

The Young People's Magazine

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

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



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Cover Picture: A beach on the Firth of Forth a few miles from Dirleton, where William Hewitson spent his last years. See page 215.

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Good Influences

Last month we were thinking about people who have an influence over others: well-known people, for instance, who use their fame to influence people on social media to buy particular products. But we also considered the influence of friends, fellow students and workmates, besides the influence of internet sites and other media. Many of these influences are ungodly, and we need to look to the Lord to protect us from “being led away with the error of the wicked” (2 Peter 3:17).

Yet there are good influences in this world. This month we will try to say something about them. First of all, there is the influence of parents. Theirs will certainly be, more or less, a good influence if they are trying to follow the Bible in the way they live – if, in particular, they are trying to protect their children from the ungodly influences that surround them. But what children most need is the consistent example of a converted father and a converted mother, who want to do “the will of God from the heart” (Ephesians 6:6) – in other words, *sincerely* seeking to do what God, through the Bible, is telling them to do.

You should consider it a great privilege if God has placed you in a family where you are consistently shown a godly example. It is not that the example of even the most godly of parents will be perfect; perfection is impossible in this fallen world. But godly parents will be prayerfully concerned about your welfare. Ungodly parents may well be concerned about their children’s health, education and happiness, but they will not be concerned about the welfare of their souls; nor will they go to God in prayer to ask Him to protect their children from ungodly influences.

It is a great privilege to have parents who go to God in prayer, day after day, to ask Him, not only to take care of your body and protect it from all kinds of dangers, but also to bless you in your soul. Such parents will especially pray that you will be converted, and they will ask God to change your heart when you are still young. They know the danger of children and young people hardening their hearts against the gospel – of becoming more and more resistant to the good news about Jesus Christ coming into the

world to save sinners. They want the Word of God to come with power to your soul – they want the Holy Spirit to apply the truths of the Bible powerfully to your soul.

Such parents will pray that you will not be influenced away from believing that the Bible is the Word of God. They will pray that you will recognise that you ought to bring all your needs to God in prayer – because God is a good God, who does answer prayer. Such parents will also pray that you would always want to go to church, because public worship is especially where God speaks through His Word to draw sinners to Himself.

Such parents want to obey the command, “Train up a child in the way he should go” (Proverbs 22:6). That is why they go on trying to point you in the right direction. They did so when you were very young, and they continue to do so even when you may feel that you are old enough to think for yourself. No doubt you should be thinking about moral and spiritual issues, but not independently of your parents, assuming they are submitting their thinking to the teachings of the Bible. You should follow them in submitting to the Bible, even if it makes your thinking very different from other young people around you.

That may make you uncomfortable, but better to feel uncomfortable than to allow these people to influence you to continue on the broad way to a lost eternity. How awful, if you know something about the way to heaven – that it is by faith in Jesus Christ – but ignore all the warnings about an ungodly life! What rebellion against God to pay no attention to the call to seek the Lord – and to do so earnestly – while He may be found!

It is God who has placed us in families – for our good. And He tells us: “Honour thy father and thy mother” (Exodus 20:12). One example of young people honouring their parents is to receive the directions they give from the Bible on moral and spiritual issues. To reject these directions is to dishonour your parents and, at the same time, to dishonour God. To reject their influence, in favour of the ungodly influence of other people around you and, for example, on social media, is foolish, wilful and dangerous. It may cause you much unhappiness in this life; it may cause you extreme sorrow in the next. Ask God to make you wise now. Seek Him earnestly, while He may be found – before you harden your heart against Him finally.

A young man in the United States was sent to prison for four years for some crime. He confessed that his course of sin began with disobeying his parents. He thought he knew as much about the world as his father; he assumed he did not need his father's advice. He said that, after leaving home, temptations came around him like a drove of hyenas and led him on to ruin. How much better it would have been for the young man if he had

realised the benefit of having a father and mother who could influence him in a better direction than the one he took!

Other family members may also have a good influence on you: brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, and grandparents. Do not despise their attempts to influence you to go in a better direction than the one you are going in at present. Even a young child may have a good influence.

John Dickson was a farmer in Ratho, near Edinburgh. For a long time he lived a careless, ungodly life. Then his wife died and a godly woman came to look after his children. One day, when his daughter was just a year and eight months old, she was in a room with John and several of his ungodly friends. The little girl exclaimed, "O the grace of God!" She had picked up these words from the godly woman who was helping to look after her. Clearly this woman was very much impressed with the grace of God – His kindness to unworthy sinners, and she knew that she herself was unworthy. And she probably exclaimed again and again: "O the grace of God!"

The effect of these words on Dickson was to make him think seriously. He did not reject what his daughter said just because she was so young and did not understand what she was saying. He was no longer careless about his soul. He experienced God's grace in applying these words powerfully to his soul. No doubt he started to pray, to read the Bible and to go to church, and the Holy Spirit blessed them to his soul. He became a new man, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and giving up his ungodly lifestyle. He would no longer have had a bad influence on other people, but the opposite.

Finally, let us think about the influence which godly people outside your family should have on you. Sadly, even people who profess to be converted may not always have a good influence on others. You are to follow everyone only as far as they follow Christ. So Paul wrote, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

When you find an old godly Christian praying, "God be merciful to me a sinner", you might wonder that someone who has been a long time on the way to heaven still feels the need to pray like this. But such people know perfectly well that they always need God's mercy: they know that they need forgiveness; they know that they need to be made more holy; they know that they need God to keep them from evil; they know that they need the Holy Spirit to keep spiritual life operating in their souls.

Let their prayers influence you to ask for such blessings from God for yourself. Even if you, as a young person, have found Christ, you have not had the years of experience in the ways of righteousness that these older people have had. How much we all need to learn from older believers! May we value their good, godly influence and ask God to bless it to us!

“The Lord Will Provide”

This article is abridged from *The Young People's Magazine* for April 1977.

In a lonely part of Scotland, long ago, a hard-working couple were struggling through life. Their little thatched cottage stood in an attractive spot at the foot of a hill. Though they were very poor, they were honest. What is more, they were godly.

The poor man could generally earn enough to provide for him, his wife Ann, and their four children. At times he could not find work; sometimes this couple had very little food left or none at all, but then God always provided for them in His providence, often sending them help in the most unexpected way. God often proves that He is “a very present help in trouble” for His people. So often had the couple seen God’s great care for them that they trusted in Him more than ever.

One day they had nothing at all to eat. Ann had no more to give the children; yet she was not cast down. She had learned to trust in the loving-kindness of her God, when there seemed to be no hope of human help; she had found by experience that man’s extremity is God’s opportunity. The day passed away, and still there was no sign of help. The children were crying for their supper, and because she had nothing to give them, their mother put them to bed, where they soon cried themselves to sleep.

Their father was very sad and he too went to bed, leaving Ann on her own. Yet she did not feel alone. In the past she had spent many happy hours in that little cottage with her Bible and her God. She had often enjoyed communion with Him there, and she took this opportunity of pouring out her soul to God, spreading her sorrows and trials before Him.

Before she began, she lit a small lamp and hung it on the wall. She moved an oak table near the lamp. She took the large family Bible from the bookshelf and placed it on the table. First she prayed for God’s blessing on what she would read. As she did so, a verse came into her mind: “For every beast in the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills” (Psalm 50:10).

Ann felt that this verse did not really apply to her; she opened her Bible and looked up some of her favourite passages. Yet Psalm 50:10 stayed in her mind. She tried to read the parts of the Bible she thought were more suited to her circumstances, but the verse from Psalm 50 kept coming into her thoughts. So she knelt down and committed herself to God.

Then Ann said to herself: “It is God’s own word”, and she read Psalm 50. She found it a beautiful Psalm, but many other verses in it seemed to be more suited to her condition. Again she prayed and tried to encourage herself with God’s assurance that He hears earnest, persevering prayer. She went

on praying and reading her Bible until midnight. Again, early dawn found her praying and reading until she was startled by a loud knock on the door. “Who’s there?” Ann called out.

The man at the door explained, “I’m a drover. Quick, mistress, and open the door. Come out and help me; and if there is a man in the house, tell him to come with all speed. One of my cattle has fallen down a precipice and broken its leg, and it is lying at your door”.

Ann opened the door and saw a great drove of cattle from the Highlands. As far as her eye could see, in both directions, the road was black with the moving mass which the man was driving to a market in the south. And there lay the disabled beast, the poor drover looking on it with disappointment.

The good couple were concerned for the poor drover, and wanted to help him as much as they could. He did not know what to do with the animal. To drive on the injured animal was obviously impossible. To sell it where it lay seemed just as impossible. Where would he find someone to buy it in such a lonely spot? What was he to do? At last the drover exclaimed, “I never was more at my wits’ end”. Then he turned to Ann and added, “Indeed, mistress, I must just make you a present of it, for I don’t know what else to do with it. So kill it and make the best use you can of it, for it is a prime beast.” And without waiting for thanks, he whistled to his dog and joined the herd which was soon moving away slowly on its long journey.

The poor cottagers were lost in wonder at this unexpected deliverance from starvation, in God’s providence. After they had begun to recover from their surprise, the father gathered his family to give thanks to the Giver of all good, for His kindness to them. They now had enough meat for many months to come – salted away until they would need another piece of it. But in their joy they at first totally forgot that they had no bread.

Some miles away from this cottage, there lived a godly lady whose kindness had gained her the respect of all the people. Lady Kilmarnock devoted her time and money to doing good, and was a blessing to those around her. Early in life she suddenly lost her husband. At first she was overwhelmed by what happened, but gradually she found true comfort in the love of God, the only place where it is to be found. She was led, by a thorny path, to understand that her happiness lay beyond the things of this life and to find real comfort in “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding”.

She gave up worldly things and devoted herself to promoting the welfare of others; and she paid special attention to seeking out people who needed her help, including Ann and her family. Ann had been at one time a servant in Lady Kilmarnock’s family, yet it was very seldom that she would tell anyone that was in great need. But God did not forget it. Later in the morning,

someone else knocked at the door. Here was a man whom Lady Kilmarnock had sent. He had a load on his back. Ann was surprised and asked him what could bring him at that hour?

“Allow me”, he said, “to enter and relieve my shoulders of my burden, and my conscience too”. He then told her how Lady Kilmarnock had sent for him the previous morning to ask “if anything had happened to Ann”. He replied that he was not aware of anything, and that she and her family were all well when he last heard of them.

Lady Kilmarnock had come to the conclusion that Ann must be in need, because for the last few days Ann had been in her thoughts again and again. “I cannot get her out of my mind,” she went on, “and I am sure that she is in distress. So take a sack of meal to her – a large one too.” He was to take it to Ann at once. And the man was to bring it himself, so that it might be delivered safely; Lady Kilmarnock obviously trusted him. Then she added, “I know she would almost starve before she applied for relief”.

The man must have felt guilty about not bringing the bag of meal at once, but he had been unusually busy throughout that day; so he brought it first thing in the morning. The meal was another part of God's provision for this godly couple and an answer to Ann's prayers and, one assumes, to her husband's prayers too. They now had a greater supply of food in their house than ever before. God's “compassions fail not”, the Bible says, and sometimes He makes that specially obvious.

Ann now found out how the verse, “For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills”, applied to her. She could recognise how God was in control of the chain of events that fulfilled His gracious purposes towards her. Yet there is often much that is mysterious in the Lord's dealings towards His children; “His ways past finding out”.

There are still people who have difficulty in making ends meet. And to believers among them especially, we would put this question, Have you, like Ann, ever prayed with great earnestness and faith till late at night, and again early in the morning? If your need was really great, and God alone was your hope, would not such perseverance as she showed be most reasonable?

God is “the same, yesterday, today, and for ever”. He who mercifully provided for Ann can provide for others too, whatever their need. If a Christian is poor, he or she may escape the snares which surround the rich. They should regard this life as a passage to another and better world, and a preparation for it; God can make them able, with a thankful, contented minds, even in the midst of difficulties and trials, to recognise that they indeed have the “promise of the life that now is” as well as “that which is to come”. “O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.

O fear the Lord, ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.” “Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength”. “Trust in Him at all times”, who never said “unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye Me in vain”.

Is Jesus God?

Rev K M Watkins

This is the last of a set of articles on Bible versions. Previous articles appeared in the March, April, June, August and September issues of this Magazine.

The two men at our door claimed to be witnesses for the Lord, but they certainly were not. They were members of the cult claiming to be “Jehovah’s Witnesses”. Their organisation traces its roots back to 1870 and the ministry of a man called Charles Taze Russell in the American state of Pennsylvania. It adopted the name “Jehovah’s Witnesses” in 1931, but “Russellites” would be a more accurate description. Through its Watch Tower publications, based in the state of New York, it has sent into the world many millions of books, pamphlets and copies of its own New World Translation (NWT) of the Bible. It has also sent out many so-called witnesses to knock on our doors and now has around eight million followers.

This organisation is not a denomination of the Church of Christ, because it rejects doctrines of the Bible that are essential to real Christianity. For example, it denies the reality of hell as a place of eternal torment, arguing instead that unbelievers are put out of existence. It denies the fact that every human soul will exist for ever. It denies the bodily resurrection of Christ. Likewise it denies His bodily return at the end of the world.

It also denies the Trinity, saying that Jesus, the Son of God, is not God, but that He is the first and most important creature God made, through whom God made all other creatures; and that the Spirit of God is a force, not a Person. Thus the Bible doctrine, summarised in *The Shorter Catechism*, is rejected: “There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory” (Answer 6).

So we pressed the two men at our door on the question, “Is Jesus God?” They did not want to give a straight answer. In the end, they said that he was “a god”, and turned up John 1:1 in their NWT, which says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was *a god*”. That, of course, is a wrong translation. The right translation appears in the

Authorised Version (AV): "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was *God*".

The Bible we used at the time was the New International Version (NIV), which translates John 1:1 exactly the same as the AV. So do other modern versions such as the New King James Version (NKJV), the English Standard Version (ESV) and the New American Standard Bible (NASB). But the callers at our door refused to accept the translation "God". They argued, falsely, that the Greek grammar meant it had to be translated in their way.

We tried to convince them that Jesus is God by going to other texts. What we did not know at the time was that our own translation was not bearing full witness to the deity of Christ [that He is fully God]. If we had used the AV, we could have pointed to 1 Timothy 3:16, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God* was manifest in the flesh". This is one of the clearest testimonies that the Holy Spirit gives in the whole Bible that Jesus is God. He who appeared in the flesh was God. *Flesh* there speaks of Christ's human body and so of His whole human nature. He who became man possessed the divine nature already, for He was God.

But we were not using the AV. We were using the NIV. And its translation is: "Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: *He* appeared in the flesh". The American edition of the NIV has "*He* appeared in a body". As we have seen in previous articles, modern English translations do not use the Greek text preserved by God in His wonderful providence. The Greek text they use for 1 Timothy 3:16 does not have the word for *God*. Thus this witness to Christ's deity is not in modern Bibles. The ESV has: "*He* was manifested in the flesh". The NASB has: "*He* who was revealed in the flesh".

Another place in the New Testament where the deity of Christ is directly asserted is Acts 20:28, which says in the AV: "the church of *God*, which He hath purchased with His own blood". God purchased His Church with His own blood. That could only be said if Christ, whose blood was shed at the cross, was Himself God, as well as man. The cult's NWT translates this wrongly, as follows: "the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son". By adding in the word *Son*, it no longer says that the One who shed His blood is God.

The NIV that we were using says, "the church of God, which he bought with his own blood". This seems good, but the NIV also has a note casting doubt on this witness to Christ's deity. It says: "Many manuscripts [have] *of the Lord*", implying that only a few manuscripts have *of God*. The NASB is similar: "Some ancient mss [manuscripts] read *the Lord*". This implies that "God" was a later change to the original inspired Scripture. The ESV has in

its margin: "Some manuscripts [have] *of the Lord*". All of these notes would give the two men at our door a loophole to avoid the testimony that Jesus is God. They could say, "Your doctrine is not reliable".

There are other ways, of course, to prove from the Bible that Jesus is God. The names, perfections, works and worship, that belong to God alone, are all given to Jesus. Therefore He must be God. The poorest of the modern versions still have many of these. Even the NWT is full of them. But that does not lessen the fact that the modern versions of the Bible, by being based on untrustworthy Greek texts, reduce the Bible's testimony to the deity of Christ. And we need Him to be God! Only if He was God could His death be of infinite value to satisfy divine justice for the sins of His people.

The two men at our door were doing the devil's work. We could pray for their souls, but we could not welcome them. Scripture tells us to do nothing to encourage such people in their work. "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 9-11). We are to reject anyone who comes without the clear testimony that Jesus is God. If we receive them, we are guilty along with them. Modern versions come with a reduced testimony to Jesus being God. We should reject them too. If not, we are in effect welcoming what they have done, even if that is not our aim or purpose.

The Old Man and the Girl's Book

Thomas Murray was born near Belfast but emigrated to the United States and settled on a farm in some country district there. When he reached the age of 75, he was no longer well enough to work the farm. So he had to stay in his log cabin, where he had lived for 33 years, with its rafters blackened over these years by smoke from the peat fire. Thomas sat by the side of the fire and he felt the time very long. But he had no thought about the eternity which was ahead of him, and perhaps coming closer very quickly.

The people in the next cabin, half a mile away, heard about Thomas being unwell. A girl in the house had been given a good book as a reward for attending Sabbath school in a nearby village. When she heard that Thomas was ill but did not know what to do with his time, she decided to go over to his cabin with her book and she offered to lend it to him. Mostly to please the girl, Thomas accepted the book and he promised to read it.

He kept his promise and the book made an impression on him. He felt

convinced of his sin; like Felix when Paul reasoned with him, Thomas trembled as he read of “righteousness, temperance and judgement to come” (Acts 24:25). The Holy Spirit was striving with him and he felt in his conscience the guilt of the sins of a long life, including his neglect of God and of his soul. He was terrified at the thought of God’s holy law and it seemed certain to him that he would perish for ever in a lost eternity.

He was in tears; he read and prayed. He was conscious of being unwell; so he prayed that God would give him some time longer in this world, so that he might find salvation before it was too late. He was eager to learn what would do his soul good. Again and again he read the girl’s book; it was *The Anxious Inquirer* by John Angell James, a minister in Birmingham, a useful book for pointing sinners to the way of salvation. He also began to read the Bible, which he had so long neglected, and God sent light into the man’s soul; so he looked to Christ for salvation.

When the girl heard that Thomas was feeling better, she went to ask for her book back. He was very unwilling to give her the book, because he had found it so useful. She went to tell the minister, and he understood the situation at once. So he promised to give her another book instead.

Thomas quickly grew in the knowledge of the things of God. A visitor to his cabin enjoyed talking with him and was impressed with his godliness. Thomas spoke as someone who had been given glimpses of heaven and of the beauty of King Jesus, who rules there. A few days after that visit, Thomas died and went to the heaven that God had been preparing him for.

Just the day before he died, he visited his neighbours and gave each of them a tract, handing it over with a few words of advice. That evening he sent for someone to visit him (probably the minister). After he came, Thomas pleaded with his family to give up their false ideas about Jesus – they did not believe that He is God – and called on them to come to Him. Thomas had learned that Jesus is indeed both God and man, and so is able to save sinners; a saviour who is anything less than God could do no good to anyone.

Let *us* also seek grace to come by faith to Him. But let us not leave off coming to the Saviour until we are old. Then it may be too late for us.

For Younger Readers

A Big Jug

Tom was a very poor boy. He went to a shop that sold cooked ham and beef. He brought a little jug to get some of the soup in which the meat was boiled. The shopkeeper filled it up for nothing.

But Tom saw another boy who brought a big jug. The shopkeeper filled it up with soup. Tom was not pleased that the other boy got more. Tom asked, “Why don’t you give me as much as you give him?”

So the shopkeeper asked him: “Why don’t you bring as big a jug as he does?” Then Tom would have got as much as the other boy.

The lesson for us is that we should ask for great things from God, not just little things. We can ask Him for everything that will be good for us. But we should ask especially for great things, like for God to forgive our sins. He is able to do far more for us than we can think of asking Him.

For Junior Readers

Everything Must Have a Beginning

William Dobbie was the British army officer who signed the document which brought World War I to an end. He was converted when he was young. As he used to point out in later years, everything must have a beginning, and spiritual life is no exception to this rule.

He had the privilege of being brought up in a Christian home, and his parents taught him about the Saviour from his earliest years. He was always thankful for their example of consistent Christian living and for the Bible teaching they gave him. Yet he was not saved, in spite of their teaching and example, and in spite of the head knowledge he had about God’s way of salvation. *Head knowledge* is what one learns from the Bible but has no saving effect on his soul

Have you ever thought about that? Your head knowledge about the gospel will not save you – you need to seek a personal knowledge of your own sinfulness and of Christ as the only Saviour.

It was when he was about 14 years old that God, in His mercy, made William feel that he was a sinner, and made his sins a burden to him. He knew that things were not right between God and his soul and that he was quite unfit to stand in God’s sight. The Holy Spirit convinced William of his sin and of his need of a Saviour.

Then, one Sabbath, he realised, as if for the first time (although he had often heard it before), that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had come to this sinful world and laid down His life to save sinners. He realised that Christ was “made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). Perhaps you could learn that very precious verse off by heart.

William realised that this was the exact remedy that he needed. He also

realised that he could make no contribution whatever to the perfect work of Christ. He saw that it was all from God, all of grace. This is what Paul says: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9). William came to know that Jesus Christ had taken his place and had fully satisfied the just claims of a holy God against him.

That was the turning point in William's life. As time went on, his sense of thankfulness to Christ, who had brought this about, increased. And his amazement at the price Jesus had paid in order to make it possible became deeper and deeper. At the same time, his desire to show this thankfulness by obeying, following, pleasing and acknowledging God in all his ways also increased. He was also convinced of the danger of worldliness – living in the way that ungodly people do – and the need to make a stand against it. That is what Moses did, who "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:24-26). These convictions affected his later life and usefulness, as he tried to live his life to the glory of God.

"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:6,7). *J van Kralingen*

William Hewitson and Madeira

5. Conclusion

Last month's section of this Youth Conference paper focused on the further, and more intense, persecution that drove both Hewitson and Kalley away from Madeira permanently and forced most of the converts across the Atlantic to Trinidad. This is the final article in the series.

By now Hewitson was back in Scotland and the Free Church committee that sent him to Madeira suggested that he should visit his flock again, now that they were in Trinidad. At once he agreed. But first he sailed for Lisbon, because Arsenio da Silva had fled there, leaving his wife and daughter behind, for they were determined to continue as Romanists. Years later he told someone that he had received a letter from his wife, commenting in less-than-perfect English, "Kind, friendly letter; but no good, no spiritual in it – no faith in Jesus Christ".

Hewitson arranged that the Free Church would appoint da Silva, already an elder, as a missionary to his people in Trinidad. Da Silva was willing to

undertake this responsibility. Hewitson sailed for Trinidad at the beginning of 1847 and his ship called at Madeira. He was reluctant to leave the ship because of what the authorities on the island might do to him but, because his friends were expecting him, he landed at a quiet spot and was able to meet some of these friends and have a profitable conversation with them. God protected him.

Hewitson reached Port of Spain, the main town in Trinidad, at the end of January and received a warm welcome. One of his main reasons for crossing the Atlantic was his concern that the exiles from Madeira might become more worldly, now that they were no longer being persecuted. He soon decided that his fears were justified. "The pressure of the iron hand of persecution", he wrote, "had been formerly a means of restraining, and of concealing from the converts themselves, much of the natural corruption that was in their hearts." It was natural for them now to be off their guard, but Satan was active and it was much easier for him now to succeed in his temptations than while they were still in Madeira.

Hewitson was relieved that there was no serious outward sin among them, but he spoke privately to some who had become more careless. One of them told him: "In Madeira it was not so difficult as it is here to walk with God". Someone else had been very earnest in prayer while in Madeira; now he was careless about family worship. Yet Hewitson believed that there was no good reason to doubt the sincerity of any of the Protestants who had come to Port of Spain. Perhaps the situation was not as bad as he at first feared.

During his time in Trinidad, he worked hard, speaking to individuals and taking services; he was often exhausted. A ship arrived carrying a further 88 Protestants from Madeira, and they spoke of over 100 others who were expecting to follow them to Trinidad. Sadly, it looked as if Madeira would be left almost without any witness to true Christianity. Yet not all of those who fled to Trinidad escaped persecution; a woman told Hewitson that she was being treated harshly in the Roman Catholic family where she was a servant, when she refused to do what God's law forbids.

Another arrival was Arsenio da Silva, who, as Hewitson had hoped, became the pastor of these exiles. Later, many, if not all, of the exiles moved to the United States – da Silva among them. Sadly, he took seriously ill, and died in early 1850. Before he passed away, he was heard praying, "Lord Jesus, let me depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation".

Hewitson returned to Scotland and, in 1848, he became the Free Church minister of Dirleton, a village 20 miles east of Edinburgh. Just two years after his induction in Dirleton, he too was seriously ill. He enjoyed the confidence that "it is not a cunningly-devised fable which we believe; the thing is true".

He told an old minister who visited him: "The righteousness of Christ is my stay. That sustained me in Madeira in the midst of persecution and difficulties; it has sustained me through all my ministry; and it sustains me now." William Hewitson died in August 1850; he was only 37.

After being forced out of Madeira, Kalley was to spend 21 years, from 1855, in Brazil, another Roman Catholic country. There he did missionary work, seeing conversions but also experiencing opposition. He retired to Scotland and died in 1888.

Let us learn some lessons from Hewitson's life and work:

1. We should have higher aims in life than success in study or business or anything else we might set our hearts on in this world. Hewitson studied unreasonably hard, and did find success, but it was only when he found Christ that he found real, lasting satisfaction. Christ still calls to us: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33) – all things that God sees we really need.

2. God is able to bless the gospel, even in the most unlikely situations, as in the midst of Roman Catholic superstition in Madeira in the 1840s. He is able to do the same today.

3. Persecution is natural to Roman Catholicism, even though we see much less of it in our time. But whatever the source of persecution – and people with no religion can be cruel persecutors – God is able to protect His people, however difficult the situation. Even if He allows persecutors to kill them, He will bring His people safely to heaven.

4. There is great need for God's people to watch against the danger of becoming worldly, and careless about their spiritual state. Rather they are to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of [their] Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

5. How important to be ready to die! Long before his death, Hewitson had learned that God's Word is perfectly reliable. He had trusted in Christ and His righteousness, and so all was well when he came to die. Let us, sinners that we are, seek the Lord. Let us not delay. He has never turned away any seeking soul.

Three Great Duties

This article is taken from *The Young People's Magazine* for June 1980 and is said to be "adapted" from another source; it has been further edited.

One evening I went to a prayer meeting. The preacher said something that struck me forcibly. He said, "Sinner, do you want to be saved? Then

you must do three things: First, Give up your sins. Second, Give your heart to God. Third, Rest only on the Lord Jesus to save you.”

After coming home, I said to a young friend who was ill at the time: “What do you think of this?” telling him the three things mentioned.

“I think the three things are very good,” he said, “and very necessary, but he put them in the wrong order. The last should have been first, and the first last. He should have said, First, You must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and rest on Him. Second, You will then give your heart to Him. And, Third, He will enable you to give up your sins.” Was my friend right? He was!

Does some reader say, Surely the order is of little importance when it's the same three things? No, the order is of great importance. Roman Catholicism has changed the order and made salvation to be by works. She found both salvation and works in the Bible. She put the second first, and the first second, and the damage was done. The Bible puts salvation by Jesus Christ first, and the good works as the fruit. Rome makes salvation the reward of good works. The order is important.

At the prayer meeting that evening there was a young man who for more than two years had been anxious to be saved. He had been trying to give up his sins and feel love to God, in order that he might be more worthy of receiving salvation from Christ. When he heard the preacher's remarks, he thought them very plain and simple and just what he himself had been thinking. So to himself he said, “God helping me, I will go home and give up my sins and give my heart to God and rest on the Lord Jesus to save me”.

Home he went and persevered for some time with the plan, and found it no more successful than before. Yet it helped to teach him that he could not obtain salvation in his own strength. At last the Lord brought him to see that Christ was willing to save him just as he was – a sinner and ungodly – without waiting to make himself any better. He saw that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners just as he was, that the Saviour's obedience and death were enough for the salvation of his soul, and that God required him to receive Christ and rest on His work as the only ground of salvation.

After three years trying to save himself, he was made able just to believe these things and to rest on Jesus as having worked out a perfect righteousness for sinners; and so his soul found peace. Now he found that he had in some small measure the two things for which he had been labouring for so long in vain. Seeing that Christ loved him, he therefore loved Christ – less than he ought, yet truly. He saw also that, although he could not keep himself from sin, Christ had promised to do it: “A new heart also I will give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart

out of your flesh; and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes" (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

He was made able to believe this also, and to put himself into the hands of Christ to make him holy. And though he knows he comes far, far short, he says that his thoughts, words and actions are very different from what they were. I suppose he would speak like old John Newton, who said something like: "I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be; yet I can truly say, I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the Apostle Paul and acknowledge, 'By the grace of God, I am what I am.' Reader, can you say that?"

Give up your sins. It is a great duty, but was anyone ever made able to do so and live a holy life, till he first took the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, and looked to Him for strength as well as righteousness? (Isaiah 45:24). A dead man do living works! Impossible. Have you not tried it and failed? Perhaps for a time you stopped doing certain wrong things, but did you hate sin? Not long ago a young man said to me, "I often tried to give up sins in my own strength, but it was just like dropping a lump of earth in a little stream. For a moment it stopped the rush of water, but it soon came round the sides and then over the top. And the next thing, it was swept clean away."

Many have found this out for themselves. The conquest of sin must begin by believing in Christ for righteousness and pardon, and then trusting in Him as able to make you holy by His Word and Spirit. Christ Jesus "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."

Give your heart to God. This means, Give your affections to God – love Him. This is another great and immediate duty. But who ever loved God until he first believed that God loved sinners? As well might he walk on water as love Christ without believing in Christ's love to sinners like him! But when I do believe in Him as my Saviour, and that for creatures like me He bore the wrath and curse of God on Calvary, I cannot but love Him. And the more I see of His love, the more I love I Him. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

Rest on the Lord Jesus Christ to save you. Yes sinner, this is your first and great duty. Till this is done, nothing is done. Till you believe on Jesus, you can do nothing pleasing to God, for "they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8). When the Jews asked Christ, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Jesus answered, and said unto them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John 6:28,29). Take Him then as your Saviour, considering the greatness of His atonement; rest on Him, and everything else will follow: love to God, sorrow for sin, a God-pleasing life – everything!

Looking Around Us

Eternal Life

In September, a headline in *The Times* newspaper stated, “Bezos Funds the Quest for Eternal Life”. Perhaps a more accurate headline would have pointed to the efforts of Jeff Bezos, the founder of the on-line retail giant Amazon, to recruit scientists to research how the human lifespan may be *lengthened*. It is reported that Bezos, said to be the richest man in the world, is providing millions of dollars to support this research.

Previous research in this area includes trying to reprogram cells in living mice. This has been successful in some of the animals, but others developed tumours. So there are clearly dangers if such ideas are ever tried out on human beings. It is of course possible that scientists may develop ways of lengthening people’s lives which are entirely safe.

But one thing is sure: human life cannot be extended indefinitely. The Bible tells us that “it is appointed unto men once to die” (Hebrews 9:27). It is God who has made that appointment; so we cannot avoid keeping it. The solemn fact is that all must die, because of sin – except for the very last generation of human beings in this world. It has been impossible for anyone to live in this world for ever, ever since the Fall, and it always will be. A separation between body and soul must come in everyone’s experience.

Yet eternal life is possible, but not on earth. There are people who have eternal life, but even they will die. Yet when they die, their souls will go to heaven, where they can never die again. Eternal life will be theirs because, in this world, they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, whom God provided as the Saviour from sin. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). God’s Son came into the world to take the place of sinners and to die instead of them. He died so that sinners, believing in Him, might not suffer eternal death, but enjoy eternal life and blessedness in heaven for ever.

The question is: Have you found eternal life? That, as we have seen, will not come through scientific research; the effects of the Fall cannot be reversed in any such way. But God has provided something better than endless life on earth – where sin would continue, and all the troubles that sinners have to endure here would continue also. Eternal life in heaven will free from sin, and will also be free from all the hardship that follows sin in this world. All who trust in Christ will enjoy this wonderful blessing of eternal life.

If you have believed on the Saviour – and found eternal life through Him

– be very thankful for God’s kindness to you and seek grace to go on in dependence on Christ. If you have not believed, and so are still on your way to a lost eternity, seek the Lord now – seek Him earnestly – before it becomes too late to find Him, and too late to find eternal life through Him. Listen to what the Saviour is saying to you: “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

Balaam’s Wish

A poem by John Newton based on Numbers 23:10.

How blest the righteous are,
When they resign their breath!
No wonder Balaam wished to share
In such a happy death.

“O let me die,” said he,
“The death the righteous do;
“When life is ended, let me be
“Found with the faithful few.”

The force of truth how great!
When enemies confess,
None but the righteous, whom they hate,
A solid hope possess.

But Balaam’s wish was vain,
His heart was insincere;
He thirsted for unrighteous gain,
And sought a portion here.

He seemed the Lord to know,
And to offend him loath;
But Mammon proved his overthrow,
For none can serve them both.

May you, my friends, and I,
Warning from hence receive –
If like the righteous we would die –
To choose the life they live.

Price £1.00