



## Seek Him Afresh

Hello everyone,

I hope that you have all enjoyed some refreshment over Easter and are now enjoying some lovely April spring weather! I'm writing this in faith (and hope!), as at the moment the snow around us has only just melted and Easter Sunday approaches. I was reading through the apostle John's account of the resurrection and was reminded again of the interesting conversation that Jesus had with Mary Magdalen after he was raised to life again and how our faith is very much based on this story and other testimonies of the Risen Lord. These give us real evidence that prompts a decision to step out in faith.

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). 17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" (John 20: 16-17).

I love reading about this encounter and how Mary recognises Jesus when he calls her name. What a privilege to be the first to see the Risen Christ. She worships him and clings to him. But Jesus says, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father". Mary wanted Jesus to stay with her

so that she could savour that moment of revelation that He was alive. But Jesus was on a journey – to appear to his disciples and then ascend to the Father – in order that the Holy Spirit might be poured out, upon each one of us. This was (and is) a fresh way of God working with His people and involving us in His mission to build and extend his kingdom. If Jesus had let Mary hold onto him and keep him by the tomb, then Pentecost would not have happened.

It leads me to the question, am I remaining current with God, prepared to go where he goes? Or am I like Mary clinging to Jesus when actually he has moved on and wants me to follow him. Are you current with God? – or are you stuck in a past view of Him, or a past time where you thought you understood him; you had everything sorted, maybe even had him in a box of your own making! Yes, God is unchanging; "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, and today and forever (Hebrews 13: 8), but sometimes our view of Him has to be adjusted; we need to grow in our faith; circumstances change and we have to seek Him afresh for each new season.

Ask God if you are remaining current with Him? Where is He leading you next? What greater depth of understanding of God's nature, character and purposes is waiting to be explored?

Love to you all, and happy exploring!

Jonathan

### Scottish Heroes of the Faith: Robert Bruce of Kinnaird (Part 3)

When young Robert Bruce, aged only 33 years old, became minister of Great St Giles Kirk in Scotland's capital city, the young King James VI, aged only 21 years old, was delighted. After all, few monarchs in Europe had a chaplain who was of royal blood. The General Assembly realised that James would be inclined to listen to such a prestigious minister, and so as often as a small committee was commissioned to take some request from the Kirk to the court, invariably Master Robert Bruce would be a leading member of the delegation.

The king honoured his new minister with an annual income from the abbacy of Arbroath Abbey so that Robert's costly decision to enter the ministry which had caused his Catholic mother to seize his heritage from the Kinnaird Estate, was more than compensated for in financial terms.

However, it wasn't long before Bruce and the king clashed. There were many ways in which the courageous minister began to irritate, even to the extent of infuriating, this young man whose only fault was his righteous fear of God.

King James VI aim was to reduce the position of the Scottish Church to a mere department of State. Probably, he wanted to control the Kirk in the way Henry VIII had controlled the Church of England. James had published in 1596 his ideas in 'True Law' setting out his views that the King's words were equivalent to God's word.

The mysterious murder of the Earl of Gowrie in 1600 caused great consternation throughout Scotland. Gowrie, a thoughtful and scholarly young man who had just recently returned from a visit to Geneva, the centre of the Reformation, was seen by many as a future leader with the Kirk at that time. His family had made large loans of money to the king. James had been present during this murder and insisted that every minister in Scotland should declare from the pulpit the next Sunday that the King was innocent of Gowrie's death. Bruce, who knew the young earl well, was far from convinced of James' innocence and so refused to make the proclamation James had demanded in the St Giles pulpit. Consequently he was seriously harassed by James. He had to flee south of the border to avoid assassination.

(To be continued.)

D Searle

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**ST. ANDREW'S ARBROATH**  
**Member Records - March 2024**

**Baptisms** - Layla Baker

**Weddings** - None

**Funerals** - None

Jonathan and Ian, our pastoral assistant, conducted other funerals though none were of members of our congregation. Nonetheless, we remember the bereaved families in our prayers.

**IMPORTANT DATE**

**PROVISIONAL MAY EDITION**

Word Processed files as attachments,  
 should be sent directly to the Editor by

**Thursday 25th April**

If you do not have my email,  
 phone me on 01241 875235

## Wednesday Café

Goodness, doesn't time fly, another month gone and another Café enjoyed. We had a Spring theme to our crafting this month and as you'll see from our photos, the crafters were very busy and managed to do two different crafts. The putters were also enjoying themselves with some friendly competition. As usual, there was lovely home baking to go with the teas and coffees on arrival and again when everyone met up again for the Bingo before home time.

We'd like to give a big thank you to everyone who showed their support by coming to our Soup lunch a couple of weeks ago and to everyone for their kind donations. It was a lot of work but well worth it as, thanks to all you kind people, we raised £388, which will go a long way in helping the ongoing work of the Café.



## Dalitso Project

Hi everyone,

We had great support at the Spring Fair in March and we thank all who came along on the day or bought cakes after the service on Sunday. Our next fundraiser is after the church service on **19th May** so we do hope to see you then too.

Though our crops continue to grow, and we are thankful for all the prayers asked for last month, the situation overall is bleak with the current rate of maize increasing and the poor value of the Kwacha in monetary terms. The Malawian Government issued a statement at the weekend declaring a State of Disaster in 23 of the 28 states. Close to 2 million farming households are affected, which represents a staggering 44% of the national crop area. We will be looking at ways to fund-raise to enable us to support not only our centres, but those in the community, by buying extra bags of maize. Look out for details

in the coming newsletters and Facebook.

The autumn trip will go ahead in October and tickets are already purchased for the 5 in the team. We are trying to be ahead of things better this year and so if you can start buying your sponsor child dress/blouse/shirt now (shops are full of summer items right now), the small packet of sweets (16g) and a sheet of stickers. (You'll find them ranging from 45p-99p in Home Bargains.) Please get these gifts in by the end of June. Our weight will be restricted because we have less travelers, but stickers will be fun no matter the age.

Details for Christmas will be sent in a few months – can't believe I am mentioning this in March!!!

If you have a query about your parcel, just get in touch with me or Charis on 07877 256 236 or any committee member, or if there is anything you want to ask about Dalitso.

Doris