

Aberdour and Dalgety Parish Church

No. 47

JUNE 1960.

MINISTER:—The Revd. D. W. RUTHERFORD, M.C., B.D., The Manse, Aberdour.

Session Clerk—Mr R. M. Walker, Eden Cottage, Seaside Place.

Clerk to the Congregational Board—Miss I. C. H. Simmers, M.A., "Kilravock."

Treasurer—Mr J. Dawson Macfarlane, C.A., Braefoot, Easter Aberdour.

Proclamations Officer—Mr R. C. Lyon, Park View, Park Lane.

THE MANSE,
ABERDOUR, FIFE,
June, 1960.

My Dear Friends,

The Church of Scotland Stewardship and Budget Committee has just made available to all members of Congregational Boards a small pamphlet on Christian Stewardship. I feel that the ideas contained in it ought to be made available to every member of the congregation, and so instead of my usual letter I have condensed it and adapted it for our own use. My hope is that you may find it, as others have done, a very stimulating influence upon your own Christian thinking.

May God's blessing rest upon you.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID W. RUTHERFORD.

"Christian Stewardship is the name given to a movement, no, not a movement, just a new emphasis, a truly biblical emphasis, that has sprung up recently in a number of countries. Quite simply, it may be described as a challenge flung at everyone who calls himself a Christian to take a new look at three things he's been given the use of—his

TIME, TALENTS and POSSESSIONS.

Now, why? Why should this challenge be flung at him at this particular moment of the world's history?

"Well one obvious reason is because more of us have more things to be responsible for than ever before in the world's history. If you don't know what I mean, take a look at the forest of TV masts that have grown out of the roofs of ordinary folk in the last few years. We can see by looking out of the window that a great many more people than ever before have more things to use, and they are beginning to realise how very, very good God is, in filling their lives with so many interesting things.

"Most of us live in families, and in a wise family, father and mother pay careful attention together, as a kind of team, to the three points which we now realise are central to "Christian Stewardship". Mother and father together by their natural right, feel it their duty to see that *TIME* is used wisely in their family life. Johnny is not going to get anywhere in life if, when he is still a schoolboy, he is learning to fritter away his evenings. Wise parents ration out time—so much for home lessons, so much for the pictures, so much for games, and so on. So you see, we are halfway already when we point out with the emphasis of Christian Stewardship, that father too, as the time distributor of the family, should be sure that his own time is properly rationed out as well.

"The same thing goes for *TALENTS*. Here again wise parents do all they can to help their children develop their talents, whether it is playing the piano or making radio sets. But the wise parent, again, checks the child that wants to sit all day and night at the piano, or stay up until three in the morning twiddling radio knobs, for he sees now that his child is learning to make selfish use of time. The best use of family *INCOME*, too, is a family affair. Not that young children could be expected to understand all the claims there are on the family income, far less understand income tax. But mother and father working together as a team of two, are more and more seeing how right it is to plan together the spending of every penny that comes into the house, and let the children see how necessary it is to save for holidays, rainy days and the like.

"I am sure you realise by now what I am leading up to. Christian Stewardship, as a movement, confronts the family as a group, rather than challenges individuals. It challenges father, mother and children, together, as God's idea of a human unit, to see their use of family time, family talents, and family possessions in the light of what God expects a Christian family to do with these three things. Christian Stewardship takes a man as he is, a member of a family group, and challenges him and his family together, not to get anything, not even to "get saved", but to *give, give, give*, to give ever more and still more of the family's time, talents, and possessions. It says in effect: "It's about time you raised your sights, if you want to shoot anything worthwhile in the world".

"What's he to raise his sights to see? What a lot there is for him to see! In a year that we call "World Refugee Year" there is no end to what the family is asked to take a good look at; e.g., the difference between their standard of living and that of a European refugee family in Hong Kong, living it may be in a shack made of cartons, the children's little bodies riddled with T.B. Or turn their eyes to the fact that several hundred million people in India don't possess a New Testament; or to the fact that nine-tenths of all the goods of this world belong to one-tenth of the world's inhabitants—and Scotland's people are in that one-tenth. Now our typical family is asked—who do you think cares enough about those Indians and Hong Kong refugees to do something about them? Why—the Church of course!

"Here people are presented, perhaps quite violently, with quite a new idea of the Church, that is, quite new to what most people think it is. It is the idea that the Church is not concerned about saving its own soul (e.g. keeping the roof wind and watertight for the kiddies' Sunday School), because if it was, then it would not be the Church, it would merely be a club. It is not concerned with itself. It is not a recipient of money, it is a *Passing On Agency*, that keeps on, day in, day out, winter and summer-holiday time alike, sending help to those

in need, perhaps quite near by in one's own cities, perhaps as far away, indeed, as Hong Kong. That constant concern for other people in need must cost the Church something in overhead expenses, but it is not begging money for itself. It is demanding, and quite rightly too, that we take our honest share of trying to alleviate human suffering, and that is why it is always ready to collect money of you, handle it for you, and send it on to where it can do most good.

"The Church is a *passing-on agency*. Then so is the home a *passing-on agency*. For the congregation is made up of families in any local area. And every family has time and talents and possession which God has given them to pass on to others. No family is so busy that it has time only for itself and cannot give some time for others—for the lonely, and the aged and the stranger in the midst. No family is so untalented that it cannot devote some of those talents to help others besides themselves. No family has so few possession that God did not mean them to pass-on some part of them to help those in suffering and in need.

"Here is the challenge which is presented to us all. Many have to relearn the significant gospel truth that the marks of a Christian are not all negative—that a Christian is not a man who doesn't drink, doesn't swear, doesn't smoke. They will have to realise that what has moved the "hard cases", who haven't been in church for years, but who are there now, is a new vision of what it means to care. If the new-comers don't find the old hands really caring, despite all their fine talk, they'll never be back in church again."

BAPTISM

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

March 13	William Beckingham Lyon.	May 22	Archibald Graham MacAlister.
May 1	Ronald Smith.	June 5	Catherine Anne Gibb.
May 22	Alan Robert Alexander.	June 5	Elaine McKenzie Hynd.

MARRIAGES

"What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

March 31	John Cuthill to Dorothy B. R. Wallace.	May 20	Michael P. Anderson to Pamela C. Baker.
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DEATHS

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

March 14	Mr Robertson, Dalgety House.	May 6	Mrs Buchan, Morayvale.
April 16	Miss F. M. Mackie, Hillend Schoolhouse.	June 1	Mrs Millburn, High Street.

ACCESSIONS—By Profession—

Mr L. L. Roberts, 1 Brock Street, N. Queensferry.	Miss N. Bald, Salisbury Villas.
Miss J. Fowler, Hillend.	Miss Janet Graham, 21 Humble Terrace.
Miss D. Henderson, Hillend.	Miss Zena Graham, 21 Humble Terrace.
Miss J. Inch, 15 Humble Terrace.	Miss Jennifer Graham, "Corriemar".
Miss M. Hammond, Dalgety House.	Miss A. McIntyre, "Tingha", The Glebe.
Mrs C. McKeating, Hillend.	Mr and Mrs Pont, 14 Main Street.
Miss A. Arthur, "Seacliffe".	

By Certificate—

Mr and Mrs William Allan, "Benrines", The Glebe.	Mrs John Cuthill, Manse Street.
Mr and Mrs Gerald Doidge, Park Lane.	

Disjunctions—

Mr Ian Kingham, to Farnborough.	Miss Margaret Anne Mackenzie, to Edinburgh.
Mr and Mrs James Mackenzie, to Edinburgh.	Mr and Mrs Latto, to Lundin Links.