

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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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: Laide; **Second:** Leverburgh, Maware, Staffin; **Third:** Gisborne; **Fourth:** Glasgow; **Fifth:** Aberdeen, London, Mbuma.

May: First Sabbath: Grafton; **Second:** Achmore, Chesley, Donsa, Scourie; **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, Fort William; **Fourth:** Auckland, 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.

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Christ's Ambassadors Need Prayer

Last month we considered Christ sending out ambassadors, those who preach the gospel. They speak in His name, “in Christ’s stead”, to their fellow sinners. In this article, we return to the subject.

Christ is altogether perfect; preachers are not; they are still sinners. Yet assuming they are actually trusting in the Saviour, they will yet be perfect – but that will be in the world to come, after their time of service in this world is over. Paul compares the gospel to treasure, and how precious the gospel should be to us! But his point is that “we [preachers] have this treasure in earthen vessels” (2 Cor 4:7) in vessels made from pottery, and therefore easily broken. No doubt Paul was thinking of physical weakness arising from preachers’ circumstances but also taking into account their vulnerability to temptation and the power of sin still remaining in them, even although that power is being subdued. But, in his comments on this verse, Charles Hodge notes that this “only renders the power of God the more conspicuous, not only in the success of [his] ministry, but in [his] preservation in the midst of dangers and sufferings which it seems impossible any man could either escape or bear”.

Only divine power can make the words spoken by a weak, fallible, sinful man effective – as an instrument in bringing spiritual good to others and, in particular, bringing about their salvation. Human beings are too feeble to achieve this, for in their preaching they are attacking Satan’s strongholds. What is their strength in comparison with that of Satan and his fellow devils? The answer lies in the words of Paul: “Our sufficiency is of God” (2 Cor 3:5). In himself he had no power even to think properly, but God was able to use his preaching to bring about extensive damage to Satan’s strongholds in the hearts of sinners, all the way from Damascus to Rome and perhaps beyond. And, in one degree or another, the Lord has used the preaching of weak, vulnerable human beings whom He has made His ambassadors to bring about His purposes to build up His Church, in every generation.

The solemn fact is: the preacher is still a sinner. That godly ambassador, the Apostle Paul, speaks of “the law of sin which is in my members” (Rom

7:23). The tendency of this principle of sin, says David Brown when commenting on this verse, is “to carnalise the entire man, to enslave us wholly to our own corruptions”. Yet in some, he points out, the principle of sin is very much subdued. Paul has already reached heaven, where “there shall be no more curse” (Rev 22:3), where therefore there is no more sin. Meanwhile God’s ambassadors must go on in their work, in dependence on the One who has sent them to engage in labour that, apart from His blessing, is altogether beyond their power – which is so much weakened by sin.

We might be tempted to think that it would be more appropriate for sinless beings such as holy angels to preach the gospel. Yet we should recognise that angels have neither experienced sin or deliverance from sin; they would require to speak of what they have never passed through themselves. But the fundamental point is that “*it pleased God* by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor 1:21). In infinite wisdom, He has chosen fallible, sinful men to be His ambassadors – to bring before their hearers the good news of salvation through a crucified Redeemer. But the good news is foolishness to those who reject the revelation God has given. Charles Hodge points out, in expounding this verse, that “God thus put to shame all human wisdom by making a doctrine, which the wise of this world regarded as absurd, the means of salvation”.

An important practical conclusion to draw from the imperfection of ministers, and the native tendency of unbelievers to reject the gospel, is the need to pray for preachers. So Paul exhorts the Thessalonians: “Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified” (2 Th 3:1). He is asking them to pray that the truth would spread and that God would be glorified through the success of the preaching, but this involves them praying for Paul personally – and correspondingly believers today are to intercede for the preachers of this generation.

Preachers are vulnerable to temptation; the devil has great power and he is subtle; so prayer should be offered to the Lord that preachers would be delivered from the wiles of the devil. They need to grow in grace and in knowledge, and therefore they need prayer so that the Lord would bless the books they read to their spiritual good – and especially the Scriptures. In particular, they need to understand the portion of truth they expect to preach from and also those other parts of the Bible they intend to refer to in their sermon; they need the Holy Spirit to give light in their understandings, so that they are not left merely to the power of their natural minds in their attempts to comprehend the teaching of God’s Word. Prayer is thus needed so that they may take from these passages what the Holy Spirit, who gave the Word, purposed to convey through them.

Especially, Christ's ambassadors need the Holy Spirit to apply to their hearers the truths they proclaim. Apart from the Spirit's accompanying power, their efforts will be in vain. So it is necessary to pray that the truth proclaimed by Christ's ambassadors throughout the world would be powerfully applied by the Spirit in order that multitudes of unbelievers may come to faith in Christ and that believers may grow in grace.

These ambassadors must be careful not to depart from pure, scriptural doctrine as they preach. They ought to structure their material in an orderly way so that their hearers may more readily take in the truths presented to them. And they must speak clearly, so that their hearers will grasp exactly what truths it is that they wish to convey. All these matters, and many more, should be made subjects for prayer, including the physical needs of preachers and their family concerns.

But in asking for the Thessalonians' prayers, Paul was also concerned that he and his fellow ambassadors "may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men". These men may have been open persecutors, but the form taken by opposition to the gospel varies from age to age and from place to place. Some of us may be most conscious of the opposition to the truths of the Bible within the professing Church, for instance, or the belittling of Scripture morality in various sections of the media. But whatever form the opposition may take, Christ's ambassadors are very limited in their capacity to resist it successfully – however appropriate their efforts may be. Yet God is not limited. Hence the appropriateness of prayer that individual ministers and particular parts of the Church – and indeed the whole Church of Christ – may be delivered from unbelieving opposition.

We read of the Old Testament priests that "they were not suffered to continue by reason of death" (Heb 7:23). One generation of them passed away and another generation served at the altar instead. So it is in the New Testament Church: one generation of faithful ambassadors is taken away to their eternal reward and another generation is raised up in their place to proclaim the same gospel. Yet often in the history of the Church, the ablest and most godly ministers are not replaced by men of the same calibre. And some of them may not be replaced at all, or replaced by men who were never called by the great Head of the Church to be ambassadors – or were not even converted. Clearly this results, especially when it takes place on a wide scale, in the Church becoming weaker. What need then to pray that God Himself would raise up large numbers of godly, competent men to act as ambassadors! We have the particular direction of the Saviour: "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest" (Lk 10:2).

Christ the only Sufficient Sacrifice (1)¹

A Sermon by *George Innes*

Psalm 40:6,7. *Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.*

Among the many irrefutable proofs that we belong to a fallen race is the Amisconstruction which men have put upon the clearest revelations of God's will. The eye that is in us is darkness, and the depraved intellect of man has distorted every leading doctrine of Scripture into a thousand monstrous shapes of error.

The Lord had appointed that the Israelites, in their approaches to Him, should offer sacrifices as an acknowledgment that their sins could not be forgiven without the shedding of blood, and as a declaration of their faith in the Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world. The sacrifices both made clear expression of the fearful guilt of sin and foreshadowed the atonement Christ should make for the transgressions of His people. But the Jews, as a nation, were not impressed with a horror of sin; neither were their thoughts led forward to the promised Redeemer. In their shameful misconceptions of God's character, they often impiously imagined that, if any of them committed a trespass, he had no more to do than to kill a bullock or a sheep in sacrifice, and his guilt would be forgiven. So also, among us, a deluding spirit is always creeping in to whisper false comfort in sin – by the assurance that we have only to ask and it will be forgiven. Thus the disobedient children of Israel make use of the sacrifices to lead them on in sin, because grace abounded.

Therefore the Spirit of the Lord strove with them, saying, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." As their history advanced, God's contendings with them on this point became innumerable. Often did God admonish them that the sacrifice of the wicked was an abomination to Him. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me, saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. . . . Bring no more vain oblations . . . they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them. . . . Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well."

¹Taken from *The Free Church Pulpit*, vol 3. Innes (1819-51) was the Free Church minister in Cannobie, Dumfries-shire, from 1844.

Thus this intolerable perversion of God's institution of sacrifice, which represented it as giving licence to sin on certain easy conditions, was strongly rebuked. But another error was intimately connected with it, which looked on the typical sacrifices as possessing a virtue in themselves to blot out transgression; this was also exposed and condemned. It is only by looking to the sacrifice of Christ that the fearful nature of sin can be fully understood. So long as the Jews fancied that it could be removed by so trifling a remedy as the blood of bulls and of goats, they could not but think lightly of guilt. Therefore Scripture was given in order to correct their pernicious mistake; in the words of our text, Jesus speaks to God in the words of the Psalmist.

The Psalm from which these words are taken is a devout expression of gratitude on the part of the Redeemer, as Head of His elect people for the deliverance granted to Him when He was brought back again from the dead. And being thus delivered from the horrible pit of corruption, and the miry clay of man's iniquities, He had His goings in the course of His mission established, that He should bring "many sons unto glory". For this is a new song put into His mouth "even praise unto our God".

As chief among His ten thousand brethren, casting His eye over the many wonderful works and thoughts of God, which have been "to us-ward", and finding them more than can be numbered, He yet sees one thought, one work, conspicuously pre-eminent above them all, as worthy to be praised. That is the love wherewith God so loved the world as to give Him, the only begotten Son, to death for sinners; and He abruptly breaks out in praise of this: "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; Mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me."

The allusion in the words, "Mine ears hast thou opened", is to the practice among the Israelites of making an opening in the ears of a servant, who submitted to his master, pledging himself never to quit his service until released by death. When Christ undertook the work of redemption, He took on Him the form of a servant. "Being in the form of God, [He] thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil 2:6-8).

In this assumption of the form of a servant, a body was prepared for Him, and so the different translation of our text adopted in Hebrews 10:5 may be explained. Both expressions refer to the same thing, and the one simply makes clear the meaning of the other. Both direct our attention to the assumption of human nature by Him of whom God says, "Behold My servant, whom I

uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth”. He Himself, in speaking to the Father of His work, says, “Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; Mine ears hast Thou opened”

In these words we find two things stated: (1) the Jewish sacrifices were not sufficient to atone for sin; (2) therefore Christ came, conscious of being a sufficient sacrifice. In the volume of the book of God’s eternal decrees, it was written that the Lamb should be slain, and that His blood should cleanse from all sin those to whom the blood is applied. In the words here spoken, according to the inspired writer, “He taketh away the first” kind of sacrifice, “that He may establish the second”.

Let us then, who have been given to see this dispensation of God, enquire reverently: (1.) What kind of atonement was needed for sin? (2.) How have all the qualities met in Christ that are necessary for a sufficient atonement?

1. What kind of atonement was needed for sin? The ransom to be given must be costly, though men seem to treat it lightly, for the guilt to be remitted is indescribably great. Man, a creature made by God, who crowned him with loving kindness and tender mercy, had set himself in opposition to his Creator. Let each of us reflect how we have given our hearts to be filled with ungodly and polluting imaginations, incapacitating ourselves for the worship and service of the holy Lord of heaven and earth, erasing His image from our natures, banishing remembrance of Him from our customary thoughts, removing ourselves as far from Him as we could, and selling ourselves as slaves to His, and our, most bitter enemy. And when, at times, conscience has spoken and rebuked us for our wickedness, reminding us of the justice and power of Him against whom we have been offending, have we not hardened our hearts and been in enmity against God?

Have we not resolved that, let Him punish us as He may, we would not love Him? But even in the depths of misery, would we not find a secret pleasure in hating Him who had brought this woe upon us? If our miserable hearts are stripped of their subterfuges of lies, it will be seen that they hate God, that they raise themselves up in daring rebellion against His holiness and justice, treating His love and His goodness with neglect – almost with contempt – abusing His longsuffering, and encouraging themselves in worldly-mindedness and abominable licentiousness. For these things, our lives are forfeited and we are justly subject to the wrath of Him who can destroy us, soul and body, in hell. It is graciously proposed that our guilt be remitted through the offering of an atonement.

(1.) *The atonement to be offered must be equivalent in value to the souls of the redeemed.* In accepting an atonement, it is indispensable that the majesty of God’s holiness and justice is vindicated as completely as if justice had

been executed on man himself. Therefore any propitiation that is not equal in value to the immortal souls of men is inadmissible. This evidently excludes all atonements devised by man.

All attempts to atone for sin by burnt offerings, including thousands of rams, or ten thousands of rivers of oil – or by severe lacerations of the flesh or toilsome pilgrimages or by large donations to charity, or by a careful routine of lengthened devotions – must be vain. Redoubled zeal in the performance of rites – or giving multiplied sacrifices to feed the flames of the altar – can never take away sin. For, when all is done, the question still comes and breaks up peace of conscience: What have you given that you have not received? Have you not a soul given you by God? All that you have is forfeited, and if you are to appease God by your own doings or givings, all that you have must be given and your soul must be yielded to undergo the wrath it has provoked, even to the uttermost.

Such is the stern doom of justice. Unless man can find something to give as his ransom which he has not received – something that is equivalent in value to his soul – he can never save himself from going down to the pit. It would be evidently beneath the majesty of heaven to accept any other than a proportionate atonement. The justice of God has been insulted, His holiness has been treated with contempt. He had said, “The soul which sinneth it shall die”; and can it be proposed that he shall receive anything as an atonement whose acceptance would leave a stain on His holiness and His justice, if it is not fully vindicated? These attributes of God’s character must be maintained unblemished at whatever cost. If a ransom is to be accepted for the souls of men, it must be such as will leave God’s government at least as majestic and great as if man had been given over to wrath.

(2.) *In the atonement to be offered there must be a connection between those for whom atonement is made and the party who suffers.* This requirement is clearly right; it is obvious that the sacrifice of animals is inadequate to take away sin. What connection, it may be asked, is there between the sin of a man and the death of bulls and of goats? And what equivalence is there in value?

The same reason would have made it plainly improper to visit for our iniquities any portion of the angelic hosts who never fell. Even if they had been willing to stand as our sureties, yet the absence of any connection and the lack of power on their part to ensure that their suffering would have the effect of bringing us back to God, would have rendered it manifestly unsatisfactory. In human affairs, where even very defective arrangements are allowed – when a father becomes surety for his son, or one partner liable for the dealings of another – it is expected that the surety may exercise some

influence over the one for whom he becomes surety. There may have been little connection between the parties before, but a bond of union between them is felt to be proper.

God's actions are perfect; so there must be a recognisable connection between him who was to make propitiation for sin and those who were to reap the benefit of that propitiation. If he was a different kind of being, with no part in the feelings and actions belonging to humanity, it might be said, What has he to do with man? He stands on a different footing, and is altogether unconcerned in man's destiny; there is no connection or relationship between them, and why should the merit of his sufferings and his righteousness extend to man?

(3.) *He who was to die for man must be innocent.* In the typical sacrifices, to offer any victim that was lame or injured was an abomination to the Lord. Such victims were rejected with most unbending scrupulousness. By this it was declared that, if an atonement was to be offered for guilty man, it must be a victim without any blemish of sin – pure and unstained, wholly innocent of transgression. As the two previous requirements exclude all hopes of a man saving his own soul by any exertions of his own, or of help coming from any other race of creatures, so does this prevent any man redeeming his brother, or giving to God a ransom for him. If one soul is to be given in exchange for another, the soul to be accepted must be innocent. If it is guilty, and has sins of its own to answer for, then it must die for its own iniquity.

When David was grieved for the loss of his favourite son, and horror-struck that he should have been cut off in his guilt, he exclaimed, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" He knew that he could not redeem his son from destruction, or give to God a ransom for him. David had sinned himself, and though, in his frantic grief, he exclaimed thus wildly, yet he was very conscious that his soul could be no offering for sin. He was a sinner himself, and he had nothing to give for another. Paul fervently wishes that Israel should be saved and says that he could wish himself accursed from Christ for them; yet he plainly recognises that the salvation of a soul is a work too great for man to accomplish. His words obviously declare that the offering of an atonement on the altar for another is impossible with man.

The victim to be offered must be an innocent soul in which the Searcher of hearts can see no blemish, but where was such a soul to be found? From the rising of the sun to its going down, where is a heart that has never harboured a sinful thought, the son who never looked unkindly on his parent, the daughter whose lip was never stained by falsehood, the man who has never lived as if there was no God ruling the world? For 4000 years the Lord

looked down from heaven; His eyes beheld the children of men. There was none righteous; there was none to redeem his brother from destruction – much less to be a propitiation for the sins of the world.

(4.) *The victim to be offered must be willing.* To punish an unwilling, resisting victim for the sins of the guilty would be cruel tyranny. Say that an innocent man had been found a fit substitute for a guilty brother, would the innocent man willingly quit the position he occupied, with all its advantages of freedom from sin and enjoyment of God's favour – to be dealt with as guilty? Would he quit his position to have all divine influences excluded from his soul, with no ray of heavenly light cheering the eye – to be plunged into the blackness of darkness, to lie there under the heavy weight of God's anger? Or say that a pure and happy spirit was shown the terrors of God's wrath in all their fearful power, rending and crushing the soul, do you think he would consent if he was asked, Are you ready to meet the doom deserved by that guilty man and to die for him, having the curse enveloping you, reaching to your inmost soul? Are you ready to undergo his sentence? Yet consent was given by the blessed Son of God – not to bear the sins of one, but of many.

The Christian and the World¹

Rev Donald Beaton

The true Christian is someone who has had a work of grace wrought in his heart by the Holy Spirit. All true religion is supernatural. While believers are called upon to work out their own salvation, they are immediately reminded that it is God who works in them both to will and do of His good pleasure (Phil 2:12,13). The clearly-marked distinction between the “natural” and the “spiritual” man is emphasised by the Apostle Paul: “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor 2:14). It was a failure to understand the background behind these two classes that caused all the trouble in the Corinthian church, and the same reason is at work in our day, causing so much trouble in the professing Church.

The things of the Spirit of God can never be received by the “natural man”, however well instructed he may be in religious matters. No training or natural gifts can ever take the place of the work of the Holy Ghost. We need not be surprised when natural men regard the things of the Spirit of God as foolishness. They can do nothing else while in an unregenerate state. They may not be open mockers and scoffers; they may profess to accept the truths of revel-

¹Abridged from the October 1935 issue of this *Magazine*, when Mr Beaton was Editor.

ation; they may diligently attend the means of grace; but if not born again, they cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, for these are spiritually discerned. Paul speaks of the change from a state of nature to a state of grace as being *translated* “from the power of darkness . . . into the kingdom of His dear Son” (Col 1:13).

This change was wrought by omnipotent power – the exceeding greatness of God’s power. It is so deep and far reaching that all things become new. The things that once held them captive have wholly, or to a great extent, lost their power over them. Their whole outlook is changed and they are engaged in new activities. This was Paul’s experience. When his eyes were opened after his conversion, all things were changed in his view: time, eternity, his blamelessness, his view of the world – including its pleasures, prizes and honours. In his own words, the world was crucified unto him and he unto the world, by the Lord Jesus Christ.

A careful study of the New Testament will bring us face to face with an array of texts pointing out the evil nature of the “world” and warning the Christian against it. Some of these are: “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (Jas 1:27); “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (Jas 4:4); “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 Jn 2:15-17); “They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them” (1 Jn 4:5).

Paul says that believers in their unregenerate state walked according to the world (Eph 2:2) and that they have been delivered from it by the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal 1:4). This term, the “world”, in the New Testament, cannot refer altogether to material things, for we are to use them but not abuse them; it is only as the heart is inordinately set upon them that they are spoken of as the “world” in the sense of the quoted passages. The “world” may be in the heart while one may have very little money in one’s pocket.

It is evident that the “world”, as quoted, has a moral significance. Generally speaking, it may be taken to mean that whole organised system of things, with its allurements, practices and laws, alien to and opposed to the rule of the Lord Jesus Christ. It has Satan for its god; its life and its sphere of activity are “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of

life". While it includes what we usually call worldliness, it embraces a great deal more.

(1.) This "world" has a spirit of its own which is antagonistic to the Spirit of God (1 Cor 2:12). (2.) It has a wisdom of its own which is foolishness with God (1 Cor 1:20,21). (3.) It has a sorrow of its own which is opposite in character and effect to godly sorrow (2 Cor 7:10). (4.) Its moral life is governed by the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2). (5.) It lies under the dominion of powers hostile to man (Col 2:8,20; Gal 4:3). (6.) The Christian is redeemed from it and inwardly no longer belongs to it. This is the "world" which believers are called upon not to love.

Its opinions, sentiments and influences are definitely antagonistic to Christ's Church and people. That its hatred is at times dormant does not suggest that it is now gone. Its hatred today is as great as when the disciples went forth as sheep among wolves, though its activities may be dormant until some circumstance calls it forth and then it puts its poisonous fangs into the cause of Christ and its action is hailed with the mocking laughter of the ungodly throughout the land. Let God's people be under no delusion; the world is still the enemy of Christ. And let them not be overcome with dismay when it strikes, but let them be of good cheer for He has overcome the world. As an organised system opposed to Christ, it has a mastermind behind its various activities everywhere. It does not aim its blows everywhere at the same time or in the same manner, but the objective is always the destruction of the cause of Christ. Let there be no mistake about it: he who is the friend of the world is the enemy of God (Jas 4:4). If it shows favour to Christ's cause, its professed friendship is like the kiss of Judas.

The world has its laws and rules and they are contrary to those which Christ has given to His Church. The world says that a multitude is required to promote and carry on a cause; Christ says that, where two or three are, He is in the midst of them. The world says that great numbers are required to carry a conflict to a successful conclusion; the Lord Jesus says, "Without Me ye can do nothing". Grace and heavenly wisdom are essentials for Christ's servants, but not for the world. Christ took the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and weak things to confound the things that are mighty, the base things of the world and things which are despised and things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are (1 Cor 1:27-28), so that no man might glory in men. The world would give the glory to man; Christ gave all the glory to God and placed that first in His life and work. But the world never seeks this; neither will any sinful man or woman unless grace is given to them from heaven.

The world had its own wisdom, and God laid that glory in the dust when,

“in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor 1:21). He had a purpose in all this: to destroy the wisdom of the wise and to bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. “The foolishness of God is wiser than men” (1 Cor 1:25).

The world exercises its tremendous influence through “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life”. These are very real and very active in their operations and the believer is warned against them. He may not love all that is implied in each of them, but he may be in danger of coming under some of their seducing influences. John classifies these desires according to the inward dispositions to which they appeal. *Lust* here is to be understood in its wider sense: any desire of a carnal nature. It does not include the lawful desires God has implanted in man, such as hunger and thirst, except as they leave their lawful spheres and seduce to evil.

(1.) *The lust of the flesh* covers a wide range, including gluttony, drunkenness, uncleanness, dances, the theatre, gambling, if not worse excesses, and all sinful pleasures and questionable amusements. (2.) *The lust of the eyes* may mean desires begotten by the eyes, but it may also mean the desires that belong to the eyes specially. The eyes may delight in seeing worldly pleasures; even if we do not indulge in the world’s vanities, we may have a secret gratification in seeing them. No doubt Satan makes use of the eyes to awaken many sinful desires in our hearts; hence the Psalmist prayed that his eyes might be kept from seeing vanity. (3.) *The pride of life*, or its vainglory, covers an extensive field; it includes gifts and qualities which may give one a pre-eminence over one’s fellows and beget a proud, arrogant spirit towards less fortunate brethren. Generally speaking, whatever puffs up a man, makes him disdainful of others – while self is being diligently fed – belongs to the pride of life. This is not the law of Christ’s kingdom; there such dispositions are not simply discouraged, but condemned as diametrically opposed to that law.

Let us keep in mind therefore that any verdict the “world” may pass on the Church of Christ is worthless; it takes to do with things it cannot know about and cannot pass just judgement on. Let believers therefore not be annoyed when they hear its insulting verdicts passed on them or be unduly upset when it passes its judgement on them and their ways – provided always that they are walking in the steps of their Master. Neither let them be overcome when it pours out its hatred on them. The Lord’s words still hold true: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (Jn 15:18,19).

Nothing said here is meant to imply that believers are beyond criticism; all that is asserted is that, in spiritual matters, the “world” is not a competent judge because it cannot know “spiritual” things.

Sanctification – Submission to God¹

John Dick

In sanctification the will of the believer is rendered more and more conformable to the will of God. This is the essence of holiness. Cicero² says that to have the same desires and aversions is the height of friendship; so we may say that to be like-minded with God, to be entirely resigned to Him, to choose what He chooses, and to refuse what He refuses, is the highest moral perfection of a creature. Absolute conformity to the will of God cannot be attained in this world but exists only in heaven, where His will is so done by its inhabitants that they are set forth as a pattern to us. But it is the effect of regenerating grace to subdue our rebellious hearts and to bring them to submit to the authority of our Maker.

This is the predominant state of believers, but it is often disturbed by the wayward movements of the will, and it is the purpose of the Holy Spirit, in operating upon it, to correct and restrain its aberrations and reduce it to a state of habitual submission. The Spirit’s object is to establish a complete moral dependence upon God and, with this view, to make the subjects of His influence cease more and more from their own views, desires and pursuits. Without pretending to explain what power the Holy Ghost secretly exerts upon the soul, we may say that the effect is produced by means of the light that He gives to the mind, in which the will of God appears not only supreme and sacred, but so just and wise and good that we should acquiesce in it without reserve and without a murmur.

Thus the people of God are led to submission, not only when His will is enforced by the nature of the duty which it enjoins, but when it demands our obedience solely because it is His will. Thus Adam was commanded to abstain from the fruit of a particular tree in the Garden, there being no reason for abstinence but the simple prohibition. The demand for submission still appears equally absolute in many dispensations of providence, of which no other account can be given than that they are the decree of heaven. It is a proof of considerable progress in holiness when the person who is tried in this manner bows to his sovereign Lord, and says, Good is His will. Job is

¹An edited extract from Dick’s *Lectures on Theology*, vol 3.

²A noted Roman orator in the first century BC.

an example; his submission amid the greatest afflictions was expressed in these remarkable words: “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21).

Does a Christian find that he is less disposed to consult with flesh and blood and more to consult the Scriptures; that he sincerely desires to know what is his duty and more diligent than before to ascertain it; that every intimation of God’s pleasure commands his attention and inspires him with holy reverence; that he is more ready and cheerful and determined in obedience; and that his supreme desire is to glorify God and to be accepted by Him? When this is the prevailing state of his mind, it is evident that God has made him willing in a day of power, and that the work of sanctification is advancing in his soul towards perfection.

Obituaries

Mr John Buchanan, Uig

The subject of this obituary, Mr John Buchanan, served as an elder in the Uig congregation for nearly 50 years. John was born in Breanish, in the parish of Uig, Isle of Lewis, on 9 January 1925. He enlisted in the Royal Navy during the Second World War but was invalided out towards the end of that conflict. Thereafter he spent most of his life in his native parish working as a crofter and weaver. John’s parents had been adherents in the Uig congregation and carefully instructed their children, keeping family worship regularly as was so common in communities such as Uig during the earlier part of the twentieth century. The privileges of growing up in an environment where the Word and worship of God were honoured were not inconsiderable, yet these outward blessings in and of themselves were not enough to effect the new birth.

The great change in John’s life, however, occurred through the work of the Holy Spirit blessing the public means of grace to his precious soul. The instrument used by the Lord was Mr Donald MacDonald (*Dòmhnall Rudair*), a worthy elder from Ness, who was supplying the Uig congregation on one occasion. As far as we know, this occurred in the 1950s, during the period of Rev Lachlan Macleod’s ministry in Uig. John was enabled to profess Christ publicly for the first time at the Uig communion in June 1963 and it is no exaggeration to say that he adorned that profession for almost 52 years in this world, until his death at the age of 90 on Sabbath, 10 May 2015. He married Joan MacLeod, from Aird, Uig, in 1960, and the Lord blessed them with a family of one son and three daughters.

John was elected to the office of deacon in 1965, and in the following year he was ordained to the eldership. He served on the courts of the Church over many years and particularly enjoyed attending the meetings of Synod, where he could meet with like-minded brethren from other congregations of the Church. Though John Buchanan was a reticent and humble man, yet he was firm and solid in his witness for the Saviour and consistent and careful as an office-bearer in the Church. He was fully resolved to maintain the biblical principles and practice which he had inherited and, though there are few left in Uig nowadays who value those principles, yet we believe that John's witness will never be forgotten by Him who has a book of remembrance for those who fear His name.

It was noticeable at the time of his funeral – from the various testimonies to his sterling worth coming from different sources – that we had lost one whose quiet, unassuming walk in life was “known and read of all men”. He was much loved in his own family; he was esteemed and admired by his brethren in the Church; but he also had a “good report of them which are without”, for he was looked up to in the place where he lived. One man in the community mentioned to us how much fatherly kindness John showed him when he started in the world of work.

John Buchanan was firmly attached to the testimony of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and in his public exercises manifested a concern for the welfare of precious souls and a love for the glory of God revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We used to be struck in the prayer meeting with his frequent use of the words, “*Thoir dhachaidh oirnn . . .*” (Bring home to us . . .), at the beginning of many of his petitions in prayer. This further demonstrated that Divine and eternal things were real to our late friend.

John was able to attend public worship regularly until his last day on earth, travelling over the narrow and winding road from Islivaig to Miaavaig. His journey through the wilderness of this world is now at an end, and we fully believe that our late friend has been brought peacefully and safely to the haven which he desired to see for so many years, to that glorious habitation where the worship of God will never cease to all eternity. “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as bride adorned for her husband” (Rev 21:2).

(Rev) *A W MacColl*

Miss Ina Macdonald, North Uist

The late Ina Macdonald was born on 8 July 1924, the youngest of a family of 10. Her father was the late William Macdonald, Old Inn, Tigharry, a noted elder in the North Uist congregation. Her mother was the late Flora

Janet Macdonald from Hougharry. One of her brothers, Donald Ewen Macdonald, was also an elder in this congregation.

She along with her brothers and sisters were brought up in a godly environment. She attended the local primary school in Tigharry, then transferring to Paible Junior Secondary for the first three years of secondary education, before going on to Portree High School to complete her education. The Bible and *The Shorter Catechism* were taught in the local schools in those days.

She went to Aberdeen University, graduating in 1945. She started her teaching career in Balnain Junior Secondary School in Inverness-shire, where she spent two years, followed by three years in Alyth, Perthshire. She then moved to Barrhead High School, where she spent the rest of her career, teaching English and Latin. She retired at the age of 60, after a total of 38 years in the teaching profession.

Like many others, she was long in a state of nature, and as she would often say to me, "I was in the world and of it". She had two major operations, the first when she was still teaching. It was during her first illness that she came under soul concern. Under the ministry of Rev Donald MacLean, Glasgow, she received the liberty of the gospel as he preached from the text, "A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgement unto truth" (Is 42:3). She received encouragement to go forward to the Lord's table through another sermon by Mr MacLean on the Song of Solomon 2:3, particularly the words, "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste". She professed faith in Glasgow for the first time at the communion season in November 1979.

She came back to North Uist after the death of her sister Margaret in December 1998, just before the death of Rev Alexander Morrison in March 1999. I got to know her well over these 16 years and enjoyed fellowship with her on many occasions.

She remained remarkably fit despite her previous illness and operations; she was in the means of grace, Sabbath and weekday, almost to the end. When visiting her, especially during the last two years of her life, I would often ask her how she was and inevitably her reply was, "Another day on mercy's ground". She was choice company and a praying woman; she loved the cause of Christ and the testimony our Church stood for.

Another light has gone out in North Uist and in the local congregation here. She passed away in the Western Isles Hospital on Friday, 31 July 2016. Her older sister, Dolina Macdonald, predeceased her in March of the previous year and we believe they are now gathered in to their people among the spirits of just men made perfect. To all her nieces and nephews and extended

family we extend our sincere sympathy and hope and pray that they will come out on the side of the Saviour. (Rev) *Donald Macdonald*

A Mysterious Saying¹

J C Ryle

We find the Lord giving a special reason why it was expedient for Him to go away from His disciples. "If I go not away," He says, "the Comforter will not come unto you."

We can well suppose that the gracious Lord saw the minds of His disciples crushed at the idea of His leaving them. Little as they realised His full meaning, on this occasion, as well as on others, they evidently had a vague notion that they were about to be left, like orphans, in a cold and unkind world, by their Almighty Friend. Their hearts quailed and shrunk back at the thought. Most graciously does the Lord cheer them by words of deep and mysterious meaning. He tells them that His departure, however painful it might seem, was not an evil but a good. They would actually find it was not a loss but a gain. His bodily absence would be more useful than His presence.

It is vain to deny that this is a somewhat mysterious saying. It seems, at first sight, hard to understand how in any sense it could be good that Christ should go away from His disciples. Yet a little reflection may show us that, like all the Lord's sayings, this remarkable utterance was wise and right and true. The following points, at any rate, deserve attentive consideration.

If Christ had not died, risen again and ascended up into heaven, it is plain that the Holy Spirit could not have come down with special power on the day of Pentecost and bestowed His manifold gifts on the Church. Mysterious as it may be, there was a connection in the eternal counsels of God between the ascension of Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit.

If Christ had remained bodily with the disciples, He could not have been in more places than one at the same time. The presence of the Spirit, whom He sent down, would fill every place where believers were assembled in His name, in every part of the world.

If Christ had remained upon earth and not gone up into heaven, He could not have become a High Priest for His people in the same full and perfect manner that He became after His ascension. He went away to sit down at the right hand of God and to appear for His people, in their glorified human nature, as the Advocate with the Father.

¹Taken, with editing, from *Expository Thoughts on John*, vol 3. This is the last section in Ryle's comments on John 16:1-7.

Finally, if Christ had always remained bodily with His disciples, there would have been far less room for the exercise of their faith and hope and trust than there was when He went away. Their graces would not have been called into such active exercise, and they would have had less opportunity of glorifying God and exhibiting His power in the world.

After all, there remains the broad fact that, after the Lord Jesus went away and the Comforter came down on the day of Pentecost, the religion of the disciples became a new thing altogether. The growth of their knowledge and faith and hope and zeal and courage was so remarkable that they were twice the men they were before. They did far more for Christ when He was absent than they had ever done when He was present. What stronger proof can we require that it was expedient for them that their Master should go away?

Let us leave the whole subject with a deep conviction that it is not the bodily presence of Christ in the midst of us, so much as the presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, that is essential to a high standard of Christianity. What we should all desire and long for is not Christ's body literally touched with our hands and received into our mouths,² but Christ dwelling spiritually in our hearts by the grace of the Holy Ghost.

Prayer¹

1. An Expression of Desire

Rev Donald Macdonald

Our English word *prayer* has in it the ideas of request and petition. It is speaking to one's God by way of appeal. It involves addressing the One that we believe in. In all religious worship there is prayer; prayer with thanksgiving is one special part of religious worship (*The Westminster Confession of Faith* 21). Prayer is an expression of desire as expressed in our Catechisms.

The Larger Catechism, Answer 178, states: "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of His Spirit; with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies". *The Shorter Catechism*, Answer 98, states: "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies".

1. General Observations. "The duty of prayer is unquestionably grounded on the nature of man as originally made in the image of the Creator."² His

²A reference to the false ideas of transubstantiation and the mass.

¹The first part of a paper given at last year's Theological Conference.

²B M Palmer, *The Theology of Prayer*, Sprinkle Publications reprint, 1980, p 210.

intellectual and spiritual faculties reflect, at an infinite distance, the corresponding perfections of the deity. Man's original powers are clouded and corrupted by sin. However dreadful the Fall and its consequences, he is still obliged to render constant, pure worship in this world and the next.

(1.) *Prayer is an ordinance appointed and commanded by God.* It is the duty of all to pray. "Men ought always to pray and not to faint" (Lk 18:1). "I will . . . that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Tim 2:8). It aggravates their sin and guilt when God's creatures refuse to pray to Him; it displays the practical atheism of the human heart when this duty is refused, which is owed to the Supreme Being, the Creator. Yet some professed atheists have been known to pray, in times of extreme danger, in spite of the creed that they have continually professed. Some men will also argue: If God is infinite in knowledge, why pray to Him? Why tell Him our necessities which He already knows? This argument is the expression of men, or the excuse of men, who have no desire to pray or to have any dealings with the Almighty, the One in whom they live, move and have their being. They are ignorant of the fact that man is a dependent creature, not one independent of his Creator.

(2.) *Prayer is an act of worship*, whether in public or private or in one's family circle. In private prayer it can be a mental exercise, in the home, in the workplace, or while meditating in a field – where one is surrounded by the beauty of nature, which reflects the glory of our Creator, and His eternal power and Godhead. Or prayer can be ejaculatory, where we clothe our thoughts with words.

(3.) *There is a distinction between true and false prayer.* There is prayer that is for outward show, to be seen of men, as the Saviour taught, "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. . . . After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. . . ." (Mt 6:5-15).

The use of the Lord's Prayer is not restricted to outward forms. There is an emphasis in verse 9: "After this manner". It suggests, not the mere repetition of words, but a methodology in our approach into God: first of all, it expresses what is directly to God's glory, and then our own needs and considerations. R L Dabney states: The Lord's Prayer "is an Old Testament prayer . . . because that dispensation was still standing". There is "no express reference to a Mediator, and [to an] answer through His merit and intercession". When this dispensation "was about to close, Christ completed this feature of it [in the upper room] by enjoining the use of His name. See John 14:13, 15:16,

16:23,24.”³ “Wherever there is religion, true or false, there is prayer. . . . The natural instinct of prayer reposes for its ground on God’s perfections and man’s dependence and wants. And so long as these two facts remain what they are, man must be a praying creature.”⁴

2. Old Testament Worship: Ever since man was expelled from paradise, it pleased God to make known how man was to approach Him.

(1.) On the basis of the first promise, *sacrifice* and the shedding of blood were introduced. We believe this was done at the gates of Eden, when God clothed our first parents with the skins of animals. There we have the first sacrifices. The way of worship was passed on from our first parents to their descendants. When men worshipped God and called on His name, the burnt offering was the main sacrifice. This was to be so, right through Patriarchal times, leading on to the time of Moses and the covenant at Sinai. Then Israel was formed into a nation with the introduction of the tabernacle, the ceremonial law and the national priesthood in the tribe of Levi.

All things subsequently were to be done according to this pattern shown to Moses in the mount. There was the most holy place of the tabernacle and its furniture, the ark of the covenant with the law placed in its side, with the mercy seat that covered it – which the high priest sprinkled yearly on the great Day of Atonement. In the most holy place was the Shekinah glory, for there God met His people. The mercy seat was typical of the throne of grace. The tabernacle became the temporary, typical residence of Jehovah, until the time of Solomon. More and more light was shining on the day of Christ, keeping His coming before the minds of the people. The book of Psalms, the true Church’s manual of praise, which includes many prayers, was largely composed by David, who is named the sweet psalmist of Israel. The Holy Spirit has left on record here the length and breadth, height and depth of Christian experience, and many psalms find their meaning and fulfilment in their messianic context.

(2.) *The temple of Solomon* was built at great cost, according to the pattern shown to Moses in the mount. At the dedication of the temple, Solomon was pleading God’s promise that He would place His name there. How wide and comprehensive were his intercessions, as recorded in 1 Kings 8 and 2 Chronicles 6 – for individuals, for the nation Israel in all sorts of situations: afflictions, chastisements, judgements and captivity. Solomon pleads that, if God’s people Israel would think of the temple and turn to Him with all their heart and pray to Him, God would hear “from heaven and forgive”. We have another example when Daniel, in the land of captivity, opened his

³R L Dabney, *Systematic Theology*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1985, p 721.

⁴Dabney, *Systematic Theology*, p 715.

window and prayed towards Jerusalem (particularly the prayer in chapter 9).

Another example is in the Book of Jonah, when he was cast into the Mediterranean Sea (2:1-9) – particularly verse 4: “Then I said, I am cast out of Thy sight; yet I will look again toward Thy holy temple”. The temple also was established as the temporary residence of Jehovah until the coming of Christ. The way into the holiest was not yet made manifest. In that dispensation this was how God was making known His mercy to sinful men.

Luther and the Reformation¹

6. Called to Study the Word

J H Merle d'Aubigné

Luther quitted Rome, and returned to Wittenberg. His heart was full of sorrow and indignation; he turned his eyes with disgust from the papal city and directed them with hope to the Holy Scriptures. He separated from the Church to cling to the Word of God. The whole of the Reformation was in that one movement. It set God in the place of the priest.

Staupitz and the Elector of Saxony did not lose sight of the monk whom they had called to the University of Wittenberg. It appears as if Staupitz recognised the work that was to be done in the world and that, as he found it too difficult for himself, he wished to urge Luther towards it. It is remarkable to find this man, who urges Luther on in the path where God calls him, ending his days sadly in a cloister. The preaching of the young professor had made a deep impression on the Elector; he had admired his understanding, his forceful eloquence, and the excellence of what he expounded. The Elector and his friend wished to advance a man of such promise and resolved that he should take the degree of doctor of divinity. Staupitz went to the convent, took Luther into the garden and told him: “You must now become Doctor of the Holy Scriptures”.

Luther shrunk at the very thought. “Seek a more worthy person,” he replied; “as for me, I cannot consent to it.” Staupitz persisted: “Our Lord God has much to do in the Church: at this time He needs young and vigorous doctors”. “But I am weak and sickly”, replied Luther. “I have not long to live. Look out for some strong man.” “The Lord has work in heaven as well as on earth,”

¹This is a further abridged extract from d'Aubigné's *The History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*, vol 1. This series marks the five-hundredth anniversary of the European Reformation. Last month's article described Luther's visit to Rome. It showed him that “no one can imagine what sins and infamous actions are committed in Rome; they must be seen and heard to be believed”. It turned his thoughts to the reformation of the Church.

replied Staupitz; "dead or alive, He has need of you." "It is the Holy Ghost alone that can make a doctor of divinity," Luther then argued, still more alarmed. "Do what your convent requires," said Staupitz, "and what I, your vicar-general, command; for you have promised to obey us." "But my poverty," Luther went on, "I have no means of defraying the expenses." "Do not be uneasy about that," replied his friend, "the prince has done you the favour of taking all the charges upon himself." Luther thought it his duty to give way.

About the end of the summer of 1512 Luther set out for Leipzig to receive from the Elector's treasurers the necessary money, but the money did not arrive. Luther grew impatient but monastic obedience detained him. At length, on October 4, he received the 50 florins and hastened to Wittenberg.

Andrew Bodenstein of the city of Carlstadt was at that time dean of the theological faculty, and is generally known as Carlstadt. He was of a serious and gloomy character, perhaps inclined to jealousy, and of a restless temper, but full of desire for knowledge. He attended several universities to augment his stores of learning and studied theology at Rome. On his return, he settled at Wittenberg and became a doctor of divinity. "At this time," he said afterwards, "I had not yet read the Holy Scriptures." This remark gives us a good idea of what theology then was. Besides being professor, Carlstadt was a canon and archdeacon. Such was the man who in after years was to create a schism in the Reformation. At this time he saw in Luther an inferior, but before long he became an object of jealousy to Carlstadt.

On 18 October 1512, Luther was made licentiate in divinity, and took the following oath: "I swear to defend the evangelical truth with all my might". The next day, Bodenstein solemnly conferred on him the degree of doctor of divinity and Luther was thus called to devote himself to the study of the Bible, and not of human traditions. He then pledged himself by an oath to his beloved Holy Scriptures. He promised to preach them faithfully, to teach them with purity, to study them all his life, and to defend them, both in disputation and in writing, against all false teachers, so far as God should give him ability.

This solemn oath was Luther's call to the work of reformation. By imposing on his conscience the holy obligation of searching freely, and boldly proclaiming, the Christian truth, this oath raised him above the narrow limits to which his monastic vow would perhaps have confined him. Called by the university, by his sovereign, in the name of the Emperor and of Rome itself, and bound before God by the most solemn oath, he became from that hour the most intrepid herald of the Word of life.

We may accordingly look upon this oath as one of the causes of the revival of the Church. The sole infallible authority of the Word of God was the

fundamental principle of the Reformation. Every detailed reform that was afterwards carried out in the doctrine, morals, or government of the Church and in its worship was a consequence of this first principle. We can scarcely imagine the sensation produced by this elementary but long-neglected truth. Only a few men, of more enlarged views than were common, foresaw its immense consequences. Before long the courageous voices of all the Reformers proclaimed this mighty principle, at the sound of which Rome shall crumble into dust: Christians receive no other doctrines than those founded on the express words of Jesus Christ, of the apostles and of the prophets. No man, no assembly of doctors, has a right to prescribe new ones.

Luther's position was changed. The summons he had received was to him as one of those extraordinary calls which the Lord addressed to the prophets under the Old Testament and to the apostles under the New. The recollection of his oath was sufficient, in after years, to console him in the midst of the greatest dangers and of the fiercest conflicts. And when he saw all Europe agitated and shaken by the Word that he had proclaimed; when the accusations of Rome, the reproaches of many pious men, the doubts and fears of his own too-sensitive heart seemed likely to make him hesitate, fear and fall into despair, he called to mind the oath he had taken and remained steadfast, calm and full of joy.

At another time he said, "He who undertakes anything, without God's call, seeks his own glory. But I, Doctor Martin Luther, was forced to become a doctor. Popery desired to stop me in the performance of my duty, but you see what has happened to it, and worse still will befall it. They cannot defend themselves against me. I am determined, in God's name, to tread upon the lions, to trample dragons and serpents under foot. This will begin during my life and will be accomplished after my death."

From the time of his oath, Luther no longer sought the truth only for himself, but also for the Church. This was the third epoch of his development. His entrance into the cloister had turned his thoughts towards God; the knowledge of the remission of sins and of the righteousness of faith had emancipated his soul; his oath as a doctor gave him that baptism of fire by which he became a reformer of the Church.

His ideas were soon generally directed towards the Reformation. In an address that he had written, as it would seem, to be delivered by a cleric at the Fifth Lateran Council (1512-17), he declared that the corruption of the world originated through priests teaching so many fables and traditions, instead of preaching the pure Word of God. The Word of life alone, he wrote, had power to effect spiritual regeneration. Thus he made the salvation of the world depend on the re-establishment of sound doctrine and not on a mere

reformation of morals. Yet Luther still entertained contradictory opinions, but he courageously broke the bonds within which previous ages had so closely confined him and opened up new paths. God was with him.

The first adversaries he attacked were those famous schoolmen,² whom he had himself so much studied, who then reigned supreme in all the universities. He accused them of Pelagianism, and spoke forcibly against Aristotle³ and Thomas Aquinas. In every public discussion he was heard saying of the divinity of the Middle Ages: "The writings of the apostles and prophets are surer and more sublime". Such language was new, but men gradually became used to it. About a year later he was able to write with exultation: "God is at work. Our theology and Augustine advance admirably and prevail in our university. Aristotle is declining; he is tottering towards his eternal ruin, that is near at hand. The lectures on the Sentences⁴ produce nothing but weariness. No one can hope for hearers, unless he professes the biblical theology." Happy the university of which such testimony can be given!

About this period, Luther formed another friendship that was of great importance through the whole of his life. There was at that time at the Elector's court a man remarkable for his wisdom and his candour: this was George Spalatin. He had been a village curate but was afterwards chosen by Frederick the Wise to be his secretary, chaplain, and tutor to his nephew, John Frederick, who was himself to become elector. Spalatin appeared timid in the presence of great events; he was circumspect and prudent, like his master and corresponded daily with the ardent Luther. Spalatin was not a man to effect great undertakings, but he faithfully and noiselessly performed the task imposed upon him. He was at first a principal helper of his master in collecting those relics of saints which Frederick so long admired greatly. But he, as well as the prince, turned by degrees towards the truth. He became Luther's friend at court, but he could gladly have quit all these honours and become once more a simple pastor in the forests of Thuringia. But Luther exhorted him to remain firm at his post. Spalatin acquired general esteem: princes and learned men showed him the most sincere regard.

Faith is a simple and operative dependence on the testimony of God, in the absence of all other evidence.

Our hopes or desires, even more than our actions, depend upon our characters.

The principles of the righteous are better than their outward character. The principles of the ungodly are worse than their outward character.

James Stewart

²The theologians of the Middle Ages, of whom Thomas Aquinas was the best known.

³Aristotle was a Greek philosopher who had great influence in the Mediaeval Church.

⁴The commonest divinity textbook during the Middle Ages, compiled by Peter Lombard.

Book Review

Knots Untied, Being a Plain Statement on Disputed Points in Religion from the Standpoint of an Evangelical Clergyman, by J C Ryle, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 483 pages, £15.00.¹

During his ministry in Suffolk, John Charles Ryle (1816-1900) began to write tracts. Though some of these were just a few pages long, and were meant for wide distribution with a direct evangelistic objective, others were much longer. Apart from his *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*, most of his books were collections of modified versions of these longer tracts. *Knots Untied*, along with the other major volumes of Bishop Ryle such as *Old Paths*, *Holiness*, *Light from Old Times* and *Practical Religion*, were all collections of these updated versions.²

Ryle's ministry coincided with the rise of Tractarianism in the Church of England. This was the designation given to the early Oxford or Anglo-Catholic movement in the nineteenth century. Its leaders produced tracts advocating the re-introduction of Romish practices into the Church of England. Many of the chapters in this book are refutations, by one who was an Evangelical Anglican and an outspoken Protestant, of the errors of the Romanising party in the Established Church. Although the original collection of updated tracts that are included in *Knots Untied* was first published in book form in 1874, when he was the Vicar of All Saints, Stradbroke, many of them had been written much earlier.

The edition under review is reproduced from the tenth edition, of 1885, after Ryle had become first Bishop of Liverpool. In the preface to the tenth edition, Ryle writes: "The general principles which I asserted and maintained when I was much younger than I am now, I firmly assert and maintain in 1885. I find nothing to retract, cancel, or withdraw in the nineteen papers which compose the volume. I frankly admit, after careful examination of *Knots Untied*, that I observe in its pages occasional sharp and strong expressions which perhaps I should not use if I wrote the book over again in the present year. But I think it better to make no change, and to leave the original language alone. I wish my readers to understand that the views which I held as a presbyter I still hold as a bishop; and I fear that any alteration might lead to misconstruction and misrepresentation" (p vii).

The chapters in this book on "The Thirty-Nine Articles", "Baptism", "Re-

¹*Knots Untied* and all the other volumes by Ryle published by the Banner of Truth referred to in this review are available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

²Ryle's ability as a tract writer is reflected in the title of a recent biography by Alan Munden, *Bishop J C Ryle: Prince of Tract Writers*, Day One, 2012.

generation”, “The Lord’s Supper,” “The Real Presence”, “The Church”, “The Priest”, “Confession” and “Idolatry” are all fine Evangelical Anglican refutations of the Romanising views of the Anglo-Catholic party in the Church of England. Ryle’s article on the “Real Presence” is typical of his approach, where he explains the biblical teaching of the spiritual presence of the Lord Jesus Christ with His people and refutes the Anglo-Catholic teaching of the presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper. The one unconvincing chapter in this category is his defence of the Prayer Book against accusations that it taught Baptismal Regeneration. Whilst his arguments may well have had weight with the Evangelical Anglican constituency for which this tract was primarily written, they are far from compelling to Scottish Presbyterians.³

It would be misleading, however, to portray this volume as entirely given over to the refutation of Anglo-Catholic doctrine. All the chapters we have referred to, besides refuting error, provide positive and helpful statements of the doctrines with which they are dealing. In addition, the book contains several chapters that were originally very popular tracts dealing with the centralities of the faith. Among these are the chapters on “Evangelical Religion”, “One Way of Salvation”, “The Sabbath”.

The chapter on the Sabbath is a very fine statement of biblical teaching. With regard to the movement, then underway, to remove the legal hedge round the Sabbath, Ryle comments, “Nothing, in short, I believe, would so thoroughly advance the kingdom of Satan in England, as to withdraw the legal protection from the Lord’s Day. It would be a joy to the infidel; but it would be an insult and offence to God” (p 334). On the literature on the Sabbath and on the change of day he writes, “The whole subject of the change from the seventh-day Sabbath to the Lord’s Day is one which the reader will find admirably handled in the sermons of Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta, on the Lord’s Day. Those sermons, and Willison on the Lord’s Day, are by far the two best works on the Sabbath question” (p 240).⁴

³Some of the words in question were: “Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ’s Church, let us give thanks to Almighty God for these benefits” (*The Book of Common Prayer*, Oxford University Press, 2010, pp 412-3). Ryle’s defence was along several lines: (1) Those who critique the Prayer Book words are taking isolated expressions out of context, which is how the Romanists defend transubstantiation and Arians seek to prove the Lord Jesus Christ is inferior to the Father. (2) If the Prayer Book taught Baptismal Regeneration it would conflict with the *Thirty-Nine Articles* and the *Homilies*, which reject such teaching; therefore, it must be read in line with these other documents.

⁴The volumes to which Ryle is referring are Daniel Wilson, *The Divine Authority and Perpetual Obligation of the Lord’s Day*, London, 1832 (reprinted by the Lord’s Day Observance Society, 1956), and John Willison, “Treatise Concerning the Sanctification of the Lord’s Day” in *The Practical Works of John Willison*, 1846, Glasgow, pp 1-126.

A third group of chapters deal with the importance of the maintenance of sound doctrine. In this category are those headed: “Pharisees and Sadducees”, “Divers and Strange Doctrines”, “The Fallibility of Ministers” and “Apostolic Fears”. The chapter on “Pharisees and Sadducees” is based on the text, “Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees” (Mt 16:6). Ryle sees the Pharisees as the forerunners of formalists and tradition-worshippers and the Sadducees as the forerunners of free-thinkers and rationalists. He then asks, “Who were they to whom the learning of this text was addressed?”

This is his answer: “Our Lord Jesus Christ was not speaking to men who were worldly, ungodly, and unsanctified, but to His own disciples, companions, and friends. He addressed men who, with the exception of the apostate Judas Iscariot, were right-hearted in the sight of God. He spoke to the twelve apostles, the first founders of the Church of Christ, and the first ministers of the word of salvation. And yet even to them He addresses the solemn caution of our text: ‘Take heed and beware’” (p 364).

Whilst stressing the importance of orthodoxy and the defence of the faith, Ryle wisely adds, “The day of controversy is always a day of spiritual peril. Men are apt to confound orthodoxy with conversion, and to fancy that they must go to heaven if they know how to answer Papists. Yet mere earnestness without knowledge, and mere head-knowledge of Protestantism, alike save none. Let us never forget this. Let us not rest till we feel the blood of Christ sprinkled on our consciences, and have the witness of the Spirit within us that we are born again. This is reality. This is true religion. This will last. This will never fail us. It is the possession of grace in the heart, and not the intellectual knowledge of it, that profits and saves the soul” (p 404).

As in many of Ryle’s excellent volumes, there are occasional comments from which Free Presbyterians will demur, such as his statement: “I find no confession which comes near the *Thirty-Nine Articles* of the Church of England” (p 75). *Knots Untied* is still, however, classic J C Ryle and contains some very fine material which we heartily commend to our readers. The volume has been re-typeset and is produced to the Banner of Truth’s usual high standards.

Roy Middleton

Notes and Comments

Church Attendance in Scotland

The “2016 Scottish Church Census” shows that regular church attendance in Scotland has dropped from 17% of the population in 1984 to 7.2% at

present. The total number of congregations has dropped from 4100 to 3700 over the same period of time. It is a sad figure, and sadder still when one remembers that many – probably most – of these churches are proclaiming a false gospel. Truly, “narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Mt 7:14).

Those that think of religion as a purely human phenomenon will see these figures as showing nothing more than Christianity going out of fashion in the Western world in the twenty-first century; but those who understand spiritual realities will see the hand of Satan in pushing secularism at present, and the hand of God in largely withholding His blessing upon the work of the gospel. Both these things may change rapidly: Satan may abandon secularism and switch back to Romanism, causing his puppets “who are taken captive by him at his will” (2 Tim 2:26) to dance in that direction; and the Lord may pour out the long-awaited blessing and confirm and strengthen His weary heritage (Ps 68:9). Let the declining numbers be a stimulus to prayer, but not a cause of despondency. The promise of the everlasting covenant will not fail: “He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many” (Is 53:11). *DWBS*

Another Election

This month British voters will once again go to the polls for another General Election, called somewhat unexpectedly by the Prime Minister, Theresa May. There has been a spate of elections and referendums in recent years, not least in Scotland, but this should not diminish from our minds the weighty matter of electing the next UK government. In particular, that government will have to shoulder a great responsibility as Britain enters negotiations for leaving the European Union, with another Scottish Independence referendum still a possibility.

We would draw the attention of our readers, however, to an even greater issue, the responsibility of civil rulers to govern in the fear of God, in accordance with the principles of God’s Word. Civil magistrates in every country have a special duty to ensure that Christianity is recognised as the national religion. They have a duty to do as much as possible, within the bounds of their civil sphere, to promote the welfare of the Church of God and the religious instruction of the population, without compromising the spiritual independence of the Church. Of course, there is not one leading politician – in the mainland UK parties at least – who would be prepared to countenance this biblical view of the duty of governments. That this is so is a sad reflection of the abysmally-low state of our society, morally and spiritually.

When we look at the leaders of the various contending parties we see

nothing to encourage us to expect that they will attempt to lead the country in a healthier direction in the moral and religious sphere. The Prime Minister is the daughter of a High Anglican minister and is known to be a churchgoer. She has made reference to the influence that Christianity has had on her outlook. Yet this did not prevent her giving her support for same-sex marriage and speaking in favour of the homosexual lobby at the Conservative Party conference. The leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, is an atheist and a militant socialist, which philosophy has tended to act against the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ whenever it has held the reins of power. Mr Corbyn is now living with his third wife, with whom he cohabited for many years previously. Nicola Sturgeon, the leader of the Scottish National Party, has been described as a “flinty secularist”.

The Liberal Democrat leader, Tim Farron, is the party leader who seems to be most active in professing to be a Christian. Yet, when Mr Farron was pressed on his opinion of homosexual behaviour, he stated that he did not regard it as a sin. Whether this truly is his view, or whether he stated it only to avoid the political repercussions which would have followed him stating it to be sinful, Mr Farron failed to stand for the unmistakable teaching of the Word of God on this great moral issue of our day. If Mr Farron genuinely believes it is not sinful, then his profession of Christianity is a hollow one indeed. If, on the other hand, he went against the light of Scripture and his conscience on this matter, it does not inspire much confidence in his fitness and integrity to hold high office in the land. “The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted” (Ps 12:8).

Of course, every voter must make up their own mind according to their conscience. Given the state of the main parties, it becomes even more important to know as much as possible about local candidates. Above all, we need a prayerful spirit that the results of the election, and of the wider issues of national and international significance facing the country, would be overruled by the Most High for the good of His cause and the glory of His name. *AWM*

Freemasonry Today

June 2017 marks the official three-hundredth birthday of Freemasonry; so it may be timely to consider its members’ beliefs and how this clandestine society operates. As it has kept a relatively low profile in recent years, and its numbers have declined, we may forget just how incompatible it is with Christianity. Superficially it can give the impression of being a benign, brotherly man’s club. It claims to be “the oldest and largest secular, apolitical, fraternal, charitable organisation in the world”. However, on a closer look, we find much that is sinister in its rituals and practices. An array of high-

profile events is scheduled to celebrate the tercentenary, and the increased publicity is no doubt intended to encourage more men to join the society.

At present, it is estimated that there are around 350 000 active Masons in England and Wales – half as many as after the Second World War. (We have no figures for Scotland.) Total world membership is estimated to be around five million. While it is difficult to find out exactly what goes on in this secret society, some practices have been exposed by their books and by former Freemasons, which give us some insight into the evil nature of this “brotherhood”.

The idea of Masonic brotherhood comes from an archaic definition of a *brother* as “one who has taken an oath of mutual support to another”. Masons swear at each level (called degrees) of brotherhood to keep the contents of that degree secret, and to support and protect their brethren in virtually all circumstances. There are 33 degrees, although many Masons will not proceed beyond the first three, which are called the “Blue Lodge”. These are (1) Entered Apprentice, (2) Fellow Craft, (3) Master Mason. In most Lodges – where Masons meet – the oaths are taken on a *Volume of Sacred Law* (VSL), which can be “any book of divine revelation appropriate to the religious beliefs of the individual”.

In the initiation ceremony, the candidate is given a copy of the VSL. Written inside is the following warning: “As a Freemason you are charged to consider the V of the SL as the unerring standard of truth and justice and to regulate your actions by the Divine precepts it contains”. As Masonry teaches that any one “book of divine revelation” is as “unerring” as any other, we are already in the realm of relativism and contradictions. Significantly, the Bible is not considered superior to any other “divine book”. At the ceremony, the man being presented has to confess that he is in a “state of darkness”. Through the initiation, he is told that he will begin to enter a “state of light”. The “truths” of Freemasonry alone, it is maintained, can lead him into that light. This belief is symbolised by blindfolding the person for the first part of the ceremony. Light is considered to be one of Masonry’s most vital symbols.

One writer puts it graphically. “To become a Freemason a man must present himself outside the closed door of a lodge in shirtsleeves with the left breast bared, a blindfold across his eyes, a hangman’s noose draped around his neck, a shoe on one foot, a slipper on the other and one trouser leg rolled up. Upon entry, he is confronted with a dagger pointed at his bare [chest] and the chanting of men in blue goatskin aprons with wands in their hands and ornamental chains draped across their chests.” He then takes an oath accepting punishment if he reveals the names of members or breaks other

confidences. The punishments threatened are barbaric: a Mason's throat would be cut, his tongue torn from his mouth and his bowels burned to ashes.

Another commentator states that "for every candidate, the initiation ceremony implies that, whatever academic or scientific learning he possesses, whatever philosophical ideas he holds, whatever religious creed he professes prior to initiation, there remains something more – indeed something vastly more – for him yet to learn and to which the Craft [of Freemasonry] can help him". The society therefore travels along the same road as the cults, where each person is viewed as being in a state of spiritual darkness until he gains spiritual light through participation in the mysteries of that cult.

Masons profess to proceed from one level of "enlightenment" to another by the degrees. Complex symbolism is at the heart of the process. For example, at a certain stage in the third degree an allegorical figure called Hiram Abiff (claimed to have been the main builder of Solomon's temple) is said to have been the only one who knew the secrets of Masonry but suffered death rather than divulge them. He was then raised from the dead "by God" and became a "Jesus-like figure", or symbolically a saviour. This is accompanied by a host of bizarre rituals and symbols – closely related to the occult, with temples, altars and a worshipful master.

In spite of these rituals, many Freemasons argue that Masonry is not a religion. Their language, however, is filled with religious terminology focusing on "salvation" by supposedly good works, mixed with various false creeds, and a dose of paganism. The *Masonic Ritual and Monitor* states, "He who wears the lambskin as a badge of a Mason is thereby continually reminded of purity of life and conduct, which is essentially necessary to his gaining admission into that celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the universe presides". One of their "encyclopaedias" comments on a funeral service: "Freemasonry has a religious service to commit the body of a deceased brother to the dust whence it came, and to speed the liberated spirit back to the Great Source of Light". At one point Masonry speaks of the name of God being lost but that it will be revealed at a higher degree. The recovered name, it is claimed, is *Jahbulon*, which is a mixture of *Jehovah*, *Baal*, and the Egyptian false god *Osiris*.

It can thus be concluded that Freemasonry is yet another delusion sent by Satan to seduce men further into his kingdom and into idolatry. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (Jn 14:6). Freemasons, in effect, reject His Word, blatantly claiming that their way is the only way to light. The Saviour assures us that He is the true Light that came into the world and that He alone can lead sinners, by His Word and Spirit, out of darkness into His marvellous light. Masonry is

a counterfeit religion and leads to darkness – even outer darkness if not repented of. Paul solemnly tells us: “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph 5:11). KHM

Church Information

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Western: At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, June 6, at 11 am.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, June 13, at 11 am.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, June 20, at 11 am.

Northern: At Dingwall, on Tuesday, June 20, at 2 pm.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Tuesday, June 27, at 2 pm.

Australia & New Zealand: At Auckland, Friday, September 1, at 10 am.

Theological Conference

This year’s Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in Glasgow, on Tuesday, October 31, and Wednesday, November 1, with Rev J R Tallach as chairman. It is expected that the following papers will be read, all in public:

The Early Reformation

Mr Matthew Vogan

James Bannerman on the Church of Christ

Rev A W MacColl

Luther and the Doctrine of Justification in Scotland

Rev D W B Somerset

Ulrich Zwingli

Mr Frank Daubney

The Temple

Rev J B Jardine

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

College and Library Fund

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

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Eastern Europe Fund: Estate of late Euphemia A MacDonald, North Uist, £125 701.79.

General Fund: M Cameron, £77.18; Estate of late Mr Alexander Fraser, Bishopton, £271.23.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: Anon, for Zimbabwe famine relief, £262.14.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Glasgow: *Communion Expenses:* MM, £100. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £63, £63, £63, £65, £10. *TBS:* Anon, £10.

Greenock: *Sustentation Fund:* Friend, Kingussie, £80.

Inverness: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £50.

North Harris: *Communion Expenses:* LDA, £100.

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

Raasay: Anon, In loving memory, £100.

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **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 Achany Rd, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nmross2001@yahoo.co.uk.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev N M Ross; tel: 01349 864351.
- Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, 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; **Strathy:** Sabbath: fortnightly as intimated.
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm. **Tarbert** and **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7.30 pm alternately. 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; Wednesday 7 pm. **Sheilbost** and **Strond:** no services at present. Manse tel: 01859 520271. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochbervie:** 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.
- Raasa:** 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: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367; or Mr Gilbert Zekveld; tel: 519 363 5899. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

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

USA

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

Australia

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

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

New Zealand

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

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev C Hembd, 14 Thomson St, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140.

Tauranga: 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 Levytskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytskyy@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.byo@gmail.com.

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

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

New Canaan: Church.

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

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