

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

**Issued by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland
Reformed in Doctrine, Worship and Practice**

*“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because
of the truth” Psalm 60:4*

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June 2014

Vol 119 • No 6

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

Moderator of Synod: Rev Neil M Ross BA, 10 Achany Rd, Dingwall, IV15 9JB.

Clerk of Synod: Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Avenue, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623, e-mail: JMacL265@aol.com.

Assistant Clerk: Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.

General Treasurer: Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283, fax 0141 332 4271, e-mail: wc.fpchurch@btconnect.com.

Law Agents: Brodies LLP, 15 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh, EH3 8AH; tel: 0131 228 3777.

Clerks to Presbyteries:

Northern: Rev G G Hutton BA, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.

Southern: Rev R MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.

Western: Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.

Outer Isles: Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.

Australia and New Zealand: Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel: 02 9627 3408.

Zimbabwe: Rev S Khumalo, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo; tel: 00263 9407131.

Zimbabwe Mission Office: 9 Robertson Street, Parkview, Bulawayo; tel: 002639 62636, fax: 002639 61902, e-mail: fpchurch@gmail.com.

Residential Care Homes:

Ballifeary House, 14 Ness Walk, Inverness, IV3 5SQ; tel: 01463 234679.

Leverburgh Residential Care Home, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520296.

Website of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland: www.fpchurch.org.uk.

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

Published by The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (Scottish Charity Number SC003545). Subscriptions and changes of address to be sent to the General Treasurer, Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283. The subscription year begins in January. Prices are on back cover. One month's notice is required for change of address. Queries about delivery of the magazines should be sent to the General Treasurer, not the printer.

Editor: Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA. Tel: 01859 520271; e-mail: kdmacleod@gmail.com. Unsigned articles are by the Editor.

Editorial Board: The Editor, Rev N M Ross, Rev D W B Somerset, Mr K H Munro.

Deadline for sending material to the Editor: The beginning of the month previous to publication.

The Gaelic Supplement (quarterly): Editor: Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0TA. Available free on request.

Youth Magazine: *The Young People's Magazine*. Editor: Rev K D Macleod BSc.

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January: First Sabbath: Nkayi; **Fourth:** Auckland, Inverness, New Canaan.

February: First Sabbath: Broadstairs; **Second:** Dingwall; **Third:** Stornoway; **Fourth:** Larne, North Uist, Zenka.

March: First Sabbath: Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Ness, Portree, Tarbert; **Third:** Halkirk, Kyle of Lochalsh; **Fourth:** Barnoldswick; **Fifth:** Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

April: Second Sabbath: Leverburgh, Maware, Staffin; **Third:** Gisborne, Chesley, Laide; **Fourth:** Glasgow, Mbuma.

May: First Sabbath: Aberdeen, Grafton, London; **Second:** Achmore, Donsa, Scourie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fourth:** Chiedza.

June: First Sabbath: Farr, Perth; **Second:** Nkayi, Santa Fe, Shiedaig; **Third:** Lochcarron, Uig; **Fourth:** Gairloch, Raasay; **Fifth:** Bulawayo, Inverness.

July: First Sabbath: Beauly; **Second:** Bonar Bridge, Staffin; **Third:** Applecross, Auckland, Fort William; **Fourth:** Cameron, Struan.

August: First Sabbath: Dingwall; **Second:** Leverburgh, New Canaan, Somakantana; **Third:** Laide; **Fourth:** Tomatin, Vatten; **Fifth:** Stornoway, Zenka.

September: First Sabbath: Chesley, Larne, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Munaka, Portree; **Third:** Tarbert; **Fourth:** Aberdeen, Barnoldswick, Ingwenya, North Uist.

October: First Sabbath: Dornoch, Grafton, Lochcarron, North Tolsta; **Second:** Gairloch, Ness; **Third:** London; **Fourth:** Edinburgh, Gisborne, Uig, Mbuma.

November: Second Sabbath: Glasgow; **Third:** Wellington; **Fifth:** Chiedza.

December: First Sabbath: Singapore; **Third:** Bulawayo, Santa Fe, Tauranga.

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Volume 119

June 2014

Number 6

The Mighty God

Again and again in Scripture, God reveals His infinite strength. Thus a Psalmist sings, “Great is our Lord, and of great power” (Ps 147:5), but he is not merely giving his own opinion or the opinion of those with whom he associated. These words were inspired by God Himself; they are His words; therefore they are entirely reliable. Ethan the Ezrahite expresses the same truth, but in the form of a question: “O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto Thee?” (Ps 89:8). And the answer to the question is so obvious that it does not need an answer. Yet, immediately afterwards, Ethan gives an example of God’s great power: “Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them”. And anyone who saw the tremendous power of the sea, in south-west England, for instance, in the early part of this year will understand that this is saying a great deal.

God’s great power is even more wonderfully revealed in creating the world and every other part of the universe. At the start of God’s inspired revelation, we are told: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Gen 1:1). Apart from a materialistic bias, people generally would surely recognise that it was impossible for such a wonderful world as ours, albeit now spoilt by sin, to come into existence except through divine power. And to study the marvellous, intricate ways that the various parts of the body function should bring us to the same conclusion.

Again, God has been revealing His power in providence; and Scripture provides us with an inspired commentary on many of God’s works in providence. Among these great works, His deliverance of the Children of Israel from Egypt stands out prominently. It is hard to imagine any course of purely natural events which would have delivered the Israelites from slavery under Pharaoh, who was so determined not to let them go even when he and his people suffered one disaster after another. Yet Israel did go free, and Pharaoh, in his mad pursuit of Israel, lost his life, as did the rest of his military forces. Rahab and the rest of the citizens of Jericho were among the many tribes who were impressed by what they had heard of God’s might as He acted on behalf of Israel. The people of Gibeon also, another of the Canaanite cities,

were so impressed by reports of what the Lord had done in Egypt that they, deceitfully, came to Joshua seeking sanctuary.

Thus the Lord speaks of Himself as “the mighty One of Israel”. In Isaiah 1:24 this expression is used to indicate how He can restrain, and punish, His enemies – as happened in Egypt. It is dangerous for people to resist God’s authority. Many may not be conscious of actively resisting His authority, yet they are acting as His enemies. This is true, in particular, of those who, outwardly, live upright lives but refuse to submit to the authority of God when He calls them to trust in Christ alone for salvation. J Julius Wood once wrote, “There are no atheists in hell. The inhabitants of that awful place are convinced, by experience and without doubt, of the existence of God, and they tremble under a dread of His displeasure and of the punishment which their wickedness merits at His hand.”¹

In the verse last referred to, God also describes Himself as “the Lord of hosts”. J A Alexander thus explains the expression’s significance: He is “the Sovereign Ruler of heaven and earth and all the host of them”.² If we think of the “hosts” of stars and other heavenly bodies, we should again be impressed by the power of God in creating them and in keeping them in existence, so that they give glory to Him by continuing to fulfil the purposes for which they were designed. We may get some sense of the greatness of creation – and therefore of the power of the Creator –if we note that, on present estimates, “a typical galaxy contains hundreds of billions of stars, and there are more than 100 billion galaxies in the observable universe”.³ And if we think of the “hosts” of holy angels, we should be impressed by the divine power that created them, so that they “excel in strength”, yet “do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word”; they are His “ministers”, or servants, doing “His pleasure” (Ps 103:20,21).

After God had created man, Satan came into the world, a fallen angel yet a powerful being. He applied his powerful mind to tempting Adam and Eve away from God and from the state of blessedness in which they had been created. In this he was successful. He is the “strong man armed” who, when he “keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace” (Lk 11:21) – while he keeps control of fallen sinners, he has them under his power; they cannot escape. But, strong as he is, he is not infinitely strong, and the Saviour points to Himself when He continues: “But when a stronger than [Satan] shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils” (Lk 11:22).

¹In *The Christians Daily Companion*, Glasgow, 1845, p 678.

²Alexander, *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, Zondervan reprint, 1978, on Isaiah 1:9.

³<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star>.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world and, whenever He came into conflict with the evil one, particularly on the cross, He overcame him. And now Jesus is sitting on the throne of glory and dividing the spoils; He is powerfully drawing sinners out of Satan's kingdom to Himself, through the Holy Spirit. Satan lacks the power to resist effectively, in spite of all the efforts he makes to keep sinners entangled in sin and away from the Saviour. See, for instance, how the risen and exalted Saviour overcame one of Satan's most promising servants, Saul of Tarsus, when he was so enthusiastically doing his master's will by persecuting the Church. Through the work of the Spirit, Saul was made willing to give up his self-righteousness, his ways of thinking and his opposition to Christ. It was a remarkable instance of divine power. On the other hand, young Timothy, for instance, may not have appeared to be a servant of Satan. But he was – until the Holy Spirit, for Christ's sake, began to work in his heart, however hidden that work was which made him a sincere follower of Christ Jesus.

This divine, powerful work has gone on, more or less, ever since. Sometimes the Lord operates on a wide scale; at other times He is pleased only to rescue a few sinners from Satan's kingdom. The Reformation period was one when the power of the Lord was clearly demonstrated in turning large numbers of sinners, from the ways of superstition and ignorance, into the narrow way to everlasting life. Many histories of the Reformation, though they supply the facts – about Martin Luther, for instance, and the 95 theses he nailed to the door of the Wittenberg church; about John Calvin and the influence he exerted from Geneva on Reformed communities elsewhere in Europe; or about John Knox as the leader of the Reformation movement in Scotland – yet one vital matter is missing. It is God's power in bringing about a saving change in these men, and His power accompanying the sermons these men preached, so that many people “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God”, as happened in Thessalonica (1 Th 1:9).

Among the volumes available in bookshops in recent years, probably only a minority would remind their readers that, beyond all the historical events which they record, is the almighty power of God bringing these events about for His own glory, for the purifying of His Church and for the good of multitudes of souls. One historian who did wholeheartedly acknowledge that God's power lay behind the events he described was J H Merle d'Aubigné; he wrote, “Whenever society enters upon a new era, it requires the baptism of faith. In the sixteenth century God gave to man this consecration from on high by leading him back from mere outward profession and the mechanism of works to an inward and lively faith.”⁴

⁴D'Aubigné, *The Reformation in England*, Banner of Truth Trust, 1962 reprint, vol 1, p 23.

A religious history written from any other point of view is not a complete presentation of the facts; it omits the most significant fact of all: the power of God working in human affairs for His own glory and the good of souls. In particular, such history lacks a proper sense of the effects of gospel preaching; this preaching not only informs the minds of the hearers about, for instance, idolatry, leading them to detest that sin and, possibly, take practical steps to remove idols from their neighbourhood – that is what secular history will record. But there is also the saving effect of gospel preaching in transforming the hearts of some, perhaps many, of the hearers as the Holy Spirit applies gospel truth to their souls, bringing them to trust in the Saviour. This is the way in which the history of the early Church is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. And even when the hand of God is not specifically mentioned in some part of Scripture – most obviously, in the Book of Esther – we are still clearly intended to see God working powerfully, as He ordered His providence at that time to protect His people the Jews.

We can also conclude from the narrative in the Book of Esther that nothing is too hard for the Lord. Jeremiah also believably understood how God had made known His power in creation. So in his dismal situation, when Judah's spiritual declension was far advanced and the Babylonian armies had invaded the land, he prayed, "Ah Lord God, behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee" (Jer 32:17).

Many people in the Western world today assume that there is no God, and they certainly live as if there is no one to whom they will have to give account at last for how they have lived; they swallow the message that evolution, rather than the Creator, is responsible for the existence of the universe and everything in it; they watch Christianity becoming weaker and less influential in many parts of the world, and they assume that Christianity will continue to dwindle away to nothing.

But this will never happen. God does exist; it is He who made the world; He will at last judge all its inhabitants by His Son. He, the all-powerful One, is ruling in heaven and on the earth; He is fulfilling all His purposes, in spite of the devil, unbelief and false religion. So when the waves of unbelief arise, God will still them, in His own good time. And there will stand at last before the throne in heaven "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (Rev 7:9), all of them delivered from Satan's evil kingdom by gracious, divine power. Let us then be encouraged to pray for God's blessing on our unbelieving generation using Jeremiah's words: "Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee".

Christ's Agony in the Garden (2)¹

A Sermon by Alexander Grierson

Luke 22:44. *And being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

2. Another ingredient in Christ's bitter cup was supplied by *Satan*. To this we find repeated references in Scripture. After the temptation in the wilderness, the devil had departed from Christ for a season; but before going out from the communion table He had intimated to the disciples that the tempter was about to return: "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me" (Jn 14:30) – that is, though there was nothing in His holy will or affections on which his sinful suggestions could take effect, Satan was about to renew his desperate assaults, that he might tempt and terrify Him into abandoning His undertaking, if he could lead Him to sin. Satan knew that his time was short and that the crisis of man's redemption was at hand.

The words of Jesus to the three disciples on first entering the garden, "Tarry ye here and watch with Me" (Mt 26:38), seem to indicate that the same dangerous and subtle enemy was near. And when Jesus returned and found them asleep, He renewed the warning in still plainer terms, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (v 41). Nor did they escape the temptation against which He warned them, for on His return from prayer He found them again and again asleep, their eyes being heavy. On such an occasion, this can surely be ascribed only to supernatural temptation. The devil seems to have exercised over the disciples some strange soporific influence, that he might have a better opportunity of tempting and terrifying their Master, as the thief seeks to bribe or deceive the watchman.

A little before, in speaking of His last sufferings, Christ had connected them with a victory that He was to achieve over Satan. "Now is the judgement of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:31). And a little afterwards, He said, in remonstrating with those that had come to apprehend Him: "But this is your hour, and the power of darkness" (Lk 22:53). From all this it seems that the devil was now permitted to collect all his forces and ply his subtlest wiles, and that the Redeemer's agony was partly caused by the mighty struggle in which He was engaged with the

¹Taken, with editing, from a posthumous volume of the preacher's *Sermons*. The first part of the sermon, including the first head and the first point of the second, appeared last month. The first head was, "The outward expressions and indications of the Saviour's agony"; the second was, "Its producing causes". The first of these producing causes was "the wickedness of men acting in concert with the treachery of Judas, and the weakness of the other disciples". The remainder of the sermon appears here.

principalities and powers of darkness. How appropriate the prophetic words of the Psalmist: “Be not far from Me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help. Many bulls have compassed Me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset Me round. They gaped upon Me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion” (Ps 22:11-13).

3. But a far more terrible ingredient in Christ’s bitter cup was from the hand of *God Himself*, His righteous indignation and holy jealousy like a consuming fire against sin. On His way to the garden, Jesus had referred to this first of all. “Then saith Jesus unto His disciples, All ye shall be offended because of Me this night; for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad” (Mt 26:31). He thus very plainly intimated that the time had now come when the dread commission granted by God Himself for the satisfaction of eternal justice was to be executed against Him: “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered” (Zec 13:7).

This was the main ingredient in that awful cup and it gave its intensity of bitterness to all the rest. Jesus lost His sense of His Father’s love, and for a season lay under His Father’s frown. The sword of Divine justice was unsheathed and wielded by the hand of omnipotence, its sharp edge was piercing the very joints and marrow; God Himself smote the Shepherd. And when God revealed Himself in the glory of His holiness to the patriarch Job, the sense that holy man had of what his sin deserved was so bitter that he exclaimed, “O that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea. . . . For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me” (Job 6:2-4); “Thou huntest me as a fierce lion, and again Thou showest Thyself marvellous upon me” (Job 10:16).

If you have yourselves ever felt the feelings of guilt in an awakened conscience, if you have been convinced of sin by the Holy Spirit, if you have felt that “the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart”, if you have thus felt that it is an evil and a bitter thing that you have sinned against the Lord, then what must have been the bitterness of that cup which sin had mingled for the Saviour? If the sting of death can sometimes appal even the unconverted sinner, if sin pained the heart of holy Job like the smart of a poisoned arrow, if the sword of the Spirit of grace pierces deep into the soul of the penitent in conviction; then how sharp and piercing must have

been the sword of God's justice when He commissioned it to awake against the Shepherd.

But here illustration fails us, for who knows the power of Jehovah's anger? Or who can adequately understand Christ's apprehension of that wrath which was due to so many millions of transgressors and which made Him exclaim, "Thy wrath lieth hard upon Me, and Thou hast afflicted Me with all Thy waves" (Ps 88:7). This formed the grand distinguishing feature in the Saviour's sufferings, which prepared the way for all the sufferings He bore. The words of Christ to Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above" (Jn 19:11), were equally true of all who took part against Him; without the permission of God, Satan could have had no power to tempt Him.

Whence then came God's permission, and why did the hand of God smite Him? There was none that could convict Him of sin; He had done no violence, neither was guile ever found in His lips. And His nature was as holy as His life. The prince of this world came and found nothing in Him. "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed" (Is 53:4,5).

Thus did Christ suffer as a sacrifice for His people's sins. While they think on the known and unknown sufferings of Christ, let them also think about their own sins – not only those they know, but those that are unknown and unnumbered. Let the eye of every soul be directed inwards; let each survey his own life and examine his own heart. And as each act of transgression passes in review, let him remember that each went to fill up that cup of affliction and misery, of wormwood and gall, from which the Saviour drank. Let them remember their sins this day, and mourn over them with godly sorrow.

3. The prayer with which Christ's agony was accompanied. From a careful examination of the words of the inspired account, it appears that Christ prayed three times in the garden, that His prayer on the second and third of these occasions was one and the same, but that the prayer He first offered was different. Let us consider them in order.

(1). Matthew tells us (26:39) that, on the first of these occasions, He fell on His face and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt". To the same effect are the words of Mark (14:35,36), "He went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me; nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou wilt."

In this first prayer He expressed His deep aversion and horror in contemplating that cup and His strong desire that it might pass away without Him drinking it, though this is coupled with the most perfect submission to His Father's will. He prayed that, if it was possible, the cup might pass away. Now, let us remember that Christ was made in all things like unto His brethren, yet without sin. But a desire to escape from suffering, if consistent with God's will, is not sinful. On the contrary, to profess a stoical indifference to suffering, such as some have gloried in, suggests an unfeeling hardness of soul. The example of Christ teaches us rather to honour the tender feelings of our nature. It inspires that gentleness and sympathy which, when the occasion calls for it, is not ashamed of tears and earnest cries and prayers.

This prayer of the Saviour indicates how gladly He would have avoided the sufferings upon which He was entering, had it been consistent with the will of God and the welfare of His people; it indicates that He was in a great strait between the weakness of nature and the counsels of Divine grace, between fear and subjection, between death and duty. The struggle in His bosom did not arise, as it did in Paul, from the contest between sin and grace, but between His holy human nature and the unparalleled sufferings to which it was exposed.

If it had been possible, the cup would have passed away in answer to His prayer. But the holy law of God had been broken, its penalty had been incurred by sin, and all the attributes of the Godhead forbade that sin should pass unpunished: His holiness, which is a consuming fire to iniquity and can never cease to be so; His inflexible justice, which will by no means clear the guilty; and His unchanging truth, which has declared that "the wages of sin is death". The cup did not pass away, but an angel was sent from heaven to strengthen Him to endure it. What a view is thus presented to us of the terrible reality of Christ's sufferings and of their tremendous necessity! Even in following out His gracious purposes of love and mercy to sinners, the all-wise God could only proceed in such a way as, instead of tarnishing, served yet more to exalt and illustrate the glory of His justice and the majesty of His law.

(2.) His prayer on the second occasion was in these words: "O My Father, if [or, since] this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, Thy will be done" (Mt 26:42). The Father indicated His will that the Son should suffer, and the Son expressed unreserved acquiescence. But there is more in these words than a mere expression of His submission to the will of God; there is also an expression of His earnest desire and prayer that God would so support and strengthen His holy humanity that it might not fail nor be discouraged, but that He might be enabled to obey, and submit to, the whole will of God

and finish the work. The Apostle, in referring to His prayer at this time, says, He "was heard in that He feared". What He feared was that His human nature might sink and be swallowed up in His great work; therefore He cried mightily unto God for aid, saying, "Thy will be done" (Mt 26:44).

"And he left them, and went away again the third time, saying the same words." Christ well knew that the glory of His Father's grace, as well as the success of His own mediatorial work and the everlasting salvation of all His people, were inseparably bound up with His finishing that cup. But He knew also that His human nature was weak; and so that it might not be overwhelmed He twice presented the prayer, "Thy will be done" – a prayer which was prophetically ascribed to Him by the Psalmist in a more expanded form: "Save Me, O God, for the waters are come in unto My soul; I sink in deep mire where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow Me. . . . Deliver Me out of the mire, and let Me not sink; let Me be delivered from them that hate Me, and out of the deep waters. Let not the waterflood overflow Me, neither let the deep swallow Me up; and let not the pit shut her mouth upon Me" (Ps 69:1,2,14,15).

This view of both prayers in Gethsemane is in entire accordance with His own words as recorded by John: "Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name" (12:27,28). His first request in this passage, "Father, save Me from this hour," corresponds with His first prayer in the garden: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me". And His second request, "Father, glorify Thy name," corresponds with His second and third prayer in the garden: "If this cup may not pass away from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done".

What the Apostle writes to the Hebrews confirms and illustrates, in the most pointed manner, this view of Christ's latter and twice-offered prayer, that it was neither a request that the cup might pass from Him, nor a mere expression of His submission and acquiescence in the Father's will, but an earnest desire that His will might be done and that His humanity might be strengthened for the endurance of it: "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared. Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (5:7-9).

Yes, blessed be God, both prayers were answered: the first, not in the withdrawal of the cup, but in the visit of the angel; and the second, in the strength imparted to sustain Him in His sufferings, in the completion of His great work

by His obedience unto death, in the Father's acceptance of His sacrifice, in His being raised again on the third day, and in His exaltation to glory. It is being answered still whenever a sinner is converted to God, and it will be finally and fully answered in the everlasting salvation of all His people.

Now, *in conclusion*, let us enquire what practical instruction we may gather from this whole subject. The whole subject is intensely practical. I can but suggest two or three inferences for your own after-reflection.

1. How alarming ought the subject to be to impenitent sinners! Go in your thoughts to Gethsemane if you have been stifling your convictions, listening to the suggestion of the tempter, "Ye shall not surely die", and quietening your souls with the idea that God is too merciful to be just, so that you may still enjoy the pleasures of sin – expecting, in the end, to find God very indulgent. Go and see the Holy One agonising in sweat and blood and hear His earnest appeal, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me". Yet that cup does not pass, because it was *not* possible that it should do so; surely there is enough in this solemn scene to convince us all that the idea of God being indulgent to sin and pardoning the finally impenitent is the most vain and groundless thought that was ever harboured by a deceived heart. Unless we repent and believe on the name of Him who drank that bitter cup on behalf of His people, the bitterest of all the ingredients in that cup, the wrath of God due to us for sin, is yet in store for us.

If God spared not His own Son, impenitent sinner, "take heed lest He also spare not thee". Rather, if these things be done "in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" "For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and He poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them" (Ps 75:8). To be racked with the remorse of a guilty conscience and tormented by inward corruption; to be plunged into the darkness of absolute despair and to have God for ever as their enemy; these are some of the ingredients of that cup which is reserved for the wicked, and of which they must drink through an endless eternity. If there was any right apprehension of these things, every Christless sinner would be pricked to the heart, a cold sweat would break out over all his frame, and he would exclaim in the bitterness of his soul, "What must I do to be saved?" And remember that these things are real and near at hand, whether we believe them or not.

2. What a solid ground of hope is here laid for every truly penitent sinner, for all who are willing to forsake their sins and trust in the mercy of God through Christ! For in the sufferings of Christ we see not only the terrible nature and tremendous consequences of sin, but we see also the sure ground upon which God is both able and willing to bestow forgiveness on all that

come to Him in Christ's name. If Christ agonised in sweat and blood, not only for His disciples, in spite of all their weakness, but also for thousands and millions who were yet in their enmity, will He now reject those who come to Him with a humble and penitent heart? "Come unto Me," He says, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

3. What a source of consolation and what a call to renewed contrition, as well as devout love and gratitude, does this subject present to the people of God! For Christ bore the chastisement of their peace, and by His stripes they are healed. When you meditate on the sufferings of Christ, surely to contemplate His great drops of blood may well move you to shed bitter tears over those sins which caused His agony. Yet even during his deepest self-abasement, the believer may well cherish everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, for the same justice, which rendered it impossible that the cup of wrath should pass away from the Saviour, renders it equally impossible that this cup, now that it has been exhausted by your Surety, should ever be presented to you. Indeed the sufferings of Christ are to the believer the sure pledge of every blessing. If God "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up" to the death for us all, "how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

I have read of someone who asked a friend to remind him, when he should be in the agonies of death, of Christ's agony and bloody sweat. When this was done, he died in perfect peace. O that when we experience the cold and clammy sweat of death on our own mortal bodies, a believing view of our Saviour's sufferings may assure us of His continued sympathy, protection and love! May we, with hearts full of hope and resignation, go to be with Him and to be like Him – His agony in the garden exchanged for a throne of glory, and our own manifold temptations, sins and trials for the holy and everlasting blessedness of heaven!

The Covenant of Grace¹

3. What Is Involved in the Covenant? (1)

Rev Roderick Macleod

We have considered briefly the fact that there is a gospel feast. This great feast was devised by divine wisdom to provide salvation for sinners perishing in sin.

What we are keen to investigate now is the preparation for this feast. Some

¹Last month's section of this Conference paper described the covenant as providing a feast.

agreement must have been made to bring the Son of God to the agonies He endured in our nature on the cursed tree on Calvary. The gospel is a prepared feast. In the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments we find that the Persons of the glorious Trinity are, from eternity, bound to one another by voluntary, inviolable pledges to provide the gospel feast.

One finds that the third Person is principally (though not exclusively) involved in the application to elect sinners of the provisions of the Covenant – such as effectual calling and sanctification. John 3:8 is one of a class of texts which teach this: “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit”. The Scriptures speak of the first Person and the second Person of the Trinity as principally (though not exclusively) involved in making the covenant. In the view of many judicious commentators, one of a class of texts which teach this point is Zechariah 3:13: “The counsel of peace shall be between them both”.

At this point, it is necessary to say that while this is a holy arrangement between divine Persons, the language we use to describe it is human. We can only speak of God by way of analogy. The divine nature is infinite, eternal and unchangeable and so it transcends our capacity to think of it as it actually is. However, because God made man in His own image, it is possible for us to think about God. For example, to think of the infinite power of God, we must consider the power of man and then think of it without any limits or defects whatever. We must not think that analogy is an inaccurate way of thinking about divine things. The Holy Spirit teaches us to think of this covenant in this way – as made in eternity, between divine Persons. Furthermore, we can form no proper idea as to this arrangement unless God reveals it to us. It is spoken of in the Bible in terms of a covenant: covenant parties contracting, a covenant proposal, covenant conditions to be met, and covenant promises to be performed.

It is clear that Ethan speaks about the making of this Covenant, or preparing the gospel feast, when he says: “Mercy shall be built up for ever” (Ps 89:2). Do we ask how this is to be done? God answers, “I have made a covenant with My chosen”. What kind of covenant? One where Jehovah has laid the whole burden of redemption on One that is equal to the undertaking, “I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people” (v 19). He, who alone can claim, “Thou art my Father” by nature, would cry in the nature that was doomed to die: “Thou art My God alone”. And as One acting by faith on the faithfulness of His Father to the promises of the covenant that had been made with Himself as Surety, He would say, “Thou art the Rock of My salvation” (v 25). We will proceed by

comparing this greatest of all contracts ever made with some general features of covenant agreements.

1. *Parties*. There are parties in a covenant. The preparation of the gospel feast is presented in the Scriptures as a proposal made by the Father, to which the Son consented, about a great spiritual feast for perishing sinners. We call this the making of the covenant of grace. So the covenanting, or contracting, parties entering into a voluntary agreement to prepare the gospel feast are: (1) the Father, representing the Persons, claims and prerogatives of the holy Trinity and (2) the Son of God, representing His people. Let us carefully observe that it is essential to our understanding of the covenant of grace to distinguish between making this covenant in eternity, and administering it in time. The glory of the gospel feast is lost if we forget that it was made in eternity. The covenant of grace was agreed by the parties from eternity.

There are other ways of speaking about the making of the covenant of grace – “the preparation of the feast” – but they all take the form of a covenant agreement. Throughout the history of teaching and preaching this doctrine, some able theologians have chosen to refer to two covenants for the salvation of God’s elect. They have called the making of the covenant by the Father and the Son *the covenant of redemption*, and they have used the expression *the covenant of grace* to refer to its administration in the Church. Not only the eminently-godly John Brown of Haddington (whose theology we present here) but the judicious Thomas Boston, Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine and other eminent theologians on both sides of the Atlantic believed that there was no need to speak of two covenants about salvation.

As there was *one* legal covenant of works, made with the first Adam, and with all his seed in him, so there is one evangelical covenant of grace made with the last Adam, and with all His seed in Him. A federal union brought all Adam’s seed into the bond of the covenant of works with him. So a federal union to Christ brings us into the bond of the covenant of grace with the last Adam. That union is effected by (1) an act of union on the side of Christ, by which He binds Himself in a vital and saving union to the sinner by His Holy Spirit and (2) a consequent act of faith on the sinner’s part – receiving Christ and all His salvation according to the terms of free and sovereign grace, without money and without price.

The arguments to support the one-covenant view are as follows. (1.) The Scriptures only speak of two covenants for life and happiness: the covenant of works made with the first man in the Garden of Eden and the covenant of grace made with the the Son of God in eternity. (2.) Salvation of sinners is by “the blood of the covenant” (singular) not covenants (plural). (3.) There

are as many covenants about life and salvation as there are Adams. Paul speaks of two Adams: the first Adam and the last Adam.

2. *Proposal.* In a covenant, matters are proposed and consented to. From eternity, the triune God purposed to make man. He decreed to permit the fall of mankind in Adam. The electing love of God the Father fell on a number of the fallen race of mankind. He proposed their salvation to His eternal Son, in the form of a covenant. This proposal was that the Son of God would become the last Adam, to represent God's elect as His seed and that He would act as Surety for them. A surety engages to pay a debt or perform a duty instead of another, according to a pre-arrangement. To this proposal the second person of the Trinity consented.

Isaiah 53 foretells the sufferings of the Son of God in our nature and describes them as the sufferings of a surety. He is suffering in the place of others. He consents – binds Himself in His love – to be held entirely responsible for the sins of His people. It is suffering at the hands of the Father, who is upholding the claims of the Godhead. “It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief” (v 10). The infinite justice of God cannot be satisfied and the feast is not “ready” if the stroke due to His people does not fall on the Surety. The claims of that justice against the sins of all the election of grace must be exhausted. The vengeance of offended holiness must fall without mercy on the divine Surety. The infinite grace of God desires it. The infinite holiness of God demands it. The infinite wisdom of God designs it. The infinite justice of God delivers it. The Son of God receives it.

In His unsearchable grace, the Surety is to be “brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb” (v 7), so He shall be silent in His love and joy over His people with singing (Zep 3:17), when He restores that which He took not away (Ps 69:4). Psalm 40 expresses the strong love of the Son of God in response to the covenant proposal of suretyship when He says, “Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened” (or, as Paul says in Hebrews 10:5, “a body hast Thou prepared Me”): “burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart” (vv 6-8).

All this suffering was required of the divine Surety as the condition of the covenant of grace. All spiritual blessings mentioned in the promises of the Word, as bestowed freely on sinners, depend on the Lord Jesus Christ consenting to exhaust the claims of holy justice for those the Father gave to Him. The Old Testament sacrifices could not take away sin. They were not

designed to do that. They are not the gospel feast designed to slake the thirst of the guilty sinner, perishing for want of pardon. They were to point to the sacrifice of Christ. In Psalm 40, Christ declares that this is the end for which He came: He makes known the abrogation of the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament and introduces the astonishing doctrine that He, Jehovah the Son, would become the servant of Jehovah the Father, in order to offer Himself as a sacrifice to satisfy the claims of justice against the sins of those He died for, according to the proposal made in eternity.

Prayer¹

5. Its Effects

Charles Hodge

Prayer as a Means of Grace. Means of grace are what God has ordained to communicate the life-giving and sanctifying influences of the Spirit to the souls of men. Such are the Word and sacraments, and such is prayer. Every cause has an end for which it was appointed; prayer is thus the condition on which the blessings of God, providential or spiritual, are bestowed. But it also brings us near to God, who is the source of all good. Fellowship with Him, converse with Him, calls into exercise all gracious affections, reverence, love, gratitude, submission, faith, joy and devotion. When the soul thus draws near to God, God draws near to it, manifests His glory, sheds abroad His love and imparts that peace which passes all understanding. Christ says, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him" (Jn 14:28). In such fellowship, the soul must be holy and must be blessed.

The Power of Prayer. The course of human events is not controlled by physical force alone. There are other powers at work in governing the world. There is the power of ideas, true or false; the power of truth; the power of love and human sympathy; the power of conscience; and, above all, the Supreme Power, which is an intelligent, voluntary, personal power, co-operating with and controlling the operations of all creatures, without violating their nature. This Supreme Power is roused into action by prayer, in a way analogous to that in which the energies of a man are called into action by the entreaties of his fellow men.

This is the doctrine of the Bible; it is perfectly consistent with reason and is confirmed by the whole history of the world and especially of the Church.

¹Taken, with editing, from Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, vol 3. Last month's article considered "different kinds of prayer": secret, social and public. This is the final piece.

Moses by his prayer saved the Israelites from destruction; at the prayer of Samuel, the army of the Philistines was dispersed. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." These facts are referred to by the Apostle James, to prove that the prayer of a righteous man avails much. Paul constantly begged his Christian brethren to pray for him, and directed that prayer should "be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty".

This of course supposes that prayer is a power. Queen Mary of Scotland was not beside herself when she said that she feared the prayers of John Knox more than an army. Once admit the existence of a personal God and His constant control over all things outside of Himself, and all ground for doubt as to the efficacy of prayer is removed. It then remains to us, as it has been to the people of God in all ages, the great source of spiritual joy and strength, of security for the present and confidence for the future. Psalm 46 still stands: "The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge".

Family Worship¹

C H Spurgeon

In families, when you see that things are wrong, it is often well just to call the household together and say, "We must draw near to God with special earnestness, for we are going astray. We have not given up family prayer, but we must now make it special, and with double zeal draw near to God."

I am afraid that some of you neglect family prayer. If you do, I am sure it will work evil in your households. The practice of family prayer is the castle of Protestantism. It is the grand defence against all attacks by a priestly caste who set up their temples and tell us to pray there, and pray by their mediation. No, our houses are temples, and every man is a priest in his own house. This is a brazen wall of defence against superstition and priestcraft. Family prayer is the nutriment of family piety, and woe to those who allow it to cease.

I read the other day of parents who said they could not have family prayer, and someone asked this question: "If you knew that your children would be sick through the neglect of family prayer, would you not have it? If one child

¹Taken with editing from a sermon on Genesis 35:1, entitled "Family Reformation", in the *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol 24.

was smitten down with fever each morning that you neglected prayer, how then?" O then they would have it.

"And if there was a law that you should be fined five shillings if you did not meet for prayer, would you find time for it?" Yes.

"And if five pounds were given to all who had family prayer, would you not by some means arrange to have it?" Yes.

And so the enquirer went on with many questions, and wound up with this: "Then it is but an idle excuse when you, who profess to be servants of God, say that you have no time or opportunity for family prayer?"

Should idle excuses rob God of His worship and our families of a blessing? Begin to pray in your families and, especially if things have gone wrong, get them right by drawing near to God more distinctly.

Did I hear you say, We do not want to be formalists? No, I am not afraid you would be. I am afraid of you neglecting anything that tends to the good of your household and your own spiritual growth. Therefore I beg you to labour at once to acquaint yourselves with God and be at peace. Draw near to the Lord again, more thoroughly than you have done before, for it is the only way by which the backslidings of persons and families are at all likely to be corrected. God grant a blessing with these words by the power of the Holy Ghost!

Every Need Supplied by Christ¹

Ralph Erskine

In Christ we may see God as He is clothed with all the relationships that can contribute to the happiness of a sinner. What friend or relation do you want, O sinner? Do you want a father to pity you? Behold, here you have an everlasting Father, for that is His name (Is 9:6), and "in Him the fatherless findeth mercy". Do you want a mother to be tender to you? Behold, motherless children may have their losses made up here; when father and mother forsake you, here is one to take you up (Ps 27:10). He can be a thousand times better to you than father and mother, and manifests more love than the tenderest mother that ever was; "Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yea, she may forget: yet will I not forget thee" (Is 49:15).

Do you want a husband? What would you think to be married with the heir of all things? Why, if the ear of faith is opened, you may hear Him saying, "Thy maker is thy Husband" (Is 54:5). And again, "I will betroth

¹An extract from *The Works of Ralph Erskine*, vol 3. The six-volume set of Ralph Erskine's *Works* is again available from Free Presbyterian Publications.

thee unto Me for ever". If you say, How will it be consistent with the justice of God for Him to marry such a black bride? Why, He says, "I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness". If you say, How will it be consistent with the wisdom, mercy, truth and faithfulness of God to betroth the like of me? He says, "I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgement, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord" (Hos 2:19). Thou shalt know God in Christ, who can betroth thee to Himself, and yet be infinitely just and wise and merciful and faithful in doing so; because mercy and truth have met together in Christ, the glorious Bridegroom; they strike up a match together, and embrace each other, that there might be nothing to hinder the match between Christ and you.

Do you want a proper match then, O sinner; or a suitable help, poor bankrupt, who have run up such arrears to the law and justice of God? Is not he that hath unsearchable riches a fit match for you? Poor dying creature, who will be food for worms in a little time, here is a living Head for you, that can make you live for ever. O mortal worm, here is an immortal husband for you. Poor changeable creature, here is an unchangeable match for you, Christ, "the same yesterday, today, and for ever". Do you want someone to love you? Are you an outcast, that reckons yourself despised by all the world, so that no one cares for you or loves you? Behold an infinitely loving and lovely Jesus tendering His love to you, saying, I will heal your backslidings, and love you freely (see Hos 14:4). And He is seeking your conjugal love, saying, "My son, give Me thine heart".

Do you want a leader through the dark and difficult steps of your way, a guide, a director and counsellor, in whatsoever affair you are engaged in, wherein you need to be directed? Here is the Wonderful Counsellor, who says, "I will lead the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight" (Is 42:16). Do you want a shepherd to feed you? Or a captain to fight your battles for you? Do you want a physician to heal you when in sickness? Do you want a refiner and purifier, when you are in the furnace, to purge away your dross? Behold, God in Christ has all the happy relationships you can desire.

As certainly as God is unchangeable, the unjustified sinner must die.

Religion does not at once deliver us out of trouble; on the contrary, it is good for us to be afflicted; but it comforts us in tribulations, through which we enter the kingdom of God, enabling us to bear with patience our many sorrows and to resist with courage our many temptations, by the assurance that God loves us now, and has provided for us an eternal rest hereafter.

George W Bethune

Causes of the Scottish Reformation (1)¹

D Hay Fleming

Until the spring of 1559, the Church in Scotland, as viewed outwardly, was a powerful institution, covering the whole land with an organised network. It was bound together by an elaborate gradation of offices, endowed with enormous wealth and wielding almost unlimited power. Through the long centuries it had grown in influence, wealth and might, until its top seemed almost to reach to heaven; but it was rotten within and doomed to collapse ignominiously before the approaching storm. The decay had been gradual, and its symptoms had been manifested in the immorality, ignorance, irreverence, profanity, credulity, imposture, and greed of the clergy. This corruption had been helped, not hindered, by the inordinate wealth of the Church; and the hope of sharing in this wealth may have made some needy nobles decide on their part in the final struggle.

That struggle might have come sooner, save for the awe with which the people regarded an institution they believed to be divine, and save for those who kept their garments clean amid surrounding corruption, and save for the memory of the good derived in earlier generations from the Church – the influences which had made for peace, civilisation and culture. The crisis might have been delayed much longer had it not been for the books and pamphlets, the preaching and teaching which opened the eyes of the people to the enormities of the system under which they were groaning.

When disgusted and repelled by the corruption, ignorance and greed of the clergy, the Scots might have lapsed into religious apathy, infidelity, or heathenism had it not been for counteracting agencies which were at work. There was a deeply-rooted, steadily-growing opposition to the medieval corruption of doctrine, as well as to the moral impurity of the Church. The teaching and influence of the Lollards, though long hidden, had never ceased to operate. Though many of them may have been illiterate, they were not all so. Those who cherished the little manuscript books of Wycliff must have had some learning; and Murdoch Nisbet² must have had more learning than many of the clergy, otherwise he would not have been able to make his copy of the New Testament.

Light came from the Continent in unexpected ways. During one of the

¹An edited extract from Fleming's *The Reformation in Scotland*. Fleming (1849-1931) wrote extensively on the subject, believing that it was a work of God.

²Nisbet was a native of Hardhill in Ayrshire; about 1520 he made a copy for himself of Wycliff's translation of the New Testament. A Covenanting descendant, John Nisbet, was hanged at the Grassmarket in Edinburgh in 1685. The Lollards were followers of Wycliff.

Duke of Albany's visits to Scotland, among his men-at-arms was Monsieur de la Tour, whom the French Parliament afterwards committed to the flames, in the pork market near Paris, for having Lutheran errors in Scotland. Before being burned, he saw his servant scourged and deprived of his tongue. The servant, who also had been a Lutheran but had recanted, died of his punishment. La Tour's martyrdom took place on September 26, probably in 1527. One would like to know more about this steadfast man-at-arms who, even before Patrick Hamilton, suffered a cruel death for doing what he could to spread the truth in Scotland.

It is quite likely that there were more Lutherans among Albany's men-at-arms and their servants, and no one can now tell how much they did, by precept, example and the circulation of pamphlets, to help the cause which had been kept alive in Scotland by the Lollards of Kyle.³ That cause was quietly but greatly reinforced at the close of the first quarter of the sixteenth century by the importing of Lutheran books and Lutheran heresies, and still more by Tyndale's translation of the New Testament.

Even in those days, when so few were educated, those in authority feared the power of the press. Hence the Act of Parliament in 1525 forbidding the importing of Lutheran books. The Act, for the King's "zeal and love" to "the Christian faith and the holy kirk", was re-enacted in 1535 with this addition, that none of his subjects should have, use, keep, or conceal any heretical books, but deliver them up to their bishops, within 40 days, under pain of imprisonment and forfeiture of their goods. That such Acts did not prevent the publication of books and ballads concerning religion and the clergy is admitted in the preamble of an Act Parliament of 1 February 1552 which states that there are "divers printers in this realm that daily and continually print books concerning the faith, ballads, songs, blasphemous rhymes" not seen by the superiors. It was therefore ordained that in future no printer presume "to print any books . . . either in Latin or English tongue" until they were examined by some wise and discreet persons appointed by the bishops.

This legislation was not intended to be a series of mere threats and warnings. The Act of 1525 was passed on July 17, and on August 7 the king wrote to the Sheriff of Aberdeen and his deputies, informing them that the Bishop of Aberdeen, Gavin Dunbar, had complained to him that there were strangers and others within his diocese who had "books of that heretic Luther" and favoured his errors and false opinions. The sheriffs were charged to publish the recent Act of Parliament, to make inquisition for such persons and to confiscate their goods for the use of the king. It was probably for a breach of the stringent Act of 2 June 1543 that John Scrymgeour, Constable and

³A district in Ayrshire.

Provost of Dundee, was charged under pain of treason in 1547, to apprehend “John Scott, printer, and to bring and present him within the castle of Edinburgh . . . to be punished for his demerits and faults”.

The reiterated and determined attempts to suppress these publications show that their influence was being felt in the country. Some of them were printed on the Continent, some in England, and some in Scotland. John Gau’s *Right Way to the Kingdom of Heaven* was printed at Malmo, in Sweden, in 1533. In the same year the tracts and books of Alesius⁴ began to be printed in Germany. In 1536 a tract entitled, *A comfortable exhortation of our most holy Christian faith and her fruits written (unto the Christian brethren in Scotland) after the pure Word of God*, was printed in Paris. The author, John Johnstone, describes himself as “a humble professor of holy divinity”. Sir David Lyndsay’s *Tragedy of the Cardinal*, with an account of *The martyrdom of Master George Wysehart* issued from a press in London about the end of 1547. Wishart’s translation of *The Confession of the Faith of the Swiss* was printed in or about 1548. *An Admonition or Warning that the faithful Christians in London . . .* was the first of Knox’s writings to be printed.

Mbuma Zending Meeting 2014

Rev J R Tallach

On April 26, a warm spring day, some 2500 people from a variety of Reformed denominations in Holland gathered in ’s Hertogenbosch for the annual Mbuma Zending meeting. Three addresses were delivered in the morning, including one by Rev M Mloyi from Zenka, and three in the afternoon, including a story for the children. I briefly passed on the greetings and good wishes of the home Church to the meeting.

A matter referred to by all the speakers was the passing away of Ds de Jong, past chairman of Mbuma Zending, who had been interred the previous Tuesday – Rev John MacLeod, Convener of the Jewish and Foreign Mission Committee, being present. Ds de Jong had shown himself over many years to be a consistent friend of our Mission and will be greatly missed.

A considerable amount of work had evidently been done in preparation for the meeting and this spoke of the zeal of many for the Lord’s cause in Africa. The collection of around €34 000 showed the same generous concern.

An interesting meeting took place in our hosts’ home that Saturday evening. The minister (Ds F van de Veen), office-bearers and some members of

⁴The Latinised form of Alexander Alane’s surname. He was a Scot who embraced the Reformation, spending much of his life in England and on the Continent.

the Old Reformed Congregation in Utrecht gathered with us, and spiritual questions – including some about conversion and the call to the ministry – were put to the visiting ministers.

The next day Mr Mloyi and I took the services in Utrecht for Ds van de Veen who is recovering from cardiac surgery. Our interpreter was a deacon of the congregation, Mr van Haaften. On Monday we were taken by Mr W A Barth to see Ds de Jong's widow.

My wife and I were warmly received by all during our visit and we particularly remember the hospitality extended to us in the homes of Mr and Mrs E Barth and Mr and Mrs G Boonsaaijer. We found these few days full of interest and felt a measure of unity of spirit and of the bond of peace with our Dutch friends.

Address by Dr Tallach. Mr Chairman, I bring the warm greetings of the Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland to you all at this meeting.

The death of Ds de Jong was a sad event for all of us who have the good of our Missions at heart, and his life illustrates the common faith we profess. Isaiah 35 speaks of “a highway . . . and a way . . . and it shall be called The way of holiness”. The entrance to this way is the strait gate of Matthew 7:13: “Enter ye in at the strait gate . . . because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life”.

The entrance to this way is the strait gate of Christ alone, by faith alone in the Word of God alone. The way continues as it begins, narrow and distinctive, in relation to the wide gate and the broad road of the world. This illustrates the singular way of the believer's progress in the world, walking by faith in the promises of God that are yea and amen in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church only comes up out of the wilderness as she leans on her beloved. Ds de Jong was buried on Tuesday of this week and this sad last duty reminds us that the end of this way of holiness is one for all of His people:

“They shall be brought with gladness great, and mirth on every side,
Into the palace of the King, and there they shall abide” (Ps 45:15).

“The righteous hath hope in his death” (Prov 14:32).

These things unite believers one with another, wherever or whenever their way in providence is set by the Lord.

On behalf of the home Committee, I most sincerely thank all of you here concerned with our Mission in Africa, for your work, prayers and financial support for our common cause.

When the churches cease to pray for ministers, ministers will no longer be a blessing to the churches.

Gardiner Spring

Rules for Preaching Christ (1)¹

Thomas Brooks

[1 .] Jesus Christ must be preached *plainly and clearly*, so that the least educated may understand what ministers say about Christ. They must preach Christ for edification, and not to work admiration, as too many do in these days. Paul was excellent at this kind of preaching (1 Cor 14: 18,19). He had rather speak five words to edification than ten thousand words to work admiration in ignorant people. So, he said, “My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (1 Cor 2:4,5). As if he should say, Such preach with little power who come with excellency of speech or with the enticing words of man’s wisdom. Ah, there are many (I speak it with grief, and to their shame) that delight to soar aloft in obscure discourses, to express themselves in new-minted words and phrases, and to show flashes of wit – and all to work admiration in the ignorant.

Such preachers are as clouds and painted-glass windows that hinder the light from shining in upon souls, that hinder the Sun of righteousness from breaking forth in His beauty and glory on the spirits of poor creatures. Woe unto these men in the day when such souls shall plead against them, when they shall say, Lord, here are the persons whose office and work were to make dark things plain, and they have made plain things dark and obscure, that we might rather wonder at them than in any way profit by them.

Aaron’s bells were of pure gold. Our whole preaching must be consistent with Scripture, or we and our works must burn together. The profoundest prophets accommodated themselves to their hearers’ capacities. Holy Moses covered his glistening face with a veil when he was to speak to the people. Yes, it is noticeable that the Gospel-writers used common language many times for their hearers’ sake. But above all, it is most noticeable that, when God the Father spoke from heaven, who is the great Master of speech, He made use of three different texts of Scripture in one breath: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him” (Mt 17:5); you have the scriptures: “This is My beloved Son” (Ps 2:7); “In whom I am well pleased” (Is 42:1); “Hear Him” (Deut 18:15).

All of these may direct them to blush who disdain the stately plainness of the Scriptures! O how unlike God such preachers are that think they may correct the divine wisdom and eloquence with their own immaturity, vanity,

¹Taken, with editing, from Brooks’ *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ*, in *Works*, vol 3. He gives 11 rules in all; they are spread over three articles.

novelty and sophistry! Jesus Christ Himself, the great Teacher of the Church, teaches this lesson: “With many such parables spake He the word unto them, as they were able to hear it” (Mark 4:33), not as He was able to have spoken. He could have expressed Himself at a higher rate than all mortals can! He could have been in the clouds. He knew how to knit such knots that they could never untie, but He would not. He delights to speak to His hearers’ shallow capacities. So: “I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now” (Jn 16:12). He that does not speak to the hearers’ capacities is as a barbarian to them and they to him.

“He is the best teacher,” says Luther, “that preaches . . . most plainly.” He is not the best preacher that tickles the ear or that works on the fancy, but he that breaks the heart and awakens the conscience. It is sad to consider how many preachers in these days make plain truths difficult and easy truths hard! They darken “counsel by words without knowledge” (Job 38:2). But how unlike they are to Christ, to the prophets and the apostles, I will leave you to judge. Nor would I have, for all the world, their accounts to make up; I will leave them to stand or fall to their own Master. God loves, owns and crowns plain preaching. Though some account it foolishness, yet to them that are saved it is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:20-30). I have stayed longer on this first direction because of its great usefulness in these deluding days.

[2.] As they must preach Christ plainly, so they must preach Christ *faithfully* (Prov 13:17; 25:13; Job 33:23). Ministers are stewards (1 Cor 4:2), and you know it is the duty of a steward to be faithful in his stewardship, to give to every man the portion that is due to him – cheering up those hearts that God would have cheered, and weakening those wicked hands that God would have weakened, and strengthening those feeble knees that God would have strengthened. Ministers are ambassadors, and you know it is the great business of ambassadors to be very faithful in transmitting their master’s messages. God looks more to, and is affected more with, a minister’s faithfulness than anything else. A great voice, an affected tone, studied ideas and silken expressions may attract and captivate poor weak souls; but it is only the faithfulness of a minister in his ministerial work that has influence with God: “Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Mt 25:23).

This is a joy too big to enter into you, therefore you must enter into it. This was Paul’s glory, that he had not shunned to declare unto them “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). Neither fear nor favour swayed him one way or another, but he was faithful in his Master’s work. And usually God crowns him and his labours most, and sends most fish into his net, that

is most faithful though he be less skilful – that has more of the heart in the work, though he has less of the brain.

Plutarch² tells of a maid who was about to be sold in the market. A merchant asked her: “Will you be faithful if I buy you?” “Yes,” said she, “that I will even if you do not buy me.” So ministers must be faithful, even if God should not buy them, even if He should not encourage them in their work in a particular way. Their very feet are beautiful who are faithful, and their message most comforting to those that sigh and mourn, that labour and languish, under the sense of sin and fear of wrath (Is 52:7).

[3.] They must preach Christ *humbly* as well as faithfully. We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor 4:5). Paul does not compliment as the men of the world do, “Your servants, sir,” but he spoke as it was, for there are no greater servants than those that are servants to the souls of men for Jesus’ sake. So John the Baptist was very humble in exercising his ministry: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (Jn 3:30).

Luther used to say that a minister must take heed of bringing three dogs into the pulpit: pride, covetousness and envy. The friends of the Bridegroom must not woo and sue for themselves but for the Bridegroom. Dispensers of the gospel are the Bridegroom’s friends, and they must not speak one word for the Bridegroom and two for themselves, as has been the trade of many weak and worthless men. It is the greatest glory of a minister in this world to be high in spiritual work and humble in heart. Vain glory is a pleasant thief; it is the sweet spoiler of spiritual excellencies. Paul was very humble in the exercise of his ministry: none so high in worth as he, and none so humble in heart as he. Though he was the greatest among the apostles, yet he accounts himself less than the least of all saints. Indeed he counted it not only his duty but his glory to be a servant to the weakest saints: “To the weak became I as weak”. “Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?” (1 Cor 9:22, 2 Cor 11:29).

Book Review

The Christian’s Great Enemy, A Practical Exposition of 1 Peter 5:8-11, by John Brown, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 100 pages, £5.50, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

This book provides an exposition of 1 Peter 5:8-11: “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about . . .”. It

²A Greek historian who died in 120 AD.

is an extract from the author's much larger work on 1 Peter which was previously published by the Banner of Truth but is now out of print. The author is the John Brown who was a United Presbyterian minister in Edinburgh in the nineteenth century and was a grandson of John Brown of Haddington. The author was not as sound doctrinally as his grandfather; he took an Amyraldian view of the extent of the atonement, but in this little volume he is fully scriptural in his doctrine; his willingness to change the text of the Bible, at one point, is less satisfactory.

Brown begins by pointing out that "there is, perhaps, no article of revealed truth which has been more generally ridiculed by infidels . . . than the doctrine of the existence and agency of evil spirits". Today, perhaps, those who reject the Bible feel no need to ridicule this truth; they just ignore it – except for those who, dangerously, dabble in Satanism. But Satan and other devils do exist and are dangerous. Hence the value of the warnings in this readable book, which includes chapters on the Christian's duty in relation to Satan and the Christian's encouragement to perform his duty.

By way of encouragement, Brown wrote that, in spite of temptation, God "can do all that He has promised. He is infinite in power; and infinite too in wisdom. No enemy so powerful, but He can restrain and subdue him; no enemy so crafty, but He can circumvent and disappoint him. No Christian so weak, but He can make him strong; no Christian so foolish, but He can make him wise."

The author also points out that "nothing is so well fitted to mortify that old adversary [Satan] as to find that the very means he employs to produce our apostasy and ruin are converted into the occasion of our establishment in the faith, our advancement in holiness, and our fitness for heaven". Again he reminds us that "the Christian is to fight against Satan, not only in his own heart, but in the Church and the world. . . . He is carefully to avoid everything which may in any way prove, however unintentionally, co-operation with the lawless one in his nefarious designs; and by all proper methods he must endeavour to counteract him."

These are examples of the practical, scriptural teaching contained in this book. Everyone who feels vulnerable because of the power of sin, within and without, should read this book, prayerfully seeking God's blessing on it. Indeed the book would prove a great blessing if it would only send us more earnestly to the throne of grace to pray the Lord to keep us from temptation.

What reason is there to sit down in silence and humbly acquiesce in the account given us of our character and state by a God of infinite holiness! There is no error to blind His judgement, no interest to bias His inclination, and there is no equal who may contend or enter into judgement with Him.

John Witherspoon

Protestant View

Two Popes Canonised

The canonisation of two popes (John XXIII and John Paul II) by the present Pope drew half a million people to gather in and around St Peter's Square in Rome. The event was attended also by the heads of state or their representatives from 122 countries, the Queen being represented by the Duke of Gloucester. "All the world wondered at the beast" (Rev 13.3).

Objections have been raised against canonising John Paul II because of his failure to deal with abuse by priests. The opinion of the *New York Times* is that he was "a great man in many ways. But given that he presided over the Catholic Church during nearly three decades of a gruesome paedophilia scandal and grotesque cover-up, he ain't no saint."

Several Roman Catholic analysts believe that the double canonisation had a political element in it. John XXIII is the hero of the more liberal Roman Catholics because he called Vatican II with a view to modernising the Church, whereas John Paul II is admired by the conservative section for maintaining the status quo. By canonising them together, say some, the Pope aimed to draw the liberals and conservatives closer together.

As part of the canonisation rites, the Pope solemnly kissed containers of relics of the two Popes – a vial of blood belonging to John Paul II and a fleck of skin removed from the body of John XXIII. We need not be surprised that Rome still clings to its superstitious, pagan, lucrative practice of doing homage to relics of the dead.

The climax of the ceremony was the Pope's proclamation, "We declare and define Blessed John XXIII and John Paul II to be saints and we enroll them among the saints, decreeing that they are to be venerated as such by the whole Church". Veneration (that is, worship) of the dead is a most heinous sin not only because it is communion with the dead, but also because it is completely contrary to the divine declaration, "I am the Lord: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another" (Is 42:8). NMR

Notes and Comments

The Prime Minister and Christianity

A recent gathering of church leaders in Downing Street heard David Cameron speak about his faith and the importance of Britain's status as "a Christian country" – unlike his predecessor, Tony Blair, who shunned commenting on Christianity. Mr Cameron stated, "Some people feel that, in this ever-more-

secular age, we shouldn't talk about these things. I completely disagree." Many who read reports of the speech, and a subsequent article in the *Church Times*, were rather surprised by his remarks, considering his record on a variety of moral issues in Parliament. And a group of prominent humanists were stirred up to write a letter to *The Daily Telegraph* complaining bitterly that his words "fostered alienation and division in our society".

So should Christians be encouraged by the Prime Minister's pronouncements? Does this indicate a sea change in his attitude towards the moral decline in our nation? Sadly the opposite seems to be the case, and "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle" (1 Cor 14:8). Indeed for Cameron there is no battle, at least not a true spiritual one.

Mr Cameron does challenge the current secular philosophy by saying, "People who advocate some sort of secular neutrality fail to grasp the consequences of that neutrality, or the role that faith can play in helping people to have a moral code". But he then somewhat negates this by adding, "Of course, faith is neither necessary nor sufficient for morality". He highlights the historical charitable tradition promoted by Christianity in the UK, stating, "I welcome the efforts of all those who help to feed, clothe and house the poorest in our society. For generations, much of this work has been done by Christians." He states too that he personally has felt the healing power of the Church's pastoral care, possibly alluding to the death of his son. Also his children attend a Church of England school.

He urges us, as a people, to be "more evangelical about a faith that compels us to get out there and make a difference to people's lives", but adds, "Being more confident . . . as a Christian country does not somehow involve doing down other faiths or passing judgement on those with no faith at all". His view of Christianity would tolerate all faiths. God's Word certainly teaches us to love our fellow sinners of all faiths and none, but tells us clearly that Christianity is unique; Jesus is the only Saviour. He said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (Jn 14:6).

"I am a member of the Church of England, and, I suspect, a rather classic one:" he adds lamely, "not that regular in attendance and a bit vague on some of the more difficult parts of the faith." And his confusion increases: "Some fault the Church of England for perceived woolliness when it comes to belief. I am not one for doctrinal purity and I don't believe it is essential for evangelism." However, he does not appear to understand that the absence of doctrinal purity leaves no basis for evangelism. The very word then becomes meaningless, as are many others, including *marriage*, in David Cameron's hands. The word *Christian* itself has been devalued in a world of

increasing relativism, where it is considered unimportant what one believes as long as one is sincere.

It would appear from his comments that Mr Cameron's Christianity has much to do with "good works" and includes a great deal of sentimentality towards the Church of England. "I deeply respect its national role, and I appreciate its liturgy and the architecture and cultural heritage of its churches," he explains, adding, "My parents spent countless hours helping to support and maintain the village church that I grew up next to." He has a great veneration for the "medieval masterpieces that take your breath away with their beauty, simplicity, and serenity", but there seems to be no mention of the fundamentals of the Christian faith – sin, and salvation through Jesus Christ.

Some organisations, such as Christian Concern, suggest that his speech was motivated by a desire to regain support lost through controversial issues such as same-sex "marriage". Whether that is so or not, it is clear that we desperately need God to raise up those in high places who would rule in the fear of the Lord and be a means of blessing, under Him, in making the United Kingdom a truly Christian nation once more. *KHM*

The Commonwealth Games and the Sabbath

We are seriously concerned about the ungodly decision of the Commonwealth Games Federation (as supported by the Scottish and Westminster Governments) to profane the Christian Sabbath during the Commonwealth Games to be held in Glasgow this summer. This is a direct breach of the Fourth Commandment, "Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it." (Ex 20:8-11).

This major sporting event is due to involve 6500 competitors and numerous officials from 70 countries; more than a billion people are expected to watch. These Games provided an opportunity for the organisers, before the gaze of the world, to designate the Sabbath as a distinct day of rest from ordinary competition and to promote Sabbath-keeping according to the biblical command. Instead they are determined to desecrate the holy Sabbath and risk God's wrath against the host nation.

In appointing the second Sabbath of the Games as the day of the closing ceremony, the organisers intend to celebrate the achievements of human beings rather than the redemptive sacrifice of Christ for His people and His

resurrection from the dead. Previous generations of Christians who endeavoured to keep the Sabbath believed that “the whole day is to be celebrated as holy to the Lord, both in public and private,” and that there is to “be an holy . . . resting all that day from unnecessary labours; and an abstaining, not only from all sports and pastimes, but also from all worldly words and thoughts” (*The Directory for the Public Worship of God*).

In His Word, the Lord clearly directs everyone to remember the Sabbath, and to keep it holy unto Himself. It is an evidence of the gross declension and the spiritual evil of the present day that the organisers are, in effect, advocating that the holy Sabbath be disregarded and polluted. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Prov 14:12). With this in view, we would warn against any involvement whatever with the Sabbath-breaking activities of these Games.

“If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it” (Is 58:13-14).

Sabbath Observance Committee

The Free Church and the “Stations of the Cross”

A few months ago we commented on the introduction of baptism by immersion into the Free Church of Scotland. The novelties continue; in April the Free Church website announced that the minister of the Lochgilphead congregation would be taking part in a “Good Friday outreach service” to be held at the local Episcopal church.

The service consisted in meditations on what is known in High Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism as the “Stations of Cross”. About half of these “Stations”, or events which supposedly happened to Christ at the time of His crucifixion, are unbiblical; and the Free Church minister had, by a significant providence, been allotted one of the imaginary and fabulous events. “My own slot”, he said, “is a reading, prayer and short talk based on the words, ‘Jesus stumbles and falls along the way’.” Sadly, he had not remembered that the canon of Scripture closes with a curse on those who add to the Word of God: “If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book” (Rev 22:18).

As the Free Church proceeds on her reckless course, those who hesitate to follow are shrugged off with a superior smile. “Free Church of Scotland and changing profile? Understandably scary for many, but for the future: –

surely exciting!” tweeted the same minister after the event. Elsewhere, the Free Church website announces the appointment of “the first female chaplain” at the school in Peru supported by the Free Church. The woman is not a minister, but her title of “chaplain” is hardly a wise one in the present climate, and her appointment may prove a step towards the ordination of women.

We are reminded of the well-known words of Jonathan Edwards, that in his day “the cry was, ‘O, there is no danger, if we are but lively in religion and full of God’s Spirit and live by faith, of being misled! If we do but follow God there is no danger of being led wrong! . . . Let us press forward and not stay and hinder the good work by standing and spending time in these criticisms and carnal reasonings.’ This was the language of many, till they ran on deep into the wilderness, and were taught by the briars and thorns of the wilderness.” *DWBS*

Deputy Prime Minister Endorses Call to Legalise Cannabis

A group of young people who smoked cannabis at least once a week had profound changes in the parts of the brain involved in emotion and motivation. This is one finding of a medical study published in April in the USA. In the UK also there is strong evidence that the use of cannabis by young people leads to a lower IQ and is “linked to mental illness”.

How perverse therefore is the action of the Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, in endorsing a report calling for governments around the world to consider legalising cannabis. This report was produced by the London School of Economics, with support from the pro-legalisation Open Society Foundation of financier George Soros, the “well-known supporter of progressive-liberal political causes”.

It was good then that the Prime Minister, in February, rejected Mr Clegg’s call for a new approach to the drug problem and we hope that this will continue to be his response, especially as decriminalising the use of cannabis would lead to a significant worsening of the problem. *NMR*

Fixed-Odds Betting Machines

A note in the March issue highlighted the proliferation of fixed-odds betting machines in betting shops and the large amounts that “customers” can very quickly gamble away. In this year’s Budget, the Government made a welcome announcement: it is raising the duty on these machines from 20% to 25%. It appears that the increase in duty is expected to have a significant effect on the use of these machines. The bookmaking chain William Hill is to close 109 shops this year as a result of the Government’s decision. William Hill said the decision to shut stores was “disappointing”. Others may be very

relieved that their husband or wife or son or daughter may now find it a little more difficult to part with their money so irresponsibly.

Church Information

Theological Conference

This year's Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in Inverness, on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 28 and 29. It is expected that the following papers will be read, all in public:

Christian Fellowship

Rev J R Tallach

The Mediation of Christ

Rev AW MacColl

The Reformation in Spain

Rev K D Macleod

John Wycliff

Rev K M Watkins

The Theology of the Cross

Rev R MacLeod

(Rev) J R Tallach, Convener, Training of the Ministry Committee

College and Library Fund

By appointment of Synod, the first of two special collections for the College and Library Fund is due to be taken in congregations during June.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

From estate of late Mr Neil MacKinnon, Skye, £3920 for each of these funds: Aged & Infirm Ministers, Ballifeary Home, Bookroom, College & Library, Congregational Development, General Building, Home Mission, Leverburgh Home, Magazines Fund, Organisation, Outreach, Publications, Sustentation, Welfare of Youth; and £54 901.07 for the Legacy Reserve Fund

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Duirinish/Bracadale/Strath: Glendale Friends, £100 per RAC.

Glasgow: Family of late Mrs N Cairns, £60; Anon, Greenock, £100; Mrs J Calvin-Howard, £5 per NM. *Bus Fund:* Anon, £20, £100; Fleming family, £40. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £60, £65, £40, £12, £60. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, Greenock, £20. *Larne Congregation:* Anon, £10. *Singapore Church Fund:* Anon, £10. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, Greenock, £10. *TBS:* Anon, £40, £1000.

Greenock: Anon, £10, £30. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £40, £50, £10, £10, £10.

Ness: *Communion Expenses:* N Ireland Friend, £50 per Rev AWM. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £100.

North Tolsta: Anon, In memory of late Mrs J MacKenzie, 73 NT, £50; Anon, In memory of beloved parents, £20; Anon, £75, £150 per MG. *Door Collection:* Mrs MacLeod, 10 New Tolsta, £30.

North Uist: North Uist Friend, £200; Anon, £60 per Rev DMD. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £1000 per Rev DMD.

Shieldaig: Anon, In loving memory of parents and brothers, £2500.

Singapore: *Church Fund:* Kinlochbervie & Scourie congregation, £300; Two Friends, Edinburgh, £50; Anon, Lewis, £150; Anon, Ps 60:4, £100 per WC.

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Babblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, 10 Achany Rd, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nmross2001@yahoo.co.uk.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.
- Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227.
- Farr** (by Daviot); Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (weekly). Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.
- Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev Roderick MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Greenock:** 40 East Hamilton Street. Sabbath 2.30 pm.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am, 5 pm; Thursday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01847 831758. **Wick:** Church; **Thurso:** Church; **Strathly:** Church; no F P Church services.
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm. **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South):** **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Sheilebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (as intimated). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh**, **Sheilebost**, **Strond** and **Geocrab** as intimated. Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Leverburgh, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Sabbath 12 noon. Manse tel: 01571 844484.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist:** **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS; tel: 01876 510233.
- Oban:** Church and Manse. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr A MacPherson; tel: 01569 760370.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 9HY; tel: 01470 562243.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Tain:** Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.
- Vatten:** Sabbath 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). **Glendale, Waternish:** As intimated. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.

England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Rev K M Watkins, 1 North Street, Barnoldswick, BB18 5PE; tel: 01282 850296.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623.

Northern Ireland

- Larne:** Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J L Goldby MA, 23 Upper Cairncastle Road, Larne, BT40 2EF; tel: 02828 274865.

Canada

Chesley, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 7 pm; Wednesday 8 pm. Contact: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

Toronto, Ontario: Church and Manse. No F P Church services at present.

Vancouver, British Columbia: Contact: Mr John MacLeod, 202-815 4th Avenue, New Westminster, V3M 1S8; tel: 604-516-8648.

USA

Santa Fe, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith, 5222 Kendal Glen Court, Rosharon, Texas 77583; tel: 409 927 1564.

Australia

Grafton, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact Rev G B Macdonald; tel. 02 9627 3408.

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel. 02 9627 3408; e-mail:sydneypchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

Auckland: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J D Smith, 9 Pedlar Place, Conifer Grove, Auckland; tel: 09 282 4195.

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact: Dr G Cramp; tel: 02 7454 2722.

Tauranga: Girl Guide Hall, 17th Avenue, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm; Thursday 7 pm. Contact: Mr Dick Vermeulen; tel: 075443677.

Wellington: 4 Rewa Terrace, Tawa. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; 3rd Wednesday of the month (not secondary school holidays) 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Hank Optland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743; tel: 02 7432 5625.

Singapore

Singapore: Sabbath: 9.30am and 5.30 pm; Beacons International College campus, 1A Short Street, Level 2, Room L2--A, Singapore 188210; Wednesday: 7.45 pm, #03-04A, SCN Industrial Building, 11 Sims Drive, Singapore 387385. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, 4 Chuan Place, Singapore 554822; tel: (65) 6383 4466, fax: 6383 4477, e-mail: byong1@singnet.com.sg.

Ukraine

Odessa: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D Levytskyi; tel:00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytsky@gmail.com.

Zimbabwe

Bulawayo: Lobengula Township, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo. Rev S Khumalo, F P Manse, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo; tel: 00263 9407131, e-mail: skhumalo.byo@gmail.com.

Ingwanya: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean. Postal Address: Ingwenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo.

Mbumba: Church and Hospital. Rev N Sibanda. Postal Address: Mbumba Mission Hospital, Private Bag T5406, Bulawayo.

New Canaan: Church.

Zenka: Church. Rev M Mloyi. Postal Address: Private Bag T5398, Bulawayo; cell phone: 0026311 765032.

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