flesh? (1)

New Testament

1. Read John chapter 13.

- (a) What three things did Jesus do after He rose from supper and before He began to wash the disciples' feet? (3)
- (b) Who said to Jesus: "Thou shalt never wash my feet"? (1)
- (c) What was Jesus' reply to that? (2)
- (d) To whom did Jesus say, "That thou doest, do quickly"? (1)
- (e) What did some of the disciples think Jesus meant when He said that? (2)
2. Read Acts chapter 3, verses 1-10.
- (a) Who was lying at the gate called Beautiful? (1)
- (b) What was he doing there? (1)
- (c) Peter did not give him money. What did he tell him to do? (2)
- (d) What happened when Peter took him by the right hand? (2)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 63 in the Shorter Catechism: Which is the fifth commandment? (3)

Upper Primary Section (9 and 10 years old)

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

Old Testament

1. Read Proverbs 6:16-19. Write out the seven things which God hates. (7)
2. Read Proverbs 30:24-28, which tells of four small but wise creatures. Fill in the name of the creature beside the reason why it is wise:
- _____ works in a team but has no leader.
- _____ always works hard and is found in all different homes.
- _____ chooses a strong, safe home.
- _____ prepares well for difficult times in the future. (4)
3. Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, which tells of different times, or seasons, in our lives. Verse 2 begins with "a time to be born" and verse 8 ends with "a time of peace." Count and write down the total number of different times which we read about. (1)
4. Read Proverbs 8:17.
- (a) What is the best time in your life to seek the Lord? (1)
- (b) What is promised to those that seek the Lord? (1)

New Testament

1. These questions, from the Gospel of John, are about the sayings of Jesus which begin with, "I am". The numbers given are the chapter and verse. Read the verses and fill in the next part of the saying.

After the blank, there are some words from another verse. Draw a line to link the two parts of each verse.

- (a) 6:35. I am the _____ no man cometh unto the father but by me.
- (b) 8:12. I am the _____ shall never die.
- (c) 10:9. I am the _____ shall not walk in darkness.
- (d) 10:14. I am the _____ without me ye can do nothing.
- (e) 11:25,26. I am the _____ shall never hunger.
- (f) 14:6. I am the _____ know my sheep.
- (g) 15:5 I am the _____ shall be saved. (7)
2. Read Acts 8:35-40.
- (a) What question did the eunuch ask Philip? (1)
- (b) What was Philip's reply? (2)
- (c) What did the eunuch believe? (1)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write down the answer to Question 94 in the Shorter Catechism:
What is Baptism?

(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

These questions are about king Hezekiah.

1. It seemed as if Hezekiah was going to die. Fill in the missing words.
In those d ____ was Hezekiah s ____ unto d _____. (Isaiah 38:1)
2. What was the name of the prophet who came to him? (Isaiah 38:1)
3. He was sad. He prayed unto t ____ L _____. (Isaiah 38:2)
4. Did God hear Hezekiah's prayer? (Isaiah 38:5)
5. How many more years were to be added to Hezekiah's life? (Isaiah 38:5)
6. Hezekiah was thankful to the Lord. He said, thou hast in l ____ to my s ____
delivered it from the p ____ of corruption: for thou hast cast all my s ____ behind
thy b _____. (Isaiah 38:17)
7. The prophet used a lump of figs to make Hezekiah better. He said, Lay it
for a plaister upon the boil and h ____ s ____ r _____. (Isaiah 38:21)

New Testament

These questions are about the Good Shepherd and the sheep.

1. We can go in by a door. Who is the door of the sheep? (John 10:7)
 2. Will they follow a stranger? (John 10:5)
- Fill in any missing words:
3. Whoever does not go through this door but climbs up some other w ____
the same is a thief and a r _____. (John 10:1)
 4. He that entereth in by the d ____ is the s ____ of the s _____. (John 10:2)
 5. His sheep f ____ him: for they k ____ his v _____. (John 10:4)
 6. I am the g ____ s ____: the good shepherd g ____ his l ____ for the
s _____. (John 10:11)
 7. I am the d ____: by me if any man e ____ in, he shall be s _____.
(John 10:9)

UK Youth Conference 2018

The Conference will be held, God willing, at Carronvale House, Carronvale Road, Larbert, FK5 3LH, from Tuesday, April 3, to Thursday, April 5. The lower age limit is 16. The cost is £50 for those in full-time employment and £25 for others. Cheques are payable to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Further details are to follow later. We look forward to meeting with the young people again. I

would encourage all who hope to attend to get their application in, if possible, by the middle of March (to Rev D Macdonald at the address below or by e-mail to dmacdcashmore@aol.co.uk or, if necessary, by phoning 01470 562243).

(Rev) *Donald Macdonald*

1. The Life of David

The Sweet Psalmist of Israel *Dr Robert Dickie*

2. The Reformation in Europe

God Bringing Light into the Darkness *Rev Kenneth Macleod*

3. Public Worship

Why We Go to Church *Rev Douglas Somerset*

4. Historical Tour

Around Perth *Rev Douglas Somerset and Rev David Campbell*

5. The Jews

Their Restoration and Spiritual Recovery *Rev John Goldby*

6. The Spirit of Adoption

Adoption in Romans chapter 8 *Rev David Campbell*

2018 Youth Conference Application

To *Rev Donald Macdonald, F P Manse, Clachan, Staffin.*

I/we wish to enrol as residential/non-residential. I enclose my/our fee.

Name(s)

Address

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New Book: *Advice to a Young Christian*

Between August 1999 and September 2004 the chapters of this book were published in this *Magazine* in an edited form. These chapters have now been brought together in a book of 115 pages – a paperback costing £6.75. The author was Jared B Waterbury, a nineteenth-century American minister.

The book is full of excellent spiritual advice and teaching on such topics as prayer and Bible reading, the Lord's Supper and examining oneself, and the believer's final reward – all in a way that is easy to understand. It is warmly recommended, even to more mature Christians.

Price £1.00