

# Free Presbyterian VISION

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ULSTER

## Resurrection Power

Judging  
Others

The Christian  
and Science

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# Contents

## REGULARS

- 8 News
- 15 **A Word to Women**  
*The First Woman & Authority Within Marriage*
- 18 **Church Life**  
*Preparing for the Lord's Day*
- 19 **Unsung Saints**  
*Mary King*

## FEATURES

- 4 **Resurrection Power**
- 6 **The Christian and Science**
- 16 **Judging Others**

## YOUTH

- 11 **My Favourite Hymn**
- 12 **Evangelism & the Cross**
- 14 **Kids**

## MISSIONARY VISION

- 20 **Visit To Uganda**
- 21 **FPC Bible Training Institute**
- 22 **Storm Odette**  
*Philippines*
- 23 **Challenges in Health**  
*Chris Killen*

## Editorial

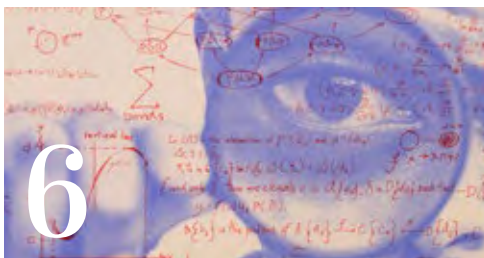
How far the eye can see has always been a constant fascination for mankind. A new dimension has been added this year in the form of the James Webb Space Telescope. With development beginning back in 1996, construction was complete in 2016. After extensive testing, it was finally launched into orbit on 25<sup>th</sup> December of last year. The telescope, having been unfolded successfully, will soon commence its program. It is claimed that it will be able to detect objects up to 100 times fainter than Hubble.

No doubt all of this will be most fascinating, but most probably at the heart of this endeavour remains a philosophy that is determined to remove God from any consideration; mankind will only believe what he can see. Even Christians struggle when it comes to matters of faith and sight. We all know that we walk by faith and not sight, but often toil when this is put to the test. Much like the Apostle Thomas who said, 'Except I shall see... I will not believe' (John 20:25). He was not in a good place. Thankfully, the Lord was merciful to him at this critical stage in the Apostle's life: '...because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed' (v29).

Whatever discoveries will be revealed by the James Webb Space Telescope, yet one thing remains the same – there is nothing new under the sun or any star for that matter. What a blessed truth it is to focus our spiritual eye on the resurrection of our Lord Jesus at this time of year. His resurrection power is to be known. It is life-changing. Jesus pronounced blessing and happiness upon those who, though not seeing with the physical eye, have believed in Him to the saving of their soul.

'Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. . . ' (1 Peter 1:8). ■

✉ **Editor**, [editor@fpvision.org](mailto:editor@fpvision.org)



“*Today, Christ lives in glory, having ascended to the Father's right hand, and bidden by the Father to sit down in the seat of honour and rest. Though exalted in heaven, He is not unmindful of His people upon earth.*”

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*“With the arrival of Spring, perhaps weariness begins to set in – is it possible that our New Year’s enthusiasm for a closer walk with the Saviour is waning?”*

*“May we learn from Uzziah’s mistakes. As Christians, we must resolve to finish well. Christian, keep going! Press on!”*

By the time March rolls around, resolutions made back in January are often a distant memory. Commitments to exercise frequently and eat well are long since forgotten! Often the new year brings with it the opportunity for many Christians to reflect and consider their ways. We acknowledge that our spiritual walks are often not what they could be and, so, we rededicate ourselves to the LORD. Accordingly, the early days of a new year can be marked with a fresh devotion to the LORD. Times of private prayer and Bible study are fiercely guarded. Perhaps even services in the local congregation, that had been neglected, are once more faithfully attended. However, with the arrival of Spring, perhaps weariness begins to set in – is it possible that our New Year’s enthusiasm for a closer walk with the Saviour is waning? Many a well-intentioned Christian starts the new year well but does not continue in the same vein.

2 Chronicles 26 records that King Uzziah started well; sadly, he did not finish in the same manner. Verse 4 introduces us to a king that sought to do “*that which was right in the sight of the LORD.*” The following verse informs us that “as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.” Verse 7 reveals: “God helped him against the Philistines... the Arabians...and the Mehunims.” Thus, we see a king, from the outset of his reign, walking with the LORD. As he walked faithfully, God gave him much help.

Sadly, Uzziah forgot the source of his strength. We read in 2 Chronicles 26:16: “But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to *his* destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.” Uzziah’s heart was filled with pride. He considered his strength, his power, his victories over the enemy, and his heart became ‘puffed up’. He forgot that God had been his helper. He forgot that God had provided every victory. He forgot that God had made him great. Of course, we remember that pride, always evident in the Pharisees, was condemned by Christ. Stirred by pride, Uzziah committed a serious sin: he sought to burn incense and entered the areas of the temple reserved only for the priests. He had no right to do this. Overflowing with self-importance and casting aside reverence towards the LORD, he ignored God’s explicit commands concerning worship. The LORD smote Uzziah in judgement and he died a leper.

Uzziah started well but finished in disgrace. May we learn from Uzziah’s mistakes. As Christians, we must resolve to finish well. Christian, keep going! Press on! As 2022 progresses, continue to take new ground for the LORD. Let us take our eyes off ourselves; let us give no quarter to pride or arrogance in our hearts. Rather, let us continue, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith” (Hebrews 12:2). ■

✍ **Rev Stephen Nelson,**  
*Rasharkin Free Presbyterian Church.*



# Resurrection Power

“**T**he cornerstone of the entire building of Christianity. The keystone in the arch of our salvation.” This is how the resurrection of our Lord Jesus has been described. If there is no resurrection, Christianity collapses. Yet, our Lord has risen. Christ, having lain under the state of death in Joseph’s tomb until the third day, by His power, conquered death and rose triumphantly.

The Puritan Thomas Watson maintained that, “Christ did not rise from the dead as a private person, but as the public Head of the church.” So, His resurrection is for the benefit of His people and is the catalyst for our Christian hope and joy.

## CONTROL

In His resurrection, we see One who is in *control* of all things. Romans 1:4 maintains He is “declared to be the Son of God with power”. So, there is a declaration in Christ’s rising from the dead. It declares His deity. The resurrection was His act. No mere

man can rise from the dead according to his own ability. But the God-man did.

Just as He had the power to lay down His life, so He had the power to take it up again (John 10:18). All that the Lord does is for the redemption of His people and the benefit of His church. He comes to earth in the Lord’s time; He is led to the cross with the Lord’s permission; He lays down His life at the exact moment the Lord ordained it; He rose again in the Lord’s time. It is easier to be concerned at world events, but never forget the Lord’s will ordains and His hand controls every situation.

## CONQUERED

In His resurrection, we are reminded of One who has *conquered* every enemy. Since the greatest and most fearsome of all enemies – death – has been conquered, is Christ not able to help us overcome every other enemy? Since death and hell are no match for Him, then you can be confident that

“no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper” (Isaiah 54:17).

## COMFORT

Once more, the resurrection of Christ brings *comfort* to the child of God in the hour of sorrow. It was the thought of the resurrected Saviour that sustained Martha in the passing of her brother Lazarus. In John 11:25, Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life”. He identifies Himself with an event – the resurrection – and a state – the life. Though He had not yet laid down His life, He gives to Martha a great promise that brought consolation to her heart. He reminds her that He is the eternal Saviour. The bars of death could not hold Him.

It was for this purpose of consolation also that the angels appeared to the woman on the morning of the resurrection. Their hearts were broken. Their hopes had been dashed in the crucifixion of Christ. The One

whom they knew and loved had been taken. But the word from heaven is given to them as soon as they arrive at the tomb, “He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matthew 28:6). The Lord will not keep them in mourning for a second longer than necessary. What comfort the news of His resurrection must have brought to their hearts!

The early church was not allowed to forget that Christ had risen. In the days immediately following His resurrection, Acts 1:3 highlights how Christ showed Himself alive to His followers, “by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God”. Reminded of a resurrected and living Saviour, comfort and consolation were brought to their hearts.

#### COMMISSION

The resurrection of Christ is the seal of the great *commission*. We have a glorious Gospel to proclaim because of His resurrection. Scripture maintains in 1 Corinthians 15:14, “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.”

The basis of all true gospel preaching is that of a living Saviour – it is a gospel that depends upon His resurrection. A dead Saviour cannot save. That is the point that builds an unsurmountable wall between true and false religion. The original champions of all false religions, ancient and modern, are dead or shall one day die. The Bible says that preaching about one who is dead is ‘vain’ preaching. It is ‘worthless’ or ‘that which results in nothing’. The word ‘vain’ portrays the idea of an empty vessel. An empty vessel, in this sense, is of no benefit. Therein is a description of false religion. It is of no spiritual benefit. It deceives those who embrace it. Christ’s resurrection has dealt a death blow to the claims of every false religion.

We can then preach Christ with the utmost confidence, for it is Christ alone who is the Saviour of the soul. The



**“ We have a glorious Gospel to proclaim because of His resurrection. The basis of all true gospel preaching is that of a living Saviour – it is a gospel that depends upon His resurrection. ”**

resurrection validates our preaching. It sets our gospel apart from every other spiritual claim.

#### COMPASSION

His resurrection, also, indicates His *compassion*. Today, Christ lives in glory, having ascended to the Father’s right hand, and bidden by the Father to sit down in the seat of honour and rest. However, although Christ is highly exalted, He is not forgetful of us who remain upon earth. Some, when raised to a position of honour, forget their friends. The chief butler, when he was restored to his position in Pharaoh’s court, forgot about Joseph in prison. However, it is not so with Christ. Though exalted in heaven, He is not unmindful of His people upon earth. Hebrews 4:15 makes the point that “we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities”. As a result, in the language of Hebrews 7:25, He “ever liveth to make intercession” for His people. He pleads His righteousness on our behalf.

*Our fellow-sufferer yet retains  
A fellow-feeling of our pains  
And still remembers in the skies  
His tears, his agonies and cries.*

#### CERTIFIES

Furthermore, the resurrected Saviour guarantees or *certifies* the entrance of the child of God into heaven. Hebrews 6:20 states, “Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

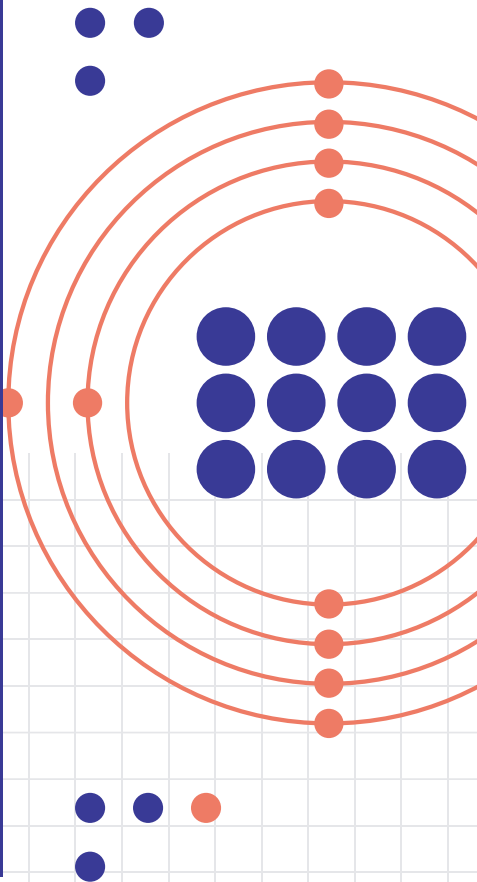
The forerunner is one who goes before to open up the way. Aaron, the High Priest of the Old Testament age, entered within the veil once a year, but never as a forerunner. He entered as the representative of those left outside, but they were always left outside. No one followed Aaron when he entered within the veil to stand in the presence of the ark and the mercy seat. However, when Jesus passed within the Heavenly veil, He did so as a forerunner, which immediately suggests that the way was open for others to follow Him. This is the hope and expectation of every child of God. Christ’s resurrection is the hope of our immortality.

In conclusion, Ephesians 4:8 declares that the Lord Jesus “led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” Every gift for our earthly and eternal wellbeing has been purchased for us at Calvary. They are guaranteed by His resurrection. What blessed assurance for the people of God.

*I know that my Redeemer lives  
What joy the blest assurance gives  
He lives, He lives, who once was dead  
He lives, my everlasting head.*

The building stands secure. The arch remains intact. Christ is alive. ■

✍ **Rev John Armstrong,**  
*Moderator of the Free Presbyterian  
Church of Ulster and Minister of  
Dungannon Free Presbyterian Church.*



# THE CHRISTIAN AND SCIENCE

Science or faith? That's the choice we are often presented with. The question creates the thought of conflict. The consequence is that it is assumed that the scientist will not exercise faith in God and that those who believe in God shut their brains off when it comes to science. These unnecessary conclusions have been exacerbated in recent years when "faith" verbs have been used with respect to science. We have been told to "trust the science" and "follow the science." 'Trust' and 'follow' are words that, as believers, we see as being synonymous with belief. What are we to do? Is it possible to live a life respecting the role of science without jettisoning our faith in God?

## DEFINING OUR TERMS

"Science" has had some bad press. During the pandemic, science has seemingly changed and people have become wary about science's reliability. How do we trust something that is changing continually? The problem we are confronting is a careless use of the term "science" and a misunderstanding of its process and authority. What we should understand is that when people speak of science they are usually speaking about an interpretation of information and data. As that interpretation is being made by

men, it is fallible, has the potential to be flawed and may need to change in the light of additional information.

The Christian's assessment of science must be based on an understanding of what science is and what it seeks to do. When we think in these terms, we will see that there is no conflict between science and faith. The Oxford Dictionary carries the definition of science as, "the intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment." Science, in essence, is the study of God's book of nature.


God's book of nature is a means of revelation. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge" (Psalm 19:1-2). According to Romans 1:20, creation reveals God's eternal power and godhead. As God is the author of this book, it is an infallible revelation. Science is false when it observes the world and asserts lies about God. The book of Creation is an infallible revelation being read by fallible men. Men read the book and may, at times, present conclusions

that are inaccurate or may need to be amended. Oftentimes, there is no malice intended – scientists are fallible creatures seeking to understand the infinite wisdom of God.

## SEEMING CONFLICTS

Scientists strive to make their observations and conclusions using all the available information. As I have already stated, there is always the possibility of some additional information that may make it necessary to amend the conclusion. Events in God's created world occur through many factors and scientists must try to identify as many of those factors as possible, while admitting their knowledge is always limited to some degree, however small.

Furthermore, we should note that conflict may exist within the scientific community. Some of the most important scientific conclusions have met opposition and contrary opinions. The Hungarian doctor, Ignaz Semmelweis, working in Vienna in 1846, noticed that the women giving birth in the doctor-run maternity ward in his hospital were much more likely to develop a fever and die compared to the women giving birth



## WHEN PEOPLE SPEAK OF SCIENCE THEY ARE USUALLY SPEAKING ABOUT AN INTERPRETATION OF INFORMATION AND DATA ... SEEMING INCONSISTENCIES BETWEEN THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE DO NOT DENY GOD BUT UNVEIL MAN'S FALLIBLE INTERPRETATIONS.



in the adjacent midwife-run ward. As a scientist, he sought to investigate the differences between the two units. There were many similarities but a significant difference – doctors often visited the maternity ward directly after performing an autopsy. Midwives didn't have this as part of their routine. Semmelweis had a theory that doctors carried "cadaverous particles" on their hands, which they brought into the maternity ward. He imposed a new rule mandating handwashing for doctors. The rates of death in his maternity ward fell dramatically. However, the innovation was not popular with everyone. Some doctors were displeased at the implication that they were to blame for these deaths. They argued against handwashing, voicing the prevailing notion that water carried disease. Conflict is not new in the scientific world. It's not hard to imagine conflicting newspaper headlines presenting alternative views about hand-washing. Readers in those days may have looked at science as speaking out of two sides of the same mouth.

Another pressure that scientists are placed under comes from society's thirst for rapid information. The Covid-19 pandemic has illustrated the trouble that arises when people demand dogmatic assertions. Assertions made are carried by the press as fact, but confidence is then undermined when those earlier assertions are modified or changed entirely. The earlier findings may have been accurate in stating the understanding at the time. Had they been expressed or reported in the media with appropriate humility perhaps people would have been slower to distrust the changing thinking about

a novel virus. Good science rests on the ability to reproduce the outcomes of experiments, but public demand or financial constraints may force the publication of conclusions that are too hasty. The Christian understanding of science will cause the Christian to exercise discernment in assessing scientific proclamations. The Christian will also have compassion towards the scientist recognising the difficulty of the task.

Much of the supposed conflict between science and faith has arisen due to the scientific world presenting conclusions which deny the God of heaven and, especially, His work in creation. Understanding that science is the reading of God's book of general revelation reminds us that God cannot contradict Himself. The Bible is God's book of special revelation and a scientific conclusion that contradicts the Bible must be false. God cannot say two contrary things and both be true. Seeming inconsistencies between the Bible and science do not deny God but unveil man's fallible interpretations. The Bible records the work of God in creating the world in six days. The Bible records a universal flood. A Darwinian scientist and a believing scientist assess the same data and draw different conclusions. When we accept that God's books of revelation are in agreement, we are left in no doubt as to what we ought to believe.

### GOD'S COMMON GRACE

I have sought to grapple with some of the reasons why Christians may struggle with the claims of the scientific community. I don't believe that implies there is no place for science

in Christian thought. How could it be wrong to read God's book of nature and observe the orderly nature of His design? The problem is not with the book but with sinful man's reading of the book. For the regenerate man, with eyes to see, creation presents the beauty and majesty of God. From the unspeakable grandeur of the night sky to the intricate detail of the human eye, the believer beholds the hand of God. God, who is the Almighty God, is the God who designed man to think, to see, to hear, to love.

We also fail to appreciate the common grace of God when we don't give thanks for the work that science has done in helping us exercise our dominion mandate over creation. God told our first parent to exercise dominion over the created order (Genesis 1:28). Over recent centuries, man has known to a limited degree dominion over the microscopic world. The God who commands, "Thou shalt not kill", has given men gifts to identify bacteria and viruses. He has given men the wisdom to develop medications and vaccines that have saved the lives of many and spared countless others the misery of chronic illness. We praise God for the gift of these scientific advances.

Historically, Christians have been at the forefront of scientific developments. In the hands of ungodly men, science can be misused to lead people to doubt. But in the hands of one who trusts in the Lord, science can cause people to see God's hand at work all around them. ■

✉ **Dr Stephen Pollock,**  
*Malvern Free Presbyterian Church,  
North America.*

# Installation of Rev Andrew Patterson in Markethill

Photo credit: Ken Hartley Photography



**Above:** Rev Andrew Patterson was installed as the minister of Markethill Free Presbyterian Church on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021. He is pictured with Session and Committee members: (front L to R) Messrs A Hopps, W McMullan, M Spratt, B Moffett; (back L to R) Messrs S McCammon, K Shields, D Mitchell and N Little.

**Above:** Rev Andrew Patterson is pictured with his wife, Sheree, and their three sons (L to R): Stephen, David and Joel.

# Ardaragh Congregation Celebrates Historic 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**Photo:** Back in October 2020, Ardaragh Free Presbyterian Church marked their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a special week of meetings. Pictured are members of Session and Committee (L to R): Mr P Smith, Mr G Bennett (elder), Mr J Frazer, Rev A Murray, Mr I Bingham, Mr M Megaw (elder), Mr J MacRoberts. Missing are Messrs N Moffatt & A Bingham.



# Elder Ordained in Larne

**Photo:** Mr Hill Reid was ordained as an elder of Larne Free Presbyterian Church on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2021. Pictured are ministers and elders in attendance (L to R): Mr J Craig, Rev J Greer (Clerk of Presbytery), Mr R Semple, Mr H Reid, Rev D Brown, Rev J Armstrong (Moderator) and Mr K Sampson.



# Completing the Catechism

Right: Pictured either side of Rev J Porter, holding their certificates, are Misses Eliana Foy and Julia Moore, both of whom recently memorised the Children's Catechism.



# Omagh FPC Honours Two Retiring Elders

Two retiring elders from Omagh Free Presbyterian Church were recently honoured with Elder Emeritus status. Mr E Monteith served as the first Clerk of Session and treasurer of the congregation for many years. Mr Browne has also served as an invaluable part of the work in Omagh. Due to advancing years, they have retired from active service. Their Elder Emeritus status was recognised during a Lord's Day morning service.



Above: Mr E Monteith is pictured with members of his family (L to R: Darrell, Anne and Martin).



Above: Mr G Browne is pictured with his daughter, Lorraine.

# Hebron Marks Twenty-Five Years of Ministry for Rev David Park

The congregation of Hebron Free Presbyterian Church united in thanksgiving as they celebrated twenty-five years of the faithful ministry of the Rev and Mrs Park on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Since the commencement of the witness, some 70 years ago, the Rev Park has been the congregation's longest-serving Pastor.

Right: Rev D Park is pictured receiving a special gift alongside his wife, Susan.



# Home & Mission Field at Comber



📖 **Above:** Mrs Hazel McElroy is presented with a gift by Rev T Martin and Mr C McKee (elder) marking her retirement from the Sunday School, after over 30 years of faithful service.



📖 **Above:** The Youth Fellowship in Comber Free Presbyterian Church raised £720, in order to sponsor 6 pupils in the Emmanuel Christian School, Uganda. Pictured is Rev David McMillan receiving the gift, alongside Rev T Martin, Mr N McElroy (Youth Fellowship Leader, middle) and other leaders within the Youth Fellowship.

## Elder Emeritus Bestowed On Long Standing Moneyslane Elder

The congregation in Moneyslane Free Presbyterian Church marked the retirement of Mr Raymond Wright after 44 years of of faithful service as an elder. On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> February the church met together and Mr Wright testified of God's saving grace in his life.

📖 **Right:** Pictured is Mr R Wright receiving a copy of the Scriptures presented to him by Rev D Henderson and Mr W Sterritt (Sunday School Superintendent).



## Londonderry's Sunday School Supports the Mission Field

📖 **Left:** Mr Andrew Foster is pictured receiving a gift of £3189 on behalf of Emmanuel Christian School, Uganda. This gift was raised by the congregations's Sunday School during 2021. Also in the photo are young people from the Sunday School and Mr J Murray (Sunday School Superintendent).

# My Favourite

# Hymn



Hymns of Faith

“Christians are not alone on the journey of life because they have the King of kings with them”

**M**y favourite hymn is one that was often sung in my home church and it is called ‘Forever with the Lord’. The Scottish hymnologist, James Montgomery, wrote it and the music was composed by I. B. Woodbury. Mr Montgomery was a gifted writer, compiling over 400 hymns of which many can be found in our own hymn book. He was the son of non-conformist Moravian missionaries, who had sailed to the West Indies, leaving James and his two siblings at the Moravian boarding school. Sadly, both his parents died in the West Indies, but his parents’ zeal for missionary work became a principal theme in many of his hymns. The words were based on 1 Thessalonians 4:17: “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

I find the hymn very moving and the lyrics teach wonderful truths of Scripture, with the main focus being heaven and how that eternal truth can impact every aspect of life on earth. The exhortation in verse 18 says, “Wherefore comfort one another with these words” and I believe that Mr Montgomery has fulfilled that perfectly with this hymn. The first words of the first verse state: ‘Forever with the Lord, amen so let it be’. These are words of comfort and reassurance to every Christian. What peace these sentiments bring to the soul, as it contemplates the stirring and magnificent truth behind them – forever with the Lord. As His child, each Christian has God’s presence with them each moment of every day. For me, this truth thrills my heart with joyfulness, as I constantly remember that God is with me. Christians are not alone on the journey of life because they have the King of kings with them.

Moreover, the words teach that it is forever. On earth and in heaven, saints of God will always have the presence of their Redeemer with them. Mr Montgomery was an excellent poet and understood the flow of rhythm and Biblical truth. One line says, ‘Yet nightly pitch my moving tent, a day’s march nearer home.’ An eternal rest from life’s trials awaits all who love Him, and each day just brings the child of God nearer to that heavenly home. Whether we live in Ulster, Spain or Nepal, our final home destination is to be with our Saviour – what a blessed promise! During life, there will be times when a person feels faint or discouraged, yet the sentiments of the

second verse encourage the soul, for it speaks of that ‘bright inheritance of saints, Jerusalem above.’ This rest awaits for all who accept Christ – men or women, young or old. The inheritance of the saints is for all and is always the same throughout all generations.

“  
AN ETERNAL  
REST FROM LIFE’S  
TRIALS AWAITS ALL WHO  
LOVE HIM, AND EACH  
DAY JUST BRINGS THE  
CHILD OF GOD NEARER  
TO THAT HEAVENLY  
HOME.  
”

The words of the third verse give believers strength when they consider that God’s Word is faithful, but, not only that, God Himself is faithful. The hidden gems of truth in Scripture will excite and bless all who wait before God in prayer and meditation. Whether God calls someone to work for Him on the mission field or at home, the same faithfulness of our heavenly Father will uphold each one to stand fast and rest on His precious Word. The last verse is a striking verse of triumph and jubilation. When the sufferings and pain of this life come to an end, we can shout with victory, ‘Once more, “Forever With The Lord!” Amen, So Let It Be!’! ■

✉ Miss Joy Gillespie

# EVANGELISM AND THE CROSS

**T**he modern method of evangelism is often little more than declaring to people, “Smile, Jesus loves you.” There is great reluctance among many professed Christians to speak about sin, eternal punishment, or the cross of our Lord. Perhaps that should not surprise us, since Scripture makes it clear there is an offensive aspect to the message of the cross. To avoid offending people, there is the temptation to hold back somewhat in our presentation of the gospel.

### MOTIVATED BY THE CROSS

The early Corinthian believers seemed to have been tempted to soften the message of the gospel and to make it appear more attractive, especially to the sophisticated and educated. But one of the most gifted ‘personal evangelists’ that has ever lived wrote to them; and, warning of that error, said, “The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18). The preaching in view in that great statement is not limited to a pulpit; very literally, Paul is saying “the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.” The words include the thought of ‘reasoning’ with sinners concerning the cross,

‘communicating’ concerning the cross or ‘making known’ the message of the cross. When we are rebuffed for bringing this ‘foolish’ message, we are not to despair, but persist, knowing that it is the ‘power of God’.

The cross is to be our great motivation for evangelism. As the truth of the cross gets hold of us, we ought to feel the need to declare the great message of Calvary; thus Paul proceeded to make that great statement, “We preach Christ crucified.” (1 Corinthians 1:23). The cross is to stir our hearts to declare the great message of salvation to sinners.

The cross indeed motivates the personal evangelist, but we must go a step further. It must lie at the heart of the message we seek to declare. The Christian speaking with his friends should desire to be able to bring the truth of the cross to their hearts. The great London preacher C H Spurgeon spoke of his desire that his ministry, and the ministry of other preachers, would be ‘tied and tethered to the cross’. This desire ought to be the desire of every Christian to bring the unconverted in personal conversation to consider the message of Christ crucified.

James Henley Thornwell was a great Presbyterian preacher in South Carolina in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He said, “The cross of Christ is the centre of the Christian system.” He spoke of the cross revealing the evil of sin. He then said, “The cross became the centre of universal attraction... The death of Christ is, without doubt, the sublimest event in the annals of time or the record of eternity.”

### GOOD PERSON TEST

Effective evangelism seeks to establish man’s need for the work of the cross. A very effective way to do this is to make use of the ‘good person test.’ In this method, the needy soul is being asked, “Do you consider yourself to be a good person?” The vast majority of people in our communities believe they are essentially good!

In making use of the ‘good person test’, the evangelising Christian seeks to lay before the unconverted the broad application of the moral law of God, as it is summarised in the Ten Commandments. Can anyone truly say they have loved the Lord with all their hearts? Can anyone truly say they have had a love for their fellow man? Can anyone truly say they have never lied or deceived their fellow man? Can anyone truly say they have never had a thought or look of lust?

The unconverted like to evaluate themselves against other people. We can all find someone who is more sinful than we are! Yet God’s scales of justice do not examine one sinner against another, they examine sinners against the holy law of God. In these conversations, we are seeking to draw sinners to the realisation that the definition of sin in Romans 3:23 does apply to them; “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” We have all missed the mark. We have all come short.

In seeking to bring sinners to see their sin, we are also able to ask, “If your sin was not too bad, why did Christ die?” John Newton, in his hymn ‘In evil long I took delight’ summed this up well as he described the cross exposing the

awfulness of our sin: ‘Thus, while His death my sin displays in all its blackest hue’. When we confront sinners with the law, the justice of God, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, then we more able to explain the purpose of the cross. It was not merely to make better people, but it was to reconcile sinners to a holy God!

### COMMUNICATING SUBSTITUTION

When the Lord Jesus was ‘evangelising’ Nicodemus, He brought him to consider the cross. Christ explained that the uplifted serpent of brass in the wilderness journey was a pointer to the uplifted Son of God on the cross. Having established that man needs a new birth because he is a sinner, Nicodemus was directed to the provision of Calvary.

The lessons in the parallel that the Lord drew between the serpent of brass and the cross are parallels we need to seek to drive home to sinners today. How could the sinless Son of God be likened to a serpent, the symbol of the curse? Though Christ had no sin of His own, sin was laid upon Him, and as such the curse for sin came upon Him. So while Christ was the sinless Lamb, on Calvary, He was “made sin for us.” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

We need to pray for opportunities to present to the unconverted the great truth of substitution. There is hope for the sinner only through One being found willing to take the sinner’s place. If we only tell sinners, “Smile, Jesus loves you”, we have not faithfully declared the good news of the gospel.

Our need today is not merely to see the cross break the hearts of others, but to see it break our hearts afresh.

At the very time that Christ was earnestly desiring to go to Jerusalem to die for His people, James and John were willing to call down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans. Jesus said, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.” (Luke 9:55). They had a wrong attitude towards the lost, they longed for justice upon them this side of the grave. But how was their wrong attitude to be corrected? Jesus immediately spoke again concerning His coming crucifixion! “For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” May the cross humble us today to rise and declare the message of saving grace to lost sinners.

When David Brainerd, the great missionary to the native Americans, heard about a particularly ferocious group of Indians, he courageously set off to evangelise them. He came near their camp at sunset, and so decided

to spend the night in the woods and visit them the following day. He was unaware that several men from the tribe had been following him at a distance. When the local chief was alerted to the arrival of the ‘white man’, a group went intending to kill Brainerd. But as they

came near his tent, they saw the missionary upon his knees praying fervently for the conversion of souls. It is recorded that the warriors saw a rattlesnake approach the missionary but slithered away. By God’s restraint, the tribal men returned home. The next morning Brainerd received a much warmer welcome in the village than he anticipated. It is said that, when he opened the Scripture, he spoke from Isaiah 53, and he told the story of the cross of Jesus Christ. ■

“  
**OUR NEED TODAY  
IS NOT MERELY TO SEE  
THE CROSS BREAK THE  
HEARTS OF OTHERS, BUT  
TO SEE IT BREAK OUR  
HEARTS AFRESH.**  
”

✉ **Rev Philip Gardiner,**  
*Perth Free Presbyterian Church*

COMPILED BY  
ROBERT MCCONNELL



**“O give thanks  
unto the LORD:  
for he is good:  
for his mercy  
endureth forever”**

Psalm 136:1

Whether they are vintage, classic or modern, most people love their cars. As a classic car enthusiast, I prefer the old stuff myself. Going around old car shows, I can appreciate the countless hours of labour and love that often go into the maintenance and upkeep of these old cars of yesteryear. Of course, the added benefit of seeing all the old cars on show is remembering back to times when you, your dad, or even your granddad used to drive a particular model.

However, there is one word that fills all old car owners' hearts with dread and that word is "rust". Rust is the very

thing that turns a work of beauty into a pile of scrap metal. Classic car owners know that, despite all their best efforts to keep their old cars in as good a condition as possible, some day they will all be gone. Rust sets in and replacement parts become impossible to find.

In Matthew 6:19-20, the Lord Jesus has some interesting thoughts on this very issue, for He says there: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. . ."

It is often said that nothing lasts forever, and, according to these verses, that seems to be the case for our earthly possessions. However, v20 makes it clear that some things do last forever - things that can never be taken from us. Such things are heavenly treasures. One of the most treasured of these heavenly possessions is to know the forgiveness of sin, the receiving of eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ and the bringing of others into that same knowledge. These things are the incorruptible treasures that we should all be striving to lay up for ourselves in heaven.



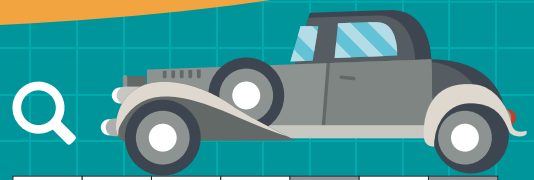
The word "old" is found in 50 books of the Bible. To complete the word search, you will need a Bible to find the answers. Using the leftover letters, spell out a word that describes something very old.

(For a clue read through Daniel 7.)

- He was 500 years old. (Genesis 5v32)
- What would not wax old? (Deuteronomy 8v4)
- He was 75 years old when he left Haran. (Genesis 12v4)
- He had a son when he was 100 years old. (Genesis 21v5)
- He died when he was 110 years old. (Judges 2v8)
- He lost his sight when he was 98 years old. (1<sup>st</sup> Sam 4v15)
- He got married when he was 40 years old. (Genesis 25v20)
- Name the old disease found in the skin. (Leviticus 13v11)
- He became king when he was 22 years old. (2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 21v19)

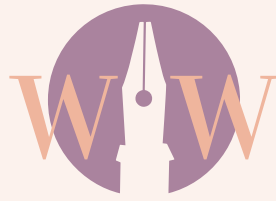
Answer:

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A	A	A	N		R	
N	B	B	C		A	J
O	R	R	E	L	I	O
A	A	A	I	N	M	S
H	M	H	E	T	E	H
I	S	A	A	C	N	U
	A	M	O	N	T	A
L	E	P	R	O	S	Y

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



## A Word to Women

# The First Woman & Authority Within Marriage

*“Today women are called to aspire to be educated, to be brave, to be high-achievers. These, and more, of our society’s goals for women are very good things. Yet our culture can cause even Christian women to despise God-given purpose for our marriage.”*

From the moment of Eve’s creation, she had a purpose; she was made a suitable companion and help for Adam (Gen 2:18). Paul describes her creation out of, and for man, as her being ‘the glory of man’. (1 Cor 11:7). It was not good for the man to be alone. Together, they were to be fruitful in their God-given goal of filling the earth and ruling over the animals.

They must submit to God, the source of all things, and that includes within the structure of cooperation that God has given. Under God, man and woman need one another. As 1 Corinthians 11:11-12 teaches, a man is dependent on the woman just as the woman relies on the man. While the woman was created from the man, man is also born of woman.

Before the fall, the God-given order was important in enabling two people, with different thoughts and wills to work together in the service of God. This structure became even more important after the fall now that sin would disrupt their cooperation and motivate self-serving behaviour. When God dealt with their sin, he affirmed the structure he had already set in place, telling Eve “thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee”.

Knowing the effects sin can have within marriage, we may fear the idea that men rule over women. It is a comfort that in passages such as Ephesians 5, Colossians 3 and 1 Peter 3, while Christian women are repeatedly told to respect and submit to the authority of their husbands, Christian men are also

commanded to love their wives as themselves, to treat them with understanding, to honour them and not to treat them harshly. While male headship has been abused throughout history, that does not make God’s pattern bad. Also, the family structure God gives does not negate our duty to God to preserve our own life, nor does it mean we submit to our husbands if he is asking us to sin. Peter even encourages Christian wives of unbelievers that their godly submission may win their husbands to Christ.

Today women are called to aspire to be educated, to be brave, to be high-achievers. These, and more, of our society’s goals for women are very good things. Yet our culture can cause even Christian women to despise this God-given purpose for our marriage: to help our husbands in their service of God and to do that while ultimately submitting to their headship.

John Calvin comments on 1 Timothy 2:15 that “*whatever hypocrites or wise men of the world may think of it, when a woman, considering to what she has been called, submits to the condition to which God has assigned to her, and does not refuse to endure the pains... or anything else that belongs to her duty, God values this obedience more highly than if, in some other manner, she made a great display of heroic virtues, while she refused to obey the calling of God.*” ■

✍ **Eppie Graham,**  
*is married to Rev Kyle Graham, Port Lincoln Free Presbyterian Church.*

# Judging Others



*“Judge not, that ye be not judged.”*

Matthew 7:1

This verse of Scripture is one of the best-known verses in the Bible. It is known not only by the Christian but also by the unconverted. Yet, while it is one of the best-known verses in Scripture, it is also one of the most misunderstood verses of Scripture. The world of the ungodly likes to quote this verse. The ungodly would reference this verse to excuse sin. They twist this portion of Scripture to support and condone sinful conduct. In essence, it is used by those who do not want to accept that sin is wrong. The mindset

today is “be yourself and express yourself”, “be what you want to be and do what you want to do”, and “no one has the right to judge”. This is certainly not what the Lord is teaching

in Matthew 7. Therefore, it is of vital importance that we grasp a firm understanding of what the Lord is saying about judging others.

## HARSH JUDGEMENT

Some are very quick to form an opinion and then to pass a harsh and hasty judgement upon others. There will always be those faultfinders with a critical spirit. In the Gospels, we find the Pharisees demonstrating this behaviour. They had a very judgemental spirit, putting themselves up and putting others down. As seen in Luke 18:9, the Pharisees “trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others”.

Also, Luke 18 is where we find the Pharisee and the Publican in the temple together. In verse 11, the Pharisee compared himself to the Publican and made a harsh judgement when thanking the Lord that he was not as the Publican. This is an example of the type of judgement that the Lord forbids - being harsh with our tongues.

If you are a driver on the road, you would not want to knock someone down with your car, and the same care should be taken that we do not knock someone down with our tongue.

James 4:11-12 states, “Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?”

Some years ago, a Bishop was boarding a cruise liner to sail from America to Europe, and he discovered he had to share a cabin. He looked at the man with whom he was to share the cabin and quickly decided that he would be better leaving his valuables in the ship's safe. Going to the Purser, he explained that the man he had to share the cabin with did not look trustworthy, and he would like to leave his valuables in the ship's safe. The Purser said that would be fine and then told the Bishop that his cabin mate had already been to leave his valuables for the same reason.

### HYPOCRITICAL JUDGEMENT

The Lord gives us an illustration of hypocritical judgement in Matthew 7:3-5. "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

The illustration comes from the world of carpentry. The Lord speaks about a "beam" and a "mote". The "beam" is used in the construction of a house; we may refer to it today as a joist. The "mote" would refer to a speck of sawdust. In the illustration, there are two individuals: one has a joist in his eye, and the other has a speck of sawdust in his eye. It is certainly ludicrous to picture someone with a joist in their eye while, at the same time, they are trying to remove a speck of sawdust from the other's eye.

The principle being taught here is that we must see our faults before we can concern ourselves with the faults of others. We must first deal with the beam in our eye before we look for the specks in others. There are 'speck-finders' who want to scrutinise the lives of other Christians in order to find fault when all the while they ignore their own faults. The Lord describes such an individual in verse 5 saying, "thou hypocrite" – judging others harshly but going easy on themselves.

I read the story of a particular neighbourhood that had a problem with cars speeding through the area. The concerned residents drew up a petition calling for a reduction of speeding in the area. The police took action, set up a speed trap, and caught five individuals for speeding. It was discovered that the five individuals had all signed the petition. They had been hypocritical in their judgement, wanting to apply the law to others, while not obeying it themselves.

Hypocritical judgement is like the boomerang - you can throw it away, but it will come right back to you. Matthew 7:2 says "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

### HONEST JUDGEMENT

In Matthew 7, we are called upon to make a judgement. Consider verse 15: "Beware of false prophets" – this requires a judgement in order to distinguish between truth and falsehood. This is displayed again in verse 16: "ye shall know them by their fruits" – again this calls for a judgement on the basis of evidence. Verse 17 speaks of "good fruit" and "corrupt fruit" – there is the need to determine the good from the corrupt.

This call to judge is found elsewhere in the Bible.

In 1 John 4:1, we are called upon to "try the spirits whether they are of God". The only way to determine is to make a judgement. That judgement must be based on Scripture, as Isaiah 8:20 states, "if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

In Acts 17, the Bereans certainly adopted this practice. When they heard the Apostle preach, verse 11 tell us, "they searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so".

Paul encouraged the Corinthians to make an honest judgement, in 1 Corinthians 10:15: "Judge ye what I say". Learning to judge between right and wrong and between truth and falsehood is necessary. It is what is called in John 7:24 'righteous judgment'.

Honest judgment is also required when it comes to church discipline. For instance, a church session is called upon to pass judgement in certain situations. Also, at the Lord's Table, we are called upon, as 1 Corinthians 11:31 says, to "judge ourselves".

So, it becomes clear that there is such a thing as righteous, honest judgement according to the Scriptures. It is good in matters of judgement, before we say anything, to apply a test. I call it the 'TNK test':

- **Is it True?**  
Otherwise, we are false witnesses.
- **Is it Necessary?**  
Otherwise, we are talebearers.
- **Is it Kind?**  
Otherwise, we are hurtful.

When it comes to the subject of judgement, every believer should always keep in mind that our Saviour went to the cross to bear our judgement. The judgement of God against sin fell upon Christ so that we would be free from condemnation.

The unsaved soul must realise that he faces the judgement of God. Hebrews 9:27: "It is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgement". ■

✍ **Rev Ian Kenny,**  
*Hillsborough Free  
Presbyterian Church.*

“  
WE MUST SEE  
OUR FAULTS BEFORE  
WE CAN CONCERN  
OURSELVES WITH THE  
FAULTS OF OTHERS. WE MUST  
FIRST DEAL WITH THE BEAM  
IN OUR EYE BEFORE WE  
LOOK FOR THE SPECK  
IN OTHERS.”

# Preparing for the Lord's Day

Preparation for the special days in our lives is usually thorough. Time and effort go into ensuring that everything is just right for the children's first day at school. New uniforms, shoes and school bags must be purchased. Parents must then reorganise their work commitments to ensure that at least one of them can be present for the drop off on the big day.

Several years of planning and preparation may go into a wedding. Sorting out the service, the hotel, the dresses and suits, the flowers, the favours, the photographer, etc - can seem like a never-ending effort, just to be ready for that special day.

As Christians, we cannot over-emphasise the significance of the Lord's Day. It is the most important day of the week. On this day, we remember the resurrection and ascension of the crucified Redeemer. We set aside time for the public and private worship of God. We hear His word and rest from our labours.

Chapter 21 of the Westminster Confession of Faith reminds us, *"This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations; but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy."*

The following three points, in order of increasing difficulty and importance, emphasise the preparation that is necessary for the Lord's Day:

## PHYSICAL PREPARATION

As stated in the Confession, there must be an *"ordering of their common affairs beforehand."* Everything must be sorted out so that we are neither distracted from nor too tired to engage in, the worship of God. In Exodus 16:23-30, we read of the preparation of food on the sixth day so that there could be rest on the Sabbath. If we are to be refreshed on the Lord's Day, then we must be properly prepared for it (Exodus 31:17). This rules out the bad practice of going to bed late on Saturday and waking up still tired on Sunday.

## MENTAL PREPARATION

A phrase that has become very common today is "in the zone." It refers to being in a mental state that enables one to perform to the best of one's ability. When sportsmen or women are in the zone, their mind and attention are exclusively on what they are doing.

Philippians 4:8 touches on this, *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there*

*be any praise, think on these things."* The instruction 'to think on these things' means to meditate upon them, revolve them in our minds, seriously consider them, and reason with ourselves about them. We do this so that we can put them into practice. We must prepare ourselves mentally for the Lord's Day. We must start thinking about going to God's house to worship before we get there. We must not rush into the Lord's house without giving a thought to worship and the Word, and we should expect to receive a blessing.

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

The Confession emphasises spiritual preparation with the words *"after a due preparing of their hearts."* We are engaged in a spiritual battle with the world, the flesh and the devil. This trinity of opposition unites to prevent us from being prepared for the Lord's Day.

Psalms 10:17 *"LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear."* We must pray that the Lord would prepare our hearts for His day. Once we enter into the experience of Jeremiah 29:13 *"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart"*, we will be truly blessed throughout the whole of the Lord's Day, especially in His house. ■

✉ **Rev Samuel Murray,**  
Trinity Free Presbyterian Church.



# Mary King

The name of Mary King will probably not mean much to most readers. She is described as a ‘big sturdy woman’ who worked in John Swindell’s school in Newmark, Suffolk, during the mid-nineteenth century. She was known to all who worked there simply as ‘cook’ and might have died in poverty later on, except for the charity of one who had been a shy young usher in the school. This young usher had been under deep conviction of sin, and Mary helped and impressed him greatly.

Mary was a fond reader of *The Gospel Standard* magazine, edited by JC Philpott and read by the stronger Calvinists within the Strict and Particular Baptist denomination - so-called because they were strict about who could partake of communion and particular in their views of the purpose and extent of the Atonement. Unable to find a church suited to her theology, she attended a somewhat liberal chapel where (she said) she had to scratch like an old hen in a pile of rubbish looking for corn. However, she claimed to have found this mental challenge and exercise to be of spiritual value to her because it exercised her spiritual faculties and therefore warmed her spirit.

The young usher who benefitted so much from her help was CH Spurgeon. He mentioned her with evident fondness on several occasions from the pulpit in later years: “She liked something very sweet indeed, good strong Calvinistic doctrine; but she lived strongly as well as fed strongly. Many a time we have gone over the covenant of grace together and talked of the personal election of the saints, their union to Christ, their final perseverance, and what vital godliness meant; and I do believe that I learnt

more from her than I should have learned from any six doctors of divinity of the sort we have nowadays.”

The final link in the chain in Spurgeon’s conversion was an old (and unknown) Arminian preacher in a well-known scenario often referred to when preachers expound Isaiah 45:22 (“Look unto me and be ye saved...”). However, the ground (under God) had been well prepared by this godly lady. From a human point of view, Spurgeon’s ministry could well have been rooted in Arminian/Wesleyan doctrine. However, God decreed otherwise. The seeds which Mary King sowed in her heart-to-heart chats with the young man led not only to his conversion but his Calvinist ministry.

The Gospel Standard ministry was a Hyper Calvinist one – denying the free offer of the Gospel and the sinner’s duty to both repent and believe the Gospel. Many Hyper Calvinists gave the young pastor a hard time when he preached both his Calvinist soteriology (all five points) and the free offer, etc. They called him a mongrel Calvinist. However, Spurgeon made more of an impact regarding the teaching of sovereign grace than they ever would. He did not trim the doctrines – he would later complain about those who were Calvinist in the study but Arminian in the pulpit. He possessed the great gift of making them accessible to the minds of his hearers. Perhaps, he remembered his struggle with them and the Gospel in general as a young usher along with the little known but kindly lady who had the gift of simple communication. Every benefactor of Spurgeon’s ministry (under God) stands in her debt. ■

✍ **Mr C Maxwell,**  
*Home Missionary.*

# Visit to Uganda

It has been over two years since Mission Board members were able to visit the work in Uganda, and so with a nervous sense of anticipation we set off on 5<sup>th</sup> January. The two Mission Board representatives, Rev McMillan and I, were joined on this trip by Glenn Hamilton, a third-year Whitefield student, who would cover the pulpit at Emmanuel Church for January.

It was good to be back in Uganda and to renew fellowship with Miss McAfee and the attendees at the church. We were encouraged by the developments in the work of the church, with some of the young men taking a leading role in



the services and especially in the regular open-air services. We were pleased to join them on the Friday evening and to see how many people in the little village came out to the roadside to listen to the singing and the Gospel message. It was also encouraging to see their readiness

to receive tracts and booklets in their own language of Luganda.

We had a blessed day on Sunday, with a prayer time before a very full morning service. Both Mission Board members brought some news and greetings, and then Glenn preached the Word. This service was extended by a prize-giving service for the pupils who had received excellent results in their examinations. We then enjoyed attending the afternoon Sunday School which was addressed by Rev McMillan and the evening Fellowship where I had the privilege of bringing a word of testimony.

Timing for the trip worked perfectly as the school doors reopened on the Monday, and we saw the attendance rise to around 420. Miss McAfee is to be commended for her planning and preparation to ensure the restart went smoothly.

We also saw and benefited from the work of Andrew Foster, with

*“It was encouraging to see their readiness to receive tracts and booklets in their own language of Luganda.”*



## MISSIONARY VISION

improvements to the school compound, the development of new school offices, and the redevelopment of the last of the three apartments on the site. We also visited some families who have benefitted from Aid Support and the farm planting programme, overseen by Hannah Foster.

During a busy week, we conducted the Annual Meeting of our NGO, met with

the local Education Officer, travelled to visit a church and school where Rev Park and Rev Brown held conferences a few years ago, visited the community boreholes, met the local Chairmen, and visited some of the pupils who have gone on to commence sponsored vocational courses. Rev McMillan also conducted a school Board of Management meeting, and we then met with all the school staff.

*“ We are glad to report that God’s work is going forward in Uganda. We rejoice that the school has restarted and that there is an open door for evangelism and the development of the church. ”*



As travel opens up a little, it is planned that David McAuley, another third-year Whitefield student, will cover the pulpit in February, and Rev Carscadden will travel to cover most of March. Please pray for them as they travel and also that the Lord will bless them and those who listen to the Word preached week by week.

As we reflect on our trip, we are glad to report that God’s work is going forward in Uganda. We rejoice that the school has restarted and that there is an open door for evangelism and the development of the church. ■

✉ **Alastair Hamilton,**  
*Mission Board Treasurer.*

## FPC Bible Training Institute

*“ Pray earnestly for these students around the world, and for our lecturing team. ”*

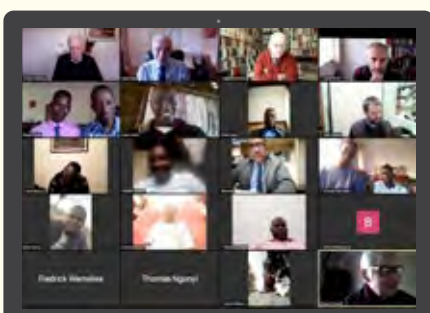
Please remember the ongoing ministry of our FPC Bible Training Institute as it enters its second year. This training programme has been set up by the Mission Board to help train students around the world for God’s work. It is a two-year part-time course and is conducted remotely.

Three additional students have been added to the Institute, bringing our total to twenty-five. There are seventeen

students from Kenya, two from Uganda, two from Pakistan, two from the Philippines, one from Guinea and one from Tanzania.

Pray earnestly for these students around the world, and for our lecturing team, that the training will be used by God to prepare young men for the work of the Gospel in their respective countries. ■

✉ **Rev David Park,**  
*Administrator.*



# Tropical Storm Odette

**O**dette, a rare off-season tropical cyclone, struck the Philippines in mid-December. It was the fifteenth storm to hit the country in 2021 and was by far the most devastating. The intensity of the storm is observed in the 160mph winds which raged through 10,000 villages, affecting millions of people.

Among those who suffered damage to their homes, businesses, and church properties were families from the churches where we have fraternal relationships. These families are relatively poor and look to the Lord to provide materials to repair their little homes and farms, and for the supply of basic food in a time of scarcity.

We are in personal contact with Rev. Ebenezer Nombro who indicated: 'As our nation reels from incomprehensible destruction in the aftermath of Typhoon Odette, several Philippine ministries and NGO's are pleading for help and steadfast prayers.'

The town where he lives experienced the worst damage, and some families were forced to move into the church building. Sadly, the government proved to be ineffective and unresponsive to the needs of the people.

The Church set up a Disaster Committee to oversee any financial donations. Through Rev. Nombro, we were able to send some emergency aid funding towards this project. He has tried to help another Reformed Church whose Church Building was very badly damaged in the storm.

Rev. Nombro desires that 'the Lord will use the Super Storm to save His people in Surigao.' Will you join us in prayer for these struggling families? Pray that our great God who sees the afflictions of His dear people on earth will provide the necessary funding to repair their little homes and farms, supply their daily bread, and be pleased in His providential mercy to bring others to Christ in the midst of disasters. ■



✉ Above: Rev Ebenezer Nombro (left) with two colleagues  
✉ Left: Damaged home belonging to a church member

## MISSION VISION

**A special conference to revitalise our missionary vision.**

**7-14th MAY in Lisburn Free Presbyterian Church**

**Saturday 7th May @ 7.30pm**  
**Lord's Day 8th May @ 11.30am & 7.00pm**  
**Weeknights 9-13th May @ 8.00pm**

- The Biblical Charter for Missions
- Details of the FPC Mission Strategy
- The development plans for each area
- Opportunities for Service
- Biblical messages each night relating to Mission Service

**Sat 14th May @ 10.00am Interactive Workshops**

- Hear what it is like to live and work on the Mission Field directly from our Missionaries
- Explore the opportunities for short term service and practical work teams

[fpcmission.org](http://fpcmission.org)



# Challenges in Health



A lot of FPC Vision readers will be aware that I have experienced ill health for many years now. My health issues have always made it that little bit more challenging to serve the Lord in the ministry God has called me to. However, I sincerely thank and praise the Lord for His faithfulness and goodness that has enabled me to serve Him even through challenging personal circumstances. “The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him.” Nahum 1:7.

At the end of November 2021, I was admitted to hospital and went through major surgery. I am thankful to the Lord for making it possible for me to have the operation. I am hoping and praying that the surgery will have long term benefits and it will mean I will have fewer kidney infections and health problems. I am still recovering from the operation and would value your prayers for the Lord to touch me and raise me up to a measure of health and strength in order that I might serve Him.

I personally want to thank everyone who has been praying for me, especially at this time. Linda and I deeply appreciate your thoughtfulness. ■

✉ **Chris Killen,**  
*Home Missionary.*

## Book Appeal

### CHRISTIAN BOOKS AND BIBLES ARE REQUIRED FOR THE BOOKSHOPS IN KENYA

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



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# Dates For The Diary

## MARCH

13<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>

### CROSSGAR, FOUNDATIONS CONFERENCE

*Theme:* Enjoying Life with the Lord

*Speaker:* Rev David Brown

20<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>

### PORTGLENONE, MINISTRY MEETINGS

*Theme:* Portraits of a Christian

*Speaker:* Rev Derek Erwin

21<sup>st</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>

### LONDONDERRY, TEACHING MEETINGS

*Theme:* The Providence of God through the Book of Esther

*Speaker:* Dr Paul Ferguson

## APRIL

10<sup>th</sup>

### JOHN KNOX, 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SERVICES

*Morning:* 11.30pm, Rev A Smylie

*Evening:* 7.30pm, Rev D Creane

23<sup>rd</sup>

### MARTYRS MEMORIAL, CLIMATE CONFERENCE

*Speakers:* Answers in Genesis - Prof. Stuart Burgess, Prof. Andy McIntosh and Simon Turpin

*Talks at:* 10am, 11.30am, 1.00pm

24<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>

### BALLYMENA, BIBLE WEEK

*Theme:* From Golgotha to Calvary

*Speaker:* Rev Reginald Cranston

*Time:* Weeknights 8.00pm

## MAY

1<sup>st</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>

### JOHN KNOX, GOSPEL MISSION

*Evangelist:* Mr Noel Shields

15<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>

### GRACE (NEWTOWNARDS), GOSPEL MISSION

*Theme:* New Life in Christ

*Speakers:* Rev R Higginson, Rev P Baker

## YOUTH COUNCIL

### CASTLEWELLAN RETREAT

29<sup>th</sup> April - 2<sup>nd</sup> May

*Age:* 15 - 18, £75

*Age:* 19+, £80

### OUTREACH

4<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> July

### CONVOY, CO. DONEGAL

*Age:* 16+

*Price:* £70

### OUTREACH

25<sup>th</sup> July - 1<sup>st</sup> August

### TAVISTOCK, ENGLAND

*Age:* 18+

*Price:* £265

Costs are all inclusive (accommodation, food, etc...) and have been subsidised by the Youth Council to help encourage and support young people who attend.

## LOUGH ERNE FUNDAMENTALIST CONVENTION

31<sup>st</sup> July - 7<sup>th</sup> August

### BETHEL FPC

*Time:*

Lord's Days, 12noon

Weeknights, 8.00pm

*Speakers:*

Dr John Douglas

Rev Ian Goligher

Rev John Armstrong