

The APC News

The Magazine of the Associated Presbyterian Churches in Scotland

The Tay Bridge Disaster

Every now and again, the citizens of Dundee are reminded of the area's worst disaster – the collapse of the Tay Rail Bridge as a train was crossing over it in 1879. The disaster is more memorable because it happened in the middle of the festive season. Everyone on board was killed, both passengers and crew – 75 people in all. Letters still appear in the local press about memories from grandparents and relatives of those who lost their lives. The incident below however, is quite unique!



The new Tay Bridge from Dundee to Fife as it stands today. The stumps of the old bridge can be seen at low tide as in the picture

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The following has been extracted from letters sent into the 'Dundee Courier' office over the years and verified by reliable witnesses.

On the stormy Sunday night of the Tay Bridge disaster on 28th December 1879, a young man, Robert Will, was on his way to catch the train when the wind blew his cap away. He spent some time looking for it and missed the train as a result.

Drink was forbidden to be sold in Dundee on the Lord's Day but was available to travellers in Fife, so the revellers used to take the train across the Tay to party on the other side. Robert Will lost his night out but his life was saved for there were no survivors from that fatal train – and more than that – God spoke to Robert and saved his soul.

When the awful news came through of the disaster, he saw that it was nothing but God in His mercy that had kept him from

catching that train, and he gave himself to the Lord Jesus Christ and was truly saved in his soul. He was a committed Christian for the rest of his life, and used every opportunity to tell others of God's salvation. He used to preach frequently in the open air at the bottom of the Hilltown in Dundee.

He was a man of good works also. When a colleague at work was off sick, Robert sent money to his wife every week. On returning to work, the man went to thank his employer for sending his wages to him, only to find that it was Robert Will who had been sending the money out of his own pay packet! Robert died preaching around 1942. The old man collapsed while preaching in the street!

In Psalm 148:8, we read that the stormy winds do God's bidding. The Lord arranged for a gust to blow a cap off – to stop a young teenager in his tracks and save him – and to give Dundee 60 years of faithful gospel witness!

Congregational Details

***“These are the
people of the prov-
ince...***

The priests...

The Levites...

The singers...”

[Nehemiah 7:5cf]

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TAIN & FEARN

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Street - 11.30am & 6.30pm; Hilton Church 11.30am and
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EDITORIAL

ARE YOU ENJOYING GOD?

MOST OF US ARE familiar with the answer to the Shorter Catechism's 1st question, 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever'. How seriously have we thought about it? Are we enjoying God, or do we just believe in Him? Can we honestly say that we are enjoying our Christianity and that we draw great pleasure from our faith in God?

King David would say that he did. In many of his psalms, he manifested his delight in God. Even in times of trouble and worry, God was the source of his joy "*In the multitudes of my anxieties within me, Your comforts delight my soul*" [Psa 94:19].

In Psalm 37:4 he commands us to "*Delight yourself also in God*" and adds that if we do, God "*will give you the desires of your heart*". In another psalm he again tells us to enjoy God "*Let the righteous be glad; Let them rejoice before God; yes, let them rejoice exceedingly*" [Psa 68:11]. Moses too said it all when he described God's people as "*Happy are you O Israel, who is like you, a people saved by the Lord?*" [Deu 33:29].

This is not just an old testament concept of the faith. Paul also teaches it. He instructs the Philippian to "*Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice*" [Phil 4:4]. To the Thessalonians he said "*Rejoice always...for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you*" [1 Thes 5:16]. Peter also expects Christians to be delighting in God for he says "*In this... (being 'kept by the power of God') you greatly rejoice...with joy inexpressible and full of glory*" [1 Pet 1:6-8].

If we are honest many of us would have to admit we do not conceive our faith as a source of joy – rather we think of it as a challenge. We do not draw encouragement and strength as we ought, from the facts of Christianity. But our faith in Jesus Christ ought to stimulate and generate joy and goodness within our hearts.

Why then do so many of us sound as if we are losers? Why is it that we do not seem to be enjoying God? Why does the title of this editorial seem trite? Answer: partly because we focus our attention on what we have been delivered **from** (sin), instead of what we have been saved **to** (true joy in God). We have been saved to enjoy God. Preachers seldom preach on the joy of salvation. When the Ethiopian had the gospel explained to him, he "*went on his way rejoicing*" [Acts 8:29]! God can be enjoyed.

The Apostle Paul had to rebuke a group of Christians in his day for becoming sensorious and legal in their faith. Initially

they had enjoyed their salvation in Christ, but they had followed wrong teaching - teaching that focussed on what they had been delivered from – the law. By their intricate study of that law, they again became obsessed by it. Thus Paul had to rebuke them saying he was afraid of them and stood in doubt of them and called them to examine the origin of their profession "*What then was the blessing you enjoyed?*" [Gal 4:15].

Scripture has a timeless relevance for many Christians today who have similarly forgotten the verse "*Do not sorrow for the joy of the Lord is your strength*" [Neh 8:10]. Our faith should be a joyful thing – if we take to heart all it means. If the Scripture is our standard for truth then the solution to our morbid introspection is to believe what it says. And it plainly tells us that faith in God is a joyful experience.

One current preacher who brings us back to God's Word on this issue, is John Piper the senior pastor at Bethlehem Baptist Church, in Minneapolis. In an article in the November issue of 'Evangelicals Now', Simon Vibert looks at 'Christian Hedonism' as portrayed by John Piper. He tells us that Piper would change the answer in the catechism from 'Man's chief end is to glorify God **and** to enjoy Him for ever' to 'Man's chief end is to glorify God **by enjoying** Him for ever'! Piper insists that we must enjoy God here and now. The mission statement of his church is 'God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him'.

Piper's mentor is Jonathan Edwards the well known reformed pastor that was in Northampton, and later in Stockbridge in America. Edwards is known for his 'world-famous' sermon 'Sinners in the hands of an Angry God', which brought deep conviction of sin, but he is not so well known for his emphasis on enjoying God. Piper has absorbed most of Edward's teaching and now directs the 'Desiring God Ministries' in Minneapolis. Piper travels the world speaking at conferences promoting his conviction that 'God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him'. He has published many books and has an excellent website.

Further details and information on Piper's ministry can be found on his website www.desiringgod.org. See also the article on 'Desiring God Ministries in the UK' on page 8.

To return to our original question: Are you enjoying God? Have you found pleasure in God? Asaph knew where he stood on the question "*There is none upon earth that I desire besides You*" [Psa 73:25].

"In Your presence is the fullness of joy, at Your right hand are pleasures for evermore"

[Psa 16:11]

"You have put gladness in my heart more than in the season when that their grain and wine increased"

[Psa 4:7]

"I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy"

[Psa 43:4]

What in the World is Happen-

This page is devoted to encouraging events that are taking place around the world to stimulate appropriate prayer.

NIGERIA IS A NATION that has gone through a lot of trouble over the past few years with military dictators taking control. General Abacha's military regime was oppressive on the people and brought the country to financial ruin while accumulating his own wealth. However, recently there has been encouraging reports of churches growing at a phenomenal rate, evangelistic missions and 12 million believers responding to a united prayer meeting – the largest prayer meeting ever held.

One of the reasons for this is the appointment of Christian leaders in the recently formed democratically elected government. In a most interesting article in the November/December issue of 'Prophecy Today', we learn about one Christian government official, Solomon Lar who was thrown into prison for 4 years by General Abacha.

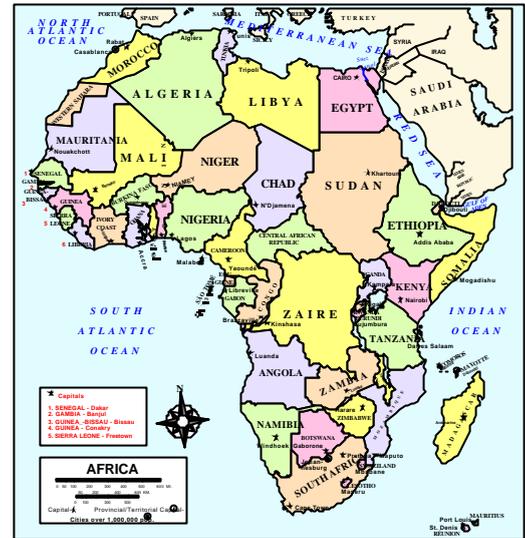
After being released, Lar's life was in constant danger, but he managed to form a 'Group of Eighteen' likeminded former governors who were respected by the people. They decided to write a letter to General Abacha to persuade him to hold a general election and return to civil rule. It was a frightening prospect and much prayer was offered before it was decided that Lar himself should personally present the letter to General Abacha.

When Lar eventually reached the presidential chair in the ornate marble lined state room and delivered his message, Abacha flew into an uncontrollable rage. He arrested Lar, and ordered that he be brought back in the morning to be sentenced for treason. But that night General Abacha died!!

The mood of the military commanders changed dramatically overnight and they started seeking Solomon Lar's advice! An election was held, and Lar's newly formed People's Democratic Party won handsomely.

Lar nominated Olusegun Obasanjo as President who was also imprisoned and became a Christian in prison. One of the first things he did on becoming President of Nigeria was to build a church in the grounds of the Presidential Villa where the Muslim Generals had built their mosque. His declared objective is to make Nigeria a righteous nation, believing that Nigeria will be a shining light to Africa and the whole world as "righteousness exalts a nation" [Pro 14:34].

There are also reports from another source that Nigeria is turning to the gospel. A crowd of 1.6 million people crammed into an 80 acre site in Lagos, to hear the gospel last



November. It is reputed to be the largest evangelistic event ever held that did not include satellite or internet technology. Over the six-day rally over 6 million people attended. African journalist Wale Fatade wrote "Never has Christendom in Nigeria been thrown into such a positive frenzy."

Some Nigerians did not want the main speaker to come back to the country as his previous mission in 1991 resulted in riots, and banned him from entering the country. However, he was invited back by the new President of Nigeria - Olusegun Obasanjo!

Our own country has also had encouragement recently. Revd Iain MacAskill the Free Church minister of South Uist and Benbecula reports of a wonderful movement of the Spirit of God and had 23 new members at his communion last communion in November, 14 by profession of faith. Real conviction of sin and brokenness of heart was evident among the many additional people who came to the services. Many others started to read their Bibles and began asking serious questions.

Give thanks for the 'protection' given to Revd Iain MacAskill and Dr. Manuel Reano a few days after the communion, when Iain's car skidded very badly on a patch of black ice and turned over several times before stopping.

Recent reports are that those who professed faith are growing in the faith and one or two more people have been converted. Other denominations are enjoying encouragement also – a sure sign that it is the Lord and not man that is behind the movement. Recovery Groups have also been started to help those afflicted with Alcohol Abuse, and other addictions. May God continue His work there and may it spread far and wide.

"...And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever' "

[Revelation 11:15]

Discriminating Christians:

Are we Bible-thumping Bigots?

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD Martin Thompson couldn't wait to join the Boy Scouts. From the flyers passed out at school, he'd read about all the fun Scouts have. But when Martin's parents discovered his interest, they told him absolutely not. Their reaction shows just how successful the gay lobby has been convincing people that homosexuality has no moral component.

The Boy Scouts don't accept members or leaders who engage in homosexual conduct -- and that's why Martin's parents objected. "Our family does not agree with discrimination against . . . homosexuals," Martin's mother told him.

The family then went to a meeting of the Anne Arundel County, Maryland, school district and tried to get the Scouts thrown off school property. Martin's father read a statement Martin had written, which said, "I don't want the Boy Scouts to come to my school because my school allows everyone to come. . . . But . . . not everyone is allowed in the Boy Scouts."

Of course, Martin's school does not allow everyone to attend. It discriminates against people who are too old or too young, and against anyone who lives outside the school district.

Evidently, this type of discrimination doesn't bother Martin's parents. They probably view it as appropriate, because it violates no moral laws. But they're evidently teaching their son that homosexual conduct violates no moral laws either -- but that objecting to it does. They equate the upholding of biblical principles as code language for gay-bashing.

Many Christian families are having to confront this issue head on. Around the country, homosexual groups and their allies are lobbying to kick Boy Scouts out of public schools and parks. So it's important that our kids understand Christian teaching on this subject.

First, we must teach them that Christian thinking about these questions

begins and ends with the fact of God's love. We love these people, but not their behavior. And God loves them. The real question is: Did God make homosexuals the way they are, or is their sexual preference a consequence of what makes our world a broken place?

Many secularists claim that homosexuality is genetically determined. But these claims ignore the empirical evidence to the contrary. Researchers looking for a gay gene periodically announce new evidence for it, and then that evidence evaporates when other researchers study it.

So if homosexuality is not genetically determined, then to some degree the behavior involves an element of choice. That doesn't mean that some people don't have a predisposition to homosexuality: they do, just as straight people have pre-dispositions that they themselves must control.

David Persing, a molecular genetics researcher and a Christian, says the biblical teaching that all of nature is fallen includes our genetic heritage. As a result, we all have inborn tendencies toward various forms of sinful behaviors, from alcoholism to heterosexual addiction to homosexuality.

But this fact does not excuse us from having to make a choice to do right or to sin. Christianity calls all of us to struggle against our natural tendencies. Whatever those inclinations are, we still have room for making real moral choices.

And that's what we have to teach our kids when they're accused of anti-gay bigotry. My new book, *Answers to Your Kids' Questions*, will help you do this. Read it with them, and you'll help them learn how to discriminate between gay propaganda and biblical truth. *Chuck Colson*

From BreakPoint, 20 October, 2000, copyright 2000, reprinted with permission of Prison Fellowship, P.O. Box 17500, Washington, DC, 20041-0500.

"Neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God"

[1 Corinthians 6:11]

Congratulations James – and Channel 4!

ONE NIGHT LAST December, television's Channel 4 ran a programme about the meaning of the festive season. The Revd James Tallach, Free Presbyterian minister on the Island of Raasay spoke excellently on the real meaning of Christmas. We were particularly glad that the essence of the gospel was not 'cut-out' as can and does so often happen in media editing.

It was also gratifying that James had

the last word on the programme, pointing out that after all the 'hype' of the festive season, we have to return to the reality of life with all its sin and problems. Forgiveness is the most important thing in the world.

Let us pray that more Christians will take the opportunities offered to spread the Word. Let us also pray that TV editors and presenters will be fair and unprejudiced in reporting the views of Christians.

Making the Simple Wise

PEOPLE OFTEN ASK, “How can I know God’s guidance?” The obvious answer is that God has already spoken, and his words are written for all generations to use. The Bible, writes the Apostle Paul, “*is able to make us wise unto salvation.*” So let’s think about the Bible.

Origin

The prophets declared, “*Thus says the Lord.*” And their words could be tested to see if the claim was true. Paul referred to scripture as “breathed out by God” (“inspired”). And Simon Peter spoke of God’s prophets being “*carried along*” by the Holy Spirit. When Jesus was on earth he treated it as the very word of God.

Functions

The Bible works in various ways. Paul writes, “*It is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness*” [2 Timothy 3:16,17].

“*Doctrine*” means teaching, or information. The Bible provides insights about God and ourselves – things we would never have discovered otherwise. It also “*reproves*”, i.e. it exposes sin; but it does more – it gives us a different attitude towards our own wrongdoing.

And it “*corrects*” – it puts right those things in our life that were wrong. That implies that we respond to its teaching. Otherwise we would never be trained in the life of God. The word translated “*instruction*” reminds us of a child being trained for adult life.

Purpose

Its purpose is to “*make the man of God complete, equipped for every good work.*” What a change, when an enemy of God becomes a man of God! And the Bible does that.

But the newborn Christian is like an empty room – part of the house but not fulfilling its potential. It needs to be “*furnished*”, then it is useful. And the Christian needs to grow in grace so that he/she may serve their God and Saviour with good works.

The Bible and us

If we want God’s guidance we must remember that it comes in the context of a personal relationship. The Bible is God’s speech. So it is not a book that we can control – it is the living God speaking to us today.

A relationship can change over time. We can hardly expect to hear God’s voice if we consistently ignore him, disobey him, or prefer our own ideas to his. On the other hand, Jesus promised that those who love God and obey him will find him drawing close to them [John 14:23].

We don’t have a right to pick and choose which parts of God’s guidance we will accept.

The Bible is authoritative.

Jesus accepted its authority over himself. For example, when he was arrested he could have prayed for angelic help; but he was under an obligation to fulfil the scriptures. Why did Jesus not find that a burden? Because of his love to God who had spoken. And if we have the love of God we will not find his commands burdensome [1 John 5:3].

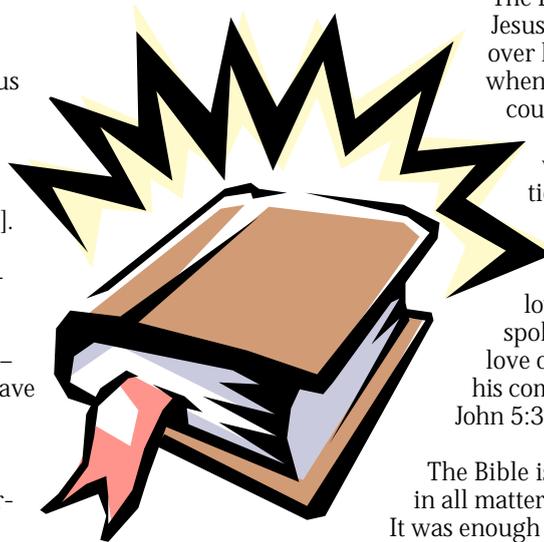
The Bible is sufficient to guide us in all matters of faith and conduct.

It was enough for Jesus. At the great crises of his life he relied totally on its words. At his wilderness temptations, in controversy and facing the cross he relied on nothing more (or less) than God’s word written.

We may be tempted to add to the Bible by relying on other supposed authorities (individual conscience or the church). That dishonours God its author, and Jesus our Lord. Or we may detract from it by rejecting parts that criticise us or make demands on us.

In a sermon he preached thirty years ago Rev Malcolm MacSween quoted the Catechism, “The Word of God, which is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.” He paused, then added, “Some people think they are wiser than scripture.”

Archie N McPhail



“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any twp-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”

[Hebrews 4:12]

The Sixth Sense!

THERE IS A FILM CALLED 'The Sixth Sense'. It is about a young boy who can see and hear and speak to dead people. There are times when this 'extra sense' can be very helpful and advantageous to him. Like many films today, it is about the supernatural. (By the way, the popularity of supernatural films these days, shows that people today have no difficulty believing in the supernatural and miraculous – it is with the Bible and God's supernaturalism that mankind has a natural aversion to!)

A sixth sense! The Bible actually supports the view of a 'sixth sense' - all Christians have it! Paul said *"Now, we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us by God"* [1 Cor 2:12]. That is, God has given us His Spirit that we might know things we would not otherwise know. Do not Christians have this 'extra spiritual sense', by which they can discern the things of the Spirit of God, which no unregenerate person can discern? John said *"you have an anointing from the Holy One and you know all things"* [1 John 2:20].

By God's saving grace, we can 'see' what we did not see before, because the eyes of our understanding have been opened [Eph

1:18]. We see how sin has ruined us, we see how God has been so patient with us, we see how Christ has died for us while we were yet sinners. No person can see these things with the five natural senses!

We know things as a result of this 'sixth sense', things that eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has entered the heart of man, things that God has revealed to us *"through His Spirit"* [1 Cor 2:9cf]. In this connection Jesus said *"it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given"* [Mat 13:11].

Is it not as a result of this 'sixth sense' that we know the *"natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God because they are foolishness to him"*? [1 Cor 2:14]. Of course it is. But these very spiritual insights of God's people, are deemed foolishness to the world. The foolishness of much of the supernaturalism of modern day films is not seen as foolishness by many film goers – but is deemed foolishness by God, for *"the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God"* [1 Cor 3:19].

Let us pray that the present interest in the supernatural would ultimately lead to belief in the true supernaturalism – the divine power of Almighty God.

"I am Jesus...I now send you...to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God"

[Acts 26:18]

Serving Our Generation

PERHAPS NO KING honoured God more than King David. It is said that *"he had served the purpose of God in his own generation"* [Acts 13:36 NASV]. What better epitaph can one have on their tombstone? What is God's purpose for your life? Are you fulfilling it? What a question to occupy our minds? David managed it – by God's grace.

He was called to do it *"in his own generation"* - ie in his own day and culture. Times and cultures change – God has called each of us to serve Him in our own day and generation. We cannot serve God in any other generation but our own. We cannot live in David generation or anyone else's. We may glean many lessons from reading and studying the saints of old, but we must serve our own generation, just as it is.

One author put it like this: "David's ministry was both relevant and timely. He served God's purpose (which is eternal and unchanging) in his generation (which was current and changing). He served the timeless in a timely way. He was both orthodox and contemporary, biblical and relevant." - Rick Warren.

We can be contemporary without

compromising the truth. It is possible to change style and method without altering the Word of God. We cannot minister to a past generation for they are not with us. Each generation has its own characteristics and culture which requires a specific type of ministry. The ministry must fit the culture. The shoe must fit the foot – we must not make the foot fit the shoe.

Paul makes this principle very clear when he says *"I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some"*. And he adds *"And this I do for the gospel's sake"* [1 Cor 9:22]. He did the adjusting to suit the occasion without compromising the truth. Because he was concerned for the gospel and for sinners, as well as about handing in his account to God, he was prepared to shave his head, take a vow and serve his generation in whatever the cultural practices were – without giving place to sin.

May our love for our generation, and our love to God, enable each of us to serve God acceptably in our times. The men of Issachar were commended because they had *"understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do"* [1 Chro 12:32].

"And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

[Luke 16:8]

Desiring God Ministries in UK – and a Testimony!

Desiring God Ministries in Minneapolis (see Editorial), are very excited to announce the opening of DGM UK, a distribution office in Northern Ireland. Their goal is to spread a passion for the supremacy of God in the United Kingdom and Europe. Here is a little background why they have undertaken this work and introduce you to George Ferris, the DGM UK Operations Director.

In 1994, George Ferris owned his own business and a nice home, played the stock market, and vacationed in Europe and the U.S. He was also growing increasingly depressed.

As a teenager, George had abandoned his parents' Christian faith to pursue as much happiness as he could find in the world. In 1980, at age 21, he married Pamela. Five years later, she became a Christian. Although George was supportive of his wife, Jesus wasn't for him. He thought happiness would be found in business and financial success. Over the next several years, George's hard work and long hours building a construction business paid off and he was able to taste some of the fruit of the "good life."

But toward the end of 1993, George found himself looking into a black hole. His "success" was empty. What he had worked so hard for wasn't really his heart's desire after all. His futile search for joy, compounded by stress at work, left George sinking in the quicksand of despair.

Searching for hope, he began to read the Bible (secretly, so Pamela wouldn't get her hopes up) and pray for help. On a Thursday night in May of 1994, consumed with anxiety about his work and his future and reaching what seemed the end of his rope, George cried out to God in desperation. Not knowing where to look, he closed his eyes, opened his Bible, and put his finger down on the page in hope that God might speak to him. When he opened his eyes his heart sank. He was in the concordance at the back of his Bible! His finger was in the "Stature" section. But then he read the text on which his finger had landed. It was Matthew 6:27 (NKJV), "Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?" George sat stunned. Worry was tearing him apart and this simple question exposed his heart. His worry was vain because his pursuit of happiness was in vain things. Suddenly George knew Jesus was calling him to lay aside his worry and put his hope in God.

Filled with awe and fear, George decided to test this to see if it was real. The

next day (Friday) he was dreading a difficult meeting with an angry, dissatisfied customer from whom he needed to collect money. If God would get him through that meeting, George would "get saved" on Saturday.

During this meeting, George could scarcely believe what was happening. His customer was unexpectedly pleasant and wrote out a cheque for the balance owed without complaint. Feeling the same sense of awe, George got in his car to drive home. On the way, while at a stop light, George suddenly sensed the presence of God fill the car and was overwhelmed with the knowledge that he was saved – God was not going to wait until Saturday! When he got home, Pamela could see the difference before George said a word and her heart overflowed with joy.

George began to drink up the Bible like a parched man. He also began reading theology. Sensing the Lord's call to follow him, George left behind his construction business and, with his wife, enrolled in a small Reformed Bible college in England. While there, he encountered books by John Piper. The Bible and his conversion experience taught George that God is sovereign. Books like *Desiring God* and *Let the Nations Be Glad* helped him grasp that everything God does, he does for his glory. Moreover, he discovered that God's pursuit of glory and people's pursuit of happiness are not at odds, but the same pursuit. George realized that his hunger for joy was really a hunger for God – another life-changing breakthrough for him.

The above article was taken from Desiring God Ministries Web Site

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"...give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine..."

[1 Timothy 5:13]

New Web Site

The Dundee congregation have now a web site of their own at **www.apcdundee.org.uk**

Will congregations please inform the editor of any new web sites so that it can be included

Round Our Congregations

ABERDEEN

There have been encouragements since we have moved premises. The services have been well attended and the older folk who worship with us in the evening are enjoying the added numbers and seem happy about the new arrangements. One or two new faces have appeared also. However, there are still a lot matters to sort out. A very handsome donation has encouraged the congregation greatly. Please continue to pray about the way ahead. A seminar is being held in the premises and Revd Alexander Murray from Lairg is giving a paper on exclusive psalmody and instrumental music on Saturday 20th January at 2pm.

DUNDEE

The premises have been almost completely renovated in the last few months and our brand new carpet is at least in place. We hope to have a 'Thanksgiving Meeting' on 17th March DV, so we hope many of you will see all the improvements then.

However, we long for spiritual blessing and the renovating of human hearts and souls, as that is the business we are really in. The church is not a building but people.

We were sorry to lose Laurence and Elizabeth from the congregation at the end of last year. Laurence accepted the post of managing director of the Northern Ireland Electricity Board.

We have been making contact with the surrounding area again by delivering over 400 of the 'Gospel of Luke' booklets and an invitation to a special service. We hope to begin a programme with the Jesus video.

The Sunday evening Bible Study has started again in the manse and our new subject is 'Seeking God's Will'. We have finished the study on 'Money Matters'!

STORNOWAY

During January the congregation enjoyed the challenge of hearing from Slavic Gospel Association who planted 64 new churches in Eastern European countries within approximately 18 months. SGA's policy is to train students and pastors in the Bible so that they in turn may evangelise their own countrymen. During February, the congregation look forward to the Highland Theological Winter Conference and also to their own Communion. The congregational Meal is set for Friday 2 March.

INVERNESS

The Book-Reading Club in the Inverness/Dingwall congregation is proving a worthwhile discipline. Members have been enriched as they have worked their way through the chapters. Relationships have been strengthened as they discussed together the lessons and challenges met with in the process. Having started with a book about Bible Characters (Fight the Good Fight, by Richard Mayhue), Club members went on to read about the greatest character of all in R.C. Sproul's book, Mighty Christ. The next month led into a book about that all-important Christian activity, prayer, as we read Richard Bewes book, Talking About Prayer. Our next assignment, the Lord willing, is Stephen Oldford's book, "not I but Christ". To whet your appetite, I shall quote from the book a verse by Daniel Whittle:

Dying with Jesus by death reckoned mine,
Living with Jesus a new life divine,
Looking to Jesus till glory doth shine -
Moment by moment, O Lord, I am thine.

The Lord deserves nothing less than our whole-hearted commitment. Let's give it to him.

"But that you may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you, whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs and that he may comfort your hearts"

[Ephesians 6:21,22]



Some of the Advisory Group Members in Aberdeen. They are from left to right, Paul Wraight, James Mackenzie, Andrew Loudon and Donald Stewart.

Church Page

THE PRESBYTERY ASKS for prayer regarding our congregation's situation in Edinburgh. As most of you know our minister there, the Revd Angus Morrison, has now been inducted to the St Columba Church of Scotland in Stornoway, last December. We ask that we will know the Lord's will concerning the future. We wish Angus every blessing in his new charge and trust that God will help him and his family as they settle down in a completely new situation. Below is an account of Angus's induction.



Our two new clerks who took up their duties last September. Revd Archibald McPhail, Clerk, is on the right, and Revd George Macaskill, Assistant Clerk, is on left.

Induction of Revd Angus Morrison in Stornoway

AROUND 400 PEOPLE gathered for the Induction of Rev Angus Morrison to the parish church of St. Columba in Stornoway on 29th December last year. It was an occasion to be remembered. A warm Christian spirit pervaded the proceedings, and gospel truth came over clearly and powerfully.

Angus Morrison was minister of the APC congregation in Edinburgh until his resignation in September last year. Since then he has been concluding his PhD thesis on Augustine, and preparing for his new charge.

Proceedings were led by the Moderator of Presbytery, Billy Forsyth. Tom Sinclair, Presbytery Clerk, read the narrative of events leading to the induction and gave the charges to minister and congregation. The sermon was preached by Willie Black of the

High Church, Stornoway (a former missionary to Korea).

The bond between minister and congregation was evident to all – something very precious. That was obvious in the spirit of the worship and in the gathering that took place afterwards. It gave encouragement that prayers for the greater usefulness of Angus' ministry are being answered.

Our thoughts and prayers are also with the congregation in Edinburgh. There are young, energetic people alongside elderly, experienced believers. Opportunities for Christian service blend with the need for gospel comfort. May the Master give wisdom and grace for the future, blessing them and making them a blessing to others. *ANMcP*

Arrested for Preaching the Gospel

LAST YEAR TWO MINISTERS FROM THE London Outreach Centre were arrested and charged with 'obstruction to the highway', after preaching to a small gathering of people in London's Leicester Square. The ministers had been doing this twice per week for seven years without any problems from the police. When warned by the police they would be arrested if they continued to preach in that spot, the ministers explained that it was the exact spot other policemen had directed them to.

At an appeal hearing at Southwark Crown Court, the lawyer defending the ministers reminded Judge George Bathurst-Norman that "Children playing on the pavement constitute Highway Obstruction, but it is reasonable obstruction. A man chalking a picture on a pavement constitutes an Obstruction, but a reasonable obstruction." He left the court and went to his chamber and returned saying "The preaching of the gospel is a Highway Obstruction and an

unreasonable obstruction". The ministers were fined £150. On stating they would go to prison rather than pay the fine, the Judge re-imposed a conditional discharge. The ministers continue to preach in Leicester Square and leave the consequences to God.

One of the charges was 'cursing the public' but was dropped when independent witnesses testified that the police officer was not telling the truth.

One of the ministers, Rev Dr Guy Dirk Wood, said "If our religion doesn't cost us anything in terms of opposition by satan and his agents, it most probably is not worth very much".

There seems to be a growing prejudice against the Christian faith in our country. This is not the first time that street preachers have been arrested in the UK. It is time for Christians to raise their voices loud and clear.

Taken from Christian Voice - Summer Recess

"But Peter and John answered and said to them 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard'. So when they had further threatened them, they let them go"

[Acts 4:19cf]

CHILDREN'S PAGE

TOP CLASS

Adults can use this page with our permission. APC KIDS.

The theme today is Water! So let's make a big splash and go straight into a mega puzzle! Draw a grid like this one and place the lines in order 1-13. Then work out the verse and the mystery word connected to water. It has five letters and begins with C. Have a good time!

The pictures come from Rainforest Adventures published by Christian Focus Publications.



C _ _ _ _ _



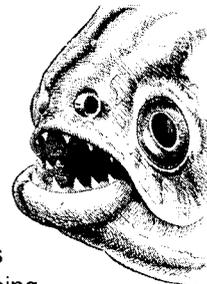
13	3	8	5	2	12	7	4	9	11	6	10	1
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		U	N	Y		Q	I	I	Y	I	T	M
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N	I	W	I	P	I		R	I	H	T	T	S
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12	R	11	E	E			S		O	S	T	V

"And teach them to your children and your grandchildren"

[Deuteronomy 4:9]

The amazing world of water

Water is something we use every day. Most of the time we take it for granted. It's always there... when we brush our teeth, wash our face, have a drink. We turn on the tap and out it comes. There are many creatures who depend on water for their entire existence. Can you see the pictures of the fish, frog, and tadpoles? Animals like this would die very quickly without water. You need water every day of your life. You use it all the time. Your body is made up of 64% of water and you lose about 1 litre of this every day just doing normal activities such as moving around, sitting and breathing. If you exercise you lose much more. You will notice this when you sweat after a game of football or when you've been running around a lot. Water is the most abundant liquid that we have on earth. There are billions of tonnes of it in the atmosphere and in the crust of the earth itself. **Fact: Water is essential to life. Without it nothing would live.**



People in Bible times knew how important water was. Even in hot dry countries today people can die if they run out of water. To avoid this people in Bible times would carry water with them on journeys in large bottles made of animal skins. Jesus also knew how important water was. He actually describes himself as living water. This doesn't mean that you pour him inside a cup or out of a bottle. Jesus is using water as a picture to describe something about himself. Remember the fact. Water is essential to life. Without it nothing would live. This is what Jesus is telling you. You have a spiritual life. You have a soul. You are not just a body. Your soul is eternal. It lives forever and without Jesus your soul will live for ever in a lost eternity. A lost eternity is an eternal punishment for sin. However, if you accept Jesus Christ as your saviour and ask him to forgive your sins and to take control of your life you will live for ever with him. If you accept Jesus Christ he will save you just like a drink of water saves somebody who is dying from thirst. That person cannot survive without fluid. Your soul cannot survive without Jesus Christ.

Extra Puzzle: The fish in the picture is a special kind. It's known for being rather vicious. **ahnariP.** Turn these letters round to find out what fish it is!

The APC News is published 9 times per year in the following months:

- January/February
- March
- April
- May/June
- July
- August/September
- October
- November
- December

All the views expressed in this magazine are not necessary those of the editor or the denomination. The articles are meant to stimulate thought and provoke a serious study of the Holy Scripture.

The typescript is set in 10pt 'Footlight MT Light' on Microsoft Publisher 98. The style for Scripture quotations is italic within double inverted commas, and then square brackets for the Scripture reference, chapter and verse separated by a colon.

The most helpful way to send articles is by email. Text may also be sent on disc in Microsoft Word. Some rtf files are so acceptable. Clearly printed well-spaced typing and artwork in one column is also good as we can scan it.

Photographs can be sent by post or by email or on disc – in JPEG format

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A "Major" Initiative

A NEW CALLING. A New Challenge. A New vision. That is how the new representative with the Lord's Day Observance Society in Scotland sees his work. Iain Alasdair Macdonald left his home in Stornoway in the Isle of Lewis at the age of 16 to begin his career in the army, and rose to the rank of Major. For the past five years he has been the Army Careers Advisor for schools in the North of Scotland.

Now, however, Mr Macdonald, feels called by God to leave army life and to enter into a new sphere of labour and take on his new challenge. He has for long treasured the Lord's Day as a tremendous gift from the Lord to all mankind, and is now concerned to promote its benefits as widely and as effectively as possible as the society's spokesman in Scotland.

His vision for the work is not negative, but extremely positive. He wants to win the minds of people not only on the issue of the Lord's Day, but also on the greater issue of the Lord himself. His desire is to stimulate a change in the attitudes of the population-both inside and outside the churches – so that people will see the benefits of respecting the Lord and his Day for themselves and the whole of the Scottish community.

Mr Macdonald lives in Inverness with his wife Ella, also from Lewis, and their three teenage daughters, Anne aged 19, Karen aged 17 and Alison aged 13.

Professor John Angus MacLeod, Chairman of the Scottish Association of the Society commenting on the appointment said: "We are really grateful for the opportunity to have someone with Iain Alasdair's drive, enthusiasm and organisational skills. He has done so much work within schools on behalf of the Army and is as happy speaking to gatherings of young folks as well as other age groups. There is so much to be done to change attitudes in Scotland and we believe that he will put the Lord and His day in the most positive and effective manner."

Mr John G Roberts, General Executive of the society, added, "We are delighted with the appointment of Iain. The task before him is enormous, but we have a man who is fully committed to the cause of the Lord's Day and we look forward to his gifts being used to further the work."

If you wish a spokesman on Sunday issues, or a speaker for a meeting do not hesitate to contact Iain Alasdair Macdonald. He stresses that he is open to come and speak to all groups – small or large, church groups or non-church groups any time of the year. Iain Macdonald, 3 Wimberley Way, Inverness, IV2 3XJ. Tel 01463 714055
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God is at the Centre!

WHAT IS THE shortest chapter in the Bible? Answer Psalm 117. What is the longest chapter in the Bible?

Answer Psalm 119.

Which chapter is in the centre of the Bible?

Answer Psalm 118.

Fact: There are 594 chapters before Psalm 118.

Fact: There are 594 chapters after Psalms 118.

Add these numbers up and you get 1188.

What is the center verse in the Bible?

Answer - Psalms 118:8.

Does this verse say something significant about God's will for our lives? The next time someone says they would like to find God's perfect will for their lives and that they want to be in the centre of His will, just send them to the centre of His Word!

Psalms 118:8 *"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."*

Now isn't that odd how this worked out – or was God in the centre of it?

Subscriptions and Renewals for APC News

The APC News is published 9 times per year, beginning with the August/September issue. The cost is £7 per year including postage and should be considered as a donation.

Note for Congregations

Congregations please note that the **minimum charge** for bulk copies (up to 50) is £20. Additional copies thereafter in bundles of 50 for £15 and 25 for £7.50. Congregations of course, can order fewer copies, but they must pay the minimum £20 for each issue. They can, if they wish, charge for their own distribution, or give them away free. Cheques should be made out to 'APC News' and sent to the address below. Please state if acknowledgement of donation is required.

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