

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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*“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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## Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**November: First Sabbath:** Aberdeen, **Second Sabbath:** Glasgow; **Third:** Chiedza, Singapore.

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

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## Christ Showing His Glory

Jesus had been invited to a wedding in Cana, a town in Galilee, and went there with His disciples. When the wine ran out, Jesus showed His power by turning water into a fresh supply of wine. The inspired comment which follows the account is: “This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory” (Jn 2:11). His miracles were intended as demonstrations of His power as the Son of God. Thus J C Ryle expressed it: “After 30 years’ seclusion at Nazareth, He now for the first time lifted up the veil which He had thrown over His divinity in becoming flesh, and revealed something of His almighty power and Godhead”.<sup>1</sup>

He who eternally was the Son of God had “made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Ph 2:7), that He might suffer unto death in the place of sinners. What condescension! As a 12-year-old boy, at the temple, He had chosen to reveal something of His deep understanding of spiritual things, but now at the beginning of His public ministry, He shows His power over nature.

He was to reveal that power on two distinct occasions by stilling a storm on the Sea of Galilee. On the first such occasion, His disciples’ reaction was to exclaim, “What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!” (Mt 8:27); they recognised, to some degree, the glory of His person. On the second, they said more explicitly: “Of a truth Thou art the Son of God” (Mt 14:33). Christ had manifested His glory to them and, as in Cana, they believed on Him – that is, their faith in their Master was strengthened; they were seeing more clearly that He was the Son of God, who had taken human nature when He came into the world as the Messiah, in fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies and ceremonies which pointed forward to Him. Matthew Henry, in commenting on John 2:11, makes two points: “(1.) Even the faith that is true is at first but weak. The strongest men were once babes; so were the strongest Christians. (2.) The manifesting of the glory of Christ is the greatest confirmation of the faith of Christians.”

Jesus’ miracles demonstrated His unlimited power over the natural world,

<sup>1</sup>Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1987, vol 1, p 102.

but He also showed His unlimited power in the spiritual realm. We may notice how the Saviour showed His power in *both* realms when four men brought a paralysed man to the crowded house where Jesus was. So determined were they to bring the man to the only One who could help him that they removed some of the stone slabs that formed the roof of the house and lowered the man down where Jesus was. First Jesus pronounced the man's sins forgiven; He then commanded the man to "rise up and walk". Jesus' power to give the man strength was obvious: the man got up and walked. For someone to heal paralysis by his own authority, demonstrated that he was no mere man; he was divine. Accordingly, the One who had power to heal the body had also the right to forgive sin.

Possibly all who read this *Magazine* will readily accept that Jesus, who performed so many wonderful miracles, was indeed the Son of God. Yet it is proper for us to ask ourselves seriously: Have *we* felt our need as sinners? Have we realised that there is no hope for sinners like ourselves except in the salvation provided by Jesus Christ the Son of God? And do we *trust* in Him for the salvation of our souls from both the guilt and the power of sin?

This great and glorious Saviour showed His power to save in all the healing miracles that He performed when He was in this world. For instance, He showed His glory when He gave sight to the blind. By nature we are spiritually blind; we cannot see the way of salvation; we cannot see the Saviour Himself – in other words, we have no capacity to look to Him according to the call, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else". It is by the divine power of the Holy Spirit working in the soul, for the sake of Christ, that sinners become able to look to Christ; that is, to believe in Him. And believing in a soul-saving way includes, not only accepting the truth of the revelation about the Saviour, but also trusting in Him.

We might also refer to other healing miracles, such as making deaf people able to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk. And we might note the corresponding *spiritual* miracles the Saviour then carried out, and still does. He heals deaf ears, so that the Word of God, which sinners once rejected, now penetrates into their spiritual understanding, leading to saving faith. Through His healing power, souls that did not sincerely speak to God in prayer become able to do so; and souls that refused to come to Christ by faith become willing to do so. In performing these spiritual miracles from His throne in heaven, Christ is manifesting His glory to sinners today.

He does so, not only in changing the heart of a persecutor like Saul of Tarsus, or the heart of the woman of Samaria, who was openly immoral, but also the heart of the most moral church-attender. In some ways we might see

it as a greater manifestation of the Saviour's glory when the openly ungodly are brought by divine power to look to Christ – that is, to come to Christ by faith – but the moral church-attender needs the same divine, saving power. And sinners who come to Christ will continue to show forth Christ's glory by following Him throughout the rest of their lives.

A single conversion is a manifestation of Christ glory, but what an impact is made on a community when large numbers are savingly changed! It was so in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, when 3000 were converted, and the impact was magnified because of the wide area from which people had travelled to Jerusalem to be present at that feast. This meant that, in some degree, the knowledge of the gospel was spread to various places which would not otherwise have heard these glorious truths for quite some time – until it was possible for an apostle, say, to visit these distant places.

So today, if God was to bless His Word to many people in some district, modern communications could very quickly spread the news of a revival to many other parts of the globe. However, one would expect that, to work spiritual miracles in the hearts of sinners, He would normally use the means He has particularly ordained Himself – the preaching of the gospel by His ambassadors. Yet reports of the powerful effects following the preaching of the Word in one place may prepare people elsewhere for hearing the Word preached in their own communities.

Another aspect of Christ's healing miracles is that many of them involved people who were possessed by devils. For example, there "was brought unto Him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and He healed him, inso-much that the blind and dumb both spake and saw". The result was: "all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David? (Mt 12:22,23). The people were recognising Jesus as the Messiah, although they may not have exercised saving faith in Him. This was, at any rate, the outward response to Christ manifesting His glory in opposition to the malicious power of Satan and other fallen angels. We have already looked at the spiritual significance of healing miracles, but here we have, in addition, Christ delivering sinners *from Satan's power*. While sinners are unconverted, they are still in Satan's kingdom and suffer from the spiritual disabilities of being blind, deaf, dumb and lame in their souls. Christ manifests His glory every time He delivers sinners from that kingdom and brings them into His own kingdom, where they exercise, through divine power, the spiritual ability to see, hear, speak and walk.

Every spiritual miracle should encourage believers to seek further manifestations of Christ's glory in the salvation of sinners. And the unconverted should feel encouraged to seek such a work of grace in their own souls.

# The Gospel Invitation<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by David Black

Revelation 22:17. *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

These words contain one of the fullest displays of the riches and freeness of divine grace to be found in the Bible. As they occur at the close of the inspired Scriptures, they may be considered as a concluding exhortation addressed to sinners in every country and age of the world.

“*The Spirit and the bride say, Come.*” The Spirit, by whom the Scriptures were given, and by whose inspiration holy men of old spoke, says by prophets and apostles: “Come”; “Hear, and your soul shall live”; “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon”; “Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out”. The Spirit concurs with these invitations by His gracious influences on the heart.

“*And the bride says, Come.*” That is, the Church, who is called in this book the Lamb’s wife. She is espoused as a chaste virgin unto Christ. She joins with the Spirit in these gracious invitations. To the Church are committed the oracles of God, and the ministers of the churches are sent forth as heralds to proclaim to men the Redeemer’s boundless compassion and infinite readiness to receive returning sinners.

“*And let him that heareth say, Come.*” Let everyone who hears the voice of Christ in the gospel, and obeys it, echo back the voice of sovereign mercy and invite others to share with him in the unsearchable riches of Christ, saying, Come, my fellow sinners, do not be faithless any longer, but believing; accept the blessings of salvation and rejoice in the manifestations of the Saviour’s love. From experience I can assure you that these blessings are as freely bestowed as they are freely offered.

“*And let him that is athirst come.*” He who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, he who is labouring and heavy laden, he who is ardently longing after happiness but cannot find it in the broken and empty cisterns of creature comforts, let him come to Jesus and he shall have all his needs supplied and the desires of his heart completely satisfied.

“*And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*” Lest some should think themselves excluded by the former invitation, lest any poor

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Black’s *Sermons on Important Subjects*. Black (1762-1806) was latterly a minister in Edinburgh.

convinced sinner should suppose that he was not the person whose soul was properly athirst for the blessings of salvation, it is here extended so as to take in every case and to silence every objection which unbelief – fruitful in apologies for itself – can possibly suggest. Whosoever will – whatever his former character may have been, however great his present guilt and unworthiness are – let him take the water of life freely.

I propose now (1) to point out some of the blessings we are invited to receive; (2) to explain the extent of the invitation and, particularly, to show the absolute freeness with which these blessings are bestowed on all who are willing to receive them.

**1. Some of the blessings we are invited to receive.** Gospel blessings are spoken of in the text under the comprehensive term, “the water of life”. “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Water is a very common metaphor the writers of the Bible use when speaking of the blessings of salvation. “When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and streams in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.” “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.”

Similarly, when describing these blessings “in the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink”. So also He addresses the woman of Samaria: “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. . . . Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.”

No blessing is more necessary than water to sustain life; usually nothing is less valued. Yet there is nothing that we feel sooner than the lack of water. In the warm regions of Judea, where water was often difficult to find, the metaphor must have had peculiar force. But whether people are conscious of it or not, we are sure that water is no more necessary for our bodies than the blessings of the gospel are for our souls. The gospel is truly living water, more refreshing to the weary soul than the cooling drink to the traveller parched with thirst. Its blessings are exactly suited to the needs of poor, guilty sinners. To show how necessary and important these blessings are, I shall now mention a few of them.

(1.) *The pardon of sin.* I mention this first, not only because it is a blessing of inestimable value, but because it lies at the foundation of all the others and is indispensably necessary to enjoying true, solid happiness. While the

guilt of unpardoned sin lies on the conscience, nothing can ease the troubled mind. To abide under the wrath of the Almighty, to be continually exposed to the just, everlasting displeasure of Him who made us, must appear inexpressibly awful to everyone who reflects on the matter. Like the handwriting which appeared to Belshazzar at his feast, it must embitter all the pleasures of life, and make trembling and astonishment seize the sinner. But “blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.”

This is the blessedness which the gospel reveals, of which we are so freely invited to partake. The gospel lays a solid foundation for enjoying this blessedness. It reveals God as reconciled by the death of His Son. It assures us of this peace-inspiring truth: “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses”. It assures us that “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”, and “the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin”. How comforting this is to the awakened sinner! To be assured from the Word of God that there is forgiveness with Him; that every obstruction is removed out of the way of our reconciliation to God; that though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow through the blood of His dear Son; that though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Come then, you labouring, heavy-laden sinners, to Jesus the Saviour for this inestimable blessing. He invites you to partake of it, without money and without price. He Himself has paid the ransom. Nor can anything prevent you enjoying this unspeakably precious blessing but an obstinate rejection of His rich redeeming mercy. To every penitent, believing sinner He addresses these comforting words, Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.

(2.) *The sanctification of our corrupted nature.* Not only has sin brought guilt on the conscience and exposed us to the eternal wrath of God, but it has also weakened all the powers of our souls and rendered us the miserable slaves of our own headstrong passions. No captivity is so disgraceful as the bondage of sin; no pollution so loathsome as that which defiles the conscience. There can be no true enjoyment under a sense of unpardoned guilt, as long as sin retains its dominion in the soul and the enslaved sinner is led captive by the devil at his will. Thus the salvation which the gospel offers is a complete salvation. It includes deliverance from the power and pollution of sin, as well as from its guilt and punishment. It is designed to make us holy as well as happy – to make us holy in order that we may be happy. It is impossible to conceive of any degree of permanent happiness, if there is no inward purity; nor does the gospel in the least sanction any joy that has a tendency to relax our obligation to holiness.



Come then, you who are weary and heavy-laden sinners, who are groaning under the bondage of corruption, the gospel brings you a glorious deliverance. It is admirably fitted to purify and ennoble your souls, to elevate them above the grovelling pleasures of sin and exalt them to higher and more dignified pursuits. Jesus invites you to aspire after more sublime objects than any which this world can bestow. He is able to heal all the diseases of your nature. He can cure you of your pride, sensuality, covetousness and earthly-mindedness. He can subdue the most powerful corruptions of the human heart, overcome the most deep-rooted habits, and implant the graces of His Spirit in souls where sin and Satan ruled before with uncontrolled dominion. Only commit your souls to His gracious government and the guidance of His Spirit, and you shall experience His all-conquering power.

(3.) *Access to God and communion with Him in His ordinances.* Only those who have tasted its sweetness can know the value of this blessing. The joys of a pious mind are pure and satisfying. When away from the world, when no eye rests on him but God's, the Christian holds fellowship with Him. The Christian reads in Scripture, with astonishment and delight, the counsels of heaven about the salvation of guilty, perishing man; the exceeding great and precious promises which God has given him; and the love and gratitude that this kindness demands in return. Then his thoughts take a wider range, and he meditates on the boundless variety of objects that nature, providence and grace present to his mind; he pours out his soul in the humble confidence of faith, and spreads before his heavenly Father his needs and cares, sins and sorrows, fears and hopes and joys.

What inexpressible satisfaction then diffuses through his soul, and with what pity and contempt does he look down on the low, sordid pleasures of ungodly men; in comparison with those he now enjoys, they are like the crackling of thorns under a pot. Or when he mingles with his fellow saints in the house of God and joins in solemn acts of worship, when with meekness he receives the engrafted word of truth, when he offers up with the congregation fervent, united prayer or lifts his voice in praises to God his Father, or when with a few Christian friends he talks of the things which belong to their peace till their hearts burn within them, or when in a more public and solemn manner he holds communion with his Saviour and the faithful in the Lord's Supper – he then experiences a pleasure which strangers do not know, which is often joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The gospel invites you to enjoy all this happiness. It removes the distance which sin has made between a pure, holy God and a guilty, polluted soul. By the blood of Christ, the gospel brings near those who were far off. It gives them access to the holiest of all, and opens a way, not only to the altar of

God, but unto God as their exceeding joy. Being justified by faith, they have peace with God through their Lord Jesus Christ, by whom they have access by faith into this grace wherein they stand. Come then, you who spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy. Hearken diligently to Christ and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

(4.) *Victory over death and the sure hope of eternal life.* Whatever pleasures worldly men may boast of, none of them reach beyond the grave. Death puts an end to all their schemes and pursuits, their hopes and joys. To say the least, they have only a dreary prospect, a vast unknown future. Therefore those who are strangers to religion try to banish the thought of death as much as possible from their minds. By means of work and pleasure, they usually succeed in keeping themselves tolerably secure, except in a time of sickness and danger, when in spite of their best endeavours, the prospect of this terrible messenger often causes the most dreadful fears.

But the gospel delivers from the fear of death. It destroys this bane of human happiness, not by banishing thoughts of it from the mind, but by opening up such prospects beyond it as completely change its nature and make it desirable. The gospel brings life and immortality to light. It assures us that Christ, by dying and rising again, has destroyed death and him that had the power of death. It discloses unutterable joys beyond the grave, in that blessed world to which, in due time, He will bring all His faithful followers. It teaches believers to consider death as the entrance into life eternal and, though the path may be gloomy, it will lead them to the regions of everlasting day. Though the passage may be stormy, it will infallibly bring them safely to the peaceful shore of Immanuel's happy land.

Come then and embrace this blessed gospel, which shows us such bright prospects. Trust in this almighty Saviour, who has conquered death and secured victory to all who believe in Him. If you trust, He will receive your soul at death into His own blissful presence, and in the resurrection morning, even this vile body which must soon become the food of worms shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working of that mighty power, whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

**2. The extent of the invitation and, particularly, its absolute freeness.** The extent of the invitation is expressed in these words: "Whosoever will". This gives encouragement to every returning sinner who feels his need of

mercy and is willing to receive the blessings of salvation, whatever his former character, or however numerous and aggravated his offences in the sight of God. No one is excluded from the blessings of salvation but those who exclude themselves. The water of life is freely bestowed on everyone who is willing to receive it.

This is a precious, most comforting truth. It is the glory of the Christian scheme, the hope of sinners, and the song of the redeemed before the throne. It is the uniform doctrine of the Scriptures and is particularly conspicuous in the New Testament. The Lord often spoke about it. He taught that the Jew and the Greek, the poor and the rich, the decent and the profligate must be accepted in the same way. Many Jews, because of their special privileges, “trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others”. He told them plainly: “Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you” (Mt 21:31).

On another occasion, He solemnly assured the people that “they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God,” while the children of the kingdom are thrust out. When He was in the house of Simon the Pharisee, a woman that was a sinner came in and began to wash His feet with her tears and to wipe them with the hairs of her head. Instead of reproving her or forbidding her to approach, He encouraged and comforted her by declaring that her sins, which were many, were forgiven. At the same time He told the proud Pharisee that, because much had been forgiven her, she loved much. So remarkable was the Lord’s conduct that His enemies reproachfully called Him the Friend of publicans and sinners. Nor did the merciful Saviour disdain the name. “They that are whole”, He said, “need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

How often we find Him, during His public ministry, inviting sinners of every description to come to Him for the blessings of salvation! “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me and drink.” And to encourage all, He declares that none who come to Him shall be rejected: “Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out” – that is, on no account whatever, even if his sins are ever so numerous or aggravated. Indeed we find Him, with the tenderest pity, complaining of sinners being unwilling to come to Him: “Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life.” “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.”

Such was the compassion of the great and gracious Redeemer that He laid

down His life on a cross as a ransom for many, declaring with His dying breath, "It is finished"; and displaying, in the midst of the greatest sufferings, the boundless extent of His grace, by extending mercy to a penitent thief who was crucified along with Him, and praying for His murderers in these astonishing words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do".

When the Lord Jesus rose again from the dead, He revealed still more plainly the nature of His kingdom, and the extent of the salvation He had procured by His obedience unto death. He did so by commissioning His apostles to teach and baptize all nations, and to preach the gospel to every creature. Accordingly, we find the apostles, after the ascension of their Lord and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, publishing the glad tidings of salvation in the name of Jesus. They declared to all who heard them that those who believe in Him are justified from all things.

Everyone who is tolerably acquainted with the apostles' writings, particularly the Epistles of Paul, and who reads them with any degree of freedom from prejudice, must be conscious that the apostles taught, like their great Master, the doctrine of free grace. How fully and clearly Paul explains this doctrine in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians! He lays it down as an undeniable truth that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" and that, in consequence, the whole world has become guilty before God, so that "there is none righteous, no not one". From this he draws the evident conclusion that, by the deeds of the law – that is, by our own works or performances of any kind – no flesh living can be justified in God's sight.

Having shut up all hope from any other quarter, Paul unfolds the gospel method of salvation, in all its grace and glory, its fulness and freeness. He declares that "the righteousness of God . . . is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. . . . To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. . . . Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace." And "if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."

This is the doctrine of free grace, the apostolic gospel, which excludes all boasting, denies any merit or worthiness to the creature, and ascribes the whole of salvation, from first to last, to the sovereign mercy of God and the all-perfect redemption of Jesus Christ. A sure and broad foundation is laid here for the sinner's hope, suited to every case and able to support him

in the utmost extremity. All are invited to receive blessings, and none have any superior claim above their fellow-sinners. And all who receive them receive them in the same way: without money and without price.

Nor is there any danger that this doctrine, so reviving to the mind of the awakened sinner, should open a door to licentiousness, proving unfriendly to morality. Paul foresaw this objection and has answered it. "What then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" The doctrine of grace may be abused by those who do not understand its nature or feel its influence; but when it is properly understood and cordially believed, it must produce the fruits of universal holiness. Though good works are neither the cause nor the condition of our acceptance with God, they are the necessary effects of it.

Salvation is freely bestowed by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. But this salvation, it ought to be remembered, includes deliverance from sin as well as from punishment, a disposition to obey the will of God as well as a title to future happiness. To conceal or limit the freeness of the gospel offer, from fear it may be abused, is to presume to be wiser than God. It is unfaithfulness to His testimony to join anything whatever with the righteousness of Christ, as the ground of a sinner's justification before God. And it is cruelty to the souls of men to prevent them seeing the unsearchable riches of Christ and the boundless extent of His grace. For "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save" even the chief of sinners.

I conclude with a full declaration of the freeness of the salvation which the gospel reveals. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come." Listen, you who are "stout-hearted and rebellious, that are far from righteousness"; listen, aged and young sinners; listen, proud self-righteous Pharisees who vainly compass yourselves about with sparks that you have kindled yourselves, and you open transgressors who proclaim your sins as Sodom and your wickedness as Gomorrah: unto you is the word of this salvation sent – to every one of you without exception, of every character. "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." There is salvation in Christ for the very chief of sinners, and there is salvation in no one else. "He that believeth . . . shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Submit to the righteousness of God. Believe His threatenings. Believe His promises. Take refuge from the wrath to come under the covert of the Redeemer's wings.

And you who know the grace of "building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life".

# Personal Piety<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

*Rev Alexander McPherson*

**Meaning of the term.** The word *piety* is not so much used among us as its counterpart *godliness*. The latter is the word in our Bible which translates the Greek word *eusebeia*. This word's first meaning, however, is piety, which denotes faithfulness to whatever one is bound to by duty. When we rise above earthly claims to duty – for example – duty to our parents, our highest duty is to God. This is why in dictionary definitions of piety we find such meanings as “right attitude towards God”, “right conduct appropriate thereto”, or “reverence felt for God and religion and conduct inspired by these feelings and principles”. The idea clearly is that God, infinitely supreme, requires of us as our first duty, reverence, worship and willing obedience, and Scripture adds love to that impulse. This is the first of all the Commandments and none of them is greater than the command to love God and one's neighbour. This is piety.

**Piety in the Old Testament.** Adam in his innocent state was pious. Then he sinned and perfect piety ceased among mankind. Yet this attitude of soul was found again in some measure in some people. All of them, without exception, bore this mark: they had faith in a promised, God-sent Deliverer from sin and misery, through whom they were reconciled to God. It was also true of them that their dispositions were directly changed, so that in some measure they manifested piety. These Old Testament believers in the promised Christ, from Abel and Enoch onwards, revered, worshipped, loved and obeyed God. The spiritual exercises of these godly people appear principally in the Book of Psalms, David himself being a chief representative of them. In Psalm 12, for instance, he deplores the fewness of godly men: “Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth”.

**Piety in the New Testament.** As might be expected in the New Testament, with its full revelation of the way of salvation, much is said about piety, though not (in English) under that name. The word *eusebeia* is generally translated *godliness*, and once *holiness*. If, however, one consults the terms *sanctify* and *sanctification* in, say, *Nave's Topical Bible*, the idea expressed by piety occurs in a variety of ways: charity, for example – “Grow up into [Christ] in all things”, “Grow in grace”, “Present your bodies a living sacrifice”, “Transformed by the renewing of your mind”. What these various expressions amount to is just *piety*.

<sup>1</sup>The first section of a paper presented at a Theological Conference.

The New Testament believer, is required to reverence, worship and obey God with a loving heart, as under the Old Testament. No saved sinner is exempted. Anyone claiming to believe in Christ for salvation, who is not clearly aiming at piety, is raising a serious objection to his claim. What is to be thought of someone who has been pardoned and inwardly renewed by divine grace, but does not desire to cease sinning and seek holiness?

It was clearly prophesied in Ezekiel 36:26,27 that the effect of conversion would be the pursuit of personal piety: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep My judgements, and do them". The result is what we see in the New Testament converts and what we read in the New Testament scriptures. Salvation in every case was to be from sin, from its dominion as well as its penal consequences. The course of a saved sinner's life was to be one of increasing piety, or godliness.

The Bible has many references to piety and also exhortations to it. I shall quote just two from the Old Testament. When Joshua was sending back to the east of Jordan the two and a half tribes, who had faithfully helped their brethren to occupy Canaan, he urged them to "take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses, the servant of the Lord, charged you, to love the Lord your God and to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments and to cleave unto Him and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul" (Jos 22:5). Again in the song in Isaiah 26 we find this pious assertion, "Yea, in the way of Thy judgements, O Lord, have we waited for Thee. . . . With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early" (Is 26:8,9).

At the beginning of the New Testament, we read the Saviour's words: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled (Mt 5:6). Next, one of several passages in Romans: "As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness (Rom 6:19). Last, out of many other texts: "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. . . . Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim 2:19,22). There can be no doubt that pursuit of personal piety is a natural result of conversion and that Scripture requires it.

***The measure of piety.*** If, however, the observable spirit, character, and way of life of professing Christians is considered, it becomes apparent that the measure of piety attained varies a good deal. There is one reason, at any

rate, why this can be expected. Sanctification, the divine work by which the person who wishes to be pious or godly, is enabled to die unto sin and live unto righteousness, is gradual. “Enabled more and more” are the words of *The Shorter Catechism*. The new life resulting from the new birth does not blossom at once unto saintliness. There is no comparison with Aaron’s rod, which overnight “brought forth buds and bloomed blossoms and yielded almonds”. At conversion, the new life in the soul may work such hatred of sin and a speedy end to certain ways of sinning that there may be high hopes of departing from all iniquity.

The time of “first love” may, in those who enjoyed that experience, give a strong urge to seek holiness. “Walking by sight” is spiritually pleasing and profitable, but it usually gives way to walking by faith. The Lord sometimes gives newly-saved sinners what I venture to call “a good start” in the Christian life by speaking lovingly to them by His Word and Spirit, thus helping them to make good progress along the narrow way. That stage usually gives way to greater dependence on the truths and principles of God’s Word and less experience of heart-warming feelings. Thereafter they experience the life of faith, in conflict with the world, the flesh and the devil, subject also to divine discipline in its various forms. All the while, if piety is truly sought, there will be gradual growth in grace and aversion to sin. Thus, if there is a steady following of the Lord, the measure of piety will increase through life.

Yet the increase of piety can fairly be said to depend a lot on the circumstances of the believer. Assuming the person’s only means of grace is a Bible, if it is read regularly and prayerfully, this would bring about growth in grace. Nowadays that situation may be rare. If, however, there are the extra advantages of the public means of grace, good examples and good books, one would expect a more rapid increase of piety.

There are, however, factors which seriously slow the growth of personal piety and keep it at too low a level. A believer may slip into spiritual declension – or, worse, backslide – and thus impede progress towards holiness and even damage his reputation permanently. Another person may fail to grasp that nothing less than holiness is the goal and content himself or herself with what is taken to be the current average of piety. (I am not forgetting that the work of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary.)

***The Pursuit of Piety.*** In addition to what has been said, it ought to be clear to every Christian that godliness will not increase of itself. The Bible declares that it must be sought. Indwelling sin is a brake on growth in grace. Worldliness is a persistent intruder into the soul and Satan takes every advantage he can. Therefore the goal – that is, holiness – must be kept in mind; the exhortations of God’s Word must be taken to heart; and the means



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of grace diligently used. What I want to do now, is to present the pursuit of personal piety under four sections: (1) the negative aspect, (2) the positive aspect, (3) encouragements, (4) helps.<sup>2</sup>

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## Teaching on Final Perseverance<sup>1</sup>

*John Newton*

Whatever judgement we form of the doctrine of final perseverance, our profession of religion will be utterly vain unless we ourselves persevere; for only they that endure to the end shall be saved. It should seem that whoever believes this and duly realises his own weakness, the number and strength of his spiritual enemies, and the difficulties and dangers arising from his situation in this evil world, will at least desire to have (if possible) some security that his labour and expectation shall not be in vain. To be uncertain in a point of such great importance; to have nothing to trust to for continuing in well-doing but our own feeble efforts, our partial diligence and short-sighted care must surely be distressing, if we rightly consider how unable we are in ourselves to withstand the forces of the world, the flesh and the devil, which are combined against our peace.

I should expect that those who oppose this doctrine of final perseverance, if thoroughly aware of their state and situation – if indeed it was possible to prove it unscriptural and false – would weep over their victory; they would be sorry that an idea, so apparently suited to encourage our hope, should not be true. It is not to be wondered at that this doctrine, which gives to the Lord the glory due to His name, and provides so effectually for the comfort of His people, should be opposed by men with corrupt hearts. But it may well seem strange that they who feel their need of it, and cannot be comfortable without it, should be afraid or unwilling to receive it. Yet many a child of light is walking in darkness on this account. Either they are staggered by the opinions of those whom they think wiser than themselves, or stumbled by the falls of professing Christians who were once advocates for this doctrine, or perplexed because they cannot rightly understand those passages of Scripture which seem to say something different.

But, as light and knowledge increase, these difficulties are lessened. The Lord claims the honour of a complete salvation and He promises that no power shall pluck His people out of His hand or separate them from His love.

<sup>2</sup>These points are to be covered in two further articles.

<sup>1</sup>A further edited extract from the letter from which the article on election was printed last month. (Taken from Newton's *Works*, Banner of Truth 1985 reprint, vol 1.)

Their perseverance in grace, besides being asserted in many express promises, may be proved with the fullest evidence from the unchangeableness of God, the intercession of Christ, the union which exists between Him and His people, and from the principle of spiritual life He has implanted in their hearts, which in its own nature is connected with everlasting life, for grace is the seed of glory.

I have no room to enlarge on these points but refer you to the following texts, from which various strong, invincible arguments might be drawn to confirm them: Luke 14:28-30, compared with Philippians 1:6, Hebrews 7:25, with Romans 8:34-39, John 14:19, with John 15:1,2, John 4:14. On these grounds, my friend, why may you not rejoice in Jesus's salvation who have fled for refuge to the hope set before you, and committed your soul to Jesus? Why may you not say, While Christ is the foundation, root, head and husband of His people, while the Word of God is yea and amen, while the counsels of God are unchangeable, while we have a Mediator and High Priest before the throne, while the Holy Spirit is willing and able to bear witness to the truths of the gospel, while God is wiser than men and stronger than Satan, so long shall the believer in Jesus be safe; heaven and earth must pass away, but the promise, the oath, the blood, on which my soul relies, afford me a security which can never fail?

As the doctrines of election and perseverance are comforting, so they cut off all pretence of boasting and self-dependence when they are truly received in the heart, and therefore tend to exalt the Saviour. Of course they stain the pride of all human glory, and leave us nothing to glory in but the Lord. The more we are convinced of our utter depravity and inability from first to last, the more excellent will Jesus appear. Those who are well may give the physician a good word, but the sick alone know how to prize him.

And here I cannot but remark on a difference between those who have nothing to trust to but free grace and those who ascribe a little at least to some good disposition and ability in man. We assent to whatever they enforce from the Word of God on the subject of sanctification. We acknowledge its importance, its excellency, its beauty, but we could wish they would join more with us in exalting the Redeemer's name. Their experience seems to lead them to talk of themselves, of the change that is wrought in them, and how much that depends on their own watchfulness and striving. We likewise would be thankful if we could perceive a change wrought in us by the power of grace; we also desire to be found watching. But when our hopes are most alive, it is less from a view of the imperfect beginnings of grace in our hearts than from an apprehension of Him who is our all in all. His person, His love, His sufferings, His intercession, compassion, fullness and faithfulness –

these are our delightful themes, which leave us little leisure, when in our best frames, to speak of ourselves.

How do our hearts soften and our eyes melt when we feel some liberty in thinking and speaking of Him! For we had no help in time past, nor can we have any in time to come, but from Him alone. If any persons have contributed a mite to their own salvation, it was more than we could do. If any were obedient and faithful to the first calls and impressions of His Spirit, it was not our case. If any were prepared to receive Him beforehand, we know that we were in a state of alienation from Him. We needed sovereign, irresistible grace to save us, or we were lost for ever. If there are any who have a power of their own, we must confess ourselves poorer than they are. We cannot watch unless He watches with us; we cannot strive unless He strives with us; we cannot stand one moment unless He holds us up; and we believe we must perish after all unless His faithfulness is engaged to keep us. But this we trust He will do, not for our righteousness, but for His own name's sake, and because, having loved us with an everlasting love, He has been pleased in loving kindness to draw us to Himself, and to be found by us when we sought Him not.

Can you think that a person who lives under the influence of these opinions will desire to continue in sin because grace abounds? No, you are too candid an observer of men and their ways to believe the slanders which are propagated against us. It is true there are too many false, empty professing Christians among us, but are there none among those who hold the opposite opinions?

And I would observe that the objection drawn from the sins of reputed Calvinists is quite beside the point. We maintain that no doctrines can change the heart, or produce a gracious manner of life, without the efficacious power of Almighty grace. Therefore, if it is found to be so in fact, it should not be charged against our doctrine, but rather admitted as a confirmation of it. We confess that we fall sadly short in everything and have reason to be ashamed and amazed that we are so faintly influenced by such enlivening principles. Yet, on the whole, our consciences bear us witness, and we hope we may declare it both to the Church and to the world without fear of contradiction, that the doctrines of grace are doctrines according to godliness.

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The path of duty is always the way of safety, and it is the road to happiness.

The regenerated soul loves God above all things and delights in His law after the inner man. The best evidence of having experienced this change is a habitual purpose and endeavour to keep all the commandments of God and to oppose and avoid every known sin.

*Archibald Alexander*

# Character of the Scottish Reformation<sup>1</sup>

## 3. Church Government and Discipline

*D Hay Fleming*

In the Scots *Confession*, evil works are defined as: not only those that are expressly done against God's commandment, but those also that, in matters of religion and worshipping of God, have no warrant except the invention and opinion of man, which God has from the beginning ever rejected; as we are taught in these words: "In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men".

And, in the opening sentence of the *Book of Discipline*, it is urged as necessary that Christ's gospel "be truly and openly preached in every kirk and assembly of this realm; and that all doctrine repugnant to the same be utterly suppressed as damnable to man's salvation". It is explained that, by the contrary doctrine, is to be understood whatsoever men, "by laws, counsels, or constitutions, have imposed upon the consciences of men, without the expressed commandment of God's Word". As examples of this, the following are mentioned: "vows of chastity, the superstitious observance of fasting days, prayer for the dead, keeping of saints' days and feasts invented by the Papists, as the feasts of apostles, martyrs, virgins, and of Christmas and feasts of Our Lady. Which things, says the *Book of Discipline*, as they have neither commandment nor warrant in the Scriptures, ought to be utterly abolished from the realm, and the obstinate maintainers and teachers punished by the civil magistrate.

This uncompromising condemnation of such days as Christmas was no hasty, ill-considered, passing outburst in the heat of a great struggle. Six years afterwards, in heartily approving of the *Second Helvetic Confession*, the Scots took care, in writing to Beza, to guard themselves on one point: "With regard to what is written in the 24th chapter of the aforesaid *Confession* concerning the festival of our Lord's nativity, circumcision, passion, resurrection, ascension, and sending the Holy Ghost upon His disciples, that these festivals at the present time obtain no place among us; for we dare not religiously celebrate any other feast day than what the divine oracles have prescribed". It is only within recent years<sup>2</sup> that the Church of Scotland (in its larger sections) has departed in practice from this deliberate principle of its Reformers.

In another passage of the *Book of Discipline*, in which the civil rulers are

<sup>1</sup>The final article in this series, abridged from Hay Fleming's *The Reformation in Scotland*. The sub-title of last month's extract was: "God Speaks Plainly in His Word".

<sup>2</sup>Fleming's book was published in 1910.

urged to suppress all idolatry, it is said: "By idolatry we understand the mass, invocation of saints, adoration of images, and the keeping . . . of the same: and finally all honouring of God not contained in His holy Word". This definition cuts very deep. This principle is inconsistent with what is implied in one passage in the *Confession* of 1560, as understood by some people. The passage runs thus: "Not that we think that a policy and an order in ceremonies can be appointed for all ages, times and places; for as ceremonies (such as men have devised) are but temporal, so may and ought they to be changed, when they rather foster superstition," rather than edify the Church using them.

As William Cunningham has said, "This is somewhat loosely expressed".<sup>3</sup> David Calderwood held that "the words are not to be so taken as if the Kirk had power to institute sacred rites; but only to make institutions of order and decency, in the ministration of such rites and parts of divine service as the Lord had already instituted". The *Book of Discipline*, explains *policy* as being of two sorts, the one "utterly necessary" and the other profitable but not absolutely necessary. The true preaching of the Word, and the right administration of the sacraments, are utterly necessary, but not the number of days in a week on which a congregation ought to assemble. These interpretations harmonise the passage with the statements already quoted, which so emphatically condemn will worship.

In the *Confession* of 1560, the marks by which the true Church is distinguished from the false are given as: (1) "the true preaching of the Word of God"; (2) "the right administration of the sacraments of Christ Jesus"; and (3) "ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered, as God's Word prescribes, whereby vice is repressed and virtue nourished". Wherever these marks are found and continue for any time, there is the true Kirk of Christ, though the number of the flock be never so few above two or three, and there Christ Himself, according to His promise, is in the midst of them.

To these three things the utmost importance was attached. For example, the *Book of Discipline* described the Word truly preached, the sacraments rightly ministered, prayers publicly offered, children and ignorant persons instructed in the chief points of religion, and offences corrected and punished, as things so necessary that without them there is no "face of a visible kirk". Again, although there was a great dearth of "godly and learned men", a high standard of qualifications was fixed for those who might be admitted to the ministry, for they believed "it was just as well, perhaps better, to have no minister than to have an incompetent or unprofitable one".

The sacraments were declared to be rightly dispensed when, before the administration, a lawful minister instructed the people, putting them in mind

<sup>3</sup>Cunningham, *Discussions on Church Principles*, Edinburgh, 1863, p 252.

that God's free grace is offered in Christ Jesus, and when God's promises were rehearsed, the purpose of the sacraments explained – in their own language – and when no change was made from the institution of the Lord and the practice of the apostles. From holding the mass in the highest reverence, worshipping the wafer as if it had been Christ Himself, there was now a great recoil.

The necessity of discipline is thus stated in the *Order* of Geneva: "As no city, town, house, or family can . . . prosper without . . . governance, so the Church of God, which requireth more purely to be governed than any city or family, cannot without . . . ecclesiastical discipline continue, increase and flourish". And the discipline itself is thus described: "As the Word of God is the life and soul of this Church, so this godly order and discipline is, as it were sinews in the body, which . . . join the members together. . . . It is a bridle to stay the wicked from their mischiefs. It is a spur to prick forward such as be slow and negligent; yea . . . it is the Father's rod . . . to chastise gently the faults committed, and to cause them afterward to live in more godly fear and reverence. Finally, it is an order left by God unto His Church, whereby men learn to frame their wills and doings, according to the law of God, by instructing and admonishing one another, yea, and by correcting and punishing all obstinate rebels."

The object of this discipline was threefold: (1) that men of evil life be not numbered among God's children, to their Father's reproach, as if the Church of God were a sanctuary for wicked persons; (2) that the good be not infected by the company of the evil; (3) that a man thus corrected, or excommunicated, may be ashamed of his fault and through repentance come to amendment. There are many notable statements in the *Book of Discipline*, but perhaps none more so than this: "To discipline must all estates within this realm be subject, if they offend, as well the rulers as they that are ruled . . . and the preachers themselves, as well as the poorest within the Church. And because the eye and mouth of the Church ought to be most . . . blameless, the life and conversation of the ministers ought most diligently to be tried."

This theory was most impartially carried out in practice. For a grave breach of the Seventh Commandment, Paul Methven, minister of Jedburgh, who had a good reputation for honesty and godliness, was publicly excommunicated, and deprived of all function in the Church. About a year later, the Lord Treasurer of Scotland, for a breach of the same commandment, had to give public satisfaction in the Church of St Giles. In 1567, the Countess of Argyle, for assisting at the baptism of James VI, "in a Papistical manner", was ordered "to make public repentance in the chapel royal of Stirling", the chapel in which the baptism had been performed.

The discipline, stern in its nature, was carried out vigorously as well as impartially. Obstinate offenders might occasionally refuse to comply, but had eventually to submit. In spite of the apparent harshness of some of the methods of subduing proud sinners, tenderness was not infrequently manifested for the feelings of transgressors, and also a reluctance to take extreme steps. Usually one or more members of a kirk session were magistrates, ready enough to support ecclesiastical authority with civil power and penalties. The fear of excommunication, or the desire to have their children baptized, made some culprits willing, even anxious, to submit to discipline and face the ordeal of the penitent stool. The Kirk Session of St Andrews ordained in 1594 that all those appointed by the Session to make public humiliation should attend “the exercise of the Catechism” to learn the doctrine of true repentance, so that, when they came to the stool, they might answer whatever questions about repentance the minister would put to them.

Yet some sinners uttered “proud and quarrelling speeches, testifying thereby the pride of their hearts and the little regard to God and discipline”. It was resolved that such offenders should be repelled for the time being, and imprisoned till they showed another attitude. Some were so hardened in iniquity that the kirk session had to forbid them to bring a sword or gun to the stool of repentance, or to come before the session with such arms.

The stool of repentance was not confined to Scotland. In England, Archbishop Grindal said, “Let the offender be set directly over against the pulpit during the sermon or homily . . . . It is very requisite that the preacher, in some place of his sermon, or the curate after the end of the homily, remaining still in the pulpit, should publicly interrogate the offenders, whether they do confess their fault, and whether they do truly repent.” Some of the means taken to humiliate offenders may seem to us absurd, but they might give a very different impression to the Scots of the sixteenth century.

For 20 years the Church of Scotland had no presbyteries, nevertheless its government was Presbyterian in spirit. The first General Assembly was held in December 1560 and usually it met twice a year thereafter. From the first, kirk sessions were subject to the general assembly. There were so few ministers that it was simply impossible to set up presbyteries at the beginning, but their germ may be traced in the weekly meeting called *the exercise*, prescribed in the *Book of Order*. The spirit of parity was so strong that no evidence of a moderator has been found in the earlier general assemblies.

In the *Book of Discipline* three permanent offices are recognised: ministers, elders and deacons – and two temporary ones: readers and superintendents. Owing to the great dearth of ministers, the two temporary offices were at that time absolutely necessary. The readers were intended to supply congre-

regations for whom ministers could not be found, and were to be chosen from “the most apt men that distinctly can read” the prayers in the *Book of Common Order* and the Scriptures. When they showed that they had qualifications enough, they were to be promoted to the ministry.

The scarcity of qualified preachers was so great that if all the ablest men had been settled in particular towns or parishes, there would not only have been widespread murmuring among the people, but the salvation of many might have been endangered for lack of the gospel. Therefore the framers of the *Book of Discipline* say, “We have thought it a thing most expedient for this time” that 10 or 12 superintendents should be selected and each set over a province “to plant and erect churches, to set order and appoint ministers”. They were not to be suffered to live in idleness as the bishops had done, but they were to be preachers themselves, preaching at least thrice every week, examining into “the life, diligence, and behaviour of the ministers” and the manners of the people, not staying more than 20 or 30 days in one place, and not more than three or four months in the principal town of their residence.

If found negligent in any of his duties, a superintendent was to be deposed; and he was subject to the censure and correction of the ministers and elders, not only of his chief town, but also of the whole province of which he was overseer. In this respect there was a radical difference between the office of a hierarchical bishop and that of a superintendent, and there were important distinctions. In the Episcopal Church, only bishops have the power of ordination, but a superintendent could be set apart to his office by a single minister. Calderwood pointed out how the two offices differed in 13 ways, and Brown of Wamphray pointed out as many as 24.

It has been suggested that, although the office of superintendent was proposed only as a temporary expedient, there may have been an intention from the first to develop it into that of a hierarchical bishop. This suggestion would have been more plausible if there had not been bishops in the Church that was overthrown. In the *Book of Common Order*, the office of doctor<sup>4</sup> is recognised as scriptural, but the duties as defined there are not prelatial. In short, while Prelacy is not expressly condemned in the *Book of Common Order*, in the *Book of Discipline*, or in the *Confession of Faith*, no room is left for it. No form of Prelacy was a blessing to Scotland; and, at the present day, the prelates of England are doing wondrously little to counteract the pernicious ritualism which is sapping their Church.

The elders were to assist the minister in all the public affairs of the Church,

<sup>4</sup>The office of *doctor* corresponds to *teacher* in Ephesians 4:11. *The Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* states that “the Reformation doctor is best represented in the non-pastor teacher of theology”. “Pastors and teachers” may be seen as forming one office.



especially in looking after the behaviour of the people; they were also to take heed “to the life, manners, diligence, and study of their ministers”. So the *Book of Discipline* declares, and if a minister was worthy of admonition, the elders were to admonish him; if worthy of correction, they were to correct him; if worthy of deposition they, with consent of the Church and superintendent, might depose him. Deacons were to gather the alms of the Church and distribute them. Both elders and deacons were to be elected yearly, “lest, that by long continuance of such officers, men presume upon the liberty of the Church”, but they might be re-elected. Those nominated for election were to be “men of best knowledge in God’s Word, of cleanest life, men faithful, and of most honest conversation”.<sup>5</sup>

Presbyteries were not set up throughout the land until 1581, but the commissioners of the Church of Scotland to the Westminster Assembly said that the Reformers of Scotland intended “from the beginning the government of the Church by assemblies and presbyteries, although they could not attain that perfection . . . in the infancy of reformation, but gave place to necessity”.

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## A Call to Holiness<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon Outline by *John Kennedy*

1 Peter 1:16. *Be ye holy, for I am holy.* See also Leviticus 11:44.

**T**hese words call our attention to important counsel, and to the important considerations by which it is enforced.

### **The Counsel.**

Be ye holy, as the law of God demands.

That is holiness both in heart and action.

It is holiness in conformity to the image and example of Christ.

In Christ we see perfect love to God as the principle for action.

Perfect conformity of action to the will of God as set before us in His law.

This counsel has all the authority of a divine command.

All of us are bound to desire to be and act according to it.

No measure of spiritual helplessness can absolve from the obligation.

### **A Gracious Promise.**

It is to those who are His people that He addresses it.

It is not in mockery of their unholiness, or to what is unattainable.

He tells them what He would have them to be.

<sup>5</sup>Later, ministers could only face discipline at presbyteries, which of course included elders. Also the annual election of elders and deacons came to an end.

<sup>1</sup>Preached in Dingwall on 8 October 1882, and now edited.

He has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son.

He points them to the fountain for making them holy.

God has come nigh through Christ and His Spirit, who applies all grace.

**How the Counsel is Enforced.**

Jehovah is holy, morally perfect in the infinity and eternity of His being.

All His moral attributes combine in the beauty of His holiness.

He is the same to all His spiritual Israel to the end.

Conviction, regeneration and sanctification prove this.

**Your Triune God is Holy.**

He has predestinated all given to the Son to be conformed to His image.

The Father gave His Son, for the fulfilment of His purpose.

The Holy Spirit as Sanctifier is holy.

**Application.**

This is an effective appeal to those who desire to enjoy the fellowship, and do the will, of God. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

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## Book Reviews<sup>1</sup>

*Revivals in the Highlands*, by Angus MacGillivray, published by Reformation Press, paperback, 65 pages, £4.90.

Today we may become rather depressed as we consider the low state of religion all around us. But a book like this, small though it is, should act as a tonic as it reminds us forcefully of the infinite power of God to bring sinners, even large numbers of sinners, to Himself. He has not changed, and He is able to work in our time as readily as in the past.

The author was born in 1805, in Strathnaver, Sutherland, where his father, Duncan MacGillivray, was a minister. He became parish minister of Lairg 12 years later. The son also became a minister, first in Strathy, on the north coast of Sutherland, and later, from 1841, in Fife till his death in 1873. During his ministry in the north, MacGillivray was able to gather information about the state of religion in Easter Ross and Sutherland.

This is the information he used to produce this book. Among the parishes he describes is Golspie, where John Sutherland became minister in 1731. "Though the work advanced quietly," we read, "it advanced steadily, and the result was that in less than nine months from the beginning of it, 70 persons in that small country parish came to the minister with the question, 'What must we do to be saved?' And this was no mere temporary impression: the work went on for years. It extended to the neighbouring parish of Rogart and

<sup>1</sup>Both titles may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

the result was a large number of solid, enlightened Christian people, in whose daily walk the image of Christ was seen.”

MacGillivray emphasises the godliness and the spiritual understanding of the outstanding men in the areas he describes. It was a common saying among them: “The awakened sinner says, If I were holy I would come to Christ; Christ says, Come to Me, a sinner as thou art, and I will make thee holy”. It was suggested to a man on his deathbed, that because he had not been converted till late in life, he should scrutinise carefully the foundation for his hope. “The old man started up in bed and said, ‘Don’t trouble me with your doubts. I know Him whom I trust. The grip which He took of me and which I took of Him, when I was hanging over hell, He will never let go and I will never let go through all eternity.’” The man was presumably not despising the duty of examining himself, but equally he dared not reject the clear evidence he had of having been brought to trust in the Saviour.

One could wish that more such information had been made available in this book (although some other books such as *Records of Grace in Sutherland* do contain further information). One could also wish that it had covered a much wider area of the Highlands. But its re-issue is very welcome. May it stir up many to pray earnestly for powerful awakenings to be granted once more to the areas described, which are now largely so barren spiritually – and to many other areas throughout the world! The power of God to do so is obvious in this book.

***Why Read Church History?***, by J Philip Arthur, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, booklet, 23 pages, £1.50.

The author has had a “lifelong passion for history”, and is rightly anxious that others should recognise the profit to be gained from reading church history. He points out that “the Bible teaches a doctrine of history”; he warns against being overly critical of the great men of the past, although they did have their weaknesses. He tells us that “the most compelling reason to pick up a Christian biography is to marvel at what God has done”. He mentions various books that should be helpful and provides a list of further reading.

The reviewer thoroughly agrees that Christian biographies and church history in general should have their place in our reading. Otherwise we will lack the examples of godly living that biographies bring, and will have little or no sense of the great works of God in the past and, by way of contrast, of how weak the Church is today. This should stimulate prayer.

Free Presbyterians, in particular, should become familiar with their heritage. A brief list of relevant books would include biographies of the early ministers of the Church, including *Memoir & Remains of Rev Donald Macfarlane*,

besides *History of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland* and Thomas M'Crie's *The Story of the Scottish Church* (which shows the ups and downs of its history), all published by Free Presbyterian Publications.

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## Notes and Comments

### Free Presbyterian Children and *The Guardian*

Over the years, many children who have grown up in Free Presbyterian homes have turned their backs on the Church and on the gospel. Doubtless their parents have mourned over this and been inclined to take at least some of the blame to themselves: If only we had set a better example, had been more watchful, more prayerful, less indulgent, more Christ-like. Ultimately, however, it is the sovereignty of God that determines the salvation of children; and the examples of Abraham, Isaac, Samuel and David show that the most eminent saints may have occasion to mourn over their unbelieving offspring, and to say with David: "Although my house be not so with God; yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it not to grow" (2 Sam 23:5).

Recently an article appeared in the *Guardian* newspaper by the daughter of a former Free Presbyterian minister who left the Church more than 30 years ago. The summary of the article is that the writer "loves Sundays because she can do what she likes after a childhood in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, where almost everything but worship, Bible study and eating was banned on the Sabbath". The article consists of many complaints, partly against the Free Presbyterian Church and partly against her parents. It is noticeable that the name of Christ is never mentioned in the article, though the heart of her complaint is against Him and against His gospel. Christ is not easy to attack, and any attempt to do so might lead people to think about the gospel and might be a means of blessing to them; so instead her ammunition is directed against the Church and against some of the lesser and more outward matters of the Christian religion.

The complaints against the Church are of some interest. But, as we will see, most of them resolve into complaints against God, and they are not matters on which Christian parents, following the Bible, have much choice.

The first complaint regards the Sabbath: that it was a day of going to church and reading religious books, and that "shopping, television, sport, and even going for a walk" were all forbidden. The services were long, the prayers interminable, and the day was spent gazing longingly out of the window at

friends playing outside. In the evening the children could not sleep for lack of exercise, and the next morning they took it in turns to get up very early to wash the dishes.

The biblical command is “to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy”, and it is clear that God does forbid shopping, sport and television on that day. “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 . . .” (Is 58:13). It was unfortunate that the writer of the article was brought up in one of the few manses which is adjacent to its church, and therefore she could not get any exercise by walking to the service. The present writer acknowledges that he sleeps better on Sabbath night when he walks to church than when he drives in a car. This is a very small matter, however.

Having to wash the dishes at 6.30 on Monday morning is described in the article as “truly horrible”, and one senses the ease and comfort of the *Guardian* readership and of modern Britain. Not for them the horrors of Aleppo, or of hell! One sees too the selfishness of modern Britain in the sentiment, “I can do what I like on Sundays”. What about all the other people who have to work so that “I” can shop, so that “I” can play golf, so that the sports centre can be open on the Sabbath. Do they matter, or is it just “me and my rights”?

A second complaint is about the obligatory worship of God: family worship, public worship, and communion seasons. This is simply a complaint against God: like Doeg the Edomite, unbelievers are “detained before the Lord” (1 Sam 21:7). The communion sermons were apparently about “hell and damnation”, but we doubt that this was ever the focus of these sermons. Their focus would have been Jesus Christ and Him crucified, but it is striking the way that the death of Christ is so often interpreted by unbelievers as relating to hell and damnation. It is a subject that seems to touch their consciences painfully.

A third complaint is about some of the things said during the sermons and during the meals at communions. We doubt that some of these are accurately reported, but if they are, they must have been a sorrow and embarrassment to many people present and not merely to the writer of the article. Anyone who is in the Christian Church for a while will see and hear many things that are regrettable, but this is not an adequate reason for abandoning Christianity; and the same things and far worse will be found outside the Church.

A fourth complaint is that “the Free Presbyterian faith is led by men – women have no official role within the church and promise to obey their

husbands in the wedding vows”. This is not unique to the Free Presbyterian Church, but is simply ordinary Christian teaching (1 Tim 2:11-12). The writer of the article tells us that she is married to a Roman Catholic, and the Church of Rome has exactly the same teaching on this matter.

A fifth complaint is that “women and girls [in the Free Presbyterian Church] must cover their heads in church, grow their hair long and are forbidden to wear trousers or makeup.” The first two of these are explicitly required in Scripture (1 Cor 11:1-16); the third is deduced from Deuteronomy 22:5: “The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God” (obviously highly relevant in a day of transsexualism); and the fourth from various biblical references to the adorning of women (1 Ki 9:30, 1 Tim 2:9, 1 Pet 3:3).

A sixth complaint concerns the many things that were forbidden by her parents: “dancing, the cinema, music, Guides, Scouts, sport and youth clubs, as practically anything was considered potentially wicked”. Of all the complaints, this is the only one which leaves much room for debate: did the parents set the boundaries in the right place? In answer, we would simply say this: that Christian parents have to set boundaries somewhere, and wherever these boundaries are set, unbelieving children will fret against them. The boundaries will frequently appear arbitrary and inconsistent and subject to many exceptions – this is part of human life, and a consequence of the limited wisdom of the parents. Furthermore, manse children are often restrained, not because their parents think it wrong but because someone in the congregation may take offence; this again is inescapable in a fallen world and implies no blame. “Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend” (1 Cor 8:13).

There are various other minor complaints in the article, but what about the good things in the Free Presbyterian Church? What about the many kind and godly people that the writer must have met in her childhood? Why does she dwell only on the unhappy aspects, and after all these years? Who could not produce a similar list of complaints about their upbringing; but would it be right to do so? And what about Christ? Why does she say nothing about Him? Has He done her any wrong? And why then does she not believe? *DWBS*

### **Gender Confusion**

Perhaps it should not surprise us that we observe our nation being deeply influenced by the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) agenda. Same-sex “marriage” is now on our statute books, homosexuality is considered normal and, as we saw last month, humanists are becoming more strident in

seeking to influence our education system – indeed to destroy Christian education completely if they could. The 2015 census revealed that 50% of Scots indicated they had no religion, as against 40% in the 2009 Census; so secularism is on the march. A recent Christian Concern report gives some idea of the scale of this spiritual malaise and of how far it has spread, especially to young people.

The report states that many schools are running “transgender workshops”. A Church of England school in south-east England has enlisted the help of a local LGBT youth group to discuss with 9-11 year olds the idea that gender is “fluid” – you may choose what gender you want to be (or do not want to be) according to how you feel, not according to your biological identity. To children at such an impressionable age, the confusion introduced must be hugely perplexing – as well as sinful. At the same school, 4-5 year olds had a book read to them called, *Are You a Boy or are you a Girl?* sowing the seeds of gender uncertainty in their young minds. In the Highlands of Scotland, once renowned for its Christianity and biblical godliness, LGBT clubs are being established in local secondary schools – trying to normalise the abnormal. That the LGBT club can be just another innocent lunch club is the sinister message.

A “gender-neutral” uniform policy was introduced across the board in another school. Why was this done? One six-year-old pupil felt he was born the “wrong” sex; so the school “must” accommodate that pupil’s wishes. But not only were his wishes to be catered for – the school chose to impose the new policy on all of its pupils. Parents were not consulted in advance and when one mother complained she was labelled “discriminatory”.

The intolerance of questioning anything in this approach is illustrated by the reaction of a secondary school ordering a parent off its premises labelling her a “bigot”. Why? Because she had dared to challenge the fact that LGBT promotional material was openly lying around. The school insisted that such interference would not be permitted. Students were told that “anyone else questioning the agenda would get the same treatment”.

Of course teaching staff also face the same difficulties and pressures. A pupil asked Vicky Allen, a teaching assistant from Cornwall, questions on same-sex “marriage” and related matters. She tried to answer honestly, holding to her Christian convictions; although the pupil was not offended by her answers, his mother seemingly was and contacted the school. The teaching assistant was suspended the next day and then summoned to a disciplinary hearing, where she was given a written warning accusing her of breaching the school’s policies. She lost her appeal against the suspension and is now taking her case to an Employment Tribunal.

The gender confusion continues as we read the tragic story, reported by the BBC, of a 10-year-old girl, whom they called “Leo” (not her real name). She did not “feel right” as a girl. She then “chose” to become a boy, but still it did not “feel right”. Her mother did some research and found another identity, “gender non-binary” – “neither male nor female”. “Leo” chose this definition, apparently on her parents’ advice. The medical answer to her problem surely was therapy – to align her mental with her physiological state – not to redefine her gender. The 10-year-old herself said, “When I grow up, it’s going to be harder for me to say, I’m not a girl”. Incalculable damage may be caused to her personality – and especially to her soul – by this choice.

As if “non-binary” gender was not confusing enough, the media is reporting the creation of multiple genders. Men, women and children are taking the sinful liberty of “creating” their own identities – ignoring objective physical reality. And this inevitably is entering the political arena. A controversial report by MPs on transsexual issues and health, led by Maria Miller, who chairs the Women and Equalities Committee, caused Melanie Philips, the *Times* columnist, to write, “The political class is obsessed with gender issues”. She accuses these MPs of “turning gender confusion from a health issue into a political statement to be enforced”. On school issues she warns, “Gender fluidity will be actively promoted as just another lifestyle choice. Under the commendable guise of stopping the minute number of transgender children being bullied, the rest of the class will be bullied into accepting the prescribed orthodoxy – that gender is mutable, and any differentiation in value between behaviour or attitudes is bigoted and prohibited.” She stresses, “Gender politics is all about subjective feelings. It has nothing to do with fairness or equality. It embodies instead an extreme egalitarianism which holds that any evidence of difference is a form of prejudice”.

Incredibly over 70 new gender identities have been invented; indeed, the social-media site Facebook allows for “custom gender” – you can have any identity you want. Satan, the prince of darkness, is using these issues as another means to further his evil ends in this world. But he is a liar and a deceiver, a murderer from the beginning and the author of confusion. The Word of God clearly says, “God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them” (Gen 1:27). Satan wants, not only to blur God’s distinctions, but to destroy man altogether by his devices. However, the Saviour reigns. “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly” (Rom 16:20). *KHM*

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The worst thing that can be done to a transgressor is to let him alone in his transgression. *Patrick Fairbairn*



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## Protestant View

### Archbishop's Visit to the Pope

The Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury recently participated in a service in the Church of St Gregory in Rome, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the initial ecumenical dialogue between the then Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey. They have issued a joint declaration on unity and “charged 19 pairs of Catholic and Anglican bishops to return to their home countries and work together to promote joint prayer, joint proclamation of the gospel and, especially, joint works of charity and justice.”

The declaration states that “while much progress has been made”, new disagreements have arisen, “particularly regarding the ordination of women and more recent questions regarding human sexuality”, and that “behind these differences lies a perennial question about how authority is exercised in the Christian community”. These disagreements have largely arisen through the sinful compromises of the Church of England in recent decades. It is a sad and solemn reminder to us that the rejection of the light of the Word of God can lead to a situation where the Roman Church appears to be closer to biblical teaching on moral issues in its public pronouncements than some nominally-Protestant denominations.

The ultimate end of all such ecumenical “progress”, however, is the absorption of the entire visible Church under the authority of the papacy. Underneath the diplomatic, carefully-nuanced language, there lies the unchanging aspiration of Rome for complete dominion, while the Anglican Church under Archbishop Welby’s leadership seems increasingly willing to be wooed by Rome’s flattery.

*AWM*

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## Church Information

### Day of Humiliation and Prayer

The Synod has appointed a Day of Humiliation and Prayer to be held throughout the Church on Wednesday, December 7, “on account of the rapidly rising tide of iniquity in Britain and other countries where our Church has congregations, and to plead for the fulfilment of the promise, ‘When the enemy shall come in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him’ (Is 59:19).”

(Rev) *K M Watkins*, Clerk of Synod

### Doctor for Mbuma Mission Hospital

With Dr Bezemer coming to an end of his two-year tour, a vacancy will arise

in December 2016 for a Christian medical doctor to work at Mbumba Mission Hospital, Zimbabwe. For further information interested parties should apply to: Rev J R Tallach, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2NH, Scotland; e-mail: jrtallach@btinternet.com.

### **Student for the Ministry**

Mr Trycot Mwedzi, of the Zvishavane congregation, has been received by the Zimbabwe Presbytery as a student studying for the ministry of the Church.

### **Education Committee**

In the past year concerns have been raised by members of the Religion and Morals Committee regarding the fact that some aspects of government-funded state education are contrary to, and undermine, sound Scriptural teaching. Consequently, a proposal was considered by the 2016 Synod to provide support to parents who wish to educate their children outside the state system. The Synod agreed that our people – parents and other interested parties – should be consulted as to their present educational arrangements and their opinion of an alternative provision.

A committee was established by Synod to move the proposals forward, and to this end we have drafted a questionnaire, which is linked from the Church website, or can be found directly at: <http://tinyurl.com/jjh2fv4>. It would be greatly appreciated if parents and other interested persons, who are Free Presbyterians, would complete it; all opinions, positive and negative, will help us in our assessment of the level of interest. If it is impractical to use the online form, hard copies of the questionnaire are being made available to Clerks of Deacons' Courts. These should be returned to Mr F R Daubney, 2 Gadloch Gardens, Lenzie, G66 5DB.

All responses should be returned by the end of November DV.

*F R Daubney, Convener, Education Committee*

### **Outreach Fund**

By appointment of Synod, the special collection on behalf of the Outreach Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during November.

*W Campbell, General Treasurer*

### **Acknowledgement of Donations**

*Congregational Treasurers* acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

**Inverness:** *Bus Fund:* Anon, £20, £50. *Church Expenses:* Anon, £40. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* A M Reynolds, £16, £7.50, £7.50, £25, £18, £17.50. *Home Mission Fund:* A M Reynolds, £7.50, £7.50, £25, £18, £17.50.

**Lochbroom:** Lochbroom Church Friends, £60 per KCM. *Communion Expenses:* Friend, £50.

**Lochcarron:** *Communion Expenses:* SMK, £100.

**Portree:** Anon, £1000. *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £20 per Rev IDM. *Sustentation Fund:* CMP, £20, £20, £20 per Rev IDM.

**Raasay:** Anon, "In loving memory", £100; Anon, "In memory of R & L MacBeath", £100.

## 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 Duirinish-Strath:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm. Thursday 7 pm (alternately in Struan and Vatten, fortnightly). Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 0147861 2110.

**Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): 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 N M Ross; tel: 01349 864351.

**Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.

**Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227.

**Farr** (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.

**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:** Sabbath 2.30 pm, held in Free Church of Scotland Hall, 14 Jamaica Street, PA15 1XX. Sabbath 2.30 p.m.

**Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev W A Weale, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Sabbath 5 pm; **Wick:** Church; **Strathy:** 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** and **Strond** 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. Contact Mr A MacRae; tel: 01463 790521.

**Kinlochberrie:** 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 7.30 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:** Church. No F P services at present. 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 Rev D Campbell; tel: 0131 312 8227.

**Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev I D MacDonald, F P Manse, Achachork, Portree, IV51 9HT; tel: 01478 612110.

**Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.

**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. Manse tel: 01470 562243. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.

**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 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev A W MacColl; tel: 01851 810228.

**Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.

### 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 BA, 252 Brierclyffe Road, Burnley, BB10 2DQ; tel: 01282 835800.

**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. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01282 835800.

#### Canada

**Chesley**, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 7.30 pm; Tuesday 8 pm. Contact: Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

**Vancouver**, British Columbia: Contact: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367; or Mr Gilbert Zekveld; tel: 519 363 5899.

#### USA

**Sancta Fe**, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith; tel: 409 927 1564.

#### Australia

**Grafton**, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA PhD, 3 Martin Crescent, Junction Hill, NSW 2460; tel: (02) 6644 6174; e-mail:grafton@internode.on.net.

**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:sydneyfpcchurch@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. Rev C Hembd, 14 Thomson St, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140.

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

**Wellington (Carterton)**: Senior Citizens' Hall, 150 High Street North. 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; Beacon International College, 70 Martaban Road, Singapore 328667 (entrance is opposite 37/39 Mandalay Road); Wednesday: 7.45 pm, Lion Building B, #02-11, 12 Arumugam Road, Singapore 409958. 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. Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 6 pm. Rev D Levyskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevyskyi@gmail.com; or contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua.

#### 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.by@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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