

Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

God's Providence

Testimony of
Ed Panosian

The Truth about Christian Marriage

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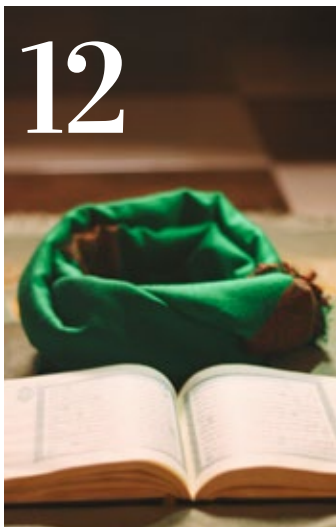
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“*The union that exists between Christ and His Church is founded on a covenant. From eternity, in the Covenant of Redemption, God the Father purposed to save sinners to be the bride of Christ.*”

Editorial

Over thirty years ago, my brother-in-law introduced me to a book entitled, “Personal Declension and Revival of Religion in the Soul”, by Octavius Winslow. Winslow was a 19th Century, non-conformist minister in England and was one of the preachers at the opening of Charles Spurgeon’s Metropolitan Tabernacle. Although this particular book first appeared over a century ago, it has lost none of its relevance for our generation. True religion in the soul is all of God’s grace. Spiritual life is from Christ. He has come that we might have this life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10). However, there are times in every Christian’s experience when our love for Christ grows cold and we need personal revival. The Psalmist reminds us that it is Christ who restores our soul and leads us in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake (Psalm 23:3). By His Spirit, He graciously ministers to us, exposing our sin and revealing His infinite mercy.

The inspired Scriptures are vital in this work. As they are brought with freshness and power to our hearts, revival takes place and we return to our first love. It was when Christ spoke to two of His disciples about His suffering and glory, that their heart burned within them. Considering the victorious death of Christ as our substitute and all that He has purchased for us by His blood, is a sure way to be revived and strengthened. Winslow said, “Jesus works in the believer, in order to his recovery. He breaks down the hard heart, arrests the soul in its onward progress of departure, places upon it some powerful check, lays it low, humbles, abases it and then draws from it the blessed acknowledgement, ‘Behold, I am vile, but, He restoreth my soul.’” There is abundant grace from Christ for believers in need of revival. Surely, we have reason to pray, “Wilt thou not revive us again?” ■

✉ **Editor**
editor@fpvision.org

Presbytery Publications Committee

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Tel: 028 417 62645
Mob: 07709 429271
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Encouragement

As the child of God travels through this world bound for glory, he needs to be challenged, rebuked, chastened and directed by the Lord. It is also important that he receives encouragement and is involved in the ministry of encouraging others. In Deuteronomy 1:38, Moses was commanded by the LORD to encourage Joshua as he took on the task of leading Israel into the Promised Land. We can understand how Joshua needed encouragement for such a calling. There were enemies to face and other difficulties to overcome; Israel would have to walk by faith and not by sight. Amid the varied circumstances of our Christian lives, we also need encouragement. There are times of illness, tasks that we feel we are not capable of performing, difficulties at home, at school, at work and even in the church. All these situations call for encouragement.

Where can we find the encouragement we need? God is the source of all true help. Following the death of Moses (Joshua 1), it was God who spoke to Joshua to encourage him. God the Father is the God of all comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3). Christ consoles and encourages His people (Philippians 2:1). And the Holy Spirit is the Comforter of the saints (John 14:26). To encourage ourselves “in the Lord”, we must spend time in His Word and prayer. This is how it was with Joshua



“God is the source of all true help.”

(Joshua 1:7-9). Romans 15:4 indicates that the Scriptures are a rich source of comfort to our weary souls.

We also receive encouragement from fellow believers and should, in turn, encourage them. God commanded Moses, regarding Joshua, “encourage him” (Deuteronomy 1:38). Barnabas was the son of consolation and was, therefore, a means of encouragement to many, including the apostle Paul. Are we a source of comfort and help to others? Hebrews 10:25 calls us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together but to exhort one another unto good works. This involves encouraging one another in the ways of God.

How will being encouraged affect us? It will cause us to be an encouragement to

others. When Joshua was encouraged by the LORD, he was strengthened to be an encouragement to the people (Joshua 10:25). It is worthy of note that the words used by Joshua to encourage the children of Israel in Joshua 10:25 are very similar to the words used by the LORD to encourage him in Joshua 1:6, 7 and 9. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, teaches that God comforts us, that we may be able to comfort others by the same comfort wherewith we are comforted of God (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4). May we find great encouragement in the Lord, in His Word and from His people, and may we, in turn, be a source of encouragement to others. ■

✉ **Rev John Woods,**
*John Knox Memorial Free Presbyterian
Church, Belfast.*



THE TRUTH ABOUT

CHRISTIAN

MARRIAGE

In a fallen world, the prevailing view of marriage is antichristian and humanistic. Many see marriage as a base physical matter, rising no higher than physical gratification. Others consider it to be a mere human arrangement that can be broken at the whim of carnality and selfishness. In paganism, marriage is a miserable experience. Women live in sullen rebellion under men who dominate the relationship as petty dictators. All of this is abhorrent to God and is a denial of the Christian view of marriage.

Ephesians 5:22-33 forms one of the most instructive sections in Scripture on the subject of marriage. In these verses, Paul addresses the topic of marriage from the Christian perspective. Certainly, marriage was instituted by God for mankind and should be carefully observed as such. However, because man fell into a state of sin, the marriage institution has been

“
*Because man
fell into a
state of sin,
the marriage
institution
has been
detrimentally
affected.*”

detrimentally affected. This is all too apparent in our times, grieving both the Lord and His people who seek to honour His Word. By the power of the gospel, marriage can be elevated to what God designed it to be. This is Paul's thesis in Ephesians 5.

Paul was led by the Spirit to write on the subject of marriage because there were problems between husbands and wives in the Ephesian church. His methodology was very wise. He did not adopt a partisan approach by taking sides, setting out to prove that one was right and the other was wrong. Instead, he challenged both husbands and wives to deal with their problems in the light of Biblical truth. Such an approach is designed to take the animosity out of a difficult situation and bring people face to face with the Lord. These verses contain some important lines of thought that help us to grasp what Paul is teaching.

The passage begins with the principle of submission (Ephesians 5:21). All believers are to be submissive to the Lord and His will in every realm of life, including marriage. This submission is only possible when we are filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). All problems that arise within marriage are due to failure to submit to the Lord, submitting instead to the flesh. Ephesians 5:21 also stresses a priority. The term “the fear of God” governs Paul’s entire teaching on marriage. Husbands and wives are to fulfil their roles in “the fear of God”. It must be the priority of each to glorify the Lord. Wives are to assume the place given to them as unto the Lord, that is, in His fear and thus for His glory. A Christian wife is to fulfil her part with Christ’s glory in mind, enabling her to accept her place and enjoy it. Similarly, the husband is to act in a Christ-like manner. This is essentially having the same priority in view – fearing God and acting for His glory. The purpose of this passage is to present the Christian view of marriage as revealed in Scripture. Specifically, Paul’s teaching is based on and drawn from the Old Testament, from which he presents various truths that undergird the Christian view of marriage.

The main truth is that marriage is a covenant. The covenant aspect of marriage is underlined by Paul’s reference to the covenant relationship between Christ and His Church. Paul writes of Christ loving the Church, dying for the Church, sanctifying the Church, and glorifying the Church. In all of these details, Paul portrays the Church as the bride or wife of Christ. The same concept is revealed in other New Testament passages (Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2; 21:9-10). The Church is Christ’s spiritual bride. They are in union with one another. The union that exists between Christ and His Church is founded on a covenant. From eternity, in the Covenant of Redemption, God the Father purposed to save sinners to be the bride of Christ. Consequently, since Paul teaches believers to think of their marriages in the light of Christ’s relationship with the Church, he is establishing that the covenantal principle is at the very foundation of Christian marriage and therefore fundamental to marriage. When a man and woman enter into marriage, they enter into a covenant.

The concept of the covenant is a solemn reminder that the Christian husband and wife must strive together to fulfil the basic reasons for God’s ordinance of marriage. One of these is to preserve chastity. While it is true that marriage was instituted before the entrance of sin, yet

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 ”



“
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 is given the
 place of being
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 of Christ – to
 enjoy His
 fellowship and
 companionship.***
 ”

the Lord underlined that nothing was to intrude into the relationship between a husband and his wife, (Genesis 2:23-24). God foresaw the fall of man, and so wrote into the original institution of marriage the principle of chastity. This principle is clearly in view in Paul’s teaching. He speaks to wives to be in submission to their “... own husbands” (Ephesians 5:22). He also counsels young wives in particular “... to love their husbands” (Titus 2:4). He instructs husbands: “... husbands, love your wives,” and “... so ought men to love their wives” (Ephesians 5:25, 28). Marriage, as a covenant between one man and one woman, is designed to protect against every form of immorality. Through Malachi, the Lord condemns the treacherous and adulterous treatment of wives (Malachi 2:14). The Lord reveals the enormity of this sin by His reminder of the covenantal nature of marriage with the words “... the wife of thy covenant.” Marriage is entering into a solemn covenant before God of which He is witness – “... the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth.”

Marriage as a covenant also provides companionship. Originally God said, “... it is not good that the man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18). In the process of creation, God finished each stage by pronouncing it to be good, signifying the fact of completion. The Genesis record teaches that man’s creation was incomplete without the woman. He lacked a companion, a suitable helper. The creation of Eve had a particular respect to Adam’s position as lord of creation, to assist in his responsibility and duty of labour. The covenant of marriage provides the man with the help the woman affords. It also gives the woman the role where she can provide the help required. This is companionship. In marriage, it is the privilege of a wife to support her husband in his role; and he must respect her for the help she gives. This is true physically and spiritually (Acts 18:1-3; 19:24-26). Amazingly, this covenant principle of companionship is in view in Christ’s relationship with His Church (Ephesians 1:22). The Church is said to be Christ’s ‘fullness’. In the framework of the Covenant of Grace, Christ’s role as Mediator is incomplete without the Church. The Church is given the place of being the companion of Christ – to enjoy His fellowship and companionship. Husbands and wives should see in this a reflection of their companionship in the covenant of marriage. Dwell joyfully together “... as being heirs together of the grace of life” (1 Peter 3:7). ■

✍ **Rev John Greer,**
Ballymena Free Presbyterian Church.



Death

Is there any hope?

When John Knox the great Scottish Reformer was dying, his trusted servant Bannatyne sat faithfully by his deathbed. Knox was very weak and frail and no longer able to engage in conversation. But in his last moments, Bannatyne leaned over the weak mortal frame of his illustrious master and softly asked him – “have you any hope?” Knox was not able to speak but, just before he died, he

mustered all the strength he could and lifted his finger to point upwards to Heaven. Knox gave that signal to his servant in fulfilment of a promise that he had given to him a short time before. He had promised, that if he recognised his servant's voice speaking to him, Knox would give him some indication that he was still resting on the truths of the Gospel and dying with the hope of glory.

Is there any hope? That is a vital question for every person when they come to face eternity. It is a vital question, not just for the person who dies but also for family and friends who are left behind. When death comes to our homes and takes some of our loved ones from us, the only great comfort we have in that dark hour is the hope of the Gospel. The grief of the Christian is to be different from the ungodly. We are not to sorrow as those who have 'no hope' for eternity because we have the hope of Christ and His Gospel. The great doctrines of the Gospel that the Lord has revealed to us in His Word should ease the pain that we experience when we are deeply bereaved. There is nothing that comforts grieving hearts more than God's Word. The inspired scriptures of 1 Thessalonians 4 emphasise the comfort of the gospel amid bereavement.

REST

The Bible speaks of the death of the believer in many ways but one of the most beautiful pictures is when it describes death as a sleep. We must remember that it is the body of the believer that sleeps at death, not their soul. In the garden of Gethsemane, the scriptures record that the Saviour found certain disciples sleeping (Luke 22:45). This is the same Greek word that is used to describe the death of the Christian in 1 Thessalonians 4:13. We rest when we are tired at the end of the labours of the day. When our labours for Christ are over, then death for the Christian will be the same. Job uses those very words when speaking of death for he says, "man lieth down" (Job 14:12). Do you see the peaceful condition that saved, departed loved ones are in? They are asleep. They are not in danger or suffering; they are at rest (Rev 14:13).

REWARD

The end of 1 Thessalonians 4:14 teaches that when the Saviour returns, He will bring the believers 'with Him'. That reveals that after death, the soul of the Christian is with Christ in Heaven because he can't bring the believers with Him when He comes again unless they are with Him now.

We often say of the Christian who dies, 'that they have gone to their reward'. A major part of the reward for a Christian is to be with Christ in Heaven (John 14:3). A man said to his Christian friend, "I hear that you lost your wife." But his friend immediately replied, "No. I didn't lose her. You can't lose something when you know where it is and I know where she is!" What a blessing that knowledge is to the child of God in the hour of death. We know where our believing loved ones are. It's not a mystery; they are not lost. Instead, they are in Heaven with Christ.

RETURN

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 Paul speaks of the great hope of the second coming of the Saviour. That is a major theme in Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. But what Paul is teaching here is that when the Lord Jesus comes again, He will not be alone but there will be others with Him. For one thing, the angels will be with Him; as it was with His first coming, so it will be with His second coming (Matthew 25:31). In addition to the angels, all the believers who have died will accompany Him when He returns the second time. In 1 Thessalonians 4:14 Paul stresses that those who "sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." The Lord Jesus is not going to return and leave the saints behind in Heaven. So here we learn that the second coming of Christ is a doctrine of comfort for the Christian. What a blessing to know that when the Saviour comes again, He is going to bring your Christian loved one with Him.

RESURRECTION

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 Paul teaches that there is going to be a resurrection of the dead; he states, "the dead in Christ shall rise first". Unbelievers may scoff and ridicule this truth of the Gospel but be in no doubt there will be a resurrection. All the bodies of those who die will be raised from the grave. The Saviour said in John 11:11, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." And, what the Saviour did for Lazarus is an example of what He will do when He comes again. He will awake every believer from the sleep of death. Those who die without Christ will also be raised; not to salvation but to damnation (John 5:29). They will be cast, "body and soul into hell" (Matthew 10:28). That awful prospect should urge us to do all we can by our witness and prayers to win our loved ones to the Saviour.

REUNION

When the Saviour comes again, there will be a reunion. 1 Thessalonians 4:17 teaches we, "shall be caught up together with them." Luke records that when the Lord Jesus raised the widow of Nain's son, "He delivered him to his mother" (Luke 7:15). That is what the Lord Jesus will do when He comes the second time. He will reunite saved family members and friends who have been separated by death. One of the most painful experiences for a family is the death of an infant. But Christian parents have the hope of seeing that child again and being reunited with them in the Glory Land. After the death of his infant son, David was comforted in the knowledge that he would see the child again in Heaven because he said, "I shall go to Him" (2 Samuel 12:23). God's people never part for the last time because our partings, even at death, are never final.

Here then is the great hope of the gospel; even in the face of death. So, to those who are grieving, as you meditate upon these doctrines, be encouraged with Paul's final appeal in this chapter, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:18). ■

✍ **Rev D McMillan,**
Armagh Free Presbyterian Church.

Dr S B Cooke Celebrates 90th Birthday

📷 Dr S B Cooke, who recently celebrated his 90th birthday is pictured with his wife, at a dinner held in his honour. They are pictured with (left to right), Dr J Douglas, Rev G Dane, Mrs G Dane, Mrs J Greer, Rev J Greer, Mrs J Douglas, Mrs D McMillan and Rev D McMillan.



Installation of Rev Thomas Murray in Lurgan



📷 Rev Thomas Murray was installed as the minister of Lurgan Free Presbyterian Church on Thursday 7th March 2019. He is pictured with his wife Lorna, and church elders (from left) Mr P Irwin, Mr M Wylie and Mr J Dumigan.



📷 Pictured at the installation of Rev T Murray in Lurgan Free Presbyterian Church (from left to right) Mr P Irwin, Dr I Brown, Mr M Wylie, Rev G Dane (Moderator), Rev D Abernethy (Interim Moderator) Rev T Murray, Rev R Johnstone, Rev J Greer (Clerk) and Mr J Dumigan.

Rasharkin Sabbath School Awards

📷 Jonah Simpson, Thomas Hanna and James McNeilly (l to r) recently received certificates of achievement for reciting the 66 books of the Bible. They are pictured with their Sunday School teacher, Miss Christina Logan and Superintendent, Mr. Stephen Gailey.



Retirement Service for Rev William McCrea



Rev and Mrs McCrea, pictured with their family at the special service to mark his retirement from Calvary Free Presbyterian Church, Magherafelt.

After a faithful Gospel ministry that commenced 50 years ago on Mullaghboy Hill, Magherafelt, the Rev William McCrea retired from pastoral ministry on Sunday 14th October. The church was filled to capacity and the various groups of the church made presentations to Rev and

Mrs McCrea to mark their retirement. A thanksgiving service was held on Thursday 1st November for Rev and Mrs McCrea where colleagues and friends brought greetings and reflections. Rev McCrea was honoured with the title Minister Emeritus. The Moderator of Presbytery, Rev Gordon Dane,

brought a faithful Word at this special service. Greetings were also read from overseas colleagues who were not able to be in attendance. We give thanks to the Lord for the work that has been commenced through the Rev McCrea's ministry and wish him and Mrs McCrea a long and happy retirement.

Portadown Independent Christian School

**Full time /
Part time Staff**

**Preferred subjects:
English, French to GCSE**

Other subjects may be available in September 2019

For further details contact:
Principal, Mrs Diane Haffey
T. 07510629500
E. d.haffey@yahoo.co.uk

Clogher Valley Independent Christian School

Principal/Primary Teacher

commencing in September 2019

Essential Criteria:

Communicant Member of FPC, 3rd level qualification, completed the Presbytery Teachers' Training Scheme or holding a recognised teaching qualification, two years teaching experience post qualification.

Desirable Criteria:

Experience in both primary and secondary education, experience in teaching Key Stage 3 & 4 Maths, leadership experience within a school.

Anyone who has the leading of God into this work contact **Rev Peter McIntyre** (Administrator) for an application form: **apmcintyre69@gmail.com**

Closing Date for applications, Friday 17th May 2019.



"...afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears..."

Happy Meals

Things for boys and girls of today are very different from that of my childhood. Long before fast food outlets and the drive-through, whenever our family ate out anywhere, the big treat was in getting the actual meal, which was usually a plate of fish and chips along with a bottle of lemonade. Nowadays, however, whenever kids are taken out for a meal, there are all kinds of extra treats in store: a play area, colouring-in sheets and crayons or some toy with their "Happy Meal" to keep them occupied.

Recently, I read an article stating that many of these "Happy Meal" toys are becoming collector's items; and, although they were free initially, they are now of great value, running into hundreds of pounds. I am sure, for both parent and child, such toys would have created some novelty interest for a while. However, because there were plenty of them and they cost nothing, people would have treated them with little affection; and sooner or later they would be thrown to the side.

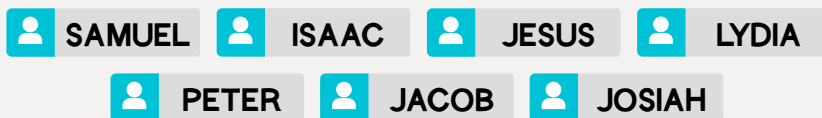
Very often, I have concerns for the lives of children brought up through church and Sunday school. Having heard so many times about God's wonderful gift of salvation, many soon begin to treat this heavenly news with little affection or regard. As years pass, hearts harden and the world beckons. Suddenly, when it is all but too late, they may realise that the very thing they once saw as nothing is in fact of great value.

Boys and girls, never treat the things of God lightly. Never discard the message of the Gospel and your need of the Saviour as something of little value, for there may come a day when you too will suddenly realise that you have spurned the greatest prize of all. Without the Spirit of God to prompt your heart, you will never turn to the Saviour for forgiveness. It is said of Esau in his later years that, having left off his opportunity of salvation, "he found no place of repentance".



FROM THE BIBLE, ABOUT WHICH TWO PEOPLE FROM THE LIST BELOW ARE WE TOLD NOTHING CONCERNING THEIR CHILDHOOD?

I have given you some Bible references to look up to help you in the process of elimination.



GENESIS 21:8, MATTHEW 2:1, 2 KINGS 22:1, 1 SAMUEL 2:26, GENESIS 25:27

ANSWERS: &

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CHURCH:

PRIZES!

Are you 12 or under?
Send your answer, name,
address and church to:

Rev Garth Wilson

Email: answer@fpvision.org
39 Millreagh Ave, Dundonald,
Belfast, BT16 1TZ

£5 WINNERS LAST TIME

- » Lilly Hutter (Merthyr Tydfil FPC)
- » Lois Cooke (Antrim FPC)
- » Hannah Armstrong (Dungannon FPC)
- » James Porter (Bethany FPC)
- » Seth Douglas (Tandragee FPC)
- » Isaac Brown (Portglenone FPC)
- » Georgia Watson (Mourne FPC)
- » Jade Bennett (Ardaragh FPC)

The Importance of the Shorter Catechism

If you attended Sunday School or Bible Class in one of our congregations, you would no doubt have been taught the Shorter Catechism. As part of your lessons for each week, you would have had to memorise and recite one or more of the catechism questions. Perhaps, at the time, it was hard to get the questions into your mind and then repeat them to your teacher.

I know that many of our young people have successfully answered all 107 questions of the Shorter Catechism, and all those who have achieved this are to be congratulated and highly commended. When I was younger, I didn't fully appreciate the importance of learning the catechism; however, throughout my life and especially in the ministry, I have been thankful that I was taught the Shorter Catechism. Many of the answers do come back to my mind, and they can often greatly help in the explanation of some truth in the course of preaching.

The importance of learning the Shorter Catechism cannot be emphasised enough in our everyday living for Christ. William Beveridge, a theologian from the nineteenth century, said, "The older I grow, the more comes back to me the first sentence in the Catechism which I learned when a child, and the fuller and deeper its meaning becomes: What is the chief end of man? To glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

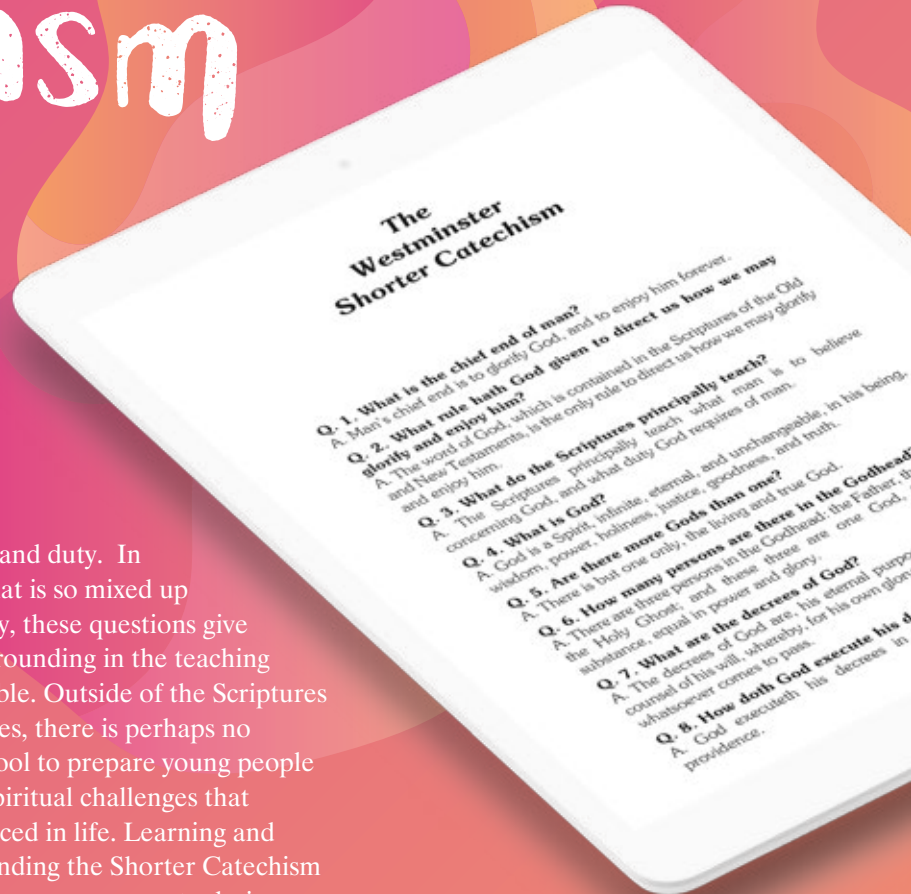
The 107 questions provide a very concise, and more importantly, a Scriptural summary of Christian

doctrine and duty. In an age that is so mixed up spiritually, these questions give a good grounding in the teaching of the Bible. Outside of the Scriptures themselves, there is perhaps no greater tool to prepare young people for the spiritual challenges that will be faced in life. Learning and understanding the Shorter Catechism can help a young person to desire a God-centred life. Our beliefs shape our behaviour; our doctrine determines our duty. This is brought out in the Catechism. Answers such as – "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever" and "The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man" are invaluable helps in the Christian life.

As the Catechism explains the nature of God, the fall of man, the truth that Christ is the only Redeemer of sinners and provides a comprehensive explanation of who Christ is and what Christ has done, it is profitable for young and older believers. The practical application of the ten commandments and the teaching on the Lord's prayer found in the Shorter Catechism provide the young Christian with a great discipleship guide for life.

Perhaps today, more than ever, the Shorter Catechism is needed in our churches and our families. It is just as relevant and applicable today as it was when it was written and put together in the 1640's. Therefore, do not neglect the memorising of the Catechism; stick with it, and keep at it. It will help develop and grow your understanding of Scripture and prepare you for the challenges of life. While the Shorter Catechism must never replace our reading and studying of the Bible, it will complement and enhance that study and help in our growth in grace. ■

✍ **Rev Garth Wilson,**
*Sandown Free Presbyterian Church and
associate editor of Free Presbyterian
Vision.*





ISLAM

Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill once said *“Islam is as dangerous in a man as rabies in a dog. No stronger retrograde force exists in the world. Far from being moribund, Islam is a militant and proselytising faith”*. William Gladstone, another previous Prime Minister, remarked *“The Quran.. ..an accursed book...”*.

The principle tenet of the Muslim faith is *“there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet”*. Islam is the second largest religion

in the world. In 2016, 4.1 million Muslims were living in the UK, up from 50,000 in 1961. Within the next thirty years, that figure is expected to rise to 13 million. Many cities across England are predominantly Muslim. The goal of Islam is outlined in the Quran, Surah 2.193, as *“fight against them until idolatry is no more and Allah’s religion reigns supreme”*. .

THE HISTORY OF ISLAM

The Quran teaches that the god of Islam, Allah, has sent many prophets. These include Lot, Jacob, Abraham,

Jonah, Moses, David, Elisha, Zachariah, Ezekiel, Noah, Ishmael, Jesus and Muhammad. Muhammad was born in AD 570. He was the son of Abdullah and lived in Mecca. He claimed that in AD 610, while in a cave, the angel Gabriel visited him and spoke to him. Allegedly, Gabriel appeared to Muhammad on many occasions over the next twenty-three years, and everything he said to Muhammad was carefully recorded in a book which was to become the Quran. All of Islam stands or falls on the testimony of just

one individual, Muhammad, who was a polygamist. He had twelve wives and two concubines, and he was espoused to one of his wives when she was just six years old. Her name was Ayisha. Their marriage was consummated when she was nine; at that time, he was fifty-three. Muhammad's first converts included a wife, a cousin, a slave and a friend. The new religion began to spread quickly. History affirms that he was responsible for the beheading of hundreds of Jewish people. The Quran endorses beheading in several places, for example, Sura 47.4 *"when ye meet the unbelievers, smite at their necks: at length, when ye have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly"* and Sura 9.5 *"fight and slay the pagans wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem"*. Islam spread very quickly. The erecting of a mosque on the temple mount in Jerusalem was seen as a great victory for Islam.

There are, however, several splits and sects within Islam. About 90% of Muslims are Sunnis. Their faith is based upon both the Quran and tradition or the Hadith. Sunnis accept the four successors to Muhammad. About 10% of Muslims are Shi'ites. They regard only one successor to Muhammad: Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law and cousin. Smaller sects include the Ishmaelites, Sufi and Ahmadian.

THE AUTHORITY OF ISLAM

Islam's primary authority is the Quran, which is regarded as Allah's last and full revelation to mankind. It is about 80% of the size of the New Testament. The claim is made that the Bible has been tampered with but that the Quran is perfect. The Quran is held in great honour and is memorised and recited every day. The Hadith is another revered book which sets forth the traditions of Muhammad. Some Muslims pay homage to the writings of Moses and the Psalms of David.

THE THEOLOGY OF ISLAM

God

Muslims are unitarian and reject the Trinity as being blasphemous. They



“ MUSLIMS CLAIM TO HOLD CHRIST IN HIGH ESTEEM. HE IS REVEALED IN THE QURAN AS A PROPHET. HIS ESSENTIAL DEITY IS DENIED, HOWEVER, AND TO ASCRIBE DEITY TO THE LORD JESUS IS VIEWED AS AN UNPARDONABLE SIN. ”

believe Allah is the one true God. Allah does not resemble his creatures in any way. He is impersonal, unknowable and beyond description. The word Islam means 'submission to the will of God (Allah)'. The Quran contains 99 different names for Allah, the hundredth name being a secret. None of the 99 revealed names denotes love or Fatherhood. The Muslim will never be in a relationship with his god. The Quran states sixteen times that Allah is not a father and has no son. The killing of the blasphemer (Jihad) will earn the faithful Muslim favour with Allah. Muslims take it for granted that Westerners are Christians.

Christ

Muslims claim to hold Christ in high esteem. He is revealed in the Quran as a prophet. His essential deity is denied, however, and to ascribe deity to the Lord Jesus is viewed as an unpardonable sin. Islam also denies the death of Christ on the cross. Sura 4.157 states *"they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not"*. The resurrection of Christ is also therefore denied. Muslims claim that Jesus foretold the coming of the prophet Muhammad in John 14.26, 15.26 and 16.7-13. These are clear and

overt references to the Holy Spirit, so not only does Muhammad supersede our Lord Jesus Christ, but he usurps the place of the Holy Spirit.

Salvation

The salvation of Islam is salvation by works. The work demanded is primarily that of carefully adhering to the 'five pillars of Islam':

1. **SHAHADA:** confession and recitation of the statement 'there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet'.
2. **SALAT:** prayers offered in the direction of Mecca. These prayers are repeated five times daily and preceded by washings.
3. **SAUM:** fasting, predominantly during the month of Ramadan.
4. **ZAKAT:** almsgiving, or charity towards the poor.
5. **HAJJ:** a pilgrimage to Mecca. Every Muslim is encouraged to make this pilgrimage at least once a year.

Some Muslims believe in a sixth pillar: **JIHAD** or 'holy war'. Some explain this as a personal war, a struggle to please Allah. Others view it as a figurative war, using prayer, evangelism and the pen to fight for the cause of Islam. Yet others consider it literally, which is a frightening reality that our world has seen something of in recent years. Those who view Jihad as literal are simply taking Muhammad at his word!

Afterlife

The Quran speaks of death, resurrection, a day of judgement, heaven and hell. Heaven promises bliss to the faithful Muslim, especially to the Muslim man. He is promised food, wine and women in abundance. Heaven is for those Muslims whose good works outweigh the bad. Islam flies in the face of the God of the Bible and His Son Jesus Christ, who said, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me'. (John 14.6). ■

✍ **Rev Roger Higginson,**
Coleraine Free Presbyterian church.

YOUTH COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

“ TO EXTEND CHRIST'S KINGDOM AND DEVELOP
CHRISTIAN CHARACTER AMONGST THE YOUTH. ”

REGIONAL OUTREACHES:

LURGAN SHOW

1 June 2019
8:30am - 12Noon

NEWCASTLE AIRSHOW

22 June 2019
10:30am – 2.00pm

PORTRUSH AIRWAVES

31 August 2019
10:30am - 2pm

*Please contact Jonathan Smith
- 07533 035923
- fpcmission4youth@gmail.com
for further details on outreaches.*

SUMMER OUTREACHES

LIVERPOOL OUTREACH

July 20 - 27, Age: 18+
Max. 10 places
Cost £255 (subsidised up to 45%)

LIMAVADY CHILDREN'S OUTREACH

Aug 12 - 18, Age: 16+
Max. 10 places
Cost £125 (subsidised up to 45%)
Non-residential cost £50 +

NEXT DELEGATES MEETING

MONDAY 13 MAY

Banbridge FPC, 8pm
*incorporating prayer meeting for
Youth Council Gospel Tent Mission*

NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL GOSPEL TENT MISSION

MOIRA DEMESNE

12 - 15 September 2019
*Incorporating the Annual September Rally at
8.00pm on the Friday night. Prayer Meetings
prior to the Mission will be confirmed on
Youth Council website and Facebook page.*

*Application forms for camp and weekend events available to
download from the Youth Council Website (fpcyouth.org)*

REPORT ON YOUTH COUNCIL TRAINING WEEKEND

Thirty-five young people gathered at the Faith Mission Centre for the Evangelistic Training weekend (22nd to 24th March 2019). There was a time for fellowship and devotions on Friday night, followed by further devotions and prayer times on both Saturday and Sunday morning.

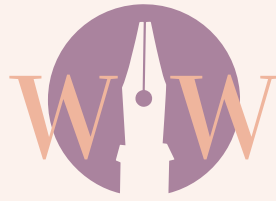
The lectures on Saturday morning focused on personal evangelism, with emphasis given to the practical aspects of door-to-door outreach. These were followed by a session on missionary work, the biblical calling of missionaries, the overall goals of those on the mission field and the characteristics of a mature church. We were able to witness a practical



application of the theory learned in the morning during a guided tour of the Revival Movement Association in the afternoon. The factory in Dromore provides literature, in many different languages, for use not only in Northern Ireland but across the world. The theme of the weekend, heaven and hell, was the focus on Saturday evening. Both lectures provided a

biblical insight into these doctrines and provided supporting passages of Scripture that are useful when witnessing to those around us. The closing part of the lectures emphasised the importance of spreading the gospel, following our consideration of the eternity of our souls. ■

✍ **Hannah Mercer**



A Word to Women

Priscilla

ACTS 18

Prisilla is always mentioned with her husband Aquila. They were truly one in faith and service. Aquila and Priscilla were Roman citizens but had been expelled from Italy when Claudius Caesar commanded all Jews to leave Rome. In Acts chapter 18, Aquila and Priscilla had settled in Corinth. When the Apostle Paul came from Athens, he stayed with them, as they were all skilled tentmakers.

Priscilla and Aquila earned their daily bread by hard work. In an age before complex machinery, there was much physical labour involved in the making of tents. Their hands would have been calloused with handling the heavy materials used and in the sewing involved. It is the Lord's will that mankind should work. Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden to dress and keep it (Genesis 2:15). After the fall, work became more difficult as the growth of weeds added sweat to their labour (Genesis 3:19). Cain grew crops, and Abel was a shepherd. People have different interests and skills, and we are to use these in meeting our temporal needs. No Christian should be lazy. Paul heard of those in Thessalonica who, although idle, were busybodies. He exhorts such, "by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread" (2 Thessalonians 3:12). When Christ performed the miracle of turning water into wine, He had the men fill the waterpots with water (John 2:7); and when He raised Lazarus, He had the men take away the gravestone and loose Lazarus from his graveclothes (John 11:39, 44). Christ will not do for us what we can do for ourselves.

Hard work did not prevent Priscilla and Aquila from being spiritual Christians. Many conversations would have taken place between Paul and his hosts which would have encouraged and strengthened them in their faith. For eighteen months, Paul preached in Corinth; and, during

this time, Priscilla and Aquila continued to grow in grace and become learned in the Scripture.

Priscilla and Aquila did not let their secular work prevent them from being involved in God's work. Their trade was easy to carry with them; so, when Paul sailed to Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him. Paul could not spend long at Ephesus, but he left his companions behind to help in the church. So it was that Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos speaking boldly in the synagogue. Apollos is described as "an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures" (Acts 18:24). However, there was a problem, as Apollos knew only the baptism of John, i.e. he was not aware of Christ's ministry, death and resurrection and of the subsequent preaching of the apostles. Quietly, Aquila and Priscilla took aside this preacher. They did not have his gift to preach, but they were more knowledgeable in Christ and were able to bring Apollos into a fuller understanding of the gospel. Apollos was therefore enabled to preach the full counsel of God and was used to reach his fellow Jews for Christ.

Paul mentions Aquila and Priscilla a few times in his epistles. They willingly opened their home so the church could assemble (2 Corinthians 16:19), showing that as time passed their love for the Lord and His work continued unabated. In fact, we learn that Aquila and Priscilla were prepared to lay their lives on the line for the apostle Paul (Romans 16:4). Tradition has it that Aquila and Priscilla were martyred. This may or may not be true, but we can be sure that they received the Lord's commendation, "Well done, good and faithful servants" (Matthew 25:23). ■

✍ **Olive Maxwell**

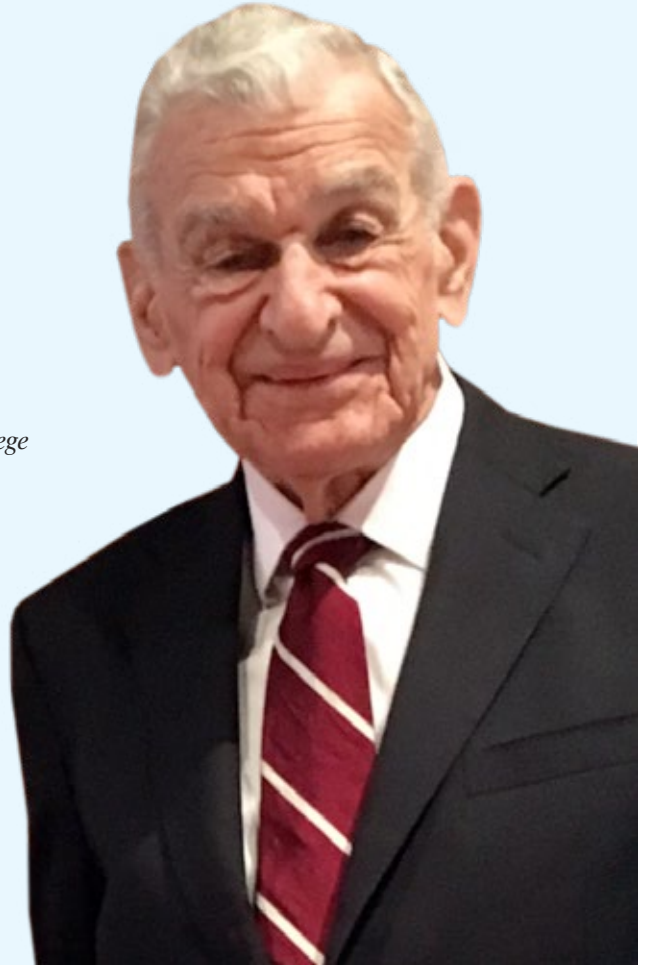
lived and worked as a missionary in Cork for over twenty years. She is married to Colin who serves with the Mission Board, mostly in the Republic of Ireland.

God's Providence

Testimony of Ed Panosian

Editor's note:

While ministering in Greenville, South Carolina, I had the privilege of being introduced to Dr and Mrs Ed Panosian. Dr Panosian served in Bob Jones University for over half a century, teaching history and church history to thousands of students. He also presented, in a first-person style, the lives of many reformers and renowned Christian leaders. A humble, God-fearing man with love for Christ and His truth, it was always a joy to see him in our church services and fellowship with him and his wife in their home. After reading his recently published biography, I asked him to relay his testimony to the readers of the Free Presbyterian Vision. This is his story – or rather, this is the account of God's gracious providence in his life.



Long years before the age of videos, I learned, in a high school Latin class, the meaning of video: “I see,” the first person singular of the verb “to see”. And, of course, pro means “for,” or “before”. Providence, then, is seeing for, or before. Our Heavenly Father, the omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent God, sees for, or before, or on behalf of, His children. He who knows the end from the beginning and He from whom nothing is hidden - He works out all things after the counsel of His own will for the good of His own, for His own divine purposes. In the life of God's child, nothing just happens; ultimately, there are no accidents.

That truth lends wonderful peace, and often cause for amazement, to the child of God. “Thou God seest me!” He, who is from everlasting, arranges every detail of a believer's

life. What a cause for wonder it is, and profound gratitude, to see how our gracious God has led, arranged, and ordered the events and circumstances in my own life of 88 years, and counting. Long before I was born, He preserved my mother, who, when only eight years of age, witnessed the murder of her father in her own home by Turkish Moslem soldiers with orders to kill all the Armenian men in the village under Turkish control.

God arranged for her, her sister, and her younger brother to be cared for in an orphanage in Beirut, Lebanon, run by Lutheran missionaries, while their mother was able to flee to America just before the First World War. After that war, an uncle was able to recover the then teenagers and bring them to rejoin their mother in America.

During those years, unknown to my mother's family, he who became my father (also an Armenian), having learned the trade of shoemaking elsewhere in Turkey, emigrated just before that war to America as well. He served in the U. S. Army during the war, afterwards met and married my mother-to-be (then eighteen), and reared a Christian family in New York State. He established a shoe repair business, which later was transformed into retailing all kinds of footwear in stores in several towns in New York and Pennsylvania.

Into his family I was born, the fourth of five children, in 1930. I came to know the Lord as my personal Saviour at age fifteen. As I considered attending college, I became aware, through a friend, of a relatively new Christian college which had just the previous year been enlarged into a university: Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina. That awareness was itself providential. A friend recommended the school to a friend of mine because she had seen advertisements of the institution, named for a gospel evangelist she had known of, and assumed it must be a good place. My friend attended and later recommended the school to me. At age eighteen I, too, enrolled in what was to become both my alma mater and my home, for now, these seventy years.

During a Gospel service the first night of my attendance at BJU, in September of 1948, I answered the Lord's call to give my life in service to Him. I had no idea what that would ultimately mean, but that was not then important. I have always known I have not been called to "preach", but I have been teaching Biblical principles of truth while teaching human history all my adult life.

I studied history and Bible, combining them in graduate school as Church History, first as a graduate assistant, then as a full-time faculty member. While still an undergraduate, I met and later married my wife of now 64 years, Betty, who became a speech teacher, also at Bob Jones University, mother of three godly children, and now grandmother to five.

Before I actually realised it, the Lord, in His providence, had revealed, one step at a time, how my life of service, given to Him, was to be spent. The class lectern was to be my pulpit. Almost unwittingly, for 53 years, I served my Heavenly Father teaching history and church history to what became thousands of young college and graduate school students, most of whom went out from college halls to serve the Lord the world over.

Because I taught, among others, a course required of every student, the History of Civilization, I had the unique

privilege of teaching almost every student who attended Bob Jones University for almost a half-century. I was serving God by serving the University by serving students - teaching them to see the Hand of God in every age, in every circumstance, and every step of every nation and every life.

One circumstance in my growing family nearly six decades ago profoundly illustrates God's providence. After five years of marriage and several miscarriages, my wife bore our son - two and a half months prematurely - who weighed only a little more than two and a half pounds. His life was uncertain for days, then weeks; but, in God's mercy, he grew to five pounds, and we were able to hold him for the first time and bring him home six weeks after his birth. In God's mercy, in the passing years, Mark has outgrown all evidence of that prematurity.

“ Before I actually realised it, the Lord, in His providence, had revealed, one step at a time, how my life of service, given to Him, was to be spent... What privilege has been mine! ”

In 1963, four years later, a second baby was happily anticipated. Because of the experience with Mark, my wife's doctor prescribed for her a drug designed to reduce the likelihood of premature birth. Soon, its use produced in Betty severe nausea and dangerous discomfort, and required discontinuance. Instead, Betty endured three months of summer literally on her back in bed, keeping the baby, leading to Lisa's healthy arrival and our much thanksgiving for God's providential gift. Just how providential, we came to realise when we later learned that that rejected drug to counteract prematurity had instead been discovered to produce birth defects! But for the Lord's providential intervention, what might have been, instead of the beautiful, godly young lady Lisa has become.

The natural man calls all this "luck". The Christian believer knows it is God's divine intervention in the interest of His child for good. Such intervention is not always in deliverance; sometimes God withholds our desires, and we experience reversals--which God knows are for our good, while we cannot understand the reasons at the time. But we can trust Him - His providence - to do always what He knows is best. That is our confidence in His providential care for His own. That is rest and peace in believing.

What privilege has been mine! How providentially has my life been ordered by the sovereign God of heaven for the good of men on earth. As the patriarch's servant who was sent to find a bride for his master's son said, "I, being in the way, the Lord led me." And, as a Gospel songwriter has put it, "I do not ask to see the distant scene; one step enough for me." It has been said that the way to be in God's will tomorrow is to do what I know is God's will for me today. Trust and obey. Jehovah Jireh - the Lord will provide. That is my testimony. ■

Opening of new church building for Bangor Free Presbyterian Church

*“The new church building in Bangor
was opened to the glory of God and for the
preaching of the Gospel.”*

Saturday 16th March marked a very historic and important milestone in the history of the congregation in Bangor. After months of construction and preparation, the new church building in Bangor was opened to the glory of God and for the preaching of the Gospel. Almost 250 people packed into the new building and the hallway for this special service.

The Interim Moderator, Rev Garth Wilson, led the proceedings and handed the key over to the Moderator, Rev Gordon Dane, who officially opened the building and then led in prayer as the church was dedicated to the Lord. A foundation stone, in the hallway of the church, was unveiled by the Moderator.

The Session of Bangor Free Presbyterian Church recognised the labours of the late Mr Cecil Magrath, a founding member of the congregation and its first Clerk of Session, by dedicating the new minister's room in his memory. Mr Magrath's daughter, Mrs Jennifer Creane, unveiled a suitably inscribed plaque to mark this tribute.

After the singing of the opening Psalm, the first minister of the church, Rev William McDermott, led in prayer. The pupils of Bangor Independent Christian school then enthusiastically sang two pieces. Rev John Armstrong, Deputy Moderator, brought greetings from Presbytery to the Bangor congregation.

Before the offering hymn, Rev Wilson took the opportunity to give a brief history of the work in Bangor. He outlined some of the matters that led to the decision to build a new church and the various steps along the way. He expressed appreciation to all who worked on the site throughout the construction. Mr David Browne, Clerk of Session, made presentations to the site foreman, Mr Victor Hunter, and also to Mr John Graham and Mr Selwyn Daly for all their practical work throughout the building project. The offering at the opening service came to £12,000. The congregation



are indebted to all who gave so generously to the Building Fund.

Rev David Priestley, who laboured in Bangor for over 17 years, until his retirement in 2017, read the Scriptures from Ezra 3. The Moderator preached from this passage with great power and with the very evident anointing of God upon his ministry.

Following the singing of the closing hymn, Rev Wesley Graham, a founding member in Bangor, closed the meeting in prayer. The meeting concluded with the singing of the Doxology.

The Bangor congregation was greatly encouraged to see so many from other churches and especially from the local area join with them. Please continue to pray for the work in Bangor. ■

✍ **Rev G Wilson,**
*Interim Moderator of Bangor
Free Presbyterian Church.*



☒ Above: Rev G Wilson, (Interim Moderator) pictured with the office bearers of Bangor Free Presbyterian Church, (from left to right) Mr A Graham, Mr P Wilkinson, Mr D Browne, Mr S Daly, Mr B McVeigh and Mr J Graham



Report from Jonny Smith

Youth Worker



With increasing opportunities to minister God's Word within High Schools and potential future opportunities within the church amongst young people, I am now allocating three days per week to this vital work. Over the past four years, I have been in approximately a quarter of High Schools in Northern Ireland, bringing the gospel to a vast range of classes. Unfortunately, many of these young people know very little of fundamental gospel truths. Often, I am standing before young people who are having the gospel explained to them for the first time. Please pray for teenagers brought up here, as well as the many foreign nationals who have moved into our country, that they will have a hunger and thirst for the gospel.

Just before Easter, I helped Banbridge Free Presbyterian Church for several weeks to commence a teenage meeting, which runs concurrently with their children's meeting. Please pray that God's blessing will be upon this new effort as they desire to reach young people in their area. Over the summer I am helping local churches with their annual Bible Clubs. Two of these churches are running week-long teenage meetings alongside their daily children's meeting, similar to the model in Banbridge. This is a fantastic way to encourage unchurched children and young people to keep coming back to God's house, where they will hear words whereby, they must be saved.

There are so many young people to be reached with the gospel throughout all our communities. If I can be of assistance to other local churches to reach this generation for Christ, I am ready and willing to do so with the Lord's help. ■

✍ Jonny Smith

Report from Christina Logan

First Months as a Missionary



At the beginning of March, I began working as a full-time children's evangelist under the Mission Board. I am thankful to the Lord that He has given me a work that I enjoy – working amongst the boys and girls. My hope for 2019 is to be able to go into schools around Co. Antrim, primarily focusing on the Ballymena and Ballymoney areas. I have had the privilege of getting into seven schools but I hope that other doors will be opened in the next year. Please pray that this will be the case and that I will have favour with the teachers and especially the boys and girls.

I have also been asked to speak at several Bible Clubs during the summer months. This is a real opportunity to reach many children with the gospel. I am planning to do a series on 'Life's Big Questions', looking at topics such as 'Who is God?' and 'What is the Bible?'. I would ask you to pray that these meetings will be used to make the children consider their need to come to the Lord for salvation.

“I pray that the Lord will use me over the incoming year and look forward to seeing what the Lord will do amongst our boys and girls.”

I thank everyone who has supported me over the past year, especially in prayer, and I would appreciate your continued support. I pray that the Lord will use me over the incoming year and look forward to seeing what the Lord will do amongst our boys and girls. ■

✍ Christina Logan

Taranaki Bible Conference

New Zealand

In late January 2019, I had the wonderful privilege of addressing the Taranaki Bible Conference in New Zealand. Mr Alan Lauridsen, who organises the annual event, had been in contact some months earlier to invite us over to preach God's Word to the faithful believers there. We set off early and many hours and three plane journeys later we arrived in New Plymouth, New Zealand ready to meet some new acquaintances and to encourage the flock of God in that part of the world.

The Bible conference saw believers and their families from all over the island descend upon the residential campsite that lay in the shadow of the impressive Mt. Taranaki. (I later learned that Mt Taranaki is probably the NZ volcano most at risk of a large eruption in the next 50 years).

Over the next three days, I preached many times on a variety of subjects and themes that the Lord had laid upon my heart. Preaching the word; instant in season, out of season; reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering and doctrine (2 Timothy 4:2).

I was greatly impressed by the hunger and thirst for God's Word that was

exhibited by the people there, with many in attendance at every session over the three days of the conference. And Oh, what singing! I have never seen so many musically accomplished families in one place before. As well as the hearty congregational singing there were musical items of praise from the various families in attendance at every meeting.

Meal times at the camp provided the opportunity to meet the people in a more relaxed environment and learn more about them and the spiritual landscape of New Zealand. As I spoke to the people at the camp, a familiar theme seemed to develop. Many of them had travelled for hours to attend the conference, which provided them with much-needed fellowship and spiritual encouragement. They had come from a variety of church backgrounds but all told a similar story. The mainline churches and denominations had largely departed from the truth and many of them had been compelled to leave to find a new spiritual home. Home churches and small independent works were the order of the day. Out of all

the various congregations represented by the people in attendance, not one of them had a dedicated Pastor or Minister. New Zealand's rich Christian heritage was eroding at an alarming rate, the ship was sinking and many small faithful churches were struggling to stay afloat.

As I listened to their accounts, I was reminded of the words of Matthew 9:36 "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd."

I trust that there will be future opportunities to minister to the scattered flocks in New Zealand but until then I hope that you will join me in praying that the Lord of the harvest will raise men to shepherd the people of God there and that he will send forth labourers into his harvest (Matthew 9:38). ■

✍ **Rev R Hall,**
*Kingston Free Presbyterian Church,
Tasmania.*



Thank you

Thank you for the support and kind wishes I often receive, when donations are forwarded to the Mission Board. It is always deeply appreciated to learn that Mr Alastair Hamilton and I are remembered in prayer. Please remember the Children's Tracts which can be ordered from the office. They are great for all the forth coming outreaches amongst the boys and

girls over the summer months. Themed pens, relating to our missionary work in Emmanuel Christian School, Precious Orphanage and Spain, are also available from the office at £1. ■

✍ **Mrs Glenda Graham,**
Mission Board Office.



Bushfires in Tasmania

Tasmania has just experienced its hottest summer on record. Total rainfall for the same period was a record-low, one-fifth of average. Severe thunderstorms, often with little or no rain, struck the island on the 14th and 15th January. The 15th January saw 5500 lightning strikes onto dry vegetation leading to over 70 bushfires, many in remote and difficult terrain. Repeated warm days, no rain and periods of strong winds drove the fires to an even higher intensity. The total cost is still being calculated two months later. Thankfully no lives were lost and only seven houses, as approximately 200,000 hectares burned. Two hundred thousand hectares equates to 772 square miles. Imagine 1/8th of Northern Ireland in flames.

Aside from the bravery and tireless endeavours of the Fire Service crews, one of the reasons there was no loss of

life and little property damage is due to a process referred to as “backburning”. Stretches of land are deliberately burned in a controlled environment to create a fire-break. Once that fire has been successfully extinguished, the approaching wall of fire burns out because there is no flammable material left to fuel it. The only way to escape the oncoming flames is to stand where the fire has already been and has been put out.

Our God is described as a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29) and His wrath against sin burns forever. There is only one means of escaping the coming judgment of God and that is to stand where the fire has already burned and has been extinguished. As the Lord Jesus hung upon the cross, He bore our sins and the fiery judgment of God for those sins was poured out upon him. He

bore it all and put the fire out. *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus”* Romans 8:1. The only way to escape the approaching judgment of God is to stand where the fire has been put out.

*“If Thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely in my place endured
The whole of wrath divine,
Payment God will not twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety’s hand,
And then again at mine.*

*Turn, then, my soul, unto thy rest:
The merits of thy Great High Priest
Speak peace and liberty:
Trust in His efficacious blood,
Nor fear thy banishment from God,
Since Jesus died for thee.”*

Augustus Toplady. ■

✉ **Rev R Hall**, Kingston Free Presbyterian Church, Tasmania.

East Africa Pastors’ Conferences



Two Pastors’ Conferences were held during March in East Africa: one was in Mbale, Uganda, from 24-25 March, with over 30 in attendance;

and the other took place in Kakamega, Kenya, from 27-28 March, with over 40 in attendance.

The speakers this year were Dr John McKnight, Reformation Bible Church, Maryland (USA), Dr Lindsay Wilson (Castlederg FPC), and Rev Malcolm Patterson (FPMSA, Kenya). It was encouraging to find that some of those attending in Uganda listen to Let The Bible Speak programme, which is broadcast on Imani Radio from Kitale. Mbale is a significant town in Uganda

on the other side of Mount Elgon from Kitale in Kenya. It was also good to meet Pastor Joel and some of his colleagues who minister in southern Uganda down near the border with Tanzania. In Kakamega, we were glad to welcome to the conference some of the students who attend the Tuesday Bible Study in the Beulah Bookshop conducted by Evangelist Patrice Akali. Please pray for these young people who are seeking God’s will for their lives. Dr McKnight and his colleagues, Mr Steve Arnold and Mr Mark Webb, brought small gifts for the pastors, their wives and children. FPMSA presented the pastors with a free book, free literature and gave a discount on purchases from the bookshop during the time of the conference. Pray for a great harvest after this time of sowing. ■

Joanne Greer Returns to Liberia



It was 6 celsius when I flew out of Dublin at 06:20 on Wednesday 6th March; it was 29 celsius when I arrived in Monrovia at 20:10 that evening. So, the transition back to cold showers was made quite easily! The numbers in the children's meetings have dropped since I left eight months ago but I am thankful for the few who

have remained faithful. Several families moved away from the area in the latter half of last year and their kids had been part of our core group. Nathan Barco, our children's worker, and I plan to start going out regularly to the communities around the church to invite children, especially to the Sunday School. The problem is certainly not a lack of

children in the area or even a lack of interest but a lack of structure and consistency in the children's families. Please pray for this outreach.

Continue to pray also for the bookstore ministry which has been struggling due to the weak economy. Two of the men who have worked in the bookstore for several years have recently moved on to other employment so a couple of young men from the church have just started working in the store. Pray for them as they settle in and learn the stock.

There are quite a few new faces in the Paynesville congregation, most of whom have come in from the radio station. This is encouraging! We were also encouraged by the words of some police officers who recently testified that they listen to our station regularly – in fact, that it gets them through the night shift! Praise God for the ability to broadcast 24 hours a day! ■

✉ **Joanne Greer**

Book Appeal

CHRISTIAN BOOKS AND BIBLES ARE REQUIRED FOR THE BOOKSHOPS IN KENYA

All books and Bibles (new and used) can be given to
Missionary Council Representatives



Office:

Mrs Glenda Graham,
3 Carrigenagh Road,
Kilkeel, BT34 4NE
T: 028 4176 5574
office@fpcmission.org

Chairman:

Rev Ian Harris,
23a Moneydaragh Road,
Annalong, BT34 4TY
T: 028 4376 8040
rev.harris@fpcmission.org

Secretary:

Rev David Park,
55 Market Street,
Ballymoney, BT53 6ED
T: 028 2766 2039
hebronfpc@btconnect.com

Treasurer:

Mr Alastair Hamilton,
37A Ballymacvea Road,
Kells, Ballymena BT42 3NH
T: 078 6061 6302
a.hamilton@fpcmission.org

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Dates For The Diary

MAY

9th, 10th, 12th

RASHARKIN, SPRING BIBLE CONFERENCE

Time: Thur, Fri 8.00pm, Sunday 12noon & 7.00pm *Speakers:* Dr J Douglas, Rev G Dane

10th

LISBURN, YOUTH PRAISE SERVICE

Time: 8.00pm *Speaker:* Rev Paul Foster *Singers:* S Greer, One Accord, R MacRoberts

12th - 26th

SANDOWN, GOSPEL MISSION

Speaker: Rev R Higginson

17th

LURGAN, ANNUAL MISSIONARY CHALLENGE

Time: Friday, 8.00pm *Speakers:* Rev L Boyd, Mrs H Boyd, Rev D Park

19th-31st

ARMAGH, BALLYMAGERNEY, MARKETHILL, PORTADOWN, TANDRAGEE COMBINED GOSPEL TENT MISSION

Time: Sunday 8.30pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm

Speaker: Rev W McCrea

AUGUST

3rd-11th

BETHEL, ENNISKILLEN, LOUGH ERNE CONVENTION

Time: Sunday 8.30pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm *Speakers:* Rev G Dane, Dr J Douglas, Dr P Ferguson

SEPTEMBER

16th

DUNGANNON, ANNUAL LADIES CONFERENCE

Time: 8.00pm *Speaker:* Mrs Vi Dawson *Singers:* Rev and Mrs McKee, Miss C Caughey

22nd

PORTGLENONE, GOSPEL MISSION, KILLYMUCK ORANGE HALL

Speaker: Mr N Shields

OCTOBER

5th-11th

BALLYMENA ANNUAL BIBLE CONFERENCE

Time: Sat 7.00pm, Sun 6.30pm, Mon – Friday 8.00pm

Speakers: Drs A Cairns, J Douglas