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FIRST

Seek First the Kingdom of God!

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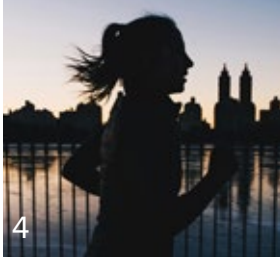
Spiritual Ambition

- » THE LORD
PAID ATTENTION

- » IGNITE US TO PRAY
(PART 1)



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A MESSAGE FROM THE FAITH MISSION'S GENERAL DIRECTOR



The Bible passage about Saul and his father's lost donkeys (1 Samuel 9) is one that I have been drawn to recently. His father, Kish sent Saul to look for the missing animals. The story was really about God sending Saul to meet Samuel, the man of God, and the anointing of the first king of Israel which followed. It is a lesson in the providence of God, and we can take a few pointers from it:

- Just like the donkeys, we can end up focusing on lesser things, when there are more important heavenly focused matters at stake.
- It can be the ordinary things in life, like Saul's donkeys, which God uses to redirect our paths.
- In times of uncertainty, we need to listen to the counsel of godly people.
- Sometimes a change of direction comes with a loss, not maybe donkeys, but it could be a loss of health, employment or bereavement.

Some of these points have been a particular challenge in our own circumstances, and we praise God for His leading personally, and in the life of the Mission in recent days.

Appointments

After much prayer and careful discussion, the Mission Council and Board have made the following appointments:

Mervyn Tomb will take up the position and role of General Director of the Faith Mission from 1 September 2025. Mervyn & Rachel will remain in Durrow at present but will relocate to Edinburgh around summer 2026.

Andrew McCullough will take up the appointment of Director for Ireland, commencing on 1 September 2025. The Irish Headquarters will remain at 62 Glenavy Road, Lisburn, and Andrew will fulfil his role from Ballymena, continuing as Superintendent of the North Irish District with Garry Tutty continuing as Superintendent of the Central Irish District.

Gordon Thomson has stepped down as Director for Scotland but will continue as Superintendent of the South Scottish District. In the absence of a Scottish Director, oversight will be provided on an interim basis by Mervyn Tomb as General Director. Replacements created by district vacancies will be considered at a later date.

Alisdair Maclean has been

appointed as Business Retail Operations Manager. He will provide oversight of the day-to-day business of all the bookshops and cafes in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Alisdair took up this role on 14 July 2025.

Opportunities

We look back at a summer of opportunity, where many children and young people have been confronted with the challenge of the gospel in residential camps, holiday clubs and other special events. Attendances at Gospel Missions and outreach events have been good, as rural communities are encouraged to live for God. Much literature has been distributed at various events, with specific themed material readily accepted. Do pray that either in sowing or reaping, God will continue to prosper the purposes of His Word. Conventions and weekends have taken place at Bandon, Edinburgh, Newton Stewart and the Irish Midlands.

14 October marks another new year for The Faith Mission. There are challenges across each of our ministry departments for which the Lord's clear guidance is needed as decisions are made. Thank you for your prayers. •

Mervyn Tomb,
General Director

A silhouette of a woman running, her hair blowing in the wind, against a city skyline at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the buildings and water. The woman is in profile, running towards the right. The city skyline is visible in the background, with several tall buildings. The water in the foreground reflects the light from the sun.

Run

NOT WALK

BY PAUL CROWE

A headmaster or school teacher may well shout the words, “walk, don’t run” if a student is running along the corridor. You may have heard these very words ringing in your ears when you were at school. Here in Proverbs 18:10 we read, *‘The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe’* (NKJV). Run, don’t walk.

The Sufficiency for the Saints

Matthew Henry wrote, “Here is God’s sufficiency for the saints: His name is a strong tower for them, in which they may take rest when they are weary and take sanctuary when they are pursued. The wealth laid up in this tower is enough to enrich them. The strength of this tower is enough to protect them.”

The name of the Lord stands for the Lord Himself. His name is the revelation of who He

is; its attributes making themselves known to man. The expression *“The name of the LORD”* does not speak about something belonging to the Lord, but who the Lord is in Himself.

The Sanctuary for the Saints

So, what are we to do when attacked by injustice and gossip? We are to run into the name of the Lord. The word run means “to rush”. Just as when someone has an urgent need of medical help they rush to the hospital, they don’t delay - so, when attacked by injustice and gossip we rush to the Lord himself. We are in urgent need of His help.

When we rush to the Lord with our urgent needs what do we take with us? Answer: we take the Word of God with us. That is why it is so important to give ourselves to the regular reading of the Word of God.

The Weary

Remember - don't walk, run to the Word of God. The Word of God has many promises that will encourage our hearts. The Lord Jesus Christ has promised to give us rest, *'Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'* (Matthew 11:28). The word 'rest' is the word that means 'to be stayed upon'. The hymn writer Frances Ridley Havergal wrote, "Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest; finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest".

Are you weary? Run/rush into the name of the Lord. Take the Word of God with you when you rush with your urgent need. The name of the Lord is a sanctuary for the weary.

The Wounded

The name of the Lord is also a sanctuary for the wounded. When we have been wounded by what others have said to us or about us, we need healing. In Proverbs 18:14 we read, *'The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness, but who can bear a broken [or wounded] spirit?'* It describes a man who has come to the end of himself. There are no mental, emotional or spiritual reserves to draw upon when the well is dry.

We ought to make the name of the Lord our sanctuary. When we take the Word of God with us and we run/rush to the Lord with our urgent need, we are assured in His word that the Lord is sufficient to meet our every need. In Philippians 4:19 Paul reminds us, *'And my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.'*

The Strength of the Lord

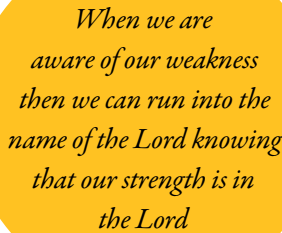
We not only see the sufficiency for the saints, and a sanctuary for the weary in this text of Scripture, but we also see the strength of the Lord. *'The name of the Lord is a strong tower.'* The Psalmist declares, *'For you have been a shelter for me, a strong tower from the enemy'* (Psalm 61:3). We can have confidence in the assurance that the Lord will be our strength. Whatever we are facing, whatever task lies at hand, we find that our strength is in the name of the Lord Himself. Paul writing to the Colossians said, *'...do all in the name of the Lord'* (Colossians 3:17). This means to

do all in the strength of the Lord, under the anointing of His Holy Spirit and acting as seeking His approval. When writing to the Philippians, he said, *'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'* (Philippians 4:13). When we are aware of our weakness then we can run into the name of the Lord knowing that our strength is in the Lord.

'The name of the Lord is a strong tower,' i.e. the Lord Himself in His manifested goodness and power is a strong tower (a tower of strength). Our security is in the name of the Lord. *'The righteous run to it and are safe.'* Derek Kidner writes, "Safe implies being 'safely above' the danger; a similar expression is used in Proverbs 29:25."

As children of God, we have security when falsely accused or betrayed. We do not need to vindicate ourselves. Don't just walk to the name of the Lord, but run and you will be safe in Him. •

Paul and Elizabeth work with The Faith Mission in the northeast of Scotland.



*When we are
aware of our weakness
then we can run into the
name of the Lord knowing
that our strength is in
the Lord*

BY IAIN JAMIESON



Spiritual Ambition

Are these two words at odds with each other? After all, 'selfish ambition' is a dangerous sin: *'Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves'* (Philippians 2:3 ESV). Seeking to promote yourself at the expense of others is inconsistent with Christian character. However, that attitude

can sadly be found within the professing church: '... Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first.' (3 John 1:9). If we are honest, that tendency to desire the admiration of others lies within each of our hearts. However, what would it look like to be godly in our ambitions? Is it possible to speak of 'spiritual ambition'? Let me suggest that it is.

As a teenager, a missionary

who had returned home from the field to Inverness, my home town, pointed out this verse to me: *'His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.'* (2 Peter 1:3). What he said to me has stayed with me. He showed me that this verse is both a huge comfort and a profound challenge.

It is a comfort because it assures me that if I truly desire to live a life of godliness then God has already provided everything I require. This promise applies to all believers in all places. In the western world we have almost limitless Bible study resources, but this verse makes the same guarantee to believers in those parts of our world with almost none. How can this be? The verse explains that this provision is found in God Himself: *'through the knowledge of him who called us.'*

However, looked at another way, this verse presents a deeply searching challenge. If we are not making spiritual progress, then it cannot be God's fault. He has given us, in the knowledge of Himself, everything we need to live a godly life. Therefore, if we are not growing in godliness then we cannot blame a lack of resources, or our churches or even our circumstances. The question we must ask our own hearts is: do I desire to live a godly life? Do I have spiritual ambition?

It is clear in the Scriptures that contentment is a spiritual virtue: *'godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But*

if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.' (1 Timothy 6:6-8). How essential it is to be satisfied with what the Lord has provided for us materially. On an even greater level, what a privilege to be content in Christ Himself, *'whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.'* (John 4:14). However, there is a form of contentment that is spiritually dangerous.

When someone is born again, there is often a period of joyful, enthusiastic growth. Suddenly there are new desires; to absorb and obey the Scriptures, spend time with other believers, sing His praise, and tell others about Him!

As maturity develops, this new life begins to take on the regular rhythms of spiritual discipline; daily devotions, church commitment, prayer life etc. However, there is the danger of the spiritual plateau. We can become content with our walk with the Lord. We are having our daily quiet time, turning up at the church meetings and doing dutifully those things that other Christians expect of us. Perhaps we even stop noticing that we are not making progress, content with where we are. If this is where we find ourselves, the question is; isn't there more than this?

The Lord Himself made this promise in the sermon on the mount: *'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.'* (Matthew 5:6). Am I hungry and thirsty for righteousness or am I content the way things are? If we are genuinely longing for godliness, this is another commitment from God that He will not withhold it from us. James reminds us of another wonderful principle: *'Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you'* (James 4:8). These verses supply us with the guarantee of heaven. If we desire godliness, righteousness and nearness then these desires will be fulfilled.

Do we have spiritual ambition? If we do, then we can praise the Lord for these promises. But what if the hunger has gone and we are on the plateau? Recognising this is the first step, and then we can be honest before God and plead with Him to reignite the fires of desire for Him. As we do that, these same promises assure us that He will answer and He will draw near. •

Iain and Rebekah live in Erskine, Renfrewshire and attend Albert Hall Evangelical Church in Renfrew. Iain is in full-time service for the Lord in itinerant preaching, open-air evangelism and writing tracts. He travels regularly to Eastern Europe to teach the Bible.

BY ANNE BROWN

The Lord Paid Attention

MALACHI 3:13-4:3

Malachi wasn't only the last book of the Old Testament, but he was the last of the prophets, probably ministering alongside or just after Nehemiah. The Jews had returned from Babylon under three different leaders over the previous 80 – 100 years and had rebuilt the temple and Jerusalem's walls. But there was no king and although there were priests, already things were slipping again spiritually. Were these the people whose parents sat *'by the rivers of Babylon, ...[and] wept when [they] remembered Zion'*? (Psalm 137:1 NKJV).

The Scoffing of the Shallow

If you read the whole book through, you would find that it's made up of a series of statements which God made to warn the Jews about their spiritual condition, which they hotly refute and then God proves the accuracy of His assessment of them. The final warning is, *'Your words have been harsh against Me...Yet you say, what have we spoken against You? You have said it is useless to serve God; what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance?' (3:13-14)*. The people had cooled off spiritually to such an extent that they were hoping to get something material from serving God. A

hardness had set in, and they began to believe that the wicked were better off for, 'they even tempt God and go free.' (3:15). It is easy to fall into that trap; godly Asaph almost did so, *'my feet had almost stumbled... for I was envious of the boastful, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked...They are not in trouble as other men... their eyes bulge with abundance...Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain...When I thought how to understand this, it was too painful for me – until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end'* (see Psalm 73:2-17).

The Fellowship of the Faithful

But not everyone had been serving God from a cold heart because there was another group, a group who *'feared the LORD'* and they were conversing together. This is so important that it is recorded just before the voice of God fell silent for 400 years! When did they do this? *'Then'* (verse 16). In the spiritually dry, barren days when there was a lot of unguarded conversation going on about the drudgery of serving God, the faithful were *'[meditating] on His name.'* (verse 16b). A person's name was connected to his character in Bible times. I wonder which of God's names they spent time meditating on? Perhaps they thought of

Jehovah Jireh, or Jehovah Shalom or Jehovah Nissi. Or maybe they remembered Psalm 91 and thought about the four names mentioned in verses 1-2 *'Most High... Almighty...LORD... God'*. Then again, they may have talked among themselves about His characteristics - His mercy, grace, holiness, patience and justice.

We don't know the exact content of their conversations, but that is how they kept their spiritual fires burning in the middle of apathy and indifference. We should emulate them. A. MacLaren wrote: "The more the truths by which we believe are contradicted, the more should we commune with fellow-believers. Attempts to rob us should make us hold our treasure the faster." Is there a lonely believer you could visit or phone to encourage them by spiritual conversation in difficult days? Luke noticed that when Paul was on the way to Rome as a prisoner, *'the brethren...came... to meet us...and when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage'* Acts 28:15 (NASB). Even the great missionary statesman needed encouragement! But these faithful fifth century B.C. saints were overheard.

The Lingering of the Lord

'The LORD gave attention and heard it' (verse 6 NASB). The Lord is attentive to our conversations; that's a sobering thought but also an uplifting one. The word translated *'gave attention'* is an animal word which means 'to prick up the ears.' The Lord is listening carefully, giving undivided attention to those who are revelling in the richness of His names. *'Heard'* is not useless repetition, rather it means 'to bend over so as not to miss a word', as you might do with a small child or an ill relative. How precious our times together should feel, when we think of the One who is listening so carefully. He's not only *listening* to but He's *logging* our conversations – not to help His memory but as a kind of memorial,

that they might be rewarded at some future date, see Esther 6:1. But also "it rests upon the much older idea, that the names and actions of the righteous are written in a book before God"(cf. Psalm 56:9; Daniel 7:10).¹

The Difference on the Day

There is a day ahead, God warned through Malachi, when *'you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked'* (3:18). The word *'again'* indicating that it was obvious to them previously. People only had to think back over their history – the exodus, David and Goliath etc. On that day which the Lord is preparing, those who fear the Lord and who have conversed with others about the name of the Lord will be His *'special treasure'*, (NKJV margin). But not only that, *'I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him'* (verse 17). God did not spare the angels who sinned, nor the wicked world of Noah's day (see 2 Peter 2:4-5), and most importantly, He did not spare His own Son, *'but delivered him up for us all'* (Romans 8:32), but He will spare us if we fear and serve Him! The promised Sun of Righteousness will come and the condition of our hearts will determine our future; "the sun rising will burn up stubble, where there is neither root nor life. But it will bring healing where there is life and where there is root"². *'You will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall'* (4:2 NASB). What a glorious prospect! Let us continue to meditate and deepen our knowledge of His name as we wait on Him to burst through the skies just as there was a faithful little group 400 years after Malachi, which included Zacharias and Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna, Joseph and Mary, ready to welcome the baby Jesus. •

Anne works with The Faith Mission in the West Irish District based in Omagh.

References:

¹ Keil & Delitzsch

² G. Campbell Morgan

A Spacious Place

PSALM 18:19

BY RICHARD MYERSCOUGH

Finally you can breathe, deeply and freely. The pressure is off, the squeeze is over. Perhaps circumstances have altered—the furniture has been moved around, so to speak, and you're no longer cramped and confined in the corner. Or maybe life is just the same but the worry-fest has had its lease terminated. Whatever the reason, whatever the motive cause, you find you're now in a different, more expansive and restful place. Just like David in Psalm 18:19 (NIV), *'He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me.'*

The spacious place

What a gift when God provides it. Room to breathe, space to think, freedom to move without constantly looking over your shoulder. The constriction that had become so familiar—almost like a second skin—has been peeled away, and you find yourself blinking in the bright, sudden light of a shadowless road. Swapping-out the metaphors, David says the LORD, *'reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters'* (Psalm 18:16). Such unfettered relief and respite is more than words can say.



“Wonderful as it is, spacious places present us with a choice. How will we inhabit them? How will we use our newfound freedom for the glory of God?”

But here's where wisdom is needed. Because wonderful as it is, spacious places present us with a choice. How will we inhabit them? How will we use our newfound freedom for the glory of God?

Our first instinct might be to luxuriate in the relief, stretched out like a cat in the sunshine, our minds uncoiling and then recomposing in the absence of pressure. And there's nothing wrong with that—there's something deeply necessary and perfectly valid about catching your breath after the compression of stress. God himself rested on the seventh day, delighting in what he had made. Sabbath is spacious by its very definition.

But we might be in danger of missing the deeper invitation the spacious place offers. Notice what David says: God brought him there not simply for comfort, but *'because he delighted in me.'* This is not just about relief, as necessary and as blessed as that is. It's about a relationship. It's about God's pleasure in His people and His desire to draw us closer to Himself. That delight is not affectation; it's fully genuine in its gladness.

Which means breathing again is only the beginning. The spacious place is where we also learn to pray again—not the desperately gasped prayers of crisis (albeit they have their place and beauty), but the deeper, more reflective prayers of communion. Prayers that emerge not from panic but from gratitude. Prayers that ask not just asking for survival but yearn to live in the light of God's goodness. The spacious place affords something the tight corners of difficulty rarely can: a more rounded, humbled trust. A contentedness that quiets both heart and mind. When pressed on every side, faith can become locked into reactivity—a series of emergency responses to immediate threats. But in the wide-open spaces

of God's grace, we can discover different layers of trust. Not the white-knuckle ride of just about holding on through apparently endless crises, but the settled, confident trust of those who have had fresh depths of the character of God opened to them, both through their trials and their deliverances. The discovery of the Father's tender compassion through the gentle, humble heart of the Son (Matthew 11:28-30).

David captures this beautifully when he writes, *'You provide a broad path for my feet, so that my ankles do not give way'* (Psalm 18:36). The spacious place is not just emotionally liberating—it's psychologically stabilising. In the cramped quarters of anxiety and pressure, we're constantly off-balance, always one misstep away from collapse, or so it seems. But God's spacious grace provides sure footing for weary souls, room to walk steadily without the fear of turning an ankle on the narrow, treacherous paths of worry and despair.

Perhaps this is where the spacious place begins to reveal its true purpose. Here, in the freedom from immediate pressure, we can learn to walk with God not only as rescuer but as Lord, the Good Shepherd who leads His sheep (John 10:4). Not just as the One who delivers from trouble, but as the One worthy of our whole-hearted allegiance.

And that leads to worship—not the grateful gasps of those pulled from raging seas, but the considered, costly worship of those who have seen God's faithfulness and are choosing to respond with the living sacrifice of their lives (Romans 12:1). The spacious place can become a sacred realm when we see it as an invitation to fresh consecration. •

Richard is the minister of Pontefract Congregational Church in West Yorkshire. You can subscribe for free to receive Richard's weekly update at www.thewaitingcountry.substack.com

BY JANI GOUDY



Ignite US TO PRAY

PART 1

Ignite us to pray! This is the desire is of my heart. The topic of prayer especially as it relates to evangelism, is one of my favourite things to talk about. I believe that God is raising up more and more men, women, young people and children with a passion and a zeal for prayer. What a privilege we have to pray and to share the gospel! What an incredible opportunity we have that our Almighty God invites us to partner with Him in this way.

Imagine if we, as God's people, got serious in this area of prayer. If we took time each day to meet with God in His Word and through prayer. If we allowed Him to speak to us through His

Word, and we purposefully leaned in to listen carefully, while being soft and sensitive to the Holy Spirit. He is our good Father, but He is also the God of the universe, and He deserves our full attention. It is important we would commit to making sure that our hearts are right with God and right with others through confession, repentance and thanksgiving. If we got honest and surrendered our hearts afresh to Him and asked Him to show us anything in our lives that might be grieving His Spirit, then be willing to make things right with Him and with anyone else we have been bitter or unforgiving towards. This is tough stuff, but it's important. Honesty is the beginning of

blessing when it comes to this area of prayer. So, let's get honest, really honest. Our God is faithful, and I am so thankful for His patience with me in this area. It's hard and it can be painful, but He promises to pour out His mercy and grace. He will help us and heal us as we daily surrender to Him and trust that He is working all things out.

Daily I need reminders of where I came from; I need to rehearse the gospel to my own heart. I need to remember what God has done for me and just allow myself to fall in love with Jesus all over again to keep that most important relationship fresh.

Daily I need to surrender anew and choose to, 'trust in the Lord with all (my) heart' as Proverbs 3:5-6 instructs us. It's humbling, it's powerful and it's freeing. Many times a day I am challenged with the question, "Will you trust God or will you lean on your own limited understanding?" Can I trust God to save the people I love so dearly? The answer to "Can I trust God?" is always YES. It has to be - He is GOD.

If you desire to have a heart for the lost, and if you want to be a channel of blessing to others, this is where it all starts. The Bible says it so clearly, 'If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land' (2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV). This is a perfect example of personal revival, which leads to corporate revival, which leads to evangelism. It all starts in the heart. We live out of the overflow of our hearts. You

will talk to others about what you love most. We are worshippers and, we proclaim what we worship.

We need to seek daily to be Spirit-filled people of God, walking according to His ways while trusting in Christ our Saviour and living for God's glory, not our own. Again, we can pray for grace, for a hunger and thirst to know God more through His Word. It is not natural to trust someone we do not know well, nor obey if we do not know what is being asked of us. We need to spend time in prayer and in His Word to get to know our God. If we are not taking the time to spend time in prayer and in His Word, we will not get to know Him

Daily I need reminders of where I came from; I need to rehearse the gospel to my own heart. I need to remember what God has done for me and just allow myself to fall in love with Jesus all over again.

So, let's make it our goal to get to know God deeper and to write His promises on our hearts. Let's become men, women, and children of the Word, seeking to be filled with His Holy Spirit, taking the time to study His Word and getting to know everything that we can about Him through His Word. It is our firm foundation. And then we can effectively pray God's Word over our husbands and wives, our children, our churches and our communities. When we are united in prayer for the glory of God, the kingdom of God and the will of God - there is power. God's power. •

(continued in the next edition)

Jani is married to Jeff, and they have six children. They have been in Christian ministry for 32 years and now serve with The Faith Mission in Canada. Jani enjoys studying and sharing God's Word in the ministry areas of discipleship, evangelism, and prayer.

LOST & FOUND

A CHANGED LIFE



Testimony by Maureen Hyslop

I was born to a Catholic mother, who had married a non-Catholic, who changed his religion in order to fulfil the demand of the Catholic Church so that the marriage could take place. However, my father did not practise any religion at all after the marriage, but my mother faithfully brought us up in the religion she knew and followed.


My older brother had special needs and as the years went by, I realised that my mother had to devote a lot of her energies into helping him. He had Asperger's syndrome, so I was very often left to just get on with living and became a lonely child.

My home was very dysfunctional, as my father was an addictive gambler, and gambled away all his wages, so we were very poor. My mother had to go out to work simply to feed and clothe us. My father was also very abusive to all of us, and very violent towards my mother.

At the age of 16 I lost faith in the Church and went out into the world without God. As a result, I became involved with a young man whom I married at a young age to escape the life I had at home and mainly my father, but soon realised that like my mother before me, I was trapped in an abusive marriage. I had

two beautiful daughters but was desperately unhappy. When my daughters were adolescents, the three of us were invited to a local mission, which was taking place in Margate in Kent where we were living at the time. I heard the gospel, how Christ died for my sins and when I heard this I thought, in my pride, "I know all this! Did I not learn all this in school as a child?" But as the preacher spoke on, the Spirit of God convicted me of sin, and I became wretched, realising how lost I really was. I was at my very lowest and could not see a way forward for my life. An altar call was made, at which time both my daughters and I together responded, and we were all saved together.

Because we had no church background we were invited to an Assemblies of God church, where we became members, and some months later we were baptised. We became part of the Christian community, but the abuse within my marriage continued and became so oppressive I did not know which way to turn. My faith was weakened by this, and I was barely holding on to God, overcome with the problems in my life. In this environment, one year later, my husband left me and went back to the small town in the North of England where we had grown up. It was a relief, at last the abuse was over. My marriage ended in divorce after 17 years.



*"I have a forgiving, faithful Father in Heaven,
who loves me, is always with me
and is compassionate and merciful?"*

My church did try to reconcile us, but there was no way back. Later I met my second husband at church. He was a godly, wise man. He became my rock and helped me, over the 33 years we were together, to recover from the damage of my childhood and my first marriage. He taught me, through the Word of God, that I have a forgiving, faithful Father in Heaven, who loves me, is always with me and is compassionate and merciful. I learned through studying the Bible that my past was gone, that I was a new creation in Christ and that I had been given a new life, a chance by God to change, to become the person He wanted me to be, and to serve Him for the rest of my life.

My dear husband went home to Heaven seven years ago, but the example he showed me, by his life, as a servant of Christ will remain with me for ever. I believe that God sent him to me, as an instrument to draw me into a right relationship with Him and to show me His

love through another human being. I am still walking with Jesus and daily discover His love afresh, and His faithfulness, and can say with all my heart that Ephesians 2: 8-10 is for me the story of my salvation, *'For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them'* (ESV).

When I realised that I had nothing at all that I could bring to God except my weakness, failure and sin, and my desperate need of Him, I came, and He, in His great mercy took me up and carried me. So, with John Newton I can sing:

*Through many dangers,
toils and snares we have already come...
We've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first begun. •*

GOOD NEWS & BAD NEWS



My Story by Hannah Butt

When we make a visit to the doctors, no one wants to hear “I have good news and bad news.”

For a few months I had been back and forward to my GP, the Practice Nurse and then to the Specialists. I had undergone numerous blood tests and various scans. The good news was, it was found early, and the bad news, it was indeed cancer.


In September 2023 I was diagnosed with first stage ovarian cancer. Within 6 weeks, I was to have invasive abdominal surgery, which would mean a lengthy stay in hospital and a long recovery and no assurance of what the outcome would be. Our comfortable world was thrown into turmoil. My mind was filled with whys and what ifs. Why would God allow this to happen to me?

In John 16:33 Jesus said, *‘I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.’* The question should really have been ‘why not me?’ I have a hope, something to cling to. I have an assurance that this world is not my home. As a Christian, God has never promised me an easy life. As Christians we will face the same trials as everyone else. The difference is that we do

not face them alone as we have a Heavenly Father who cares for us and loves us and will not give us more than we can deal with. When we as a family began to walk this path, we felt the hope and peace that God had me in His hand and the outcome was always in His control. No matter how much I worried about what was going to happen, it was not going to change God’s plan. We truly felt God’s peace. I also had a whole army behind me upholding me and my family in prayer.

On the morning of my surgery, my husband, Daniel, was not permitted to stay with me; I was shown into a little cubicle and told to wait until they came to get me. This should have been a very lonely and potentially scary time. I never felt alone or scared. I sang praises to God while I waited and had the peace that He knew the outcome. I trusted and prayed that God would guide the surgeon’s hand and I would have peace and courage to deal with any outcome. I don’t recall much about that time waiting. As I look back, I don’t remember a time of anxiety but a time of peace. I was surrounded in prayer and the love of a perfect Heavenly Father.

I spent ten days in the hospital after my surgery still not really knowing what the outcome was, but never anxious about the outcome either.



“No matter how much I worried about what was going to happen, it was not going to change God’s plan. We truly felt God’s peace.”

God had promised that He has overcome the world, I have no need to fear. On the morning of discharge the surgeon came to my bedside and her words were, “Someone is watching out for you.” The surgery was a success, there were no signs of cancer anywhere else in my abdomen, they had managed to remove everything successfully and it looked like I would need no further treatment. I would have to have some more blood tests to make sure that I was indeed all clear but from a surgeon’s standpoint it was a success.

I do indeed have Someone watching over me, my life is mapped out for me. Even if the outcome was not deemed a worldly success, it was never going to be a failure for God. He has our lives mapped out in His hand and He knows the end from the beginning and gives us

the strength to deal with circumstances that are out of our control. He has indeed overcome the world, and our time here is just temporary, we are sojourners on our way to our heavenly home where there will be no more sickness, no more tears and we will all be given a new, perfect body.

As I look back on this path I travelled, the question of ‘why me?’ still resonates. Why not me? After all I was able to face this challenge with a hope and a purpose rather than with fear and despair. If I did not have Christ beside me how lonely and hopeless a journey this would have been. My Saviour sustained me and gave me peace, for that I am forever grateful. *‘In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world’* (John 16:33). To me this means no more fear and a life filled with hope. •

BEING A CHRISTIAN IN THE WORKPLACE:



Community Nursing

Over the years, our healthcare system has been evolving and expanding. Treatments that once could only be administered in acute settings are now increasingly being managed in community environments. Even in the short time I have worked in community nursing, I have seen a rise in the complexity of cases handled outside the hospital. Advances in medicine mean people are living longer. However, the loss of close-knit communities and the geographic spread of families often leave older individuals isolated in their homes, with only the television usually playing the news for company.

As a Christian, it's in this environment that I see the effects of the Fall. The aging and decaying process of the body reminds us that, while medical advancements may prolong life, the inevitable fact remains, we all must face the final battle — death. As an assistant practitioner, I am sometimes the only person a patient sees in a day, and they often crave conversation. These are the moments when trust and rapport are built, especially with patients I visit regularly.

Although it's not encouraged to openly share our faith with patients or their families, opportunities often arise — sometimes from

simple questions like, “What did you do over the weekend?” Living out my faith in the workplace isn’t always easy, and I often fall short in showing Christ in my daily life. A verse that continually encourages me is Colossians 3:17, *‘And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him’* (ESV). This reminds me that I do not serve in my own strength but in God’s grace and strength, renewed each day.

In recent years, there has been an increase in palliative care within the community, as more people prefer to remain at home. This can be a deeply challenging time for family members, who often take on the burden of caregiving. As community nurses, we have the privilege of walking alongside patients and their families during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

Sometimes, patients or their loved ones struggle to accept a terminal diagnosis. In these moments, the fear of death becomes very real. Recently, we have supported several younger palliative patients, many with young families. These situations can be particularly emotional, as patients express sorrow over the milestones they will miss — children going to university, future weddings or simply being present as their children grow. Often, they worry more about those they will leave behind than about themselves.

Having personally experienced the impact of a terminal palliative diagnosis within my own family, I deeply understand these fears. Watching a loved one’s body gradually

deteriorate is one of life’s most painful experiences. A verse that brought me comfort during that time was Psalm 61:2–3, *‘From the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I, for you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy.’*

That personal experience has given me greater empathy and compassion in my role. In community nursing, we encounter death regularly. While it never becomes easy, I’ve grown more aware that when the soul departs, what remains is merely a shell. It’s a clear reminder that this earth is not our final home and that our time here is short.

As Paul says in Philippians 3:20–21, *‘But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body’* (NIV). This is the hope we can share with those God places in our path — whether in our personal lives, among our colleagues, or with the patients we serve. Even when we cannot publicly share our faith, we have the privilege of bringing these individuals before God in prayer.

For me despite its many challenges, being an assistant practitioner in the community is an honour. I am grateful for the opportunity to share in the lives of the patients I care for, and I am blessed with a wonderful team to work alongside. Though I often fail to reflect Christ as I should, I pray that He will continue to use me as a vessel, sanctifying me daily and allowing me to reflect His love to others. •

While it never becomes easy, I’ve grown more aware that when the soul departs, what remains is merely a shell. It’s a clear reminder that this earth is not our final home and that our time here is short.

DEBS & REUBEN HUTCHINSON

Debs and Reuben are our new workers in South East England serving with Leighton Road Evangelical Church.



FM: *Where are you both from and what was your occupation before coming to Bible College?*

Debs: I grew up in Norwich, Norfolk and worked there as a Room Manager in a private nursery for 0–5 year-olds before leaving this line of work to go to Bible College and pursue ministry.

Reuben: I grew up in the Lancashire countryside, studied gamekeeping and then worked as a builder / labourer until coming to Bible College. We got married in Lancashire and have many happy memories there - we consider it home.

FM: *Tell us a little bit about your background and how you became a Christian?*

Reuben: We both have fairly different upbringings and backgrounds to each other, but God has been so, so kind to both of us. I grew up

surrounded by rolling hills, woodland and farmland. My childhood was spent exploring nature and hunting with my dad and brothers, along with many other outdoor adventures with the family. Both my parents are loving, devoted Christians who took me and my brothers to church, as well as sharing and living out the gospel in their daily lives. But it was when I heard an evangelistic challenge by Ray Comfort that I realised I needed to have a relationship with the holy God restored. It became clear that this was a personal thing and only through what Jesus had done for me on the cross. It was then that the wonder of the gospel came alive.

Debs: I grew up knowing the gospel and believing in God, but to apply this to my life in a very real way meant surrender and vulnerability. For me, this was a very

uncomfortable prospect. It was easier just to ignore God and push Him and all my problems and pain away until I couldn't ignore God any longer. One weekend at a church film night on the universe and its scale, I realised for the first time, just how BIG and holy God was and how small and sinful I was in comparison. I could see that this was a huge problem.



Following a Sunday sermon on 'being shipwrecked if you are not a believer', I began my journey of surrender, and Jesus became my Saviour and King. My story is one of God breaking through into a lost and hurting girl's heart, and over time, being totally transformed.

FM: Tell us a bit about the ministry you are involved with The Faith Mission in Suffolk?

Reuben & Debs: We work alongside James and Katie Brown in a church revitalisation project at Leighton Road Evangelical Church in Ipswich. This church is located on the Gainsborough Estate and the needs are very high and often heartbreaking. Week to week we are involved in community drop-ins, a mums and tots group called Little Stars and a children's club called B4T Club. Reuben and James share most of the preaching from Sunday to Sunday, with Debs being involved in the children's work and aiming to come alongside the women of the church and community too.

We are also part of the wider Faith Mission Team in the Southeast of England, helping Stephen and Cynthia Walker at the Camp and Conference Centre in Stowmarket with

summer camps, soccer schools and other events.

FM: What have you both learnt since working in ministry?

Reuben & Debs: For both of us, the concept of 'ministry' is forever evolving. It's very easy to see ministry as what we do from nine to five or on a Sunday, and then the rest of the time is 'life'. But something we have learnt is that our lives are our ministry. Our Christian character, our marriage, our home, our family relationships, our finances, our rest, our conversations and interactions are all ministry long before we set foot into the church or onto the street to evangelise. Our ministry in The Faith Mission is only as good as our relationship with God is and that requires every part of who we are. The words of R.M. McCheyne are a constant challenge to us: "My people's greatest need is my own personal holiness."

FM: How can we best pray for the work in your area and for you as a couple?

Reuben & Debs: We would love for you to pray that Leighton Road Evangelical Church would thrive spiritually. That its congregation would have a hunger for God's Word

and an attitude of constant growth, running their races well.

We would also appreciate prayer for the Gainsborough Estate where the church is located. We come into contact with families week by week with huge physical needs, but more than that, they need to be rescued by Jesus. How amazing would it be for rows and rows of houses in this community to be saved one by one, because of the influence of this little church?!

We long for our lives to minister Jesus to people and to do that we desperately need God's help, so please pray for us spiritually too, that our lives and our ministry would ultimately bring God glory! Thank you so much for all your love, prayers, and support. •



STUDENT PLACEMENTS

Jonathan & Yuliia Gould

Student Placement in Suffolk and Devon



The following week was Soccer Camp. It was such a joy to see around 60 kids coming every day to play football and hear the gospel. The camp was run by Sports Reach and held at The Faith Mission Centre, Stowmarket. At the end of the week there was a barbecue for the kids and their families, where the gospel was shared. Despite a lot of rain, the children really enjoyed their time. Free New Testaments were handed out at the end of the week, and quite a few people accepted them. One child gave a New Testament to his neighbour, who has started reading it and is now considering becoming

We were on placement from 19 May until 1 July. Just a week before this, on 10 May, we got married!

What a great way to start married life—serving the Lord together. During our first week, we were helping at Leighton Road Evangelical Church, alongside former Bible College students Reuben and Debs Hutchinson and supported by Faith Mission members, James and Katie Brown. There were two family fun days with bouncy castles and snacks, and around 100 people came through the church gates!

We were delighted that a few Muslim families brought their children along. Jonathan preached from God's Word on Sunday, and Yuliia led the kids' club.





a Christian! Praise be to God for all His goodness!

For the second part of our placement, along with another student, Matthew Williamson, we joined Nigel and Ruth Wilson in Devon for two weeks. This involved door-to-door outreach in Paignton, followed by street evangelism in Tavistock and Okehampton. We joined an open-air in Newton Abbot, where conversations were held with a variety of people including a young couple struggling in their faith, a man recovering from a serious spinal injury and a woman

who had attended church all her life but admitted to never understanding the gospel until now. Throughout that week, we distributed New Testaments, gospel tracts, and engaged with people from all backgrounds—Muslims, Agnostics, Mormons, and even a Spiritualist. Yuliia had the opportunity to share the gospel with two young girls, while Jonathan and Matthew spoke with two Mormon missionaries and a third Mormon man. While we were here, we witnessed a spiritually dark area in real need of the gospel. A lot of people are from broken

families but yet are hardened to the Good News.

We also had the opportunity to take part in Sunday services where Yuliia gave her testimony of how God has worked in her life; Matthew brought a gospel message and Jonathan testified of God's saving grace. Please pray for all who heard the message and that the Lord will work in all those people's hearts and give praise to the Lord for everything! •



Rachel Combe, Ryan Malone, Sarah-Jane Bulbeck

From Cumbria to the Outer Hebrides



The life story event was held in Cowan Bridge and had an average of about 60 people each evening with a testimony from different people from all backgrounds. The two weeks in Cumbria taught us how much work goes on behind the scenes of a tent mission and how street café presents a lot of great opportunities to pray for local people, those who are believers and for those who do not yet believe.

Our first stop for placement was in Cumbria with full time Faith Mission member, Wesley Brewer. We had opportunities to share in testimony, speak about our time at Bible College and along with students from Capernwray Bible College, we set up a street café outreach in Kendal. That gave a focal point from which we could share the gospel through free literature and teas and coffees.

We then learned what happens in the lead up to a tent mission which offers opportunity for door-to-door work, inviting local people to come to the life story event. As temperatures soared in the villages of Ingleton and Kirkby Lonsdale, we found the door-to-door work slightly more challenging, but most people would answer and take a leaflet and sometimes stopped to share their views which lead to some interesting conversations. There was encouragement from the door-to-door work, as a lady had decided to come along who attends Quaker meetings and found the tent mission very open and different as Wesley simply put forward the love of God in the gospel which really resonated with her.

After our time in Cumbria, we set off to the Isle of Lewis, in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland, with full time Faith Mission member, Jeff Townend, and retired member, Donnie MacLeod, for another tent mission. None of us had been there before and didn't know what to expect, but the island was





beautiful, and we were blown away by the hospitality of the Christians there. After setting up the tent, we started out with door-to-door work. Throughout the first week we all had an opportunity to share our testimony in the evening meetings followed by someone bringing a word from the Bible.

It was a blessing to be able to run an after-school club in the tent through the second week of the mission. We had around 20 children coming along each day, who got

involved and were receptive to the gospel. Towards the end of the second week, we had an opportunity to go on Isle FM to talk about the tent mission, bring encouragement to local Christians with a devotion and to share our testimonies. Many people's hearts were stirred through the preaching, and we praise God for that.

It was a great opportunity to see God working in people's

lives from down in Cumbria up to the Isle of Lewis. We found it to be hard work physically to set up and take down two tents in five weeks. So, from placement we learned that we should always call upon the Lord and seek Him for strength. Please pray that the seed sown during these two tent missions will bear much fruit bringing encouragement to the local believers. ●



Matthew Williamson, Dani Scott, Rebecca Adams and Elisa Chan

Our Placement with the Gospel Truck in Northern Ireland

We spent the first three weeks of our placement with full-time Faith Mission members Andrew and Carolyn Maybin. The weeks were filled with different types of outreach and ministry opportunities, dotted around Northern Ireland in different areas. The first week we helped with the Gospel Truck ministry at the Balmoral Show. This is a large agricultural show which takes place near Lisburn, attended by many from all over the UK and Ireland. The sight of this very large truck brought many people to our stand, wanting to know more about the truck and its purpose. This led to many hearing the gospel and Matthew had a very

fruitful conversation with one man who spotted the truck. We praise God for the many gospel conversations that were had and the huge amount of Christian literature that was taken.

The second week was spent doing door-to-door, setting up the tent, and helping out with the Tullymore anniversary weekend. There were many unsaved who came along to the weekend event and several local Christians were very encouraged to see some of their non-Christian neighbours come along and hear the gospel.

Finally, we were involved in helping with a teaching week alongside Magheramason Presbyterian Church in

Co. Londonderry, where we helped with door-to-door visitation, school assemblies, prayer meetings and sharing testimonies. Sharing the gospel in school assemblies was such an amazing opportunity, since this would be restricted in many countries around the world. Most Sundays Matthew was preaching, while Dani, Elisa, and Rebecca were serving in the kids' ministries. It was a busy three weeks and sometimes personally challenging, but it was encouraging to have had many conversations with people who need the Saviour as well as being able to encourage Christians. God gave us the help and strength we needed to learn many things and enjoy serving Him. •



Rebecca Adams,
Dani Scott, Elisa Chan
From Northern Ireland to Kent



We left Northern Ireland and made our way to Kent in our fourth week of placement.

We had such an encouraging time alongside Arabella Paul, who is a full-time member of The Faith Mission in Kent. She took us under her wing and showed us the ropes of children's work. During our time with her we helped with teaching the New Testament to primary school pupils using the Bible Explorer programme. Each of us took a New Testament story, bringing it to life with many props and excitement helping the children to

grasp the truth of God's Word. The children were very engaged and when we came to talk about Jesus' death and resurrection, they were left with a challenge to consider Jesus' resurrection.

We also helped with a Sunday church service along with a Sunday School in Meopham Green.

Although it was mainly children's work during these two weeks, we had opportunity to do things for the first time and be involved in

parts of ministry that were new to us but a delight. Dani, who is a second year student, observed during the student placements, how helpful it was to see different types of ministry, which can give a sense as to where your own gifting may lie, and get some direction for where God may be calling you.

All in all, it was such a privilege to serve the Lord in these ways, even though many a time we felt stretched. Yet, particularly at those times, when we felt weak and inadequate, we knew the Lord's strength, enabling, and peace. We thank God for His help in guiding and leading us where He wants us to be. Praise God! ●





EDINBURGH CONVENTION 2025

The first week of the Scottish summer holidays began with sunshine and celebration at the Edinburgh Convention. Later in the week rain showers and showers of blessing descended as hearts were touched, encouraged and challenged. Deep teaching from the Word was brought by Robert Murdock, Raymond Moore and Jonathan Currie. There was something for everyone, and a fun faith-filled holiday was enjoyed by all from the children in creche and Kidszone to the teens and young adults in Invigorate and Rejuvenate. Join us next year in Scotland's capital from 28 June - 3 July 2026 for blessing and challenge. •



Messages available on
YouTube @TheFaithMission.





Killyfaddy Prayer Union Centenary

On 25th February, a large congregation gathered in 'The Courthouse' in Clogher, Tyrone, to celebrate the centenary of Killyfaddy Prayer Union. Former member and former Pilgrim, Rev. Robert Orr, opened the meeting in prayer and current representative, Johnny Mitchell, gave an inspiring report of God's moving in the area one hundred years ago and the impact that has made on succeeding generations!

On 30 November 1924, Pilgrims Eberstein and Bisset commenced a mission in the newly constructed Killyfaddy Orange Hall. Over the next six weeks many people professed personal faith in Jesus Christ. A prayer meeting was held on Christmas Day and four days later, nine people waited behind to seek God! When the mission closed, a Prayer Union was formed on 22 January and seventy-five people became members. Misses M. and C. Irwin were the first representatives, and these were followed by David Robb and then by his nephew, James Bell. The Prayer Union later met in the Bells' home and now meets monthly on the third Tuesday, in John and Wendy Smith's home.

Lorna Wilkinson, a former Prayer Union member and former Pilgrim, related how

her mother trusted in Christ through Mr Eberstein's ministry, and later she herself had a fresh encounter with God through a series of Christians' meetings conducted by Pilgrims Ann Smith and Lynn Riley. She described the Prayer Union as 'a building block' in her Christian life and said those praying people followed her with interest over the years. John Smith shared of his conversion to Christ in 1973 and how the Prayer Union members at that time were a great encouragement to him as a young Christian. Trevor Matthews, great-nephew of David Robb in whose home Pilgrims Eberstein and Bisset stayed during the Killyfaddy Mission, related from Mr Eberstein's diary, that three people were converted on Christmas Day 1924! It was also interesting to learn that Mr Eberstein himself was only five years converted when he was involved in this great move of the Holy Spirit.

Andrew and Rodney Condy sang two appropriate pieces, and Trevor then preached a stirring message from Ezekiel 37 on the valley of dry bones. Garry Tutty closed the meeting in prayer and local ladies served a delicious supper, allowing people from near and far to further reflect on the 'great things' the Lord had done for them and their families over the century!•



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OPEN DAYS

2025–26

If you're thinking about full-time Christian service, or want to go deeper into God's word, then we'd love to invite you to an Open Day at the Faith Mission Bible College.

Our Open Days give you the opportunity to explore if studying with us is right for you.

Experience sample lectures and community life, take a tour of the college, and find out more about our programmes.

Anyone considering studying with us, full-time or part-time, is welcome to attend.



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