

Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

Dr Bill Woods:

The Belfast Boy Who
Burned for Christ
in Brazil

Overcoming Anger:
A Christian Perspective

Grappling
With Our
Sinfulness

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Editorial

Isaac Newton, when writing to a fellow scientist by the name of Robert Hooke, remarked, 'If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants'. This was an honest admission which accepted that even his ideas did not arise in a vacuum. Each discovery was, in some way, the result of another's labour. Newton was also a firm believer in the Bible as the Word of God. He is quoted as saying, 'I can take my telescope and look millions of miles into space; but I can go away to my room in prayer and get nearer to God and heaven than I can when assisted by all the telescopes of earth'.

In recent times, the passing of godly men into glory has reminded us that such lives have provided a platform from which the following generation may carry on. The recent passing of Dr. Bill Woods OBE is one such example. Following his death and the ensuing tributes, it was clear to see that God gave this unique man a heart for the people of Brazil, as well as a heart that loved and cherished the Lord Jesus Christ. It is on shoulders such as these that tomorrow's missionaries will inevitably stand. Dr Woods remarked to me once that he was able to look back and draw inspiration from those who had gone before him. It is a pattern the Lord has given His Church. Where there is a Moses, there is a Joshua learning and subsequently pressing on with God.

The words of our Lord Jesus in John 4:38 teach all of us well, 'I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours'. 2024 presents us all with opportunities to enter into the labours of others. Let us press on then! ■

✉ Editor
editor@fpvision.org



“Right to the end Dr Bill was, like the biblical John the Baptist, ‘a burning and a shining light’ - the small lamp that significantly shone in the darkness.”

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When Christ Draws Near

The two disciples who left Jerusalem for Emmaus on the evening of the resurrection day were intensely sad and discouraged. They knew that, a little over seventy-two hours earlier, their Lord and Saviour had been crucified and buried. They had not expected such a course of events. They believed that Christ would have redeemed Israel and ushered in a new era throughout the nation. They were devastated by His death. Further confusion filled their hearts when their friends, Peter and John, returned from the empty sepulchre but reported that they had not seen the Saviour. A tsunami of emotions swept over them. They were so troubled by all of these seemingly inexplicable events that they could not hide their despair. Grief was written all over their faces. Their journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus must have been one of the hardest they had ever undertaken - they were devastated. It would have remained that way for these dear followers of the Lord had the Saviour not come to them.

Luke describes the tender actions of Christ in just a few words, 'Jesus Himself drew near and went with them' (Luke 24:15). He did not send an angel to minister to them, nor did He wait until they were happier and then come; rather, He drew near. They were at their lowest ebb. They felt their world had collapsed around them. They could not see a way

forward. Their hearts were full of fear and unbelief; but, such was the Saviour's love for them, He did not let them continue in that frame. He saw them in their hour of great need and tenderly, graciously, personally, and lovingly ministered to them.

“

They were at their lowest ebb. They felt their world had collapsed around them. Their hearts were full of fear and unbelief; but, such was the Saviour's love for them, He did not let them continue in that frame.

”

This is what Christ does with His people. He draws near to us when our hearts are broken, and He ministers to us with a word in season. At times we need rebuked, for we are slow to believe all that God has said, and at all times we need a fresh sight of the glory of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. With all the skill of a great Physician, Christ opened the Scriptures and, beginning at Moses, expounded to these troubled Christians the things concerning Himself - especially His death and resurrection. He did not tell the disciples to pull themselves together or try a little harder, rather, He spoke to them about what He had done for them and that God was in control of all these things.

Our Lord's ministry was not in vain that day. For when the two disciples eventually understood that it was Him, they said, 'Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?' (Luke 24:32). Their sadness was dispelled, their hearts were warmed, their zeal was revived, and they joined the other Christians in Jerusalem and freely testified of the risen Saviour. He had

drawn near and gone with them, and they were blessed. May it be so for us in the unknown paths of 2024. ■

✍ **Rev Colin Mercer,**
Omagh Free Presbyterian Church.

Dr Bill Woods

The Belfast Boy Who
Burned for Christ in Brazil



*“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good,
and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”*

James 4:17

Devoted to Christ, passionate about people, remarkably successful, incredibly generous, but always fiercely self-effacing - this was the hero of the faith that many of us have been privileged to call our friend, Dr Bill Woods. Converted to Christ on July 20, 1952, in Ravenhill Free Presbyterian Church under the ministry of Rev Ian Paisley, Bill Woods became part of a thriving youth fellowship in that church, out of which proceeded an extraordinary number of missionaries who carried the message of the Lord Jesus Christ to many parts of the world.

Bill's desire to become one of those missionaries was driven by the following factors: the powerful preaching of his

pastor, Dr Paisley; a pointed appeal by Jessie Munn, one of a family of missionary sisters - 'Is there a young man here who would be prepared to surrender his life to Jesus Christ and go to serve Him on some mission field?'; the death of one of those volunteer missionaries after surviving only six weeks in Brazil's interior, Mrs Ina Orr; and Mollie Harvey's impressive challenge using an oil lamp, when she emphasised how one small lamp can make such a huge difference when everything around it is so dark. Bill Woods determined to be that small lamp.

Beginning in January 1957, he spent two years in the WEC (Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade) Missionary Training College in Glasgow. He then

left Belfast harbour on August 20, 1960, on board a ship to Liverpool with the strains of hymns sung by his friends sounding in his ears - 'Take The Name Of Jesus With You' and 'God Be With You Till We Meet Again' - and, having boarded the SS Hubert, eventually docked one thousand miles up the Amazon at Manaus in October. Overwhelmed by the sight of multitudes who were suffering around him, Bill dedicated his life to relieving their pain and reaching their souls with the Gospel of grace. This involved his spending years in language and medical schools before he emerged with the skills he needed to treat thousands of leprosy patients.

In answer to Bill's much-repeated prayer that the Lord would enable him to 'do something,' a 'great and effectual door' of service was opened to him in Rio Branco, a frontier town in Acre and the State capital. Acre was the

smallest State in Brazil (though larger than Great Britain), but it already had the reputation of being the ‘Leprosy State’, with 11 people in every 1000 of the population afflicted with leprosy – endemic proportions by any medical definition. When Bill arrived in Rio Branco, his official title was ‘General Co-ordinator for the Control of Leprosy in the Acre State.’ However, applying his characteristic discipline, determination, and dedication to the mammoth task on hand, it was not long before his work mushroomed, with patients flooding his facilities from all over Acre and the neighbouring State of Amazonas.

Over more than fifty years in the field, Dr Woods promoted a revolutionary new treatment for leprosy using multi-drug therapy which resulted in numerous cures, removed much of the social stigma from the dreaded ‘leprosy’ word, reduced the incidence of the disease in the former ‘Leprosy State’ from 1.1% of the inhabitants to 0.15% by 1996, and also restored sight to hundreds of people who were once confined to the hidden seclusion of their isolated homes. Much of this was accomplished at his main centres of operation; but some of it necessitated his travelling thousands of miles, armed with his famous portable operating microscope and slit lamp. Remote locations in the Amazon jungle were reached by lengthy and hazardous boat trips, or by boarding precarious single and twin-engine planes that had a reputation for regularly falling out of the sky.

Exactly how God was with him and how Bill took the Name of Jesus everywhere he went has provided the rich material for an incredible story that has been recounted in a book by his close friend and now President of Acre Gospel Mission, Victor Maxwell (‘I Want You To Do Something’), recorded in an ITV documentary by Paul Clark (‘Angel of the Amazon’), and has been recognised by the conferring of multiple awards in Brazil and an OBE in the United Kingdom by Queen Elizabeth II.

I was intrigued by the warm tribute delivered by the current president of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, when he received the news of the death of Dr Woods. He described him as the ‘leprosy doctor’ and called him ‘Dr. Guilherme’ – a Portuguese variant of the name William that means ‘resolute protector’ or ‘strong-willed guardian’.

That Dr Woods deserves these designations due to his tireless work in medicine in Acre and Amazonas is unquestioned; but he especially qualifies for these descriptions because of his faithful labours in his primary field, that of missions. Bill never lost sight of the fact that God had called him to Brazil to be a witness for Him. Therefore, wherever he went, he burned brightly for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Along with several children’s workers from the Martyrs Memorial Free Presbyterian Church, I had the immense privilege of accompanying

Bill on June 29, 2023, as he came full circle and made a return visit to one of his first sources of education, Nettlefield Primary School, Belfast. It happened to be prize day. Bill was immediately installed as the guest of honour. Encouraged by questions put to him by the school principal, Simon McLean, Bill related to the children in that packed assembly hall how ‘the greatest moment’ in his life came about when, just over seventy years ago, ‘he, a poor sinner, was found by Jesus Christ.’ He left them with a few lines in Portuguese – which he then revealed to be ‘the gospel in a nutshell’ that we find in John chapter 3 verse 16: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”.

Right to the end Dr Bill was, like the biblical John the Baptist, ‘a burning and a shining light’ - the small lamp that significantly shone in the darkness. Or, as expressed in the words of a hymn sung in Bill’s presence on the night before Fred and Ina Orr left for Brazil in March 1954:

*Let me burn out for Thee dear Lord,
Burn and wear out for Thee,
Don’t let me rust or my life be a failure
my God, to Thee:
Use me and all I have, dear Lord,
And get me close to Thee;
‘Til I feel the throb of the great heart of
God
And my life burns out for Thee.*

After Bill had received all his decorations from the British and Brazilian governments, with typical modesty – and, more importantly, a recognition of his sense of priority – he commented, “I very much appreciate these awards, but would prefer to hear my Heavenly Father say, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant’”. This highest of all commendations he did hear on Monday, November 6, 2023, when he gloriously entered into the joy of his Lord. ■

✓ **Dr Ian Brown,**
*Martyrs Memorial Free Presbyterian
Church.*





Grappling With Our Sinfulness

*An excerpt from a sermon
preached at the Annalong Mens'
Conference in October 2023*

Robert Lewis Stevenson wrote his infamous work in 1886 entitled *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. In it, Dr Henry Jekyll developed a potion that turned him into a completely different man named Edward Hyde. Jekyll himself was a typically well-mannered individual, but Hyde, his other personality, was a cruel, cold-blooded killer. The book is all about these two characters engaged in a battle for the possession of the one body. Someone once asked Robert Lewis Stevenson, 'Where did you get your inspiration for your characters?' Stevenson, raised in a strict Presbyterian home, replied, 'I looked inside myself, and I find there's always a struggle with the beast that lives within me'.

Stevenson's story may be fictional, but, spiritually, that struggle exists within every believer. God has called every Christian to be like Him and to be holy. 1 Peter 1:15 commands, 'As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy'. However, it is the lamentation of every believer that obeying this call is a daily struggle because of the beast that lives within him, namely, his sinful nature. In Romans 7, the apostle Paul describes this Jekyll and Hyde-like internal battle that every genuine believer faces. In that momentous chapter, he describes the ongoing war between the old and new man within the one body, or, as described by Grant Richison, as the 'spiritual titanic tug of war taking place in every believer...once a person comes to know Christ'.

A REALITY WE CANNOT EVADE

Paul makes it clear in Romans 7 that, whilst there is a call to be holy, sin is still very much present in the life of the believer. In the opening verses of the chapter, Paul states that whilst the Christian is dead to sin in a legal sense and on account of being married to the body of Christ in verse 4, experientially sin is still very much present in the believer. In verses 17 and 18 he states, 'Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me, for I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing'. Whilst he possessed the new man, he also still possessed the old man, his earthly corrupted self in which there was nothing good.

This is a reality every Christian would love to avoid but cannot evade. The truth is that in the flesh of the believer, there is sin and corruption. As John states, 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves' (1 John 1:8).

A HOSTILITY WE MUST ENCOUNTER

Whilst the presence of sin is very much a reality in the life of the believer, he must not simply wave the white flag and surrender in this ongoing battle. He is called to war against his old man, and, as Paul puts it in Colossians 3:9-10, '... put off the old man with his deeds and put on the new man'. Towards the end of Romans 7, from verses 19 to 24, Paul gives a glimpse into his struggle

and invites us to join him in this battle. In grieving over his desire to do good, he bewails in verse 19 that '...the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do'. He recognises that, whilst there is a desire to put on righteousness and holiness, yet, '... when I would do good, evil is present with me'. Whilst he delighted in the law of God after the inward man, sin was always lurking around the corner seeking to stop him in his tracks. He likens it to ongoing warfare, as sin was in verse 23 '...warring against the law of my mind'.

In verse 24, Paul concludes by exclaiming 'O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' The word 'wretched' in the original language refers to someone who was exhausted after a battle. Paul was stating to the Roman believers that he was tired and even exhausted in this ongoing war with his sin and seeking to live a life of godliness. This struggle and hostility that the Christian endures can be a discouraging, even exhausting experience. The hymnist put it well when he said that he had 'wrestled on towards heaven'. It was Martin Luther who summed up his own struggle when he exclaimed 'I only fear one pope, pope self!'

The struggle is also an encouragement to the believer, as it is evidence that he indeed has been born again. Whenever someone becomes a Christian, they are regenerated, and a new principle of spiritual life is implanted into them, known as the new man. The existence of the continual war between the old man and the new man therefore testifies that the new man is indeed in residence and further acts as an encouragement that the person in question has assurance of salvation.

A MINISTRY WE WILL ENJOY

As the believer grapples with his own sinfulness considering the holiness of

God, he is not left alone. Paul concludes his treatment of the subject on an encouraging note as he stated in the final verse of the chapter in verse 25, 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord...' After asking the probing question 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?', he then answers it by lifting his mind heavenwards and rejoicing that Christ ultimately would deliver him from his wretched body of sin. Christ will accomplish this at the time of the great resurrection of the believer, and the very body which has been subject to sin will be free from the presence of sin. Paul speaks of the body as a 'vile body', and he proceeds to rejoice that this vile body will '...be fashioned like unto his glorious body...' (Philippians 3:21). Armed with such knowledge, the believer can then resolve with Paul to press on in this struggle with himself, as Paul exclaimed in his last sentiment in the chapter: '... so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin'.

In Bunyan's famous *Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian was led astray into Bypath Meadow into Doubting Castle. We then read of a man named Mr Valiant for the Truth, accompanied by some of his friends. They found him bloodied and badly beaten by three thieves who were named the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. In seeking to encourage his friends, he rousingly said, 'I am going to my father's house. With great difficulty I have gotten hither ... my marks and scars I carry with me as a witness that I have fought his battles who will be my rewarder'. Every believer should be encouraged that whilst they carry marks and scars from their battle with self, sin, and Satan, they ultimately win the war in and through Christ and the completion of His redemptive work in their lives. ■

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The existence of the continual war between the old man and the new man therefore testifies that the new man is indeed in residence and further acts as an encouragement that the person in question has assurance of salvation.
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✉ **Rev Julian Patterson,**
Ballymagerney Free Presbyterian Church.

Centenarian Celebrations in Banbridge

Mrs Lena Weir, a member of Banbridge church for over 40 years reached her 100th birthday in November 2023. The church organised an event to celebrate this happy occasion. In the picture are Mrs Weir, her present and past ministers Rev, David Smith, Rev Fred Greenfield and Rev William Whiteside. ■



Rasharkin Refurbishments



October saw the conclusion of another phase of refurbishment to the Rasharkin Free Presbyterian Church building. This stage saw the construction of a cry room, an audio room, a disabled toilet as well as renovation of the existing toilet facilities and entrance hall. The work was finished just in time for their harvest weekend and provided yet another reason to rejoice in the Lord's goodness. The congregation are particularly indebted to Mr Jim Cameron and Mr Tommy Boal (pictured) who completed much of the work. ■

New Elder in Dunmurry



Above: Rev Samuel Murray (Moderator of Presbytery), Rev Nathan McVeigh (Minister of Dunmurry FPC, Mr William Thompson, Mr Robin Eccles (Clerk of Session), Rev John Greer (Clerk of Presbytery)

Sunday 22 October, 2023, was a very encouraging night in the ministry of Dunmurry Free Presbyterian Church. Mr William Thompson was ordained and installed as an elder in the church. William served on the Committee for a number of years and has been a very active member in the work, and the church is delighted to have him join the Session. ■



Thanksgiving in Londonderry

The Londonderry congregation held special services on the 5th November to give thanks for 40 years of Gospel witness in the church building at Lisnagelvin. We were thankful to have two former ministers of the congregation, Dr Ian Brown and Rev Julian Patterson, along to bring God's Word. The services were well attended, and we knew the Lord's presence in our midst. The congregation also held an anniversary dinner which was attended by the Moderator and his wife. ■



Right: Dr Ian Brown and Rev Glenn Wilkinson



Dr Napier Malcolm Receives His Home-calling



✓ Rev Nigel Smyth

Dr Napier Malcolm was many things – a loving husband and father; a diligent doctor and tireless editor of the British Church Newspaper; a true Christian gentleman. One cannot imagine a difference in opinion being expressed in anything other than a gracious and generous manner.

A loyal and integral member of the Bristol Free Presbyterian congregation since its inception, he was really an Anglican at heart, not the modern sort but the Anglicanism of Ryle and the 1662 prayer book. However, first and foremost, he was an evangelical protestant. It was in order to safeguard these truths, that he initiated contact with the Free Presbyterian Church resulting in the formation of a congregation in the city, a witness that he faithfully supported right up until his death.

Dr Malcolm worked tirelessly for the cause of the gospel. Always aware of his standing in the community as a doctor, he was careful not to draw unwanted attention. Yet he was willing to risk people’s disapproval by standing in the open air and boldly declaring the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

His quiet and unassuming presence, his gentle encouragement, and his ceaseless prayers will be missed. Our comfort is in the knowledge that he has left the land of the dying to go to the land of the living, to be with Christ which is far better. ■

Ordination of Elders in Magherafelt



Mr Kyle Wenlock and Mr Mark Linton were ordained and installed as elders of Calvary Free Presbyterian Church, Magherafelt, on Tuesday 17th October. Revs Murray (Moderator of Presbytery), Greer (Clerk of Presbytery) and McKee (minister of the congregation) took part in the service. ■

Gilford Awards Sunday School Attendance



Pictured alongside Rev Gregory McCammon are Rebecca and David Wallace. They were awarded for their 100% attendance at Sunday School for the past five years. ■

Mourne Independent Christian School

TEACHER REQUIRED

GCSE English, English Literature and Geography.

Key Stage 3 English, Geography, Scripture and Church History.

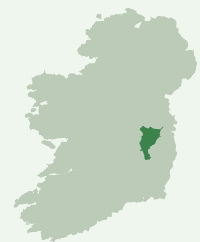
Key Stage 2 Art and Church History

Contact: School Administrator
Mr Gordon Imrie: 07714530607
gordonimrie@yahoo.co.uk

CONSIDER CHRIST OUTREACH

Dates for Co Kildare 2024

Saturday 3 February
Saturday 13 April
Saturday 25 May
Saturday 7 September
Saturday 2 November



Anyone wishing to help,
contact: Rev. James Porter
T: 07596 145779
E: jamesporter@yahoo.co.uk

COMPILED BY
ROBERT MCCONNELL



CHILDREN'S CORNER

'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

1 John 1:9

On 13th February, 1997, a cargo ship called the 'Tokio Express' left Holland, bound for New York. After only a short time at sea, stormy weather caused huge waves to batter against the ship. Despite being well secured, much of the ship's cargo broke loose and was swept overboard about twenty miles off the coast of England. One of the big steel containers lost was full of Lego...five million pieces!

An avid beachcomber called Tracey Williams was the first to spot pieces of Lego along the beach where she lived in Cornwall. This same Lego was also washing up on beaches in Ireland, Holland, and Denmark. The toy company Lego was able to give an exact inventory of every single piece of Lego that was lost. What made things even more bizarre was the fact that much of the lost Lego had a nautical theme. For example, there were 13,000 spear guns, half a million pairs of diving flippers, 350,000 sets of scuba gear, and 50,000 sharks. It is estimated that 1.6 million pieces of more dense bits of Lego are stuck on the seabed, too heavy to float. However, even some of this has been found, caught up in fishermen's nets.

It takes approximately three years for debris to float across the Atlantic from England to the

USA, so over the last 27 years some of that lost Lego could be washed up on any beach anywhere on earth. Being made of hard plastic, they have the capability of drifting about for centuries. What happened nearly 30 years ago cannot be reversed or undone. Most of those tiny pieces of Lego will never be found. The beaches and seabed will never be free of this environmental nuisance. Although not actually at fault, even Lego, which is a powerful multi-million-pound company, can do nothing to fix this problem.

This story reminds me of another even greater problem that faces all mankind, which is highlighted in the Bible, and that is sin. Very often the word 'sin' in the Bible is in the plural. Isaiah 59:12 says that 'our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us'. It is impossible for you to clean up your life, and reverse and undo all the sins you have committed. However, with God nothing is impossible. He alone can forgive all of your sins, and put right every wrong. Acts 3:19 says '...repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out'. The Lego might have been lost, but thank God, because of His mercy and willingness to forgive sinners, you don't have to be left in that self-same sad condition. ■

?
QUIZ

**FROM THE NAMES BELOW,
WHO HAD NO ASSOCIATION
WITH BOATS OR THE SEA?**

Jonah

Peter

Paul

Gideon

Noah

James

John

Jesus

Answer:

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

PERSONAL DECLENSION

AND REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN THE SOUL

BY OCTAVIUS WINSLOW

If there is one consideration more humbling than another to a spiritually minded believer, it is that, after all God has done for him, after all the rich displays of his grace, the patience and tenderness of his instructions, the repeated discipline of his covenant, the tokens of love received, and the lessons of experience learned, there should still exist in the heart a principle, the tendency of which is to secret, perpetual, and alarming departure from God.

So begins Octavius Winslow in his book, 'Personal Declension and Revival of Religion in the Soul.' Winslow was a prominent nonconformist minister of the 19th century, and in his work,

Winslow puts his finger on a problem known to us all - our tendency to backsliding.

Sometimes we think of backsliding in terms of its full-fledged form; and so, in our minds, the backslider is one who is very clearly far from God, not only in the inner life, but especially in outward practice. There is, however, an ongoing tendency to backsliding in all our hearts; and, in its early stages, it can proceed without raising any great alarm. Backsliding is a constant threat for every believer and one which we are fools to ignore.

Winslow's lovely blend of devotion and doctrine is like a trip to the

doctor's surgery to receive a spiritual checkup, a diagnosis, and a prescription for recovery. It is the kind of book that is best read slowly, pausing to reflect upon the state of our own lives and hearts.

In the first chapter, Winslow addresses the beginnings of declension and highlights some of the symptoms that would uncover the disease. His examination is penetrating and challenging, but Winslow also shows that recovery is possible, and gives guidance toward personal revival.

In his next chapters, Winslow addresses areas of more explicit spiritual decline, challenging us to examine the state of our love for the Lord, our faith, and our prayer life. In each case, there is a very devotional examination of the problems, including practical instruction for recovery.

Throughout the book, Winslow holds two vital truths together. On the one hand, there is a clear emphasis on the responsibility of believers to pursue holiness and to use the means of grace that God has given. On the other hand, there is the reassuring emphasis that, ultimately, the Lord is the restorer and the keeper of his people.

This emphasis on the Lord and His gracious work is the thrust of the final chapters in the book. Because salvation is of the Lord and is dependent upon God's promises, true spiritual life in

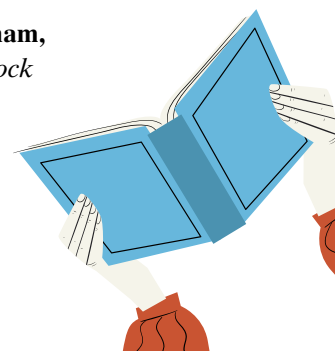
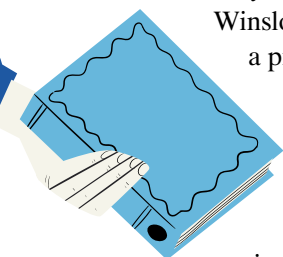
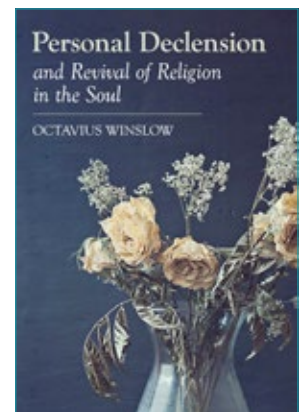
God's people is indestructible. We are certainly to retrace our steps to the point of spiritual departure and to crucify the various causes of our departure, but we are ever to do so as those who look in faith to the Lord, that God might be the restorer of our soul.

“
HIS EXAMINATION IS PENETRATING AND CHALLENGING, BUT WINSLOW ALSO SHOWS THAT RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE, AND GIVES GUIDANCE TOWARD PERSONAL REVIVAL.
”

This book probes, and challenges the inner life of God's people, but far from merely chastising us and telling us to do better, Winslow points us to the love of our God, and the power of Christ, and would have us rest in '...him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy' (Jude 19).

I would highly recommend this book to God's people. It has been a blessing to me, a challenge to my heart, and a book to which I will likely return in the future. ■

✍ **Rev Kyle Graham,**
*Port Lincoln & Lock
Free Presbyterian
Church, South
Australia.*





GRACE



It has been said that ‘grace’ is the most important word in the Protestant vocabulary, and certainly, when the Reformers rediscovered the truths of Scripture, grace was very much to the fore. ‘Saved by Grace Alone’ was one of the great solas and cries of the Reformation Church and Protestant faith.

Dr Alan Cairns, in his *Dictionary of Theological Terms*, describes grace as, ‘Undeserved favour bestowed upon those who are positively deserving of the wrath of God.’

There are several different ways grace can be defined. For example, we can speak of common grace and special grace. Common grace is that which is experienced by everyone across the world (both saved and unsaved) every single day of life. Common grace includes the air we breathe, food to eat, seedtime and harvest, health, soundness of mind, and even

spiritual and physical restraint, so that mankind in its utterly depraved state does not simply destroy everyone and everything. It is important to highlight that every aspect of grace (both common and special) was purchased and paid for by Christ on the cross.

But for this article, I wish to focus primarily on the grace that is experienced by every believer.

SAVES

Firstly, it is a grace that **saves**. Ephesians 2:5 teaches us ‘by grace ye are saved’. The salvation of our souls, from start to finish, is entirely the work of God in us. We are chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and quickened by the Holy Spirit. Nowhere is this better evidenced than the dying thief on the cross. He was a sinner who could do absolutely nothing to save himself. He was nailed to a cross and would remain there until his death; therefore, he could not work for his salvation or merit it in any way and yet he received grace. Even though he was a ‘malefactor’ and had begun his time of crucifixion by railing on the Lord (Matthew 27:44), yet he was chosen

of the Father. Both thieves saw the same Christ hanging upon the middle tree, but only the eyes of one were opened. This teaches us that saving grace is both intimate to the individual and also irresistible. It was only the one thief whose heart was stirred by the Spirit of God to believe in Christ, and it was only the one thief to whom Christ promised eternal life and a home in paradise. He did not deserve salvation, and yet he received it. This is the reality for each one of us. There is not one individual who will ever be in Heaven based on either sympathy or reward.



SANCTIFIES

Secondly, it is a grace that **sanctifies**. This particular part of grace is usually attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit within us, but it is not possible outside of the framework of the cross, for that ongoing work within us was purchased by the Son of God. Hebrews 10:10: 'By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.' Also, further down the chapter, we read in Hebrews 10:14, 'For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.' Whilst there is a certain part of sanctification which is work based and involves us along with God, nevertheless there is the grace of God involved, and, without it, sanctification would be impossible. AW Pink once said: 'There is no way we by ourselves can generate sanctification. Our sanctification is Christ. There is no way we can be good. Our goodness is Christ. There is no way we can be holy. Our holiness is Christ.' May we ever be mindful of the grace of God changing us and enabling us to die unto self and live unto righteousness.

SECURES

Thirdly, it is a grace that **secures**. Peter writes in 1 Peter 1:5 that we 'are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation'. Christ Himself stated in John 10:28: 'I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.' This is something that must never be forgotten by the child of God: the grace of God which saves us from

our sin is the same grace which keeps us and protects us. When you go through the Scriptures there are many different ways that this is presented to us (see Proverbs 18:10 and Psalm 18:2). Of course, who could forget the words of the Apostle Paul at the end of Romans 8 that he is persuaded that there is absolutely nothing that can separate us from 'the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'? Every Christian who is eternally saved is eternally secure. The grace of God saves and the grace of God keeps. It truly is a glorious truth and, at the same time, a very humbling truth. While it shows us our weakness and infirmity that we are unable to keep ourselves; nevertheless, at the same time, it shows God's greatness and grace that He not only is willing and able to keep us, but that He actually does keep us every moment of our lives, both here on earth and in eternity.

SUFFICIENT

Finally, it is a grace that is **sufficient**. It is sufficient to save, to keep, to strengthen, and to uphold in every circumstance and trial that may come our way. The Apostle Paul endured times of hardship and difficulty, and yet he proved the sufficiency of God's grace. Of course, we can speak of the thorn in the flesh that he prayed on three occasions would depart, and

God answered in 2 Corinthians 12:9, 'My grace is sufficient for thee'. The grace of God is sufficient every single day and in every moment of that day. It is a very precious thought to meditate upon God who is the Alpha and the Omega and sees the end from the beginning. He knows exactly what will come our way every single day, and thus prepares us and provides for us in those times of need. John 1:16 explains it so well: 'And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.' Each and every day we receive the grace that we need for that day; tomorrow's grace will come tomorrow when we need it, not today when we do not.

I often think of the words of the great hymn by John Newton, 'Amazing Grace', and, in reality, the more I consider the grace of God, I have concluded that the word 'amazing' does not do the grace of God justice. In truth, I do not believe there is a word in the English language that goes far enough to fully explain grace in its fullest sense. It is beyond 'amazing' that a thrice holy God would choose to save guilty sinners and then Christ would take our humanity into perfect union with His deity. He would take our sin in His own sinless body upon the tree and He would die in our stead. The Holy Spirit would then come and dwell within us and

God would keep us. The eternal desire of the Godhead is to have communion and fellowship with us, and to have us live and reign in glory with Christ. How true it is that the word 'grace' is unquestionably the most significant word in the Bible. Have you experienced it? ■

“ EACH AND EVERY DAY WE RECEIVE THE GRACE THAT WE NEED FOR THAT DAY; TOMORROW'S GRACE WILL COME TOMORROW WHEN WE NEED IT, NOT TODAY WHEN WE DO NOT. ”

✍ **Rev Timothy Ormerod,**
Ballygowan Free Presbyterian Church.

YOUTH FOCUS

YOUTH COUNCIL HISTORICAL TRIP

On Friday 27th October, a group of young people from Northern Ireland, Wales, and England, led by Rev Paul Hanna, set off on a Youth Council trip to Scotland. While Scotland is well known for its breathtaking scenery, we were there to visit several important historical sites around Dundee and St Andrews over the Reformation weekend. Upon arrival, we met with our tour guide for the weekend, Calum Webster from the Christian Institute. Originating from Scotland, Calum has a depth of knowledge in this area and a passion for his Protestant history.

On Saturday morning, Rev Wesley Irwin (Rutherglen FPC) met with us for breakfast before we donned coats and umbrellas to brave the inclement weather. We started at the birthplace of Richard Cameron, a leading Scottish covenanter, called the Lion of the Covenant, who was martyred for his faith at Airmoss in 1680 when government dragoons cut off his head and hands. We then went to see the Magus Muir monument and the graves of the five covenanters slaughtered at the Battle of Bothwell Bridge in 1679.

Later in the day, we met up with Mr Webster's parents, Charlie and Kathleen, who showed us the Reformation Monument at St Andrews and the Wishart Arch in Dundee. The Arch is the last remaining section of Dundee's city walls, and it was here that George



Wishart preached the Gospel to the lepers who were not allowed inside the city. We also visited the location of Scotland's first martyr, Patrick Hamilton as well as the location of 'The Saint of the Covenant' - Samuel Rutherford.

Travelling on we saw the grave of Robert Murray McCheyne and got to see inside St Peter's Free Church where he ministered. We then stopped off at the memorial wall of Mary Slessor, who grew up in Dundee's Cowgate district and later became a missionary in Calabar, Nigeria.

On Sunday morning, we worshipped in Rutherglen Free Presbyterian Church, where the young people testified and sang, and Rev Irwin preached the Gospel. The congregation kindly provided lunch for us after the service. In the afternoon we visited two sights: firstly, the Drumclog memorial where we sang 'There is a fountain full of blood' which the Covenanters sang when they were attacked for their faith; we then visited the Bothwell Bridge Memorial. In the evening, we went back to

Rutherglen Free Presbyterian Church where Mr Stephen Crawford preached. Afterwards, the congregation provided supper and we had a wonderful time of fellowship getting to know the congregation and the Youth Fellowship.

Monday was our final day and we travelled into Edinburgh via the tube. We started at John Knox's house, and then saw inside St Giles Cathedral. We also saw John Knox's burial spot and Greyfriars Kirkyard. Our final stop was the Covenanters Memorial at Edinburgh Grassmarket. As we visited these sights, we had times of praise. Before leaving, the group said our goodbyes to Mr Webster, and Rev Irwin and his wife.

This historical trip was a wonderful experience, getting to learn and understand more about God's people and what they stood for. If you ever get the opportunity, I highly recommend going to Scotland on a historical trip! ■

✘ **Rachel Cahoon,**
Dungannon 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.

INFORMAL BIBLE STUDY

"Combatting the Cults"

3rd February, 7:30pm

Lurgan FPC

YOUTH COUNCIL 50TH ANNIVERSARY RALLY:

16th February, 8:00pm

Martyrs Memorial FPC

LOCAL EVENINGS OF PRAYER

Mid-March.

SUMMER CAMP

5th - 9th August 2024

Ages 12-18. £185pp. Full details online. Application forms received on a first come, first served basis.

STAY UP TO DATE AT



FPCYOUTH.ORG



A Word to Women

Following Him

*'And when they had brought their ships to land,
they forsook all, and followed him.'*

Luke 5:11

As I write this, we have been living in Uganda for five months. It feels more familiar each day and yet, as we come closer to the Christmas season, I cannot help but think of family and friends at home. I want to take a few moments to think about this verse with you, and perhaps explain why I have chosen to look at this verse. Although it has been five months, leaving home is still very fresh in my mind and this verse in a way explains my journey.

'AND WHEN THEY HAD BROUGHT THEIR SHIPS TO LAND...'

This passage in Luke chapter 5 tells us about the miraculous catch of fish. When Jesus commanded the fishermen to take their boats out and to lower their nets, they were rewarded with a great catch of fish.

The verse we are looking at says that they brought their ships to land. Jesus had performed this awesome miracle, and we discover that Peter, James, and John want to follow Jesus and give their lives of servitude to Him but ... they must bring their ship to land.

When we prepared to leave for Uganda, we could not simply lock the door of our house and walk away. Ray had to begin his depositions to seek prayerful and financial support; also, we had many practical things to prepare. Apart from these physical preparations, there were spiritual preparations to be made as well. We see in verse 8 that Peter says 'I am a sinful man, O Lord.' Before Peter could leave and follow Christ, he had to prepare himself spiritually and so must we. If we are to give our lives to Christ and serve Him, we must prepare our hearts.

'...THEY FORSOOK ALL...'

This simple phrase means so much, 'they forsook all'. For my family and me, we forsook all to move across the world

to follow Christ's leading, but you know, if you are to follow Christ, you must also forsake all. You must forsake your old self and your old wants. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says 'old things are passed away ... all things are become new.'

When we give our lives to the Lord, we leave our old lives behind. We leave the sins we once enjoyed, but also we may have to leave friendships we once cherished, careers we strove for, or some other things in our lives that were not honouring to God. God reminds us in Isaiah 43:18 & 19: 'Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold I will do a new thing'. God has a new life for you as His child. He will do a new and wondrous thing in your life.

“
*When we
give our lives
to the Lord,
we leave
our old lives
behind.*
”

'...AND FOLLOWED HIM.'

Lastly and very simply, the disciples followed him. These men were simple fishermen; they did not know what plans the Lord had for their lives, but they stepped out in faith and 'followed him'.

Maybe you are reading this short word today and God has been asking you to step out in faith and follow Him. Maybe it is to follow Him to some far-off land and serve Him there, but maybe it is to follow Him in your home. Maybe

He has been asking you to follow Him in daily worship with your family or in your own private time with Him.

As W.C. Martin said in his hymn:

*Where He may lead me I will go,
For I have learned to trust Him so,
And I remember 'twas for me
That He was slain on Calvary. ■*

✉ **Mrs Rhonda Carscadden** is married to Rev Ray Carscadden. They serve the Lord together in Uganda.

Hobson of Liverpool

One man dominates our thoughts of the evangelical scene in the late Victorian Liverpool and that is Bishop JC Ryle, whose voluminous writings are still being reprinted and appreciated today. This being so, it automatically disqualifies him from this series on ‘unsung saints’. However, he had a ‘right-hand man’ who is lesser known today but was a ‘brother whose praise is in all the churches’ when he ministered in the great metropolis.

Richard Hobson was an Irish Protestant by birth. Converted through the witness of other pupils in Sunday School, he grew in grace and joined the Irish Church Missions who bravely sent missionaries among their Catholic neighbours. Often this was conducted through the controversial ‘Inquiry Class’ where Romanism was directly challenged and answered in public meetings. The priests were enraged and one missionary in Drogheda was almost kicked to death. As the doorman at one prayer meeting, Hobson successfully held off an infuriated mob, managing to engage the ringleader for a moment or two. He quoted 1 Timothy 2:5 from the Douay Version (‘There is one God and one mediator’, etc.) and offered the youth the enormous sum of £5 if he could produce a text from his own Bible that declared that there was one God and two mediators. The next morning, the young man called at Hobson’s house and borrowed his Douay Testament and soon created a great stir in the neighbourhood by valiantly professing faith in Christ.

Hobson studied for the Anglican ministry in Birkenhead, Liverpool before taking up pioneer work in 1868 in the most notorious slum in Liverpool. Known as ‘Little Hell’, the Windsor district housed 4,500 souls in sixteen acres of ground. Narrow streets of badly built houses and cellars caused the area to be a hotbed of deadly diseases. There were sixteen public

houses, two beer shops, and several brothels. His first church service was held in a cellar with five people in the congregation: three women, one man, and ‘a little fellow who sat on a creepy stool’. Hobson sang (presumably on his own) ‘Rock of Ages’ and ‘There is a Fountain’, prayed twice, and read the Parable of the Lost Sheep. The man in attendance professed faith. Thirty souls gathered at the schoolroom the following week. He gave himself to extensive house-to-house visitation and soon the schoolroom, holding 250, was overflowing. Gaining favour with the people of all creeds and none, a new church building was opened in 1869, and he laboured there night and day for 30 years.

He welcomed the appointment of JC Ryle as Bishop and the two men worked well together. Attributing the success to God using a faithful ministry, Ryle left the following on record: ‘I know of a parish of 4,500 in Liverpool, with not a rich man in it – a thoroughly poor working-class parish. In a plain brick church, there is a hearty service and an attendance of 700 on a Sunday morning, 300 in the afternoon, and 950 in the evening. In the 3 mission rooms, there is an average attendance of about 350 in the morning and 450 in the evening.’ He continued, ‘The practical and moral results in the parish are patent and unmistakable. There is not a single house of ill fame, nor a single known infidel.’

Hobson preached at Ryle’s funeral in 1900 and retired in 1901 to nearby Southport, where he became an active and valued member of the local Anglican Church. He died in faith in 1914! ■

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

Note: His autobiography is published by Banner of Truth under the title: *Richard Hobson of Liverpool*.

“ *Doctrine is not just to be learned; it is to be lived out. It is the believer’s daily duty and God’s will to live a sanctified life.* ”



SANCTIFICATION

What is doctrine? It is simply teaching – the teaching of the Bible. Christ said, ‘...learn of me’ (Matthew 11:29). If we are to walk worthy of the Lord, then we must be continually increasing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 3:10). The concise format of this series means that only the briefest overview is presented. It is just a starting point in exploring God’s Word. Each article will also seek to present a challenge to live out the doctrine in our daily lives.

The doctrine we want to consider in this article is sanctification.

THE DEFINITION OF THIS DOCTRINE

What is sanctification? The *Shorter Catechism* puts it like this, ‘Sanctification is the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.’

It is the work of God. Sanctification is something God effects in all His people. It is the outworking of Christ’s death. Its basis is the cross. Titus 2:14 says, ‘Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of

good works.’ Sanctification follows salvation as day follows night. It is particularly attributable to the Spirit and the Scriptures. (See 2 Thessalonians 2:13; John 17:17).

It is two-fold in nature. The believer is set apart from sin and is being set apart unto God. It is a daily dying to sin and a daily dedicating of ourselves unto God. In sanctification, we separate ourselves from sin so that we might live unto God.

It is conformity to Christ’s image. God’s purpose in His people is that they are conformed and renewed in His image. Paul states God’s purpose in Romans 8:29 as being ‘conformed to the image of his Son’.

It is a progressive work. The Catechism teaches that sanctification is progressive and ongoing by saying we ‘are enabled more and more to die to sin and live unto righteousness.’

It will be perfected (Romans 8:30). What is glorification? It is sanctification perfected! One day, ‘we shall be like him’ (1 John 3:2).

THE DISTORTION OF THIS DOCTRINE

The doctrines of the Bible have always been attacked. The devil challenges the truth – ‘Yea, hath God said’ (Genesis 3:1). Men change the truth – ‘Who changed the truth’ (Romans 1:25). Others contradict the truth – ‘Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already’ (2 Timothy 2:18). Some corrupt

the truth – ‘which corrupt the word of God’ (2 Corinthians 2:17).

Sanctification is distorted through:

Perfectionism – Some advocate that a believer may reach a point where they never sin.

Legalism – Some think that sanctification is all about outward conformity to rules and regulations.

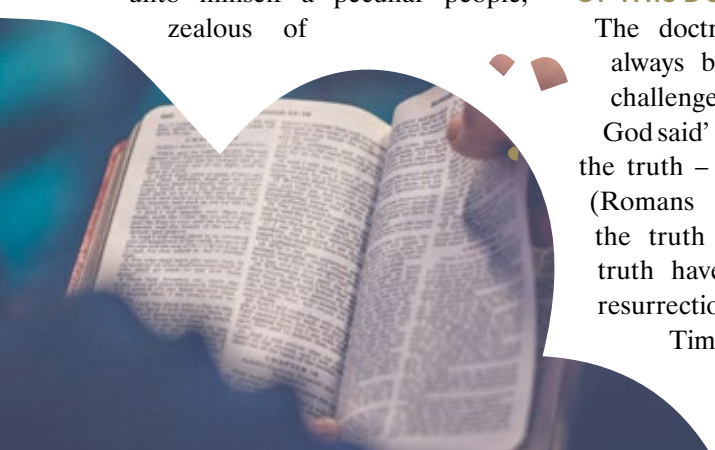
Moralism – Some think that striving to live a holy life makes God love them more and makes them more acceptable to God.

THE DEMANDS OF THIS DOCTRINE

To some, doctrine is something purely academic or theoretical. We must be ‘doers of the word’ (James 1:22). Doctrine is not just to be learned; it is to be lived out. It is the believer’s daily duty and God’s will to live a sanctified life, ‘For this is the will of God, even your sanctification’ (1 Thessalonians 4:3). We are to pursue after holiness (Hebrews 12:14). Paul’s challenge in 2 Corinthians 7:1 is: ‘...let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.’

Let us ask ourselves: Is God doing a sanctifying work in my life? Am I advancing in holiness? Can I say with Paul, ‘I die daily’ (1 Corinthians 15:31)? Do I thank God for His sanctifying work in me? ■

✍ **Rev Wesley Irwin,**
Rutherglen Free Presbyterian Church



Overcoming Anger

A Christian Perspective

Anger is a powerful and complex emotion that touches every person's life. Whether it's a minor annoyance with another driver on the road, a situation at work, a running battle with your spouse, or frustration with your children for not putting away their toys, anger is something we all experience. For some, unresolved issues can fester, leading to deep-seated anger, simmering beneath the surface, ready to explode at any moment. In this article, we shall explore the importance of dealing with anger within a Biblical framework

ACKNOWLEDGING ANGER AS A HUMAN EMOTION

Anger is a universal emotion, and it is essential to recognise that it is not inherently sinful. In fact, our text even commands us to 'be ye angry, and sin

not' (Ephesians 4:26). The statement's imperative mood emphasises that anger is not intrinsically wrong, but the handling of it is key.

THE ROLE OF RIGHTEOUS ANGER

Not all anger is sinful. There is a concept known as righteous anger, which is a godly reaction to sin or injustice. We see examples of righteous anger in the Bible, including Jesus Himself. He displayed anger, without sin, when He encountered unbelief and hypocrisy (Mark 3:5; John 2:14-17; Matt. 21:12-13 & 23:13-33). If we desire to be more like Christ, we should direct our anger towards the things that anger God.

Anyone who cannot be angry at the mistreatment of an innocent child, some great display of depravity, terrible injustice, or assaults on God's Word

and the doctrines of the faith is either a coward or has no moral convictions at all. The first step in addressing your anger is to analyse it. Ask yourself whether your anger is righteous or sinful. Consider why you are angry, as God encouraged Cain to do in Genesis 4:6 when he questioned Cain's fallen countenance. God's questions are not to gain information but to help us view situations from His perspective.

One common issue with anger is that we often direct it at the wrong targets, for the wrong reasons, at the wrong times, and in the wrong ways. A good rule of thumb is that if your anger revolves around your hurt feelings, or personal concerns, it is likely sinful. In contrast, if your anger stems from harm done to others or God, it can be considered righteous.

THE DESTRUCTIVENESS OF SINFUL ANGER

Sinful anger becomes problematic when it is centred on oneself and allowed to fester, growing into resentful, vindictive, and mean-spirited behaviour. It will consume our thoughts, filling us with bitterness and undermining our joy, even interfering with our worship and hindering our relationship with God. Sinful anger will poison our lives and damage our spiritual well-being.

TIMELY RESOLUTION OF ANGER

Returning to Ephesians 4:26, the latter part of the verse states, 'let not the sun go down on your wrath.' It is often said in jest to newlyweds to not to go to bed angry ... stay up all night and fight! But the underlying message of the text is clear: get a handle on your anger quickly.

INAPPROPRIATE WAYS TO MANAGE ANGER

As we strive to control our anger, we must avoid ineffective approaches. Three common but inappropriate ways are suppression, explosive outbursts, and passive-aggressiveness.

Suppression:

Some, believing that all anger is wrong, attempt to control their anger by suppressing it. However, this approach seldom resolves the underlying issues and often leads to more significant problems. Suppressed anger will eventually explode, usually over some minor issue, or manifest as bitterness, contentiousness, and a negative attitude.

Explosive Outbursts:

On the opposite end of the spectrum, some people let their anger erupt without restraint. They feel the need to 'get things off their chests', often causing collateral damage with their

words and actions. This approach is harmful and can create a hostile environment. Excuses like, 'This is just the way I am' are feeble attempts to justify such behaviour.

Passive-Aggressiveness:

Others deal with their anger less directly and more subtly, using a passive-aggressive approach. This could involve spreading rumours, manipulating others, using sarcasm, making snide comments, having a negative attitude, or even staying silent and ignoring the other person. Instead of addressing the issue directly, passive-aggressiveness punishes others indirectly. It may feel like you are in control, but, in reality, it poisons relationships.

If we don't learn to control our anger, it will control us.

PRACTICAL STEPS FOR MANAGING ANGER

Learning to control anger is an essential part of the Christian life. Here are some practical tips to help you master this potentially dangerous emotion:

Embrace your Position in Christ:

Christ died both to take away the guilt of our sins and to give us power through the Holy Spirit to overcome our sins. What we cannot do by ourselves, we can yet accomplish through the indwelling Spirit of God (Philippians 4:13).

It is worth noting that one aspect of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22&23 is 'temperance' or self-control. Controlling anger may seem an impossible task, but if you learn to walk in the Spirit in obedience to God, you can control it, or else God's Word is not true! The word 'fruit' implies that it is a growth process, requiring nurture and attention. Rely on the Spirit's strength, and you will see increasing victories over your anger.

Assess Righteous Versus Sinful Anger:

When you feel anger welling up, take a moment to evaluate its nature. Is it righteous anger, motivated by concern for God and others, or is it sinful anger, rooted in personal grievances? For righteous anger, establish boundaries and outlets for expressing it constructively. For sinful anger, address it promptly to prevent it from spiralling out of control.

Confess and Forgive:

If your anger is sinful, confess it to God and seek His forgiveness. Commit those who have caused your anger to the Lord and pray for them.

Repent and Seek Forgiveness:

If you have sinned due to anger, accept responsibility for your actions and ask for forgiveness from those you have wronged. If you had an argument in your home, gather the family and acknowledge your wrongdoing. Fathers, as head of the home, should initiate reconciliation, taking the initiative to create a loving and Christian home, through humility and forgiveness.

THE POSITIVE OUTCOMES OF CONTROLLING ANGER

Learning to control anger has many positive benefits. It can enrich our relationships, help our families to heal and grow, and also enhance our Christian witness, demonstrating our new life in Christ. Additionally, it has the potential to positively influence society by promoting respect and kindness over hate and violence.

Christians must learn how to understand and control their anger. With the help of God's guidance and power, and by applying practical steps to gain victory over this destructive emotion, we can contribute to stronger relationships, healthier family dynamics, and a more loving and compassionate society. By mastering our anger, we can avoid hurting ourselves and others, and live a fulfilling and God-glorifying life. ■

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

“When you feel anger welling up, take a moment to evaluate its nature. Is it righteous anger, motivated by concern for God and others, or is it sinful anger, rooted in personal grievances?”



Mission Vision Conference

to Mark the Mission Board's 50th Anniversary

March 2024 marks the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Free Presbyterian Mission Board. Although its beginnings were small, God has graciously blessed the Mission Board's work and the Free Presbyterian missionary endeavour now stretches into numerous countries around the world. We are incredibly thankful to God for His sovereign purposes in raising up men and women and sending them into the harvest fields. Some have passed on to glory, others have transitioned into retirement, many are still in their fields of service, and a number are engaged in deputation meetings in preparation to leave home and serve in foreign lands. None of these developments would ever have been possible without the Lord's grace,

help, and provision. Our congregations continue to support the work faithfully by prayer and financial gifts. There have been 50 years of encouragement and giving which have enabled the work to progress.

To mark this Golden Anniversary, a series of special missionary services are being arranged from Wednesday 6th March to Saturday 9th March 2024. God willing, these meetings will be held in Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church. Please keep these dates free and plan to join with us: 'O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together' (Psalm 34:3). ■

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



MISSION VISION 50

A special conference to focus on Mission in Action.

Hosted in Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church

6-8 MARCH 2024 each night @ 8pm

- The Priority of Evangelism
- The Purpose of Discipleship
- The Pattern of Church Planting

SATURDAY 9 MARCH 2024 @ 8pm

- Special Anniversary service to recognise the work of the Mission Board over the past 50 years
- Special Speaker – Rev Samuel Murray (Moderator of Presbytery)

fpcmission.org
@FPMission



‘An air of Youthfulness’ at the

Missionary Council Weekend



There was certainly an air of youthfulness as the delegates and friends of the Missionary Council met for their annual weekend in the Silver Birch Hotel, Omagh. Three families, with a total of eight children, joined us this year adding young voices and activity to the weekend. Jason and Danielle Boyle were there with their boys, Caleb and Jonathan; Glenn and Emma Hamilton with Holly, George, and Isabella; and David and Rachel McAuley with Eloise, Arthur, and Jude. The first meeting was held in

Omagh church on the Friday night. Rev Jason Boyle brought a personal word of testimony and Rev Mercer set the tone of the weekend, preaching on the subject, ‘Mission in Action’. The Omagh ladies provided a light supper.

The Saturday morning began with an informal meeting for the ladies, when they heard Danielle's personal story and about the family ups and downs of living in Mexico City. Then, after free time in the afternoon, the Saturday night meeting included Alastair Hamilton giving an update on the position of the mission strategy in our works across the world and an interview with both prospective missionary couples, the Hamiltons and the McAuleys. They discussed their backgrounds and told of their hopes and concerns as they prepare to go out to Kenya and Uganda respectively. Presentations were

made to retiring Missionary Council delegates, before Glenn Hamilton brought a closing word.

Everyone attended Omagh church for the Sunday morning service. Recently graduated missionary student, Elizabeth Edwards, gave a report on the summer outreach to Kenya and David McAuley preached a challenging sermon on being fellow labourers in the work. ■

✍ **Mr Eric Graham,**
Missionary Council Chairman.



MISSIONARY VISION

Uganda

Building & Vehicle Appeal

The sending out of new missionary families to Uganda is a cause for great thankfulness to the Lord, but also presents new challenges, such as the provision of suitable, safe accommodation and vehicles adequate for the circumstances. To address these needs, the Mission Board is planning to develop a secure compound and build two new houses on land adjacent to the Mission Station, and to buy a new 9-seater Toyota Landcruiser.

Accommodation for the McAuley family is an urgent need, as they move on to the field this year, so we plan to



prepare the compound and build the first house immediately. Then, as soon as possible afterwards, we will build the second house for the Carscadden family, with room left for another house in the future.

The total funds needed for the building project and the new vehicle are approximately £280,000. We are delighted to report that we have already received pledges of finance for these projects from a generous supporter and the Missionary Council to cover

the first £130,000, which means we need to raise a further £150,000.

We are, therefore, making an earnest appeal for gifts to help with this major expansion of the mission field in Uganda. If you would like to donate to these projects, please contact the Mission Board Office for bank details. Sincere thanks for your prayerful consideration of this matter. ■

✉ **Rev David McMillan,**
Uganda Subcommittee Chairman.

UNITED CHILDREN'S CAMPS 2024

MOYALLON CENTRE near Portadown

First Camp: 29 July - 2 August

Second Camp: 5 - 9 August

Cost: £140 per young person

Application forms: available on www.fpcmission.org

'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' Ecclesiastes 12:1



MISSIONARY VISION

A Very Encouraging Trip to Nepal



☒ Above: The young ladies who graduated.

The 'eight-thousanders' is the collective name for the fourteen highest mountain peaks in the world and refers to the fact that each of those mountains is over 8000 metres high. That height is significant, in that 8000 metres is regarded as the maximum height at which a human being can survive for any length of time without an artificial source of oxygen. Nepal is unique in that it houses the world's top eight tallest mountains. It is impossible not to be moved by the breathtaking scenery of the place.

The Nepalese appear to be a very religious people. It is impossible to move about the country and fail to see the evidence of false religion. Hinduism and Buddhism seem to dominate the culture. Shrines, pictures, and images are to be seen at every turn. We saw numerous cars with little images and false gods placed on their dashboards. Cabs of lorries are adorned by paintings of the gods. The words of Psalm 97:7 readily came to mind; they 'boast themselves of idols'. However, in the midst of false religion, the truth of the Gospel is being proclaimed.



☒ The men who were ordained



☒ Above: The Youth Conference

The purpose of our visit was to engage with the work of our missionary, Miss Joy Gillespie, and the Free Presbyterian Church of Nepal. A special two-day Youth Conference had been arranged. Young people and some of the Nepalese Free Presbyterian church pastors travelled from different areas of the country to be in attendance. As is the custom, the congregation sat on the floor during the four services each day. We preached upon the early ministry of Elijah in a land that had largely embraced idolatry in the days of Ahab and Jezebel. The topic seemed most appropriate, with the audience listening attentively and appreciating the Word proclaimed.

We also had the opportunity to participate in an ordination service for three new pastors and three church elders. Further, Rev Creane preached at a graduation service, marking the completion of a Bible study course undertaken by a number of young ladies. Visits to two churches in the mountains, not far from Kathmandu, were also highlights. We greatly appreciated the generosity of the Mission Board in sending us.

We were privileged to be present to see the Youth Fellowship Teams engage for the first time in a quiz to win the newly established Rev Wesley Graham Memorial Cup. Five teams were questioned on the *Shorter Catechism* questions 1-38, general Bible knowledge, multiple-choice questions, and a sword drill. The team from the church in Kathmandu won. Rev Thapa presented the cup to the winning team, along with their medals and a certificate. All the other participating teams were also recognised for their efforts.

The Lord's people in Nepal were most welcoming and friendly. Miss Gillespie and Rev Paul Thapa, the Moderator of the Presbytery, are to be commended for their continued labours in faithfully presenting the Gospel. Your prayers for them and for all who assist in the work would be much appreciated. ■

☒ Rev John Armstrong,
Dungannon Free Presbyterian Church.

☒ Below: A team participating in the Rev Wesley Graham Memorial Cup.



2024 MISSION TRIPS



“Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.”

Mark 16:15

ASIA

with LOCAL
CHURCHES



Date:

Oct/Nov 2024 for 10 days

Team: Maximum of 4

Outreach Activities:

VBS, Church Visits,
Youth Events

Cost:

£1,200/person (subsidised)

SPAIN

with CORTIJOS
NEUVOS CHURCH



Date:

July 2024 for 7 days

Team: Maximum of 12

Outreach Activities:

VBS, Open Airs,
Leaflet Distribution, Youth Events

Cost:

£500/person (subsidised)

Express your interest by completing the online application form available on the Mission Board website: www.fpcmission.org

Places are limited and applicants must be 18 years old or over.

More details can be obtained from the Mission Board Secretary – Rev D McMillan.

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Easter Convention

Organised by: **FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER**

Hosted by: **MARTYRS MEMORIAL FPC**

FRIDAY 29th MARCH, 8.00PM **YOUTH RALLY & PRAISE SERVICE**

Participants: Students from Whitefield College of the Bible and the Youth Council 50th Anniversary Choir
Preacher: Rev Timothy Nelson

SATURDAY 30th MARCH **8.00PM**

MISSIONARY RALLY
Various missionary reports
Preacher: Dr John McKnight
Maryland, USA

MONDAY 1st APRIL **7.00PM**

CONVENTION RALLY
Preacher: Dr John McKnight
Singers: Magherafelt FPC choir
Kids' Club will run during this meeting

SUPPER SERVED AFTER EVERY MEETING



Dates For The Diary

JANUARY

12th - 14th

HEBRON FPC, 56TH ANNUAL MISSIONARY CONVENTION WEEKEND

Time: Fri 8.00pm, Sat 7.30pm, Sun 12noon & 7.00pm
Missionary reports & presentations from around the world. Special Singing at each service.

26th

MARKETHILL FPC, YOUTH RALLY

Preacher: Rev R Higginson
Subject: Temptation

FEBRUARY

11th - 16th

MULLAGHGLASS FPC, BIBLE WEEK

Time: Sun 7.00pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Preacher: Dr Ron Johnstone

20th - 26th

AGHALEE FPC, 25TH ANNIVERSARY SERVICES

Time: 11:30am & 6:30pm
Preachers: Dr Ron Johnstone, Rev Samuel Murray

25th Feb - 10th March

BETHEL FPC, GOSPEL MISSION IN LISBELLAW ORANGE HALL

Time: Sundays 3.30pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Evangelists: Rev James Porter, Rev Larry Power,
and Mr Colin Maxwell

MARCH

10th - 24th

COLERAINE FPC, GOSPEL MISSION

Evangelist: Dr William McCrea

15th

FREE PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual St Patrick's Day Lecture

Time: 8.00pm, Dungannon FPC
Preacher: Rev Peter McIntyre
Subject: Land of the Giants:
2,000 Years of Irish Christianity

17th - 22nd

CALVARY FPC, MAGHERAFELT BIBLE CONFERENCE

Time: Sun 7.00pm, Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Preacher: Dr Ron Johnstone
Subject: Practical Christianity:
Teaching from Ephesians

18th - 22nd

LONDONDERRY FPC,

Time: Mon-Fri 8.00pm
Preacher: Rev Colin Mercer
Subject: The Christian Enjoying Christ

Free Presbyterian
VISION

