

A letter from **ALISTAIR BEGG** MARCH 2023

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THERE IS NO IDEAL PLACE IN WHICH TO SERVE GOD,
SAVE IN THE PLACE IN WHICH HE SETS YOU DOWN.



That statement I attribute to Rev. Eric J. Alexander, who just a few weeks ago passed into the nearer presence of Jesus. This is a great loss to the church in Scotland, where he spent a lifetime in the Presbyterian ministry.

I knew him first from afar. I coveted every occasion when I could sit under his powerful expositions of Scripture and was humbled when one day he invited me to preach as part of a series leading up to Easter. He was for me a model of faithful, effective ministry of the Word.

It was a happy providence that the year after we moved here from Scotland, he was invited to give the Bible

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expositions at the Urbana student conference. It was a real privilege to carry his bags and serve as his minder during that time. He expounded Ephesians 1-3, which sparked many questions which were then posed in a Q and A to another of the speakers, Dr. Billy Graham. With characteristic humility, he deferred to Eric for the tougher questions on the doctrine of election!

At Basics 2002, Eric was one of three speakers, the others being Dick Lucas and Derek Prime. To describe that occasion as memorable is a classic understatement. Preaching from 1 Samuel 12, Eric reminded us all of what it means to be called by God as servants of His Word. I can almost hear his voice in this quote:

“God has called all who are within the pastoral leadership of churches in the world today to hear His words and to take them as a messenger boy to the people for whom they were intended, so that they will hear the words of God, and nothing else, and nothing less.”

There is little doubt that he was one of the finest preachers of my lifetime. In the pulpit he was masterful and in private self-effacing, jovial, and unselfish with his time in encouraging all of us as young men. For this reason, I have chosen to use this letter to answer

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the question I am often asked: "Who has influenced you in your approach to preaching?" I thank God for Eric J. Alexander and trust that the things I have heard and learned from him, I and we may be enabled to pass on to faithful men who will prove able in turn to teach others also.

With my love in the Lord Jesus,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alvin". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.