

HOPE



Auchinleck
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Serving Christ, Serving the Community

A Tree of Love

Despite the many difficulties this last year has brought, one thing that I have enjoyed is finding lots of new, local, countryside walks. Often, in pre-lockdown days, we would all have piled into the car and driven off to find some lovely walk or scenic spot to sit there and enjoy the beauty of creation. When in reality, we have similar places on our doorstep.

One particular walk, that I have recently discovered, is in the Auchinleck Estate and follows a beautiful path along the side of the river Lugar. At one point, a huge tree has snapped in half, and fallen across the path. Having climbed over the trunk and branches, I looked back, and to my surprise, there in the middle of the trunk, at the point where the tree had broken in half, was **the shape of a huge love heart**.

As I looked at this love heart, I was reminded of another tree, **where we see the greatest demonstration of love that has ever been seen** – the tree at Calvary, which Jesus died. He did not die on that tree, simply because men wanted him dead, but **He willingly gave up His life** out of love.

“The Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20.

In the garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin entered into the human race and therefore into the heart of every man and woman. Sin condemns us all to a life far from God, and to a life which He never intended for us. God is holy, and while we are sinners, He cannot have the relationship with us that He desires, and that we need. The Bible says that **“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son,”**. God loved us all so much, that He made a way where we could once again have a personal relationship with Him. **He gave the most precious thing that He had**, His Son, Jesus, in order to provide this way. Jesus took the punishment for all of man’s sin, including yours and mine, on the cross at Calvary. **“This is real love- not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.”** 1 John 4:10

All that God asks is, that we **accept that Jesus died on that tree for us**, acknowledge it was our sin that he bore the punishment for, and believe that God raised him from the dead three days later, in order that we might have a new life, united with God. **“If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.”** 1 John 1:9

Easter is just past, and spring is very much in the air. We are constantly reminded of new life as it appears around us. Whether, by celebrating at Easter, the fact that Jesus rose again from the dead, or from the green buds appearing in

the trees or the fresh shoots that have risen up from the ground, **it’s all a reminder that God wants to offer new life to all**. God loves each of us so much, that His Son, Jesus, **laid down His life on that tree of love**. He provided a way back to God, where anyone that truly receives the gift that His sacrifice provides, will have a new life like they have never known before.

As I think about the tree, with the heart shape, I am reminded that it wasn’t the nails that held Jesus to the cross, but love – love for me and love for you.

How deep the Father’s love for us,
How vast beyond all measure,
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss –
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders;
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life –
I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything,
No gifts, no power, no wisdom;
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer;
But this I know with all my heart –
His wounds have paid my ransom.

Stuart Townsend



PERSONAL TESTIMONY BILLY FULTON

Hello, and thanks for taking the time to read my story. I was born in Ayr, but brought up in the village of Drongan. At an early age I was sent along to a **Sunday school at Schaw Kirk**, which was in full view of our house. The Sunday school was well attended with huge classes. **Some of those Bible stories, which I learned there, remained with me for years** until I left school and followed the well-worn path of my pals. The Bible puts it this way, "you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you by your forefathers".



Billy Fulton

The one thing I am thankful for is/was **my total belief that there was a creator God in heaven**. I used to hate it when pals mocked Christians, and I got into an argument with a pal which almost came to blows, but for others holding us back it would have. However, as I got older, God played no part in my life. **Music was my passion** and with that came smoking "weed", drinking, and parties. In my 20's I ran a mobile disco and gained a resident Saturday night spot in a Glasgow hotel. It was physically exhausting, running from 10.00 at night until 2.00 in the morning. I did this as well as my day job.

What followed was a series of embarrassing events when I came face to face with Christians. **God was speaking to me, but I wasn't listening**. I remember working in Ochiltree when a young man stopped to give me a gospel leaflet. He was from the Baptist church in Cumnock. When he spoke about the Lord Jesus dying on the cross for sinners, **I felt so uncomfortable** and just wanted him to go away. Later I did some temporary work in Auchinleck and when the work came to an end, **I prayed to the God I did not know** - asking for help in relation to employment! After a few weeks I got a job next to a Christian man who told me of Jesus. **Wow, by this time I wanted to hear more**. He gave me a Bible and for a period of around two years I read it secretly - hiding it under a cushion if a family member came in.

I knew I was a sinner by the lifestyle I was leading, but I read of God's love in sending His Son to die on the cross for sinners.

I was in Ayr one Saturday morning when a man from Canada stopped me and gave me a small leaflet with the words of Scripture, **"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"**. When I got home the tears flowed, but I was still not saved. An invitation to a Gospel meeting was given to me and I accepted. I struggled to take that step of faith. **Could God love someone like me?** The meeting ended - I couldn't tell you what the preacher spoke on, but God was speaking to me. I wanted to ask him some questions at the end, but he had some questions for me. I believed the Bible. I knew I was lost. I needed all my sins forgiven. Only One could do that and I prayed He would, and He did.

"Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved". I went home and told my parents I had got saved - made right with God - judgement for my sin gone, forgiven. Tears of joy flowed from my eyes.

Later God gave me a wife I don't deserve. We read the Bible and pray together, but more than that, **God gave me His One and only Son**, yes, God the Son bore my sin on the cross, and rose from the dead!! Through Him I have a **"Blessed Hope"**.

Free Bible and/or a
Free Copy of

*"Where is God in
a Coronavirus
World?"*

by John Lennox

*please contact us by
any of the means listed
on the back page*



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

LORD AUCHINLECK

Alexander Boswell, Lord Auchinleck, 8th Laird of Auchinleck (1706–1782) was a judge of the supreme courts of Scotland. He was the father of the author and biographer James Boswell, and grandfather of songwriter Sir Alexander Boswell.

At the time of his death, William Halbert (Schoolmaster) wrote an **Essay Towards a Character of Lord Auchinleck**. In it he describes the type of man he was and the reputation he had.

*His fame for justice was well known,
His clemency no less conspicuous shone:
Reliever of the needful and oppressed,
The generous benefactor of distressed,
Ready to hear and rectify a wrong,
To re-establish harmony among
Contending friends, or such as disagreed,
And of his interposing aid had need;
Successfully he laboured much and long,
As healer of the breaches us among,
And still from jarring order brought about,
Careful searching unknown causes out.*

*A name of veneration and respect,
Of honour and esteem – Lord Auchinleck.*



Two things struck me as I read this recently. Firstly, his consideration of the needy and oppressed and secondly, his willingness to be a mediator in disputes among men.

Reading this, I was reminded of the character and mission of another Lord. One who is referred to in the Bible as **the Lord of all lords and indeed the King of all kings**.

In Luke 4.18-19 we learn of His heart and His mission, He came to, ".....preach good news to the poor.....to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised....."

Jesus Christ cares for the vulnerable, the ostracised, the marginalised – the poor, the broken-hearted, the blind, the bruised and the prisoner. He had time for

those that nobody else had time for. He loved the un-loveable. He was the friend of tax-collectors and sinners. He went out His way to meet an immoral woman (John 4), and actually sat on a well patiently waiting for her to come to draw water. She came when the sun was at its hottest. She thought nobody else would be about – but Jesus was. **She found that He was a man like no other**. Others had used and abused her. Some had cast her aside when she was of no more use to them. They moved on but left her bruised and broken. However, **this Man changed her life forever** – He gave her hope and happiness. He described His gift to her, and the gift He offers you, as **"a well of living water springing up into everlasting life."**

Maybe today you are feeling vulnerable, used, broken, oppressed by circumstances, distressed by guilt, shamed by your past. Maybe you feel lonely and unloved, anxious and afraid, Jesus says, "Come to Me all that labour and are heavy laden, and **I will give you rest.**" Matthew 11.18.

Lord Auchinleck not only showed compassion for the oppressed, but he acted as a mediator in men's disputes. He was a lover of harmony. Sadly, we are **living in a world of disunity and disconnect**. So many conflicting views, lifestyles, philosophies. So many factions and divisions, classes and cliques. However, the greatest disconnect is not so much between humans and humans, but it is the **great disconnect between humans and God**. The Bible teaches us that, "your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, that he will not hear." Isaiah 59.2. The offence is one-sided – **it is on our side!!** We have offended a holy God by our wilful disobedience and rebellion against His laws. We deserve banishment from His holy presence for ever, however, He, **the offended party, seeks reconciliation**. This can't be on the basis of compromise. God must be just. He must carry out the punishment that our sins deserve. **That's where the Lord Jesus comes in**, "God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is **one God, and one mediator** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all." 1 Timothy 2.4-6.

I don't know how many disputes Lord Auchinleck helped resolve during his time at the supreme court, but it will be nothing in comparison to the multitudes, over the past twenty centuries, that have been reconciled to God through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. You can be among that multitude, by repenting of your sin and **accepting, by faith**, that Jesus Christ died for you on the Cross at Calvary.


2 Corinthians 5. 20-21 :- "Now then **we are ambassadors for Christ**, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, **be reconciled to God**. For He hath made Him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."



Struggling - Benefits Cut, Sanctioned, finding it difficult to make ends meet??

We provide a food bank in the hall at Park Road at 2pm every Thursday

& at The Hub, Furnace Rd Muirkirk at 11am every Friday

 Auchinleck-Christian-Fellowship

 **YouTube**
AChrisianF

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BLOGS

Modern Day Parables
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Heather:-
Tough Muddering
toughmuddering.wordpress.com



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Ruth :-
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