

# FREE PRESBYTERIAN VISION



THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

## Peer Pressure

May - June 2014 . Issue 9 . £1



Paul Foster: God's Call



Distinctives: The Practice of Protest



Remembering Margaret Armstrong



News: Happy Birthday, Dr Cooke!





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## Editorial

**I don't believe in pick 'n' mix Christianity. I believe the Bible is the word of God, so who am I to ignore something from it? I might as well tear out that page then keep tearing out pages as and when it suits me. If I started out like that, there would soon be nothing left.'**

Scottish international rugby player Euan Murray became a Christian in 2005 and his words are indicative of a faith that is substantial and meaningful. For him, therefore, rugby on Sunday is not an option. However, for most, sport is now perfectly acceptable on this day. Major events inevitably reach a climax then, and numerous professing Christians have rejected the position of their forefathers in order to participate or watch.

Recently it was announced that the Northern Ireland football team would be required to play one of its European Championship qualifiers in Belfast on a

Sunday in 2015. Manager Michael O'Neill proclaimed "no issue" with the decision – as a Roman Catholic, his comment is hardly surprising. And one religion correspondent was quick to suggest that there would be the usual reaction from the "regular cranks" with their "blind bigotry".

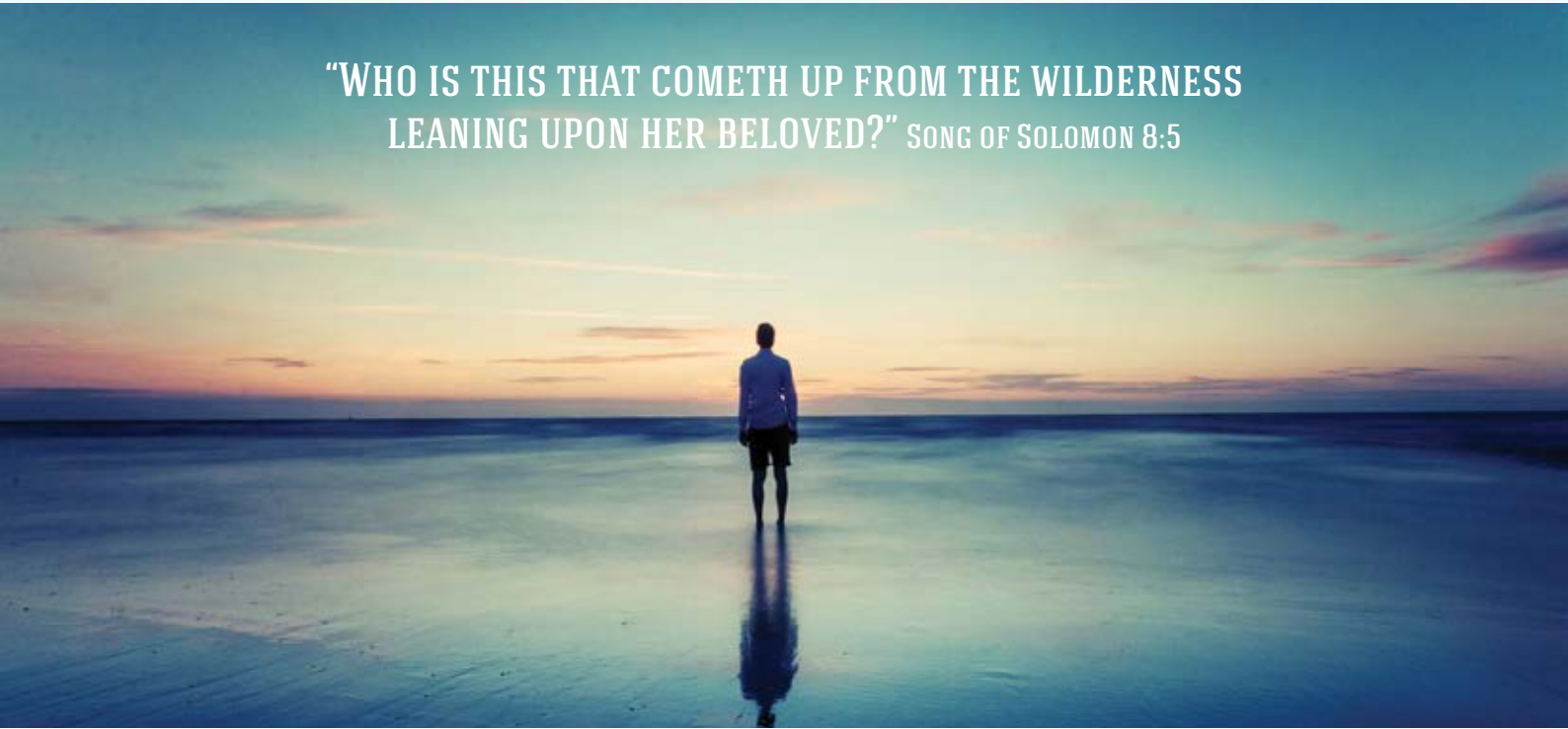
The world, and conforming Christians, may maintain otherwise, but the Bible directs us to honour the Lord's Day. We are bidden to turn away from our own pleasure and our own ways, finding our pleasure in Him and His ways. And there is blessing for that people prepared to give God His place, even in respect of His day (Isaiah 58:13-14).

Can we seriously maintain that our nation is the better for having abandoned the observance of this weekly day of worship and rest?

✚ Timothy Nelson  
editor@fpvision.org

# LEANING ON CHRIST

“WHO IS THIS THAT COMETH UP FROM THE WILDERNESS  
LEANING UPON HER BELOVED?” SONG OF SOLOMON 8:5



**T**he soul in Christ is on the way heavenward. Desiring “a better country, that is, an heavenly” (Hebrews 11:16) and looking “for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Hebrews 11:10), there is a disdain for the wilderness of this world. So just like the spouse in the Song, a ‘coming up’ from the wilderness is both desirable and discernible. There is no sitting still in it, or going further into it, as if it were home. Treading such a path indicates a pilgrim spirit. The company of saints “of whom the world was not worthy” (Hebrews 11:38) confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. David was of similar mind when he said “I am a stranger in the earth” (Psalm 119:19). It is the undoubted duty and commendable practice of believers not to be conformed to this world, viewing the world’s offers as nothing but “vanity and vexation of spirit” (Ecclesiastes 2:11). Our heart’s cry is surely: “Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity” (Psalm 119:37).

But how shall we be separate from this wilderness-world, while on our way to

the heavenly realm? A coming up from the wilderness implies an upward way, an ascending way, and progress being made in the ascent. We read of the spouse’s posture as she comes up from the wilderness – she is leaning. This Hebrew word is not used anywhere else in Scripture. It plainly suggests her weakness and her dependence upon another. Her spirit will flag and her strength will fail unless she receives continuous supplies. The one on whom she leans is her beloved.

This is a wonderful picture of the union, by faith, between a believing soul and Christ. He is the One whose love and loveliness has ravished the heart and drawn out the assent and consent of mind and heart to Him as the Bridegroom of the soul. He is our Beloved, the very one who is the Beloved of His Father. How intimate is this union! He is heir of all things and we are heirs of God through Him. His righteousness is ours to justify us, His grace is ours to sanctify us, His Spirit

is ours to comfort us. His covenant is ours, for it was made with Him and with us through Him.

He  
is the One  
whose love and  
loveliness has  
ravished the  
heart.

By faith in Him our souls are set on the way to Immanuel’s land and faith enables us to walk in it. Faith lives and leans on Christ. To lean on Him is to live by faith in Him. There isn’t one part of the pilgrimage where we dare adopt another posture.

We come up from the wilderness leaning and we will leave the wilderness still leaning – leaning upon His glorious Person. He calls us to lean upon Him and counsels us to depend upon Him saying, “Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee” (Psalm 55:22); “Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you” (1 Peter 5:7); “Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him” (Psalm 62:8)

∴ Rev Leslie Curran, Associate Editor, is the Director of Let the Bible Speak radio ministry in N Ireland and a regular preacher on its worldwide network of broadcasts.





## THE INTERVIEW: JI HYUN PARK

THE WHITEFIELD COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE HAS BEEN PRIVILEGED TO HAVE A NUMBER OF OVERSEAS ENROLEES, FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE DENOMINATION, IN ITS STUDENT BODY OVER THE YEARS. THESE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN HAVE ENRICHED THE LIFE OF THE COLLEGE, AND HAVE TESTIFIED TO THE BENEFIT RECEIVED AS THEY PREPARED FOR MINISTRY BEYOND THESE SHORES. AMONG THE CURRENT GROUP IS JI HYUN PARK, AN EXTERN STUDENT FROM SOUTH KOREA, WHO IS WITH US FOR ONE YEAR. THE EDITOR CAUGHT UP WITH HIM JUST BEFORE CLASS ON A RECENT THURSDAY.

**TN: Ji Hyun, can you tell our readers a little of your background?**

**JHP:** Well, I was born in S Korea's second city. It is called Busan. It's about two hundred miles from Seoul, the capital, and has a population about twice the size of N Ireland! It lies on the south east tip of the country, and is one of the busiest ports in the world. However, when I was ten years old, the family – I have a younger brother – moved to Seoul because of my father's business, so most of my education would have been there.

**TN: What did that entail?**

**JHP:** I went to High School where we studied a range of subjects, then to University in Seoul. For my first two years there was a fairly general curriculum, but for the last two I specialised in Hebrew Culture and History.

**TN: Timothy Nelson   JHP: Ji Hyun Park**

**TN: Did you have a Christian influence at home?**

**JHP:** No. My grandparents would have been convinced Buddhists. My parents were not practicing members, but the ethos of Buddhism would have moulded and shaped what they were, though not in a very obvious way. There was really no strong religious influence.

**TN: So how were you brought to Christ?**

**JHP:** When I was about 17, I was invited to the church of a school friend, a Presbyterian church. As I attended services there, I heard enough to realise that I was a sinner in need of salvation. But there was a lack of clarity in the teaching. Part of the problem was that members of the church, though Presbyterians, spoke in tongues – common, and not only in Pentecostal circles, in Korea – and they seemed to believe this experience was the sure sign of conversion. I struggled with it all for three years, trying to work my way to salvation, even trying to speak in tongues, but I could find no peace. Finally, one of my Christian friends at university gave me a book of Martyn Lloyd-Jones' sermons on Romans, and I understood at last that the only basis of salvation was the finished work of Christ in redemption. I trusted Him and came to be assured of salvation when I was 20.

**TN: You had an interesting experience after graduating from university.**

**JHP:** It is compulsory for young South Koreans to give two years military service, and so off I went to the army! My area of expertise was dog handling, and I got to enjoy working with those German Shepherds (Alsations) and to learn the importance of faithfulness.

**TN: What happened after military service?**

**JHP:** I spent two years teaching elementary students at a private school, but I knew this was not to be my life's work. Right from the time of my conversion, I had the desire to teach the Word of God, to be a pastor. I had benefited from the writings of many Reformed teachers, including CH Spurgeon and AW Pink, and I wanted to share the wonderful truths they introduced to me with others. But I wanted

a clear call from God to this ministry, and eventually I was convinced of his leading to the pastorate. By now I was attending Eunyung Presbyterian Church in Seoul, and after finishing my stint as a teacher, I enrolled in the denominational seminary where I studied for three years.

**TN: And you are now in the pastorate.**

**JHP:** Yes. While I studied, I worked part time in my home church, and afterwards, in 2008, I was ordained as an assistant pastor in the congregation.

**TN: It is a large church, isn't it?**

**JHP:** Including children, there are about 3000 people. We have three Sunday morning services. There is a senior pastor, I am one of six assistant pastors, and there are another eleven part time workers – so, yes, it is a large congregation.

**TN: So how did you end up in N Ireland?**

**JHP:** About eight years ago I was introduced to the witness of the Free Presbyterian Church through the sermonaudio.com internet site. I heard things that commended this church to me, and created a desire to learn more. Sometimes the churches in Korea, while doctrinally sound, are not so direct in proclaiming the Gospel. The Free Presbyterian Church believes in 'the free offer of the Gospel', in preaching Christ to all men. I was attracted too, by the church's separatist position and its stand against error. And so, with the permission of my church, I arrived in September 2013 for one year. I have been seeking to learn from this time – visiting many churches, attending deputation meetings and sitting in on classes at the college – it has been a very useful and helpful experience for me.

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**Thank you, Ji Hyun. I'm sure our readers will pray for you. We trust that God will bless you as you return to Korea at the end of the summer, and that His hand will be upon you, your wife, and children, in years to come.**

# APOS

## INVESTIGATING THE ISSUES

**N**ow the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. (1Timothy 4:1) Paul's solemn warning anticipates a series of awful departures from the faith. Certainly, in the life-time of the apostles, there was such departure – apostasy – on the part of various individuals and groups, but the trend is to continue until Christ returns. It is essential, then, that we heed this warning, for it impacts our own day.

### DEFINITION

What is apostasy? Basically, it is a 'departure'. While the word is not used by our translators, the Greek apostasia is found in the original of 2 Thessalonians 2:3, where 'falling away' is the translation that prompts the transliteration 'apostasy'. In 1Timothy 4:1, while the Greek is different, it is apostasy that is meant – 'a departure from', in the sense of abandoning something that was formerly espoused. The original word is used fifteen times in the New Testament, and these contexts will help us define apostasy,

**1. Ten times the translation is simply 'depart'.** Consider the following examples:

**(a)** Luke 2:37 – Anna 'departed not from the temple but served God'. It might be observed that this is what will happen in the absence of apostasy – there will be devotion to the house of God and faithfulness to Christ and the message of redemption (v.38). But by inference where there is apostasy, true worship and the Gospel will be forsaken.

**(b)** Acts 22:29 – The authorities, realizing that they had no right to punish a Roman citizen, departed from Paul at once. They wanted nothing to do with him, refusing even to be in his presence – the term here conveying a sense of abandonment.

**(c)** Luke 13:27 – This solemn reference pertains to that awful day when Christ will command the unregenerate to depart from Him into eternal punishment. Here is a complete separation between two parties, a severing of all connection and association. In apostasy, no connection with Christ remains; there is complete withdrawal by the apostate.

**2.** In Luke 8:13 the word is translated 'fall away'. The seed falling on stony ground represents those who hear the Gospel but eventually fall away. The reason – "these have no root, which for a while believe." There is no root, no connection with the vital source of life.

While profession has been made, it is empty and when the test comes, they fall away. This is a description of apostasy on a personal level.

**3.** The word is also translated to 'withdraw oneself' in 1 Timothy 6:3-5 – the believer withdrawing from false teachers. From such the believer is to remove completely – to be totally separate. The general sense of the word is revealed – apostasy involves withdrawal.

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BE PRIZED.**

### DEFECTION

Apostasy implies defection. Paul's warning obviously has a clear connection to

the verses at the close of the previous chapter. Chapter 3 depicts the church as the pillar and ground of the truth. God's people are to uphold the truth, summarized in verse 16, embracing the person and work of Christ. But apostasy is defection from that truth.

In 1 Timothy 3:16, the words "without controversy" literally mean



# T A S Y

‘confessedly’. We may conclude that this argues for a confession of faith to set down the truth so that there is no controversy about what we believe. Moreover, the original word comes from a root that means ‘to say or speak the same thing’. It signifies agreement, harmony and concord; and this is why a confession of faith is so important. There must be consensus on what the truth actually is! And it must be laid out clearly in order to enlighten believers, and to protect the church from error and falsehood. This verse may be viewed as a confession of faith in miniature, given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and it invites a closer look.

“Great is the mystery of godliness” – *mystery* signifies that which is revealed by God, for the truth could never be discovered by man’s fallen mind alone. The Lord has given to His people a revelation that is “great”, of the highest value, something to be prized. And Christ is the sum and substance of this revelation! Here is His **incarnation** – “God was manifested in the flesh.” What truth lies in these words – the virgin birth, His blessed person as the God-man, His life of perfect obedience, His humiliation and death, the atonement He made for sin – all is here! And there is His **vindication** – “justified in (by) the Spirit.” Here ‘justified has the sense of vindication. The Holy Spirit vindicated Christ by raising Him from

## THE DEFECTION INVOLVED IN APOSTASY IS DEFECTION FROM CHRIST.

the dead, Romans 1:3-4. Then, we have His **adoration** – “seen of angels.” The holy angels gaze on Him with wonder and adoration because of His gracious work (see 1 Peter 1:12, Ephesians 3:10). Next, His **proclamation** – “preached unto the Gentiles.” Literally it reads ‘proclaimed among the nations’. The reference is to Christ’s programme of evangelization, mentioned here because the commission was given before

He went back to heaven. There follows His **acceptation** – “believed on in the world.” That He was to be proclaimed among the nations anticipated His being accepted by those among whom He was preached. Thus, sinners from every tribe and nation began to worship Him as their Saviour and Lord, as had been predicted from ancient times, Genesis 12: 3. Finally, His **exaltation** – “received up into glory.” He was taken up into glory, signifying the sovereign and exalted position from which He reigns over all as King of kings.

Now, in the light of this, it is clear that the defection involved in apostasy is defection from Christ. This is a vital point. It assists recognition of apostasy. It prompts us to be careful who or what we brand as ‘apostate’ – the word has been used far too readily, and on occasions without justification. It underlines the true reason for ecclesiastical separation

– we separate from churches and from men when there is genuine departure from Christ, and when they embrace those who are undoubted apostates.

## DARKNESS

When apostasy occurs, the mind is opened to all kinds of error. This is the darkness of apostasy. It paves the way for the awful consequences pictured in the text.

The darkness of apostasy is promoted by *seductive forces* – “seducing spirits”, where the thought is of ‘causing to wander’. These evil spirits prompt men to wander into deeper deception.

The darkness of apostasy is promoted by *satanic falsehood* – “doctrines of devil”. Literally, it reads ‘teachings of demons’ – the powers of darkness have the ability to foster error, 2 Corinthians 11:2-4.

Note, finally, that all of this darkness is channelled through men: ‘speakers of lies in hypocrisy’ (verse 2). Hellish powers use men who hypocritically cloak their error in order to deceive; and do so because they have seared their consciences. Hence, the apostate’s darkness is but a prelude to eternal darkness, Jude 13.

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✚ Rev John Greer, minister of Ballymena Free Presbyterian Church, has been Moderator of the denomination since 2012.

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## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DR COOKE!



Armagh Free Presbyterian Church has hosted a special service to mark both Dr S B Cooke's eighty-fifth birthday and the twentieth anniversary of his retirement from ministry in the city.

The large congregation included many ministers and elders, with contributions from Moderator Rev John Greer, Dr John Douglas and Rev William McDermott. Whitefield College

students and the Armagh Youth Fellowship brought items of praise, and a recording was played of current minister Rev David McMillan singing in the church some twenty-eight years ago. At the close the congregation sang 'happy birthday' to Dr Cooke as he blew out the candles on a special cake!

Dr Cooke's famous sermon 'Free Presbyterianism: Why?' was reproduced on CD and made available at the service.

## REV WILLIAM WHITESIDE RETIRES

The retirement of Rev William Whiteside was marked at a special gathering in Banbridge church where he had ministered since 1990.

Conducted by interim-moderator Rev Austin Allan, the service included special greetings brought by Moderator Rev John Greer and Rev Alan Smylie, Ballygowan, where Mr Whiteside had ministered previously. Clerk of Session Mr Ivor Parke spoke fondly of twenty-four years of faithful ministry in Banbridge, and later presentations were made by fellow elders Jim McElroy and Philip Moore. Items of praise were contributed by Mr and Mrs Stephen McCrea and by Rev Fred Greenfield. The guest preacher was



former Clerk of Presbytery and College Principal, Dr John Douglas, a long-time friend of the congregation. The capacity congregation enjoyed supper and fellowship at the close of this 'bitter-sweet' occasion.



# MAGHERAFELT INSTALLATION



A capacity congregation witnessed the ordination and installation of Mr Ryan McKee as Associate Minister of Calvary Free Presbyterian Church, Magherafelt, on Friday 28th March. Dr William McCrea, in his 45th year of faithful ministry in the church, conducted the service, with contributions from Revs A Cairns, A Allan, D Stewart, I Harris, I Brown, D Brown and S Barnes. Moderator Rev J Greer and Rev G Lucas preached, and Mr Barry Stewart,

Clerk of Session, welcomed Mr McKee to his new role and assured him of the prayers of the people.

The Calvary Choir and Youth Choir also participated in the meeting. The congregation was encouraged by support from many other churches, and the presence of the Lord was evident throughout. Mr McKee commenced his preaching ministry as Associate Minister on Sunday 30th March.

## New Contact Details

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Portglenone, BT44 8BQ  
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**Rev K McLeod**  
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Rasharkin BT53 7JT  
T. 028 2957 1133

**Rev I Brown**  
6 Berkeley Hall Lane, Saintfield  
Road, Lisburn BT27 5TH  
T. 028 9266 3988



## FREE PRESBYTERIAN INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS



23<sup>rd</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> June 2014, Martyrs' Memorial Church, Belfast

### THE CALL TO BATTLE

*The Christian Armour, the key to successful Christian living*

**The Foe and the Forces**

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>

*Rev. John Morrow, Omagh*

**The Belt and the Breastplate**

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>

*Rev. Ian Goligher, Canada*

**The Sword and the Shield**

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>

*Rev. John Armstrong, Portavogie*

**The Headwear and the Footwear**

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>

*Rev. David McClelland, USA*

**The Prayers and the Perseverance**

Friday 27<sup>th</sup>

*Rev. John Greer, Ballymena*

Nightly at 8.00pm - Short video presentations of the work - Youth Choir on Friday

**PRAY AND PLAN TO ATTEND!**

# CHILDREN'S CORNER



## Sweeter than Honey

Boys and girls, with summer approaching I have noticed a lot of activity in my flowerbeds. Honey bees are working hard, collecting nectar. I love honey, especially on my toast! Did you know that God's Word describes itself as being sweeter than honey? In Psalm 119:103 it says, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"

The Bible is sweeter than honey because it contains the sweetest message of all, about the sweetest person of all. It tells us of salvation and of the Lord Jesus Christ the only Saviour of the world.

And the Bible is like honey because it sustains us. Honey is a good source of food. It is nature's sweetener, without additives or colouring. Honey will keep you strong and healthy. John the Baptist lived on honey and locusts. I'm sure it took

a lot of honey to get those locusts down! Just as the honey sustains the body, the Bible sustains us spiritually. In Psalm 119:28 David prays, "Strengthen thou me according to thy word."



Like honey, the Bible stands the test of time. Honey has special qualities which stop it from going bad. Years ago archaeologists found pots of honey in the pyramids of Egypt. And they discovered that the contents were still edible, even after being buried for thousands of years! The Bible too has stood the test of time. Psalm 119:160 reminds us that it is true from the beginning and that it will endure forever. Boys and girls, I hope that you remember to read God's precious Word every day.

Compiled by Robert McConnell

Just as the  
honey sustains  
the body, the  
Bible sustains us  
spiritually.

**Quiz:** Food is mentioned in these Bible references. Fill in the blank squares with your answers. Then take the letters from the shaded squares to find a special title given to the Lord Jesus Christ. Read John 6:27-37 for a clue to the answer. I have given you one of the letters in the puzzle to get you started.

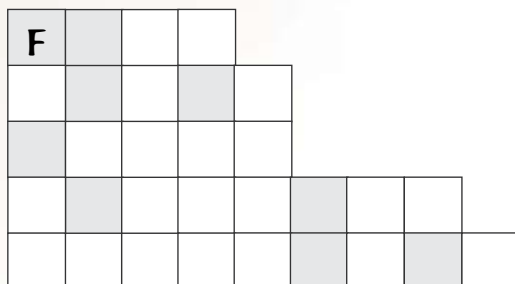
Luke 24:42

Genesis 18:6

Hosea 7:4

2 Samuel 23:11

Isaiah 1v8



The Lord Jesus is the...

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## PRIZES!

12 or under? To enter, send your answer, name, address, church attended to:

Rev. Stephen Pollock

Email: [answer@fpvision.org](mailto:answer@fpvision.org)

15 Fernagreevagh Road, Loughgall,  
Armagh, BT61 8PN

## NOV WINNERS EACH RECEIVE £5!

- |                               |                                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| » Mary Foster<br>(Kilskeery)  | » Joel Heak<br>(Tandragee)            |
| » Summer Watson<br>(Mourne)   | » Ellie Cunningham<br>(Mourne)        |
| » Ethan Salt<br>(Aghalee)     | » Lydia Hanna<br>(Mourne)             |
| » Stephen Hylands<br>(Comber) | » Matthew Rutherford<br>(Londonderry) |



# OUR GOOD GOD

**L**anguage inevitably changes from generation to generation. Often this poses no problems. But ask your parents what it meant 'to tweet' when they were young! Today we use words like 'awesome', 'wonderful', 'adorable' to describe the most mundane of items – from a video game to a teddy bear – when really they are more appropriate for God. He alone is truly worthy of awe, wonder and adoration!

Another word that is often used without much thought is the word 'good.' Chips are good, school is good, and holidays are good. All true! But what do we mean when we say: 'God is good'? "...there is none good but one, that is, God..." (Matthew 19:17). Do we simply mean He is not bad? Well, the verse in Matthew 19 shows us that God is always morally good. He can never act in a way that is sinful or wicked. He is good, so all He does is good. "Thou art good and doest good" (Psalm 119:68). But God's goodness often speaks of His kindness, benevolence and generosity. Satan delights when we hold harsh views of God. He suggests as much to Eve in Genesis 3:1- 'if God were good He would allow you access to every tree.' Our God is precise and just in His dealings with sin while also delighting to give and to bless. All he gives is good. (James 1:17)

He is good to all His creatures. "The LORD is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works." (Psalm 145:9, also Matthew 5:45) We know God is good in light of the fact that we are not immediately consigned to hell. (Romans 2:4) If you are not a Christian, the fact that you are reading this is due to God's goodness – He would have you turn from sin to Christ!

But God is especially good to His people. "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." (Psalm 73:1) "The LORD is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him." (Lamentations 3:25) He delights to forgive the sins of those who repent and trust in him. "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee." (Psalm 86:5) His goodness gives grace for every need. "The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble" (Nahum 1:7) "Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever." (Psalm 106:1)

So, young people, as your mother probably says: 'Be good!' Luke 6v35 states: "But...do good..." Be like God!

## FROM THE OLD TO THE YOUNG

*"Goodness is the very opposite of harshness, cruelty, gruffness, severity, mercilessness – all of which are far removed from God. How unbecoming it is to have such thoughts about God! Such sinful emotions are found in man. The goodness of God, on the contrary, is the loveliness, benign character, sweetness, friendliness, kindness, and generosity of God."*

- W. 'a Brakel, The Christian's Reasonable Service, Vol.1, The essence of God, page 122





# Peer Pressure

**Do you have a question about Christian belief or behaviour? Send your questions to: [questions@fpvision.org](mailto:questions@fpvision.org)**

**This month we asked Rev Roger Higginson (Coleraine), 'How can I handle peer pressure?'**

**P**eer pressure, the feeling of being pressurized to do or be something by those around us, is something we all experience.

It is positive when we provoke one another unto love and good works. (Hebrews 10:24) But it can also be negative – peers may pressurize us to enter into a questionable relationship, to experiment with drugs or alcohol, or to view questionable material on the internet.

Daniel and his three friends, brought as teenagers from Israel to Babylon,

faced considerable peer pressure. They were placed in a land that was morally bankrupt, with few believers, and so were deprived of the security of religious heritage. Nebuchadnezzar wanted to change their diet, their mindset, their speech, their names, their appearance, and their religion (Daniel 1:4-7). They were pressed to eat meat offered to idols, then enrolled in the University of





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WORKS.

Babylon to learn Chaldean and to be indoctrinated with the humanistic, secular and cultish learning of that nation. Nebuchadnezzar sought to change their identity and to erase the memory of their Godly upbringing, to create a band of young men who would look like, sound like, think like, and eat like native Babylonians! And you too may feel under pressure to talk like the world, appear like the world, or even think like the world with its humanism, secularism, ecumenism and atheism.

The natural thing is to yield to this pressure, especially as it can be very **strong**. When the tide of popular opinion is against us, it is hard to stand. It is a lot easier to drift. Daniel had the King, the King's court, parliament and an entire nation urging him to conform! The pressure was **continual** as the meat was set before them every day for ten days. Others were eating the King's meat – everyone else was doing it. Naturally we value acceptance and don't like being left out. What is set before us is often **appealing** to the senses. In Daniel's case it appealed to the eyes and the nose – the meat looked and smelt more appetizing than the cabbage-like pulse. He knew that the meat would taste a lot better than the pulse. If there was little or no appeal to our senses the pressure to conform would not be so great.

Daniel 1 provides us with clear direction to aid us in confronting peer pressure.

- **Purpose in your heart to honour God above all** (v8): there can be no purity of life where there is no purpose of heart. Daniel was not going to defile his conscience. We must **learn to say no**. Daniel could have argued that there was no choice. But the child of God always has the choice of honouring or dishonouring God.

- **Even if it appears unpopular or unsuccessful, do what is right:** eating pulse and drinking water when there was beef and wine on offer appeared foolish and politically incorrect. Even if Daniel had not appeared 'fairer and fatter in flesh' after eating the pulse, it was still the right thing to do. Faithfulness is more important than success!

- **Nail your colours to the mast at the first available opportunity:** Daniel let everyone know where he stood as soon as pressure was put on him. The longer we hide our light under a bushel the more difficult it becomes to let it shine.

#### CHRIST PRAYS FOR HIS PEOPLE WHEN THEY FACE THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION...

- **Be gracious in your behaviour:** Daniel treated his peers and those in authority politely, and in the process he won their respect.
- **Never forget in the darkness what God has shown you in the light:** in Babylon, Daniel could have been tempted to think that society had moved on and the principles he learned as a boy were no longer relevant. Truth and morality do not change. We must take our stand, and not waver. Daniel knew God's word on the matter, Leviticus 7.22-27.

- **Be consistent in your conduct:** Daniel didn't honour God in this area and dishonour Him in others. Nor did he reason that a little compromise would do no harm.

- **Maintain close fellowship with God:** we sometimes sing 'Daniel was a man of prayer' and he was. His communion with God enabled resistance of pressure to conform.

A dead fish can only go with the tide – but a living one can swim against it. A sign of spiritual life is the ability to walk against the course of this world. Daniel had the life of God in him, and we can only conquer when we have new life in Christ.

The apostle Paul faced immense pressure from the Jews and the Romans, but said "*in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us*" (Romans 8:37). John declared "*this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*" (1 John 5:4). Christ prays for His people when they face the hour of temptation "*I pray ... that thou shouldest keep them from the evil*" (John 17:15) He provides a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13). He was victorious in temptation (Hebrews 4:15-16), and He is able to help us (Hebrews 2:18). He gives us the Holy Spirit who empowers us to live victoriously.

Young person, 'dare to be a Daniel' – 'dare to stand alone, dare to have a purpose firm, and dare to make it known'.



# PAUL FOSTER: GOD'S CALL



**H**ave you ever been a part of a plan but not known anything about it? It was 6.55pm, on a Lord's Day evening, several years ago. I was in Newtownards Free Presbyterian Church, wearing my regular Sunday clothes, sitting in my usual seat waiting for the service to start. Little did I realize that I was less than an hour away from a challenge that would change my life forever! The minister asked, 'Are you willing to serve God in full-time service?' The words came powerfully and unmistakably from the Lord and I knew they were for me! Dreams of a

career in sport prompted me to fight against Him, and hours of wrestling began. However the Lord softened my heart and enabled me to say 'Yes'.

Imagining further challenge would follow in church services, I was shocked to find that weeks went by and not a single hint of a call came. And the thought of full-time service lay dormant through school and university days. Mid-way through university I became unwell and spent some months in hospital.

The Lord in providence used a casual conversation with my minister to profound effect. He declared, 'Whatever the Lord's will is, He will provide not only the **ability** and **opportunity** to complete it, but also the **passion** – for only then will you be able to do it unto Him with all your heart'. Knowing I had no desire to pursue a career related to what I was studying at university, I set about praying for the Lord to make His will clear, and in doing so, give me with a passion for it above everything else.

The Lord answered that prayer, and through a local street outreach gave me a compelling love, far exceeding everything else, to talk to people about Him. As this passion grew, the Lord also began to speak very distinctly, through the preaching of His Word, calling me to serve Him full-time. Feeling unfit for such a thing, I prayed earnestly for clarity, and as Proverbs 3:5-6 promises, the Lord confirmed His call through His Word in my own daily devotions.

The Lord declares in Matthew 9:35-38, "the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few". Are you willing to serve the Lord? Has the Lord called you? We all must pray "the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."

If you have received His call to be such a labourer, have you obeyed?

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∴ **Paul Foster** is a 4<sup>th</sup> year student in the Theological Hall.

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## YOUTH COUNCIL SPRING RALLY

**H**undreds of young people gathered in Martyrs' Memorial church on Friday 21st March for the Annual Spring Rally. A choir from the Belfast churches sang and Jonathan Smith, newly appointed Mission Board youth worker, spoke.

In his message, Rev Ian Brown made it plain that the gospel is not simply history but good news to the 'whosoever' – it is about a Saviour who is alive, not dead, hence it is always up to date.

*Photos courtesy of Ruth Dane.*





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# A WORD TO WOMEN

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**“TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO: AND WHEN HE IS OLD, HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT.” (PROVERBS 22:6)**

**A** few months ago I became a grandmother for the first time when our little grandson, Elijah, was born. It was a truly joyous occasion for all the family – and it made me think afresh of our responsibility to teach the Word of God to boys and girls!

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 commanded the Israelites to teach diligently the laws of God to their children. The older generations were charged to instruct the boys and girls under their control. Of course, there are many things vital for the well being of little ones. It is important that they are clothed and well fed, their health and medical care is attended to, that they are given every opportunity to further their education. However, there is nothing as important as training them in the ways of God! Children must be trained in the way that is right [Proverbs 22:6]. Parents soon realize that fact, for our children learn very quickly to say ‘no’ to everything!

THE  
PRECIOUS SEED  
WHICH HIS (JOHN  
NEWTON'S) MOTHER  
HAD SOWN, AT LENGTH,  
BROUGHT FORTH  
A WONDERFUL  
HARVEST!

When you are teaching those under your care – in Sunday School, Children's Meeting, Holiday Bible Club, as a mother in the home, or a grandmother when the little ones come round – always remember that telling them of Christ lays a foundation for eternity. If the archer is to hit the target, the arrow must be pointed in the right direction. Teaching the children is about pointing them in the right direction, and laying a foundation upon which they can build for the rest of their lives. Let us lay those foundations well!

Think of Timothy's grandmother and mother, Lois and Eunice [2 Timothy 1:5]. They taught him the Scriptures from childhood [2 Timothy 3:15]. There is very little said about these ladies in the Bible, yet what a legacy they

have in Timothy, a minister of the Word and also a labourer with Paul. What a tremendous privilege Timothy enjoyed as a child! But he was not brought up in an ideal family situation. His Jewish mother, Eunice, was married to a Gentile and they were living in a pagan city [Acts 16:3]. Yet Timothy was instructed from infancy. Eunice remained true to the Scriptures, even though no mention is made of her husband's salvation or of any ability or desire to instruct Timothy spiritually. Be encouraged if you find yourself in a similar position. Like Eunice, you too can be a power for good in your family, by teaching the little ones and praying faithfully for them. Paul reminds us of the influence a believing family member can exert over unbelievers in the home (1 Corinthians 7:14).

John Newton was only 8 years old when his mother died. After his conversion, he recalled the enduring example she had been to him in those early years. Although he fell into deep sin as a young man, that early influence never left him. God answered his mother's prayers many years later, saving him and using him extensively as a preacher and hymn writer. The precious seed which his mother had sown, at length, brought forth a wonderful harvest!

Let us be encouraged. God can use that simple word which we sow prayerfully in the hearts of the children. It is not how eloquent we are in teaching, or how experienced. Remember, it is the Word of God which we seek to impart, and He has promised that His Word will not return unto Him void, but will accomplish that which He pleases (Isaiah 55:11).

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✠ **Alison Armstrong** lives in Portavogie, N Ireland. She is the wife of the Free Presbyterian minister there, active in the life of the congregation, and works as a primary school teacher.

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# DISTINCTIVES

## FEATURES OF FREE PRESBYTERIANISM

### THE PRACTICE OF PROTEST

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR MEMBERS OF OUR CONGREGATION  
CONVENED A PROTEST OUTSIDE THE THEATRE AT THE MILL,  
NEWTOWN ABBEY. WE WERE THERE, WITH OTHERS, TO REGISTER OPPOSITION  
TO THE STAGING OF A PRODUCTION THAT MOCKED THE BIBLE AND  
BELITTLED ITS MESSAGE.

When the honour of God and His Word, the fundamentals of the faith, or public morals are slighted, a protest is to be raised. Contending against error, compromise and outright apostasy is to be faithful to the clear commands of Scripture. This spirit of protest is to be exercised, be it against liberals, modernists or those soft-centred ‘evangelicals’ who associate with those they should not. After all, protest ‘against’ error, as well as ‘for’ the truth, is part of being a true ‘Protestant’!

#### PRACTISING THE TRUTH

The command to protest is clearly Scriptural. How often in the history of the Free Presbyterian Church the words of Jude 3 have been quoted as the means of explaining and justifying this spirit of protest! *“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”*

Paul not only believed in preaching the gospel fervently, but he was also *“set for the defence of the gospel”* (Philippians 1:17). In his mind the Gospel needed to be preached and defended, and he determined to do so. He saw the Gospel minister in the New Testament age in the same mould as Ezekiel, who was commissioned to be as the watchman

upon the walls of the city, crying out against all who would seek its harm.

The apostle goes further and teaches that one prominent mark of a faithful ministry is to contend against error. Writing to Timothy, he warned that there would be those, especially in the latter days, who would “depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils” (1 Timothy 4:1). Timothy was challenged to warn of these errors, and expose those who promoted them: *“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained”* (1 Timothy 4:6).

And these New Testament commands are not innovations. They are following that well defined path traversed by the Old Testament prophets. The ministries of those such as Ezra, Nehemiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, to name but a few, were evidently characterized by this spirit of protest against sin and departure from God.

#### PERPETUATING THE WITNESS

To protest is always necessary. The requirement exists for all true churches and ministers of the Gospel

today. God’s truth is ever under attack. The devil has sought to assail the Word of God from the beginning. He did so in the Garden of Eden and he continues to this day. He still *‘goes about as a roaring lion’*. Faithfulness to God, therefore, requires this spirit of protest.

...AND EXHORT  
YOU THAT  
YE SHOULD  
EARNESTLY  
CONTEND FOR  
THE FAITH  
WHICH WAS ONCE  
DELIVERED UNTO  
THE SAINTS.

Churches and ministers who shy away from raising the voice of protest against error are failing in God’s eyes, no matter who else might commend them. Sadly, there have ever been those who are ashamed of the protesting element within the name ‘Protestant’. There are

many who never open their mouths in protest against error and compromise from one year to the next. To observe them you would think that the devil is dead and that no error is presently being propagated by his minions! This is surely contrary to the teaching of the New Testament.

The Word of God would have us to protest against error because God in His infinite wisdom has committed the treasure of the gospel to earthen vessels. This in turn places a solemn duty upon the people of God generally, in every generation, and Christian ministers in particular, to defend the honour of God, His Word and His truth, against all attacks. The Lord could, if



He so decreed, intervene directly and deal with those who oppose Him and His truth. He has infinite power to do so. However, He has ordered otherwise. He requires His people to own His truth in this world and to be prepared to contend for that truth when it is attacked. This is part of identifying with the Saviour. He defended His Father's truth on earth, and the servant is not above the Master.

### **PROTECTING THE FLOCK**

This spirit of protest is for the good of the sheep. The minister is an under-shepherd of the sheep and therefore he must be always on his guard, ever looking out for the welfare of the sheep. He must guard against the wild beast which would devour the sheep and the lambs of Christ's flock. Like David, who went out against the bear and the lion, so we must go out against those who would harm the flock of God by their attacks on His truth. It is no coincidence that it was the same order of skills that David needed to employ to deal with Goliath and to exercise the duties of kingship. The welfare of Christ's flock is seriously jeopardized where there is a failure to protest against error. Compromise and error subsequently creep in and become acceptable among God's people where there is no voice of protest raised. Sadly, ever so many are more readily influenced by error than they are by truth!

### **PUBLICIZING THE ERROR**

Whether in the case of Old Testament prophets or New Testament apostles, this contending was done openly. These men took their cause to the public square and contended with error. Open compromise with error requires open protest and rebuke. Paul, for example, was open in pointing out the errors that had crept into the churches he founded. We have the inspired record of his warnings and entreaties for ever preserved in the Word of God. There were times when he rebuked whole churches, such as Corinth, in his first letter to that church. On another occasion he rebuked his fellow apostle, Peter, and also Barnabas who had dissembled and who for a time had sided with the Judaizers who were doing so much harm to the New Testament church, cf. Galatians 2:11.

It has been the consistent practice of the people of God to have among them a spirit of protest and to be zealous of the honour of the Lord. Who are we to abandon these convictions?

**GOD REQUIRES  
HIS PEOPLE  
TO OWN HIS  
TRUTH IN THIS  
WORLD AND TO  
BE PREPARED  
TO CONTEND  
FOR THAT  
TRUTH WHEN IT  
IS ATTACKED.  
THIS IS PART  
OF IDENTIFYING  
WITH THE  
SAVIOUR.**

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∴ **Rev Brian McClung** is the minister of  
Newtownabbey Free Presbyterian Church.

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# SPOTLIGHT ON THE SCHOOLS

A Presbytery Education Board Feature



## BALLYMONEY

Pupils are delighted with the newly refurbished Library and Computer Suite. Thanks to Steven Boyd and Rhonda Maternaghan who ran a Half Marathon to raise funds for this project and to all who helped

with the renovation work! The results achieved by our Year 7 pupils in the Common Entrance Exams this year were thrilling, with one pupil joint first in Northern Ireland! 'Well done and To God be the Glory!'



## NEWTOWNABBEY

Upper Primary Technology class displays this year's design work including miniature wooden houses and sail boats.



## MOURNE

Year 1-4 dressed up as their favourite book characters to attend Kipper's 25th birthday party, celebrating 'World Book Day'. Year 5-7 pupils with prizes they won in

a Nursing Home's poetry competition and holding a Victorian Tea Party, when finishing their Victorian topic in History. Year 8-11 pupils who have had their poems published in a poetry anthology.





## KILSKEERY

Prize Night attendees heard that all six GCSE students gained 9 or 10 GCSEs at grade C or above, most gaining 3 or more additional level 2 vocational qualifications, equivalent to a GCSE. 25% of all grades were A or A\*. Sarah Foster, winner of the Hannah Fallows Memorial Cup for Academic Achievement in Upper Primary. Amy Foster and Hannah Dane received prizes for success in GCSE examinations.



## CLOGHER VALLEY

Both pupils and parents have their times of prayer, when all the interests of our school families are remembered. Recently we have been thinking of Jenson Scott, brother of pupil Ethan. Jenson was born without connecting tubes between his liver and gall bladder, a very rare condition known as Biliary Atresia. Shortly after birth he underwent six hours of life-saving surgery at Birmingham Children's Hospital. God has wonderfully answered prayer thus far. Jenson will probably need a liver transplant in later childhood. Parents Stephen and Gillian, and the entire family, appreciate the support received from so many connected with the school. 'How good is the God we adore, our faithful unchangeable Friend.'



## PORTADOWN



This year pupils undertook a sponsored 'Read-Along' for 'Precious Orphanage' in Nepal. They attempted to read as many books as possible for six weeks prior to 'World Book Day', asking family members and friends to sponsor them for each book read. Over £2,000 has been raised with most eligible for Gift Aid. Thank you to the children and to all who sponsored them!

## BANGOR

Key Stage Three pupils recently completed a project entitled Cheese Sensations, and are pictured at the end of their cooking session with snacks which included quesadillas, cheesy hedgehogs, pitta pizzas and cheese rolls. Year 11 pupils have been working on I.C.T. Controlled Assessment tasks while the Year 12 pupil prepares for the Theory exam in May through revision and practice papers. Years One to Seven attend the new Aurora Swimming Complex each Friday where they enjoy the Olympic sized pool and work towards distance (5 metres to 2 miles) and survival badges (Level 2).



### MOURNE INDEPENDENT CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

**Full-time teacher required:**  
**Maths / Science**

**Applications in writing to:**

The Administrator,  
5 Carrigenagh Rd, Kilkeel BT34 4NE  
or [apatterson78@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:apatterson78@hotmail.co.uk)

### KILSKEERY INDEPENDENT CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

**Teacher / Trainee teacher**  
**Required, Sept 2014**

**Enquiries:** Contact  
Rev B McClung 028 9083 5942



# MISSIONARY VISION

## MISSION BOARD UPDATE

**T**he Mission Board thanks every supporter of our denomination's missionary endeavour. We are amazed by God's goodness in providing the necessary finance through regular covenant support, and monthly grants from Missionary Council offerings. In tough times, the sacrificial giving of so many is such an encouragement, enabling us to keep workers on the field and to assist them in their ministries. Every day God is teaching us the blessing of being "workers together with him".

Since the last issue a special Missionary Rally, kindly hosted by Ballymena congregation, was convened to highlight needs in Kenya and Nepal. After the very successful Ballymoney weekend in January, we wondered if many would travel to nearby Ballymena. The Lord did not disappoint us! The meeting drew hundreds from across the province, and His blessing was very evident.

**IN TOUGH TIMES, THE SACRIFICIAL GIVING OF SO MANY IS SUCH AN ENCOURAGEMENT, ENABLING US TO KEEP WORKERS ON THE FIELD AND TO ASSIST THEM IN THEIR MINISTRIES.**

Rev. Graham spoke on behalf of Nepal and Miss McAfee reported for Kenya. Special multimedia presentations were prepared by Rev Park, who highlighted on-going projects supported by the Mission Board.

The new website for the Mission Board and Missionary Council was also officially launched. Mr. Alastair Hamilton, a Missionary Council representative on the Mission Board, introduced the new site. The Board is indebted to him for all he has done to have the site up and running.

The Rally has been uploaded to the Gallery section of our new Website where you can listen in once again. The offering totalled £4,698, with additional substantial gifts contributed over the weekend. Moderator Rev. Greer preached on

Christ's missionary burden, John 4 v 28-42, and helped lift our eyes once again to the fields 'white already unto harvest'.

IT IS  
GOOD TO KNOW  
THAT THROUGH SUCH  
MEETINGS HEARTS HAVE  
BEEN STIRRED AND LIVES  
HAVE BEEN OFFERED  
FOR MISSIONARY  
WORK.

It is good to know that through such meetings hearts have been stirred and lives have been offered for missionary work. We trust that this will mean new workers being thrust out into those fields to labour for God. God has brought us to the kingdom for such a time as this. This is our day of opportunity and service, at home and abroad. We are challenged again by the words of the old missionary hymn:

*"Shall we, dare we, disappoint Him?  
Brethren, let us rise!  
He who died for us is watching  
From the skies."*

✚ Rev Ian Harris  
(Chairman)

## KENYAN APPEAL SUCCESSFUL



**M**ission Board thanks the many congregations and individuals who contributed to the appeal launched to raise £30,000 for two new buildings for the Bible Christian Faith Church, Kenya. The target now reached, we are closing this appeal. The Makutano building is near

completion. Another is planned near the Uganda border. May God greatly bless the preaching of his Word in these buildings! Full reports will be given in due course.

*"Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." (Psalm 115:1).*



## A VISIT TO SPAIN



In February I visited Spain on behalf of the Mission Board for the opening of the new hall in Alcorcon, Madrid. The church was well filled, with some visitors from Ulster attending. After the meeting, the new hall – which includes Sunday school rooms and a study – was used to host refreshments and a time of fellowship. May this excellent facility be used for the glory of God!

Later I travelled south to Beas De Segura with Rev and Mrs Boyd. With Rev Boyd interpreting, I preached on the Lord's Day, and at the prayer meeting. The barriers to the gospel are real and growth is slow here, but the Boyds and Joy Gillespie continue to labour faithfully. Continue to pray for the Spanish field. Rev Boyd is due home on deputation this September, Rev Creane (Lurgan) arranging meetings.

Rev Andrew Patterson

## BOOKS FOR AFRICA



Missionary Council is renewing its appeal for new and used Bibles, books and stationery supplies to stock shops in Kenya and Liberia. If you can help, your items may be channelled through your local church or Council representatives. If you don't have anything suitable, why not help with transportation. At £1.70 per kilo to ship to Africa, the last consignment cost £1240. Further information: Contact Missionary Officer George McConnell (details, bottom of page 23).

## SPECIAL PROJECTS



Mission Board's 'Projects Appeal', under the sponsorship of the Missionary Council, has helped, in **KENYA**, the Christian Academy, Church buildings, food aid, vehicles, furnishings, computers and Achsah's well at the School – and in **NEPAL**, the Bible College, Precious Orphanage and children, Pastors' Conference, church buildings, radio broadcasts, and motor bikes for pastors

### AND YOU CAN HELP!

Local congregations, Youth Fellowships, Bible Classes, Sunday Schools, Ladies Groups, Families, or just individuals – all could focus on a current project

### KENYA

#### Today's projects include, for Kenya:

- » Christian Academy (*£25000 needed annually*)
- » new cooker (*£1500, to start a school bakery*)
- » solar water heater (*£1900*)
- » printer/copier (*£1760*)
- » Sunday school prizes (*£2000 annually*)
- » poorer children (*food*)
- » upgrading & networking computers (*£3640*)
- » deposit for new school bus.

### NEPAL

#### Nepal needs

- » orphanage support,
- » a site for new premises (*£84000*)
- » annual Bible College training (*£2100*)
- » monthly pastor's support (*£400*)
- » Annual Conference (*£3800*)
- » Medical Fund (*any gift appreciated*)
- » church buildings (*£4000*)

If you are interested in sponsoring

any of these projects please contact:

**Rev. David Park** (Missionary Council Chairman)

028 2766 2039 or [revdavidpark@gmail.com](mailto:revdavidpark@gmail.com)

# REMEMBERING MARGARET ARMSTRONG

**M**argaret Armstrong, whose name may not be widely known even among Free Presbyterians, was a remarkable lady who was instrumental in initiating our missionary work in Kenya. She was born on 29 May 1934 and so, had she lived, Margaret would have celebrated her 80th birthday this month.

The great granddaughter of the First Baron Napier of Magdala (1810-1890), once the British Army's highest ranking officer, Margaret was born in Nairobi and grew up on the family coffee farm in Ibonia, Kiambu. After initial home schooling she went to Limuree Girls School before moving to Armagh to live with relatives in 1948. Her education continued at the Manor School House in Milford, and then at Trinity College, Dublin, where she earned a diploma in Social Science. While at Trinity she was converted. Margaret takes up the story:

*When I was in Dublin studying in November 1953 another girl who was studying Social Science with me took me along to hear Rev Sidlow Baxter. His addresses were entitled 'The Deeper Truths of the Bible'; he was there for a week. I enjoyed listening to him so much I went back each night and I began to want what he had. What did he mean when he talked about such things as the uplifting power of the indwelling Spirit? I was ready to do anything to get what he was talking about and so it came about that when he made an appeal one night that I responded. He said 'Is there anyone willing to enthrone Christ in their hearts?' I prayed that the Lord Jesus would come into my life and be enthroned in my heart.*

*Sometime later the Lord challenged me: Would I be willing to go to the Mission Field? I told Him I would if he wanted me. He led me to BTI Bible College, Wycliffe Linguistic Course and Missionary School of Medicine. Later I applied and was accepted by AIM (Africa Inland Mission) for work in Kenya, arriving in July 1960, where I was assigned to do women's and girls' work among the Marakwet Tribe at the Kapsowar Mission Station.*

Margaret made a profound impact in Kenya. Bill Rettie spent 14 years in Kenya with AIM, and he made these interesting and revealing observations on his time there:



**SHE WAS PROBABLY THE FIRST WHITE MISSIONARY TO STAY IN THE AREA FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME... SHE BROUGHT THE GOSPEL AND TALKED TO WHOEVER WOULD LISTEN.**

*In many conversations the name of one Margaret Armstrong was often mentioned with great respect. Margaret, an AIM missionary from Northern Ireland used to visit the area in the 1960's. She was probably the first white missionary to stay in the area for any length of time. That in itself impressed her hosts - 'she ate our food'. More importantly she brought the Gospel and talked to whoever would listen. There was little evident response at that time but Margaret prayed fervently that the Lord would establish his church in that place. She returned home and subsequently died without ever seeing an answer to her prayer. Yet today there is not one but six Africa Inland Church (AIC) congregations in this area plus a number of other denominations. It is estimated that over half of the whole community regularly worship in these churches. A recently completed church*

*building will have a commemorative plaque to Margaret's memory – a fitting tribute to one who planted for others to reap.*

How Margaret became a Free Presbyterian reveals strength of character, sincere convictions and deep spiritual discernment. Our admiration for her increases when we consider that this stand was taken by someone from an aristocratic background – by one who had more to lose than many others. When home on furlough in 1966, she first heard Dr Paisley preach and she joined the newly formed Free Presbyterian Church in Armagh. This decision brought trouble and criticism from many quarters but Margaret did not waver. Writing to a correspondent at that time she stated:

*Thanks for your letter which I thought I would reply to imminently in order to answer your reference to reactions of me becoming a 'Paisleyite'! You say that you would have looked around for a different group – not the Free Presbyterians. Well, all the historic denominations are in the WCC – Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, Methodist,*



## KENYA CHOIR AVAILABLE ON INTERNET

Both CDs of the BCFC Christian Academy Choir are available on the internet (iTunes, Amazon MP3, Google Play, Spotify, Emusic, Media Net, and Rhapsody). Search for **SPREAD THE NEWS** and **BE THOU EXALTED**. Please visit and download a tune or album. All revenue goes to the school.



*Baptist and Salvation Army. In Armagh the Brethren and Pentecostal are not. But why slip into those when the Free Presbyterians have done the work of faithfully alerting us to the dangers ... They got all the slander and hatred and are despised and when you look into it you find it is because they stand for the truth. So I want to be where the battle against the ecumenical movement and the Rome-ward trend is hottest.*

Later, speaking in Ravenhill Free Presbyterian Church, she declared:

*I would like to say how happy I am to be here tonight and to say, I thank God for Dr Paisley's ministry and booklets, and that I am glad I have broken my association with the WCC (World Council of Churches), whatever people may say.*

Margaret resigned from AIM and she wrote in her letter of resignation:

*My desire is to make a complete break with the WCC. Therefore standing on such promises in Scripture as 1 Timothy 6: 3-5, and 2 Corinthians 6: 14-17, and*

*others, I want to resign from AIM. So I am ready from now on to receive no more allowances.*

**I WANT TO BE WHERE THE BATTLE AGAINST THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT AND THE ROME-WARD TREND IS HOTTEST.**

*When I was last on furlough in 1965 I left the Church of Ireland because it is in the Ecumenical Movement, it has its clergy who sit on the Irish Council of Churches and many of its clergymen are very ecumenically minded. It seems to me that the Scriptural way to deal with this spiritually deadly movement is to withdraw from it. Now I find that the AIM, although its members are not ecumenically minded, it has the same link up as the Church of Ireland, being a member of the NCC (National Council of Churches) of Kenya. It is illogical for me to withdraw from one and not the other; therefore I wish to withdraw from the AIM because it is not putting into practice this teaching of separation.*

Thus Margaret resolved to separate from this compromise, whatever it might cost. We will complete the story of her remarkable life in the next issue.

✚ Rev Gordon Ferguson

## NEW WEBSITE SIGN UP NOW!



The newly launched website for our missionary work: **www.fpcmission.org** carries information on all our missionaries and up to date prayer requests, news and photos. To ensure that you continue to receive prayer letters and news from the missionaries, you need to register your email address on the site. Go to the home page and click on the button at the top, "Register for Updates". This will initiate a simple registration and validation process, where you can select the information you would like to receive. You can change these preferences and your email address at any time.

### MISSION BOARD DETAILS

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# DATES FOR THE DIARY

## MAY

5<sup>th</sup>

### MAGHERAFELT, LADIES CONFERENCE

Speaker: Mrs K Murray (Tandragee)  
Testimony: Mrs J Creane (Lurgan)  
Time: Monday, 8.00pm

9<sup>th</sup>

### BALLYMENA, YOUTH RALLY

Speaker: Rev I Brown  
Theme: Creation v Evolution  
Time: Friday, 8.00pm

16<sup>th</sup>

### MOURNE, YOUTH RALLY

Speaker: Rev D Stewart  
Special Singing  
Time: Friday, 8.00pm

16<sup>th</sup>

### LISBURN, YOUTH PRAISE SERVICE

Speaker: Rev G McCammon  
Singers: Joy Logan  
Ben, Stephen & Daniel  
David Warwick  
Time: Friday, 8.00pm

16<sup>th</sup>+18<sup>th</sup>

### SIXMILECROSS, ANNIVERSARY SERVICES

Speakers: Revs T Murray &  
F Greenfield  
Special Singing  
Time: Friday at 8.00pm  
Sunday at 3.30pm

18<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>

### BALLYMONEY, BIBLE CONFERENCE

Speaker: Rev J Greer  
Time: Sunday at 8.00pm  
Monday – Friday at 8.00pm

25<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>

### BALLYMONEY, YOUTH CONFERENCE

Speakers: Various  
Time: Monday – Friday at 8.00pm

## JUNE

7<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>

### BALLYMENA, BIBLE CONFERENCE

Speaker: Dr A Cairns  
Time: Saturday at 7.30pm  
Sunday at 11.30am & 6.30pm  
Monday – Friday at 8.00pm

8<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>

### PORTADOWN & GILFORD, TENT MISSION

Speaker: Rev T Martin  
Time: Sundays at 8.30pm,  
Monday – Friday at 8.00pm

*Tent situated near Knock Road roundabout,  
Portadown-Gilford Road*

28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>

### ANNALONG, ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND

Speaker: Rev D Park  
Time: Saturday at 8.00pm  
Sunday at 12.00 & 7.00pm

## AUGUST

2<sup>nd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>

### ENNISKILLEN, LOUGH ERNE CONVENTION

Speakers: Rev J Greer,  
Dr J Douglas  
Rev I Harris  
Time: Nightly at 8.00pm

## SEPTEMBER

20<sup>th</sup>

### TANDRAGEE, MEN'S CONFERENCE

Speakers: Rev S Pollock  
Rev I Brown  
Dr A Cairns  
Time: Saturday at 10.00am