

and steady observance of the laws that govern spiritual life. His soul had yielded a rich crop from the virgin soil, and he was falling into the error of supposing that the strength of this soil could maintain itself without new accessions of nourishment. He declined a position as master of a vessel of which his brother was part owner, for he was afraid that the prolonged absence from the means of grace which a voyage at sea then entailed, would ill suit the needs of his spiritual life which required, as he well knew, all the help he could obtain from without. He, therefore, settled in Irvine, near Ayr, and toiled bravely and hard. Here he was baptised in June, 1814, but the joy of his spiritual life was far from ecstatic. He had to fight for every inch he gained.

The claims of the ministry now began to be pressed upon him by his own convictions and the advice of others. For a time he resisted, for the honor of serving God in this way seemed at first too great for one of his spiritual attainments. The decision was, however, at last formed, he having first set apart a day for fasting and prayer, and he went in 1816 to study under Dr. Steadman at Horton College (now Rawdon) in Bradford. His course lasted four years, and by neglecting the safeguards which every student needs to set, he found towards the end of his course that his zeal had somewhat abated and that he had become a prey to metaphysical doubts. This has always been a common, though distinctly unnecessary danger of student life. The means to avoid it are simple, but they must be faithfully employed, and Mr. Gilmour had not employed them. Yet "he faced his doubts and gathered strength."

After his graduation he supplied the church at Greenock for five months in the absence of the pastor. His brief ministry there was blessed to the conversion of some of the unconverted, and to the edification of the church. His experience as a sailor he also turned to good account in preaching to the crews of the ships in harbor. In February, 1821, he went to Aberdeen, and he was the first Baptist pastor who ever labored there. As he was a perfect stranger in the city and had no Board to support him, his undertaking shewed his intrepid courage, especially as he might have secured churches in England where he could have been comfortable and happy. He engaged a hall and announced