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October 2017 Newsletter

The Forerunner of

Glory



WELCOME

LORD'S DAY

Morning Worship—11.00am

Evening Worship—6.30pm

PRAYER MEETING

Thursday—7.30pm

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CONTACT DETAILS

Stornoway RPCS
Coulgrein Mission House
C/O 9 Perceval Road,
Stornoway, Isle of Lewis,
Scotland, HS1 2UG

www.stornowayrpcs.org

info@stornowayrpcs.org

Scottish Charity No: SC043043

WORD FROM THE MANSE

Dear congregation,

Perhaps you saw the recent news story about Scott Schultz. He was a 21 year old student at Georgia Institute of Technology in America who was shot dead by police on campus. Scott had advanced at police with a knife and refused to obey their repeated instructions to drop his weapon. This was certainly a tragic incident. If only he had complied with police instructions he would be alive today.

However, if you read the story on the BBC News website, as I did, it showed a very different reality. The BBC reported about Scout Schultz, not Scott, and used his preferred gender pronoun- they. Scott identified as intersex and was the president of the LGBT Pride Alliance at Georgia Tech. The initial BBC headline read "LGBT student shot dead by police," which seems to imply that this incident related to LGBT "rights".

Many people have subsequently expressed their opinions. Some take out their anger on the police for excessive force, while others passionately speak of the systematic oppression of LGBT people. There have been riots and a police car has been burned. As I write, the inquiry into Scott's death is ongoing. But there are some pieces of the puzzle coming together. Scott had suffered from depression and had attempted suicide in the past. It was he that had called 911 to report someone of his own description carrying a knife and possibly a gun. There have apparently been three suicide notes found inside his dormitory.

How should we respond as Christians? We should be deeply saddened by this whole event. The loss of life should always bring sorrow to us. We should remember that there are parents recently bereaved and how difficult it will be to come to terms with their loss. But it seems fairly evident that Scott lived in a world of utter confusion. Ought we not also be grieved by the line taken by the BBC and others in promoting this gender confusion? The more the media muddies the waters on the simple issues of sexuality the more likely such incidents are.

This gender confusion is the outworking of Romans 1. Our culture has rejected God and so while "professing to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1:22). We can be clear that "God is not the author of confusion" (1 Corinthians 14:33). He created man in his image, male and female (Genesis 1:27). The only solution is the Gospel which gives light to darkness. Let's continue to pray for our own nation that the Gospel would have free course and overturn this confusion.

In Christ,

Stephen

NEWS & EVENTS

THANKS FROM BILL LUCAS

A personal word of thanks to all those who visited me at the Golden Jubilee Hospital and at home following my recent heart surgery, for your many prayers, gifts and cards received, and the telephone calls. Thanks too for the regular visits of my 'minder' – MD.

- 2 Above all we give thanks to the Supreme Surgeon who brought us through this anxious time. The Lord has done great things for us, to Him be the glory. Two verses from the Psalms were an encouragement to me. Psalm 31:24 -- "Be of good courage, and He strength unto your heart shall send, All ye whose hope and confidence doth on the Lord depend." Also Psalm 38: 21-22 -- "Forsake me not, O Lord; my God, far from me never be. O Lord, thou my salvation art, haste to give help to me." May the Lord bless you all.

THE BLOSSOMING OF A DESERT ROSE



On Dean Martin Drive in Las Vegas, Nevada, forty-seven people gathered for worship in the back room of a rented church building. From the perspective of the world's desert-playground, the called service of public worship was less than noteworthy. It went totally unnoticed, I am sure. The night before this worship service McGregor and Mayweather boxed at MGM on "the strip" while millions watched over pay-per-

view. Over that same weekend dozens of famous music acts, comedians, dancers, and less honorable shows and events occurred. Millions of dollars—or more—were spent at tables and in slot machines. But which event had eternal significance? Las Vegas Reformed Presbyterian Church was established.

In 2012, a group of friends committed to confessional presbyterianism approached the RPCNA's Pacific Coast Presbytery with a Macedonian call: "Brothers, come over and help us!" Since that time the small Pacific Coast Presbytery sent ministers and prayers, gave oversight and counsel, as well as loved, taught, and encouraged this small group of friends and worshipers. Over time the small group grew to include several new families and singles.

Not all were happy. "Your church is doomed before it even begins." That was the comment of one local who encouraged one of the worshipers to close up shop—don't waste your time planting a church like that. A confessionally reformed church will never flourish in this city—especially with *a cappella* psalm singing! Another person commented that the "RPCNA's money" should not go to help out in such a city as Las Vegas. Why would we plant a church *there*? It is so sinful. It is so unsafe. I've heard that with my own ears. The Lord is faithful. The desert rose will blossom.

After five years of proverbial blood, sweat, and tears, the Las Vegas Reformed Presbyterian Church was established. It did not draw the attention as that of the Mayweather victory or the wows and amazement of *Cirque du Soleil*; but there is eternal significance. Out of the desert blossomed an outpost of Jesus Christ—an outpost from where the gospel will go forth. The lives of broken people will be healed. Sinners will become saints. The crooked will be made straight. An oasis has formed in the midst of a spiritual desert (The metro-population of Las Vegas is just shy of 2 million souls—and those two million souls are served by four NAPARC congregations. Four! A spiritual desert indeed.). The prophet Isaiah reminds us that under the gospel administration, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad... and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

The presbytery oversaw the new members covenanting together to "live together in brotherly unity as an organized congregation... being obedient to the courts that are over them in the Lord, and that by a godly life they will seek to promote the purity, peace, and prosperity of the church as a whole." The members then signed the covenant and proceeded to call their first minister. The gospel call was unanimous.

The desert rose will blossom.

Sometimes I am accused of being overly-optimistic. That's okay. My optimism is not in my presbytery's abilities or the abilities of the minister that the newly formed congregation called—but my optimism is in the promises of the gospel and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ—confident that even desert places will flourish under the preaching of the Word.

Rev Nathan Eshelman, Los Angeles RPCNA

GLEANINGS BY BILL LUCAS

CAN IT BE DONE?

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13)

It is often said that it is impossible ... to call on God without distractions. Such is the variety of objects, such the imbecility of our nature, such the weakness of our graces, such the suddenness and swiftness of a thought, that none but the angels can do this ...

(We grant that) perfection herein is impossible in this life; perhaps only a prayer or an ordinance may have that intenseness, as to exclude every wandering thought that would step in. However to be perfectly free in every duty from them, is rather to be wished for than hoped for in this life. The angelic perfection is reserved for heaven; the evangelical perfection may be here attained ...

In this sense there is no divine precept impossible. Although our Lord Jesus said: "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5), yet the apostle asserts: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). If all things, then why not this?

Though it were impossible in itself, yet is it possible with God's help? We are prone to think that we can perform easy things by our own strength, and that difficult things are too hard for God. Have you ever really tried to find out what God and you can do?

Could you not have heard a sermon better if a naked sword had been suspended by a single hair over your bare heads; and prayed more cordially if you had seen every word you uttered written down by the hand of God? The same caution and watchfulness that can keep distraction away two days, can do it for ten, or twenty; and he that can be tempered for a day, might be tempered every day, if he did his best.

Richard Steele, A Remedy for Wandering Thoughts

THE UNIQUENESS OF OUR LORD

"When Jesus knew it, He withdrew Himself from thence; and great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all; and charged them that they should not make Him known." (Matt. 12: 15 -16).

These two expressions reveal the uniqueness of our beloved Lord. There was no one outside the scope of His interest and compassion. On the other hand He was anxious to step back after fulfilling His good deeds, and maintain His humility and self-effacement. To become popular would have prevented Him from mingling surreptitiously among the ordinary people He loved. If only we revealed the same characteristics in our service for Him.

Brian Russell

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN (JOHN 15:13)

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What love is this? Outside Jerusalem around 2000 years ago the Lord laid down His life, not only for friends but also for those who were His enemies. The love displayed by the Lord on that occasion cannot be measured or calculated. We simply praise and thank Him today for that love displayed to each and every one of us.

John M Clegg

PLANT IN US

Plant in us Thy humble mind; patient, pitiful, and kind, Meek and lowly let us be, full of goodness, full of Thee.

C. Wesley

A LIVING HOPE

"And they said, There is no hope; but we will walk after our own devices (plans), and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart." (Jer. 18:12)

This is an apt description of our current world. Hopelessness reigns. So eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die. If it feels good -- do it! What a difference the entrance of the gospel makes in these desperate times. When we trust the Saviour we have a living hope, an anchor for the soul, a helmet of salvation, the hope of eternal life. "Blessed is the man that trustest in the Lord." (Jer. 17:7).

W.H.G.

UNEXHAUSTED LOVE

"They gathered manna every morning." (Exodus 16:21)

Labour to maintain a sense of thine entire dependence upon the Lord's good will and pleasure for the continuance of thy richest enjoyments. Never try to live on the old manna, nor seek to find help in Egypt. All must come from Jesus, or thou art undone for ever. Old annointings will not suffice to impart unction to thy spirit; thine head must have fresh oil poured upon it from the golden horn of the sanctuary, or it will cease from its glory. To-day thou mayest be upon the summit of the mount of God, but He who has put thee there must keep thee there, or thou wilt sink far more speedily than thou dreamest. Thy mountain only stands firm when He settles it in its place; if He hide His face, thou wilt soon be troubled. If the Saviour should see fit, there is not a window through which thou seest the light of heaven which He could not darken in an instant. Joshua bade the sun stand still, but Jesus can shroud it in total darkness. He can withdraw the joy of thine heart, the light of thine eyes, and the strength of thy life; in His hand thy comforts lie, and at His will they can depart from thee.

This hourly dependence our Lord is determined that we shall feel and recognize, for He only permits us to pray for "daily bread," and only promises that "as our days our strength shall be." Is it not best for us that it should be so, that we may often repair to His throne, and constantly be reminded of His love? Oh! how rich the grace which supplies us so continually, and doth not refrain itself because of our ingratitude! The golden shower never ceases, the cloud of blessing tarries evermore above our habitation. O Lord Jesus, we would bow at Thy feet, conscious of our utter inability to do anything without Thee, and in every favour which we are privileged to receive, we would adore Thy blessed name and acknowledge Thine unexhausted love.

CHS

STIRRING UP

We need stirring up -- not so much to be taught something new, as to be stirred up as to what we have learned already.

We should stir ourselves up by the Word of God. Let us apply it to ourselves and take it as if addressed to us. Let us not listen to it or read it carelessly -- but as the message of God to us! Let us not be hearers only -- but doers of the Word ... receiving it as God's message, pondering it in our minds, applying it to ourselves, believing it, and striving to live by it!

John Flavel

FAITH

Faith is like the hand of a beggar which takes the gift.

Thomas Chalmers

THE FORERUNNER OF GLORY

“...The LORD will give grace and glory...” (Psalm 84:11)

The Forerunner of

Glory

In ancient days, when larger ships were unable to get close enough to shore to dock due to stormy conditions, the ship's anchor would be placed in a small boat called a forerunner. The forerunner carried the anchor through the breakers and dropped it at the harbour securing the larger ship. When weather conditions would permit, the larger ship would slowly be drawn to shore through the anchor chain, and the ship would eventually arrive safely at the harbour.

GOD'S PROMISES

The Bible is full of wonderful promises, which are varied in nature and applicable in different circumstances. These include, for instance, promises of encouragement (Isaiah 40:31), of comfort in times of affliction (Psalm 50:15) of wisdom (James 1:5) and for those seeking the Lord (Psalm 34:10).

A promise is not fulfilled till it is delivered. We can be guilty of promising much and delivering little. We have all experienced being on the end of a broken promise or being guilty of breaking a promise ourselves. Even with the best will in the world, we are liable to fall short in fulfilling any promise. God, on the other hand, is a promise making and a promise keeping God.

One of the greatest promises in Scripture is to be found in the words of Psalm 84:11, concerning the words grace and glory, “the Lord will give grace and glory.”

AN UNBREAKABLE CONNECTION

There is an unbreakable connection between the grace of God and the glory of God. This is evidenced in John 1:14, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Whatever else might be said about this great statement, John makes clear that grace and glory are seen in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:5-6 states, “having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.” Here the connection between grace and glory is seen, before the foundation of the world.

In Psalm 84:11, the statement is made that the Lord will give both grace *and* glory. Spurgeon brought out the connection between the two, as they relate to the present and future states of the believer:

“The little conjunction “and” in this verse is a diamond rivet binding the present with the future: grace and glory always go together. God has married them, and none can divorce them. The Lord will never deny a soul glory to whom He has freely given to live upon His grace.”

Grace and glory are therefore seen in the Scripture before the foundation of the world, in the present here and now and in the eternity to come. All is bound up in our Lord Jesus Christ.

GRACE

What is grace? Grace is often described as God's unmerited favour, but as AW Pink pointed out; grace is more than merely God's unmerited favour:

“To feed a tramp who calls on me is “unmerited favour,” but it is scarcely grace. But suppose that after robbing me I should feed this starving tramp—that would be “grace.” Grace, then, is favour shown where there is positive de-merit in the one receiving it.”

6 Grace is therefore God's unmerited favour towards those who deserve his eternal punishment. This is seen in the fall of man in Genesis 3:15. As soon as man was in need, God announced His grace, in promising a Saviour who was to come. This was God's unmerited favour shown towards fallen man, who had robbed God and sinned against Him, much like the tramp in Pink's illustration.

Grace is a concept that is foreign to sinful human beings because it is not something we merit; it is always something we freely receive. We would like to think that we can do something to earn the favour of God, but the reality is that it is impossible for sinners to earn God's favour. There is no soundness in us, only wounds and bruises and putrefying sores (Isaiah 1:6). Grace is not something that is earned; it is a gift of God as the Scriptures clearly teach:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast*” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

It is often said that God is a loving God who would not send anyone to hell. It is true that God is a loving God, yet He is also a just God, who cannot simply overlook sin. If God pardoned our sins without satisfying His own justice that would not be grace, that would be a miscarriage of justice.

Grace is not some sort of abstract concept, but, as Michael Horton has said, grace is “Jesus Christ in redeeming action.” We, as sinners, are unable to fulfil the demands of the law, and only Christ could pay our debt. He did so by perfectly obeying the law of God and dying on the cross in our place. That way, God's justice is satisfied and our debt has been paid, when we place our trust in Christ alone. We only experience grace in Him and insofar as we are trusting in anything else we are not under grace. The Galatians embraced another gospel, a gospel of works righteousness.

If we are to understand grace at all, we must understand that it is God's unmerited favour shown towards us, who were deserving of God's eternal wrath, available only through Christ's redeeming work.

How should we respond to God's grace in Christ? If salvation is by grace, rather than our own works, it should not be seen as giving us licence to live a life of sin (antinomianism), as some would suggest, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” (Romans 6:1). Grace ought to lead us to live a life of humility and grateful gratitude in obeying and serving God. It should also lead us to enthusiastically share the message of God's grace with those who are lost. Without grace, there would be no such thing as Christianity. No sinner is beyond God's grace. If Paul could be saved from a life of persecuting the church to a life of promoting the faith, who then is too sinful? How can we fail to share such a wonderful message? If we understand God's grace, surely we should be shouting it from the rooftops.

GLORY

Alexander Maclaren suggested that there is a sense in which grace and glory are both given simultaneously to the believer in this life; as opposed to grace in this life and glory purely in the life to come, as grace is the experience of Christ's redeeming action and glory is the reflection of His image. We are transformed from one degree of glory in this life as we behold the face of Christ in His Word.

Whilst it is true that as, in this present state of grace, we behold Christ in the mirror of His Word and are transformed into His image from one degree of glory to another, the fullest connection between grace and glory for the believer is ultimately seen in the glory that will follow in the world to come. Not only is it grace that saves us, grace that keeps us, but it is grace that brings us to glory. Certainly, in this sense, grace comes before glory and, if we are in a state of grace, the glory is sure to follow, as Psalm 84:11 makes clear. Christ is the source of our life in God in the here and now and the basis of our hope for the life to come.

It is not possible for anyone to be with Christ in glory who has not known Christ savingly in this life. At the same time, it is not possible for anyone to comprehend the fullness of glory that awaits for all who have experienced grace in this life. However, God has revealed something of His glory, that our hearts might be drawn to it:

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

The glory of heaven is the gift of God's grace in Christ. The Scriptures use figurative language to describe heaven as a place of indescribable beauty. The streets are pure gold, the gates are of pearls and its fountain is the water of life (Revelation 21). Whatever heaven is, it is to be with Christ, which is far better (Philippians 1:23. There “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4)

OUR JOURNEY

We are all on a journey, towards one of two destinations. Those who are out with Christ are journeying towards a lost eternity where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Nevertheless, there is hope while still on mercies ground, for Christ says, “look unto me and be saved” (Isaiah 45:22).

For all who are in Christ, we are promised His grace whilst we travel and His glory to come. We are unable to get to the dock ourselves, due to the storms of sin within and without. Jesus is both the anchor and the forerunner who has gone before us to make a way and to prepare a place for us, so that where He is, there we may be also (John 14:3). Many ships are being pulled toward the harbour of heaven by our forerunner. One day we will arrive safely home, where we shall ever be with the Lord.

“Grace is but glory begun, and glory is but grace perfected” (Jonathan Edwards).

SM

PURITAN PUBLICATION BOOKS



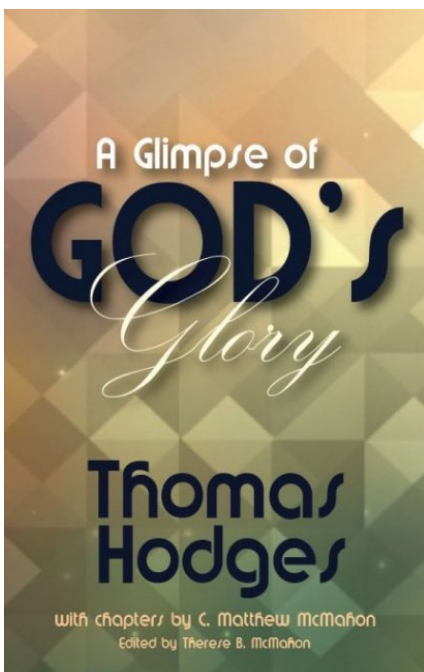
William S. Plumer (1802–1880) was an American Presbyterian minister and theologian recognized as a Reformed leader in the church in the 19th century.

This work concerns dealing with affliction in a manner that glorifies God.

Everyone deals with affliction. The question that remains is how well, as a Christian, you deal with it to the glory of God. Sometimes you will get weary. When you get weary you sometimes need a word of instruction, a word of encouragement, a word of comfort, and a word of caution. This is where William Plumer will give you all of these in a tender and pastoral manner.

He takes God’s word and applies it to a number of afflictions that Christians regularly deal with such as the death of a loved one, those who speak hatefully against you, spiritual warfare, times of spiritual leanness, and one which many deal with daily, poor health. Not only will he Scripturally deal with those difficulties, but he also includes devotional writings of hymns and poems that are designed to lift the spirits of the saints. Many Christians have lived and died. Their experiences are often our experiences. Plumer shares them in this work.

May this devotional instruction on affliction and weariness of soul be a great help to lift your spirit to have high thoughts of God and Christ even amidst daily tribulations.



Thomas Hodges (1600-1672) was a fiery puritan, a Covenanter, a dedicated minister of the Gospel and an active member of the Westminster Assembly.

There are not many theological books which give themselves completely over to the topic of, “the glory of God.” This work by Hodges is a rarity. Hodges’ entire work surrounds the glory of God, and how the glory of God relates to Christians, ministers and magistrates.

What is the glory of God? Hodges explains this most important doctrine from Psalm 113:5-6, “Who is like unto the Lord our God...” The glory of God is the end to which the promotion of holiness, and the production of happiness, and all other ends are subordinate. He shows that it is the Christians duty to behold this God, and dwell in him, to find him whose glory is so great, and does not change.

Hodges’ work is written to be a cure to your soul to remind you how important it is that God is to be glorified every minute of every day of your life, and into eternity. In this, Christians may attain to a clear, life-altering glimpse of God’s true glory.

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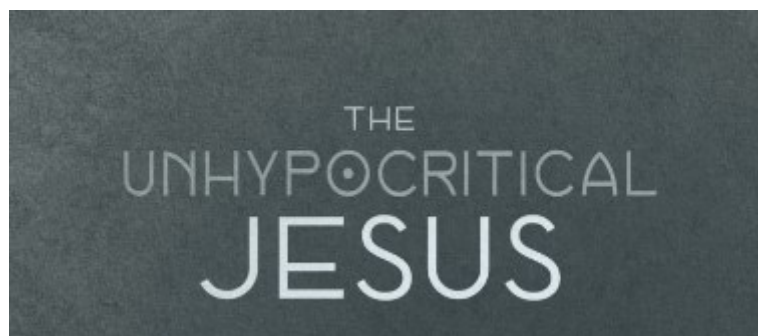
SECTS OF SEDUCTION

From time to time I get a knock on the door from two exuberant representatives of one of the local cult chapters. Although such visits have become less frequent in recent years, it is generally my practice to step outside for a nice little chat. The friendly couple always seem overjoyed at the fact that I am willing to take the time to talk with them, and usually, during our formal introductions, I am thinking to myself: “They have no idea what they’re in for.” After listening intently to their presentation and their questions, I begin to reply with concise, reasoned questions that always seem to be a factor in their change in demeanor. Within minutes, the exuberant facade that radiated from their smiling faces turns into a fortress of defense.

The last couple who visited me told me plainly they were Jehovah’s Witnesses, to which I responded, “So am I.” They soon discovered, however, that my definition of being a witness of Jehovah was quite different to theirs. After I spent some time explaining the necessity of the deity of Christ for fallen man’s salvation, I asked them one simple question: “If Jesus were to walk up and greet you, what would you do?” To this question they had absolutely no programmed response. “According to your beliefs,” I said, “if Jesus were to come and greet us here and now it would be entirely appropriate for you to shake His hand and say, ‘It is so nice to meet you, my friend.’ But, if He were to come and greet me, the only appropriate thing for me to do would be to fall at His feet and worship Him as my Lord and my God.” After I said this, I observed something I never had before. The younger of the two men began to cry. Then, within seconds a van pulled up and they were whisked away.

When I recall that experience, I still pray for that young man. For just as every member of every cult is enticed by those who have disguised themselves as angels of light (2 Cor 11:14), that young man had been seduced to follow and serve as a witness not of the one and only eternal, triune Jehovah but, instead, of the prince of darkness whose minions have deceived multitudes throughout the world. For this reason, the cults of the world cannot rightly be called “sects of Christianity.” On the contrary, they are sects of Satan himself, for they have manufactured another gospel, and they have exchanged the truth of God for a lie. And, indeed, without repentance, it is before His face they will suffer His judgment.

Burk Parsons, www.Ligonier.org



Jesus constantly warned about hypocrisy throughout his earthly ministry. Whether it was the institutionalized hypocrisy of the Pharisees (Matt. 6:2, 5, 16; 15:7; 16:3; 22:18; 23:13-15, 23-29), or the leavening effects that such hypocrisy on professing believers (Luke 12:1), Jesus recurrently emphasized that we are ever in danger of falling into hypocrisy. Since such hypocrisy was most prevalent among the religious leaders in Israel in Jesus’ day, pastors and others engaged in public ministry are far from immune from such hypocrisy in our own day.

When the Apostle Paul wrote his epistles, he often dealt with the issue of sincerity and hypocrisy in ministry. The same Apostle who said, “what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do...For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me” (Rom. 7:15-20) also said, “I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:27). Paul, at one and the same time, acknowledged the principle of indwelling sin in his own Christian experience and a deep determination to avoid falling into the trap of hypocrisy. There was a devout resolution in the heart of the Apostle to put hypocrisy to death daily—even as he recognized the irreconcilable warfare between the flesh and the Spirit that raged in his heart.

And, while it is true that all Christians must have the same resolution as the Apostle Paul, there was only One who never knew anything of the reality of indwelling sin—the Lord Jesus Christ. There is only One who perfectly abstained from every form of sin and hypocrisy. There was not one insincere bone in the body of Jesus. Jesus never taught others something that He did not perfectly exemplify in His own experience. This is perhaps nowhere better seen than in his teaching on the Sermon on the Mount. No one ever had a pure heart like Christ. Jesus never lusted after a woman, never lied, never had a hateful thought or affection. Jesus was perfectly pure in heart. Jesus loved His Father with *all* of His heart, mind, soul and strength.

There is an astonishing picture of Jesus' sinless sincerity that forms when we see that Jesus did all that He taught in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus embodied His own teaching in the Sermon on the Mount when He gave Himself to carrying out the work of redemption. Consider Matthew 5:38-42:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.”

Jesus perfectly put these same truths into practice when He entered into His sufferings for our redemption:

Jesus did not resist the evil person when the soldiers came to take Him captive in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:47-56). In fact, Jesus went so far as to heal the servant of the high priest, whose ear Peter cut off out of misplaced zeal for his Master. Jesus was simply putting in practice what He taught when He said, “Love your enemies” (Matt. 5:44).

Jesus turned the other cheek—so to speak—when his captors “spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands saying, “Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?”” (Matt. 26:67-68). Jesus did not retaliate when He was struck. In this sense, he turned the other cheek.

Jesus gave away all of His garments as He was being crucified. Matthew tells us, “Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: ‘They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots’” (Matt. 27:35). John gives greater detail when he wrote, “Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. They said therefore among themselves, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be,’ that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: ‘They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.’ Therefore the soldiers did these things.” (John 19:23-24).

Jesus went the extra mile when He carried His cross to the place where they crucified Him. After being held captive he entire night, we read, “He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull” (John 19:17). Jesus not only subjected himself to betrayal, false accusations, judgment, mockery, abuse and derision at the hands of men—He carried the heavy tree to the place at which His enemies nailed Him to it.

In this brief cameo we see the way in which Jesus did all that He taught—especially as it pertained to His carrying out the work of redemption for the salvation of our souls. The Savior has taken away the sin of our hypocrisy by His sincere obedience. Who but Jesus could keep the commands of God with such sinless sincerity? Then, having perfectly done what He taught in absolute sincerity, Jesus left us with the most potent example to follow. As the Apostle Peter wrote:

“To this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ‘ Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth; ’who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed” (1 Peter 2:21-24).

Children's Corner



Dear Children

Do you know what the word Eternity means? It is a period of time which has no ending although it can also mean that it has no beginning either.

I have a watch which is called "Eternity" and there is also a perfume called "Eternity". I don't know why they have been called "Eternity". Is it because they think that the watch will go on and on and never stop and also that the fragrance will last a long, long time? I really don't know but I do know that I will need to put a new battery into that watch before long. I also doubt that the fragrance "Eternity" will last any longer than my favourite perfume. But what the Bible calls "Eternity" **NEVER** comes to an end.

Eternity is a state into which we all, both young and old, enter when we die. Death is not something that only old people experience. All ages experience it.

There are two kinds of eternity – heaven and hell – and we can only go to one of them. It is, therefore, very important that we prepare for eternity and know to which kind of eternity we are going when we die. I am sure that all of you would want to go to heaven. So how do you get there? Jesus said: "I am the Way" and He also said: "I am the Door". We need to know Jesus as our Lord and Saviour and to put our trust in Him. He alone will take us to heaven for only His friends will go there. Jesus said to His disciples before leaving them: "I will come again and receive you unto Myself that where I am there you may be also".

I heard of someone who was sitting in a room where there was a clock with a pendulum and as the pendulum swung from side to side the tick it made seemed to be saying to him: Eternity – where? Eternity – where? That made him think of where he was going after he died and that, if he wanted to go to heaven, he needed to find out how to get there.

I pray that you too will think of eternity and that you will decide to prepare for it **now**. The Apostle Paul reminds us that "**now** is the acceptable time; **now** is the day of salvation". Tomorrow is not promised to any of us. The salvation of your soul is an urgent matter. Don't put it off. It may then be too late. I do pray that you may not be as foolish as to think that because you are young you have enough time. That is one of Satan's lies. Don't believe him. Choose Christ and His salvation **NOW**.

With my love and prayers.

Granny M



Activity: Read the statements below and write **True** or **False** beside each one of them. You can ask your parents or grandparents to check and see if you got them correct but if you send them to me you will receive a small gift.

1. Old and young people die.
2. We don't need to think about eternity till we are old.
3. All people go to heaven.
4. Eternity never comes to an end.
5. There are two kinds of eternity – a good one and a bad one.
6. We need to prepare for eternity now.
7. Only old people die.
8. People go to heaven or hell when they die.
9. To get to heaven we need to believe in Jesus as our Saviour.
10. Eternity lasts a short while.