

The APC News

The Magazine of the Associated Presbyterian Churches in Scotland

Walking with God

THE GREAT OBJECT of life is to walk with God. Life was always meant to be a walk with God. In the Garden of Eden, the highlight of the day for our first parents was the walk with God. But the 'Fall' changed everything. Man no longer had that close relationship with God.

However, it is still possible to walk with God. In His mercy, God re-opened the way for us to walk with Him, so even before the 'Flood' we read Enoch "*walked with God*". So did Noah [Gen 5:22, 6:9].

The amazing thing is, God wants to walk with us more than we want to walk with God. He promised the Israelites "*I will walk among you and be your God and you shall be My people*" [Lev 26:12]. He told His people to build a tabernacle because He wanted to dwell among them and be their God [Exod 25:8].

The New Testament reminds us of God's intention and plan by repeating the promise of [Lev 26:12] in [2 Cor 6:16]. And again in Revelation God promises the believers in Sardis that "*they shall walk with Me in white*" [Rev 3:4]. So walking with God is a Biblical concept expressing the spiritual union

between God and man.

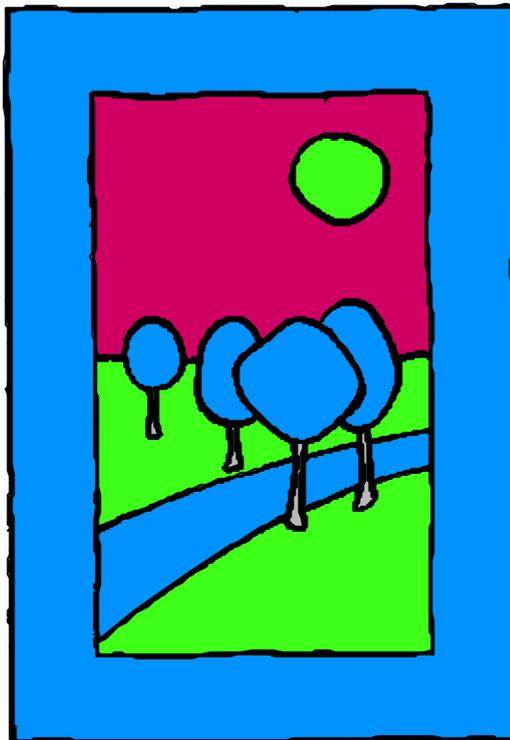
Walking with God means we have the same attitude of mind as God. Walking together symbolises agreement and harmony "*Can two walk together unless they are agreed?*" [Amos 3:3]. We go for a 'stroll in the park' when we are on holiday and when we want to relax. We go for a walk to get rid of stress – to

unwind. Christians ought to spend more time 'walking with God' in the cool of the day to unwind from the daily pressures of life. It is sad when Christians are 'too busy' to relax and to take time to unwind. God rested at the end of each day – we should follow His example.

You don't walk with anyone unless you have a close relationship with them. Strangers don't walk together. Only those with common interests walk together.

It ought to be the highlight of each day for us to spend uninterrupted time in God's presence. It is the most relaxing of all occupations. It strengthens the mind as well as the body. It revives the spirit and enables us to perform our responsibilities and duties.

The book of Acts tells us that this activity brought revival "*the churches*



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Congregational Details

“These are the people of the province...The priests...The Levites...The singers...”

[Nehemiah 7:5cf]

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LAIRG & ROGART

Revd Alexander Murray, APC Manse, Saval Road, Lairg, IV27 4EH, Tel 01549 402176 Email: amurray@lairg.freeserve.co.uk Lairg Church - 11.30am, 1st, 3rd, 5th Weds 7pm; Rogart Church - 6pm. 2nd, 4th Weds 7pm. Treasurer: Miss Annie J Morrison, Woodlands, Lairg, IV27 4DB; Tel. 01549 402362.

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Revd J W Ross, APC Manse, Main Street, Lochcarron, IV54 8YD,
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EDITORIAL

Is the Tide Turning?

EVERY SERIOUS MINDED Christian is concerned at where the western world is heading. Immorality, violence, divorce, abortion, homosexuality is on the increase. Judgement must be round the corner. God’s patience with the western world must be running out. Such are the thoughts of many Christians today.

However, according to some recent statistics from America the tide may be turning. We may have reached the bottom. The abandonment of absolute values are having a detrimental effect on society. People are realising that we must return to traditional and Christian values. How encouraging if this is true.

An article in National Review states that, divorce, unmarried teenage pregnancy, abortion and even crime rates are all down! Attitudes to life are also changing. A Wall Street Journal/NBC poll says that 33% of liberals agree that what’s important for society today is to promote respect for traditional values!

These polls indicate that there is a lack of confidence in present worldviews (ie non-Christian basic beliefs) to provide a stable public order. Current worldviews are giving rise to social problems at an alarming rate. We need to change our basic beliefs. People are realising something fundamental is wrong with our basic beliefs.

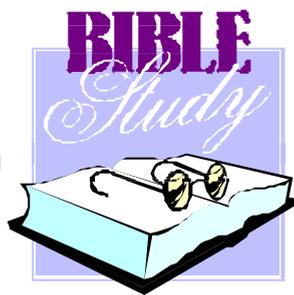
Charles Colson maintains that this is a wonderful opportunity for Christians to promote Biblical truth with confidence. Science is behind the Bible – contrary to public opinion. The Bible can stand up to reason and debate. Christians need to be more assertive in their beliefs.

Last year a Professor George debated abortion at a convention of the American Political Science Association.

His opponent was Stanley Fish a well-known deconstructionist who dismissed arguments against abortion as based on ‘religious convictions’ alone, while the case for abortion is based on ‘scientific facts’.

Professor George argued that science supports the pro-life view – the unborn child responds to stimuli, and doctors perform surgeries to babies in the womb. There is empirical evidence to support the pro-life position.

Before the convention Professor George sent papers to Stanley Fish. When the debate started, Fish startled the assembled professors by throwing down his papers on the table and announcing ‘Professor George is right, and he is right to correct me. Today the pro-life position is supported by



scientific evidence’. The audience sat in stunned silence. This is but one example of how science, when properly applied, supports the Bible.

Christianity is verifiable. Our faith in Holy Scripture can be supported by scientific facts. (See articles on page 8). We need to demonstrate this more often. The general public believe a lie when they think that Christianity is not based on facts. Christians need to affirm more often the solid reasons and facts behind their faith.

Sadly, the Church has withdrawn from public debate on many social and moral issues about which the Bible is not silent. This has allowed humanists and secularists to dominate the field.

Whether the tide is turning or not, we have a responsibility to publish the gospel unashamedly. Those who are gifted to reason and debate must be encouraged to expose falsehood in the full knowledge that truth is on their side.

Christians must write and debate in public forums with the same purpose

HARVARD and YALE UNIVERSITIES FOUNDED on CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES

‘One of the evidences that the Puritans had a long-term vision of the future is the establishment of colleges... Harvard College... stated its purpose clearly: “Let every student be plainly instructed, and Earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life, Joh 17:3. and therefore lay Christ in the bottom, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and Learning.”

“Yale in the early 1700s stated as its primary goal that “every student shall consider the main end of his study to wit to know God in Jesus Christ and answerably to lead a Godly sober life’ ” “All Scholars shall Live Religious, Godly, and Blameless Lives according to the Rules of God’s Word, diligently Reading the holy Scriptures and Fountain of Light and Truth; and constantly attend upon all the 3 Duties of Religion bot in

EVANGELISM

“Recognise there is a needy, unreached world out there. There are billions of people in the world who are entirely beyond the scope of our present evangelistic efforts... We are all surrounded by people with whom we have no contact, who are mentally and emotionally worlds apart from us... Will they ever be reached by your usual methods? “Face the problems of isolation, fear adaptation. If your separation from the world around you has become isolation, change your lifestyle. Jesus was the friend of publicans and sinners. We must accept people as they are. They are not Christians, and they will probably act accordingly. “Acceptance does not mean approval... Avoid judging, preaching, condemning, or moralising. Demonstrate grace, not legalism. Be sensitive as to how your actions will affect the other person. Love people as they are and as individuals, not targets for evangelism”.

[Jim Petersen in

The Mission in Dundee

THE DUNDEE CONGREGATION held a Mission during the last few days of October. They visited the community around the church with a questionnaire asking 4 simple questions.

The last question was ‘Would you like to know more about the Christian faith?’ There was a wide range of replies, but the majority said they already knew enough about Christianity. Most people were pleasant and very few were rude.

The most notable aspect was that those who did not want to know

anything about Christianity appeared very sad people and did not seem to have much hope of things getting better. Those who showed interest and did want to know more were much more pleasant and more positive about life.

Some elderly people were very kind and welcomed us in for a chat. Those who visited the multi-stories had the best response of all. People there were more interested and were happy to have us revisit them with more information. The whole experience was an excellent opportunity for us to get to know the people of the area.

As might be expected, many people were feeling insecure since the 11th of September and were looking for stability and certainty in life. The most common question returned was ‘Where was God on September 11th?’

Free sandwich lunches and

snacks were served on the Friday and Saturday and in one two-hour spell eighteen people came into the church. Some took away literature and said they would come along on Sunday. One family came on the three occasions we were open. Some sailors from India came whose boat had just come into the harbour.

On Sunday a lovely lunch was provided after the service. It was good to have nearly twenty people including children, from the neighbourhood come



Some of the Dundee congregation and those who helped at the Mission taking a break

to the church that Sunday morning. The text was from [1 Cor 15:19] “*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable*”. The theme was ‘Hope for Today’, a subject which was very much on the minds of the community. The evening service focussed on the woman of Samaria and was entitled ‘A Woman with a Flawed Hope’.

Each day started with prayer (and a cup of coffee) and we all felt God was with us as the weather, which had been very misty and wet all week, cleared on each day so that there was no

Choosing Office-bearers?

by Revd George I Macaskill, Stornoway

WHAT IS THE Biblical teaching on office-bearers within the church? How should churches elect its deacons and elders?

To begin with, what is the difference between an elder and a deacon? If one takes Acts 6 to refer to deacons, the deacon holds an office of service. On the other hand, the elder holds an office of authority. While the deacon serves in Christ's name, the elder rules in Christ's name. In a very real sense, the eldership is a "calling". It is therefore important that people choose their elders because they feel they are being "called" by God within their congregation.

The minister's distinction as an elder is that he is a teaching as well as a ruling elder and has therefore to concentrate on preaching and prayer [Acts

6:4]. One implication of this difference between an elder and a deacon, is that much more prayerful thought has to be given to the choosing of a minister and elders than to deacons.

A deacon, however efficient, may not necessarily have the "calling" of an elder and although the experience of Church courts is obviously an advantage, it is not a requirement that one first be a deacon before becoming an elder. Conversely, an elder, although able to take part in the deacons' work, often has not the qualities of a good deacon. This is demonstrated within presbyterian church law by the fact that ministers are not even required to be present at deacons' courts, while, on the other hand, a minister must always chair a Kirk Session.

Many would see the importance of an elder being able to preach publicly as a qualification, but others would see "apt to teach" in 1 Tim 3:2 simply as being able to defend the faith in a personal one-to-one setting, similar to the same phrase as used in 2 Tim 2:24.

What are the qualifications for

office in a church? The Bible sets out qualifications for both deacons and elders in 1 Tim 3 and Titus 1.

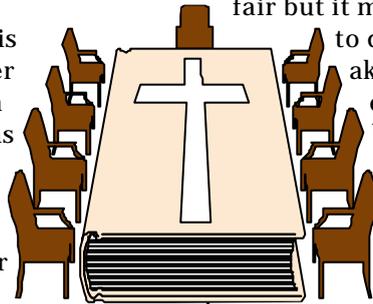
The qualifications for office-bearers deserve an article on their own, but, in short, these qualifications insist that a candidate must be above reproach of character, even by the world [1Tim 3:7]. It is important to note that personal character, not skill or experience, is what is essential.

It is so easy to think that businessmen will automatically make good elders because they have the experience and skill of management. The Bible's teaching, however, is that grace comes before gifts.

What about the method of choosing office-bearers? Two things must be said. First, whatever system of election is chosen, it must not only be fair but it must never allow the process to degenerate into something akin to a "popularity vote". The exercise of choosing office-bearers is a process for establishing who is being "called" to lead in a congregation, not who is best-liked. The church of God is not a "democracy" where the will of the people rule. The church of God is a "Theocracy" where God reigns. The idea of pitting one name against another smacks of the competitive spirit of the world rather than the prayerful, spirit-led guidance of Christ's church.

Everything should be done in a way that encourages unity rather than anything that could lead to an occasion for rivalry, grievance or jealousy.

Secondly, the principle from the scriptures, regarding the appointment of office-bearers, seems to be that both those who already rule plus the congregation should agree with the appointment. If either the existing Kirk Session or the congregation are unhappy with a candidate then the appointment ought not to proceed. While the Kirk Session, being the ruling body, must take the initiative, they ought not to appoint somebody that the congregation do not



JAMES BANNERMAN on the CHURCH

"In other words we learn that the very object for which the Church of Christ was established on the earth was to declare and uphold the truth, with all its spiritual and saving blessings... For this thing, then, the Church of Christ was instituted; and...in its nature and importance, paramount to the Church itself..."

"In other words, we learn that ordinances and office-bearers have been established for the object of promoting the well-being and edification of the Church. These things then, [ordinances and office-bearers-Ed]...were instituted for the sake of the Church, and not the Church for the sake of them; and these things therefore must be, in their nature and importance, subordinate to the Church.

"The Church was established for the sake of the truth, and not the truth for the sake of the Church..." Other things, such as sacraments and ordinances...are not essential to it..."

**The STORY
BEHIND the
PAINTING**

When Leonardo da Vinci was painting his masterpiece 'The Last Supper', he looked for a model for Jesus. He found a chorister in a church - a young man who was lovely in life and features – Pietro Bandinelli.

Years passed and the painting was still not finished. He had one more character to paint – Judas. He looked for a suitable model but had great difficulty. He wanted someone with a face hardened and distorted by sin. At last da Vinci found a beggar 'on the streets of Rome with a face so villainous he shuddered when he looked at him.' He hired the man to sit for him as he painted the face of Judas on the canvas. When he was about to dismiss the man, he said 'I have not yet asked your name'. The reply was 'I am Pietro Bandinelli – I also sat for you as your model of Christ!'

The sinful life of the young man, who at one time looked so lovely, so disfigured his face that he now looked the most evil man

Being a Stay at Home Mum: A personal perspective

First published by Highland Christian News

KATHY CALVERT is married to Simon and is a full-time mother to their two-year-old daughter, Amy. Before Kathy had Amy she worked as an IT Systems Administrator for the main office of a large international quantity surveying firm. She is now a stay-at-home mum. Here, in her own words, she tells Advocate about the opposition, the sacrifices and above all the rewards of her full-time motherhood.

I thoroughly enjoyed my job and the challenges it presented. I enjoyed the company of other adults and welcomed the mental stimulation of the work. I have always enjoyed working hard and have either been in full-time education or full-time employment since I was 16 (I am now 29).

However I am stunned by the attitude of most people when I tell them that my husband and I made the decision for me to leave my job and be a full-time mum. They look at me as if I have completely lost my head. "Just let me know when you get fed up and want to go back to work to get your life back" one well-meaning person said, offering to child-mind. "Your brain will turn to jelly from all that baby talk" a former work colleague told me.

I acknowledge that there are circumstances where mothers have to work, but I think that few mothers are encouraged to find ways to enable them to stay home with their children while they are young.

There are difficult financial issues. At the time I left work I brought in nearly 50% of our income. But there ARE sacrifices that can be made and a

baby is worth the sacrifice. For us that has meant giving up expensive holidays, making do with the clothes that we have, cutting down on grocery bill and having few meals out.

When Amy is 18 and looking back on her childhood, she won't remember (or care) that she didn't wear the best label clothing or have the most expensive, newest toy on the market. She will remember that it was her mum who helped her with her schoolwork. That it was her mum who held her hand in the dentist's chair and helped her pick out that all-important outfit for the first grown-up birthday party.

The time when they are young cannot be replaced once it is gone. I once read that no one ever says on their deathbed "I wish I'd spent more time at the office." It is the time with our children that we will value most when they have grown.

Also there is work that can be done from the home to bring in a hit of extra money. This option is barely discussed in most pregnancy or mother and baby magazines. In fact, looking through magazine back-issues I failed to find one article that pointed out the advantages of being a full-time mum to both the mother and the child. Nor did I find an article which suggested ways of making money from home (taking in ironing, typing, running a door-to-door catalogue, sewing, etc.) to enable a mother to stay at home.

People assume that if you've chosen to stay at home, that all you do is sit and watch chat shows and munch on chocolate. That you have taken the lazy option and are work-shy. Or that your husband makes lots of money and you can afford to be a lady of leisure. For myself none of the above are true.

I have chosen to stay at home



Preaching & Preachers

By William Taylor, Thurso

JESUS' COMMISSION to His disciples following His ascension was *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"* [Mark 16:15-15].

That is an implicit command with emphasis on the gospel from Him who spoke as never man spoke. With what objective? To preach the *"unsearchable riches of Christ"* from the textbook that is replete with texts in its 66 books, which must be the basis for the preacher to work from, since the sermon is to be regarded as the highest point in the worship of God. Without a text (doesn't it sound odd!), there is a vacuum that leaves the preacher in a labyrinth of his own making, should he fall prey to this unusual anomaly – a tragedy which may happen in this third millennium.

Assuming that not to be the general pattern, a sermon must be an exposition of some passage of Scripture: it may be a few verses, a verse, or part of a verse to which the preacher has given diligent thought, preparation and much prayer, if he is to engage his hearer's hearts, and rivet their attention to the need of repentance through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Having divided his text into two, three or more headings, the preacher forms the structure of his sermon with special emphasis on doctrine and application. Spending too long on the statement of doctrine can be boring to hearers. Instead, each heading should have an application (Spurgeon is a classic example) that attacks the conscience; illustrated with biblical instances of God's power in redeeming souls from Satan's dominion.

Preaching that touches the heart-strings of unconverted souls and

awakens them to the reality of death, judgment and eternity, with a passion for the lost, knowing that he and they are to meet at the Great White Throne. Paul's advice to Timothy was *"Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke with all longsuffering and doctrine"* adding a word of warning in the next verse *"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine"* [2 Tim 4:2].

Does that not have a contemporary ring about it, reflecting our situation today? The Bible is always up to date – never behind the times! But the enemy has come in like a flood, and in our modern cultural society the popular sermon is one that steers clear of sin and hell. One minister who recently preached such a sermon to a different congregation, was told 'minister, there are no sinners here!'

Preaching today is far-removed from those giants, Whitefield, Spurgeon, MacDonald of Ferintosh, Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Those ambassadors for Christ yearned at a throne of grace for the salvation of their hearers and warned them of the consequences of neglecting their soul's salvation with solemn pleadings to flee from the

wrath to come. Preaching of that nature is hardly known in this 'enlightened' age.

Few are disturbed by the situation in Britain with abortion numbers reaching horrendous figures, children abused, raped, murdered, a cry for younger and younger legalised sodomy. Except for a lone voice in the wilderness, there is a silence from church-leaders who are not prepared to stand on the side of God and His Word. That is alarming!

Truly the devil is having a heyday, postulating as an angel of light and many preachers are following in his

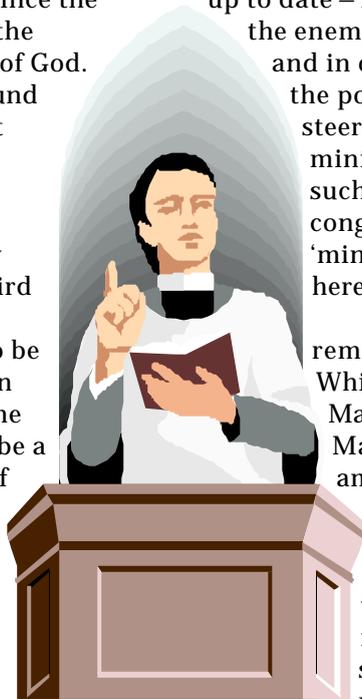
LLOYD-JONES on PREACHING

"I refer to the element of 'liveliness'. This underlines the fact that seriousness does not mean solemnity, does not mean sadness, does not mean morbidity. These are all very important distinctions. The preacher must be lively; and you can be lively and serious at the same time.

"The preacher must never be dull, he must never be boring; he should never be called 'heavy'.

"...there is something radically wrong with dull and boring preachers. How can a man be dull when he is handling such themes? I would say that a 'dull preacher' is a contradiction in terms; if he is dull, he is not a preacher. He may stand in a pulpit and talk but he is certainly not a preacher.

"With the grand theme and message of the Bible dullness is impossible. This is the most interesting, the most thrilling, the most absorbing subject in the universe; and the idea that this can be presented in a dull manner, makes me seri-



In the August issue of 'Evangelicals Now' the editor John E Benton gives a book review of the book 'Icons of Evolution' by Jonathan Wells, who holds PhDs from Yale University and the University of California. Here are some paragraphs from the review.

"When asked to produce evidence for Darwinian evolution, most teachers and textbooks produce the same set of ten examples. These examples are usually illustrated with memorable pictures, like that of ape-like creatures changing into upright human beings. Wells calls these the icons of evolution."

"The substance of this book is to take these ten well-worn pieces of evidence and look at what the most up-to-date research tells us. According to Wells, in every case the evidence falls apart, and it really is time that biological textbooks stopped trotting out what amounts to myths and misinformation rather than science."

"Wells accuses biologists of perpetrating mere myths which would be laughed out of court in any other

"Its what the teacher wanted" **Fighting Naturalism in School**

The article below is about a school in America but the same issues are of relevance to schools in the UK

LISA HUNTER -- A Southwestern wife and mother -- was tidying her kitchen when she found a piece of paper on the floor. It was her 12-year-old daughter's science homework. Students were supposed to confirm that they understood that the earth was the outcome of a primeval explosion.

Ashley, her daughter, had completed it -- even though the "correct" answer denied her religious beliefs. Lisa didn't object to the Big Bang theory, per se. What concerned her was that it was being taught in a naturalistic way that presupposes that the creation happened without a Creator.

So Lisa sat down with Ashley, and gently asked, "Did you really believe what you wrote? That the universe was caused by the Big Bang without God being involved?" Ashley burst into tears. "No," she sobbed, "but that was the answer the teacher wanted. I didn't know what to do."

Lisa brought the matter up during a parent-teacher conference -- but Ashley's teacher was defensive. As Lisa recalls, "She was appalled that I was questioning her judgment -- and she announced that she had no intention of changing the curriculum."

When Lisa began discussing alternative interpretations of the Big Bang theory, the teacher cut her off. "I'm not allowed to teach about religion," she told Lisa dismissively.

Undeterred, Lisa then met with the school principal, and brought along material I'd used on BreakPoint and that is in my book, *How Now Shall We Live?* This material had taught Lisa how to argue rationally from a scientific standpoint against naturalistic philosophy. As Lisa told BreakPoint, "The material gave me courage and a conviction to do this in love."

The principal's response was startling. She acknowledged that Lisa's arguments were good. And then she invited Lisa to serve on a school curriculum committee. And she agreed to have the science teacher apologize to the kids, and encourage them to ask important questions about the Big Bang theory.

For example, children could be invited to think about where the initial matter for the Big Bang came from. The Big Bang theory simply assumes the existence of a ball of densely packed matter the size of a basketball. But where did it come from? Or, the teacher might ask: What force or power caused this super-dense ball to burst apart in the primeval explosion?

The discovery of the Big Bang remains one of the most dramatic evidences for the biblical teaching that the universe had a beginning at a specific point in time. And that destroys the argument of Carl Sagan and others that the cosmos is all there is, ever was, or will be. And now as scientists are discovering intelligent design in the universe, we're beginning to see the hand of the one who created that extraordinary beginning.

Thanks to Lisa's efforts, America has at least one public school science curriculum that no longer presupposes that God does not exist. And her experience teaches us two important lessons.

First, pitting religion against science is not the way to do it. Instead of charging into the classroom waving our Bibles, we need to oppose bad science with better science. When we argue our case that way, we win, because the truth is on our side. Second, Lisa's story shows us that if we're willing to educate ourselves and become involved, we can

Congregational News

DUNDEE

We are pleased to report that David Dow (our full-time worker) has made a breakthrough into one of the schools near us. David Dow has managed to get permission to teach every week in a primary school. He is to help teach primary 4 to 7 year olds in a school that emphasises its multi-cultural ethos which two years ago was opposed to Christianity being taught. David is doing this with the Scripture Union representative. Please give thanks for this opportunity.

Our Wednesday night Club is going well with numbers increasing – and attention to the Bible Time at ‘half-time’ is fairly encouraging. Good relationships are being made and hopefully in the long run these children will come



to know the Lord Jesus Christ in a personal way.

On a sadder note, the congregation said ‘good-bye’ to Ross, Fiona and Finlay in October (see photo) and presented them with a cheque. Ross’ work has moved him to Beith, just outside Glasgow. We thank them for their help in the congregation and wish them every blessing.

Our October Mission report is on page four. We have been encouraged by the response at the Mission that our Saturday Lunches which starts on 3rd November, will be fruitful. We are having a 5-minute ‘Word at One’ during the 2 hour lunch break.

HIGHLAND HARMONY

A group called "Highland Harmony" has been set up with a view to improving, and stimulating interest in, Psalm singing in the northern counties. The name stems from the fact that there will be four-part harmony singing (male and female) and also the harmonisation of different denominations.

This is also an excellent opportunity for anyone interested in learning and enjoying four-part singing. So far, those who have expressed interest range from

places as far north as Wick and as far west as Wester Ross.

The group has been invited to join with Psalm-singers from the south of Scotland at the Psalmody Recital in Glasgow in May, 2002. Practice will normally be held, God willing, on the last Saturday of each month from 3.00pm to 5.00pm in North Kessock Free Church Hall.

Please pray that this will bring glory to the One who is worthy of all praise and honour (Psalm 95:1,2). If you are interested, why not come along? You will be very welcome. Further information can be obtained by ‘phoning 01445-712050 or e-mailing kendunedin@aol.com

K MacLean

STORNOWAY

The congregation has begun its fortnightly morning Bible Studies and has a list of speakers for its Fellowships until the end of the year. It is hoping to begin a series of eight meetings on "Parenting" within the congregation. It hopes to use "Parent

PRESBYTERY

The next presbytery will be held on

Tuesday 13th November

at **2pm** in

St Stephen’s Church, Inverness

APOSTLES, PROPHETS, TEACHERS

**by Thomas M
Lindsay**

“The distinguishing characteristic of an apostle was that he had given himself, and that for life, to be a missionary, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of Christ to those who did not know it....

“The prophet and the teacher had the same ‘gift’ in the same or in less measure than the apostle, but they found their sphere of its use within the Christian community, while the apostle’s sphere was for the most part outside, among those who were not yet within the Church of Christ.

“The apostles were men who in virtue of the implanted ‘gift’ of ‘speaking the Word of God’ and of the ‘call’ impelling them, were *sent forth* to be the heralds of the kingdom of Christ. This was their life-work. They were not appointed to an office, in the ecclesiastical sense of the word, but to a work in the prosecution of which they had to do all that is the inevita-

From Gideon News

"The late Harold Evans was one of the founder members of the Gideons International in Wales.

When he began visiting the hotels in Cardiff he was viewed with suspicion because the Gideons were hardly known in

Britain at the time. Harold visited most of the hotels and none of them would accept Bibles for their bedrooms.

When he called on the Royal Hotel in Cardiff, the manager told him 'You will place Bibles in this hotel over my dead body!' Harold smiled and replied

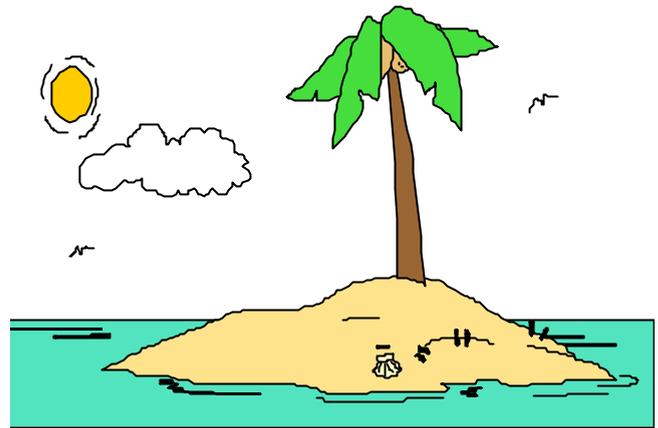
'that's a very dangerous thing to say. You see, on Monday morning at 7 o'clock we have a Gideon prayer meeting in my office – and we are going to pray that God would remove whatever obstacle lies in the way of placing Bibles in hotel bedrooms!'

Three days later the hotel manager was rushed to hospital with a heart attack. As soon as he could get to the telephone he rang his assistant manager and said 'Please ring Mr Evans of the Gideons at once and ask him to bring Bibles for our hotel bedrooms. I

Desert Island Books

With Alan MacDonald, Inverness

by Catherine Mackenzie



HELLO ALAN, as an artist I imagine you would quite enjoy a visit to a desert island - as long as you had your paints with you... but this time you are going to an island to read books. Would you enjoy that experience or would you find yourself fretting for the trappings of modern life i.e. microwave ovens, mobile phones?

As long as it was a visit and not a permanent banishment, I would enjoy the break. Being alone in God's creation is one of the great privileges and joys of life. I would miss some trappings of modern life but not the ones you mention. Only sad single blokes couldn't do without a microwave, and only those with a very low IQ would struggle without a mobile phone. I would, however, miss the washing machine, a very underrated piece of modern technology.

When you were a child did you enjoy books? Are there any that really stick in your memory?

Yes I did enjoy books as a child, especially since we had no T.V. Pilgrim's Progress stands out from everything else in my early reading days (along with Enid Blyton). I don't think I'll ever again be so completely gripped by a book as I was the first time I read 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe,' by C.S. Lewis. Even now the Narnia books are amongst my favourite books.

As a Christian the Bible will have had a profound effect on your life - but

if you were to pick one other book that has changed you or challenged you to change what book would that be?

Well, a man called Tim Dindsdale wrote a book on the Loch Ness Monster that nearly changed the course of my life and could have turned me into a wild-haired, unshaven, daydreaming nessie-hunter. Instead, I'm a wild-haired, unshaven, daydreaming artist. Spiritually, 'Don't just stand there, pray something,' by Ronald Dunn was memorable, as were the Screwtape letters by C.S. Lewis.

If you were to pick a sentence or quote from any book or piece of poetry to stick on the wall of your mud hut on this fictional desert island what quote would that be?

I hope the phrase 'mud hut' is not a reference to Knockbain Farmhouse, where

I live. Nothing springs to mind here, so I'd probably stick up verses 8-9 of Psalm 107, just to remind me to keep praying for all my friends who aren't Christians.

In what ways has God's book the Bible shaped you as a person since you became a Christian?

Big question. It has had a radical effect on every area of my life. It cannot be compartmentalised. Whatever situation you encounter, you wonder how Jesus would have reacted/behaved. The biggest impact is constantly evaluating my behaviour, not against somebody fallible and human, but against our perfect Redeemer.

You are allowed to take the Bible and the Pilgrim's progress with you onto the island - and three other books. What will these be?

Assuming it was a long stay on the island:- 'The Case for Christ,' Lee Strobel. Any one of the Narnia novels by C.S. Lewis, The Silver Darlings by Neil Gunn.

Once you are on the island you are cut off from society but you are allowed to send one book to a non Christian friend. What book would you pick and why?

As mentioned above, 'The Case for Christ,' by Lee Strobel. It's very comprehensive, covering every imaginable area of conflict between Christians and unbelievers.

You are also allowed one luxury... anything at all... what one extra item would you bring with you to make your life easier on this island - bearing in mind that mobile phones are banned so you are not allowed one!

A mobile phone is not a luxury, it is an

Committees! Familiar?

Oh give me your pity, I am on a committee
Which means from morning to night
We attend and amend and contend and descend
Without conclusion in sight

We confer and concur, we defer and demur
and reiterate our thoughts.
We revise the agenda with frequent amendments
and consider a load of reports

We compose and propose, we support and oppose
and the points of procedure are fun
But various motions are brought up as notions
and terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve, but we never dissolve
since it's out of the question for us
What a shattering pity to end our committee
Where else could we make such a fuss?

Anon.

Prayer for Right Views of Life

Oh why do I give so much time
To things which soon will be
No more, but pass away, when they
Can no help be to me?

For though I know I have a soul
Which will live on and on
When here my body is no more
And earthly pleasure's gone.

Yet still I can so easily
Neglect my deepest need
And live as though I have no soul
Nor mercy from Thee plead.

So Lord instruct me and give help
That I will wiser be
Than those who die still unaware
They mercy need from Thee.

And make me know without Thy grace
To hell my soul must go
Where there is darkness, pain and grief
And everlasting woe.

And in my heart oh may I know
The joy of sins forgiven
Through Christ who died my soul to save
And give me hope of heaven.

So help me Lord to value more
Those things which matter most
To love Thy Word and prove its worth -
Nor in vain glories boast.

Though thankful for material gifts
May I them view aright
And wiser be in deeper things
Nor keep them from my sight.

Then blessed I'll be upon this earth
But far more blessed above
Where bliss for ever I shall know

Notice To Congregations

Congregations are encouraged to send reports in regularly of what is happening in their communities. The editor will be pleased to receive information any - time during the month. It is up to each congregation to send in their own report without the editor reminding them each month.

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

*January/February
March*

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 Holy Scripture. All articles not attributed to an author are by the editor.

The typeface is 10pt 'Georgia' using 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.

Articles are best sent by email. Text may also be sent on disc in Microsoft Word. Clearly printed well-spaced typing and artwork in one column is also acceptable.

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

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THE GRIEF IN AMERICA

What grief has struck this world of ours,
Which terrorists have planned;
And hearts are saddened everywhere,
Nor can they understand-
Why God should such distress permit,
On earth to thus take place:
Where lives so quickly have been lost
Eternity to face.

But though deep questions now are asked,
And tears and grief are known;
God's purposes must still go on,
And Him we all must own-
To be a God whose ways are just,
Who only does what's right:
And faith we must still exercise-
Before His holy sight.

And thereby we can prove that He –
Our refuge thus will be;
So that our hearts can trust in Him,
Whatever grief we see;
And God will be exalted yet
O'er powers that us defy:
And though distresses us befall,
He will to us be nigh.

So as we pray for those in power
Who evil men put down;
May mercies yet through darkness come,
And peace and grace be known:
Then may we all acknowledge God
And truly humbled be;

“There is nothing attractive about the gospel to the natural man; the only man who finds the gospel attractive, is the man who is convicted of sin” -
Oswald Chalmers

Judgement is not God's reflex action – it is His considered last resort” -
David Andrew

God is not looking for leaders, He is looking for servants

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