

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: Spring blossom.

The Young People's Magazine

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The Young People's Magazine

Volume 88

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Number 4

Accepted by God?

Will God accept me when I die? It is an important question, a hugely important question, for us all. Yet there is another important question which we should ask ourselves first. It is this: Does God accept me *now* as righteous? Let us look at three examples, from the Bible, of those who should have answered, No, to that second question, and two who could have answered, Yes. (One of the three was able to give the better answer later in life, after he was converted).

First, there was *the rich young ruler* who came to Jesus (see, for instance, Matthew 19:16-22). He asked, “Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” He called Jesus, Good Master – or, Good Teacher – but he does not seem to have realised that Jesus was God. That was why He was so good, so kind. The young ruler was an unbeliever, however much he respected Jesus as a great teacher.

Jesus pointed him to the Ten Commandments, but the young man claimed, “All these things have I kept from my youth up”. He thought he was doing very well, keeping all God’s commands. But, at most, he was only keeping them outwardly. He had not killed anyone; he did not steal from people, or take God’s name in vain. No one could say that they had seen him break any of the commandments. So he asked Jesus: “What lack I yet?” Although he claimed to have kept all the commandments, the young man seemed to feel that, by doing some good thing, he could *earn* eternal life.

Jesus told him: “Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me”. He was to go and show real kindness to the poor.

But the young man did not want to do that; he was very rich and he did not want to part with his riches. He would not submit to Jesus, although Jesus was God. The young man was sinful in his thinking, even although he was so careful to keep God’s commandments outwardly. His heart was not right with God; he loved his riches more than he loved God.

Did God accept him as righteous at that point in time? The answer, sadly, is, No. He was a sinner; his sins were not forgiven; he was not holy. And if

he died then, God – being perfectly righteous – could not accept him into heaven. This young man was not fit for heaven; he should have realised from the Scriptures and from the words of Jesus that he was *not truly* righteous.

Second, let us think about *the Pharisee* that Jesus spoke about along with the publican, or tax-gatherer (see Luke 18:9-14). This Pharisee also assumed he was a very good man; he claimed he was so much better than other men, such as those who were unjust in their dealings with others, and those guilty of adultery. In particular, he was so much better than the publican.

Among the good things he pointed to was his fasting twice a week; yet God had not told him to do without food on two days each week (the Pharisees were very fond of making up commandments for themselves). If the Pharisee had died then, he would have learned that he was not fit for heaven; he was not really good; he just thought, quite wrongly, that God would treat him as righteous because he assumed he was righteous.

Third, let us turn our attention to *the publican*. He had no high opinion of himself; he confessed to God that he was a sinner. He knew that he had no right to a place in heaven. He knew he needed mercy; he did not deserve anything good from God; he had nothing that he could boast of. So he prayed that wonderful prayer, “God be merciful to me a sinner”. It is so suitable for everyone, ourselves included.

The publican was at the temple, where sacrifices were offered. The sacrifices showed how God could accept sinners – through the death of a substitute. An animal died instead of the sinner. All these sacrifices were pointing forward to Jesus Christ, who was to die instead of sinners, as their Substitute. This was God’s provision so that sinners could be saved. The publican believed that he could be saved through the Substitute that God would provide. The Pharisee was also at the temple, but he did not believe. He trusted in his own righteousness and rejected God’s provision.

How do we know that the publican believed and the Pharisee did not? Because Jesus said that the publican went home justified rather than the Pharisee. To say that the publican was justified is to say that God accepted him as righteous. So it should be clear that the publican trusted in God’s provision and was accepted as righteous, but God did not accept the Pharisee. He did not believe. He was not justified. Unless this Pharisee believed before he left this world, he never became fit for heaven. The righteous God could not accept him into that place of perfect holiness.

A final example is *Saul of Tarsus*. He too was a Pharisee, very confident in his own righteousness. Reflecting on his past, he states that, “touching the righteousness which is in the law,” he was “blameless” (Philippians 3:6) – yet only in a limited, outward way and only as other people could see him.

He certainly was not righteous before God; he was persecuting God's people, who believed in Jesus; and he was rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, whom God had sent into the world to be the Saviour.

Saul had a complete change of mind about his blamelessness. When he met Jesus on the way to Damascus, he realised that he was a sinner and needed Jesus Christ to be his Saviour. He then believed in Jesus; he trusted in Him to be his Saviour. Now, like the publican, he was justified. God accepted him as if he had never sinned, as if he had always kept all the commandments of God's law, because Jesus was now his Substitute. Jesus had kept all the commandments in his place and had suffered unto death for Saul's sins.

He was blessed with all spiritual blessings for the sake of Christ and, as the Apostle Paul, he lived a godly life for the rest of his days in this world – and we can be sure that the publican also lived a godly life. When they died, God received them into heaven and, at the resurrection, they will both have their souls reunited to their bodies, in an act of great goodness, reversing the effects of death. Then Christ as the Judge, at the last judgement, will welcome them to eternal glory.

But what about ourselves? Have we believed in Christ? Are we on the way to heaven? And how will we know whether we are or not? There are two questions we should ask ourselves: Am I – like the rich young ruler, young Saul of Tarsus and the other Pharisee – trusting in some righteousness of my own to get to heaven? Or have I, like the older Paul and the publican, realised that I have no righteousness of my own that God can accept and that I need a righteousness which only He can give?

We need to learn that all our righteousness is “as filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6). Righteousness is sometimes pictured in the Bible as a piece of clothing. The righteousness Christ provides is a perfect garment; it covers us completely. But our own righteousness is useless, just like rags that are full of holes; they do not begin to cover us properly. And besides, they are filthy, because of sin. The righteousness that God will accept must be clean – pure and holy.

That was what Paul understood. His desire was: to “be found in [Christ], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law” (Philippians 3:9). He wanted to be united to Christ by faith, to be at one with Him, but not because of his own righteousness. His further desire was to be saved on the basis of “the righteousness which is of God by faith” – the righteousness which God gives, and is received by faith. These were Paul's sincere desires. So he could conclude that he had true faith and that he was on the way to heaven, for God would accept him when he died. What about ourselves?

Jejana

1. "O God, Teach Me"

This is the first of a series of three articles which were written in 1836 and appeared first in a South African magazine. They were reprinted in Scotland and again in *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* in 1926. They are printed here with editing.

In the district of Stellenbosh, not very far from Cape Town, in South Africa, a small house stands in the midst of the deep sands and thick brushwood. There is a large, well-cultivated garden, though all around is wild and waste. It is very pleasant to look at it, because the toil that made it fruitful was not that of a slave.

The owner of this plot of land is a widow; it is she who has cultivated it, with the help of her orphan children. But this is not her best inheritance; the blessing of God, which makes rich and adds no sorrow to it (Proverbs 10:22), has made this widow's heart to sing for joy. No one can sit long beneath her lowly roof without acknowledging that the cottage, when lit up by the beams of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, can provide more true happiness than all the splendour of a palace, if God is not there.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only remedy for man's fallen condition; and the Lord's great goodness is obvious in adapting itself to people of every language – and of every degree of guilt and wretchedness. Yet there are those who reject the all-sufficiency of the gospel and turn aside from the evidence of its power, as shown in people all over the world.

But the Christian is different. He rejoices in the power of God's work, that can make the lowliest of his fellow-creatures happy. He loves his religion all the more, not only for making these poor people holy and happy here, but also for opening to them the doors of a glorious eternity. So the story of Jejana will be of interest to the Christian, and if it should please God to use it to bring one wanderer to the fold of Christ, or of strengthening one weak believer in the faith and love of Jesus, the purpose for which it is published will be fulfilled.

Jejana was born at Brintjes Hoogte, hundreds of miles east of Cape Town. Her mother was one of the Khoikhoi people but died when Jejana was very young. She placed Jejana in the care of a young farmer in the area, and did the same with her cattle and sheep. Jejana was brought up in the family as a slave and made herself so useful that, when the young man's parents moved from Brintjes Hoogte, they purchased her from their son for a team of oxen and another female slave.

As the farmer was passing through a place called Tulbah, he spent the Sabbath there so that one of his children could be baptised. Jejana till then

had never been in church but she was permitted to attend this service. All around her was new and attracted her attention.

When Michael Vos, the minister, stood up to preach, her eager gaze was fixed on him. He took his text from Revelation 3:15: "I know thy works". Jejana listened with deep attention to the minister, as he described the sinner's evil doings. She realised that what the minister said applied to herself. But in her ignorance she imagined that the preacher was God; she thought he was looking at her in particular and pointing her out. and the frightened girl tried to hide behind one of the pillars of the church.

At the end of the service, Jejuna left the church, but the deep, sad feelings which had taken possession of her soul still remained. The minister invited the farmer and his wife to his house; and as the dejected girl stood behind her mistress' chair, he fixed his eyes on her and asked her if she had been in church that day.

"Yes, sir," she answered.

"Did you understand?"

"No, sir."

"Do you know that there is a God?"

"I have often used His name in oaths and curses, but I know nothing about Him. Tell me where He is, and what He is."

"God is a Spirit", said the minister; "He is everywhere and hears all you say and sees all you do."

"Do you know you have a soul?"

"No, sir."

"Yes, what inside you feels glad and sorry is your soul," he told her, trying to explain. "And when you die, it must be happy for ever with God, or be sent to everlasting fire in hell."

"What shall I do, for I have never done anything but evil in my life."

Here the conversation was interrupted, and Jejana had to go with her master and mistress, and she saw the kind pastor no more – though doubtless his prayers followed the unhappy girl.

She went on her journey, but the terrors of God were upon her, because of sin. By day and night, the hand of the Lord was heavy upon her; she tried to keep from sleeping, for she expected to waken in hell. Sadly, she did not know that there was balm in Gilead and a kind Physician there (Jeremiah 8:22).

At last she obtained some little help from an old Khoikhoi man called David, who came to her mistress's house. After David said that he had been in church, Jejana earnestly asked him what he had heard there. She told him what was going on in her soul, but he seemed to know very little about the

way of salvation. He only told her to pray to God to teach her and help her. When Jejana asked him how she should pray and what she should pray for, he told her to go and kneel down and look to God in heaven and say, "O God, help me. O God, teach me."

So eager was the poor girl to put the old man's lesson into practice that she put down the meat her mistress had given her to prepare for cooking, and ran away to the bush to pour out her soul in David's words, "O God, teach me! O God, help me!" And she added, "for David says Thou wilt".

Lessons from the Life of Jacob

5. Jacob in Egypt

Rev J B Jardine

Last month's section of this Youth Conference paper told about Jacob's life in Canaan after returning home from his 20-year stay with his uncle, Laban.

4. Jacob's life in Egypt. While on his way to Egypt, Jacob received the highest of honours in Beersheba, after he had offered sacrifices. God graciously assured Jacob that He would guide his family, as a nation, for the future (Genesis 46:1-4). God Himself would go with Jacob into Egypt, and there he would be able to embrace Joseph once more. God would also fulfill His promise to them as they left the land of Canaan (Genesis 15:13-16).

It was the love of Joseph to his father that resulted in Jacob travelling to Egypt. Joseph honoured his father. Pharaoh received Jacob with dignity for Joseph's sake. He gave Jacob a home and made the family honoured guests in Egypt (Genesis 47:7-12). Jacob was 130 when he stood before Pharaoh and he could say, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage" (Genesis 47:9). Yet he was to live another 17 years in Goshen. Little is known of these years apart from the fact that the family prospered in Egypt.

At the end of his days, Jacob blessed his family. He adopted Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, and blessed them with the others, giving a higher place to the younger one. He assigned to Joseph the double portion of the firstborn instead of Reuben, who had actually been born first (Genesis 48:22, 49:4). The blessings of Jacob were prophetic in nature and received their fulfilment in due time. It was "by faith" that Jacob "blessed" and "worshipped", when he was dying (Hebrews 11:21).

Even at the hour of death Jacob held to the promises of God. He looked to the fulfilment of God's covenant promise that the land of Canaan would

belong to him and his seed. He therefore commanded Joseph to bury him in Canaan. The family and “a very great company” of the nobles of Egypt mourned for 70 days when Jacob died.

Lesson Nine. *In Egypt, at the sunset of his life, God’s mighty grace triumphed and taught him to wait on the Lord. Jacob said, “I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord” (Genesis 49:18).*

We can see that Jacob repented of all his sin and truly had a new heart. Yet we must also realise that the consequences of our bad decisions may also follow us long after we have regretted our actions and repented of them and received full forgiveness. We should also see how our sins affect others, and our families often suffer the consequences of our evil deeds.

God can forgive the spiritual results of our bad decisions, but we might never be able to erase their effect on ourselves and others. So in all your actions, remember this holds true: Sow goodness and you will reap goodness; sow evil, and you will reap evil. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” (Galatians 6:7-8).

5. Jacob’s character. *His Natural qualities.* Jacob inherited an affectionate attachment to his family from Isaac. He inherited his shrewdness, initiative and resourcefulness from Rebekah, qualities she shared with Laban her brother. Jacob showed a lack of honesty and courage, just like Abraham and Isaac. These failings of character spring from unbelief. Yet God awakened and nourished in him a simple trust in the truth of what God had said.

Jacob often strove against God’s plan, when he would use sinful means to save himself, his family and his wealth through cunning and deceit. He tried to bring about God’s promise himself rather than leave Him to His own time and way. To Jacob, the end sometimes justified the means.

Yet Jacob was never indifferent to the things of the Spirit, to things unseen, to things of the future. He had a true conviction of the value of what God had promised. He had a real desire to obtain these things for himself and his family.

The progress of grace. Jacob received divine teaching which, in the end, proved the triumph of grace over nature in him. Jacob became Israel, a prince of God. He went to three schools – the school of chastisement, the school of providence and the school of grace.

Jacob suffered several great disappointments during his long exile, and he suffered from the sins of others: their deceit, greed, anger, lust and envy. He endured the deaths of many whom he had loved. God’s providence dealt with him in remarkable ways. God gave and then withheld. God placed him

in danger and then delivered him. God brought his schemes to failure and then delivered him through simple, unremarkable means. In this way, God developed in Jacob the habit of relying on His power and guidance, of accepting His will, of realising His nearness and faithfulness.

The Lord taught him at Bethel, Haran, Penuel, Bethel again and Beersheba. He was taught three clear lessons: firstly, that God was with him to bless him; secondly, that the changes in his life were ordained by God and, in the end, were for his good; thirdly, that he was the heir of the promises made to Abraham and Isaac. Jacob went to Egypt with the clear approval of the God of his fathers and with the assurance that the same providence which ordained this move would ensure that it would not interfere with God's promises.

Bethel witnessed the first time that Jacob chose his father's God as his God. Although Jacob later tolerated idolatry in his household and compromised his religious testimony by sin, yet we never get a hint that he was unfaithful to this first and final religious choice. At Haran it was the "God of Bethel" who directed him to return: "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto Me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred" (Genesis 31:13).

At Shechem, God directed him to Bethel in order to fulfill his Bethel vow, by there erecting an altar to God. "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother" (Genesis 35:1). And it was at Bethel that the promise of former years was renewed to him and there he was called Israel (Genesis 35:9-15).

During the night Jacob received his new undeserved name at Penuel. He was learning the lesson that the way to overcome is through faith. It was during the second time at Bethel that the substance of all the earlier revelations to Jacob was renewed and combined. After this solemn occasion when God appeared to Jacob, we find Jacob, like Moses, "enduring as seeing Him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27), waiting for the salvation (Genesis 49:18) of a God who "is not ashamed" to be called his God (Hebrews 11:16) but is repeatedly called "the God of Jacob".

Sovereign grace is most prominent in all God's dealings with unworthy Jacob. God calls Jacob a "worm" (Isaiah 41:14). What is weaker or more worthless than a worm? Yet in Scripture, the Lord refers 22 times to Himself as the "God of Jacob". Also the Saviour took this description to himself in Psalm 22, that he was "as a worm and no man". This title expresses God's free, matchless grace. The Lord delights in this title that links His holy name with one who was so unholy. God appeared to Jacob seven times and in each encounter was revealing His matchless grace. God's grace followed Jacob

everywhere he went. The more Jacob sank, the more God in His grace condescended to lift him up.

Lesson Ten. *Today too God saves sinners by grace (Ephesians 2:8) and keeps the saved through grace (Romans 5:2, 1 Peter 5:12). In these last two verses we read of the grace wherein we stand. God also teaches those who are saved and kept by grace (Titus 2:12).*

The Return

Rev K M Watkins

It was back! Just like the year before, it disappeared at the beginning of August, and now, in the first week of February, almost six months to the day, it was back in the garden. Immediately it flew down from the fence post to gather the food put out for it, just as it had always done. It was “Hoppy”, the one-footed gull. You can read about it on page 126 in the July 2021 *Young People’s Magazine*.

Where had Hoppy gone? We did not know. But it was remarkable the way it disappeared and returned at the same time each year. Many birds actually migrate thousands of miles every year. Their patterns are very regular. As April turns into May here in Harris, the sound of the returning cuckoo is heard again. The lapwings, curlews and oystercatchers have their seasons as well.

It is God the Creator who makes His creatures know these things. “Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming” (Jeremiah 8:7). When spring returns each year, so do the flowers and the leaves on the trees, and so does the birdsong. “The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land” (Song of Solomon 2:12). The turtle in these texts means a bird, the turtle-dove. As summer turns into autumn, our migratory birds again know their times, and they will be seen gathering before setting off for their long flights back to warmer lands in the south.

Even tiny ants know these things. How busy they are before winter comes, gathering and storing food in the warmer months, to eat during the cold days ahead. The ant knows what she needs to do, and she knows when she must do it. She “provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest” (Proverbs 6:8). Ants are very small in size, but they act as if they possessed great wisdom and power when it comes to this. “The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer” (Proverbs 30:25).

But we human beings seem to be very slow to learn this lesson for ourselves. Yes, we have sayings that tell us to make timely use of opportunities for our *earthly* welfare. We are told, "Make hay while the sun shines". Is it dry and warm? That is the time to cut the grass in the field, so that the animals will have hay to eat through the winter. It might rain tomorrow, and then we will not be able to make the hay, so let us do it today. Many have the wisdom of this world to do things while it is possible to do them, and not put them off to another day that might never come.

But what of *spiritual* things? God calls us to repentance, saying, "Return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity" (Hosea 14:1). When it comes to the welfare of our souls, we are very slow to act. God says of sinners, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" (Deuteronomy 32:29). The sad fact is that, when we are left to ourselves, we do not consider the things that belong to the peace of our souls. We do not make good use of our opportunities. We let them slip through our fingers, time and time again. If we delay too long, soon it will be too late.

The Lord condemned the people in the Church of Jeremiah's days for this very thing. The birds knew the time to migrate, "but My people know not the judgement of the Lord" (Jeremiah 8:7). They were not observing the gathering clouds of God's judgements about to fall on them. They were not making use of the short time they had to repent of their sin and seek His mercy. Instead, they were continuing in rebellion. The birds were still appearing and disappearing at the right times in the year. But they were not learning from them. As a result, time was running out. Soon there would be no opportunity to find mercy. Then they would have to say, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jeremiah 8:20). That time was fast approaching.

Seeing this was about to come on the people for their woeful failure to understand the times, Jeremiah lamented over them, saying, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (Jeremiah 9:1). Destruction was coming, not because of any lack of suitable balm and medicine for the disease of sin, not because of any lack of an able Physician of souls, but because they refused to face the urgency of the situation. "Why then is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?" (Jeremiah 8:22). It was because they did not understand that offers of mercy would soon cease.

Later, the Saviour would lament over the city of Jerusalem for the same thing, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the

things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes” (Luke 19:42). Great destruction was coming upon the city, and all “because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation” (verse 44). They had a season during which Christ preached the gospel to them, confirmed by the miracles and wonders He did among them. But they were letting these things pass them by. Soon their day of opportunity would come to a close.

What about us? God tells us, “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise” (Proverbs 6:6). The ant wastes no time. Are we wasting time? Are we failing to hear the call of the gospel? Hear what it says: “Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart” (Psalm 95:7,8). “Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

As we hear the songs of returning birds this spring, as we see the flowers coming out at their different times, as we start to see again the busy scurrying of ants and other insects and animals, let us learn from them all that our time is short and our gospel opportunities are limited. Whatever else we think we need to be doing, we certainly need to be doing this: “It is time to seek the Lord” (Hosea 10:12). “Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near” (Isaiah 55:6). The birds return. But do we return to the Lord God?

The prodigal son sets a good example. “He came to himself” (Luke 15:17). That means he came to a right understanding of the miserable state his sin had brought him to. He realised that he needed to return to his father’s house and seek peace with him. Did he delay? He did not. One moment he is saying, “I will arise and go to my father” (verse 18), and the next moment “he arose and came to his father” (verse 20). He returned. And you know the result. He was received. So will we, when we return to God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no time to waste.

For Junior Readers

Kept Safe in Battle

I hope you all know the answer to *The Shorter Catechism* question, “What are God’s works of providence?” It is: “God’s works of providence are His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures, and all their actions”.

The Lord preserves all His creatures as Nehemiah prayed, “Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made . . . the earth, and all things that are therein . . . and Thou preservest them all”. It is not “chance” or “luck” that dictates the events of our lives! Just as the little sparrow depends upon the

providence of God in life and death (Matthew 10:29) so we too are dependent on God in all things. God is directing and controlling everything that happens. So Christians can say with the Psalmist, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear" (Psalm 46:1,2).

Perhaps in your ordinary daily life you are not aware of God's providence and His care of you. But if you were in trouble or danger, you might be more conscious of it. Many of the young men who fought for our country in the two world wars learned by experience that God was taking care of them in the midst of many dangers.

One young man called Stanley, from the south of England, joined the army in 1917. He was sent to the north of Russia to join the campaign against those who were called Bolsheviks. He was conscious of the Lord's keeping on several occasions when he was preserved from death.

One time he had the job of signaller and was to be responsible for sending messages between the army commanders and the troops. Just as his company was being sent on an expedition, he was told that another company needed a signaller more urgently, so he had to join a different group and carry out another task.

Meanwhile his original company had run into an ambush and were nearly all killed, including the officer he would have been with. But Stanley, and the company he had joined, returned safely from their duties. He could see clearly the Lord's care over him in providence, directing him to another situation so that his life was spared.

Another time he and another soldier were sheltering in a hut on a hillside. Suddenly the hut came under attack and both young men ran out the door hoping to escape. Stanley ran up the hill, but the other soldier ran down the hill and was killed at once by a shell. Stanley could see clearly that the Lord had preserved his life once more and was very thankful to God for his escape.

He found his time in Russia very difficult spiritually. He had no Christian companions, no church to attend, and the Lord's Day was treated just like any other day of the week. But one day he had some encouragement. He went into a cottage belonging to a poor Russian family and recognised a Russian Bible lying on the table. By pointing to the Bible and making suitable signs he was able to show to the family his love for the Word of God. To his joy it was very clear that they also shared the same love and respect for the Bible. You can imagine how much this incident cheered him and no doubt he acknowledged the Lord's kindness in providence in directing him to that particular hut!

(You can read these and many other stories in the book, *With Mercy and with Judgement* by M J Hyde.)

J van Kralingen

For Younger Readers

Jonathan's Bookmark

The man was known as Old Jonathan. At one time he must have been young Jonathan.

Then, one day, a young woman gave him a bookmark. On it were the words, "God bless me". She made Jonathan promise to put the bookmark in his Bible. But he was not to leave it for more than a day at the same chapter. So Jonathan had to read at least one chapter of the Bible every day.

Jonathan went home and placed his new bookmark in his Bible at Matthew, chapter 1. He kept reading a chapter every day; so the bookmark was moved on each day, like he promised.

It is good to read the Bible. It did Jonathan good to read it.

A Reformation Tour

10. Two Faithful Ministers in St Andrews

Rev David Campbell

With the oldest of the Scottish Universities, St Andrews remains a famous University town today. Sadly, its present outlook in the field of education is very different to what the Reformers and some former teachers laid down for its future. This article will look at the important labours of Andrew Melville and Samuel Rutherford, both of whom spent some considerable time in St Andrews.

A*ndrew Melville.* When John Knox died, the circumstances of the Scottish Reformed Church could be described as uncertain and likely to get worse. The absence of the great Reformer from the position of spiritual leadership and defence of the Church coincided with much turmoil in the political sphere. The young king, James VI, was not old enough to exercise power and a succession of Regents ruled with varying degrees of success.

In the Reformed Church there were not enough ministers and not enough funds to provide for the ministers, largely because some parts of the system of bishops were still in place in the country. Most of the funds to pay ministers went to the bishops, as happened under the Roman Catholic system. These were known as *tulchan bishops* from the practice of stuffing a calf skin with straw – a tulchan – in order to draw milk from a cow. The noblemen who supported the bishops also drew from these funds. The Church and the General Assembly resisted this use of the resources, but the voice of

opposition was not heeded. The bishops were a constant source of trouble to the Church courts, but the Regent of the time gave the ministers no support.

It was in these unsettled circumstances that Andrew Melville returned to Scotland from Geneva in 1574, only two years after Knox's death. His work was to result in very significant and effective reformation and the restoration of the interests of the Reformed Church, not least in the removal of bishops, the establishment of presbyteries and the production of *The Second Book of Discipline* in 1578. Melville also took a great part in reforming the University of Glasgow. His name still appears on the iron gates of the University in recognition of the importance of his work.

For these labours, some of them being especially demanding, Melville suffered the enmity of the episcopal party in the country and many of the nobles. He was libelled – that is, he was formally charged with wrongdoing – and was threatened by the Regent at various times because of his faithfulness to the scriptural form of Church government he had done so much to establish.

In December 1580 Melville was appointed Principal of the University of St Andrews, where he carried out very significant and much-needed reforms, but with less success than in Glasgow. As was mentioned in the previous article, he was joined in this work in St Andrews by his nephew, James Melville, who was also a minister, and a very learned and respected teacher. Andrew Melville remained in his position until 1607. During this time he was not only a very firm and faithful defender of the Presbyterian government of the Church but also of its biblical doctrine, worship and discipline. He, along with other excellent men like Robert Bruce, was to suffer for his faithfulness, especially after James VI became king of England in 1603, after the death of Elizabeth I.

Andrew Melville came into significant conflict with James VI in the early years of his reign. He is famous for having taken the young king by the sleeve on one occasion and rebuking him sharply for his behaviour. Melville reminded him that there were two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland – the kingdom of James VI and the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, of which James was neither a lord, nor a ruler, but a member. For these and other faithful defences of the truth, Melville at first earned the grudging respect of the King, but also his growing enmity and eventually his malice.

In 1604 Melville was brought, with other faithful ministers, to London. The King pretended he was going to consult them about, among other things, the new translation of the English Bible. It was a device to remove them and their significant influence from the Church in Scotland, and Andrew Melville never returned to his native land. After being imprisoned in the Tower of

London in 1607, he was banished to France in 1611, where he died in 1622. **Samuel Rutherford.** It is one of the mysteries of providence that, when the Church of Christ seems very weak and about to be destroyed, the Lord is in fact preparing other men to take the place of those who endured persecution and hardship in their stand for the truth. This was so when God raised up Andrew Melville and others after the death of John Knox. It was also true of the group of eminent men raised up in the early 1600s following the imprisonment or banishment of a group of the most respected ministers of the previous generation.

Samuel Rutherford deserves a high place among that later group of those who are known as Second Reformation ministers in Scotland. He is perhaps best known now for his hundreds of spiritual letters. A large number of these were written to his parishioners from Aberdeen, where he had been banished for a faithful book against the errors of Arminianism. His letters are also a fruitful source of history for anyone studying the times when he lived. But Rutherford is also famous for his preaching and his other writings, several of which are still in print.

His release from banishment and his attendance at the famous Glasgow Assembly in 1638 brought him into prominence, and the Assembly appointed him Professor of Divinity at St Andrews that year. He was reluctant to leave his parish in Anwoth in Galloway and desired to continue preaching when he moved to St Andrews. He remained there for the rest of his life, and so was able to teach those who were to become ministers of the Church during that important era.

Among his many other labours was his work in the Westminster Assembly, which produced *The Confession of Faith*, the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*, the *Form of Presbyterian Church Government* and the *Directories for Public and for Family Worship*. These important documents have had authority in Presbyterian Churches all over the world since that time.

Samuel Rutherford, like Andrew Melville, was a controversial figure, even in his own day. He was among a minority of ministers of the Church who strongly opposed the passing of certain Acts in Parliament and in the General Assembly. These allowed men into positions of power who had been involved in murderous revolts during the period of civil unrest in the 1640s. These ministers were deposed by the majority in the General Assembly in what was the first serious division within the Scottish Church.

This division lasted a full ten years and had a devastating effect on the way in which the Church responded to open persecution in the 1660s. But Rutherford, who was summoned to be tried at the same time as James Guthrie (who was later hanged), died in St Andrews before the persecution took the

serious turn it did. Among the reasons for King Charles II and the government being so eager to remove Samuel Rutherford was that he wrote a famous book on the limits of a king's power. This book, entitled *Lex Rex*, was burnt at the market cross in St Andrews, and we will refer to it when we consider the events that took place there.

This is only a summary of the lives of two of the most famous ministers in St Andrews during the period of the Reformation. It is intended to encourage readers to look into their faithful ministry more fully for themselves and to learn the principles for which they contended and for which they were given grace to suffer. It is hoped that, by the study of these principles, there will continue to be people in future in the Church in Scotland who will love the testimony of the Reformation and will be willing to suffer for it if called to do so.

The next article will return to an earlier period and will look at the monasteries that were destroyed at the time of the Reformation. One of them remains, in ruins, in the centre of St Andrews.

Why We Should Use the Bible

This book contains . . . the mind of God, the state of man, the doom of sinners, the way of salvation and the happiness of believers.

Read it slowly, often and prayerfully.

Read it to be wise; believe it to be saved; and practise it to be holy.

It should fill the memory, rule the heart and guide the feet.

Its doctrines are holy; its commands are binding, its mysteries are true and its decisions cannot be changed.

It contains light to direct you, food to support you and comfort to cheer you.

It is the traveller's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword and the Christian's charter.

It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory and a river of pleasure.

It tells how paradise is restored, heaven is opened and the gates of hell made known.

Christ is its grand subject, our good is its purpose, and the glory of God is its end.

It is given to you in life, it will be opened at the judgement and be remembered for ever.

It involves the highest responsibility; it will reward the greatest labour; and it will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents. *Author unknown*

Looking Around Us

Trousers and Skirts

A recent issue of *The Herald Magazine* contained an article about three men who regularly wear skirts. It is clear from their walk around central Glasgow, in the company of the reporter who wrote the article, that people generally are not comfortable with the idea of men wearing skirts. Yet one of the men points out that most of the women they see around them are wearing trousers. Another comments, “Women wear trousers, and no one thinks anything of it”.

Yet this comment is not altogether accurate; there are some people who believe that it is wrong for women to wear trousers, and equally for men to wear skirts. And most of these people believe as they do because of what the Bible says. Deuteronomy 22:5 tells us: “The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God”. In the past, in Britain and elsewhere, the distinction between male and female was maintained by men wearing trousers and women wearing skirts.

But someone might object that such Old Testament laws no longer apply to us in the New Testament age. That would be true if we were talking about something that was part of the Old Testament ceremonies, such as sacrifices; laws about such matters no longer apply since Christ has offered the one sacrifice that can really take away sin. But the verse I have quoted speaks about a moral issue; it has to do with right and wrong. So the teaching of this verse still applies today.

There is a real difference between males and females. That should be obvious, in spite of what so many people claim today. The distinction should be kept up in every age. It should never be considered out of date.

That distinction comes out clearly in what the Bible tells us about the creation of human beings: “Male and female created He them” (Genesis 1:27). First God created Adam, then Eve. And as people go about their business in life, they should respect that distinction between male and female by wearing distinctive clothing – by wearing a garment that distinguishes them as males or as females.

The same difference between male and female should be reflected in the length of their hair. Paul asks, “Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her” (1 Corinthians 11:14,15). It is women who should have long hair and men who should have short hair.

These differences in hair length and in clothing should be maintained to emphasise the real distinction between male and female. The man or boy who is wearing trousers and has short hair is saying, I am a male; and he should be implying, That is how God made me. The woman or girl who is wearing a skirt (or a dress) is saying, I am a female; and she should be implying, That is how God made me.

Most people in our society reject the authority of the Bible; in particular, they reject the relevance of the Bible's account of creation. So they feel free to dress as they please and to ignore what God says in the Bible about the length of people's hair.

We must not ignore God; He made us and so has authority over us. We must not reject the authority of the Bible; it is a revelation from God, telling us what we need to know. What the Bible tells us about the distinction between male and female is still relevant; we ought to follow it.

The Wicket Gate

This poem, by an unknown writer, is taken from *The Family Treasury* for 1860. Many of the ideas come from John Bunyan's *The Pilgrims Progress*. At the wicket gate, the Pilgrim enters the way of salvation, and so does the poet.

Mid the fast-falling shadows,
weary and worn and late,
A timid, doubting pilgrim,
I reached the wicket gate,
Where crowds have stood before me,
I stand alone tonight
And, in the deepening darkness,
pray for one gleam of light.

From the foul sloughs and marshes
I've gathered many a stain;
I've heard old voices calling
from far across the plain.
Now, in my wretched weakness,
fearful and sad I wait;
And every refuge fails me,
here at the wicket gate.

And will the doorways open
to me, who roamed so long,
Filthy and vile and burdened
with this great weight of wrong?
Hark, a glad voice of welcome
bids my wild fears abate.
Look, for a hand of mercy
opens the wicked gate.

On to the palace Beautiful
and the bright room called Peace;
Down to the silent river,
where you shall find release;
Up to the radiant city,
where shining ones await.
On, for the way of glory
lies through the wicket gate.

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