

# Word For The Week

## 5 October 2018

### Preaching Dates

#### 7 October 2018

**Andrew Chalkley** (am) at  
Fort William Baptist Church

**Gordon Dickey** (am) at  
Selkirk Baptist Church

**Andrea Mill** (am) at  
Bristo Baptist Church, Edinburgh

**Alan Milnes** (am) at  
Leslie Baptist Church

**George Thomson** (pm) at  
Larkhall Baptist Church

**Jonathan Groves** (am + pm) at  
Gerston Chapel, Paignton, Devon  
with Kerusso Trust presentation

**Charles Sommerville** (am + pm) at  
Dykehead Mission

#### Tuesday, 9 October 2018

**Andrea Mill** (pm) at the North East Fife  
Filling Station, Auchtermuchty

#### 12- 14 October 2018

**Andrea Mill** in Ibiza, Spain, to lead 3  
creative writing workshops and lead 3  
days of worship creative worship  
session at Encens.



### "God's TLC"

By George Sprott

My wife is a keen gardener, and without doubt has the gift of "green fingers". She often disappears into the garden or greenhouse for ages, but the results from all her efforts are amazing - lots of tasty fruit and veg, and our home often filled with the perfume from beautiful blooms; many grown from seed. I've asked what the secret of her success is: "Lots and lots of TLC" she says.

I'm reminded that Jesus once told his friends that their heavenly Father is a gardener. Jesus likened himself to a "true Vine", and his disciples as branches on the vine. The purpose of every branch is to bear fruit. Fruitless branches are cut out of the vine by his Father, says Jesus, and the fruitful branches are pruned (cleaned) so they can become more fruitful.

Though at first impression, the idea of cutting and pruning may seem harsh and abrupt; this actually speaks of the amazing mercy and grace of God. Our Father, the gardener, wields his pruning shears with wisdom, mindful of our individual needs. Knowing our capabilities and the direction he intends for us to grow, God compassionately cuts back things from our lives. He sees our character flaws and all kinds of unresolved issues in our lives, and yet still he uses us to be fruitful by impacting the lives of others with his love and grace, including the times when the Spirit enables us to preach and teach his word.

Our responsibility is to remain in the Vine; to continue to live in Christ Jesus. When we do, we live in the love of God, and we can continue to live in that love by obeying Jesus' commands. Our ability to produce lasting fruit will be the inevitable result of continuing to live in the true Vine. And we need not worry about being sufficiently fruitful. If we love the Lord, we will be obedient and when we are obedient the Spirit will produce more of the fruit in each of us that is good in God's eyes. When our lives are aimed at pleasing him in every way possible, a fruitful harvest will be produced that glorifies him.

How much ought we to thank and praise our heavenly Gardener for his tender loving care!