

# The Explorer

June 2017

Free



Published by the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

## Subscription Details

The Explorer is published by the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) and is supplied free with the Witness magazine which is published monthly. The subscription rates for 2017 are:

U.K. £27.50  
Europe (Airmail) £30.00  
Overseas (Airmail) £35.00

Congregations ordering the Witness are encouraged to make bulk orders at the reduced rate of £24 per subscription per year. The Explorer, being free, may be ordered separately for Sabbath Schools.

Subscriptions and orders should be sent to:

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Young folk are encouraged to complete the various puzzles in the magazine and send them in to:

Miss Anne Macaulay  
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Younger readers who find the questions too hard may like to do a drawing based on one of the articles and send it to the same address.

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## Printed by:

DM DESIGN & PRINT  
25 Loch Lann Road  
Inverness  
IV2 2HB

Design and layout: M A N Macleod  
Picture cover : [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)  
Picture page 3: [www.iclipart](http://www.iclipart)  
Pictures pages 4&5: per J MacInnes  
Picture pages 6 & 7: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)  
Picture page 8: [www.Bibleforkids](http://www.Bibleforkids)  
[Unattributed articles ought not to be considered the work of the Editor.]

# Skipper's tales



## SKIPPER AND THE STOLEN CUSHION!

As you know Skipper is a Border Terrier. This means he is most definitely not a retriever! Do you know what type of dog a retriever is? Well, it is a dog bred and trained to retrieve or bring something back to its owner. The dog in the picture on the next page is so good at catching and retrieving that he plays in a team!

Some dogs are trained to retrieve birds which have been shot for folks to eat, but most retrievers are pets and their favourite game is for someone to throw a ball or a stick and they will bring it straight back for you to do it again – and again and again!

Well, as I said, Skipper is most definitely NOT a retriever and if you throw a ball or a stick he thinks it is a great game but if he brings it back – and sometimes he doesn't – he won't give it back to you and holds on to it. He thinks it is great fun to fight you for it and will pull on it with his strong teeth until you let go. But, of course, he wants to run after it and loves to catch it; he just doesn't understand that for us to throw it he has to give it back! The garden is full of toys he likes to play with but if we go near them he just picks them up and runs.

The other day we had a visitor. This lady had a lovely little travel cushion in her car and as soon as she opened the door in shot Skipper, picked it up and went off as fast as he could round the garden. We were so embarrassed; he's never stolen something from someone's car before! Then we remembered; the lady who comes to look after him often brings him a soft toy and perhaps he mistook the cushion for a toy.

We eventually got it back but he was a bit annoyed, to say the least. He was very reluctant to give it up because it was something he liked and wanted for himself; it gave him pleasure and fun. The problem was that it was wrong of him to take what didn't belong to him, although being a dog he didn't understand that.

Aren't we just like that sometimes? We do something that is wrong because for a while it makes us feel good and we don't think of others or how it will affect them. We are often selfish, aren't we? All of this is due to sin. We are all born sinful and very quickly learn to do what WE want even when we are told not to. We don't want to give it up because it is sometimes very attractive to us. Satan, of course, encourages us to think like that. He wants us to sin and disobey everything the Lord tells us. He also tells us that it is all very harmless.

The Bible tells us differently. It tells us that sin is always disobedience to what God wants. He wants us to obey his word and he has given us the Ten Commandments to help us to know what is good and what is not.

You know, there's something else about sin too. We might enjoy it at the time, just as Skipper enjoyed running around with that lovely cushion, but sin always brings us unhappiness. In the end it will give us the very opposite of what we think it will.

The Bible tells us if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive them and that he provided a Saviour so that if we believe in him our sins will be forgiven. Ask someone to help you to find a verse in the Bible about forgiveness then ask God to help you not to disobey him.



## From The Editor

Dear Friends

I recently passed through the centre of London. I saw many famous sights and was reminded, again, of our wonderful history. One place I like to visit is Trafalgar Square. If you ever go there you will see a very famous monument called Nelson's Column. At the base of the column sit statues of four large lions known as Landseer's lions. They are the work of a man called Edwin Landseer who took years making the sculptures. He would visit London zoo and watch the lions sitting and walking and then he would make sketches. It was from these sketches that he fashioned his famous lions.

The lions are a particular favourite for children who like to try and clamber up onto them where they can then get their picture taken. They are remarkably life-like and you can almost imagine them suddenly shaking their great manes, giving a roar and springing into life. However, they aren't real. They will never roar or move from that spot.

The Bible often speaks of lions. This is not surprising as they were quite common in that part of the world. It also warns us about the devil who is described as a "roaring lion" always on the look-out for opportunities to attack our souls and destroy us, if he can. Often nowadays people speak of him as though he were a comic figure, a bit naughty but ultimately harmless. He likes this. He likes us to think he is as harmless as Landseer's lions. But there is nothing harmless about sin and Satan and unless we are saved we will be forever in his clutches.

We are not strong enough to defeat this lion. What a blessing then that the Bible also speaks of another lion: the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the "lion of the tribe of Judah" who has defeated sin and Satan and is ready and willing to defend us if we put our trust in him.

*Murdo A N Macleod*



## Senior Camp 2016

I come from Spain and this was the first time I have gone to the Youth Camp, and it was a very nice time. Our leader in the senior camp this year was Rev James MacInnes.

Everyday was busy as we did a lot of activities. We went cycling, went out onto the water and tried kayaking. One night we were out at midnight running down a hill! That was very good fun. We also embroidered some bags and we went to shoot with bow and arrows.

The talks were about Apologetics. The first one was: Why do we have to give reasons about our beliefs? The second: The refutation of atheism. The third: Can we trust the Bible? The fourth: Is God fair? The fifth: Why do bad things happen?

Sometimes we met up with the younger ones at other camp and with the juniors, we played some football. We went for a walk in the countryside, we went to Landmark Adventure Park, jumped in the pond, visited a fort, went to Tesco to buy lots of sweets; and the last afternoon, as a farewell, we had a barbecue. It was a great experience! Anna Ruiz

## Junior Camp 2016

Camp was, as ever, filled with great fun. This year, the leader of the Junior Campers was Rev. Tim McGlynn. Throughout the week, we did lots of great activities – we went to Landmark, Loch Morlich, Fort George and, of course, the traditional trip to the pond.

Our study topic this year was Jonathan Edwards and Christ's works through him in America. We had talks every evening on different aspects of his life and had project work during the day, where we turned scribbled notes from the last night's talk into pages of information.

Just as always at camp, we were provided with excellent food from our fantastic cooks. Every morning, afternoon and evening, they had made something delicious for us. There was always dessert too which, needless to say, was gone in about ten minutes flat.

Camp is a brilliant opportunity for young people to come together to have fun and hear the Word and works of God, to be around people our own age who become life-long friends and worship together. We are thankful to the Lord for all these things. I would thoroughly recommend Camp to anyone who wants to come along. Katrina Martin





Limited spaces still available

# Camps 2017

## Why Not come along to one of the Badguish camps.

Come and enjoy the unique atmosphere of our Badguish camp. The week is packed with Bible-studies, quizzes, team-games, races, brilliant talks, personal projects and of course some fantastic food. Junior camp starts at P7, up to Secondary 4. Senior camp is for those from secondary 5 upwards.

There are so many things on offer activities in the Cairngorm National Park: mountain-biking, rowing, canoeing, Landmark, high-ropes, football, Highland games, and even rafting.

For further information on either camp or for booking forms, please contact Greg Macdonald, 01851 810037 or [gregmacdonald@me.com](mailto:gregmacdonald@me.com). Further details are also available on the Church website at [freechurchcontinuing.org](http://freechurchcontinuing.org).



# THE SHARK'S SECRET

We are told in the Bible, "Be sure your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32:23) This means that our sins will always be found out, and we will be judged and punished for them if they are not forgiven by the Lord. Sins are sometimes found out in this life, but all of them will be found out and judged on the great judgement day.

Sometimes there have been very strange events that have brought to light the evils which people have done. One of these was by a very large shark.

About two hundred years ago many pirates roamed the seas to attack other ships, to rob them, burn them, and even kill those who were on board. On one occasion a sailing ship, which was thought to have pirates on board, was being chased by a British naval vessel. In order to escape being found out, the captain of the pirate ship took all the papers that showed where he had been and what he had done, and rolled them up, tied them with a string and threw them into the ocean.

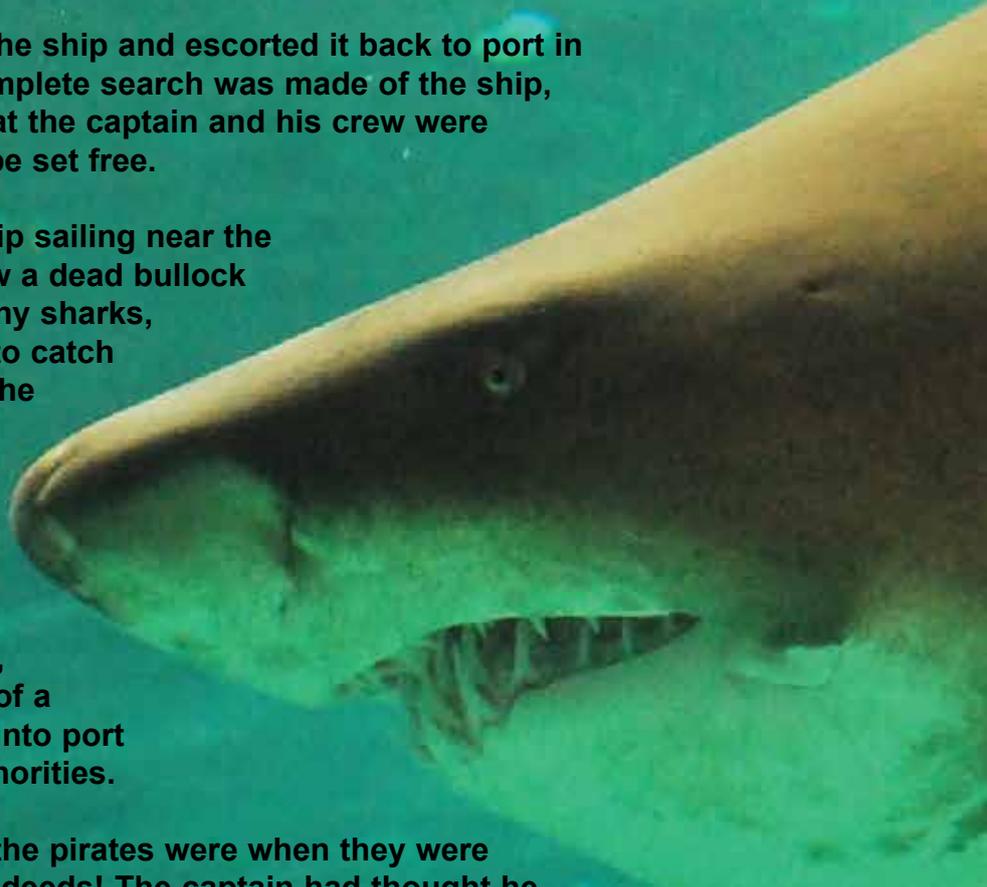
Soon the naval vessel caught the ship and escorted it back to port in Kingston, Jamaica. When a complete search was made of the ship, no evidence could be found that the captain and his crew were pirates, and he would have to be set free.

However, there was another ship sailing near the coast of Jamaica. The crew saw a dead bullock in the water surrounded by many sharks, and the captain decided to try to catch one of them. They sailed near the bullock and soon a very large shark was hooked and dragged on board.

When the shark was opened, it had a roll of paper tied with string in its stomach. When it was unrolled, it was found to be the records of a pirate ship. The captain sailed into port and gave the papers to the authorities.

Can you imagine how amazed the pirates were when they were shown the records of their evil deeds! The captain had thought he had buried these papers in the depth of the ocean, never to be seen again. But he was found out and judged for his sins. These papers are said to be still preserved in the museum in Jamaica.

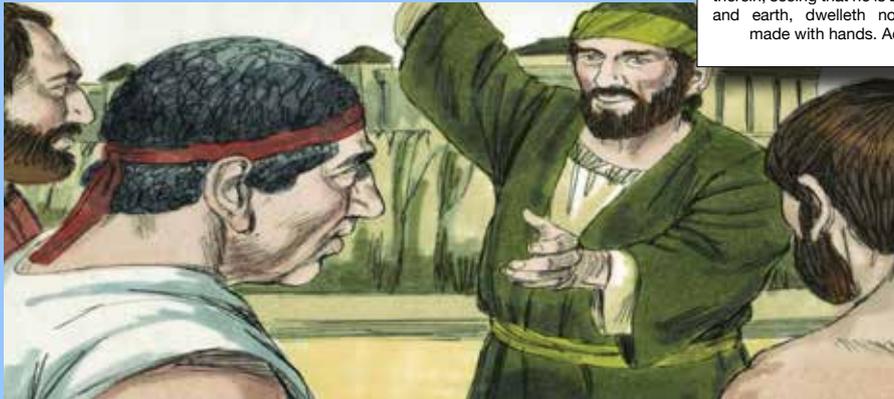
Many people, like the pirates, imagine that their sins are hidden and forgotten. But they will all be found out, if not in this life, then certainly on the day of judgement. (R Cameron-Smith. Southern Presbyterian Church of Australia.)





# THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES - CHAPTER 17

## THESSALONICA AND ATHENS



God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Acts 17:24

### PROCLAIMING THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AT THESSALONICA (vv 1 - 14)

In this chapter we follow Paul and his companions as they move on from Philippi. Arriving in Thessalonica Paul, as was his custom, began demonstrating from the Scriptures that Jesus was the long-promised Messiah. He preached about Jesus, explaining his sufferings, death and resurrection. Jesus now reigns as King. Some Jews and some Gentiles believed the message and turned from idols. (1 Thessalonians 1)

Not everyone was happy and accused Paul and the new believers of disloyalty to the government because they spoke of “another king”. (v7) Paul and his companions moved on to Berea, having established a congregation at Thessalonica, to which he wrote Epistles. The Bereans were honest and unprejudiced listeners, but the Jews in Thessalonica again stirred up people in power against the Gospel message of Paul. Paul now went on ahead to Athens.

### DECLARING THE LIVING GOD AT ATHENS (vv 13 - 15)

The people of Athens were famous for their history and culture. They were also famous for their devotion to the ‘gods’, but religion without knowledge of the true God will never save us or change our hearts. Although Athens was a ‘university city’ they had no knowledge of Christ. They were a people filled with curiosity, always asking, “Is there anything new?” (Verse 21)

What Paul was saying was new and so a crowd gathered, but the novelty soon passed away, alas, and despite their knowledge they continued to grope in the dark like a blind man, as it says in verse 27. The true God continued to be unknown to them.

What did Paul preach in Athens?

1. God is the maker of all things (vv 24 - 25). He therefore needs nothing from us.
2. God is the controller of all things (vv 26 - 29). However, we are not grateful to him for what he gives us.
3. God is the Judge of all people (vv 30 - 31). The day for judgement by Christ is fixed and time is running out for repentance. God’s patience ought not to be abused.

At this point (v 32), the hearers stopped Paul speaking because they found what he said offensive to their beliefs. He had mentioned the resurrection of Christ and this one fact would have changed everything they believed about God and about themselves! So they turned away and only a few people believed the Gospel. It seems that no congregation was gathered at Athens as it had been in other places though a few believers did gather together in the name of Christ, much like many places today.

I wonder if you are like the people of Athens? Do you have people or things in your heart which you put first — before God? Do you collect a lot of knowledge and yet Christ is not in any of it? Perhaps you also hear preaching and find it interesting but is there a real desire to know God, who can only be known through Jesus Christ (John 14:6)?