

Free Presbyterian Youth Council



'Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth' - Ecclesiastes 12:1

2010 MARCH REGIONAL RALLY REPORT (MOUNT MERRION FPC)

By Mr Kyle Thompson (North Down Committee Member)

The Youth Council Spring Rally for Belfast and North Down took place on Friday the 12th of March in Mount Merrion FPC with around 150 young people present. Mr Stephen Cassells led the meeting and conducted the congregational hymn singing as the crowd gathered.

After Mr Jim Palmer from Portavogie opened in prayer, young people from Ballygowan brought their opening two pieces in song. This was followed by two testimonies. First was Mr Paul Foster from Comber who spoke of how the Lord had bridged the gap from lowly sinners to his perfect self. Second was Mr Matthew McGill from the Martyr's Memorial who spoke of God's guiding hand over his entire life. After a further piece from the Ballygowan young people Rev. Thompson brought the sermon before the young people.

The Youth Council had asked all preachers at the regional rallies to preach on the same theme - The Marks of Grace. Rev. Thompson's sermon was based on 1st John. The subject was split into two main parts, the internal marks of grace and the external.

Internal Marks of Grace

Adoption (1 John 3 v 1) - By God's grace we are his children and He has lifted us from where we were and brought us into his family.

The Holy Spirit (1 John 4 v 13) - God gives us the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who, similar to a parents reassuring presence to a child, assures us of our salvation and relationship with God.

The Word of God (1 John 5 v 10) - The belief of God's Word is another mark of grace which sets us apart from that time before Christ saved us.

External Marks of Grace

Radical change of lifestyle (1 John 2 v 15) - Our physical, spiritual and emotional desires changed when Christ saved us. While sin will always remain in our lives it will no longer reign and so our old desires are replaced by new ones centred on Christ.

Obedience (1 John 5 v 2) - One of the very best ways we can show that we are Christians is by obedience. Anyone can pay lip service but a genuinely changed heart will manifest itself in an unassuming obedience to the commandments of God.

Prayer (1 John 5 v 14) - Communion with God is maintained by prayer. We have access to God through prayer at all times and a Christian who has experienced the previous points will desire to spend as much time in direct fellowship with God as possible.

After the meeting a supper was provided by Mount Merrion and a time of fellowship was had in the minor hall of the church. The Youth Council would like to thank Mount Merrion FPC for hosting the rally as well as the Rev. Thompson and all who took part in the evening.