

Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

Challenges Facing the Church of Tomorrow

Words
to Live By
2 Timothy 2:22

Revive Thy
Work O Lord
Co. Fermanagh

JULY
2023
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£1.00



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Editorial

Summer is here! I can vividly recall my summer holidays as a child as a time which always took on a predictable routine. The holidays began with feverish excitement but soon turned into a prolonged spell of boredom. I, along with my friends, would start wondering what we were going to do with our time. However, as the last week approached, and the new school term loomed, we quickly realised that the summer was ending.

Summer, for the life and witness of the church, is a time when many of our churches will engage in children's and youth work. Let us pray that God will be pleased to protect and bless these faithful efforts - how valuable they are. However, they too will soon pass, and with them more opportunities for young people to get right with God.

In Jeremiah's day, the people had been living under a false impression. Despite all of the prophetic warnings that captivity was going to happen, the people still hoped for peace. False prophets had given them smooth but lying words, assuring them that such could never befall a people whose God is the LORD. It is in this context that we read some very well-known words in Jeremiah 8:20, 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved'. In other words, these people realised that what they felt was an ideal time for deliverance to come, because it was before winter, had passed. They were not rescued; they were not saved. Instead, they would wait many years before their salvation would be realised again. Those solemn words '...we are not saved' must ring in our ears as we make our summer plans. With all the plans you have for the summer, what preparation have you made for your soul? ■



“It is important to realise that however dark the days may become, such seasons of difficulty are nothing new for the Lord's people.”

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“God always puts His bright lights in dark places. Christian, take courage and do not hide away in this day.”

A Light in the Darkness

1 Kings 16:29 - 1 Kings 17:1

The story is told of Benjamin Franklin’s attempts to implement street lighting in Philadelphia. He did not call for a town meeting or try to persuade the people by advertising it. How did he go about it? He acted on an idea! It is said that Franklin hung a large, bright lantern on a long bracket at the front of his house. He carefully trimmed the wick and polished the glass every evening. Now there was a light for all to see even on the darkest of nights. People could see the hazards in the night around them, and passing his house made them feel more secure. It was not long before people began to see the benefits of owning these lights. Soon, countless residents were hanging lanterns outside their own homes. Philadelphia had gone from darkness to dazzlement, because of the brightness of just one little light.

One of my Biblical heroes is the prophet, Elijah. He appeared on the scene of redemptive history in what may well be the darkest age in Israel’s history. King Ahab was possibly the worst king Israel had ever had, and God’s people had fallen as far as they could fall from Him. Elijah’s day was a dark, dismal, and desperate day. It was a day of political uncertainty, pagan idolatry, and persecuting animosity!

Maybe as you look out at the world around us, you can draw many parallels to Elijah’s world. You see all around you how sin festers, wickedness flourishes, while a true love for Christ seems to be flagging and failing. What are we, as the bride of Christ, to do?

We are to do what Elijah did amidst all that darkness - and that is shine! Like that little light in Philadelphia, Elijah did not hide away ashamed, but he burned brightly for all to see. He did not hide under a bushel; but, publicly and privately, he displayed that he was a man who had been in the presence of the Son of God. It was through the witness of the bright little light of Elijah that many other lamps began to ignite in a darkened day (1 Kings 19:18).

Our day may be dark, but Jesus said to His people, ‘Ye are the light of the world’ (Matthew 5:14). God always puts His bright lights in dark places. Christian, take courage and do not hide away in this day! ‘Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven’ (Matthew 5:16). God can use the witness of just one little light to set this whole world shining for Him.

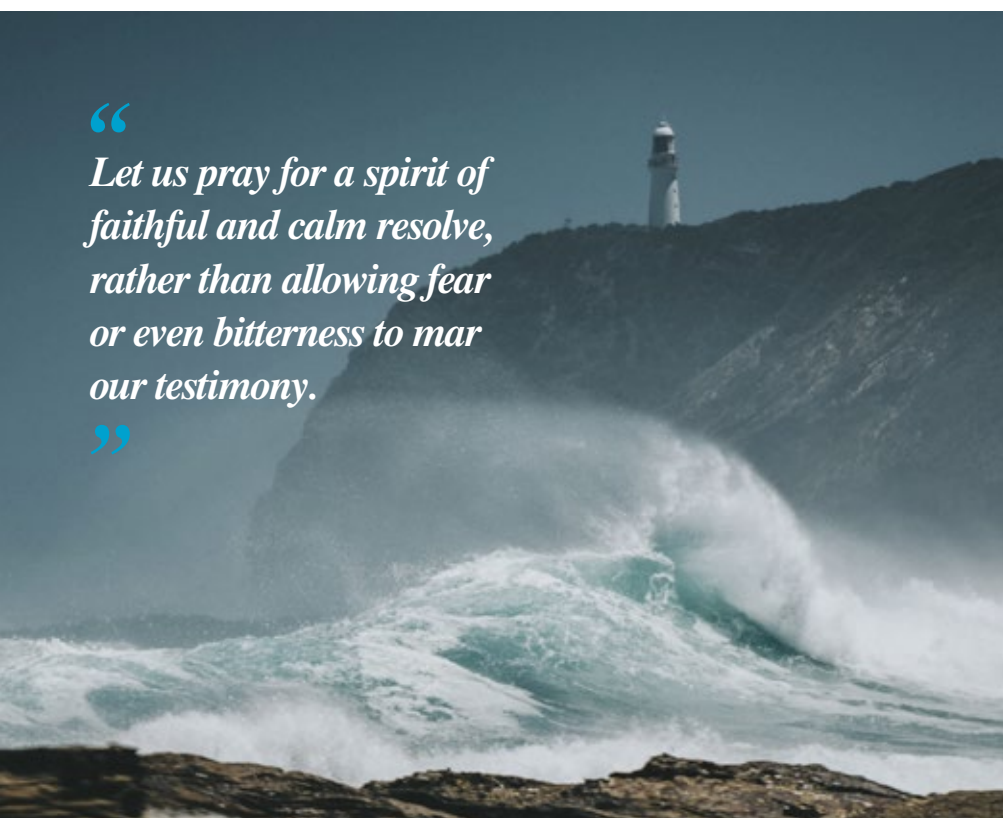
As the end gets closer, the day gets darker. As the day gets darker, the saints shine brighter. As the saints shine brighter, the world sees more clearly. Wherever the Lord has placed you, make your mission this: ‘This little light of mine, I’m going to let it shine.’ ■

✍ **Rev Joshua Moffatt,**
Bangor Free Presbyterian Church.

Challenges

Facing the Church of Tomorrow

“
Let us pray for a spirit of faithful and calm resolve, rather than allowing fear or even bitterness to mar our testimony.
”



I have been around long enough to have seen far too many predictions of so-called prophecy experts come and go without proving true. Clearly, these are cases where men left the realm of Bible prophecy behind and landed squarely in the realm of sensationalism. Sadly, the testimony of Christianity suffered in the process. Rapidly changing times often serve as a catalyst for such pursuits. Thankfully, prophetic Scripture does give us much upon which to ground our hopes: the Second Coming of

Christ, the resurrection of the dead, Christ's victory over all enemies, and more—these are the things of which we can be sure. But sometimes it is the lesser details that stir our curiosity, and the events of the day threaten to command our attention instead of the long view. It is not my purpose in this article to address the questions of Bible prophecy, but I do want to speak to the questions that surround how we should prepare ourselves for whatever God in His providence has for us to face in the future. We are living in

changing times, and such times put dangers before us. I would suggest that we are often better off looking back at what God's Word has to say about how previous generations faced their circumstances than trying to look ahead and guess or fret about what things might happen to us. Scripture describes times in which believers gave bold testimony in the deepest of trials; and Scripture also chronicles times in which God's people failed and fell into error and unbelief during perplexing events.

CHALLENGES IN THE WORLD

If anything is clear, it is the fact that the world is changing before our very eyes. Whether we look at the realities of the digital world, at governmental or financial uncertainty, at the abandonment of moral restraint, at the forceful promotion of moral perversion, or the frightening challenges to civil liberties and security, etc., the accelerating speed of change and declension is truly staggering to behold. For many Christians, these sad realities can foster a spirit of perplexity, worry, or ultimately (and subtly) a spirit of unbelief. Thus, it is important to realise that however dark the days may become, such seasons of difficulty are nothing new for the Lord's people. They may be new to us who have enjoyed the comforts and security which have prevailed in recent centuries in Western nations; but they are indeed nothing new, and we are

“I would submit that the greatest challenge facing the church of the future within its borders is to keep (or regain!) a firm grip of the Biblical Gospel. Let the doctrines of salvation become more and more our focus.”

told not to think something strange is happening to us (1 Peter 4:12) if even fiery trials become ours. So, for us, the shock at the prospect of losing these familiar comforts can produce dangers.

When we look at the history of God's people, we are presented with the example of a generation that lived through the Babylonian captivity. In the providence of God (and obviously due to Israel's sin), God allowed the Gentile nations to gain ascendancy in the world and overrun the nation. Those who were even more wicked than the weakened and compromised church were allowed to take control. But amid those years, we read the story of a group of faithful young men. Daniel and his companions were taken to be servants in the pagan empire. Remarkably, they served with distinction and honour as they bore good testimony before the eyes of the ungodly world. They were not antagonistic or harsh in their manner towards these Gentile rulers. In fact, when we read in Daniel 1 that these men had to refuse the instructions of their superiors in the matter of the king's meat, they carefully announced their desire to follow these convictions without endangering the prince of the eunuchs (vs 10-12). Instead of harshly rebuking Melzar as they approached him, they humbly communicated the lines they could not cross and were treated favourably. Now as we turn

the pages of Daniel, we certainly find other occasions in which their stand for God was not so positively received, and they were cast into the fiery furnace for refusing to worship Nebuchadnezzar's image. But God was with them - always remember that 'fourth man' whom Nebuchadnezzar saw in the fire! Whether it was the king's meat, the fiery furnace, or the lion's den, God was with these faithful believers and honoured their testimony. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about how they faced the changed world into which they were brought was the fact that they were calm instead of fretful. Imagine the difference if they had been fretful through their captivity. It would have communicated something like: 'Oh no, the gods of the Gentiles are winning!' Even during total pagan control, they knew that this was not the case. Neither is it the case today.

And so I submit that one key challenge facing the church of tomorrow is the danger of fretfulness. Let us pray for a spirit of faithful and calm resolve, rather than allowing fear or even bitterness to mar our testimony

CHALLENGES IN THE CHURCH

Another great challenge that faces the church of tomorrow will certainly be found within its own borders. When we read of the Lord's moving and bringing His people out of captivity, we see a precious season of what Ezra calls a 'little reviving in our bondage' (9:8). God was honouring His promise not to forsake the nation through which the promised Messiah would come. But the years became long after Ezra's little revival, and we find that the nation to whom those promises had been made became so unfamiliar with the substance of those promises that, when Christ did come, they did not recognise Him! That is a frightening prospect for the church of any generation. How did they get to that point?

Consider the groups found within Israel when Christ came. The influential Sadducees had reached the point of surrendering major doctrines like the resurrection. Perhaps their movement

started with thoughts like this: 'If the nation is going to survive among these Gentile empires, we are going to have to learn to get along with these people.' Well, that might not be a heretical thought from one perspective. Daniel and his companions interacted reasonably with their captors, but never to the point of compromise. The Sadducees failed that test. Then there were the Pharisees who operated under the principle that Israel had to be completely separate from the Gentiles. Here there is great truth in the premise. But where did they take that premise? They let the good principle of separation lead them to false conclusions of self-righteousness and ritualism. This is not to mention the Zealots who did not think the Pharisees went far enough and used violence against the worldly Gentiles! Each party thought they were acting in the best interests of the church, and in so doing they got so side-tracked that they crucified their promised Saviour when He came!

I would submit that the greatest challenge facing the church of the future within its borders is to keep (or regain!) a firm grip of the Biblical Gospel. I do not think it is a stretch to suggest that the seed premises of both the Sadducees and the Pharisees are both present within the modern church (even the 'good ones'). Let the doctrines of salvation become more and more our focus, and not prophetic sensationalism, political activism, or allowing social issues in our changing world to distract us from this one indispensable pursuit. We can use the Gospel to speak truth to the political and moral issues of the day. But if we are fretful, and seek to take God's Kingdom matters into our own hands during our own perplexing season of waiting for God to move, then we will ultimately engage these very real issues from the wrong standpoint and perhaps lose the Gospel in the process. ■

✉ **Rev Reginald Kimbro,**
Grace Free Presbyterian Church,
Winston-Salem, North America.

Kilskeery

☒ An energetic group of pupils and staff enjoyed a walk along the North Down coast as they followed the Our Place in Space trail from Cultra to Helen's Bay. Primary pupils had recently studied the glory of God displayed in the Solar System.



☒ Faith McFarland and Joseph Foster were awarded the Collum Shield for the highest number of points in the Schools' Section of the Fermanagh County Show. The shields have been on display in school throughout this past year.

Bangor

☒ Our pupils recently took part in the UK's largest ever online British Sign Language (BSL) lesson as part of Sign Language Week. Our school was one of over 1,350 schools to take part in this event, with over 223,000 children participating. The pupils taking part enthusiastically learned some greetings and commonly used signs, as well as fingerspelling their names.



☒ We also had the chance to take on the role of astronauts and set off on a lengthy exploration of our solar system. We visited the 'Our Place in Space' sculpture trail which certainly gave us an insight into the sheer size of space. The Lord graciously granted us favourable weather and safety throughout the five miles of the trail that we completed. There were some weary feet and legs by the end of our walk!



Mourne



Our School held two events in May to raise funds for the missionary work in Cortijos Nuevos, Spain. This is where Lyle and Heather Boyd served the Lord before returning to Kilkeel. Alejandro Bernabeu, who is now involved in the work, sent the school a short video outlining the need. He would like to purchase a canopy for their book table, print Scripture texts on it and on banners around the table, so passers-by can read the Word, even if they do not come for literature. He would also like to print the Word of God on the vehicle used to transport people to the services, along with the church address and other contact details. On consecutive days, the pupils and friends of our school held a coffee morning and went on a sponsored walk to raise the necessary funds. Our thanks to everyone involved! We pray that the Lord will encourage His servants in Cortijos Nuevos and that they will experience much of the Lord's blessing.

Portadown

☒ Year 12 pupils receive a copy of Daily Light on their last day of school.



☒ Junior Girls enjoying getting dressed up.



☒ Some of our pupils enjoying some refreshments after cross country in Edenvilla Park

Newtownabbey



✉ Primary School pupils have been learning to write letters. They have written to King Charles III, sharing some details about themselves and then sharing a verse of Scripture with him. They also wrote to Miss Joanne Greer, missionary in Liberia, and here some of the pupils are reading the letters she wrote back to them.

✉ A coronation picnic was held on Friday 5th May to mark the historic event in our nation's history. The pupils planted a coronation garden with red, white, and blue flowers. They enjoyed making bookmarks, bunting, and windmills to help celebrate. A picnic in the sunshine with sandwiches, cupcakes, and ice-cream was enjoyed by teachers and pupils.



Ballymoney



In February, Upper Primary pupils wrote Poems for the 'Big Green Poetry Machine' competition and were delighted to hear that they were chosen to be published! Our pupils enjoyed a visit to the library back in March for World Book Week. While they love books and had great fun dressing up as characters from their favourite stories, they also focused during the week on 'What makes The Bible the Greatest Book of All!' Practicing is underway in school for our Praise Service and upcoming deputation Meetings. Pray with us that the Lord will bless these meetings and be pleased to bless His work in our schools as a result.

Education Board

Three teachers recently graduated from the Christian Schools Training Programme, having obtained their degrees and completed the Education board stipulated training. A special service was held in Portadown Free Presbyterian Church to mark their graduation, where the Moderator Rev Armstrong presented to them the Diploma of Christian Education. A joint schools' choir took part in the Graduation Service and also subsequently sang at the Monday evening meeting of the Easter Convention.

✉ (L to R) Miss Lydia Foster, Miss Jemma Monteith, and Miss Elizabeth Edwards.



Outreach to Balmoral



From Wednesday 10th to Saturday 13th May, the Consider Christ team of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster had a Gospel witness at this year's Balmoral Show.

The outreach consisted of a book table, stocked with free Christian literature, Bibles, and New Testaments. The Balmoral Show is Northern Ireland's largest agricultural event with over 100,000 people in attendance; therefore, it affords an excellent opportunity to evangelise people from all over the province, as well as from the Republic of Ireland and mainland Great Britain.

The response from the general public to the outreach was positive with no apparent opposition. The Consider Christ Team wish to thank all who helped in any way to make this outreach possible. ■

Report by Rev James Porter

Armagh Honours Their Senior Elder

The Armagh Church recently honoured Mr Norman Kerr by appointing him as Elder Emeritus in the congregation for his many years of faithful and dedicated service to the congregation. A certificate and gift voucher was presented to Mr Kerr on behalf of the congregation. ■



 **L to R:** Mr Billy McCrum, Rev David McMillan, Mr Norman Kerr and Mr Fred West.

Elder Ordained in Carryduff



 **Carryduff Session and Moderator**


L to R: Mr Syndey Morrison, Mr George Anderson (Clerk of Session), Mr Laurence Crawford, Rev John Armstrong (Moderator), Mr George Maxwell and Rev David McLaughlin (Minister)

Many gathered in Carryduff Free Presbyterian Church on Friday 9th June, to witness the ordination of Mr Laurence Crawford. Mr Crawford formerly served on the Committee for eleven years and is now the second member of the congregation to be ordained as a ruling elder. ■


Elder Emeritus in Londonderry

Londonderry Free Presbyterian Church held a special service on Sunday, 7th May, to mark the retirement of Mr William Dougherty from the eldership of the church. Mr Dougherty received the title of Elder Emeritus following his faithful service of 56 years as an office bearer, with 51 of those as clerk of session. ■



 **L to R:** Session members Mr J Murray, Rev G Wilkinson, W Dougherty and S Mackey.

Sunday School Achievement in Aughnacloy

 **L to R:** Rev Simon Anderson, Jodie McKeown and Sunday School Superintendent, Mr Kenneth Lockhart. Jodie McKeown received a gift marking her completion of the 107 questions in the Shorter Catechism.



Junior Bible Class Excellence in Tandragee



 **Photo:**

James Gillis, Reuben Hill, Amaya Preston, Hannah Heak, Bethany Boyd and Ryan Boyd (not pictured) all received study Bibles from the Tandragee FPC Junior Bible Class for following completion of a two-year course on the Shorter Catechism. Also pictured are Minister Rev John Gray and teacher Mr Alan Gibson.

First Annual Mainland Conference in Walthamstow



South Grove Free Presbyterian Church, London, held its first Annual Mainland Conference over the weekend of May 20th & 21st. Rev Kyle Paisley (Oulton Broad Free Presbyterian Church) was the visiting preacher. As well as preaching the Word, he brought a report of the history of his church with some lessons from the revival which took place in Lowestoft. Throughout the weekend musical pieces took place and there was a time for fellowship around food and refreshments. It was a time of spiritual refreshment enjoyed by all and helped bring much-needed focus to the work of God in the East of England. ■

Christian Workers Training Academy

The Academic Committee of the Whitefield College of the Bible is pleased to announce that, after a number of years of absence, the Christian Workers Training Academy will be recommencing. The course is designed to educate and inform those who are looking to increase their knowledge and become a more effective witness and servant of Christ. There will be a variety of subjects covered, such as Christian doctrine, Bible survey, Church History, and personal evangelism but to name a few.

The course this year will run for a total of 16 weeks, with 8 weeks before and after the Christmas break, concluding in March. There will then be a graduation ceremony for the course. The course will be run this year in Tandragee Free Presbyterian Church (kindly granted), and the cost will be £100 in total, with all course notes and materials fully supplied.

To apply, or for further information, please contact course co-ordinator Rev Julian Patterson:

T: 07708550733

E: cwtacademy@outlook.com ■

COMPILED BY
ROBERT MCCONNELL



'Fear not,
daughter of Sion,
behold thy King
cometh...'
John 12:15

The King Who Cannot Be Removed

Growing up, I was taught how to play chess. This board game has many different pieces that all move in different ways. However, one thing that all the pieces have in common is that they can be taken by your opponent... all, that is, except for the king. The king cannot be killed or taken from the board.

The 6th of May 2023 saw the crowning of King Charles III. A royal coronation is something that most of us rarely experience. Today, the United Kingdom is one of only about twenty-five countries that still has a royal family. Most of the great kings of the past have been resigned to the history books, and are now only a memory.

The same can be said of all the various kings that are mentioned in the Bible. However, there is one king who has never been, nor ever will be, removed from his royal throne. Yes, many attempts were made to have him removed, but they all failed. Who is this king? He is the King of Glory. He is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

King Herod, killing all the male infants in Bethlehem, failed to remove him at his birth. With a robe and thorny crown, the Jewish leaders, mocking his kingship, also failed to remove him at his crucifixion because He arose again on the third day. Speaking of that victory, the Saviour said in Revelation 3:21,

'I also overcame and am set down with my Father in His throne.' Upon his royal garments, it says, 'King of kings and Lord of lords.' Ephesians 1:21 says that this name is 'above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.'

Just as it is in the game of chess, this King can never be removed. Greater still, there is no 'checkmate' either, because He can never be defeated. His crown and His throne will never belong to another. Romans 14:11 says that whenever the Lord Jesus returns, 'every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord.' I wonder is the Saviour your Lord and king today? ■

FIND THE BIBLICAL KINGS IN THE WORD SEARCH.

Use the remaining
letters to spell out
the name of a king
in the book of Daniel
that ate grass.

- ⚔ DAVID
- ⚔ HEROD
- ⚔ SOLOMON
- ⚔ ZIMRI
- ⚔ SAUL
- ⚔ REHOBOAM
- ⚔ AHAB
- ⚔ JOASH
- ⚔ MANASSEH
- ⚔ HEZEKIAH
- ⚔ BELSHAZZAR
- ⚔ BAASHA
- ⚔ OG
- ⚔ ASA
- ⚔ EGLON

O	G	S	N	R	E	A	H	A	B
B	H	O	A	E	D	U	C	M	H
B	E	L	S	H	A	Z	Z	A	R
A	R	O	A	O	V	J	I	N	E
A	O	M	U	B	I	O	M	A	G
S	D	O	L	O	D	A	R	S	L
H	A	N	D	A	N	S	I	S	O
A	E	Z	Z	M	A	H	R	E	N
H	E	Z	E	K	I	A	H		



ANSWER:

KING

PRIZES!

Are you 12 or under? Send your answer, name, address and church to:
Rev Garth Wilson e: answer@fpvision.org

GOD IS

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE TO THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

BY MARK JONES

Very few, if any, Christians, when searching for a devotional book, would begin looking in the direction of one about the 'Attributes of God.' Initial thoughts might be that such a subject would be a heavy read, immensely impractical, and only of interest to those wanting to expand on deep theological concepts. While this may be true of some books on the subject, it is most certainly not accurate of 'God Is - A Devotional Guide to the Attributes of God' by author Mark Jones [Published by Crossway].

This 240-page book by Jones is a must-read for every Christian.

Before I give you my reasons for suggesting why every Christian should pick up a copy, let me quote from Charles Spurgeon, 'Would you lose your sorrow?

Would you drown your cares? Then go, plunge yourself in the Godhead's deepest sea; be lost in his immensity; and you shall come forth as from a couch of rest, refreshed and invigorated. I know nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief; so speak peace to the winds of trial, as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead'.

THE AIM OF THE BOOK

The author aims to engage the heart of the reader in a study of

God through twenty-six chapters which are brief and follow a remarkably simple outline: (1) an outline of the particular attribute (2) a focus on Christ (3) everyday life application. Very few books on this subject offer any application to everyday Christian living. It is this third element of the book which sets it apart from many others. Mark Jones is a pastor who is renowned for possessing a warm passion for bringing his audience to Christ. As expected, this volume is full of Christological applications from cover to cover. This book is not intended as an extensive treatment of the attributes of God and therefore avoids theological controversies and hard-to-understand concepts on the doctrine of God.

'WHO IS A GOD LIKE UNTO THEE'

The author takes us on a journey through areas that the average Christian never thinks about in his lifetime. For example, when we think of the attributes of God, we think of omnipotence, wisdom, omnipresence, omniscience, eternity, love, infinity etc. But how many of us think of God's blessedness - that nothing within or without Him alters His state of happiness? Nothing disturbs or upsets this blessedness! To think that the brokenness of the world and the failures of His people do not bring about any change in God's blessedness is incomprehensible. Any wonder Paul said in Romans 9:5 that He is 'God blessed for ever. Amen.' What about God's simplicity? We are not insulting God when we say 'God is simple'; rather, we are glorifying Him. Jones handles a very complex but vital concept. We speak of God in parts in our attempts to grasp

His incomprehensible being, such as His love, power, wisdom, unchangeableness etc. Yet God knows no distinctions in His being; He is simple, which means He does not have power or wisdom; He is power and wisdom! Stephen Charnock, author of perhaps the greatest work on the attributes of God, said, 'Where there is the greatest simplicity, there is the greatest unity: and where there is the greatest unity, there is the greatest power.' What a wonderful thing to know that when we are saved, all of God becomes ours! So when God speaks and says, 'All things work together for good to them that love God...' (Romans 8:28), we know that to be true because His goodness is one with His power to make this happen, and His power is wisdom to work it out! When we see one attribute, we see them all.

'LOST IN WONDER, LOVE, AND PRAISE'

After many years as a Christian, I have found my devotional life renewed, deeply refreshed and transformed by this highly accessible read on the attributes of God. As you read, you will find your (at times) empty soul beginning to overflow as you are drawn into the expanse of your God in ways that you have never considered, especially in those challenging and oftentimes dark experiences of life. Nothing changes the landscape so quickly as that feeling of being 'lost in wonder, love, and praise' at the glorious Godhead. Mark Jones summarises his desire for his book in the closing words of the introduction, 'Works on our great God should bring us joy, satisfaction, and a renewed appreciation for Him. If this book does not do that, may it be cast aside and forgotten. Learn about and enjoy, I pray, the God you will spend eternity knowing and enjoying, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.' ■


✍ **Rev Paul Thompson,**
Antrim Free
Presbyterian
Church.



WORDS



LIVE



2 TIMOTHY 2:22

The mantra of today's world is live as you please and forget about the consequences. Such an approach is the mindset of many of the young people in our land, who are encouraged to truly find themselves by living life to the full.

This follows through in the slogans used by many companies to promote their brand names. If we take two examples in Nike – “Just Do It” and Dr Pepper – “What’s the Worst That Can Happen?” - we could surmise that restraint is only for those who are dull and outdated.

However, God’s Word gives us a vastly different perspective. When Paul wrote to young Timothy in the second letter of his epistle, he gave him wise words to live by. Writing in verse 22, he urges Timothy to ‘Flee

also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.’

THE COMMAND TO FLEE

Timothy, and other believers, were expected to grow and mature in the faith. While the lusts of the past would never disappear entirely, they were expected to have learned to deal with these temptations spiritually. These lusts of the flesh were always strong, tempting even mature believers. They were not to be underestimated. The only way to overcome the lusts of the flesh was to flee from their presence.

The word ‘flee’ comes from the Greek

boy



word ‘phuego’ from which we get the English word ‘fugitive’. It is in the present tense, meaning that we must ‘continually flee’ so that we do not get caught up in these sins. We are to be like the fugitive who is always watching and always on guard so as not to be trapped by his pursuers. This is not fleeing out of cowardice, but fleeing for safety.

But what are these youthful lusts we are to flee from? Paul does not tell us specifically what they are, and therefore, we are left to discern them.



Several come to mind both from the context and experience. The commentator William Hendriksen puts them into three categories: pleasures, power, and possessions.

The desire to satisfy the lust of the flesh is ever before us. The young Christian is constantly bombarded with immorality, whether it is on TV, on social media, or even on the street. It is very often nigh impossible to avoid, but that does not mean it must be entertained. Therefore, Paul urges us to flee!

So how do we 'flee' youthful lusts? You must recognise the evil thought and ask God for help. Paul, in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, tells us we must take every thought captive. You must turn your eyes to look somewhere else. Job said, 'I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?' (Job 31:1) Although we cannot always avoid temptation, we must purpose in our hearts to overcome it.

You must get up and leave. Was this not what Joseph did in the hour of his temptation? He fled, even though it cost him his freedom. His one desire in it all was to honour God (Genesis 39:9) and in doing so, God honoured him (Genesis 39:21).

Paul told Timothy to flee, but did he ever struggle with these lusts, or was he somebody who seems to be above those kinds of things? When Paul was writing his letter to the Romans, he was living in Corinth – an immoral city of the ancient world. Paul wrote to the Romans, 'For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.' (Romans 7:18-19)

I am NOT implying that Paul committed any kind of immorality, not at all. I AM saying that Paul lets us know that he struggled with temptation like you and I do. And he learned to flee.

Youthful lusts include ambition and idolatry. The youth today are often

focused on making themselves great – that is what society teaches them. The image portrayed by many is they must be the best-looking, the smartest, and the most successful. If we are not careful, this can often transition into our spiritual life as well; Christ's young disciples often argued about who would be the greatest in the kingdom. Christ said that if we want to be first, we must be last and the servant of all (Mark 9:35).

If we are going to be greatly used by God, we must flee selfish ambition.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 10:14, 'Flee from idolatry.' You may be thinking, 'Well, at least that one is not a problem for me! I'm never tempted to set up an idol.' Really? Are you never tempted to set up anything in the place that rightfully belongs to God alone? Do you allow watching TV or playing computer games to usurp the time that you should spend alone with God or serving Him? Run from anything that pulls you away from full devotion to God!

Young people, that is what God is telling you in His Word today: flee from those impulses which may be either sinful themselves or might lead you to sin.

THE COMMAND TO FOLLOW

It is important to learn to flee youthful lusts, but Paul wants to encourage Timothy to not just run away from wrong things, but to run towards the right things. The word used for 'follow' means to 'pursue', 'to run after' or even 'to persecute.' When one persecutes another, it means that he keeps attacking that person. In the same way, no matter how many times we fall, we must keep getting up and pursuing godly character. Proverbs 24:16 says, 'For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again.'

What aspects of godly character must a person follow, as mentioned in 2 Timothy 2:22? Paul urged Timothy to flee the flesh and follow righteousness. He was to remove himself from the presence of temptation and seek the ways of God. The pursuit of righteousness involved faith, love, and peace.

These attributes were to be sought and maintained in his life. The best defence against temptation and lust is to fill

our lives with godly pursuits.

If we are seeking the righteousness of the Lord, walking in faith, love, and peace, then victory over sin and temptation will come much easier!

“
THE BEST
DEFENCE AGAINST
TEMPTATION AND
LUST IS TO FILL
OUR LIVES WITH
GODLY PURSUITS.
”

THE COMMAND TO FELLOWSHIP

When we flee lust and follow those good things, we are not to do them alone. You cannot get away from temptation by being alone. Timothy was to watch the company he kept. It would be much easier to follow righteousness and walk in faith, love, and, peace if he surrounded himself with those who shared his desires. Temptation is greatly reduced if we surround ourselves with those who share our desire for the ways of God.

Certainly, we see this reality throughout Scripture: Moses had Joshua; David had Jonathan; Elijah had Elisha; Daniel had Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; Paul had Barnabas and Timothy. We should not face this battle on our own; we need to be surrounded by brothers and sisters who are fighting to be pure as well. They pray for us, hold us accountable, and encourage us. Proverbs 27:17 says, 'Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.' Young Christian, may you desire to flee from anything that does not bring you closer to the Lord. ■

✉ Rev Glenn Wilkinson,
Londonderry Free Presbyterian Church.





CASTLEWELLAN RETREAT 2023

On 29th April, 120 young people made their way to Castlewellan Castle for a weekend of teaching and fellowship. It was evident from the very first meeting that everyone who gathered had a real desire to worship the Lord. From the singing to the participation in activities, all was done with an enthusiastic spirit.

Each day we were brought to the story of Jonah where we learnt: how Jonah ran from God; ran back to God; ran for God; and finally, how he ran without God. Revs Paul Foster and Julian Patterson, as well as Mr Alan Steele, spoke simply and directly, applying the lessons to us personally. I went away from the weekend both convicted and encouraged in my walk with God.

Of course, the whole weekend did not consist of meetings. We enjoyed a

combination of free time, team games and quizzes. We were split into teams to give us the opportunity to meet new young people and get outside our comfort zone. Throughout the weekend, everyone had the chance to showcase their talents: whether it be with entertaining one-minute games on Friday night; more athletic games, such as, tug-of-war, crab football and volleyball on Saturday morning; or academic challenges on Saturday evening, such as, naming as many breeds of cows or counties in Ireland as you can.

I have been to Castlewellan for several years now and one of the primary blessings is the leaders. Each year, they individually take the time to come alongside and check up on us as young people; in fact, a few discussions into the wee hours of the morning have happened a time or two! Whether

it be dating advice or theological questions, they go above and beyond to help.

Another blessing to me has always been the singing; I have always loved music, and hearing the different harmonies blend in to praise the Lord is something that directs your mind to heaven.

Castlewellan has been a personal highlight in my calendar year after year. I would strongly encourage young people to consider going. The friendships made with like-minded Christians are a real blessing. It not only blesses you during the weekend, but it brings confidence when you seek to go on mission trips or even to a local youth rally. ■

✍ **Naomi Kyle,**
Mourne Free Presbyterian Church.

YOUTH COUNCIL DATES

More details of each of these events can be found at fpcyouth.org or on Facebook and Instagram at *FPC Youth Council*. Alternatively, speak to your local YF leader or delegate.

SUMMER BBQ

Friday 28th July, 7:00pm
Whiterocks, Portrush

DELEGATES' MEETING

Monday 4th September, 8:00pm
Omagh FPC

NATIONAL RALLY:

Friday 8th September, 8:00pm
Magherafelt FPC

PLEASE PRAY

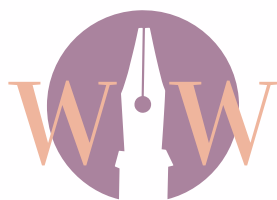
- for outreaches to Mulvin, London and Kenya in which approximately 35 young people are participating collectively.

- for the Summer Camp in August which 110 young people are attending.

STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCYOUTH.ORG



A Word to Women

A Young Girl's Service for God

Exodus chapter 2 relates God's sovereign plan for the child whom He had chosen as the future leader of the Children of Israel. Notably, God gives us this account from the perspective of the women who played important roles during the infancy of Moses. I do not doubt that Jochebed, who was a godly mother, made no decisions without seeking her husband's wisdom, as together they prayed for God's guidance. Amram is the first person mentioned in verse one, so he takes his rightful place at the head of this Israelite home. Thereafter, we marvel at the faith of Jochebed, who risked much in hiding her baby boy from drowning at the command of the wicked king. Next, we are introduced to Miriam, who was the sister to Moses. We do not know her age, but many feel that she must have been in her early teens since her mother trusted her to carry out a vigil on the banks of the mighty River Nile. Young teenage girl, let Miriam show you by example how you can serve God at this stage in your life.

CONCERN

Firstly, we read of Miriam's concern for the safety of her precious brother: 'And his sister stood afar off to wit what should be done to him...' (verse 4). Miriam realised that rushing down to the ark of bulrushes would have increased the child's danger. Since

her parents had come to the point where they could no longer protect the child physically, Miriam must observe how God would protect that tiny ark. Young girl, when you have concerns to do right for God, remember that He is above all worldly powers that are arrayed against you – just stand afar off and wait and watch and pray.

COURAGE

Secondly, we read of Miriam's courage in speaking when God gave the opportune time. The situation seemed to worsen when the first visitor to the riverbank was the daughter of the king. When Miriam saw the princess send her maid to fetch the ark, she did not rush forward; that would have been folly. The princess showed no animosity toward the child. She did not give a command for the ark to be cast into the waters, even though she must have guessed what lay within it. God caused the babe to weep, and the heart of the princess filled with compassion. Then Miriam stepped bravely forward to speak with the greatest wisdom – 'Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?' (verse 7). What courage to

suggest to the princess how the child's needs could be met since it was her father who had ordered the little boy's death! Young girl, when God opens the door, ask Him to give you the wisdom and courage to tell others of your faith and their need. Speak respectfully, no matter how those others have treated you previously.

COMFORT

Thirdly, we read of Miriam's comfort in seeing God's wonderful intervention – 'And the maid went and called the child's mother...' (verse 8). Miriam was permitted by the princess, who represented the worldly system of Egypt, to preserve her brother's life and restore joy in her own home. God used this young girl in the preservation of the one who would lead her nation from Egyptian bondage toward the

comforts of Canaan. My dear young reader, as you serve God in this wicked world, be comforted in the awareness of His continual intervention on your behalf. ■

✉ **Mrs Joan Greer,**
*is married to Rev John Greer,
Ballymena Free Presbyterian Church.*

“
When you have concerns to do right for God, remember that He is above all worldly powers that are arrayed against you.
”

The Lord's Day

One of the great blessings that God has given to His Church and all mankind is a day of rest. We must ever remember that 'His commandments are not grievous' (1 John 5:3) but are for our good, as well as for His glory.

A CREATION ORDINANCE

The principle of the Sabbath was not merely a command given to Israel at Sinai. It was something God laid down at the beginning, both by precept and example. Genesis 2:2&3 records, 'God rested on the seventh day from all His work... and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it...' It must be noted that the word, 'Sabbath', does not mean 'seventh' as some suppose but 'rest'. The Sabbath day is a day of rest.

REAFFIRMATION AT SINAI

Exodus 20 records the giving of the Ten Commandments. It is very important to remember that the Ten Commandments are not so much civil or ceremonial law for Israel, but moral law. Therefore, they express the moral perfection of God and the things that are pleasing in His sight. They were written by the finger of God Himself, indicating their absolute authority. They were written on tables of stone which indicate their permanence. Out of all the commandments given at that time, the fourth is the longest.

The fact that God says, 'Remember the sabbath' indicates it was already in existence and binding before Sinai.

CALL THE SABBATH A DELIGHT

While there are prohibitions pronounced

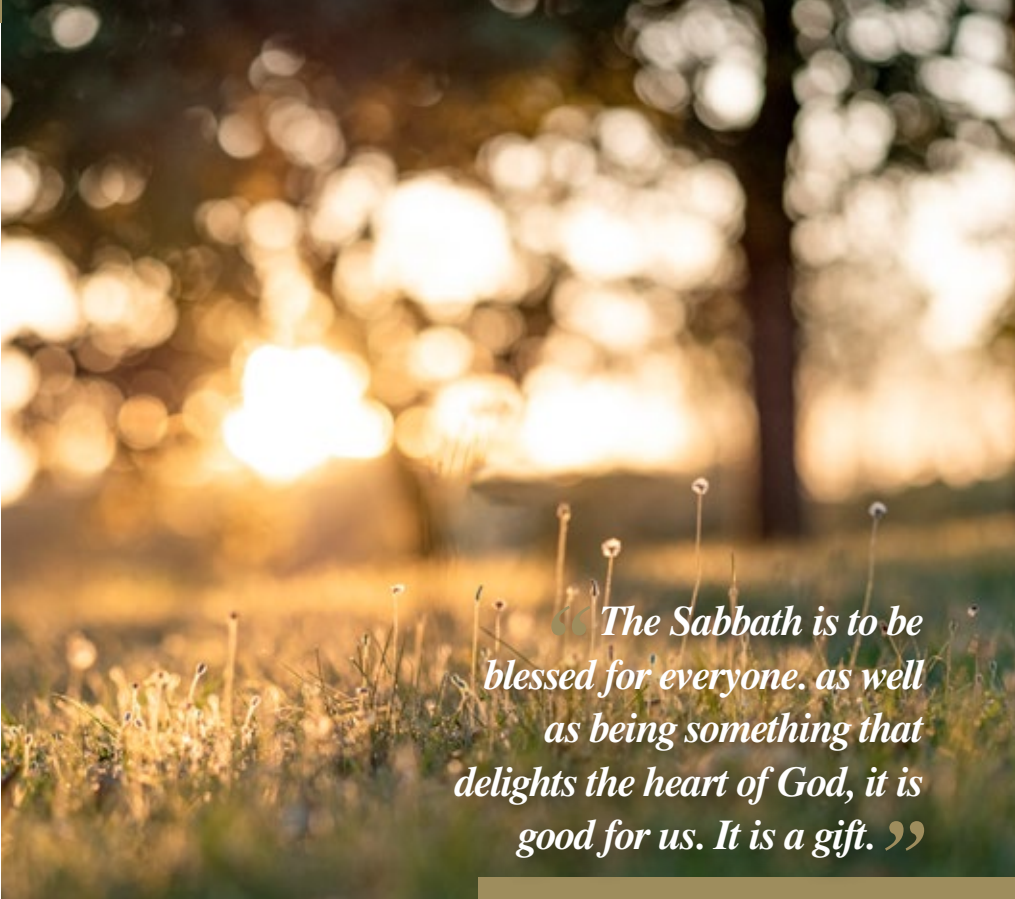
regarding the Sabbath – e.g., no non-essential work is to be done, but rather works of absolute necessity and mercy, trade is forbidden as well as doing our pleasure – yet the Sabbath is to be blessed for everyone. We need a day of rest. God knows our frame. We need physical rest, as well as mental and emotional rest. Isaiah 58:13&14 exhorts us to 'call the sabbath a delight' and annexes great blessing to those who love and honour it and the God who gave it.

Our Lord said while on the earth that 'The sabbath was made for man' (Mark 2:27). Therefore, as well as being something that delights the heart of God, it is good for us. It is a gift. God wants us to take time to rest and enjoy Him. What an affront to the Almighty to spurn it and tell Him we do not want it!

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH OR THE LORD'S DAY?

John on the isle of Patmos declared, 'I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day' (Revelation 1:10). It is evident from this verse that there is still a day set apart for the Lord in the New Testament.

The weight of Scripture makes it clear that the church placed special emphasis on the first day of the week. The Lord rose from the grave on the first day of the week. The Holy Ghost descended



“The Sabbath is to be blessed for everyone, as well as being something that delights the heart of God, it is good for us. It is a gift.”

on the Church on the first day of the week. The disciples broke bread on the first day of the week. The first day of the week was specially set aside for the public worship of God. Offerings were brought before God on the first day of the week.

The change from the seventh day to the first day shows that Christ has made all things new. We are no longer under the law in the sense of being condemned or as a means of justification. Christ's obedience is the ground of our acceptance before God (Romans 5:19). The moral law of God is now a rule of faith and practice for the Christian on how best to please Him who is Lord of the Sabbath and who loved us and gave Himself for us (see Romans 7:12).

Untold harm has been done to the cause of Christ and the testimony of the church when His day has been desecrated, especially in 'the house of His friends'. On the other hand, when the Lord's day and all that it entails is loved and happily enjoyed, the blessing of God and His presence become a glorious reality. May we ever hold dear this one day in seven that God has owned, blessed and sanctified. ■

✍ **Rev Roger Higginson,**
Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church.

By All Means Win Some

Our next unsung saint comes to us via a report that CH Spurgeon received and published in his *Sword and Trowel* magazine, in August 1877. He comes to us without a name (“Mr. _____”) which was to protect him, his family, his business and, ultimately, his work for the Lord. This policy is explained by the fact that our present subject lived in a ‘densely and fiercely Popish town’ in 19th century Ireland, where the local RC priest did not hesitate to use physical punishment to compel his flock to obey his voice. In such towns, Protestants were generally tolerated only if they kept their mouths shut and their heads down. Those given to evangelism could expect a hard ride. One has only to read the accounts of Gideon Ousley from the previous generation to see that such evangelism was not for the faint-hearted.

Our friend was a Presbyterian grocer who saw the evangelistic worth in CH Spurgeon’s sermons. Who could doubt either his taste or discernment? Spurgeon’s sermons have many points of recommendation. They are easily read, having been preached with an eloquence that induces the reader to turn the page. Best of all, they are Gospel-centred, and the reader is not only informed of the person and work of Christ, but confronted with the immediate need to repent and believe for himself. These printed sermons – still in print and online – have been used for the conversion of myriads of sinners all over the globe.

This is all well and fine. It is one thing to obtain the sermons; it is another to get them into the hands of the people. In such a town, it would have taken a very brave and determined Romanist to have dared purchase one for himself. Rome had declared that the Protestant doctrines of the Gospel were accursed by God and to be rejected. However, our good grocer became as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove

(Matthew 10:18). John Trapp (one of Spurgeon’s favourite commentators) commenting on this verse observed, ‘The dove without the serpent is easily caught; the serpent without the dove stings deadly... Their match makes themselves secure, and many happy.’

Instead of trying to sell these sermons, or even leave them sitting on his counter, our friend simply used them to wrap up any purchases in his shop. He knew that they were being read because the customer would often look ‘anxiously, though furtively’ to see if another sermon would be used as wrapping paper. Who knows how many sermons were dispersed in this simple way? Did it lead to the salvation of any soul?

It was Spurgeon’s wife, Susie, who included the report in her article for her husband’s magazine. She considered this to be not only a ‘touching incident’, but also a ‘choice little bit of history.’ She related it not only for its own sake – a report on sermon distribution – but also to induce her present readers to pray. I quote: ‘Will you take note of this touching incident, and remember poor dark Ireland in your prayers for Christ’s sake?’

One day our unsung and unnamed saint sold his last loaf of bread wrapped in the all-important sermon. Perhaps the priest eventually cottoned on, and decisive action was taken to close down this particular ministry? Perhaps the grocer simply moved out of the area or passed on to his heavenly reward. Christian history often leaves us wondering, ‘What happened next?’ Scarce though the details of this ministry may be, they are nevertheless instructive and encouraging to us. ■

✉ **Mr Colin Maxwell**, *Home Missionary*.



“
*We give thanks to God
for His mercy and
grace to this county
and, as we view the
spiritual landscape,
we see the need for
the same again.*”

When we come to the subject of revival, especially that of 1859 concerning the County of Fermanagh, accounts are somewhat limited, so much so that it goes unmentioned in Gibson's book entitled, *The Year of Grace*. In seeking to explain this limitation, J. E. Orr reported in his account that the population at that time was 38% Episcopalian, 2% Presbyterian, 4% other evangelicals and 56% Roman Catholic.

There were some reports of God's moving at that time because Dr Weir tells of his visit to the town of Enniskillen and how, on inquiry, he is informed by the boatman that large meetings have taken place. He goes on to detail a meeting that was held in

the area surrounding the monument of General Cole. He records that 'of ministers of religion, there were present at this meeting, one Episcopalian, two Presbyterians, and several Wesleyans. One of the latter gave a narrative of what he had witnessed in Derry previously to which the Rev Mr Dill, Presbyterian minister of Dromore addressed the people - about 1,000 in number - from Ezekiel 18:32, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth."'

In July 1859, the local press reported of revival meetings having taken place in Enniskillen. They stated that 'several open-air meetings have been held in this town lately which were well attended. On Sunday last, the Forthill was selected as the place of

meeting and on Monday the Market Square did draw attention to the fact that “We have not heard of any of those manifestations taking place which have been characteristic of the ‘awakening’ in Belfast, Ballymena and other towns.”

There was not the widespread outpouring that we read of in other areas and yet, we are aware that revival is not that which is worked up by man, but it is the sovereign working of a holy God – One who moves not by geography or the desires of man, but with His divine purpose in mind.

The Scriptures bear out this truth, for we read in Acts 8 of how Philip ‘went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake.’ God moved and souls were saved for we are told that ‘there was great joy in that city.’

The writer reveals that in that place there had been one by the name of Simon who sought to keep the people in darkness by sorceries and his life, too, was transformed. A great work was being done by the Spirit of God and yet, at this time, God saw fit to instruct Philip to ‘Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.’ His mission there was to speak to an Ethiopian eunuch and point him to the way of salvation.

PAST MOVINGS OF GOD

While Fermanagh may not have featured much in the awakenings of 1859, God had moved in times previous. In the 1750s, an Episcopalian clergyman by the name of Skelton laboured in the town of Pettigo. This is a little place which is on the border between Fermanagh and County Donegal and is only a few miles from Lough Derg, a renowned Romish retreat. As he got to know his parish, he made this comment, ‘One could hardly have supposed, on viewing their manners, that they were born and bred in a Christian country. Yet many of them were nominally protestants... they scarce knew more of the Gospel

than the Indians of America their chief study was to supply their natural wants, and indulge their gross appetites.’

He saw a spiritual barrenness that, to a degree, reflected the state of religion to be found in the county of Fermanagh, as in other counties, and the same could be said today! While what he saw reveals the low spiritual condition of the area, yet, a few years later, in 1785, God in His own time was pleased to pour out of His Holy Spirit for His honour and glory.

Crookshanks records of the Methodist movement: ‘For months very few days elapsed without one or more finding peace with God. On February 6th, although the snow on the ground was deep, a large congregation assembled, and one young woman who had forded a river, stood, wet as she was, all the time of the service, weeping bitterly, until the Lord refreshed her soul with His heavenly benediction.

On Thursday 24th three souls were set at liberty.’ This was not restricted to adults for ‘on June 13th there was a love-feast, from the beginning of which many testified freely to what the Lord had done for their souls, amongst whom was a boy eight years old, as well as several other children.’

In Belleek, another border town on the other side of Lough Erne, they also witnessed a moving of God, ‘On Saturday 18th a field meeting was held near Belleek by Messrs. Barber, Joseph Armstrong, and Mitchell, when the Spirit of the Lord descended graciously. There was a shaking among the dry bones, so that many were convinced of their guilt, and others of their need of purity of heart.’

PERSONAL REVIVAL NEEDED

As we have referred to the low spiritual condition of Fermanagh in the past,

there has ever been that need for the stirring and moving of God in the life of His people and in the lives of the unconverted. The hymn writer, Albert Midlane, sums it up in the words of the hymn:

*Revive thy work, O Lord,
Thy mighty arm make bare;
Speak with the voice that wakes the dead,
And make thy people hear.*

*Revive thy work, O Lord,
Disturb this sleep of death;
Quicken the smould’ring embers now
By thine almighty breath.*

So easily God’s people can drift into that state of apathy and carelessness, and there is that need for personal revival and also, on a wider church level. In Fermanagh, the visit of W. P. Nicholson in 1947 was used to this end with, again, the salvation of precious souls and the building up of the saints.

It was the same at the commencement of the Free Presbyterian witness here in 1967. Missions conducted by Dr Paisley, Rev Wylie, Rev Beattie and Rev Foster were used by God to establish a church in Lisbellaw. This later progressed to a church in the county town of Enniskillen and Kesh.

We give thanks to God for His mercy and grace to this county and, as we

view the spiritual landscape, we see the need for the same again. May every child of God cry out with Habakkuk, the prophet of old, ‘[R]evive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy’ (3:2). May we pray to this end, mindful that it is His work and for His glory! ■

“
Revival is not that which is worked up by man, but it is the sovereign working of a holy God.
”

✉ **Rev Raymond Robinson,**
Kesh Free Presbyterian Church.



Mission Trip to Kenya

On Thursday 27th April 2023, Revs Ian Harris and Colin Mercer of the Free Presbyterian Mission Board travelled to Kenya to participate in a Pastors' Conference. The annual conference was organised in conjunction with the Mission Board, and involved Free Presbyterian missionary, Rev Malcolm Patterson, and pastors who serve in Glory Bible Church under the auspices of the Free Presbyterian Mission Society Africa.

This year's conference was held in La Voyage Hotel and Conference Centre, outside Kitale. It commenced on Monday 1st May and continued for four days. During the conference, messages were brought on various subjects, including: the Trinity; the eternity, immutability and holiness of God; the Christian and political involvement; the importance of the Church Prayer Meeting; church membership; consecration to the Lord's service; sermon preparation, structure and content; the importance of children's work; and church planting. A brief question and answer session followed some of the addresses.

During the week, fifty-three pastors were in attendance, some of whom had travelled a long distance to be present. The majority of the pastors were able



Above: Pastor's Conference

to stay in the hotel accommodation and enjoy fellowship in the mornings and evenings. Following the final meeting on Thursday, certificates of attendance and gifts were presented to those who had attended.

Reflecting on the week, Mission Board Chairman, Rev Colin Mercer noted, 'This was my first Pastors' conference in Kenya, and it was encouraging to see so many assemble each day to hear the Word of God. There was great attentiveness and interest in each of the sessions. It was also a blessing to meet with men who have a burden for the work of God in their land, and who are endeavouring to press on with gospel preaching.' Rev Malcolm Patterson and members of the General Committee of the Glory Bible Church are to be commended for their labours in organising a conference that was a blessing to all who attended.

In addition to speaking at the conference, Revs Harris and Mercer had the opportunity to preach in various churches during their visit. They desired

Below: GBC Nyaporo



to encourage the pastors and their congregations and to see first-hand the progress and challenges of the work. The congregations that were visited are small in comparison to the large charismatic churches scattered throughout Kenya, but many children and young people attend the services and sit under the faithful preaching of the Word of God.

Free Presbyterian involvement in Kenya goes back a long time and the Lord has blessed those many years of labour. The faithful sowing of the Gospel and the patient teaching of God's people have brought forth spiritual fruit, and continue to impact many individuals and their families in different places. On his return, Rev Mercer commented, 'Throughout our visit, we were received and welcomed with Christian love and Kenyan hospitality. The Kenyan pastors with whom we fellowshiped greatly appreciate the prayerful and practical support of the Free Presbyterian Church. They extend their greetings to our home congregations. The fellowship with God's people – young and old – remains a cherished memory of our time there.'



Photo: GBC Shimo La Tewa

MISSIONARY VISION

Kenya is an open door for missionary work, and there is a great opportunity to reach children and adults with the gospel of Christ. The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. We are thankful for those who continue to preach the Word, and for the assistance given to the local pastors and congregations by Rev and Mrs Patterson and others.

As Rev Mercer and Rev Harris travelled home, their prayer was (and remains) that God would raise up others to go to Kenya and be co-labourers with His people there. It is

a land of great beauty, and we should pray, as Moses prayed in Psalm 90: 'O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.' ■

✍ **Rev Colin Mercer,**
Mission Board Chairman.



📷 **Photo:** GBC Tantana

Robert McConnell's School Ministry

The ministry of reaching children with the Gospel through school assemblies is a bit like painting the Forth Bridge in Scotland, because, as I come to the end of one school year, I begin to contemplate the start of the next. It is a continuous cycle of contacting principals or assembly coordinators at the end of every summer to make all the necessary arrangements for the following terms. With upwards of 130 bookings per year, much prayer is needed to prepare suitable messages.

The school ministry that I am involved in stretches from Newcastle to as far up as Antrim town. It also covers the Ards Peninsula and North Down, including the cities of Bangor, Lisburn and Belfast. Going into around 50 schools, I work mainly with the state-run and integrated primary school sectors.



It is my privilege to reach 12-15,000 boys and girls every year, most of whom have no biblical background at all. Weekly, I would get to speak to upwards of 2,000 children. Sometimes, because of the size of some of the inner-city schools, I would have up to 600 children before me in one sitting.

Ministry in the schools is a most fruitful one because, not only do I get to present the message of salvation to the children, but the teaching staff are present as well. Through the means of prize giving, the Word of God also gets into homes by way of bookmarks and tracts. Many schools

are also willing to take and distribute invitations for the Summer Holiday Bible Clubs.

Of course, this ministry has its challenges as well. More and more, Christianity is being discarded by society and this permeates down to the youth as well. There is a widening lack of biblical knowledge which is becoming very evident even amongst older children, but, as I come and go, I leave it all with the Lord and His mercy, in the hope of a bountiful harvest of souls. ■

✍ **Robert McConnell,**
Children's Evangelist.

MISSIONARY VISION

New Missionary Curriculum at the Whitefield College of the Bible

For several years the Whitefield College of the Bible and the Free Presbyterian Mission Board have been exploring the possibility of developing and expanding the College curriculum to include more missionary-oriented content. Various meetings have been held, involving the College Principal, Rev Timothy Nelson, and members of the Mission Board, including past and present Chairmen. These meetings have been constructive and profitable and led to firm proposals being presented to the College Academic Committee, College Management Committee and, in due course, to the General Presbytery for consideration.



In April 2023, the Presbytery approved the introduction of additional class time to facilitate the enhanced missionary training in the College.

From September 2023, students in their final year will attend Thursday afternoon classes with a distinct missionary focus. Subjects will include: the theology of missions; linguistics; IT skills; organising an NGO; Medical First Aid; general mechanical and electrical maintenance; and other matters considered relevant and appropriate.

The classes will be interactive, and past and present missionaries will participate. The module-style format will include PowerPoint presentations and hands-on practical work. The Mission Board is grateful for the wholehearted support of the College Principal, College Committees and Presbytery as this new aspect of the curriculum commences. Prayers are coveted for students and lecturers, that each one may know the Lord's blessing. ■

✍ **Rev Colin Mercer,**
Mission Board Chairman.

What is an NGO and why are they needed in Missionary Work?

Several of our supporters have asked these questions, and, for the benefit of all our supporters, the answer is given by the Mission Board Treasurer.

We are surrounded in daily life by TLAs (Three Letter Abbreviations), and it is no different in modern missionary work. Some of these abbreviations are specific to the work and location, such as ECS (Emmanuel Christian School), BoM (Board of Management), OVC (Orphans and Vulnerable Children), and some are general abbreviations that are widely used across the world, such as NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation).

In Uganda, an NGO is defined as 'Any legally constituted private, voluntary grouping of individuals or associations involved in community work which augment government work but are clearly not for profit or commercial purposes.' As we seek to deliver education and other support services, then, clearly, we fall under that definition, and are, therefore, required to register. We first obtained registration as 'The Free Presbyterian Mission Society Africa' – our legal entity in Uganda, in April 2017 – and have just renewed the registration in April this year. We thank God for answered prayer in that renewal.

There is a lot of work to apply for and maintain the registration. We have created a five-year development and work plan, together with a five-year budget. We are also required to report against that plan and budget on an annual basis. There are, however, many benefits from having the NGO

status: it gives us a recognised position of trust in the country; it facilitates bank accounts and work permits; it allows us to employ school staff; and, also, it offers some tax benefits.

Please continue to pray for Uganda, and especially for this work which goes on behind the scenes. It is essential to facilitate our continuing work in both the school and the church, and it enhances our standing and reputation in the community in which we operate. ■

✍ **Mr Alastair Hamilton,**
Mission Board Treasurer.



MISSIONARY VISION

Work Team in Uganda



After much planning, on Friday 7th April 2023, a work team left from Magherafelt to travel to the Emmanuel Christian School in Uganda with the aim of completing several projects onsite.

The team, which consisted of nine men and two ladies, travelled to Dublin where we boarded a flight to Doha and then on to Entebbe. We arrived at the school late in the evening with enough time to unload the tools and materials before travelling on to our accommodation.

After a welcome rest on the Lord's Day, we commenced work on Monday morning. There were five main areas of work, with each member of the team assigned to a particular task:

- Plumb the three missionary apartments for hot water and repair leaking fittings in the water tanks - Rev Graham Lucas and Benjamin Lucas (Garvagh FPC).
- Complete electrical upgrade work in the School Office and missionary apartments - Sam Snodgrass (Londonderry FPC) and Luke Dobbin (Omagh FPC).
- Strip out the old electrical wiring throughout the site and conduct necessary repairs - Richard Foster (Kilskeery FPC) and Kyle Wenlock (Magherafelt FPC).
- Install a sound system in the church - Mark Linton (Magherafelt FPC).
- Tile four classroom floors - Denver McGuckin and Robert Bell (Magherafelt FPC).

Elaine and Abigail Wenlock (Magherafelt FPC) had the responsibility of preparing all the meals for the team, assisting with the work onsite when required, doing crafts with the children in the afternoons, and attending the outreach on Friday evening.

Rev and Mrs Baxter were also an integral part of the team and assisted in all areas of work.

Each person can testify of being blessed richly, and we would like to thank Madam Noreen and the Mission Board for all their help and support. ■

✉ **Kyle Wenlock,**
Magherafelt FPC.

Youth Camps & Evangelism in Spain



At Easter, I was invited to preach in a youth camp that was held near a city called Cuenca. There was a good group of young people from different churches, and I spoke on the life of Joseph. I was impressed by the interest that many of these young

people showed for spiritual matters, and I pray that God will bring them to Christ, and call some of them to the full-time ministry.

However, much of our focus in the Spring has been in organising our own youth camp. It was held here in our region from 29th April to 1st May. We had young people from churches in Seville, Alcorcon, Toledo, Aranjuez, and Alicante. The theme was 'Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth', and there were four Bible studies, dealing with the last two chapters of the book of Ecclesiastes. It required a lot of preparation, but we thank the Lord that He undertook in all these things, and we believe the camp was a great blessing

for many. We thank the Lord for all the people in the congregation who helped in this ministry.

We will have our annual gospel mission and anniversary meetings here between 9th –11th June. A Pastor from Barcelona, who has had a great impact in my life, is going to come to preach, and he will be speaking about the hope that can be found in Jesus Christ alone. Pray that many unsaved will come to listen to the Word. This pastor will also bring a very special display of Old Spanish Bibles that he possesses, and he will tell us something about the history of our Bible. ■

✉ **Alex Bernabeu,**
Cortijos Nuevos, Spain.

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Dates For The Diary

JULY/AUGUST

30th July - 6th August

LOUGH ERNE FUNDAMENTALIST CONVENTION
BETHEL FPC, ENNISKILLEN

Speakers: Rev John Armstrong, Rev Stephen Pollock, Dr John Douglas

Time: Sundays 12 noon & 8pm, nightly 8.00pm

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

27th August - 1st September

COLERAINE, BIBLE WEEK 2023

Various speakers addressing topical issues

Time: Lord's Day 11:30am & 6:30pm, weeknights 8:00pm

All Welcome!

SEPTEMBER

3rd - 10th

DRIVE-IN MISSION, DERRYBOY ROAD, CROSSGAR

Evangelist: Rev Ryan McKee

Time: Sundays 3.30pm, weeknights 8.00pm

10th - 24th

OMAGH, GOSPEL MISSION

Evangelists: Rev Thomas Murray

Time: Sundays 3.30pm, weeknights 8pm

11th

WHITEFIELD COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE
GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT SERVICE

Martyrs Memorial Free Presbyterian Church

Preacher: The Moderator of Presbytery

Time: 8pm

Refreshments afterwards. Everyone welcome.



BOOK REPRINT

'He Counted Me Worthy'

The story of the last four years in the life of the Covenanter Rev. James Renwick, has been reprinted. This book is available from Rev. David Linden, and is priced £5 plus £1 postage.

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Free Presbyterian
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