

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

Contents

“He Preached Christ”	33
The Day of Salvation (1)	
A Sermon by C H Spurgeon	36
Luther and the Reformation	
2. All Was Omission, Sin and Impurity	
J H Merle d’Aubigné	44
The Free Offer of the Gospel	
1a. What Is It?	
Rev A W MacColl	48
The Spirit of the Age	
Rev Donald MacLean	50
Christ as Judge – Some Lessons	
Thomas Boston	53
Union with Christ	
John Newton	55
Our Mission Work	
Rev J MacLeod	56
Book Reviews	
<i>The Lord’s Day</i> by Thomas Boston, James Fisher and John Kennedy	58
<i>From the Mouth of God</i> by Sinclair B Ferguson	59
<i>Preparation for Ministry</i> by Allan Harman	60
Protestant View	60
Notes and Comments	62
Church Information	64

February 2017

Vol 122 • No 2

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

Moderator of Synod: Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.

Clerk of Synod: Rev K M Watkins BA, 252 Briercliffe Road, Burnley, BB10 2DQ; tel: 01282 835800; e-mail: kmwatkins@fpchurch.co.uk.

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

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

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

Clarks to Presbyteries:

Northern: Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.

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

Western: Rev D A Ross, F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.

Outer Isles: Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.

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

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

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

Residential Care Homes:

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

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

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

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

Editorial Board: The Editor, Rev A W MacColl, Mr K H Munro, Rev D W B Somerset.

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

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

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

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; **Fifth:** Aberdeen, London, Mbuma.

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

June: First Sabbath: Perth, Shieldaig; **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, Stornoway, Vatten, Zenka.

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

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

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

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

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

Volume 122

February 2017

Number 2

“He Preached Christ”

The title of this article is the text that Charles Hodge took for a sermon he preached following the death of J W Alexander.¹ Alexander (1804-1859) was briefly a professor in Princeton Seminary, but spent most of his ministry as a pastor in New York. The text is part of Acts 9:20: “And straightway *he preached Christ* in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God”. This describes Saul of Tarsus immediately after his conversion and his call to be an apostle and therefore a preacher of the gospel. The focus of that first sermon was Christ and the fact that He is the Son of God. It was the same message that the angel brought to the shepherds outside Bethlehem, immediately after the birth of Jesus: “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Lk 2:11) – the Child who had just been born was the promised Messiah and was Jehovah; He was divine.

Much had happened since the angel had delivered his message: the divine Saviour had grown up; He had gone about doing good; especially He had died in the place of sinners, had risen again and had ascended to heaven. He appeared to Saul on the way to Damascus and, in spite of all his persecution of Jesus’ followers, Saul was beginning to preach the everlasting gospel – what Christ had called him to do. He was emphasising two gospel facts particularly: that Jesus was the Messiah and that He – though indeed man – was more than man; He was the Son of God.

After the resurrection, Jesus had sent out the remaining 11 disciples with the words: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk 16:15). The content of what they were to proclaim was specified: it was the good news of who Christ was and what He had done. They were also to proclaim the result of His work: there was salvation for guilty sinners. It was a message of peace, as the angels had made clear – it was “peace through the blood of His cross” (Col 1:20), as Paul was later to write as he pointed to

¹The sermon appears in James M Garretson, *Pastor-Teachers of Old Princeton*, Banner of Truth, 2012. Readers may be interested in *Thoughts on Preaching & Pastoral Ministry: Lessons From the Life and Writings of James W Alexander*, by James M Garretson, published by Reformation Heritage Books in 2015. It is much more of a biography than the title suggests. The books referred to here are available from the F P Bookroom.

Christ's death as the substitute for sinners, when He took their sins and suffered their punishment. These are the great facts to be made known in the preaching of the gospel in every generation.

When Hodge came to comment on Alexander's preaching, he said: "He endeavoured to turn the minds of men away from themselves, and to lead them to look only unto Jesus. He strove to convince his hearers that the work of salvation had been accomplished . . . and was not to be done by them; that their duty was simply to acquiesce in the work of Christ, assured that the subjective work of sanctification is due to the objective work of Christ, as appropriated by faith and applied by the Holy Ghost. He thus endeavoured to cut off the delays, anxieties and misgivings which arise from watching the exercises of our own minds, seeking in what we inwardly experience our warrant for accepting what is outwardly offered to the chief of sinners, without money and without price."²

Here is an example for preachers today: they are to point to Christ as the source of all spiritual blessings, emphasising to their hearers that they cannot in any degree save themselves; and they are not to seek for anything in themselves which could possibly provide encouragement to seek for salvation – but their need, their sin, their guilt, their helplessness should certainly send them to Christ, for He has done all that is necessary for the salvation of guilty, polluted sinners. And, as Hodge made clear, He "is outwardly offered to the chief of sinners". So Paul proclaimed, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world *to save sinners*; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim 1:15).

This is the type of preaching that congregations should be looking for: what centres on Christ. Yes, preachers are to proclaim "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27); that was what Paul, as he spoke to the elders of the church in Ephesus, had every right to claim he had done. But he also stressed: "We preach Christ crucified" (1 Cor 1:23). He did both: he proclaimed the whole testimony that God had revealed, but his focus was on the Saviour who had suffered, the Lamb whom God had provided – to be a propitiation, a sacrifice that would turn away the anger of God from those sinners whose substitute He was, for He came to satisfy God's justice in their place. Apart from preaching Christ crucified, ministers have no foundation for any message to their hearers except condemnation.

Yes, appropriate attention must be paid to the law and to the terrible consequences of breaking that law, but no one will obtain deliverance from condemnation apart from the message of forgiveness through Christ, who was crucified. And no one will continue on the way to heaven, bearing fruit,

²*Pastor-Teachers of Old Princeton*, p 142.

apart from going on “looking unto Jesus”. We should also bear in mind the Saviour’s words to His disciples: “Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit” (John 15:8). This is how God is to be glorified in the lives of people in this world. To glorify God is our primary duty in this world.

In one of his communion addresses, Alexander thus encouraged believers: “The view which we are to take of a dying Christ is not natural sympathy with His human sufferings. These were indeed great, unparalleled and unutterable. But it is observable that the bodily pangs are not made prominent in the Scripture narrative Our Lord plainly dissuades us from this simply-human and compassionate view of His death, by the words which He turned and spoke to the weeping daughters of Jerusalem”.

Alexander goes on to oppose crucifixes, and pictures and plays featuring Jesus’s death; they “leave the very crowds that weep and smite the breast ready next day to go about deeds of violence or licence. . . . We are in need of something that is beyond nature. . . . The death of Christ, exhibited in the sacrament, is to be viewed by faith. . . . It is faith that beholds this spotless Lamb laid on the altar of divine justice. It is faith that sees the penalty here exacted on the blessed Substitute. It is faith that hears the invitation extended to every sinner in the gospel. It is faith that receives the salvation as complete, suitable, available, present, made over and held out for the acceptance of the individual soul. It is faith that actually accepts it, laying the hand of appropriation on the head of the unblemished Victim . . . and it is faith that renews these very acts of reception, surrender and adhesion with equal or increasing readiness, again and again through all the Christian life. In other words, faith ‘discerns the Lord’s body’; faith receives it; faith feeds upon it.”³

Here indeed was preaching of Christ crucified. Yet many hearers reject such preaching. In Paul’s time, unbelief led “the Jews [to] require a sign, and the Greeks [to] seek after wisdom” that had a human source (1 Cor 1:22). That unbelief continues today. What need there then is of the Lord to send out godly preachers to make Christ known everywhere and of the Spirit to apply their message powerfully!

Hodge thus ended his sermon in what had been Alexander’s church: “The sum and substance of the preaching ever heard within these walls is that Christ is the only source of truth, of righteousness, of holiness and eternal life, so that we are complete in Him. To Him therefore be honour and glory, might, majesty and dominion, world without end.” May the time soon come when preachers everywhere will preach Christ crucified, as Alexander did, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven! Then how great will be the honour and glory which will ascend to heaven from all parts of this world!

³J W Alexander, *God Is Love*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1985, pp 131-135.

The Day of Salvation (1)¹

A Sermon by C H Spurgeon

2 Corinthians 6:2. *Behold, now is the day of salvation.*

No one can change a day's weather. The kings of the earth cannot command bright days for themselves nor inflict days of tempest on their enemies. It belongs to One higher than they to command the morning and cause the day star to know its place. It is little they can do to the light and the sun, the clouds and the rain; they cannot bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades nor loose the bands of Orion. Still rulers and governors and kings have accomplished much in shaping the social character of their subjects' days. Sometimes, like the king of Nineveh, they have proclaimed days of fasting, and their subjects have been clothed in sackcloth; on other occasions they have exercised the prerogative to ordain days of feasting, as Ahasuerus did at the palace of Shushan, when for 180 days "he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty", by filling the capital with feasting.

Kings of the older stamp were more able to influence the days of their people than they are now. In former times, when people had more faith in the fable of the divine right of kings than they have now, a despot could cause a thick darkness over all the land, even darkness that might be felt. They made war according to their own fancy or frenzy, and what is that but moral midnight? What does war mean but crime, suffering, death, poverty? Is it not usually the sum of all villainies? Everything that is evil either marches with it or follows in its train. The very thought of war for our beloved country darkens our heavens. Alas, with what a light heart have despots drawn the sword and sought to wade through slaughter to imaginary glory, shutting the gates of mercy on mankind that they might seize a province or avenge a jest.

Kings can also brighten people's days when they have a mind to be quiet: they make peace and then the nations bask in the sun, and earth covers her battlefields with greenery. Peace gives the poor world respite to bind up her gaping wounds and remedy a little of the mischief of the awful fight. Hard labour and stern self-denial are not grudged by the suffering peasants if they may have time to breathe and the land may enjoy her Sabbaths; but why should such toil and suffering have been demanded? Simply because kings quarrel, and their subjects must die to end the strife.

Princes have also on occasion exercised their prerogative by proclaiming days of amnesty and oblivion: a long rebellion has been crushed out, and there

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol 24.

has been no fear of its return, and then the monarch has thought it best to refrain from undue severity and to overlook the evil which he has subdued; accordingly he proclaims that the past shall be blotted out if, by a certain time, the rebellious will surrender, yield up their arms and promise loyalty. Such days are calm and clear, and bring light to despairing rebels who saw no end but the gallows. Thus for humiliation or rejoicing; for war, for peace, or for pardon, monarchs can set their seal upon a day and mark it with their signature in history.

If earthly monarchs can somewhat affect the days of men; what can be done by the King of kings? The Creator of day and night can surely order all our light and shade. The Ancient of days is He who can give us "mornings without clouds" or make the day dark with gloom. How often He has made the sun of prosperity to gladden us, and how suddenly He has shrouded us beneath the thick clouds of adversity! Our days are in His hand and He is Lord of all. You and I, looking back, may well bow before the power and majesty of the Eternal, who has such infinite power over us that none of us can stay His hand or say unto Him, "What doest Thou?"

The Lord has had His days of vengeance; are they not written in the book of the wars of the Lord? How terrible was the hour when He opened the sluices of the firmament that the rain might descend in torrents, and bade the fountains of the great deep rise to meet the descending floods! How dreadful were the 40 days in which the floods above the firmament leaped downward to embrace their brethren of the ocean, till the whole earth was covered with one all-devouring deluge, and sea monsters whelped and stabled in the palaces of kings! That was the assize of justice, and the day of vengeance of our God. Such days have been at other times as, for instance, when He poured hell out of heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah, when He overthrew Pharaoh and all his host in the midst of the Red Sea, and when His sword stayed not from blood till Hivite and Perizzite and all the Canaanites fell before the hand of Joshua, because the iniquity of the people was full, and the hour of execution had arrived.

Those were the days of wrath, and there is another, far more terrible day yet to come, when heaven and earth shall flee away before the face of Him that shall sit upon the great white throne. Blessed be God, we are not at this time living under the rod of vengeance, but our text tells us that "now is the day of salvation". When it is a day of vengeance, the Lord does His strange but necessary work thoroughly, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord". The prophet said of Him: "The Lord revengeth, and is furious". Well did Miriam sing, "The Lord is a man of war, Jehovah is His name".

But when He puts on the robes of mercy, and proclaims with a silver trumpet the day of salvation, “blessed are the people that know the joyful sound”. I trust that there are among us some of that happy company who have heard, with the inner ear, the note of grace. At any rate, the Lord has set a period of salvation, from the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus to the present hour. The day of salvation has not been suspended; it still lasts, and it shall last till the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout: then shall come the judgement, and strict justice shall sit upon the throne.

When the Apostle was writing this wonderful sentence, he dreaded that men should not avail themselves of its great truth. Read the first verse of the chapter: “We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain”. The day of salvation is a great favour from God, and it would be a fearful thing if we should live in it and miss its privilege. It is only through God’s favour that we enjoy this day of amnesty, oblivion and forgiveness; therefore we beseech you not to let its golden hours pass over you in vain.

This is the great anxiety of my heart at this time in addressing you; I have great fear lest some of you should live in the day of salvation and yet die without being saved, should live in the midst of light with blinded eyes, should dwell with deaf ears where the silver trumpet sounds, and the kingdom of God should come very near you and yet you should not enter it. It will be sad indeed if you should see strangers from afar brought into the kingdom of heaven and you, who live on its borders, should be utterly thrust out. May the Holy Spirit bless the words which shall now be spoken, so that the evil which we fear may not come upon you, but that you may receive this grace, or favour, of God to your eternal good.

That you may not receive this grace in vain, (1) I shall try to show the great reason for this day of salvation; (2) I shall speak of the glorious day itself; (3) I shall dwell upon the dark shadow which will close that day if the Spirit does not lead us into salvation.

1. The great reason for this day. “Now is the day of salvation.” Will you kindly read the context in order to understand why there is a present day of salvation? I will take you a little away from the text to chapter 5, verse 20, and I would ask you to bear in mind that the division into chapters is arbitrary, and we need take no notice of it. The Apostle says, “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Here then is the secret of the whole matter. This day is the day of salvation because “He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that

we might be made the righteousness of God in Him". There could have been no day of salvation if a Saviour had not appeared; and if that Saviour had not become a substitute and surety, salvation would have been denied us by the stern voice of justice. But now Christ has come into the world and died for sin, and because He has finished all the work which He undertook, the Lord God proclaims to us the day of salvation.

Notice that, according to the context, this is the day of salvation *because we may now be reconciled to God*. "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The Lord would not set His ministers to plead with people to be reconciled to Him if peace was out of the question. He would not send us on an impossible errand. God is already reconciled to every sinner who has an interest in the blood of Jesus. Toward them the Lord is full of peace. Nothing is required now to reconcile God to the believing man. The great thing is that people would believe in Jesus Christ and be reconciled to God. The feud between you and God, poor prodigal child, need not be continued. You quarrelled with your Father, and you went into the far country; and now you have spent your substance, but He sends to you this message, Be reconciled; come home; a loving reception awaits you; return at once.

Because Jesus has died, the partition wall is broken down; the great gulf between a holy God and unholy man is bridged by the atoning blood. You may be reconciled; there is no reason why the terrible quarrel should continue; therefore, because reconciliation is possible, it is a day of salvation. As long as man remains an enemy to God, he cannot be saved, for enmity to God is the very essence of his ruin and the sting of his condemnation. While a man lives in enmity to God he is, and he must be, under the power of an evil spirit which curses him; therefore reconciliation to God is absolutely necessary if he is to enjoy salvation. I repeat that, because reconciliation is possible, this day of salvation has come.

Next, lest anyone should exclaim, But how is it and why is it that so great a boon is conferred? I cannot understand it but the plain statement of verse 21 explains it all: "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin". Here is the grand doctrine of *substitution*. O soul, if you believe in Christ Jesus, you shall be saved because He stood in your stead, He took your sin; the Lord made Him to be sin on your account and exacted at His hand satisfaction for your iniquity. The Lord bruised Him and put Him to grief; so that He was made a curse for us and bore in our stead the wrath of heaven. Now therefore the righteous God will not, cannot, need to vindicate His law a second time. If He has made the Lord Jesus to be sin for us, He need not visit us for sin nor punish the same offence a second time. Indeed it would be injustice to lay sin once upon the Substitute and afterwards upon the sinner;

therefore a day of salvation may well be proclaimed, since Christ has finished transgression and made an end of sin.

To help us to understand mercy's great expedient still better, the Holy Spirit tells us that the divine design in Christ Jesus is to make sinners the "righteousness of God" in Christ. Wonderful expression! I shall not attempt to enter into its fullness, but I will content myself with saying that the two expressions of the verse set forth the imputation of sin to Christ and of righteousness to us, the substitution of Christ in our place, and the standing of our souls in Christ's place. And they do so in terms so forcible that he must be determined not to believe the doctrine who does not see it in the words before us. Our Lord is not merely made a sin-offering, but He is made sin, and we are not merely made righteous in Christ, but we are made righteousness itself, indeed the righteousness of God, which is the very highest righteousness conceivable.

I never wish to strain expressions, nor push them one inch beyond their proper meaning, but I think it difficult to do so here, since the language is so very forcible and explicit. If the doctrine which I have explained was intended to be taught, I do not see how it could be more clearly stated. Now soul, if you desire salvation, see how God can give it to you.

As He takes the sinner's sin and lays it upon Christ, so He takes Christ's righteousness and lays it upon the sinner. He looks at the believer as if he was as righteous as His Son, who represents him. He treats the believer as if he had been obedient to all His law; He looks on the model man, Christ Jesus, the perfect humanity, and He sees in Christ all His people and treats them accordingly. He looks upon His people as if they themselves had magnified the law and made it honourable by a sinless life. Wonderful doctrine this! But he who believes it shall find rest to his soul, and it is because of it that we are authorised to come forth this day and declare the day of salvation. The guilt of the believing sinner is put away, for Christ has carried it. And now righteousness belongs to the sinner, for God imputes it to him without works; therefore this is the day of salvation.

Still keeping to the context, and illustrating in another way the great reason for the day of salvation, will you kindly read the verse which contains our text? "For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." It is a quotation. Paul says, "He saith". Where does God say that? We have no difficulty in discovering this: it is in Isaiah 49, a passage you should carefully read and ponder heartily.

I wish to call your special attention to it as opening up the glorious reason for the famous proclamation about which we are preaching. Verses 6-12 in

that chapter apply eminently to the Messiah – that is, to the Lord Jesus Christ. Of whom else could the prophet have spoken as in verse 7: “Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to Him whom man despiseth, to Him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers?” Who is this but the Lord as He stood before Herod and Pilate? To this very day He is abhorred of the Jews: they mention Him ordinarily by the name of “the Crucified”, and to them that term is the embodiment of the utmost scorn. We glory in that word, but to them it is the essence of contempt. “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” We are sure that Isaiah spoke concerning Him, the Crucified, whom we adore.

Our next enquiry is, What did He say about Him? Read verses 5-6: “And now, saith the Lord that formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and My God shall be My strength. And He said, It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth.” Beloved, are you not glad to hear these words. If you are not curious to hear *me*, but eager to hear my Master’s truth, your heart will be rejoiced at the blessed news that now *Christ has come to be the salvation of the Gentiles*. We were out in the cold; we were the younger branch of the family, and the heir despised us; we had not yet come into our portion; we were left in darkness and in sin.

But now our turn has come, and we are favoured. From the day when Jesus said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,” our privileges began. From the day when Paul said, “Seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles,” ours has been a day of favour, and we have obtained the portion which once belonged alone to the seed of Abraham. Only we have obtained it to a far larger extent, and we see more clearly its deep spiritual meaning and wealth of blessing. What was veiled under types and shadows is evidently set forth before our eyes.

Tell it all over the world today that salvation has come to the Gentiles, and especially to the dwellers in the islands. As for the ends of the earth, surely we are intended by that term, for our forefathers dwelt where Phoenicians made distant and dangerous journeys to find tin and other metals, and our land was thought to be upon creation’s edge, inhabited by a barbarous people of uncouth tongue. And yet to us, even to us, has the gospel come. Jehovah, the God of the whole earth is our God at this day; in this let us exult, for it proves that the day of salvation has come to the Gentiles.

Further, He goes on to say in verse 8: "Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard Thee". Mark this well. *God saves us because He hears the Lord Jesus*. Here is the secret of all the answers of grace to the prayers of penitents. He says, "I have heard Thee in a time accepted . . . behold, now is the day of salvation". In the lonely watches of the night, the great Intercessor prayed for His own. He lived a life of supplication, and He did not pray in vain, for He said to the Father, "I knew that thou hearest Me always". It was always so. His prayers may be said to have reached their highest point when He offered the marvellous intercession recorded in John 17 and followed it up by His strong crying and tears in the garden, when He poured out His soul in agony; while prostrate among the olives He sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground.

Mysterious was that bloody sweat! Precious drops, they did not fall by chance. They wrote on the earth the reversal of the curse which fell upon the ground, and the ending of the day of wrath in the day of salvation. That sacred sweat bedewed a garden which henceforth yields the oil of joy, wherewith believers may anoint their faces with gladness. Jesus was heard in that He feared, and henceforth it is a gospel of good cheer to the chief of sinners. "In an acceptable time have I heard Thee." Is it not wonderful that Jesus in the garden made intercession for transgressors who as yet had not learned to pray for themselves? I trust that among those who hear me there are people as yet unconverted who nevertheless are special objects of the Redeemer's intercession and who shall find salvation because their great Substitute was heard on their behalf. All believers were heard when their great High Priest was heard; the Father's answer to Him was an answer to all His people.

It is added, "In a day of salvation have I helped Thee". Help came to the man Christ Jesus in His hour of agony; the Father succoured Him, and there appeared unto Him an angel strengthening Him. How must that angel have marvelled as he saw the face of the incarnate God red with a sweat of blood. The whole scene is beyond conception strange and singular: the prostrate Saviour in agonising pangs utters strong crying and is helped by His God. The angel came to strengthen our Champion, not to join in the fight. No one could share the conflict; Jesus must tread the winepress alone. But the angel was empowered to communicate strength to the manhood of Christ, and he did so. Then it was that, being succoured in His hour of need, the Master took the appointed cup so full of woe, drank it to its utmost dregs and said, "It is finished!" It was then that, by one dreadful draught, He pledged the justice of God and gave this day of salvation to the sons of men.

You see then that our present day of privilege has come to us through the Lord hearing and succouring the Daysman and Redeemer of His people. But

salvation comes to them also because, according to verse 8, it is written, “I will preserve Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth”. *Jesus is now God’s covenant with man*, and that covenant is one of peace and favour. The Lord says to each believing man: Thy sin will I remember no more; a new heart also will I give thee, and a right spirit will I put within thee; thou shalt be Mine; I will sanctify thee and glorify thee with My Son; behold, in token of My faithfulness, I have given My Son to be the seal, the surety and the sum of My covenant; behold, I have given Him for a covenant to the people, a leader and commander for the people. Brethren, you are not under the covenant of Moses today: you are under the covenant of Jesus; you are not under law, but under grace and, because of this, today is the day of salvation.

I cannot at this time enlarge on the other blessed verses which make up Isaiah 49, but let me say it is because Christ is now anointed to give liberty to all captives and to say to them, “Go forth” – it is because He brings the darkened ones out of death-shade and says, “Show yourselves” – that this is a day of salvation. Furthermore, when we are delivered from bondage and darkness, then because Christ is a shepherd and leads His flock and makes them feed in the ways, finds pasture for them in high places, protects them from hunger and thirst and gives them springs of water to drink from – it is because of all this that now is the day of salvation.

I will not enlarge further, but only say, If I now preach the day of salvation, as I will try to do, with the utmost boldness and fullness, and if any of you enquire, How is it? Why is grace so free this day? I shall tell you that the cause is quite as marvellous as the fact, that the way of salvation is as surprising as salvation itself, and that Jesus Christ the Son of God, who has done and is doing it all, is the most wonderful of all. In His eyes I see the stars which can shine away the midnight of despair; in His hands I see the majestic might which can break the fetters of Satanic bondage; and in His face I see the sacred guidance which shall bring the host of His elect safe home, in unbroken ranks, to the land of the tearless eyes.

The confession of sin is not the cause of its pardon – the moving cause is God’s free, unmerited grace; it is the blood of Jesus. God pardons from the fullness of His mercy and on the ground of the Saviour’s sacrifice. But the confession of sin is the channel by which God speaks comfort to the soul.

If I look at my giant corruptions and say they are too great for the grace of Jesus to subdue, I limit Him. If I think my difficulty in life too insurmountable for the power of Christ, then do I limit Him. But if in simple faith I see that, in receiving Jesus as a gift, I receive all good in Him, then am I enabled to rise superior to all my circumstances.

Octavius Winslow

Luther and the Reformation¹

2. All Was Omission, Sin and Impurity

J H Merle d'Aubigné

When he entered the monastery, Luther did not have what was afterwards to make him a reformer of the Church. He was proceeding in conformity with the tendencies of the age from which he was soon to begin to liberate the Church. A new stone had been added to the edifice of superstition by the very man who was before long to destroy it. Luther looked to himself for salvation, to human works and observances. He did not know that salvation comes wholly from God. He sought his own glory and righteousness, unmindful of the righteousness and glory of the Lord. But what he was ignorant of as yet, he learnt soon afterwards. It was in the cloister of Erfurt that this immense transformation was brought about, which substituted in his heart God and His wisdom for the world and its traditions.

When Martin Luther entered the convent, he changed his name and assumed that of Augustine. The monks had received him with joy. It gratified their vanity to see one of the most esteemed doctors of the age abandon the university for a house belonging to their order. Nevertheless they treated him harshly and imposed on him the meanest occupations. They wished to humble the doctor of philosophy, to teach him that his learning did not raise him above his brethren. They imagined besides that they could thus prevent him from devoting himself so much to his studies, from which the monastery could reap no advantage.

He had to open and shut the gates, wind up the clock, sweep the church, and clean out the cells. Then they sent him through the streets of Erfurt, begging from house to house, obliged perhaps to present himself at the doors of those who had once been his friends or his inferiors. On his return, he had either to shut himself up in a low, narrow cell, whence he could see nothing but a small garden a few feet square, or recommence his humble tasks. But he put up with them all; he had become a monk with all his soul. Besides, how could he think of sparing his body, or have any regard for what might please the flesh? It was not thus that he could acquire the humility and sanctity which he had come to seek within the cloister.

The poor monk, oppressed with toil, hastened to employ in study all the moments that he could steal from these occupations. He voluntarily withdrew

¹This is the second in a series of abridged extracts from J H Merle d'Aubigné's *The History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*; they mark the five-hundredth anniversary of the European Reformation. The first article saw Luther betaking himself to a monastery in search of holiness.

from the society of the brethren to give himself up to his beloved pursuits; but they soon found it out and tore him from his books, exclaiming, "It is not by studying, but by begging bread, corn, eggs, fish, meat and money that a monk renders himself useful to the cloister". Luther submitted: he laid aside his books and took up his bag again. Far from repenting at having taken upon himself such a yoke, he was willing to go through with his task. God tried him in small things, that he might learn to remain unshaken in great ones. Besides, to be able to deliver his age from the miserable superstitions under which it groaned, he must first feel their weight.

This severe apprenticeship did not, however, last so long as Luther might have feared. The prior of the convent, at the intercession of the university to which Luther belonged, freed him from the humiliating duties that had been laid upon him. The youthful monk then returned to his studies with new zeal. The works of the Fathers of the Church, especially of Augustine, attracted his attention. Nothing struck him more than the sentiments of this Father on the corruption of man's will and on *Divine Grace*. He felt, in his own experience, the reality of that corruption and the necessity for that grace. The words of Augustine corresponded with the sentiments of his heart. He almost knew by heart the works of Peter d' Ailly and of Gabriel Biel. He was much taken with a saying of the former: If the Church had not decided to the contrary, it would have been preferable to concede that the bread and wine were really taken in the Lord's Supper.

He also carefully studied the theologians Occam and Gerson, who both expressed themselves so freely on the authority of the popes. He was heard in public discussions unravelling the most complicated trains of reasoning, and extricating himself from a labyrinth whence none but he could have found an outlet. All his hearers were filled with astonishment. But he had not entered the cloister to acquire the reputation of a great genius; it was to seek food for his piety. He therefore regarded these labours as mere digressions.

He loved above all things to draw wisdom from the pure source of the Word of God. He found in the monastery a Bible fastened by a chain, and to this chained Bible he was continually returning. He had but little understanding of the Word, yet it was his most pleasing study. He sometimes passed a whole day meditating on a single passage. At other times he learned fragments of the Prophets by heart. He especially desired to acquire from the Scriptures a perfect knowledge of God's will; to grow up in greater fear of His name; and to nourish his faith by the sure testimony of the Word.

It would appear that about this time he began to study the Scriptures in their original languages, and to lay the foundation of the most useful of his labours – the translation of the Bible into German. John Lange, one of the

friars of the monastery, a man skilled in Greek and Hebrew, probably was his first instructor. The young monk studied with such zeal that often he did not repeat the daily prayers for three or four weeks together. But he soon grew alarmed at the thought that he had transgressed the rules of his order. He then sought to repair his negligence, and began to repeat conscientiously all the prayers he had omitted, without a thought of either eating or drinking. Once even, for seven weeks together, he scarcely closed his eyes in sleep.

Burning with desire to attain that holiness which he had entered the cloister to seek, Luther gave way to all the rigour of an ascetic life. He tried to crucify the flesh by fastings, mortifications and watchings. Shut up in his cell, he struggled unceasingly against the deceitful thoughts and the evil inclinations of his heart. A little bread and a small herring were often his only food. Indeed, he was naturally of very abstemious habits. At this period, nothing was too great a sacrifice if it might enable him to become a saint – to acquire heaven. Never did a cloister witness more severe exertions to purchase eternal happiness. When Luther had become a reformer, and had declared that heaven was not to be obtained by such means as these, he knew very well what he was saying. “I was indeed a pious monk,” he wrote to Duke George of Saxony, “and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can express. If ever a monk could obtain heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it. . . . If it had continued much longer, I should have carried my mortifications even to death.

Luther did not find in the cloister that peace of mind which he had looked for. He wished to have the assurance of his salvation, but the fears that had agitated him in the world increased in his cell. God had led him there, so that he might learn to know himself and to despair of his own strength and virtue. His conscience, enlightened by God’s Word, told him what it was to be holy; but he was filled with terror at not finding that holiness, either in his heart or in his life. A sad discovery, but one that is made by every sincere man! All was omission, sin and impurity. It plunged him into despair.

The monks and divines of the day encouraged him to satisfy God’s righteousness by meritorious works. But what works, thought he, can come from a heart like mine? How can I stand before the holiness of my judge with works polluted in their very source? “I saw that I was a great sinner in the eyes of God, and I did not think it possible for me to propitiate Him by my own merits.”

He was agitated and dejected, avoiding the trifling conversation of the monks. Unable to comprehend the storms that tossed his soul, the monks reproached him for his silence and his gloomy air. A tender conscience inclined Luther to regard the slightest fault as a great sin. He had hardly

discovered it before he attempted to expiate it by the severest mortifications, which only served to show him how useless all human remedies are. "I tortured myself almost to death," he said, "in order to procure peace with God for my troubled heart and conscience; but surrounded with thick darkness I found peace nowhere."

The practices of monastic holiness soon appeared to Luther the unavailing remedies of a deceptive religion. "While I was yet a monk, I no sooner felt assailed by any temptation than I cried out, I am lost! Immediately I had recourse to a thousand methods to stifle the cries of my conscience. I went every day to confession, but that was of no use to me. Then bowed down by sorrow, I tortured myself by the multitude of my thoughts. Look, I exclaimed, you are still envious, impatient, passionate! . . . It profits you nothing, O wretched man, to have entered this sacred order."

Yet Luther, imbued with the prejudices of his time, had from early youth considered the observances a certain remedy for diseased souls. It is possible then to dwell within what he believed was a holy place, and yet bear in one's bosom a man of sin. He had received another garment, but not another heart. Can all these rules and observances be mere human inventions? Such a supposition appeared to him, at one time, a temptation of the devil, and at another an irresistible truth. Luther passed his life in a continual struggle. The young monk crept like a shadow through the long galleries of the cloister, that re-echoed with his sorrowful moanings. His body wasted away; his strength began to fail; sometimes he seemed like one dead.

On one occasion, overwhelmed with sorrow, he shut himself up in his cell and for several days allowed no one to approach him. One of his friends, Lucas Edemberger, feeling anxious about the unhappy monk, took with him some boys who sang in the choirs, and knocked at the door of the cell. No one answered. Edemberger, still more alarmed, broke open the door. Luther was lying on the floor, showing no sign of life. His friend strove in vain to rouse him. Then the choristers began to sing and he gradually recovered. But he required another, stronger remedy to heal him thoroughly: the sound of the gospel, which is the voice of God Himself. He knew it well. Therefore his troubles and terrors led him to study with fresh zeal the writings of the prophets and of the apostles.

If only convinced sinners are warranted to embrace Christ, then I must, ere I can be warranted to embrace Him, be convinced that I am a convinced sinner. But the Holy Spirit is the only source of infallible conviction, and the Holy Spirit is nowhere promised to convince of conviction; He is only promised to convince of sin. True, the convinced sinner is the only capable subject of saving faith, but it is not as a convinced sinner I am called upon to come to Christ.

John Duncan

The Free Offer of the Gospel¹

1a. What Is It?

Rev A W MacColl

The Westminster Confession of Faith emphasises God the Father's gift in the everlasting covenant, in that He "freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved" (7:3). This biblical doctrine is thus part of the fixed constitution of the Church of Christ in Scotland. Yet it has been the subject of much discussion over the years, not least in our own day. Evangelical Presbyterians in Scotland and further afield have vigorously contended for this doctrine, and it is one which is given much prominence in the type of presentation of divine truth which characterises faithful gospel preaching among us. It is thus worthy of detailed study. In this series of articles we will, firstly, seek to outline the various positions taken over the question of the free offer of the gospel, secondly, state the biblical grounds upon which the orthodox position rests and then, finally, deal with some objections and controverted areas of the debate.

The free offer of the gospel might be defined as the assertion that God, in bringing the good news of salvation to sinners through the preaching of the Word, invites all who hear that Word to accept the gift of salvation without reservation.² It is an "offer" because Christ and all the benefits of His redemption are set before sinners who are without Him, and they are called upon to appropriate Him and His benefits for themselves.

It is "free" because there is nothing that any sinner can contribute to induce God to make such an offer, nor is there any qualification that the sinner can bring, to make himself acceptable to God, for the gospel excludes works. God's gratuitous offer and invitation is therefore the only way of access to Him, and the salvation He offers is salvation "without money and without price". Thomas Boston taught that the faith which unites with Christ comprises, firstly, faith in Christ's sufficiency; secondly, faith in the gospel offer; thirdly, faith in our right to Christ; and, finally, the faith of particular trust for salvation. The faith of the gospel offer he held to be "that Jesus Christ, with His righteousness and all His salvation, is by Himself offered to sinners and to you in particular".³

¹The first part of a paper delivered at the 2015 Theological Conference.

²Some have given a wider definition and stated that the offer is to all of mankind. Practically there is no real difference since, although salvation is only offered to those who actually hear the Word, yet all are welcome to hear it preached and are thus not excluded.

³*The Beauties of Boston*, ed Samuel Macmillan, Christian Focus, 1979 reprint, p 594.

Historically, the controversy over the offer of salvation has been concentrated within Calvinistic Churches. Romanists and High Anglicans, with their sacramentarian system, lay little emphasis on the sinner's response to the preached Word as a means of receiving the benefits of redemption. Arminians have no special difficulty with a universal offer of salvation to all men since they also maintain a universal atonement on behalf of all men. The difficulty that Arminians run into – if they examine their own position thoroughly enough – is with the *freeness* of the offer. If man's salvation ultimately depends on a human decision to accept a general provision made for all, then the freeness of that salvation begins to come into question, for what is the ground of one's salvation in such a case: is it divine grace or human free will?

We may initially summarise four main positions on the free offer. Firstly, there is the view that no offer is to be made to unconverted sinners and that the promises of grace and salvation are strictly limited to those exhibiting the marks of grace and election. Secondly, there is the opposite view, that of Arminianism and Amyraldianism,⁴ which grounds a universal offer of salvation in a universal atonement. Thirdly, there is the position of the Westminster Standards, which asserts a free offer of Christ in the administration of the gospel, yet does not found such an offer on a universal atonement. Fourthly, there are some who seek to narrow down or qualify the extent of the offer to a lesser or greater extent.

Whatever position is adopted, the great issue which Calvinists have to contend with is: whether it is possible to reconcile the Bible's teachings on divine sovereignty, in salvation, with the promises and invitations of the gospel to sinners. This is, as William Cunningham notes in his *Historical Theology*, a difficulty with which all systems of theology have to contend at some point; it "just resolve[s] into the one grand difficulty of all religion and of every system of theology – that, namely, of reconciling, or rather of developing, the consistency between the supremacy and sovereignty of God, and the free agency and responsibility of man".⁵ From this question all the other areas of controversy take rise.

Furthermore, the Calvinistic doctrine of total depravity, which teaches the inability of mankind in spiritual matters, may seem to raise its own difficulties. There is the issue of how a spiritually-dead sinner, who is unable to respond to the gospel, can be addressed by God in terms which emphasise the sinner's

⁴Amyraldianism is an erroneous view that borrows some aspects of Arminianism and some aspects of Calvinism. It holds that Christ's atonement was fully intended to save all men on condition of faith, but that another decree to make it effectual was needed for the elect.

⁵Cunningham, *Historical Theology*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1994, vol 2, p 346.

responsibility to accept the offer – and how that sinner can be responsible for his refusal and inability to accept it. Must we limit the offers and invitations of the Word to those who were elected from all eternity in the predestinating purpose of God? In practical terms, does this force us to look for marks of election and effectual calling before we call men to come to Christ?

As Cunningham comments, the notion that there is no offer of salvation to sinners as such is one which has generally held very little appeal to theologians and preachers of the Reformed Churches: “Very few Calvinists have ever disputed the propriety and the obligation of addressing to men, indiscriminately, without distinction or exception, the offers and invitations of gospel mercy”.⁶ The outright denial of the free offer to all men was mainly adopted by some of the more exclusive eighteenth-century English dissenters and has continued to this day in the Gospel Standard Strict Baptists and in certain of the Dutch Reformed Churches.

How then do the advocates of this teaching understand the example of Christ and of the Prophets and Apostles, who called the backslidden Jews to repent and believe the gospel – in other words, who made indiscriminate appeals to them to believe in the gospel, such as, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28)? They assume that these calls belong to the special privileges of a unique, covenanted nation. One very obvious question to ask here is: If only Jews were to be exhorted to repent and believe the good news of the gospel, how were the Gentiles ever to be gathered in? For if there is no warrant for sinners *as sinners* to accept of salvation (whether Jew or Gentile), it would be presumption for even the elect to lay hold of salvation. Indeed, Paul informed Agrippa that he made no distinction between Jew and Gentile when calling all men to the duty of repentance (Acts 26:20).

The Spirit of the Age¹

Rev Donald MacLean

At the close of 1952 another chapter of our lives ended, reminding us, among other things, that a year will come when the final chapter of our lives will be written and we shall depart hence and be no more. Here we have no continuing city, for “it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement” (Heb 9:27). Paul therefore keeps before us the great fact:

⁶Cunningham, *Historical Theology*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1994, vol 2, p 344.

¹The pastoral letter that Mr MacLean wrote to his Portree congregation at the beginning of 1953, printed here with some editing.

“Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (v 28).

It would be a useful and searching question were we to consider on this New Year's Day whether we are of those who are looking to Christ for salvation and whether our course in this world is governed by the hope that, when life's journey ends, we shall be with Christ, which is far better than any earthly portion we can possibly possess. It was for sinners that Christ was offered up, and it is those who come to confess that this is their character who value such a Saviour and consequently wait upon Him. “My soul waiteth for the Lord”, said the Psalmist, “more than they that watch for the morning” (Ps 130:6). As the watchman anxiously and wearily waited for the first streaks of light which would herald the approach of day, so the Psalmist waited with expectation upon Him who could deliver him from the depths. May this spirit be given to each one of us as another year dawns!

On the whole, the condition of our nation has reached a greater measure of stability in the year that is gone, yet the problems confronting our statesmen still demonstrate that more is needed than the wisdom of man to solve the difficulties arising from international conflict. Man without God, and only governed by his whims and individual desires, is the most unpredictable of all creatures, and it is evident that this lesson is being taught to this generation by the course which providence has been taking. There is no sign so far, however, that either the leaders of thought or the rulers of nations have profited by the experience despite the painful nature of the events taking place from time to time. Nor are they likely to profit, until a radical change comes over their outlook. “The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?” (Jer 8:9).

A spirit of material atheism has taken hold of the people generally. They show this by turning their backs on the means of grace and seeking satisfaction in streams and fountains other than the Fountain of life. The consequent ignorance of the gospel and the central doctrines of divine truth reigns in the popular understanding. It follows that the conscience is deadened, leading to the present serious outbreak of crime and disorder. “Unto the pure, all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” (Tts 1:15,16).

It is never an easy thing to find salvation, although that precious jewel is brought so near to us in the Word of God. The natural enmity of the human heart to all that belongs to God leads to rejection of the everlasting gospel,

which is the wisdom of God unto salvation. This fact, especially in a generation so spiritually corrupt as ours, makes the matter of the soul's salvation a perilous business, and the wonder will be if any escape. Let each one of us dismiss for ever from our minds that there is any salvation apart from Christ and saving union to Him, and let it be an equally unshakable conviction that there is no such union apart from the work of the Holy Spirit imparting life and thus awakening and enlightening the sinner, and effectually drawing him to the Lord Jesus. All other forms of religion, however pleasing to the modern mind and acceptable to modern taste, are false and will not suffice when it comes to the swellings of Jordan and the great white throne.

The Church of God thus finds herself in a veritable wilderness, where no sympathy can be expected in her troubles, and either an undisguised hostility or a dead indifference is shown to her message of salvation. Yet she leans and must lean upon the arm of her Beloved for help and strength, and she desires that no arm but His should be exalted. She thus does her duty, in His strength, in bringing to sinners the services of God's house, where the means are found through which Christ makes Himself known to the children of men. These means are still left with us in this generation; their purpose is the gathering of souls to Christ Jesus and the feeding of those who have already found Him. To us all the Lord says, "Seek ye My face". May each of us, at the beginning of another year, get grace to say, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek" (Ps 27:8).

Let each one of us then resolve to seek the Lord by private prayer and the reading of God's Word, earnestly looking up for a blessing. Let parents also seek His blessed and gracious face at family worship, prayerfully seeking to teach their children their need of the divine Saviour. If this seeking was more to be seen among us, the public means on Sabbath and weekday would be better attended and be more profitable to us all. I would like to see more who know Gaelic coming out on Sabbath morning. There could also be an improvement in attendance at the weekly meeting, where I am endeavouring to lecture through the Book of Psalms. Since the lecture is given in English, there is no excuse for lack of attendance.

There are some, I regret to say, who never attend on Sabbath or weekday except perhaps at communion times. Their families are brought up in ignorance of the Word of God and in defiance of God's command, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more as we see the day approaching" (Heb 10:25). What tremendous responsibilities lie upon such people! What a solemn, dreadful light will be cast by eternity upon misspent Sabbaths and neglected Bibles! Let those who are guilty of these things repent, return to the truth and seek, in whatever time may yet be given them in the world, to

find Him who is able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by Him. May the Holy Spirit be poured upon us all this year, so that the desert may “rejoice and blossom as the rose” (Is 35:1).

I again take the opportunity of extending my sympathy to all to whose homes death has come, or to whom days and nights on sickbeds have been appointed. May the God of all comfort grant His consolation, applying His own healing balm to the wounds thus made!

With best wishes for your spiritual and temporal welfare.

Christ as Judge – Some Lessons¹

Thomas Boston

1. *Labour to get a firm persuasion of this great, solemn truth.* Alas, the greatest part of mankind are so busy with the affairs of this present life that they do not remember the future. These awful words – death, judgement, and eternity – make no more impression on their hearts than if they had no meaning. This is a truth of the greatest importance, and therefore clearly and plentifully revealed in Holy Scripture. Listen then to the voice of this heavenly oracle, and believe the thoughts about this solemn day and tremble at it.

2. *Think frequently on this terrible judgement,* so that the belief of it may be powerful in your hearts and lives. One great cause of men’s woeful neglect of duty is the lack of serious thoughts about Christ’s second coming. This renders them lazy and over-confident, so that they make no provision for it; but where it is firmly believed and duly thought upon, how active and diligent it makes them! It had this effect on Paul (2 Cor 5:9,10,11). Many put this day far away; they set it at a remote distance from them; and this makes them foolish and careless.

I have read of a minister who described, in a sermon, the last judgement in all its terrors and with such forceful words that his hearers broke forth into passionate cries, as if the Judge Himself had been present to pass the final sentence on them. In the height of their commotion, the preacher asked them to stop their tears and passions, for he had one thing more to add, the most moving and astonishing consideration of all – namely, that within less than a quarter of an hour, the memory and impression of what so touched them would vanish and their affections return to their worldly objects in their usual manner. To neglect to consider things seriously makes even the doctrine of eternal judgement have no effect. It is therefore necessary that the belief of this truth be so firmly seated in the heart that it may engage the attention of

¹An edited extract from a chapter on Christ’s exaltation in Boston’s *Works*, vol 1.

the thoughts and have a royal power over the will and affections – so that our lives may be ordered according to its rules.

Serious thoughts about this solemn day would prove the most effective restraint from sin; in particular it has a notable effect in keeping men back from secret sins and deprives the devil of one of his greatest advantages against men: the secrecy. It would be a powerful remedy against sensual temptations, which so easily ensnare the hearts of men; and it would change the thoughts of the mind, alter the taste of the desires, and make the most enticing and irresistible lusts the objects of our greatest detestation.

3. *We should fear and tremble at the thoughts of this solemn day.* The great ones in the world, who are most powerful and unruly, may hence see that there is a power above them. Many oppose Christ and His interest now, saying, “Let us break Their bands asunder, and cast away Their cords from us” (Ps 2:3). But they should remember that “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision”. The day is hastening on when He shall “speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure”. He shall “break them with a rod of iron” and “dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel”. The day is coming when He shall appear in His power and great glory, and all the opposers of His cause and interest shall be called before His throne and hear this dreadful sentence pronounced against them: “Those Mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before Me” (Lk 19:27).

4. *This should make the saints patient under all their trials and sufferings.* They have no reason to be ashamed of suffering disgrace for Christ, for He will abundantly reward them at the great day. Whatever injustice they have received from men, they will have righteous judgement from God. This should make them despise the reproaches and censures of their most malicious adversaries. There is a day appointed wherein oppressed innocence shall obtain the noblest victory, and disgraced godliness the most public, highest honour. They may suffer under the tyranny of time, but they shall reign in the kingdom of eternity. The belief of this is enough to make them glory in the sharpest tribulations and to triumph joyfully over Satan and his perverted malignant world (Heb 11:25,26. 2 Cor 4:17, 18).

5. *Make the Judge your friend in time,* by receiving and embracing Him as your only Saviour, offered to you as such in the gospel. And give all diligence that you may be found in Him, clothed with His righteousness, in that terrible day. There will be no standing before His solemn tribunal unless you are clothed in the garments of your elder brother; and there will be no access into the guest-chamber unless you have on the wedding-garment of imputed righteousness. Therefore kiss the Son and be reconciled to Him, and so you

shall appear before Him as your Judge at the last day. “Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee” – particularly that of a solemn acquittal in the last judgement.

But if you will not now submit unto the sceptre of His grace and righteousness, and subject yourselves to Him as your only rightful Lord and Sovereign, willing to have Him to reign over you and to be ruled by His laws, you shall not be able to stand in judgement but be condemned with His enemies and have your eternal habitation in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord”, be persuaded to flee from the wrath to come; “so iniquity shall not be your ruin”.

Union with Christ¹

John Newton

The union of a believer with Christ is so intimate, so impossible to alter, so rich in privilege, so powerful in influence, that it cannot be fully represented by any description or comparison taken from earthly things. The mind, like our sight, cannot grasp a great object without viewing it on different sides. To help our weakness, the nature of this union is illustrated in Scripture by four comparisons, each throwing additional light on the subject, yet all falling short.

(1.) In our natural state, we are tossed about by the changing winds of opinion and the waves of trouble, which every hour disturb and threaten us on the uncertain sea of human life. But faith, uniting us to Christ, fixes us on a *sure foundation*, the Rock of Ages, where we stand immovable, though storms and floods unite their force against us.

(2.) By nature we are separated from the divine life, as branches broken off, withered and fruitless. But grace, through faith, unites us to Christ, *the living Vine*, from whom, as the root of all fullness, a constant supply of sap and influence flows into each of His mystical branches, enabling them to bring forth fruit unto God, and to persevere and abound in doing so.

(3.) By nature we are abominable in the sight of a holy God, and full of enmity and hatred towards each other. By faith, uniting us to Christ, we have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and joint communion among ourselves – even as the members of the same body have each of them union, communion and sympathy with *the head*, and with their fellow-members.

(4.) In our natural state, we were cast out naked and destitute, without pity and without help (Ezek 16); but faith, by uniting us to Christ, gives us an in-

¹Letter to a Christian friend; taken, with editing, from Newton’s *Works*, vol 1 (1985 reprint).

terest in His righteousness, His riches and His honours. Our Redeemer is *our husband*; our debts are paid, our settlements secured and our names changed.

Thus the Lord Jesus, in declaring Himself the foundation, root, head and husband of His people, takes in all the ideas we can frame of an intimate, vital and inseparable union. Yet all these fall short of truth, and He has given us one further similitude, of which we can by no means form a proper conception till we shall be brought *to see Him as He is* in His kingdom: “That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us” (Jn 17:21).

Well may we say, What hath God wrought! How inviolable is the security, how inestimable the privilege, how inexpressible the happiness of a believer! How greatly is he indebted to grace! He was once afar off, but he is brought nigh to God by the blood of Christ; he was once a child of wrath, but is now an heir of everlasting life. How strong then are his obligations to walk worthy of God, who has called him to His kingdom and glory!

Our Mission Work

Rev J MacLeod

It must never be lost sight of that our principal aim in sustaining our mission work in Africa is the propagation of the gospel of God’s grace – the enlightening of the minds of sinners in the knowledge of Christ. Since 1904, we have been sowing the good seed, planting and watering it, in the hope that God would give the increase. We believe that the great day will confirm that the labour expended was not in vain and that not a few shall be on the King’s right hand in confirmation of this.

The John Tallach High School and other primary schools, together with the Mbuma Hospital and the Thembiso Children’s Home, continue – with the generous help of our Dutch friends – to serve as useful handmaids to the gospel. They bring such people as are not normally within our “catchment area” into contact with the Word of God, perhaps for the first time. Divine worship is daily conducted at these institutions, even at the remote Rural Health Clinic at Lutsha, and those who come for medical attention have death and life set before them in the spiritual sense. The same arrangement will be set in place at Vovo, where the second Rural Health Clinic is now under construction.

Due to a poor harvest and subsequent shortage of maize, it was agreed to send out £1500 (of which £500 was a private donation) to alleviate the sufferings of such as were facing famine conditions. Rev A B MacLean has

commented that the drought in 2016 was the most severe experienced by him during his 11 years on the Mission. There is now a shortage of US dollars in Zimbabwe, and this is having its own baneful effect on those who are on the poverty line. Solar panels have now been installed at Ingwenya and this is a great boon in view of the frequency with which the national grid electricity supply is cut off, and without warning. Assessment of the Mbuma solar requirement has been undertaken and it is hoped that problems with regard to the electricity supply there will also be resolved. Rev A B MacLean is presently home on furlough.

On December 26, a storm which lasted about half an hour passed through Ingwenya Mission and left a trail of destruction. An e-mail from Mr B Ncube, the Headmaster there, described it as follows: "We are indeed grateful that no one was injured, especially that it was the school holiday, and also that it was a public holiday with no workers around. It was also providential that Miss MacLean was at her own house because otherwise she would have been in the very office which was the worst hit. The damage is huge. My Headmaster's office had its roof completely ripped off with a huge tree falling on the roof as well. Everything inside was soaked, and it is the main office, within which were most documents etc. The dining hall had its roof blown off; so was that of the Form 1's dormitory and the Matron's house too. Trees were uprooted and all over the whole compound there are fallen trees. Electricity poles also fell down and, as it is, Miss MacLean has no e-mail facility, as it has been cut off from the communication lines. With schools opening on January 10 we are anxious to try and have the situation attended to. We commit everything to the Almighty."

Repair work has already begun and it is expected that the school will be open on the appointed date. In general the Mission continues to function and the emphasis continues to be on Biblical instruction. The five primary schools now have their own appointed Bible Knowledge teachers and pupils all have the opportunity of answering the Scripture and Catechism questions printed in *The Young Peoples Magazine*.

The Thembiso Home continues to provide shelter for rejected and orphan children. We are grateful to Miss Margaret MacAskil and Miss Petra Beukers for their visits, over the course of which they give further training to the housemothers. Dr J Bezemer has now completed his two-year contract period and has returned to Holland. Also missing from Mbuma is Miss G van Wijngaarden, who, after serving the Mission faithfully for many years, has now retired and returned home to Holland. We are grateful to both of them and wish them the Lord's blessing.

In regard to our work in Israel, we are glad to report that the translating

and the printing of *The Westminster Confession of Faith* in Hebrew has now been completed. This work was initiated by Rev John Goldby in 2005. It was difficult for him to find suitable and sympathetic translators, but, after much searching, he was successful in doing so. Further difficulties arose only to be surmounted, and the determination and perseverance with which he pursued his objective is to be commended. Never before, to our knowledge, was this work attempted and completed; so we have in this Hebrew *Westminster Confession of Faith* a genuine first edition. Two lots of 300 copies have gone through the press, and we hope many more will follow. Two copies are to be lodged in the National Library of Israel.

Book Reviews¹

The Lord's Day, by Thomas Boston, James Fisher and John Kennedy, published by Reformation Press, paperback, 126 pages, £6.90.

The Lord's Day is a compilation from the works of Thomas Boston, James Fisher and John Kennedy, on the Sabbath. As the publisher states in his foreword, "this book contains material on the subject of the Lord's Day from men who had a clear grasp of the Scriptural basis for observing the Sabbath Day – Thomas Boston of Ettrick, James Fisher of Glasgow and John Kennedy of Dingwall". From the Scottish Lowlands in the eighteenth century to the Highlands in the nineteenth, the same love and reverence for the Sabbath may be traced in these writings. The republication of this work is welcome as we in the twenty-first century continue to contend for the same Sabbath as these men observed.

The material by Boston and Fisher is in the form of a thorough exposition of the *Shorter Catechism* questions and answers on the Fourth Commandment. Kennedy's piece is a lecture. There is a harmony of opinion throughout. The perpetuity of the Sabbath is well defended on the grounds that it is a moral obligation that men put aside set times to worship their Creator. Kennedy explains the change of the weekly Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. His reasoning is that if God set aside the seventh day to commemorate His entering into His rest from the wonderful work of creation, how much more appropriate that there be a memorial of the day on which Christ entered into His rest from the even more glorious work of redemption. With his usual perceptiveness, Kennedy also shows that those who argue against the perpetuity of the Sabbath do so because of their spiritual aversion to the holy duties and delights of that day.

¹All the books reviewed here may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Much practical advice is given on how to keep the Sabbath. There is the danger of remaining too long in worldly activities on the Saturday night and of “entertaining a carnal, worldly frame of spirit” on that night. Parents are reminded that children “must not have their liberty to profane the Sabbath by playing any more than they would by working”. Boston and Fisher agree that our conversation “ought to turn wholly upon spiritual and heavenly subjects” as far as possible, and the people are warned to “beware of common discourse between sermons”.

A spiritual love to the Sabbath shines out, and it is clear that these men often enjoyed rich blessings from heaven in their soul on that day. Their experience showed that the Sabbath morning was a special time for wrestling with God for a blessing. Boston says, “It is God’s day for dealing with the soul, wherein His people may expect to be furnished for all the week”. Many think Sabbath-keeping is a gloomy thing, but Kennedy advises us to ask the godly what they think. “They will tell you that it is a delight. They would not exchange one moment’s gladness, such as they have enjoyed on the Lord’s Day in His fellowship and service, for all that the world could bestow of its dissipating pleasures.”

This publication is very timely given the increasing laxity in Sabbath-keeping in church and state, and the deplorable decline of vital godliness which always accompanies it.

(Rev) *ID MacDonald*

From the Mouth of God, Trusting, Reading, and Applying the Bible, by Sinclair B Ferguson, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 221 pages, £7.50.

This is a book on the Scriptures intended for “ordinary Christians”. The title comes from the Saviour’s reply to the first of the devil’s temptations (Mt 4:4).

The first chapter stresses the importance of the words, “It is written”, as used repeatedly in the New Testament. The author comments on their significance: “If Scripture said it, then God said it”. He goes on to explain the doctrine of inspiration and points out that, in using the word, Paul “was not thinking about its *effect on us* (inspiring) but about its *source in Him*”.

Another chapter discusses such topics as the inerrancy of the Bible (it is without error) and its authority and sufficiency. The author writes, “Everything I need to learn in order to live to the glory of God and enjoy Him for ever I will find in the application of Scripture”. A great part of the book gives advice on how to understand what God is saying to us through the Bible.

Altogether the book provides good teaching on the vital doctrine of Scripture, a doctrine which is so basic to our attitude to the glorious revelation that God has given to a lost world. We do not, however, agree with the author’s recommendations for Bible versions.

Preparation for Ministry, by Allan Harman, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 125 pages, £5.25.

This small book gives advice to those considering if they have a call to the ministry, to those already studying and to those who have finished their studies and taken up a charge. It contains helpful counsel for men in these various categories (but the use of the ESV for Bible quotations is a pity).

Almost half of the book is taken up by two useful appendices: one by C H Spurgeon, entitled “The Minister’s Self-Watch”, the other by B B Warfield, on “The Religious Life of Theological Students”. Warfield emphasises that “every man who aspires to be a religious man must begin by doing his duty, his obvious duty, his daily task, the particular work which lies before him to do at this particular time and place. If this work happens to be studying, then his religious life depends on nothing more fundamentally than on just studying”. He does, of course, emphasise also to the student that “there are other religious exercises demanding your punctual attention which cannot be neglected without the gravest damage to your religious life”.

Protestant View

The Sacrifice of the Mass as a Decoy

The doctrines of Romanism have been cleverly developed by Satan, on the one hand to mimic biblical doctrine and to use the same language, but on the other hand to meet the religious instincts of the unregenerate heart. They can be useful therefore to Christians to show them what is in their own hearts by nature; and they also serve, indirectly, to highlight the biblical doctrines that Satan is most eager to bury.

One of these biblical doctrines is the intercessory work of Christ as High Priest, and various aspects of Roman Catholic religion entrench on this in different ways. Among these is the so-called “sacrifice of the mass” – the claim that the mass is a sacrifice to God in a similar way to Old Testament sacrifices.

For the great majority of Roman Catholics, the sacrifice of the mass becomes *the* sacrifice on which they rest their hope for salvation. They view their “righteousness” before God as a composite work, made up partly of their good work in attending mass and in other good deeds, partly of the priest’s work in offering the sacrifice, and partly of some vague “magic” done by Christ in the past which makes the whole thing effective. Such a religion is not very different in spirit from the rituals and sacrifices of the heathen.

For a few more sophisticated Roman Catholics, however – particularly those who have some contact with Protestantism – a more subtle doctrine is needed, to counter the obvious argument from Hebrews 10 that Christ’s sacrifice on the cross was unique: “This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God . . . for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb 10:12,14).

In answer therefore to the question, “What difference and relation . . . is there between the sacrifice of the mass and that of the cross?” the so-called *Catechism of Saint Pius X* (1908) replies: “Between the sacrifice of the mass and that of the cross there is this difference and relation, that on the cross Jesus Christ offered Himself by shedding His Blood and meriting for us; whereas on our altars He sacrifices Himself without the shedding of His Blood, and applies to us the fruits of His passion and death”. Thus the application of His work is through the mass, or so it is claimed.

But the application of Christ’s work, really, is through His ongoing intercession at the right hand of God, and through the resulting influences of His Spirit in the hearts of believers, that He secures for them. The effect of the mass, therefore, in this matter, is to keep the poor soul away from Christ as High Priest, so that it tries to draw strength instead from an outward human ritual. In military terms, the sacrifice of the Mass serves as a “decoy” to divert attention away from Christ as the High Priest, who “ever liveth to make intercession” (Heb 7:25). For those that have their eyes opened, however, the decoy shows how important and precious the true doctrine must be. *DWBS*

Confession and the “Year of Mercy”

Cardinal Vincent Nichols claimed last year that attendances at confession had “increased dramatically” in England and Wales during the Pope’s “year of mercy”. This indicates a number of sad facts. It shows, firstly, that poor souls connected with the Roman Church feel the working of the natural conscience and exhibit a desire for a sense of forgiveness. They will not, however, find true forgiveness with God through the Roman sacramental system, with its priestly caste and their blasphemous “sacrifice of the mass”.

Secondly, it shows that Rome can still be successful in trading in the souls of men, even in this secular era. No mere man has power to absolve sin, for “*the Son of man* hath power on earth to forgive sins” (Mk 2:10) and He only is now exalted a Prince and a Saviour “for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). *The Westminster Confession of Faith* makes it clear that “God alone is Lord of the conscience”.

The dreadful abuses which have sprung from the confessional over the years serve to highlight the danger of giving fallible men power over the con-

science. The whole charade of a “year of mercy” could only serve to heighten anxieties among the devotees of Rome regarding obtaining forgiveness. As previously pointed out in this *Magazine*, if the Pope and his clergy were really sincere in desiring the forgiveness of sins for their people – and if they actually knew it for themselves – they would not confine the exercise of the mercy of God to one particular “year of mercy”. AWM

Notes and Comments

Marie Stopes Abortion Clinics

Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectors have raised “serious concerns” about the safety of mothers at Marie Stopes abortion clinics. Reports revealed shocking scenes and poor standards over an extended period of time. One clinic was found with foetal tissue left in open waste bins which, in addition to the abhorrent moral evil of the procedure, could spread severe infection. And inspectors visiting the charity’s headquarters found evidence of bad risk management, improper methods of client consent and poor oversight of the 60-70 clinics in the UK. Marie Stopes clinics now carry out 70 000 abortions a year (about a third of all terminations performed in England); such is the scale of this horrific practice.

Professor Edward Baker, deputy chief inspector of hospitals at the CQC, said these “serious concerns” had been raised following inspections at 12 Marie Stopes International (MSI) sites between April and August 2016. He added, “Our concerns at a corporate level – particularly around governance arrangements, staff training, and around patient safety and safeguarding protocols – did not give us the necessary assurance that patients would be protected from avoidable harm at all times”. He claimed that one report found 2634 incidents recorded at MSI locations between 2015 and 2016, a rise of 704 from the previous year, and the organisation could give only a “limited” explanation as to why this was so. Professor Baker warned that staff at clinics had “limited training”, and doctors were found to be “bulk-signing” consent forms authorising abortions – apparently indiscriminately.

One mother who visited a Marie Stopes clinic for a termination described how she was treated: “I wasn’t asked at any point if an abortion was what I wanted and why . . . just asked a list of medical questions. I was ‘greeted’ at the actual clinic with a dirty look from a receptionist . . . having to sit in the waiting room and wait for ages till a nurse came and called my name . . . given a form to sign and then given a cup with a pill. Only when I hesitated and started to cry did the nurse finally ask if I was OK and if it was what I wanted.

When I said I wasn't sure, I was asked to 'hurry up and make a decision as they had other people to see'. I then said, 'No'. I somehow managed to get back down the four flights of stairs." Mercifully this lady did not abort her unborn baby. Truly, "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel" (Prov 12:10).

At a Norwich clinic, reports reveal that doctors "bulk signed" as many as 60 abortion consent forms at one time, with little indication that they understood the patients' situation. It is possible they may not even have met the mothers. At another clinic, in Sandwell, West Midlands, inspectors found that the handling of a distressed patient with learning difficulties was "poor and insensitive"; she was "not adequately counselled". Overall the reports reflect deficient procedure and training, and reveal a list of serious shortcomings and a general lack of care by staff. There were also questions over the maintenance of medical equipment on the premises.

As a response to the CQC reports, in August 2016 the organisation temporarily suspended some of its abortion services. However by October, after making "considerable changes", the Care Commission allowed all services to be resumed, stating "Marie Stopes International has made progress since our inspections; we will continue to monitor its services very closely and our planned re-inspections will determine exactly how embedded these improvements have been".

However, what the Word of God requires is a total repeal of the infamous Abortion (1967) Act, passed 50 years ago. A timely, able letter, to this end, was sent to all MPs at Westminster by a correspondent to the January *Evangelical Times*, stating, "Each abortion snuffs out an innocent human life. It should not be allowed to happen because the Bible reminds us in Psalm 139: 13-16 that life from conception is sacred and precious, 'Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.' All human life is . . . intrinsically valuable from conception."

While the CQC appears to voice care and compassion in its criticism of Marie Stopes clinics, little or no reference is made to, or concern shown for, the foetus, which may be aborted. While the bad practice of these clinics as to the mother's safety is highlighted – and that is vital – state watchdogs are silent on the protection of the most vulnerable person, the person without a voice, the unborn child. Marie Stopes' UK website boasts, "Everyone deserves the right to choose . . . your health and wellbeing is our biggest priority". What about the rights of the child? Above all, what about God's rights over all His creatures? How loudly the Bible speaks of the wicked: "In the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor" (Ps 10:8). These murders are no longer done secretly but openly, and are even sanctioned by the laws of many countries.

KHM

Church of Scotland Minister Promoting “LGBT”

Rev John Nugent, minister of St Fergus Church of Scotland in Wick, is reported in *The Herald* as supporting the introduction of “LGBT inclusive education” into all Scottish schools. He says that “all inhabitants of our planet have rights that go along with being human” and that the denial of “inclusive education” in schools is “tantamount to a denial of human rights”. Those that do not agree with Mr Nugent on this matter, he characterises as “bigots and haters”.

The Bible knows nothing about these “rights” that people invent for themselves, which have become such a convenient tool for promoting evil. The Bible does tell us, however, about sin, and in particular about the sin of sodomy (what LGBT essentially is), and it warns us that those who continue in their sins will suffer eternal punishment at the hand of God. Those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ will be saved. The Bible also warns us about those “in sheep’s clothing” who pretend to be ministers of Christ but who inwardly are “ravening wolves”, teaching men to ignore Christ’s gospel and to break His law (Mt 7:15). *DWBS*

Church Information

Committee Meetings

Synod committees will meet, DV, in Inverness Free Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, March 21, as follows:

- 10.00 - 10.30 Church Interests Committee
- 10.30 - 12.00 Training of the Ministry Committee
- 12.00 - 13.00 Sabbath Observance Committee
- 14.00 - 15.00 Outreach Committee
- 14.00 - 17.00 Finance Committee
- 15.00 - 17.00 Religion and Morals Committee
- 18.00 - 19.30 Publications and Bookroom Committee
- 19.30 - 20.30 Welfare of Youth Committee
- 19.30 - 20.30 Dominions and Overseas Committee

(Rev) K M Watkins, Clerk of Synod

Bookroom Fund

By appointment of Synod, the Special Collection on behalf of the Bookroom Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during February.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

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. **Glendale** and **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thursday 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- 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 Acharyn 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, EH3 9NU, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227, e-mail: dcampbell1560@gmail.com.
- 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, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Sabbath 5 pm; **Wick:** Church; **Strath:** 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

Santa Fe, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith; 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: 45 Cliff Road, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm; Wednesday 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 Levytzkyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytzky@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.

Ingenya: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean. Postal Address: Ingenya 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.

Free Presbyterian Church Bookroom

133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE Tel: 0141 332 1760

E-mail: sales@fpbookroom.org

Book Selection

	RRP	Offer
Holy Bible: Compact Westminster Reference Bible with Metrical Psalms		
Trinitarian Bible Society, 2016, Black Calfskin Leather (6.6" x 4.7")	£69.95	£55.00
The Shadow of Calvary by Hugh Martin		
Banner of Truth, 2016 [1875], pbk, 264 pp	£7.50	£5.99
A Scribe Well-Trained: Archibald Alexander and the Life of Piety		
edited by James M Garretson, Reformation Heritage Books, 2011, pbk, 207pp	£7.50	£5.99
Advice for Seekers by C H Spurgeon		
Banner of Truth, 2016 [1890], pbk, 96 pp	£4.50	£3.59
Stars in God's Sky by Faith Cook		
Evangelical Press, 2010, pbk, 160 pp	£8.99	£7.19

(Postage is extra)

Subscription rates, including postage:

FP Magazine £26.00 (£2.00 per copy) • YP Magazine £15.00 (£1.00 per copy)

Combined £39.00