



*Giffnock: the Park Church
Sunday 25th October 2020
Bible Sunday*

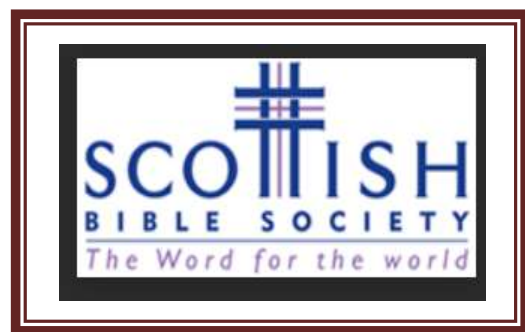


*⁷The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.
⁸The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.
⁹The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever.
The decrees of the LORD are firm, and all of them are righteous.
Psalm 19: 7 - 9*

Good morning everyone,

As always, I want to begin by saying that I hope that you are well and that you are managing to cope with all that is happening around us. I can't believe we are nearly in November - where has the time gone? I hope you will enjoy our devotional this morning as this being the last Sunday of October, it is Bible Sunday.

Bible Sunday has been a long standing tradition in the Church of Scotland celebrating and giving thanks for the work of what was the National Bible Society of Scotland and is now the Scottish Bible Society. Some years ago the decision was made to change the time for celebrating this fine institution and its work from the Second Sunday of the Advent Season to this time of the year at the end of October and each year devotional material has been made available to mark this occasion. Both our written reflection here and our Service of Prayer and Reflection in the Church will focus on their story which is about how we communicate the importance of God's Word and the reading of it to others, not just in our own country and cultural setting but also in those of other nations and if you are able, let me encourage you to look up and see for yourself some of the things the Scottish Bible Society does on their website.



In the meantime yet again we come to the juncture of one week closing and another beginning and I trust as we see things change perhaps for the good or perhaps more likely for the not so good, I hope you will Trust that as

the songwriter said, "He will hold you hold fast" and remember as the Boys' Brigade Hymn writer did that

"We have anchor that feeds the soul,
Stead fast and sure while the Billows role,
Fastened to the rock which cannot move
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's Love"

Have a great week, have a safe week, and May He who loved us Keep and Guard over us.

Calum D. Macdonald



Carnwadric Church Foodbank

As some of you may have already heard, Carnwadric Church has set up a foodbank for the local community. This has been something I have felt to be a good practical way in which we can show support for a new ministry beginning at Carnwadric and help to demonstrate God's love to those in need.

In the past Park Church has always been a church willing to help others and so I would encourage you all to think about buying some extra food regularly with your own shopping and handing it in at the office (Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday afternoons) I know someone already who is happy to pass these on to the good folks of Carnwadric for us.

Let me encourage you with these words:

2 Corinthians 9 v11

God will give you much so that you can give away much, and when we take your gifts to those who need them they will break out into Thanksgiving and praise to God for your help.

Wilma Macdonald



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“Be not forgetful of prayer. Every time you pray, if your prayer is sincere, there will be new feeling and new meaning in it, which will give you fresh courage, and you will understand that prayer is an education.”
— *Fyodor Dostoevsky, the Brothers Karamazov*

Let us Pray.

Our gracious God we praise You this day as we celebrate the marvel of Your presence among us and the gift of Your Word To us .We acknowledge in our limited understanding that we cannot begin to imagine the full extent of your Majestic Power, Your capacity for being able to be everywhere at once, Your Holiness which no matter how well polished and well lived our lives may be, still cannot hope to match your Glory or perfection.

We thank You for Your love expressed to us, a love best demonstrated in the giving of Your Son. We thank once more for the life he lived as an example for us to follow. We thank You for his sacrifice on the Cross of Calvary, for his resurrection from the tomb and willingness to be constant in prayer interceding for each one of us.

We thank You for Your Word Encapsulated in these 66 books from Genesis to Revelation, for the inspiration it offers for the challenge it gives and the guidance that is available through it and We thank for the indwelling power of your Spirit at work within us and able to make the pages of Your Word come to life in a new and vibrant Way for us today.

Forgive us when we let our lives diverge and be diverted from Your Plans and Purposes. Forgive us when we have grieved you or hurt others by the things we have said or done or even that attitude with which we have come. Impart to us we pray, a sense of your Grace at work; may we know again that assurance that faith in Jesus brings.

Loving God in these moments as we pray for your Grace to fall upon us again, give to us a confidence to speak with others of the things of faith. Help us to demonstrate the marvel of your love in the things we do in Christ's name. Motivate us with a passion for helping others to discover for themselves the wonder and joy that Salvation through Jesus brings. Use us we pray to this end and so as one week closes and another begins we dedicate ourselves afresh to the call of the Gospel once more in and for Jesus' namesake we pray,
Amen.



A Prayer Request

On Tuesday 27th October at 12 noon, one our Church members, Mrs Barbara Hay will be Committed and Commended to the Grace of God in a Service of Cremation.

I would ask that you remember those who were dearest to Barbara in Prayer. In Particular please uphold Barbara's Daughter Gillian and her twin brother David, Her mother Barbara and her two sisters Sheila and Margaret along with all those in their wider family at this time

Thank You

Calum D. Macdonald



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Psalm 19 : 1-14

For the director of music: A psalm of David.

- ¹ *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.*
- ² *Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.*
- ³ *They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them.*
- ⁴ *Yet their voice^[b] goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.*
- ⁵ *It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course.*
- ⁶ *It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is deprived of its warmth.*
- ⁷ *The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.*
- ⁸ *The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.*
- ⁹ *The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever.
The decrees of the LORD are firm, and all of them are righteous.*
- ¹⁰ *They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.*
- ¹¹ *By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*
- ¹² *But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults.*
- ¹³ *Keep your servant also from wilful sins; may they not rule over me.
Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression.*
- ¹⁴ *May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.*



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Psalm 19: 7 - 9

Good morning

In my opening letter I spoke of this being Bible Sunday, celebrating the work of the Scottish Bible Society. The first ever Bible Society was apparently established in 1779 and called the Naval, Military Bible Society later to be known as the Naval, Military and Air Force Bible Society whose task was to deliver copies of the Bible to their Servicemen. This was followed by the French Bible Society in 1792, whose story was short lived on account of the French Napoleonic Revolution of 1803. Funds left over were transferred to Great Britain and these were used to produce Bibles in the Welsh language.

In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society came into being when a group of Christians, associated with the Religious Tract Society and led by William Wilberforce and Rev Thomas Charles, sought to address the problem of a lack of affordable Bibles in Welsh for Welsh-speaking Christians. The news was breaking of how many young girls had walked long distances to Rev Thomas Charles to get copies of the Bible. One such story rose to prominence where a young girl called Mary Jones walked over 20 miles to get a Bible in Bala, Gwynedd.

Five years later, in 1809 The Edinburgh Bible Society came into being followed by the Glasgow Bible Society in 1812. They both would amalgamate to become the National Bible Society of Scotland in 1869 and of course are now known as the Scottish Bible Society. Their simple mandate was to see that the Word of God be disseminated as widely across the world in the indigenous languages of those lands far from that of our own.

Interestingly the military bible versions have continued to be produced. My old Friend Mike Edwards never entered parish ministry as his Calling was to that of the Royal Air Force as a Padre. I remember as young man hearing from him in church being asked to pray for those young soldiers on the QE2 and SS Canberra, two luxury liners pressed ganged into service as troop carriers during the Falklands crisis. The soldiers were all seeking copies of a New Testament and they were running short, and these young men were looking ahead and realising that the pending story of combat to win back the Falkland Islands had left them with a sense of their mortality and the questions they had unanswered about the hereafter.

At the height of Cold war before the Fall of the Berlin wall, the Slavic Gospel Association was a Christian organisation that broadcast Radio show programmes to those of the Former Eastern Block and who also took materials and supplies to many of the churches in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania who were often under the watchful eyes of the Communist State and some even endured direct persecution. Bibles were in such short supply at times that they would rip out pages and pass them out so that they all could copy by hand the text before passing it to someone else.

The good news is that there are very few places today where the Gospel story in the Bible is not available. Sometimes it is good for us to think about how much has been achieved but it also reminds us how much has still to be done. Some who are more cynical would ask "How can the Bible possibly be of any relevance for life today?"

The Counsel of the Apostle Paul which we are reflecting on in the church service gives a helpful answer to this question.

2 Timothy 3: 1 - 7

3 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.

⁶ They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, ⁷ always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. These words, yes, written a long time ago, are a terrible indictment on our society today. While we have seen many good people do many good things throughout this Pandemic Crisis, we have also seen people at their worst, in the high office of our Politics, in the world of finance and business, and yes

even in the sectors of the church at times, individuals who have shown a greed over others on such things as toilet paper of all things - Toilet Paper!!

There is the selfishness of some today seeking to fulfil their need for "Pleasure" so much so that they are willing to put the health of others at risk knowingly. I am willing to wager that when the second Lockdown comes (and it probably will, although we might not know when), we will have another run on the shelves principally by those who can afford to stock their shelves as a three month supply, while those who cannot afford such a luxury will scabble about for the scraps or who cannot get to the shops early enough as they are the first responders at the front of this pandemic. Wilma in her plea for help for Carnwadric Church's new Foodbank, cited a very important verse for us from 2 Corinthians 9:11 "***God will give you much so that you can give away much, and when we take your gifts to those who need them they will break out into Thanksgiving and praise to God for your help.***"

These verses help us understand the Human condition and Humanity's need for someone to save them from themselves. In actual fact, the Bible's message is about seeing the recognition that God has, where He sees something in us that is worth redeeming and that is the moment where Hope for Humanity begins.

The next question might very well be - Why should we trust what God might have to say through the Bible? The simple answer to that is to look and see what we can find out about God and I think the best way to do that is again to look and see what the Bible Says about God himself and it is at this moment we come to the text of Psalm 19: 7-10 . Written by Israel's King David but whom I believe, was inspired by God's Spirit himself to pen these words, words which speak of the very attributes of God and his nature.

What God's Word is	The Attribute of God Revealed
<i>The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul</i>	Tells us of the <i>Perfection of God</i>
<i>The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple</i>	<i>the Trustworthiness of God</i>
<i>The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart</i>	Speaks of the Justice of God and His Sense of what's Right
<i>The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.</i>	Speaks of how he see things more clearly understands things better

What God's Word is	The Attribute of God Revealed
<i>The fear of the LORD is pure</i>	The Holiness of God
<i>The fear of the LORD is... enduring Forever</i>	Reminds us of His Immortality
<i>all of them (his decrees) are righteous</i>	His goodness His virtue His integrity · His worthiness · His Morality ; His honour ; his purity , nobility and piety
¹⁰ <i>They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold;</i>	A value beyond compare
<i>they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.</i>	There is a beauty and appeal like no other

If we can take these things at face value as revealing of God's nature and then understand that although the worst and even minor negative traits of Humanity are abhorrent in his eyes, why then does He Care? The Simple Answer seems to be - He Loves us. This is further demonstrated by His Son and how Jesus lived among us and showed us how we might live before dealing with the one thing that still needed to be rectified - our sinfulness. Thus, the one who had no Sin, became Sin for us and the Cross of Calvary became the ultimate symbol of the Sacrifice of God.

That Message remains at the heart of the Bible Society and of the Church's work, where the words of John 3: 16 still ring true today.

"For God so Loved the World that He gave his only son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

Believing in Jesus my friends is a good thought for us to leave on and a thought I trust you will hold on to in these days and weeks to come.

Calum D. Macdonald

May the beauty of our Father
in Heaven be reflected in your eyes,
May the love of His Son
be reflected in your hands,
May the wisdom of his Word be
reflected in your speaking,
And May the example of his Spirit flow
from your heart,
that all might see,
and in seeing, believe
Amen