

Bristo Baptist

M a g a z i n e

July / August 2006

Resting in God



Bristo Baptist Church

41 Buckingham Terrace / 1 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh EH4 3DJ

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Editorial



My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.

(Psalm 62: 1 & 5).

July and August bring the peak holiday months. Schools have broken up for the summer, and people make plans to rest from work and enjoy a change of scenery, or the many events, Christian and secular, that are taking place.

Rest from daily routine is important. Even God found it important; after the work of creation the first thing He did was rest.

Psalm 62:1 makes a simple yet powerfully reassuring statement – our rest is in God at all times. Yet verse 5 reminds us that it's not enough just to know in our *brain* that our rest is in God. We have to *tell* our *soul* to find that rest. Tell *your* soul to find rest in God over the summer months!

Robert Mill

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Dear Friends,

My soul finds rest in God alone.
(Psalm 62.1)

We find it very hard to rest in our busy world. Timetables, schedules and agendas. A life of bucolic bliss seems far away. But we do find places of rest at times. The TV, our hobbies, our beds! And what about God? He is close to us every day, but can seem far away. The pressures and gnawing anxieties can make this seem like a deadened, religious fantasy. But for those who still themselves to discover the presence and power of God, a transforming and soothing peace can and will irradiate our lives. But how?

With summer upon us, it's a good time to find out again how to rest in God. We need to remember that our heavenly Father needs to be treated as God. When we place Him first, other things in our lives line up in order. This is the first challenge. Before anything else happens in the day, take even a few

moments to acknowledge Him and commit the day to Him.



And at other times when you find there is space, open a door for God to fill some of it. Have your Bible there to read, play some worship music or simply meditate on His reflected glory in the beauty of nature around you. Invite the Holy Spirit to come into you afresh. Think on how Jesus has done everything that needs done to make you right with God.

And find His presence. Know His touch. And rejoice in His peace, as you find rest in Him.

In His love,
Jim

Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.

Psalm 62 : 5

COMING EVENTS

Church Holiday Weekend at Alltnacriche (near Aviemore), over the Edinburgh September Holiday weekend, *Friday 15th–Monday 18th September*. Cost: £60 for each adult, £30 for one child or student, £150 for a family (i.e., all children/students after the first go free). Deposits payable now with the balance at Alltnacriche or by instalments over the summer. More details from and bookings to Paul or Linda Watson.

Do make every effort to book for what in previous years has always been a really great weekend, full of fun yet with ample time for intimacy with God. An ideal time to *rest in God's presence* for a few days!

Festival Praise, *Saturday 19 August*, Charlotte Chapel, 7.30 p.m., organised by Origin Scotland with the **exile** choir. Admission free.

BAPTIST UNION OF SCOTLAND / BMS WORLD VISION JOINT ASSEMBLY 27-29 OCTOBER 2006

World Service: Listening to the Global Church
The Music Hall, Aberdeen

For the first time the Baptist Union and BMS are holding a joint Assembly in Scotland. Although we appoint two of our members as delegates to the Assembly it is also possible for others to attend as visitors.

Themes include *a voice of hope, a cry for justice, ending with a shout of celebration*. **Music** led by *Stephen Fischer and the Fishy Music Band*. **Young people and children** have their own programmes. **Costs:**

Full weekend £55
Saturday full day £20
Evening Celebrations £5 per ticket

You may think that October is a long way off but registration forms, which I have, need to be completed by mid-August. For more information, speak to me or see the notice board.

Christine Lumsden

BRISTO INTERN TEAM

In the middle of August, we look forward to welcoming our four interns, coming from the USA, Russia and England. They will be working as part of our ministry team for the coming year, as we seek to witness to the Gospel and reach out to others in Jesus' name.

Please pray especially for a positive outcome for the visa application by Tima and Yulia, coming from Voronezh in central Russia. And that God will settle our team in harmony with us and with each other.

Jim Purves

WEDDING

Congratulations to *John and Sonya Cooper* who were married on Friday 30th June.

GRADUATION

Congratulations to *David Purves* on his graduation from St Andrews University on Thursday 22nd June with a M.A. degree in Arabic and International Relations.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Firstly I'd like to thank the church for electing me to the Deacons' court, and for confirming my position as church treasurer. I'd also like to thank the church meeting for accepting my presentation of the accounts for 2005/06 and for accepting my recommendation of the church budget for 2006/07.

I'd like to summarise the church budget for the coming year, and make a few observations on the budget.

<u>General Income</u>	<u>Budgeted Income</u>
Church Offerings	£40,000
Tax Refund	£7,000
Rent	£2,400
Use of Halls	£8,000
Sundries	£200
Total	£56,700

Total income for 2006/07 including designated offerings : **£64,650**

<u>Expenditure</u>	
Employment	£32,500
Supply	£1,000
Energy	£6,200
Insurance	£2,880
Refurbishment	£1,000
Furniture & Equipment	£2,300
Repairs	£3,000
Tuning	£150
Council Tax	£2,600
Repairs to Manses	£2,000
Phone	£800
Office	£500
Subscriptions	£800
Children & Young People	£650
Outreach / Publicity	£1,200
Literature & Copyright	£500
Care Van	£100
Fellowship	£500
Sundries	£1,000
10% Tithe to Mission	£5,760
Fund from General Income	
Total	£65,440

I have a few comments on the annual budget.

1. To achieve our target income for the year from general offerings we need an average weekly offering of over £750. To date we are averaging around £650.
2. There is a projected shortfall for the year of over £7,800. Excluding the 10% donation of income to the mission fund, and comparing income with what we need to spend to keep the church and its buildings running, there is a shortfall of over £2,000. This is of course an estimated budget and we may well not spend as much in running the church as we expect to spend, but in previous years actual expenditure has closely matched expected expenditure; underspend in some areas of the budget have been matched by an overspend in another area. We are fortunate at Bristo in that we do have a surplus in the general account; however with potential future developments in consideration at Bristo it would be ideal if we did not have to eat too much into our savings this year. This year

in particular a recent examination of the buildings has shown that significant repairs may need to be made to our buildings to cure areas of damp and repair places where water is getting into our buildings.

3. The budget does not contain any potential expenditure for the re-development work at Bristo; nor does it contain any potential expenditure for the Intern programme, other than known essential repair work to the church flat to make it suitable for a number of the Interns.

Please prayerfully consider what you are able to give to the church. If anyone would like to use the weekly envelopes then please see me for a set of the envelopes. If any UK tax payer wishes to sign a gift aid form for gifts to the church, please ask me for a form. If you gift aid your offering to the church, for every £1 you give, we are able to claim back 28 pence from the taxman.

Paul Watson

REST IN GOD: A PERSONAL REFLECTION

There can be no sweeter experience for God's children than the sense of being at rest in God. There is, after all, the great promise of entering into God's rest held out to us in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Whether this is referring to an experience attainable in the present or to a future eschatological blessing is a matter of interpretation. Perhaps both are offered in prospect, one as a foretaste of the other. What is certainly without doubt is that rest in the sense of lasting peace and freedom from striving and conflict is seen as a crowning blessing and ideal condition for the people of God which has its source in the God who first rested from His work. Our rest is in Him.

Faith and the rest of God are inseparable. It is unbelief which disqualifies us from ever enjoying it. Faith is the practical recognition of God's lovingkindness; unbelief is the perverse and stubborn denial of it. Faith blesses the Father heart of God; unbelief provokes His just anger. Faith cooperates with God, providing for Him an open channel

for His blessing; unbelief is a closed door which keeps God out.

It would be good if I could say honestly that my life always testified positively to these insights, and that I was consistent in pressing on in faith, knocking immediately on the head all temptation to unbelief. Although I have made progress in my Christian life, I still find in myself from time to time a tendency to pessimistic thinking, fear of the worst case scenario and a 'glass half empty' mentality, as though God was not in control or could not be relied upon to be wholly good all of the time. All of this can creep up on me in spiritually unguarded moments or pounce on me under pressure.

Granted that nevertheless I *have* made real progress - and it would be another example of pessimistic unbelief to deny this! - what would I like to pass on in the way of counsel for those with similar difficulties?

Before making the mistake of judging our weaknesses too harshly (or even giving way to despair and dishonouring God further!) perhaps

a word of balancing caution is needed. It is true that we are warned of the serious danger of unbelief and its offence to God, but we are also told that Jesus will not break a bruised reed or snuff out a smouldering wick. Some personality types are more inclined to timidity or depression than others, and it is also possible to enter the Christian life with 'baggage' from a wounded past in the form of dashed hopes, abusive relationships and damaging life experiences which might still hinder openness and trust. Scope must be given to the grace of God and compassionate ministry to the weak.

If there is one valuable lesson which has provided me with victory when fearful and unbelieving thoughts have attacked the peace of God in my life, it lies in taking a deliberate, resolute stand on the truth of God's covenant love and commitment to work all things together for good (Rom. 8: 28). Because of my natural disposition to think myself into the ground as my over-analytical mind churns out an increasingly complex plotline of God-defying difficulties, I have had to learn to suspend all analytical

thought processes until I am centred again on the true Centre who is sovereign and orders all events (including, to my great relief, my own weaknesses and failures!) to the overall good. Here is rest! And to do this I use the weapon of praise to drown out the voices of accusation, fear, doom and gloom which come from the enemy. Seeing God exalted makes the problems of life fall away into nothingness or else take on their true character as challenges and opportunities to shape character and destiny, all intended for good. Knowing when matters are too complex for the clearest human mind to unravel that God is not confused and is aware of an infinite range of factors that I cannot begin to consider means that I can breathe more deeply and slowly and allow God to work things out His way, not mine.

It is not enough, I have found, merely to 'pray' about matters in the sense of talking about them to God. That can fall into the trap of focussing on the problems themselves. True prayer is an expression of faith, and true faith glorifies God in praise, adoration

and gratitude for God's answers in advance. We should emerge from prayer stronger and at rest in God. Note the emphasis in God's word, and since there can be no better words to end on than these, I end my reflections with this glorious passage from Paul (Philippians 4: 4, 6-7):

'Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!...Do not be anxious about anything, but by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'

Brian Barclay

**REST IN GOD:
A PERSONAL REFLECTION**

What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!

*O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.*

*Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
take it to the Lord in prayer.*

*Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge,
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield you;
you will find a solace there.*

*Blessed Saviour, Thou hast promised
Thou wilt all our burdens bear*

May we ever, Lord, be bringing all to Thee in earnest prayer.

*Soon in glory bright unclouded there will be no need for prayer
Rapture, praise and endless worship will be our sweet portion there.*

Joseph M. Scriven 1855

The man that wrote this hymn was no stranger to suffering. His first fiancée drowned the night before they were to marry and his second

fiancée also died shortly before their wedding. He wrote the hymn while in America, to comfort his mother who was across the Atlantic from him in Ireland because he had learned something that we so often forget – God is interested in every little detail of our lives and has promised to bear our burdens. We therefore do not need to worry or struggle on by ourselves feeling that the whole world is against us.

In my life I have experienced:

- the deaths of my father when I was two and my mother when I was six
- the birth of my son who was found to have some brain damage at the age of six months that makes him weak on the left side, that gave him night time seizures for many years and that resulted in learning difficulties and autistic characteristics
- an emotionally abusive relationship (entered into before I became a Christian) that destroyed my self-esteem and resulted in depression
- being made redundant

- the sudden death of a sister followed by the death of my adopted mother a year later
- years of working in a job that has felt oppressive and that has not allowed me to realise the potential that God created me for

Yes, there has been much suffering, but in each situation I have found God to be faithful.

My son, Adam, has just turned sixteen and is becoming a lovely young man. Although he has not been physically healed, we have witnessed much improvement in his behaviour over the years as we have prayed for him and his seizures stopped a couple of years ago. Yes, it has been hard raising him mostly as a single parent, but I have learned so much about autism and learning disabilities and no longer “judge” parents of badly behaving children in supermarkets!

The relationship with Adam’s father was some of the worst and some of the best years of my life: the worst because of the anger and hurts within the relationship: the best because through these dark years I found a loving Father who gave me the strength to cope and

miraculous answers to prayer as I got down on my knees in desperation. I learned of the need to forgive those who hurt you and of the deep healing that comes as a result.

Through being made redundant I experienced God’s bountiful provision for my life. I received a lump sum and had another job within three weeks. He has always provided for my needs beyond my expectations, showing time after time how well He knows me from the personal touches in the things He has given me.

Losing a sister unexpectedly was hard and I foolishly shut God out at first as I was unable to cope with the pain. But only when I did allow Him in was I able to deal with my grief and to begin the healing process. I learned from this experience and turned to God immediately when my Mum died a year later.

What can I say about my job, other than it has been a real struggle at times to know why God led me to it other than to provide for my family. The Lord has had to keep on humbling me and reminding me

that being at work is more about the relationships I have with people than the actual work I do. After all we spend so much time with people at work and they are bound to be influenced by what we say and do even if we do not speak directly about Jesus. Having said that, I have had some flashes of boldness and have seen two people healed of back problems as I felt the Spirit’s call to pray for them at different times.

Where am I now?

Now I am in a place of peace and blessing because I have learned to put my trust in God to work out everything for the good. I have learned to be patient and to wait for the deliverance that He always brings in time. Many of you know of my marriage to Robert last Easter, through which God has given me the chance to experience a loving Christian relationship as He intends it to be and through which all the hurts of past relationships are forgotten. The marriage has also brought much financial blessing.

The job that has been a struggle is also coming to an end as the Lord

leads me into a new area of ministry through being self-employed as a LighterLife Counsellor. This will enable me to work more flexibly and to give more time in service to the Bristo Fellowship. God’s timing really is perfect and I look forward with hope and expectation of seeing God do marvellous things in the future. Of course there will be challenges ahead but I know that I do not need to worry when God has promised to bear my burdens. I fully intend to take everything to God in prayer!

Andrea Mill

O REST IN THE LORD

Some may know this beautiful short aria from Mendelssohn’s oratorio *Elijah*. It is sung by the Angel to encourage him. His contest with the worshippers of Baal on Mount Carmel is over. The false prophets have been executed but the queen, Jezebel, threatens to kill him and he flees to Horeb, exhausted, afraid, lonely.

“What are you doing here Elijah?” says the Lord.

“I alone am left: and they seek to take my life.”

Then He said, “Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord.”

And the Lord passes by, not in the wind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire, “and after the fire, a still small voice” (or, alternatively and more expressively, “a delicate whispering voice”). And Elijah hears God speak to him.

(See *1 Kings 19*)

The words of Mendelssohn’s aria are taken from *Psalms 37*,

- v. 7 *Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him*
- v. 1 Do not fret because of evildoers
- v. 5 Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him and He shall bring it to pass

and also a reference to *Psalms 21:2*,

You have given him his heart’s desire

So if we are “resting” in the Lord, we are trusting Him and waiting for Him to reveal Himself, not in noisy activity but in silence so that we can hear His voice. As He speaks, we yield our cares to Him so that His desires become ours. Trust, wait, listen, yield. Are we ready to do this then obey?

Christine Lumsden

Service Times

Sunday

Morning Celebration (including Junior Church)	11.00 a.m.
Evening Celebration	6.30 p.m.

Monday / Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday

Cell Groups (refer to weekly sheet for times / locations)

Monday

Prayer Meeting	10.00 a.m.
International Soup	12 noon

Tuesday

Home from Home	1.00 p.m.
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Friday

IT Youth Club	7.30 p.m.
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Saturday

Morning of Prayer	9.30 a.m.
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