

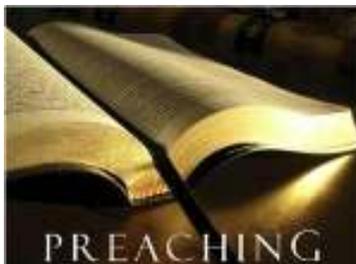
### Preaching Dates

#### 14 October 2018

**Fraser Allan** (am) at  
Strathendrick Baptist Church.  
**Glen Cartwright** (am) at Fusion,  
Newton Mearns Baptist Church  
**Alastair Crockett** (am) at  
The House of the Lord Church,  
Nechells, Birmingham.  
**Brian Crockett** (am) at  
Cambuslang Baptist Church  
**Kenneth Forrest** (am) at  
Cathcart Baptist Church  
**Jonathan Groves** (am) at Kubalalika  
Zambesi Evangelical Church, Malawi  
**Willie Henry** (am) at  
Irvine Baptist Church  
**Douglas Inglis** (am) at  
Johnstone Baptist Church  
**Arthur Jones** (am) at South Beach  
Baptist Church, Saltcoats.  
**Jim O'Hara** (am) at  
Perth Baptist Church  
**David Bebbington** (pm) at Callander  
Baptist Fellowship (a branch of Stirling  
Baptist Church)  
**John Bingham** (am + pm) at Mustard  
Seed Fellowship, Glenrothes  
**Gordon Dickey** (am + pm)  
at Longhorsley Free Church  
**Matthew Edmonds** (am + pm) at  
Alloa Baptist Church  
**Nigel Johns** (am + pm) at  
Larkhall Baptist Church

#### 17 October 2018

**George Hunter** (pm) at Auchlochan  
Retirement Village (Methodist Homes  
Association), Lanark. The annual  
thanksgiving service for those who  
have passed away in the last year.



### "21st Century Questions"

By Eric Macarthur

"For too long we have read scripture with nineteenth-century eyes and sixteenth-century questions. It's time to get back to reading with first century eyes and 21<sup>st</sup> Century questions."

I came across the above quote from Tom Wright recently and it made me think....as I guess it was intended too. How much has Luther's personal anxiety, an anxiety fed by the Roman Church's theology and (often corrupt) practice, influenced subsequent generations of interpreters? Can we really read with 1<sup>st</sup> century eyes? And if 16<sup>th</sup> Century questions have shaped our understanding, what were the 1<sup>st</sup> Century questions that Jesus and the apostles were answering? And for that matter what were the underlying issues in earlier Jewish history that Moses and the prophets were addressing? Can we find out? Do we read with that question prayerfully in our minds? Surely we need to attempt to grapple with these questions as well as understanding the questions and issues of our own time if we are going to be able to use scripture to answer today's questions. The Word of God does not come in a vacuum but into specific situations and circumstances. It's continual relevance is due to it addressing particular people at particular points in their lives.

I was asked a month or two ago to preach on a chapter in Galatians. That letter was probably as significant for Luther as it was for the 1<sup>st</sup> century Galatians themselves. But were they wrestling with the same issues that Luther was? They had already (like us I suppose) received and believed the gospel of grace....what were they being told would be the benefit of circumcision, of becoming Jews? And what was the bondage that Paul saw they were being lured in to? And what impact would this have on the mission to the gentiles? Today's generation are generally not troubled in the way Luther was...should they be? But how does Paul's defence of the gentiles calling to follow Christ without also taking on board the Jewish law and customs affect our evangelism and the expectations we have of those who receive Christ?

Are we as preachers aware and sensitive to the issues and questions of our time...are we as concerned about them as others are or we preoccupied with internal church affairs and arguments? And are we are how much our own background affects our understanding of the text?

We have a great gospel. We live in desperate times. But if we don't see how the one relates to the other we will be like archers who no matter how well they shoot, miss the target because they were aiming in the wrong direction.

Let's keep praying, and asking the questions.