

"Of common ilk":  
Spiritual friendship as a means of grace in the lives of  
Robert Murray M'Cheyne and his circle of friends

Clint Humfrey

If the battle in which Christians find themselves engaged has an element of otherworldliness—as the Apostle Paul describes it in Ephesians 6:12 when he calls on Christians to recognize that their struggle is not against human enemies but spiritual powers of wickedness—should not also the spiritual camaraderie of believers engaged in it have such an element? Christians throughout the centuries have affirmed the "peculiar" nature of their bonds of friendship that God has owned for the advancement of His kingdom. Unions of this kind are, as they say in Scotland, "of common ilk," and it is Scotland in particular that has seen a most powerful example of *spiritual* friendship as a means of grace—the friendship of Robert Murray M'Cheyne and his companions.<sup>1</sup>

**"Iron sharpening iron"**

The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed the spread of a new work of grace in the Scottish lowlands. Decay had pervaded much of the religious life of that area of Scotland and the need for awakening was acute. God, in His wisdom, raised up not just one man, but a number of men who would be His weapons in lighting the darkness. These men were brought together by His Providence at Divinity Hall, Edinburgh, where God used another special instrument, Thomas Chalmers, to shape their lives. Chalmers instructed them in accurate thinking about God and His universe, as well as effective planning in order to be highly "useful" in the practical spread of the visible and invisible Church.<sup>2</sup> While at Edinburgh, a number of these students

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would band themselves together in "Societies." One "Society," known as "*the Exegetical*" would hold significance beyond anything the members perceived. A young "*Exegete*" recalls his impressions:

[N]o society of this kind was more useful and pleasant to us than one which, from its object, received the name of *Exegetical*. It met during the session of the Theological classes every Saturday morning at half past six. The study of Biblical criticism, and whatever might cast light on the word of God, was our aim; and these meetings were kept up regularly during four sessions.<sup>3</sup>

It was in the *Exegetical* that the future of many in Scotland lay. The members of this group joined together to become comrades-in-arms in the cause of Christ, and many of them would be blessed with spiritual awakening in connection with their later ministries. Many of the names belonging to the Society would read, in hindsight, like a who's who of Scottish Evangelical leadership for that time—Horatius Bonar, Andrew A. Bonar, Robert M. M'Cheyne, Alexander Somerville, and John Milne.<sup>4</sup>

One of the members, Andrew Bonar, had sought friends to whom he could "unbosom himself." As he said, "God alone has been my Counselor and Teacher...I should never complain [but] I sometimes think myself neglected by friends and others."<sup>5</sup> His prayer was answered, when God provided a close friend in Robert Murray M'Cheyne. Bonar recorded:

It was about the time of his first year's attendance at the [Divinity] Hall that I began to know [M'Cheyne] as an intimate friend. During the summer vacations,—that we might redeem the time,—some of us...used to meet once every week in the forenoon, for the purpose of investigating some point of *Systematic Divinity*, and stating to each other the amount and result of our private reading... Advancement in our acquaintance with the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures also

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brought us together; and one summer the study of *Unfulfilled Prophecy* assembled a few of us once a week, at an early morning hour.<sup>6</sup>

M'Cheyne was graced with godliness beyond his years, and Bonar stayed very close to one who revealed so much of Christ. Together, along with the larger circle of students, they studied, discussed, and applied the precious truths they were learning in class, using one another, as it were, as whetstones for sharpening. "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17), and Andrew Bonar was sharpened most by M'Cheyne. Bonar would later describe the impact made by his friend on his life:

...the impression left was chiefly that there had been among them a man of peculiar holiness. Some felt, not so much his words, as his presence and holy solemnity, as if one spoke to them who was standing in the presence of God; and to others his prayers appeared like the breathings of one already within the veil.<sup>7</sup>

Another companion was Alexander Somerville. Having come to saving faith at around the same time as M'Cheyne, Somerville became a dear friend to both Bonar and M'Cheyne, so that all three men became vehicles of God's grace to one another. Bonar recalled:

Mr. Alexander Somerville...was [M'Cheyne's] familiar friend and companion in the gay scenes of his youth... [H]aving been brought to taste the powers of the world to come, they united their efforts for each other's welfare. They met together for the study of the Bible, and used to exercise themselves in the Septuagint Greek and Hebrew original. But of terner still they met for prayer and solemn converse; and carrying on all their studies in the same spirit, watched each other's steps in the narrow way.<sup>8</sup>

All three would seek Christ together, preparing one another for the

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days ahead. They sought to know Christ and make Him known, though they did not know the specifics of where their paths were to run. Many were the occasions such as this one remembered by Bonar:

Saturday, 30th.—In a walk round Duddingston Loch with Robert M'Cheyne and Alexander Somerville this afternoon, we had much conversation upon the leading of Providence and future days. We sang together, sitting upon a fallen oak-tree, one of the Psalms.<sup>9</sup>

The freeness of heart expressed in praise, as well as the mutual concern regarding the acts of God in each other's life typified these friendships. Due to this God-centred characteristic, they can be rightly considered truly "*spiritual*" friendships. As well, this quality friendship was not limited to the three aforementioned men. Up to ten or twelve men<sup>10</sup> enjoyed these sweet fellowships one with another, and could testify to many such "walks" where edifying counsel was in ample supply.

### **Mutual encouragement**

One example of the importance of these relationships for the spiritual growth and progressive sanctification of these men, is in the case of Somerville and Bonar. Bonar had been sent to Jedburgh to assist his cousin's husband, a Mr. Purves, with the pastoral work there. As it was the beginning of his ministerial career, the time at Jedburgh would prove very formative for Bonar. Interestingly, Alexander Somerville arrived as a tutor in the nearby town of Edgerston which caused Bonar to note "the providence that led to this."<sup>11</sup> Bonar expressed his appreciation of this providence when he said, "Alexander Somerville has been very useful to me, and though at present he is doubtful of remaining, yet I pray God that it may yet be ordered that

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he shall."<sup>12</sup> Again, Bonar could state in his diary: "On one Monday evening, I walked up with Alexander Somerville to Edgerston. We sang and repeated psalms by the way, and in our room we had a season of prayer together such as I seldom have enjoyed more."<sup>13</sup>

### The refining fire

The providence of God that brought Alexander Somerville to Edgerston, so near to Andrew Bonar, and at such a needy time, was the same providence that would lead Somerville away from the area, for both men's spiritual benefit. Just as the presence of a like-minded soul is a source of spiritual encouragement, so too is the absence of a spiritual friend a source of the divine refining process. It was in this manner that Andrew Bonar was to be refined by the departure of his bosom friend Somerville.<sup>14</sup> With none to whom he could "unbosom his heart," Andrew was forced to rely again on Christ Jesus, much like he had to do when beginning in University. As with all good things, the tendency for Bonar was to take for granted the sweet fellowship he enjoyed with Somerville. Bonar said upon reflection: "And this very great lesson I have so far learned, that God alone, in the absence of friends, with none to sympathize, can be the joy and portion of my soul."<sup>15</sup>

Later journal entries of Bonar's show the change that the Spirit of God was superintending. While yet immature, his attachment to friends led him to a sweeter communion with Christ. Later, sin would have such friends be idols competing with the Lord. The removal of this comfort of friendship caused Bonar to write in his journal, "Altogether have felt of late somewhat as I suppose *death* would make me feel in parting from friends; and often I have rejoiced in hope of our gathering together in Christ forever."<sup>16</sup> A weaning needed to happen in Bonar's heart, as it must with all good things which, when corrupted by sin, take one's eyes off of Christ.

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### The challenge of a godly life

The saints of Hebrews II are referred to as being a "great cloud of witnesses" from whom we take courage to run the race of faith, "fixing our eyes on Jesus" (Hebrews 12:1). In the same way, godly peers can be challenging to their contemporaries. Robert Murray M'Cheyne was vitally used in this capacity during his brief life. The evident holiness and "usefulness" of M'Cheyne made his illness and death all the more noticeable. Andrew Bonar, for one, was distinctly challenged in his walk of faith, as he saw a deficiency of holiness in his own life compared to that of M'Cheyne. The prospect of the potential of M'Cheyne's life that would go unrealized caused a great degree of self-examination on Bonar's part.

For example, in a New Year's Day journal entry from the dawn of his ministry, Bonar wrote:

1st January 1836.—Spent this morning in meditation and prayer. Saw most strange providence leading me here, and bringing Alexander Somerville too, and so strengthening the hands of John Purves in this dark spot. To-day no less were we reminded of this, by hearing of Robert M'Cheyne's illness, he being threatened with consumption, and obliged to return home. God gives me no small blessing in permitting me to labour for Him in health, scarcely one single pain in my body all these past years; and He has given me, too, a field of labour and usefulness seldom bestowed on any so early and given me gifts which many have not. Oh, may this year be more spent in drawing continually out of the Fountain of life.<sup>17</sup>

The life that M'Cheyne lived was a visible challenge for Bonar, exhorting him to look to Christ. Bonar saw the transparency of M'Cheyne, which allowed so much of Christ through, and it caused him to reflect upon his own opaqueness. Although comparison with others can lead to man-pleasing and self-focus, this type of compari-

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son was intended by God for the purpose of challenging a soul to more saturation with the glory of Christ and His graces. As Bonar further said:

I have been struck at reflecting upon God laying aside M'Cheyne, who seems far more completely devoted to the work than I; and it has taught me that free grace and special goodness must be the only reasons why I have been sent here with health and strength. It cannot be because of my gifts of grace in the least degree.<sup>18</sup>

The challenge of positive comparison with M'Cheyne would stir Bonar for the rest of His life, and aided the latter's purpose to "fix" his gaze upon Christ.

### For rebuke

The security found in a spiritual friendship can be a help towards openness and honesty. Since the time of Adam and Eve hiding in the garden, mankind has sought to conceal reality, or to avoid it. Only in the context of a God-aware relationship can reality be engaged honestly. The openness that existed between M'Cheyne and his fellows teaches what it is like to be confidently aware of God, secure in the righteousness and atonement of Christ, and courageous to confront sin and rebuke iniquity.

M'Cheyne knew the importance of honesty in his spiritual friendships. His friends often recalled "how faithfully and anxiously he used to warn his friends of whatever he apprehended they were in danger from."<sup>19</sup> Whether in snares of men-pleasing, sloth, coldness, or pride, M'Cheyne loved his friends and fellow labourers too much to allow them to continue in their waywardness unchecked. M'Cheyne's care for others made him committed to telling them what they didn't prefer to hear, but what indeed they *needed* to hear. In this way M'Cheyne copied the unwavering covenantal love of God for His peo-

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ple, which enabled him to rebuke those dear to him with the utmost love.

This type of "tough love" was not unique to M'Cheyne. The other friends practised it as well. Andrew Bonar, for instance, came to express concern with young W. C. Burns' view of preaching. Burns thought it was "hurtful to speak too much and too often about 'look to Jesus'," something that Bonar considered erroneous.<sup>20</sup> A few months later, Bonar would note that he "never heard William Burns preach so free a gospel."<sup>21</sup> It would seem that Bonar's choice words and concerned rebuke left an impression upon his friend, keeping him from a by-path.

Rebuke is often difficult and painful, but all so necessary in the fight against sin. The presence of loving rebuke therefore is an apt indicator of the presence of true spiritual friendship.

### **A like devotion**

During the nineteenth century, an outpouring of Christ-like piety overtook a goodly number of young ministers in Scotland. Their devotion followed a similar pattern, that is, a growing enthrallment with the Risen Lord Jesus. Robert Murray M'Cheyne modeled this enthrallment for the rest of his generation. His piety was long remembered by his friends through rich statements like this: "Ah! there is nothing like a calm look into the eternal world to teach us the emptiness of human praise, the sinfulness of self-seeking and vain-glory, to teach us the preciousness of Christ, who is called 'The Tried Stone'."<sup>22</sup> M'Cheyne's seemingly insatiable desire for communion with Christ set him apart from so many ministers of his day. Andrew Bonar records the testimony of a lady greatly affected by M'Cheyne's ministry saying:

There is something singularly attractive about Mr.



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M'Cheyne's holiness... It was not his matter nor his manner either that struck me; it was just the *living epistle of Christ*—a picture so lovely, I felt I would have given all the world to be as he was, but all the time I was dead in sins.<sup>23</sup>

Bonar himself would say of M'Cheyne: "O what I wonder at in Robert Murray M'Cheyne more than all else is his simple feeling of desire to show God's grace, and to feed upon it himself".<sup>24</sup>

M'Cheyne saw acutely his need of Christ and sweet communion with Him. As he said, "But, oh! I need much the living Spirit to my own soul; I want my life to be hid with Christ in God. At present there is too much hurry, and bustle, and outward working, to allow the calm working of the Spirit on the heart."<sup>25</sup> It was M'Cheyne's conviction that personal holiness was the pre-eminent need of ministers who desire to be instruments in revival—without it, there would only be confusion.<sup>26</sup>

Others in the circle of friends had the same kind of Christ-devoted hearts. Andrew Bonar, for example, sought hard after God and Christ. John J. Murray describes him thus:

Entering within the veil through the blood of Christ was to him the chief exercise of the Christian life. It was for that reason that "Christ and Him crucified" was at the very centre of his thoughts and of his preaching... He did not believe in any short-cut to holiness and usefulness in the work of God. He knew that the one and only way to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ was daily and hourly communion with the Father and the Son.<sup>27</sup>

Another minister of note with similar "breathings after holiness" was William Burns, the young preacher who replaced M'Cheyne at St. Peter's Free Church, Dundee. Typical of his experience are the following diary entry and prayer:

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Edinburgh, November 1<sup>st</sup>.—I spent the whole of this forenoon till half-past twelve in private with the Lord, and enjoyed more of his presence humbling and elevating my soul than I have had for some time past when alone (O! for a day every week to spend entirely in the secret of his presence!).<sup>28</sup>

O scatter the clouds and mists of unbelief which exhale afresh from the stagnant marshes in my natural heart, the habitation of dragons, and pour afresh upon my ransomed soul a full flood of thy divine light and love and joy, in the effulgence of which all sin dies, and all the graces of the Spirit bloom and breathe their fragrance!<sup>29</sup>

Burns' piety impacted many lives, among them that of Andrew Bonar who could say of Burns: "The single-mindedness, intense zeal, yet calmness, of William Burns, has often spoken to my heart with indescribable power."<sup>30</sup> What was said of Burns could easily have been said of M'Cheyne, the Bonars, Somerville or others of their friends: "[N]o one who ever spent the briefest time alone with him, or even met him casually by the way, could for a moment doubt that in the truest and fullest sense to him "to live was Christ"<sup>31</sup>.

### **A common theological fount**

The common devotion of these saints was rooted in a common faith and shared theology. They had a particularly God-centred focus that saw the entire world under the sovereign rule of God, a rule that was manifested through unmerited mercy and grace. Historically known as Calvinism, this theocentric understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures was held by these men with a vibrancy and warmth that has sometimes escaped others who have held the same belief. Their Calvinism was "experimental" as the Puritans would say, and was far from the dead orthodoxy that characterized far too many Calvinist-affirming parishes. Furthermore, these men emphasized the "free

offer of the gospel" while still holding to the electing purpose and particular redemption planned by God.<sup>32</sup> One name consistently influenced these men in shaping their understanding of the God-centred purposes for all things, that of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758).

M'Cheyne's introduction to Edwards came around March, 1832, while in the Divinity Hall in Edinburgh. He had been reading "part of the Life of Jonathan Edwards,"<sup>33</sup> and later bought his "Works."<sup>34</sup> The influence of Edwards upon M'Cheyne proved to be profound, and the latter's preaching and philosophy of ministry consistently imitated the heart religion of the former. M'Cheyne especially incorporated the study of Edwards' teachings into his own devotional life since he considered them "a mine to be wrought, and if wrought, sure to repay the toil."<sup>35</sup> Not surprisingly, the Scottish preacher would often refer to Edwards as an authority when evaluating the revivals that were sweeping through many parishes in that day.<sup>36</sup> The "Resolutions" of Edwards<sup>37</sup> and the journals of David Brainerd,<sup>38</sup> whose biography was written by Edwards, were often appealed to in order to stir up affections for Christ and zeal for his name.

Andrew Bonar also admired the fruit of the Spirit's work in Edwards. Bonar thus summarized the appeal of Edwardsean theology, which was no less than biblical Christianity: "Whitefield, Edwards, and [Asahel] Nettleton, never found themselves, nor those they addressed, hindered by these great truths; they were helped by them, not hindered. No wonder; for do not each of these doctrines [i.e. Calvinistic ones] at once turn our eye on *God himself?*"<sup>39</sup>

William Burns also fed his soul on Edwards' written corpus. Since this young minister was greatly used in revival, he often deferred to the New England divine for guidance as a shepherd in the midst of awakening.<sup>40</sup>

One may ask, "How did this Edwardsean influence get introduced?" There seems little doubt that the source must have been the

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precious mentor of their generation, Thomas Chalmers. Chalmers had been quickened in his own life through the witness of Edwards' writings, and he sought to share that same fire with his pupils.<sup>41</sup>

### **A shared burden**

One cause united the passions of these men of God—the cause of glorifying God through the salvation of sinners. Burdened by this common sense of duty, these warriors for joy desired to see masses congregated in worship of the Lamb slain. While still studying in the Divinity Hall, many of these men would have their hearts broken for the lost through their visiting of Edinburgh's lower-class districts. Thomas Chalmers would lead a prayer meeting before this visitation, and no doubt it would have been impressed upon the young ministers the need to serve those without Christ. As M'Cheyne would later say of his own parish and its "noisy mechanics and political weavers": "perhaps the Lord will make this wilderness of chimney-tops to be green and beautiful as the garden of the Lord, a field which the Lord hath blessed!"<sup>42</sup>

These men had also been awakened to the profound spiritual needs in foreign lands, and in their reading they were touched by the missionary zeal of previous generations of Scottish ministers.<sup>43</sup> William Burns, for example, would see revival under his ministry in Scotland, but would later go to China as the first missionary of the English Presbyterian Church. John Milne, another of this group of kindred hearts, would reflect on Burns' concern for the lost:

I was struck with his close walk with God, his much and earnest prayer, his habitual seriousness, the solemnizing effect which his presence seemed to have wherever he went, and his almost unvaried success in leading those with whom he conversed to anxious, practical, heart searching concern about their state in God's sight. In public, his ministrations were

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chiefly of an awakening nature, addressed to the unconverted.<sup>44</sup>

Robert M'Cheyne also agonized for the lost. A simple servant girl testified that he was, "deein to hae folk converted."<sup>45</sup>

## Conclusion

Bound by a like burden, a common theology and a similar Christ-centred devotion, Robert Murray M'Cheyne and his friends knew, through their love for one another, a foretaste of heaven. This made them long for heaven all the more. These "kindred spirits" cried together, preached together, battled the world, the flesh, and the devil together, and remained "unbosomed" together.

Like the survivors of war, all of the battlers carried with them the memory of those who had fallen before. It was precious memories of that sort which propelled them to live—and to live well. It seemed that the one who fell so early, namely M'Cheyne, left the deepest impression and was so instrumental as a friend and a means of grace. Andrew Bonar summed up the intense feeling which flooded over him at the news of Robert M'Cheyne's death on March 25, 1843. As he wrote:

Never, never yet in all my life have I felt anything like this. It is a blow to myself, to his people, to the Church of Christ in Scotland. O Lord, work, for Thine own glory's sake. Arise, O Lord, the godly ceaseth and the faithful fail... Life has lost half its joys, were it not the hope of saving souls. *There was no friend whom I loved like him... I must myself live nearer to God, and find what he found.*<sup>46</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> For a helpful listing of M'Cheyne's friends, see the appendix to L. J. Van Valen, *Constrained By His Love* (Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publica-

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tions, 2002), 489-491.

<sup>2</sup> See Norman L. Walker, *Thomas Chalmers: His Life and Lessons*. (London: T. Nelson & Sons, 1880). Chalmers advanced remarkably progressive ideas in the wake of the Disruption. Chalmers had insights on church extension (i.e. church-planting), missionary enterprise, and fund-raising for building programs, which were ahead of his time. Many of these insights would be pertinent to church planting efforts in our day.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew A. Bonar, *Memoir and Remains of Robert Murray M'Cheyne* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, 1844), 40.

<sup>4</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 40. Other members included: John Thomson, Robert K. Hamilton, John Burne, Patrick Borrowman, Walter Wood, Henry Moncrieff, James Cochrane, John Miller, G. Smeaton, Robert Kinnear, W. B. Clarke, William Laughton, Thomas Brown, William Wilson. In later years, all of the Exegetical's alumni (except one) would align themselves with the Free Church of Scotland following the Disruption.

<sup>5</sup> Andrew A. Bonar, *Diary and Life* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1984), 18-19.

<sup>6</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 39.

<sup>7</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 143.

<sup>8</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 22-23.

<sup>9</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 31.

<sup>10</sup> Van Valen lists 8 friends other than M'Cheyne. See *Constrained By His Love*, 489-491.

<sup>11</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 31.

<sup>12</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 36.

<sup>13</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 40.

<sup>14</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 41.

<sup>15</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 45.

<sup>16</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 48.

<sup>17</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 48.

<sup>18</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 38.

<sup>19</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 38.

<sup>20</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 136.

<sup>21</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 89.

<sup>22</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 93.

<sup>23</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 92.

<sup>24</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 415.

<sup>25</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 73.

<sup>26</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 71.

<sup>27</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 248.

<sup>28</sup> John J. Murray, "Introduction" to *Diary and Life of Andrew Bonar* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust), xii.

<sup>29</sup> Islay Burns, *Memoir of Wm. C. Burns* (London: James Nesbit & Co, 1870), 126.

<sup>30</sup> Burns, *Memoir of Wm. C. Burns*, 118.

<sup>31</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 273.

<sup>32</sup> Burns, *Memoir of Wm. C. Burns*, 135.

<sup>33</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 84. Bonar describes M'Cheyne saying, "He saw no inconsistency in preaching an electing God, who "calleth whom He will," and a salvation free to "whosoever will"; nor in declaring the absolute sovereignty of God, and yet the unimpaired responsibility of man."

<sup>34</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 26. M'Cheyne refers to Edwards saying, "how feeble does my spark of Christianity appear beside such a sun! But even his was a borrowed light, and the same source is still open to enlighten me."

<sup>35</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 27.

<sup>36</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 44.

<sup>37</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 127, 495.

<sup>38</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 240. To W.C. Burns, M'Cheyne writes, "Remember Edwards' magnificent resolution: "Resolved to improve afflictions to the uttermost". Spread the sail when the breeze of adversity blows and let it drive your vessel onwards on its course."

<sup>39</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 526. M'Cheyne records: "How often Brainerd mentions in his journal: "Numbers wept affectionately and to appearance unfeignedly, so that the Spirit of God seemed to be moving on the face of the assembly;" and again, "They seemed willing to have their ears bored to the doorposts of God's house and to be his servants forever!" How little is there of this divine presence and holy impression in our assemblies!"

<sup>40</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 532.

<sup>41</sup> Burns, *Memoir of Wm. C. Burns*, 571.

<sup>42</sup> Walker, *Thomas Chalmers: His Life and Lessons*, 17. See also William Hanna, ed., *The Correspondence of Thomas Chalmers* (New York: Harper Brothers Publishers, 1853). Jonathan Edwards figures highly in Chalmers' thought in a similar way to that of William Carey and Andrew Fuller. These English Baptists would in turn profoundly stimulate ideas for missionary enterprise and church extension in Chalmers. As Edwards linked Chalmers to Carey and Fuller, so too were the successive generations of Scottish pupils influenced by these divines in one way or another.

<sup>43</sup> Bonar, *Memoir and Remains*, 75.

<sup>44</sup> Alexander Duff, John Urquhart, John Adams, Robert Nesbit, William Sinclair Mackay and John Ewart were a group of "knit hearts" under the influence of Thomas Chalmers, who heightened the awareness of the missionary enterprise among the Church of Scotland in the generation before M'Cheyne and his comrades. For a biography of their lives, see S. Piggin and J. Roxborough, *The St. Andrews Seven* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1985).

<sup>45</sup> Burns, *Memoir of Wm. C. Burns*, 571.

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<sup>46</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 397.

<sup>47</sup> Bonar, *Diary and Life*, 97-98 (emphasis mine).

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