

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.

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

August: First Sabbath: Dingwall; **Second:** 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: First Sabbath: Leverburgh; **Second:** Glasgow; **Third:** Chiedza, Singapore.

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

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The God Who Sent Moses

It was God's purpose to bring the Children of Israel out from their bondage in Egypt. That was what He had promised their ancestors, and now the time had come to put His purposes into effect, to fulfil His promises. He had already been preparing Moses to be their leader and He was now to meet Moses in the desert to call him to that work. As Moses was leading his father-in-law's sheep, possibly in search of fresh pasture, God caught his attention through the burning bush which "was not consumed". It was a remarkable demonstration of what God can do: the bush was preserved from destruction in spite of the great power of fire to destroy. At the burning bush, God spoke with Moses and appointed him to deliver Israel from Egypt – a task that Moses could not possibly carry out in his own strength; it was divine power alone that could bring this about.

Moses expected that when he would tell the Israelites about the deliverance, they would ask, "What is His name?" And he enquired, "What shall I say unto them?" Then "God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you" (Ex 3:13,14). He was revealing Himself to Moses as Jehovah, the self-existent God; the name is often translated as the LORD.

Matthew Henry makes four helpful points in expounding the significance of the name *Jehovah*: (1) "He is self-existent; He has His being [from] Himself, and has no dependence upon any other. The greatest and best man in the world must say, 'By the grace of God I am what I am'; but God says absolutely – and it is more than any creature, man or angel, can say – 'I am that I am'. Being self-existent, He cannot but be self-sufficient, and therefore all-sufficient, and the inexhaustible fountain of being and bliss." (2) "He is eternal and unchangeable, and always the same yesterday, today and for ever. He will be what He will be and what He is." (3) "We cannot by searching find Him out. This is such a name as checks all bold and curious enquiries concerning God." (4) "He is faithful and true to all His promises, unchangeable in His word as well as in His nature, and not a man that He should lie."

This is the all-powerful God who sent Moses to lead Israel into the land flowing with milk and honey, a highly-productive land where they would enjoy tremendous blessing (if they would submit to God and His revelation and would continue in submission to Him). As with so much of Old Testament history, God's work in bringing the Children of Israel out of Egypt, on their way towards Canaan, is typical of something spiritual. It represents the Lord bringing His people out of the bondage of Satan's kingdom and on towards the blessedness of heaven. And we must consider the self-existent Jehovah, the One who has absolute authority and infinite power over all His creatures, sending out ministers to take part in that glorious work of leading His children from (to use John Bunyan's expressions) the City of Destruction to the Celestial City.

When a man is sent out to proclaim the gospel, it is the Lord God of heaven who sends him, whatever human instrumentality may be involved in calling him into the work. But if someone has not been called by the Most High, he most certainly has no right to act as a minister. It was God the Son who said to Matthew: "Follow me" (Mk 2:14). When Christ had taken our nature and entered into the world, He still spoke with complete authority; accordingly Matthew submitted to the call and followed the Saviour. He submitted to Christ's divine authority and went wherever he was sent, to speak in the name of Christ.

And when Christ was about to ascend to heaven, He directed the remaining 11 disciples: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk 16:15,16). All truly-called ministers, in every generation, are given the same authoritative commission, and they are given the same message. They are to warn sinners about the consequences of going on in sin; they are to make known the good news about Jesus Christ and salvation through Him; and they are to administer the sacraments. They are to do so in the name of the self-existent God.

In particular, He is the Creator of those to whom the preacher is proclaiming the truth; it is the Creator who has sent him. The authority of the preacher depends entirely on the fact that the Lord has sent him as His ambassador. If someone asked Matthew who had sent him and in whose name he was preaching, he might have answered, "I AM hath sent me unto you". So Paul spoke "boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 9:29), who had called him to the work of the ministry, promising him, as He did the original eleven disciples: "Lo, I am with you alway" (Mt 28:20). And every preacher in every generation is to rely on the same promise, for that pledge extends to "the end of the world".

But the fact that the self-existent God sends out ministers as ambassadors has implications, as we have noted recently, for those who hear them. Such preachers can say, "I AM hath sent me unto you". So, for instance, when a preacher speaks of sin, it should be borne in mind that the great, eternal, self-existent God has sent him to proclaim a revelation from heaven about sin; every sin is against the Creator of all things and against the holy law that He has given, in His kindness, to regulate human life. To reject, or even to neglect, the message about sin is rebellion against this great God, and it is likewise rebellion to reject or neglect the warnings about the consequences of sin – death, judgement and a lost eternity – that such a message ought to include. Accordingly we are to take to heart that each of us – who are continually in the presence of this great God – is guilty and polluted by sin.

If the preacher comes with a message of God's grace, speaking of the great and glorious salvation that He has provided for guilty sinners, it is again rebellion to despise the provision that has been made by Christ in infinite love to a lost world. No wonder Scripture asks, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation . . . ? (Heb 2:3). Let us remember that the One who died for sinners is not only man but God. He it is who will sit on the judgement seat on the last day, and not least among the matters to be addressed then will be: How did we respond to the call of the gospel – for instance, as He Himself gives it: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28)?

And if the preacher speaks of the need for holiness, let us remember that he speaks as an ambassador for "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy" (Is 57:15), the One who says, to His children in particular: "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (1 Pet 1:15). The all-holy One is calling on us to follow a holy way of life – and to do so perfectly. Yet every degree in which we come short of perfect holiness is sin; so we are sinning continually. We therefore continually need to come to the Lord, who is a gracious God, to be forgiven and also to be purified. That is what He, with absolute authority, directs us to do.

Whatever the subject of a sermon, provided it is scriptural, we must regard it as coming through an ambassador from Christ. The ambassador's personal authority is not the point; the important matter is that he was sent out, like Moses, by the eternal, self-existent, perfectly-holy God. To the extent that he remains faithful to the Scriptures, we should feel the authority of his words; it is the authority of Jehovah Himself. How awful will be the end of those who go on despising the authority of the living God as He speaks, not only in the pages of Scripture, but also through His ambassadors!

Christ the only Sufficient Sacrifice (2)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.*

2. How have all qualities needed for a sufficient atonement met in Christ?

Without Him there was no salvation for our wretched and desperately wicked souls, but He took our nature on Him, in the most amazing condescension, in full consciousness that He possessed all the qualities needed to make an atonement. Thus He announces his determination to come forth for that purpose, saying, “Mine ear hast Thou opened; lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me”. It is for us who profess to trust solely in His blood for pardon of our great guilt, to consider, not once and in a passing manner, but by constant and daily meditation, the excellency of His sacrifice. Only thus can our faith in it be strengthened and kept in vigorous operation. Thus too will our love and reverence for God be heightened, as we admire the wonderful manner in which value, connection, innocence and willingness² all meet in Christ set forth as our propitiation. We cannot speak worthily of the theme, but let each of us consider it more attentively, day by day, in the Scriptures which testify of Jesus, for only thus can we be rooted and grounded in love.

(1.) We beseech you to note *the sufficiency of His sacrifice in value*. If it is required that the atonement on the altar must be equal in value to the souls to be redeemed, shall it be said that the blood of God’s only begotten Son – who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself as a sacrifice, the just for the unjust – is not sufficient to make atonement for the sins of all His people? Surely one pang or agony of Him – who, being in the form of God, counted it not robbery to be equal with God – is proof of God’s indignation against sin, passing what would have been given if we had all perished!

Assuredly the holiness and justice of God were never so terribly displayed as when it was seen that His own Son could obtain the redemption of His people only by bearing the iniquities of them all, and shedding His blood to atone for their guilt. What more awful manifestation of holiness can be conceived than the Lord God Almighty hiding His countenance from His own only-begotten One? This was because Christ had taken on Himself the sins of His people and unchangeably resolving that, till justice should be

¹Taken from *The Free Church Pulpit*, vol 3, and continued from last month. Under the first head, the preacher answered the question: “What kind of atonement was needed for sin?”

²These represent the sub-divisions used to answer the question posed as the first head. See last month’s section of the sermon.

satisfied to the utmost of its demands, God would not turn away His wrath. And though it involved giving His well-beloved Son to the death, He would not let the cup pass till it was drunk! Amid the rending rocks and opening graves was the truth proclaimed with eternal strength: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission". Therefore, because justice must be satisfied, the Son of God purchased His Church with His own blood.

(2.) *He was connected with those for whom He died.* Though it was His divine nature which gave unspeakable value to His blood, yet He was made in all points like as we are. Before saying, "Lo I come," He declares, "Mine ears hast Thou opened" – "a body hast Thou prepared Me". He by whom, and to whom, and through whom are all things, took on Him the seed of Abraham, and became man as well as God. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." Not merely had He a human body, but also a human soul, capable of all the sinless feelings of our nature. He was linked in the tie of human friendship. There was a disciple "whom Jesus loved". He was touched with a feeling of our infirmities. At the tomb of Lazarus, "Jesus wept". And, more wonderful still, He in whom were "hid all the treasures of wisdom" had a soul united to Him which "grew in wisdom". Therefore He was fit to stand as head and representative of our race before God, to make atonement.

When the first Adam stood in innocence, he was our head. When he fell, we all derived from him a corrupt nature. In him we all died. Now here stands a second Adam, deriving His nature immediately from God and free from every taint of sin, who offers Himself to bear the iniquities of many and to be dealt with as guilty and liable to experience wrath. Thus, having life in Himself, He will give life to as many as believe on His name. Much as we may marvel at the disinterested love which prompted this offer, we cannot but say that its acceptance was perfectly reasonable and just. It was accepted and, as in Adam all died, so in Christ are all believers made alive. His life is infused into their souls, renewing them in the spirit of their minds and creating them anew unto good works.

Their connection with Christ is, to believers, as much a matter of experience and actual operation as the connection between the natural man and the first Adam. As the natural life derived from Adam works to disobedience, so the life derived from Christ works to obedience and the purifying of the heart through faith. Therefore, by this connection, there is an admirable fitness, coherence and propriety in the whole Scripture plan of atonement through Christ's blood, and in justification by faith.

Christ laid down His life for the sheep. They who are justified by His blood are His own, drawn to Him by the cords of a man and the bands of a

brother. They have their souls knit to His, and do not live in themselves, but by His Spirit living in them (Gal 2:20). Therefore, when He presents them before the presence of His Father, does not this close and intimate connection between Him and His people entitle Him to ask that they – who have Him formed in them the hope of glory – be with Him where He is, and have eternal life with Him in fullness of joy for evermore?

(3.) *Christ is supremely qualified to make propitiation for sins, because of His spotless innocence.* The blood to make atonement on the altar must be that of a pure and holy victim. He who is substituted for the guilty, to save their souls, must be perfect in His innocence. Where can such a victim be found except in the holy Jesus? He was without spot, and unrebukeable in the midst of a perverse generation. His life was the fulfilling of the law, for love to God and love to man animated His whole career. Of His love to God who shall speak worthily? We do not know what passed in the communion He had with His Father and, if we did know it, we could not utter the fullness of the intense love which made Him say, “I delight to do Thy will, O God”.

There are times when even a poor and imperfect believer finds his heart so full with love to God that he cannot utter one half of what he feels. And shall we dare for one moment to compare our love with His? His love glowed with the intensest, purest flame; His zeal never flagged. He counted it no laborious task, but His meat and drink, to fulfill the law; it was the natural employment of His heart. “Thy law is within My heart.” Though surrounded by temptations and beset by enemies who were considering how they might allure Him to evil, they never could succeed in raising within Him a single wish that was in the slightest degree sinful, or in making Him move a hair’s breath from the strict line of duty. The commandments of God are exceeding broad, and make man see an end of all perfection. But Jesus kept them all. Sin, His deadly foe, could not succeed in throwing the slightest stain on His heart.

When the time came for offering Himself up, if a vestige of sin could have been found in His heart, or of guilt on His lips, or of iniquity on His hands, His sacrifice must have been rejected as incompetent; the horror of His undertaking would have been trodden in the dust; and Satan would have triumphed, keeping the world still under thralldom. Burning with eager desire thus to overthrow Christ, the prince of this world came, but neither in His past life could the accuser of the brethren find aught to accuse Him of, nor could Satan now find in Him any hold by which to overturn His innocence. That innocence stood invulnerable, unassailable. It defied Satan’s most cunning wiles, his fiercest assaults. “The prince of this world cometh,” said Jesus, “and hath nothing in Me.”

To evince the impotence of his malice, when Satan stirred up his slaves

to take away the life of the Lamb of God, he could supply them with no slanderous charges against Him that were supported by even plausible testimony. The witnesses did not agree in their evidence. The charge the rulers of the Jews brought, on which the Redeemer was doomed to die, claimed that He, being a man, made Himself equal with God. Before Pilate He was accused of making Himself a King. But His Father gave Him witness that He spoke the truth in these things, by the resurrection from the dead – declaring Him to be the Son of God with power and exalting Him far above all principality and power to be the King of kings and Lord of lords.

But through these accusations Jesus was condemned to die and was led forth bearing His cross. As if to render His innocence more conspicuous, slander was then constrained to be dumb and the tongue of calumny was fettered in silence. Before then wicked men had said, “Behold a man gluttonous and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners,” and “He casteth out devils by the power of Beelzebub”. Now the falsehood of such charges was too apparent to be hazarded; and it was then manifest that He and the prince of this world had nothing in common. Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. The words with which they reviled Him were such only as made their blindness and cruelty of heart more evident: “He saved others, Himself He cannot save”.

The innocence of the victim who was then bearing “our sins in His own body on the tree” had been conspicuous through life; by two witnesses it was attested as bright and remarkable in the hour of His death. “We receive the due reward of our deeds”, said the penitent malefactor to his companion, “but this man hath done nothing amiss.” And the centurion who watched Him “glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man”. From the cross, His innocence sent efficacious influence into the hearts of spectators, and already Christ crucified drew souls to Himself (Jn 12:32). Truly, an innocence which could thus, with all things against it, triumph in its sufferings and death, over evil and idolatrous hearts, proves Jesus fit to be set forth as a propitiation for our sins.

(4.) *Jesus was a willing victim.* What need is there for a laboured proof of His willingness? If He was unwilling, who could have ascended into heaven to bring Christ down? If He was not willing, could He not have returned on high any moment He chose? Did He not show that He was a willing victim after He spoke to the men who came out to seize Him and they fell to the ground as dead, yet He yielded Himself up to them to be led to scourging and death? But His willingness to be made a curse for sinners, that He might redeem them who were under the curse, was not the consent of ignorance of what was involved for Him in such an undertaking.

When He said, "Lo, I come," He went forth knowing all that should come upon Him. He who dwelt in the bosom of the Father, from time everlasting, knew how evil and abominable sin is in His sight, and what a tremendous infliction of wrath was due to the vindication of justice, so long despised and insulted. He knew well what tribulation and anguish He was undertaking to suffer when He offered to make atonement to the uttermost for such as should come unto God by Him. He bore without expression of grief the sufferings inflicted by the hand of men. "The Lord God", He says, "hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not My face from shame or spitting."

And when He came to be baptized with His baptism of fire, even to undergo the final sharp trial of His Father's wrath, which made Him "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and pressed Him into such a depth of agony that He sweat "as it were great drops of blood", we know that He submitted His will to His Father's, saying, "Not My will but Thine be done". And on the cross, when the extreme pangs of His suffering were drawing near, His Father hid His face from Him, to the unutterable trouble of His spirit. Then that heavenly light which had been the comfort of His heart was cut off, and He was left alone, as if guilty, bearing the weight of wrath due to His Church's guilt in darkness and sorrow, encompassed by the prince of this world and his legions. Knowing that this was their hour and power, they burned to destroy Him. They hoped for success, but He upheld His will.

In this frightful hour, Jesus went calmly on, willingly submitting Himself to bear "our sins in His own body on the tree". He proved His willingness by consummating the sacrifice. His enemies had assailed His life, but it was impregnable to their attacks. No man could take away His life. Death entered the world by sin; but He had never sinned, and therefore death had no power over Him. Here is a difference, which we must notice, between the death of all other men and that of Christ. "No man hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit" in the hour of death. "We must needs die." But no one could take Christ's life from Him. He laid it down of Himself (Jn 10:18).

To complete the sacrifice, it was necessary that Christ should die. Death was there, exulting in the prospect of a victim coming under its power, such as it had never smitten before – even the Prince of life being slain by its dart. All that was implied in Jesus dying we cannot know but, from the strong dread of it expressed in the Psalms, and the earnest supplications not to be left in hell or suffered to see corruption, we must suppose that something fearful was involved. As it was the last blow in the Redeemer's suffering, so it was the most awful. But, however great its terrors, Christ looked both at

the blow about to be struck and at the effects which would result from it, and perceived that, if He permitted death to bury its sting in Him, that enemy would no more have power over those that should believe on His name. Thus Christ, in the same spirit in which He had said, “Lo, I come,” now cried with a loud voice, “It is finished . . . and gave up the ghost”. Bowing His head, He made reconciliation for iniquity and brought in an everlasting righteousness.

And now, soul who knows that there is no sacrifice sufficient to make atonement for sin but Christ, and that the sacrifice of Christ is all-sufficient, why are you so perpetually turning away from the refuge God has set before you and seeking rest in the midst of your iniquities? You would wish to be saved without Christ if you could, but it is clearly impossible. Yet although this has been demonstrated to be impossible, you are resisting invitations to salvation by faith, and struggling against believing. I see no help for you but in Him, who was lifted up to make reconciliation, drawing you to Himself by His Spirit. “Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief.”

Luther and the Reformation¹

7. The Helplessness of Man and the Omnipotence of God

J H Merle d'Aubigné

A living faith in Christ filled Luther's heart and life. “Within my heart,” he said, “there reigns alone (and it ought thus to reign alone) faith in my Lord Jesus Christ, who is the beginning, middle and end of all the thoughts that occupy my mind by day and night.”

All his hearers listened with admiration as he spoke – whether from the professor's chair or from the pulpit – of that faith in Jesus Christ. Men were astonished that they had not earlier acknowledged truths that appeared so evident in his mouth. “The desire of self-justification”, said he, “is the cause of all the distresses of the heart. But he who receives Jesus Christ as a Saviour enjoys peace, and not only peace but purity of heart. All sanctification of the heart is a fruit of faith. For faith is a divine work in us which changes us and gives us a new birth given by God Himself. It kills the old Adam in us and, by the Holy Ghost which is communicated to us, it gives us a new heart and makes us new men. It is not by empty speculations,” he again exclaimed, “but by this practical method that we can obtain a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.”

¹This is a further abridged extract from d'Aubigné's *The History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*, vol 1. Last month we saw Luther feeling called especially to the study of Scripture and to the reformation of the Church.

At this time Luther preached discourses on the Ten Commandments entitled *Popular Declamations*. They contain errors no doubt; Luther became enlightened only by degrees. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov 4:18). But what truth, simplicity and eloquence are found in these discourses! How well we can understand the effect the new preacher must have produced on his audience and on his age!

We will quote but one passage taken from the beginning. Luther ascends the pulpit of Wittenberg, and reads these words: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" (Ex 20:3). Then turning to the people who crowded the sanctuary, he says, "All the sons of Adam are idolaters, and have sinned against this First Commandment". Doubtless this strange assertion startles his hearers. He proceeds to justify it: "There are two kinds of idolatry – one external, the other internal. In external idolatry, man bows down to wood and stone, to beasts and to the heavenly host. In internal idolatry, man does not worship a created being [outwardly] yet, fearful of punishment or seeking his own pleasure, loves him in his heart and trusts in him. . . .

"What kind of religion is this? You do not bend the knee before riches and honours, but you offer to them your heart, the noblest portion of yourselves. . . . Alas, you worship God in your body, but the creature in spirit. This idolatry prevails in every man until he is healed by the free gift of faith that is in Christ Jesus.

"And how shall this cure be accomplished? Listen. Faith in Christ takes away from you all trust in your own wisdom, righteousness and strength; it teaches you that, if Christ had not died for you and had not thus saved you, neither you nor any other creature would have been able to do it. Then you learn to despise all those things that are unavailing to you.

"Nothing now remains to you but Jesus Christ – Christ alone, Christ all-sufficient for your soul. Hoping for nothing from any creature, you have only Christ, from whom you hope for everything and whom you love above everything. Now Christ is the one, sole and true God. When you have Him for your God, you have no other gods."

Thus Luther shows how the soul is brought back to God, his sovereign good, by the gospel, according to the words of Jesus Christ: "I am the way . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by Me". The man who speaks thus to his age aims at something more than the correction of a few abuses; he is earnest above all things to establish true religion. His work is not merely negative; it is primarily positive.

Luther goes on to speak against the superstitions which then filled Christendom: among them the signs and mysterious characters, the observance of

certain days and months, familiar spirits, phantoms, the influence of the stars, witchcraft, the patronage of saints. He attacks these idols one after another and with vigour overthrows all these false gods.

But it was particularly in his lecture room before an enlightened, youthful audience, hungering for the truth, that he displayed all the treasures of God's Word. "He so explained Scripture", says his friend Melancthon, "that, in the judgement of all pious and well-informed men, it was as if a new morning had risen upon doctrine after a long night of darkness. He showed the difference between the law and the gospel. He refuted the then prevalent error of the churches that men by their works merit the remission of sins and become righteous before God by outward discipline. He thus led men's hearts back to the Son of God. Like John the Baptist, he pointed to the Lamb of God that has taken away the sins of the world; he explained how sin is freely pardoned for the sake of the Son of God, and that man receives this blessing through faith.

"He made no change in the ceremonies. On the contrary, the established discipline had not in his order a more faithful observer and defender. But he endeavoured more and more to make all understand these grand, essential doctrines of conversion, the remission of sins, faith and the true consolation to be found in the cross. Pious minds were struck by the sweetness of this doctrine; the learned received it with joy. One might have said that Christ, the apostles, and the prophets, were now issuing from the obscurity of some impure dungeon."

The firmness with which Luther relied on the Holy Scriptures imparted great authority to his teaching. But so did the fact that every action of his life corresponded with his words. It was known that these discourses did not proceed merely from his lips: they had their source in his heart. And many influential men who regretted the divisions in the Church when the Reformation later burst forth, had already been won over beforehand by the holiness of the Reformer's life and by the beauty of his genius; they embraced the doctrine to which he gave testimony by his works. The more men loved Christian virtues, the more they inclined towards the Reformer. Wittenberg was changed by this preaching of faith, and it became the focus of a light that was soon to illuminate all Germany and shine on all the Church.

Luther had an affectionate, tender heart and desired to see those whom he loved in possession of that light which had guided him into the paths of peace. He took advantage of every opportunity that occurred as professor, preacher, or monk, as well as his extensive correspondence, to communicate his treasure to others. One of his former brethren in the convent of Erfurt, the monk George Spenlein, was then living in the convent of Memmingen, per-

haps after spending a short time at Wittenberg. Spenlein had commissioned Luther to sell various articles that he had left with him. Luther carefully discharged this commission. He received, he says in a letter to Spenlein, in April 1516, one florin for a tunic, half a florin for a book, and a florin for a hood, and had remitted the amount to the father-vicar, to whom Spenlein owed three florins.

But Luther quickly passes to a more important subject: "I should be very glad to know", he wrote to friar George, "what is the state of your soul. Is it not tired of its own righteousness? Does it not breathe freely at last and does it not confide in the righteousness of Christ? In our days, pride seduces many and especially those who labour with all their might to become righteous, not understanding the righteousness of God that is given to us freely in Christ Jesus; they wish to stand before Him on their own merits. But that cannot be. When you were living with me, you were in that error, and so was I. I am struggling unceasingly against it, and I have not entirely triumphed over it.

"O my dear brother, learn to know Christ and Him crucified. Learn to sing to Him a new song, to despair of yourself; and to say to Him: Thou, Lord Jesus Christ, art my righteousness, and I am Thy sin. Thou hast taken what was mine, and hast given me what was Thine. What Thou wast not Thou didst become, in order that I might become what I was not! Beware, my dear George, of pretending to such purity as no longer to confess yourself a sinner, for Christ dwells only with sinners. He came down from heaven, where he was living among the righteous, in order to live also among sinners. Meditate carefully upon this love of Christ, and you will taste all its unspeakable consolation. If our labours and afflictions could give peace to the conscience, why should Christ have died? You will not find peace except in Him, by despairing of yourself and of your works, and in learning the love with which He opens His arms to you, taking all your sins upon Himself, and giving you all His righteousness."

Thus the powerful doctrine of the apostolic age, which was to be used again in the days of the Reformation, was clearly and forcibly explained by Luther. Spenlein was not the only man whom he sought to instruct in this fundamental doctrine. The little truth that he found, in this respect, in the writings of Erasmus² made him uneasy. It was of great importance to enlighten a man whose genius was so admirable. But how was he to do so?

Erasmus much respected Luther's friend, the Elector's chaplain; to him Luther applied. "What displeases me in Erasmus," wrote Luther, "who is a man of such extensive learning, is, my dear Spalatin, that by the righteous-

²Dutch scholar, who produced an influential edition of the Greek New Testament. He was critical of the abuses of the Church but did not embrace the doctrines of the Reformation.

ness of works and of the law, of which the Apostle speaks, he understands the fulfilling of the ceremonial law. The righteousness of the law consists not only in ceremonies, but in all the works of the Decalogue. Even if these works should be accomplished without faith in Christ, they may, it is true, produce . . . men perfectly upright in the eyes of the world; but they then deserve as little to be styled righteousness, as the fruit of the medlar to be called a fig. For we do not become righteous, as Aristotle maintains, by performing righteous works; but when we have become righteous, then we perform such works. The man must first be changed, and afterwards the works. Abel was first accepted by God, and then his sacrifice.”

Luther continues, “Fulfill, I beseech you, the duty of a friend and of a Christian by communicating these matters to Erasmus”. This letter places the relation between Luther and Erasmus in its true light. It shows the sincere interest he felt in what he thought would be really beneficial to this illustrious writer. Undoubtedly, the opposition shown by Erasmus to the truth compelled Luther later to combat him openly, but he did not do so until he had sought to enlighten his antagonist.

At last the nature of goodness was clearly explained. Then was declared the principle that what constitutes the real goodness of an action is not its outward appearance, but the spirit in which it is performed. This was aiming a deadly blow at all those superstitious observances which for ages had oppressed the Church and prevented Christian virtues from growing up and flourishing within it.

“I am reading Erasmus,” says Luther on another occasion, “but he daily loses his credit with me. I like to see him rebuke with so much firmness and learning the grovelling ignorance of the priests and monks, but I fear that he does not render great service to the doctrine of Jesus Christ. What is of man is dearer to him than what is of God. We are living in dangerous times. A man is not a good and judicious Christian because he understands Greek and Hebrew. Jerome, who knew five languages, is inferior to Augustine, who understood but one; although Erasmus thinks the contrary. I very carefully conceal my opinions concerning Erasmus, through fear of giving advantage to his adversaries. Perhaps the Lord will give him understanding in His time.”

The helplessness of man and the omnipotence of God were the two truths Luther desired to re-establish. It is a sad religion and a wretched philosophy that directs man to his own natural strength. Ages have tried in vain this boasted strength; and while man has, by his natural powers, arrived at great excellence in what concerns his earthly existence, he has never been able to scatter the darkness that conceals from his soul the knowledge of the true God, or to change a single inclination of his heart. The highest degree of

wisdom attained by ambitious minds, or by souls thirsting for perfection, has been to despair of themselves. It is therefore a comforting, true doctrine which unveils our impotence and proclaims a power from God. That truly is a great reformation which vindicates on earth the glory of heaven and pleads before man the rights of Almighty God.

No one knew better than Luther the indissoluble bond that unites the free salvation of God with the works of man. No one showed more plainly than he that it is only by receiving all from Christ that man can impart much to his brethren. He always represented these two actions – of God and of man – in the same picture. So, after explaining to the friar Spenlein what is meant by saving righteousness, he adds, “If you firmly believe those things, as is your duty (for cursed is he who does not believe them), receive your brethren who are still ignorant and in error, as Jesus Christ has received you. Bear with them patiently . . . and if you have any good thing, impart it to them. ‘Receive ye one another,’ says the Apostle, ‘as Christ also received us to the glory of God’ (Rom 15:7).

“It is a deplorable righteousness that cannot bear with others because it finds them wicked, and which thinks only of seeking the solitude of the desert instead of doing them good by long-suffering, prayer and example. If you are the lily and the rose of Christ, know that your dwelling place is among thorns. Only take care lest, by your impatience, by your rash judgements and your secret pride, you do not yourself become a thorn. Christ reigns in the midst of His enemies. If He had desired to live only among the good, and to die only for those who loved Him, for whom, I pray, would He have died, and among whom would He have lived?”

Prayer¹

2. What Is the Basis for Prayer?

Rev Donald Macdonald

3 The Basis for Prayer. Some preliminary considerations will be given here before we come to the substance of this section.

(1.) *The dependence of the creature:* Our nature and creation should teach us this truth. Such is the atheism of the heart of man that he thinks he is all-sufficient.

(2.) *The original creation.* Although angels and men were perfect in their

¹The first part of this Theological Conference paper, last month, contained the first two main points: (1.) Some general observations, (2.) Prayer in Old Testament worship. This second article provides the third main point.

creation – perfectly conformed to their Maker, as to righteousness – yet they are dependent because they are finite. At their creation they came forth from the hand of their Creator in a holy state; so they would adore and praise their Maker for what He is in Himself, and for His works in creation – in all their wonder. Nature wonderfully provides for the good of God’s creatures. In it God’s goodness is magnified. On the morning of the day of creation, the worship expressed in Revelation 4:11 would be the worship of the sons of God, angels and Adam: “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created”. Adoration belongs to prayer; it is closely allied with praise; it is part of prayer addressed to the Creator. But the attributes of justice and mercy were not yet revealed at the beginning of creation, which was a sinless state.

(3.) *The disruption caused by sin involved mankind and some angels.* The attribute of justice was first exercised in the spiritual world, in the immediate judgement of the fallen angels, when they were cast out of heaven. The holy demonstration of Divine wrath exercised in the creation revealed God’s infinite hatred of sin – with no promise of recovery.

(4.) *This disruption in the spiritual world led to the fall of man.* Adam and Eve gave way to Satan’s temptation; this brought Adam and all his posterity into condemnation and ruin; they were exposed to sin’s penalty. When Almighty God brought them under judgement in the Garden, Adam and Eve surely expected the penalty to be executed: “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2:17) – which implied eternal death, without mercy. It was when judging the serpent that another side of God’s nature was revealed to fallen man: in the promise that the woman’s seed would come. This other side of God’s nature is the attribute of mercy, now introduced to the world, not only to deal with sin, but also to recover man from all the effects of the Fall. If man was a dependent creature in a perfectly holy state, how much more is he dependent, now that he is ruined and fallen?

Let us now notice some things following these preliminary considerations:

1. *It is this attribute of mercy that opens up a way to God.* It is thus a basis for prayer: for petition, supplication and thanksgiving. It is on account of this that, almost from the gates of Eden, men in the line of Seth “began to call on the name of the Lord” (Gen 4:26). If there was no revelation of mercy, men would never have been able to call upon His name, there would have been no desire to do so.

2. *The second basis for prayer is the revelation of God.* As this revelation proceeded, particularly from the time of Abraham, there was an unfolding of the name of God to men. It is a difficult question, related to our approach

to God in prayer: How can He show mercy to the guilty, to sinful beings? There can be no mercy apart from sacrifice – unless the demands of justice are met. To show kindness on the grounds of compassion alone would be contrary to God’s holiness; the holy God sees an intrinsic vileness in sin. God showing mercy necessitates the mystery of the incarnation: the Word, the One sent by the Father, was made flesh. This sets before us who Christ is, what He came to do, and what He accomplished in man’s redemption. It is the atonement that meets all the demands of God’s holiness.

The doctrine of the atonement sheds light on that of the Trinity, which is seen less clearly in the Old Testament but is more fully opened up in the New Testament – not least in the upper room on the eve of the crucifixion. The atonement and the Trinity are inseparably joined together; to deny the one is to deny the other. The fact that the Mediator is both God and man in two distinct natures in the one Person is a very important truth behind the sinner drawing near to God: “For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father” (Eph 2:18). By Christ we come to God and learn of the Father. In natural religion we see much of His eternal power and Godhead. However, we could never know mercy apart from God’s Word.

3. *The covenant of grace is the third point to be considered here.* The Word of God makes it clear that He deals with man by way of covenant; it was so from the very beginning. In Scripture the doctrine of the first and the last Adam are developed under the two covenants: the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. They are the federal heads of the two parties, the first Adam in the Fall, the covenant head of the race. The second Adam, the head of the redeemed family. All men by nature, as fallen, are under the sphere of natural religion; there is much diversity here. You have an example of natural and revealed religion in the history of Cain and Abel. Man has the ability to develop from reason some creed to suit him, but he is blind to the fact that he is a subject of a higher law; he is under law to God.

It is under the law that he has a relationship to his Maker, as B M Palmer says: “The law is needed as a test of character, no less than a rule of conduct. Antecedent to a single act, he needs the law by which to know himself; and without it he would be incapable either of probation or progress”; apart from the law, he could not see himself to be a lost, ruined and undone sinner. Man was created under the moral law; it therefore touches every aspect of his being and no change in his moral or spiritual state can relieve him from its authority. Palmer further says, “Whether holy or apostate, whether a saint or a sinner, whether in this world of trial or in the world of retribution, through time and eternity, the law must remain without change . . . Law, however, consists of two parts – the precept that guides, and the penalty that binds; the

one disclosing the purpose of God, the other proclaiming His supreme authority. Neither of the two can be removed without dissolving the law itself.”² The unity between the precept and the authority cannot be severed.

In revealed religion we are shown the workings of grace. Grace does not set aside the law but establishes it. We might say that grace is founded upon law; it magnifies and honours the law. When God acts in grace towards rebellious sinners, grace first meets the requirements of justice; it meets the demands of violated law. This leads us to ask how this can be done when there is no possibility of sinful men, with their diminished ability, fulfilling God’s requirement: “Pay Me that thou owest”; for “the soul that sinneth it shall die”. In the provision of grace, God reveals to us the Seed of the woman, who was to be born of her without sin, “made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,” “whereby we cry, Abba, Father”.

This brings under review the whole doctrine of the Person of Christ and His substitutionary work in man’s redemption on the cross, to be followed by His resurrection and ascension. Here is the great wonder of grace towards sinful men: the Lawgiver was made under law and became subject to His own law; He not only obeyed it fully but satisfied all the claims of justice. The scarlet thread of the atonement runs through the whole scheme of law and grace, to the glory of God, for the good of lost sinners. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit” (Rom 8:3,4). This is why the Publican’s prayer, “God be merciful to me a sinner” (Lk 18:13), is ever suited to the souls of sinners, from Abel downwards. This is at the foundation of all prayer in true religion.

Let us put in a logical order the basis for prayer as presented in this section: the doctrine of the Trinity which reveals the eternal Word Himself, the covenant of grace with all its arrangements, and finally the written Word – the Scriptures which are God-breathed, which are the work of the Holy Spirit, through men divinely inspired. This is the basis on which all true prayer and worship is offered to the eternal God.

Let here Hugh Martin’s sermon entitled: “Precept, Promise and Prayer”.³ The precept is: “Make you a new heart”. That is the law. Man cannot do it, but the precept still binds him despite his inability; man is duty-bound to

²B M Palmer, *The Theology of Prayer*, Sprinkle Publications reprint, 1980, pp 184-5.

³This sermon was published in *The Free Church Pulpit*, vol 3, and is included in *Christ for Us*, a collection of Martin’s sermons published by the Banner of Truth.

obey. Where God gives a precept, He gives a promise: "A new heart will I give you". That is grace. The promise is a foundation for prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me". The answer to prayer is founded on both law and grace.

How Are Believers Sanctified?¹

John Dick

There are means appointed for carrying on the work of sanctification. We reject those suggested by human wisdom; let us now attend to those which God Himself has ordained.

First, it is evident that, as the Word of God is the rule of holiness, so it is admirably adapted to promote its own design. It not only points out our duty, but presents many considerations calculated to work powerfully on the will and the affections. It not only delivers bare precepts, which recommend themselves to us because we can see that they conform to reason and truth; but it exhibits them in all the loveliness of example – in the history of the saints, and particularly of our Redeemer. Holiness, if I may speak so, appears in Him in an animated form and, displaying every grace before us, fixes our attention and engages our love.

The idea of Plato, the ancient philosopher, is put into effect by the incarnation of virtue in Christ; and although his prediction, that all men would fall down and adore virtue, is not fulfilled; yet this is the effect upon those whose hearts are made, by divine grace, to feel its attractions. The Word of God holds out the greatest encouragements to seek holiness, in the promises of divine assistance with which it is filled. It will be manifest to everyone who has seriously reflected on his own moral weakness, and has felt the paralysing effect of such meditation, how appropriate the promises are to promote holiness.

How is it possible for me, the sinner is apt to exclaim when he is called to purify his heart, to cleanse myself from the pollution of sin? Can the Ethiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots? Then may I, who am accustomed to do evil, learn to do well. In this state of despondency, the Word of God affords us relief by assurances of supernatural grace. When the Word of God says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling", it adds, "For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil 2:12,13). It places before us the best motives: the love of God and the love of Christ; the priceless benefits which have already been

¹Another edited extract from Dick's *Lectures on Theology*, vol 3.

bestowed upon us, and the new blessings which we may expect to obtain; the peace, the consolation, the joy, the hope with which our heavenly Father refreshes the souls of His obedient children and recompenses, in this world, their services.

Briefly, the Bible displays, before the eyes of the runner in the Christian race, the glorious prize which awaits him at the end of his course – the immortal crown which the righteous Judge will bestow upon him. We know, from experience, the efficacy of hope in stimulating and sustaining our exertion. The Scriptures enlist this principle of human nature in the service of religion, and exhort us to be “steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor 15:58).

Second, all the other ordinances are means of sanctification. I shall notice two: prayer and the Lord’s Supper. Prayer has a direct tendency to impress the mind with a sense of divine things, to heighten our reverence and esteem for the object of worship, to increase our desire for the blessings we ask for, and our abhorrence of the evils from which we implore deliverance. Besides these effects, the direct object of prayer is to obtain grace from God. It consists, not only in adoration and thanksgiving, but also petition. It involves a sinful creature, conscious of guilt, needs and wretchedness, applying to the infinite mercy and kindness of the Creator. As prayer is authorised by Him, it never fails – when it is presented in the name of the Mediator – to bring down the blessing.

Its effect is similar to that produced on the face of Moses by his communion with God. The soul, returning from the sanctuary, shines with spiritual glory. By strength not his own, the Christian overcomes difficulties, repels temptations, and advances with a steady progress in the path of obedience: “Let us . . . come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16).

The connection of the Lord’s Supper with the sanctification of the soul is equally clear. The very emblems which are used point it out as an institution adapted to the purpose of invigorating the graces of the Christian. As bread and wine furnish nutriment to the body, so the body and blood of Christ – in other words, His atonement and its benefits – contribute to the nourishment of the soul. The ordinance powerfully impresses upon the mind the unspeakable love of Christ and the great evil of sin, and thus excites two principles of mighty efficacy to purify the soul – gratitude to Him and abhorrence of sin. But it is a means of communication between the Saviour and His faithful disciples, in whom He works anew by His Spirit, to carry on to perfection the good work which He has begun.

Sitting at His table, partaking of His bounty, they renew their baptismal vows in humble dependence upon His grace, by which only they shall be enabled to perform them. They devote themselves to His service, not from necessity, but from choice; not merely because they are bound to do so, but because they prefer Him to every other master. A deep sense of what they have enjoyed, and of what they have done, remains. Their faith is more confident; their love is more ardent; their resolution is more firm; their state of mind is more spiritual and heavenly. Like a traveller, who has stopped, has rested and been refreshed, and then resumes his journey with renewed vigour, they go from strength to strength till they appear before God in Zion. "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." (Jn 6:57)

In the third place, The dispensations of providence are means of sanctification. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28). Paul makes use of the universal term *all* to signify that nothing is excluded and that there is a co-operation of events to promote the spiritual interests of believers. And here we must admire the infinite wisdom and almighty power of God, who renders subservient, to His merciful designs, things which are not only considered as evil, but are evil in themselves and have a tendency to evil. Were they not controlled and regulated by His superintending care, they would cause the most injurious effects on the bodies and the souls of His people, on their present and their future well-being.

But, as in medical treatment, substances which are nauseous to our senses – substances which, when absorbed into the system, cause pain in the first instance, and substances which are harmful – are administered in such quantities and with such mixtures that the ultimate effect is the removal of disease and the restoration of health; so it is in spiritual things. The objective is the spiritual health of the patient; and this is the result of the bitter doses which he is compelled to swallow, and of the pain of amputation to which he may be subjected.

The Scriptures frequently speak of affliction as contributing to the progress of holiness: "Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us" (Rom 5:3-5). You observe the process: affliction calls into exercise the graces of the Christian and strengthens them, and this ends in the more powerful diffusion of divine love in the soul, in a more powerful impression of the love of God to us, or a stronger emotion of love on our part to God. Thus our promptitude and sincerity in serving Him will be increased. The sanctifying

effect of affliction is pointed out in many passages of Scripture; the Psalmist experienced it and says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Thy Word" (Ps 119:67). It is the discipline which our heavenly Father administers to the members of His family, and it is so necessary and so beneficial that none of them is exempted. It is a proof of His love, because His design in correcting them is to make them partakers of His holiness.

How blessed are the fruits of sanctified affliction! They are the fruits of righteousness, and are of far greater value than the temporal blessings they most appreciate. They humble the pride of the people of God, awaken their vigilance, make them feel their own weakness, create a stronger abhorrence of sin and an increasing indifference to earthly things, inspire a meek submission to the will of God. Leading the thoughts to heaven, they stir up longing desires for the peace which awaits them there, and for the pure joys of religion which are earnest of its felicity. I have restricted myself in illustrating the effects of adversity; but all the dispensations of providence, under the direction of divine wisdom and goodness, have the same tendency and are included in that comprehensive plan of benevolence which God is carrying on for the final happiness of the objects of His love.

God's Forgiveness and Ours¹

Ashbel Green

The answer we are considering concludes by saying that "we are the rather encouraged to ask" forgiveness from God "because, by His grace, we are enabled, from the heart, to forgive others". If we examine the discourses and sayings of the Lord Jesus as recorded in the Gospels, we shall find that He often speaks of the duty of forgiving those who have offended or injured us. Let us therefore examine the nature of this duty carefully. Let us consider what it does not, and what it does, require.

1. It manifestly does not require that a man who has been offended or injured should be indifferent to the fact that this has happened. The duty of forgiveness necessarily implies that we know and feel that we have something to forgive. We ought indeed to be careful not to estimate an injury beyond its real magnitude, nor to dwell on it and think about it so as to inflame our minds, or fill them with angry or revengeful emotions. This is to

¹These are the comments of Green (1762-1848) on the last part of the answer to Question 105 in *The Shorter Catechism*. This extract is taken, with editing, from Green's *Lectures on the the Shorter Catechism*, vol 2. He was a prominent American minister and was President of the Board of Governors of Princeton Theological Seminary.

be carefully avoided; yet we not only may, but should, be conscious of an offence or injury, when it has obviously been offered or inflicted.

2. We are not required to withhold from the offending party the knowledge or information that we consider he has done us wrong. On the contrary, it is a duty expressly enjoined by the Saviour to go to an offending brother and tell him his fault: first privately and then, if we do not obtain satisfaction, to take measures to have him censured and disciplined. But all this is to be done, not vindictively, but so as, if possible, to “gain our brother”; or, failing in this, to prevent the harm which might arise from his example.

3. Neither are we required to place confidence in someone who has given us unequivocal evidence of a disposition to injure us. We ought not to put ourselves in his power, so as to make him able to repeat the injury he has done to us or add to it. For this we have the warrant of the Saviour’s perfect example, who would “not commit Himself” to His enemies till He was fully prepared to terminate His mission by His death.

4. But our duty positively and necessarily requires us to be ready to be reconciled to an offender. We are not to repel, but to facilitate any approach of the party who has injured us, when he seems disposed to acknowledge his fault. We are to show that it is not hard to appease us, not difficult to win us to forgiveness. We are not to require the offender to humble himself greatly, before we meet him for reconciliation. We are not to insist on greater concessions than are equitable, but rather to accept of less than might be exacted if rigorous justice were done – provided always that we have evidence of real regret for his wrongdoing and a disposition to be friendly, or not hostile, in time to come.

5. We are, from first to last, cordially to forgive the offender. We are to wish him no evil; we are to guard our hearts against all hatred, malice and vindictive feelings. We are to feel benevolently, to cherish unfeigned good will, toward our bitterest enemy. We are to desire sincerely that he may lay aside his hostility, and become reconcilable. We are to pray earnestly that God may bring him to repentance and, for the sake of Christ, forgive him freely. We are to forgive the injury he has done us – and the offence he has committed against God is much greater, by his flagrant violation of the law of love, and of the sacred principle of doing as he would be done by. Of all this, the Redeemer exhibited a wonderful instance, in His prayer for His murderers in His expiring moments. And there was a close imitation of this high example in Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Happy are they who feel and exhibit the same likeness to their Redeemer as Stephen did, in performing a duty so contrary to the naturally proud and resentful human heart.

In praying God to “forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors”, the

word *as* must be considered as expressing likeness and not equality. Alas, all that we do is imperfect! And if God did not forgive our sins more purely, perfectly and freely than we forgive the sins of those who offend us, we should never escape condemnation.

Still, this is never to be made a plea for the imperfection of our forgiveness. We are to mourn the imperfection and earnestly strive to avoid it. Then we shall have the “encouragement” mentioned in the (*Shorter Catechism*) answer before us – the encouragement which is derived from evidence that we have been made partakers of the renewing and sanctifying grace of God. It is this grace alone that will ever enable anyone rightly to discharge the duty which has now been explained – a duty by which we make no atonement for our sins and can plead no merit for its performance. But, when properly performed, this duty proves that we have, by divine grace, been imbued with a portion of the spirit and mind of Christ and so we may cheerfully hope that we shall be made partakers of all the benefits of His great salvation.

The Christian's Desires¹

Henry Venn

God's incomparable excellency is a motive to induce the Christian to love God, but he has further motives. The more completely an object is suited to benefit us, so much the more will our hearts be united to it and feel affection towards it. Accordingly the Christian loves God as his chief good. God alone, says he, can be a heart-satisfying portion to me. In His favour is my life, while all beneath Him is full of vanity and disappointment – too worthless and too transient to satisfy even one desire fully. But God is all-sufficient: “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.”

This love of a Christian to God expresses itself in frequent longings to share in His pardoning mercy and be happy for ever, through being accepted by Him. He is content to part with all he has for this; he considers God's love to him to be above everything. He can say with David: “Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us”. He cannot be easy while a cloud obscures his Father's face. The apprehension of His displeasure is most grievous to him; nor can he be satisfied till God is reconciled. He cries with vehemence like David: “Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Complete Duty of Man*. Venn (1724-97) was an Anglican minister in Huddersfield and elsewhere.

Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free Spirit.”

He discovers also the sincerity of his love to God by a delight in Him, no less than by desires after Him. His soul is at rest while he can call God *his* God. In such a view he rejoices in the divine favour more than he would in calling the whole world his own. It animates him in the highest degree to think that God is his “portion”. And so truly does he rejoice in God, and delight in Him with sincere affection, that he is satisfied under all the troubles to which he can be exposed. Amidst shame and reproach he can support and content himself in the thought that God knows his innocence and approves of him. In his needs, distresses and afflictions, it is a strong consolation that, in this state the Lord knows his path and that when he is tried, he shall come forth as gold.

Even in the most perilous and dismaying circumstances, when the judgements of an incensed God are spreading consternation over whole countries, the Christian in his love to God still finds a spring to cheer and refresh his soul, to which none but himself has access. “God is [my] refuge and strength,” he says, “a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not [I] fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.” For in the midst of all this fiery indignation issuing forth against his adversaries, the Christian still beholds God in Christ Jesus reconciled to him and to every humbled sinner.

Such were the glorious expressions of love to God even before the Lord Jesus Christ had ascended up on high, leading “captivity captive”; one must therefore conclude that the more explicit knowledge of salvation which we enjoy must produce the same blessed effect. The inspired Habakkuk could find such love to God in his heart as to say, “Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation”. If a man of like passions with ourselves could so love God as to find comfort in Him amidst the horrors of a universal dearth, we may certainly conclude that – now that the Messenger of the covenant, the Dayspring from on high, has visited the Church – the love which a real Christian bears to his God may enable him to feel at least as high a delight and exultation in His favour.

Though, alas, few are observed in our own day to love God in a degree so fervent and intense as this, yet the endeavour and the desire of all who are sincere Christians is to do so. And they reveal they have a principle of love,

of the very same kind, by opposing their first tendencies to complain, even in a time of great tribulation, by rebuking themselves for the defectiveness of their delight in God, saying “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance” (Ps 42:5).

Whether therefore the Christian is weak or strong, it is apparent that he delights himself in the Lord. When he rejoices and triumphs in the midst of outward troubles, his delight in God flames forth with vigour and brightness. And when it is his grief and heavy burden that he cannot do so, this is still as true an expression of love to God struggling in a sore conflict under the weight of oppression. It is because it is the very joy of his heart to be glad in the Lord and in everything to give thanks, that he feels pain on account of his dejection and lack of joy in God in the time of tribulation.

Such delight in God, even in the midst of prosperity, is something the world cannot understand; and the utmost they can conceive man is able to attain is to bear distressing troubles with calmness. Therefore it demonstrates that a Christian delights in God when it is his very desire to be “strengthened with all might, according to [God’s] glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” – that is, to bear afflictions with holy triumph, considering what God is to him and has done for him.

The Unsearchable Riches¹

A Sermon Outline by John Kennedy

Ephesians 3:8. *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

Let us consider the riches of Christ that are here referred to, that are said to be unsearchable, and then inquire what the preaching of them implies.

The unsearchable riches of Christ.

These are, in abundance, what is precious.

The abundance of them makes Christ Himself rich.

By them He can enrich others, even Gentile sinners.

The riches are His as the Eternal God.

They are riches of infinite glory in Himself as divine.

They are His to enjoy, and to use as the Son of God.

O how unsearchable!

The riches of His merit.

¹Preached in Dingwall on 15 October 1882, and now edited.

He required this as Surety, before He could pay the ransom.
 Thus He carried out His work of atonement and obedience.
 His life had two sides, obedience on the one, and suffering on the other.
 The riches of His own grace appears as Prophet, Priest and King.
 It pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in Him.
 How unsearchable all this is!

What this preaching implies.

It is a trumpet call to sinners to come to the riches.
 It is an unfolding of the doctrine regarding Christ.
 It is a proclamation calling sinners to Him.
 In the preaching, Christ is set before you.
 In the gospel He is brought near to you.
 He is there to be received.

Application.

How blessed they are who receive Him!
 How very wicked they are who refuse Him!

Book Review

I Shall Not Die but Live, Facing Death with Gospel Hope, by Douglas Taylor, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 360 pages, £13.00, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Douglas Taylor was Assistant Editor with the Banner of Truth for 14 years until he retired through ill-health in 2011. One morning after leaving work, the words of Psalm 118:17, “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord”, came strongly to his mind. Before long he began writing short messages and posting them on the Internet. This continued till shortly before his death, in May 2014. He stressed that his only ambition for his blog was “that it should exalt Christ”.

About a third of these messages have been collected in this book. Conscientious that he did not have long to live, many of these pieces are written with the closeness of death before the mind’s eye of the writer. In a piece entitled, “The Houses of Mourning and Mirth”, in which he quotes the words of Ecclesiastes 7:2-4, he writes, “Deep seriousness is not at all an enemy to joy, only to folly. The thoughtful consideration of the end of all men is also likely to produce sobriety, a quality in which the professing Church today seems lacking, despite the importance the New Testament attaches to it.”

Many of these messages contain a quotation from some Reformed writer; at other times he makes use of poetry and sometimes a verse or two from a

metrical Psalm. One quotation comes from John Calvin; it includes the words: “Nearly all the wisdom which we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves”. Taylor seems to have had a particular fondness for Thomas Watson, from whom he often quotes. One of these quotations is as follows: “We should be content to live, but willing to die. Is it not a blessed thing to be free from sin and to lie for ever in the bosom of divine love?”

Taylor emphasises, “If there is an atom of co-operation required from me which the Lord does not Himself give, everything falls to the ground, and I am lost. Some will think this an exaggeration, but those who feel as weak as I do will understand me very well.”

In these messages, Taylor consistently quotes from the Authorised Version. At one point he quotes Isaiah 32:2 and complains: “This ‘man’ [in the verse] can be none other than the Saviour. (Just in passing . . . some of the commentators and most of the modern versions make this ‘man’ to be Hezekiah I want to protest at this nonsense on behalf of ordinary believers who are thereby robbed of the comfort they should gain from this verse. How long will the ‘critics’ dare to take the children’s bread? I suppose till the Lord arises to plead His own cause against them.)” Just at a couple of points is there anything to which one would react negatively.

Most of these messages cover around a (small) page and a half; others are longer but, as Taylor was getting weaker, some barely fill a single page. Those who are becoming weak themselves, among others, should find it profitable to read one of these messages from time to time; those who are short of time might pick up this book and read a page or two between other activities; others again could usefully read a few pages before settling down to sleep.

Protestant View

Fatima and Rome

The Pope has recently “canonised” two young Portuguese children, Francisco and Jacinta Marto, who died aged 11 and nine respectively in the Spanish influenza epidemic at the end of the First World War. According to the Vatican, they were credited with having received a number of special messages from Mary in the year 1917, in visions they allegedly saw at Fatima, north of Lisbon. These visions are regarded as amongst the most important events in the history of modern Roman Catholicism. Needless to say, the apparitions have been sedulously exploited by the papal propaganda machine over the years and credulously accepted by multitudes of poor Romanist

devotees. The present incumbent of St Peter's is reported to be "devoted to the Madonna", as was the late John Paul II, who actually attributed his survival from an assassination attempt in 1981 to "Our Lady of Fatima".

The adoration of Mary – Mariolatry – is by no means the least of Romanism's sinful errors. It intrudes on the exclusive honour to be paid to God in worship and it derogates from the glory of the "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5). Rome has always traded in superstition and downright deception, and our readers need little reminder that visions such as these, purporting to be from Mary, come not from a heavenly source but, ultimately, from the one who "is a liar and the father of it" (Jn 8:44).

The Episcopalian bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness, Mark Strange, when recently attending an inter-faith conference in Rome, was chosen to meet the Pope personally and receive a blessing from him. He described this interview as "truly wonderful", adding, "I cannot deny that this is a man who is in direct line to Peter. He is sitting on the throne of Peter and I find that is quite awe-inspiring." While we feel sorry that any professed Protestant minister would enthuse about such a meeting and concede so much to the absurd, unscriptural claims of the papacy to primacy over the universal Church, we sadly cannot expect much better from the leaders of the Scottish Episcopal Church. As a body, it has lamentably failed, over many years, to adhere to the truths of the Word of God and has, in general, been closer to Romanism than to the Scriptural doctrines of the Reformation. "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast" (Rev 13:3). *AWM*

Notes and Comments

The UK General Election

The General Election in the United Kingdom is now over. When she called the election, the UK Prime Minister, Theresa May, was riding high in the opinion polls and she expected to obtain a greatly-increased majority in the House of Commons. But things did not work out as she hoped: while her Conservative party ended up with the largest number of MPs, she no longer has an overall majority.

This note is not intended as political comment in any party sense, but only to draw attention to some moral and religious aspects of the situation. In it all we should recognise the overruling providence of God, although we may not be able to understand in any detail His purposes for this country. But we

must recognise the prevailing ungodliness and how almost every political party has pursued an ungodly agenda on moral issues. The exceptions are the Unionist parties in the Northern Ireland assembly, which have been resisting – thus far successfully – proposals to legalise abortion and same-sex “marriage”. Ironically Mrs May is now having to rely on the Democratic Unionist Party for support in the House of Commons.

The UK, in common with many other countries which have rejected their Christian heritage, is in a very dangerous position. There is a very distinct parallel with Judah, whom the Lord warned: “Their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased. How shall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forsaken Me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery . . . every one neighed after his neighbour’s wife” (Jer 5:6-8). God is likewise leaving the UK to itself to an alarming extent; we are a nation under judgement.

One positive outcome of the election was the return of many more MPs in Scotland opposed to independence. (For justification of our opposition to Scottish independence, particularly on grounds related to our Protestant constitution, see a note in the September 2014 issue of this *Magazine*.)

Mrs May is a churchgoer, but one wonders: Did she pray over her decision to call an election? Did she seek God’s blessing on her campaign? Yet, however dissatisfied we may feel with the religious and moral attitudes of most of those in parliament today, we are called to pray for the government of the UK or wherever else we may live. Paul wrote: “I exhort . . . that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; *for kings, and for all that are in authority*; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Tim 2:1,2).

Terrorist Attacks

At the time of writing, there have been three major terrorist attacks in the UK since March. Our readers will be well aware of something of the horror and carnage which such despicable outrages have caused in the name of the Islamic religion. People of all ages and from many countries have been caught up in these dreadful events and shared in the misery produced by them. In total, 35 people have been killed and 217 injured in the attacks.

The two London incidents occurred on the streets and were relatively unsophisticated in their brutality, but the Manchester suicide bombing targeted a pop music concert, using shrapnel to maximise the impact of the explosion and claiming the lives of many young people, including a teenage girl from the Western Isles. Twenty-two were killed and 119 injured that night alone. The youngest victim was only eight years of age. It is deeply regrettable that

so many young children were present at a pop concert and that some ended their days on earth in such desperately sad circumstances. We desire to remember those who have been injured in these attacks and their families and the families of those who have lost loved ones. We pray that the Lord, in His great mercy, would grant them the healing balm of the gospel in their souls in the midst of their sorrow.

These appalling events demonstrate that Britain, and the western world generally, is confronted with an ideology that secular liberalism cannot deal with and has no means of overcoming by its own resources. Militant Islam is a spiritual power which no amount of security surveillance, community engagement or de-radicalisation measures can ever begin to tackle successfully. Indeed one of the most worrying aspects of the recent attacks was the fact that a number of the perpetrators were UK citizens. The fact that such evil terrorists can grow up in our society and be left to commit such atrocities is an indication of the displeasure of God against our godless generation. The only means of overcoming Islamic terrorism in the long term is the blessing of God on the preaching of the everlasting gospel, so that the religion of Islam is brought down in its every guise.

But until the UK is awakened to a sense of its sinful departure from the religion of the Bible, it is likely that attacks will only continue; indeed much worse may yet occur. We are still, however, to pray for the day when all false religion will be swept off the face of the earth and when “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Is 2:4). *AWM*

General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

At its recent Synod, the Scottish Episcopal Church approved the “marriage” of sodomites; while the Church of Scotland took a further step in that direction when the General Assembly received a report on the subject from its Theological Forum, and instructed its Legal Questions Committee “to undertake a study of the matters which would require to be addressed in any new legislation permitting Ministers and Deacons to officiate at same-sex marriage ceremonies”.

The report itself contains all manner of evasions and unfounded assertions (for example, that every person in the world has “an entitlement to the scripture in their own language” – the Bible, it seems, is not a gracious and undeserved blessing from heaven but a human right that can be demanded). The main argument, or rather juggling trick, in the report is that we should not be thinking of marriage in terms of heterosexual and homosexual unions but rather in terms of procreative and non-procreative unions. The marriage of the first Adam is an example of the former (procreative) while the mar-

riage of “the last Adam” is assumed to be an example of the latter (non-procreative). Thus the New Testament supposedly endorses non-procreative, and hence homosexual, unions.

It appears from the report that the Theological Forum took no notice of Romans 7:4: “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God”. This verse shows that a true marriage to Christ is fruitful; and one fruit that the genuine believer brings forth unto God is submission to His Word (Mt 28:20). The absence of this fruit is a sure sign that the soul is not married to Christ. Judged by this standard, many in the General Assembly are indeed “non-procreative” in the union that they claim with Christ; in truth they remain married to the law, and are bringing forth “fruit unto death” (Rom 7:5), of which this silly report is a sad example. *DWBS*

UK Exporting Same-Sex “Marriage”

In 2013 former UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, boasted of his determination to export same-sex “marriage” all over the world. Not content with legalising it in England and Wales, he stated, during a celebration party for homosexual activists in Downing Street, that he hoped to see it accepted throughout the world. He told them his pride in his success in sanctioning “gay marriage” in spite of much opposition among his own MPs. The first same-sex “marriage” was performed in March 2014; a Scottish Act quickly followed and was put on the statute book in December of that year.

Mr Cameron claimed that Britain was now “the best place to be gay, lesbian or transgender anywhere in Europe”. He added, “I think it’s a really good step. I’ve told the Bill team I’m now going to reassign them because, of course, all over the world people would have been watching this and we’ve set something of an example of how to pass good legislation in good time. Many countries are going to want to copy this.” During the event Mr Cameron signed a copy of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013.

Significantly, in the Lord’s providence, Mr Cameron is no longer in parliament. However, a loophole has been found whereby his desire to export same-sex “marriage” is taking place in a rather subtle manner. Same-sex couples, of whom one or both is British, can be “married” within embassies in countries where this sinful practice is illegal. Their “union” then becomes valid under UK law as it has technically been performed on British soil. One same-sex “marriage” that took place recently at the British Embassy in the Seychelles caused great concern. A local bishop rightly called it “illegal and shameful” and “disrespectful to Seychelles”.

Using the loophole, 10 such couples “married” in China and seven in Japan, including a ceremony for two male UK diplomats attended by the British Ambassador. Others were held in Vietnam, Cambodia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines. There are reports that British nationals can “marry” at embassies in Azerbaijan, Kosovo, Albania, Bolivia, Serbia and Russia – all of which oppose same-sex “marriage”.

However, inroads have been greatest in Australia, which has so far resisted redefining marriage. Apparently perhaps 100 to 150 of same-sex “marriages” have been performed there – undermining the sovereign will of that country, and further strengthening the voice of a vociferous minority seeking to overthrow the *status quo*. The Anglican Archbishop of Sydney warned in *The Australian* newspaper: “Not only has this minority view [of campaigners for same-sex “marriage”] tried to swamp the public debate with its introspective, authoritarian denial of free speech, it has struck at the heart of Australian democracy and the freedoms that we all cherish”.

So, tragically, we now observe Britain, not only dragging herself into a moral mire, but extending a pernicious influence over other nations. Lyle Shelton, Managing Director of the *Australian Christian Lobby*, comments on the current domestic debate, saying, “We’re seeing the negative consequences of the decision that Britain has made, in terms of the impacts on the rights and freedoms of other people in the UK, particularly people of faith, so I think it’s up to Australia to make its own decision and not to be swayed by what other nations might do”.

How we need the Lord to pour out His Spirit, not only upon the UK, but also upon the whole world so that the time will come when it will be said, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev 11:15). KHM

Church Information

Meeting of Presbytery (DV)

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

Acknowledgement of Donations

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Achmore: Communion Expenses: Friend of the Cause, £20; Anon, In memory of beloved husband, £100.

Dingwall & Beaully: Sundry donations, Anon, £40 per RAC.

Perth: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £20.

South Harris: Family of late Mrs Una MacLeod, £50. *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £100, £60, £40.

Stornoway: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £100, £20. *Sabbath School:* Anon, £20.

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). **Laig:** 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 WA Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Sabbath 5 pm; **Strathy:** Sabbath: 6.30 pm (first and third Sabbaths of month).
- 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. **Shielbost** and **Strond:** no services at present. Manse tel: 01859 520271. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, IV1 1NA, 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.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01470 562243. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Tain:** Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev A W MacColl; tel: 01851 810228.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.

England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Rev K M Watkins BA, 252 Briercliffe 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: Burnaby Community Room, 3605 Gilmore Way, Burnaby, BC, V5G 4X5. Sabbath 9.30 am, 6.30 pm. Contact: Mr Douglas Spratt, tel: 604 990 4051, or Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. E-mail: info@fpchurchvancouver.ca.

USA

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

Australia

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

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel. (02) 9627 3408; e-mail: sydneyfpchurch@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 Levvyskiy; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevvyskiy@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.

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

New Canaan: Church.

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

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