



YOUNG BULWARK



RICHARD CAMERON

Richard Cameron went to university at the age of 14. When he finished, he came back home to live with his family as the schoolteacher in the town of Falkland in Fife. It was an important job in a small town. In those days, schools were closely connected with the parish church and the teacher helped the minister with things related to the church. For a short while he also led the congregation in singing psalms in the church, since the Scottish Church never used organs or other instruments. At school the younger children learned reading, writing, and maths. Some of the older children learned Latin and other advanced subjects.

ATTENDING FIELD PREACHING

But this was a time of great trouble in the Church. The faithful ministers had been forced out of their churches by the government. They had to preach

in houses and in the fields instead. At first there were not many of these meetings in Fife but more began to be held around the time that Richard began to teach. Soon it became one of the areas in Scotland where there were lots of meetings. Many were in the area around the town in which Richard lived. Thousands of people went, rich and poor. But many were arrested and punished just for going to them.

Richard went to hear the faithful ministers preaching at the field meetings together with many others. He had an important job and it was even more noticeable to others that someone like Richard went to these meetings. It could cost him a lot because the meetings were against the law and the preachers were condemned by the government as traitors and rebels.

Richard listened to the earnest and direct preaching of a faithful preacher called John Welwood. He became firm friends with the young minister. It could be that it was Welwood's preaching of the gospel which was used in Richard Cameron's conversion to Christ.

STANDING FIRM

The local minister was shocked by Richard attending these meetings. He was not someone who stood out against the way the government were changing the church. He liked Richard and was very pleased with the work that he did. He tried to persuade him to stop going to the meetings. This did not work so he got several other ministers to speak to Richard. But he still would not change his mind. Richard must have known that he would get into trouble and could lose his job but that was not the most important thing to him. He and his family had heard a message in the field meetings that they could not get elsewhere. They had heard the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the free promise of forgiveness of sins and eternal life through trusting in the Saviour alone.

They could not abandon the meetings therefore, not even when there was severe persecution in Fife. Richard was waiting for the summons to appear in court. And it came. Richard and his family, together with many others in the town were summoned to appear in court because they had stopped going to the parish church. They were charged with going to preaching meetings in a local house and for going to field meetings. They were probably fined a lot of money for this.

Richard had to give up his job and move with his family to Edinburgh. He was

offered a job as a chaplain to a noble family who lived near the border with England. There were no children here to teach but he would have still been involved in teaching the Bible to those who lived in the house, and in leading family worship because Sir William Scot was often elsewhere on important business.

Richard was still able to write letters to John Welwood and had great encouragement from him. In one letter Welwood wrote: "you have the honour to be persecuted for righteousness sake", but he told him to be careful because "there may be several trials" ahead for him. But he told him to trust in God. "If you keep near Him, all is well". God would never change no matter if others did. "God will never fail you. He will be with you, as long as you are with Him." Richard needed that good advice because another test was coming, and it was not going to be easy.

ANOTHER TEST

The government were brutal and severe in their persecution. But they also thought of cunning ways to try to cause divisions amongst those ministers whom they had forced out of the Church. Some ministers were told that they would be allowed back into the churches as long as they agreed to obey the government. Some felt the pressure and decided to accept. They were ministers who believed the right things according to the Bible. They were not going to be forced to preach what was wrong. But they were being told that there were things they could not do. It was still a case of the government controlling the Church, which was not right. Only Christ is the Head of the Church and He has said how his Church should be ruled. It is wrong to

allow governments to control the Church, because Christ is its only king.

People had a difficult choice. Was it right or wrong to listen to these ministers who had given into the government? Had they been unfaithful to the Lord Jesus Christ? Richard Cameron thought deeply about this and he decided it would be wrong to listen to such ministers. The problem was that Sir William Scot and Lady Scot sometimes went to hear one of them. One day Richard had to go along with them to church. He walked along with them. What was Richard going to do? Would he go into the church? They got to the door and Richard said that he could not go in and left. Next day he had to answer for what he had done. He explained why he believed it would be wrong to listen to such ministers. His employers were not pleased, and he was told that he could no longer be their chaplain. Once again, Richard had been prepared to lose his job rather than go against what he knew was right.

BECOMING A PREACHER

Once more too, John Welwood was a faithful friend. "I am glad that the Lord helped you to be faithful to him in that family you were in..." "Acknowledge him in all your ways and he will direct your steps". He also encouraged Richard to think that the Lord had something more in store for him: that he himself would be a preacher of the gospel in the fields. He went back to the Borders to be a chaplain in a different place but this time without any difficulty. It brought him closer to some of the main field-preachers. Eventually he was approved by them as an official preacher.

He preached the gospel powerfully in the fields in many different parts of the

south of Scotland. But he felt it was important to warn people about going to listen to the ministers who had made an agreement with the government. Others did not like this, even some of those who were preaching in the fields. They told Richard that he should stop. It was another difficult time for him, and it seemed best to go to Holland to see some of the faithful ministers who had been banished from Scotland by the government. They welcomed him and gave him good advice. When he came back to Scotland, he found that many of those who had been preaching in the fields were finding it too dangerous. Only a few continued. So, Cameron joined them. 3,000 people came to hear God's Word preached the first time. The next Lord's Day, even more people came to hear. Even though his life was in danger, Cameron kept on preaching.

He was bold in making God's Word known. He preached comfort and encouragement tenderly as well as speaking about the way that God was being denied and disobeyed in the country. Sometimes people listened with tears in their eyes.

READY TO DIE

One time he decided that it was important to make a public stand against what the government were doing. So he and others rode into a town and read out a declaration against the king, which they then nailed to the market cross. This was very bold; some people said it was too bold. It was only going to enrage the government further, but Cameron was prepared for anything that would happen. He kept preaching but the government troops were in pursuit. Then one day 120 government dragoons

caught up with Cameron and 62 of his followers. Cameron and his friends got ready to defend themselves because they knew they would not be treated well. Cameron prayed, 'Lord, spare the green and take the ripe'. He was ready to die; he was ripe for heaven. He and the others fought valiantly but they were overcome, and most were killed. Richard Cameron was among them.

Richard Cameron was bold. He was fearless in the trials he faced. You might not face the same kinds of difficult choices. But we all face the choice of serving the Lord Jesus and if we follow and serve Him, we must be prepared to suffer. Others will try to get us to change our minds, even a little bit, to please them. Remember Moses: he had to make up his mind growing up in Pharaoh's palace. Would he suffer with God's people or would he sin? Do not be tempted to choose sin rather than Christ. It is never right to sin and to disobey Christ, no matter what the consequences may be. Others may mock or make life difficult for us, but it will only be for a very short time compared to eternity. Just like Moses, Richard Cameron looked to an eternal reward. Trusting in the Lord Jesus for help, you will be able to do that too.

FOR CROWN AND COVENANT

How long will we be forgotten?

How long will our graves be trodden upon
And our meeting places left to ruin?
Our history, carved into stone, is eroding
And our legacy, written in blood, is fading.
Our persecutors are honoured as we lie in the earth.

Some, in pieces where they left us after
We were hanged and hunted,
Drowned and drawn.
Living in fear under oppression from the earthly crown because
We believe in a heavenly King.
We bear his name as he bore our punishment.
On our flag our cause was embroidered in gold:
FOR CHRIST'S CROWN AND COVENANT,
And it was stained red.

Our hearts were once touched by secret sermons
Preached on hillsides as we gathered in our hundreds
Desperate and thirsty for the word,
But they killed our preachers.

Today, few know our names,
Lost in the innumerable dead.
We are John, James, even Margaret.
Tell me, was it all for nothing?

No, our blood lives on in those who remember;
In Christ's royal bloodline the children of the king.
We are a church now
And although our name and flag has changed
Our cause is still the same, written in gold on blue.

In these changing days, our history is suppressed
But remember us, remember our name.

We are the covenanters
And we stand with Christ.

*Lois Kennedy, 16,
Reformed Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland,
Kilraughts congregation.*

RICHARD CAMERON

KEY DATES



1647

Richard Cameron is born.



1660

Charles II becomes king.



1661

Archibald Campbell and James Guthrie are the first to be put to death.

1661

Richard Cameron goes to university in St Andrews.



1662

Faithful ministers are removed by the government.

1666

Covenanters defeated at the Battle of Rullion Green.



1669

Richard Cameron becomes a school teacher. The government make an agreement with some ministers (Indulgence).

1675

Richard Cameron becomes a chaplain.



1678

Richard Cameron begins to preach.

1679

Covenanters win the Battle of Drumclog but are defeated at Bothwell Bridge.



1679

Richard Cameron is ordained as a minister in Holland and returns to preach.

1680

Richard Cameron makes the Sanquhar Declaration, denouncing King Charles II. He is killed at Aird's Moss.



RICHARD CAMERON

WORD SEARCH



CAN YOU FIND ALL THE HIDDEN WORDS IN THIS WORD SEARCH?

F A Y T I S R E V I N U B C W
M J W S N T W Z A Q O G H G V
T I T N D P I P I E W A F R U
Y V Q O U G D O Q G P C S E Z
C S T O L T R G B L Y H N Q L
F L L G G V U G A L S R G A H
C U W A E Y Z I O I R A P L O
X C T R N V N C R F O Q E Q Y
S E Y D C M S A O B K E B P B
J L X G E S P P I O A H A Y B
P N C F I S R Q M Q M R L H N
D N A L L O H P G H S H U Q S
M S R E I D L O S Z L Z W H E
S M Q X R E H C A E R P Z S C
R I E Y V Y F A L K L A N D B

INDULGENCE
 CHAPLAIN

UNIVERSITY
 PARISH

PREACHER
 HOLLAND

FALKLAND
 SOLDIERS

DRAGOONS