

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

Contents

Abundant Provision	225
The Unity of the Spirit	
Synod Sermon by Rev D W B Somerset.....	228
Prayer	
3. The Spirit of Prayer	
Rev D Macdonald.....	236
Luther and the Reformation	
8. “I Hope that the Lord Will Deliver Me from Fear”	
J H Merle d’Aubigné.....	238
God’s Command and Noah’s Faith	
A S Patterson	241
A Letter to a Young Minister	
S Simpson.....	245
Christ’s Temptations – Some Lessons	
David Mitchell.....	248
Book Review	
<i>Introducing Tyndale</i>	251
Notes and Comments	252
Church Information	256

August 2017

Vol 122 • No 8

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

Moderator of Synod: Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623.

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

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

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

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

Clerks to Presbyteries:

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

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

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

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

Asia Pacific: Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel: 02 9627 3408.

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

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

Residential Care Homes:

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

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

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

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

Editor: Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ. Tel: 01463 712872; e-mail: kdmacleod@gmail.com. Unsigned articles are by the Editor.

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

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

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

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

Communions

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

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

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

April: First Sabbath: 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.

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

Volume 122

August 2017

Number 8

Abundant Provision

In what is probably his best-known Psalm, David speaks of the Lord as his Shepherd. He was acknowledging that the Lord was guiding him on his way through life and providing for him in every way. In the New Testament we find the Lord Jesus identifying Himself as the Good Shepherd, the One whom the sheep – true believers – follow and who cares for them.

One wonderful aspect of the provision, described in Psalm 23, that the Shepherd makes for His sheep is a table, which suggests a supply of food. Previously David had pointed to the “green pastures” to illustrate the same point; now, as he draws near to the close of this brief Psalm, the figure of the shepherd is less in the forefront. Yet, in making use of the idea of a table, we are pointed in the same direction, to the Lord providing a supply of food. And it is a plentiful supply that He provides. David goes on to speak of a cup that is running over, indicating the abundance of the Lord’s provision. Must we not believe that the supply of spiritual food which the Lord has placed on the table for David and all His other sheep must be just as abundant?

One thing should be particularly obvious in the light of Scripture: David deserved none of the blessings he found on this table, and all God’s other children are equally undeserving. Apart from the Good Shepherd, what they deserve because of their sins is eternal punishment – eternal death. But He tells us Himself: “I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep” (Jn 10:11). He stood in the place of the sheep and died instead of them; He took their guilt upon Himself and bore it away; He suffered the penalty which should have fallen on the sheep. So, in the place of eternal death, there is *eternal life* and all the blessings this term implies, for everyone who believes in Jesus.

David speaks of the Lord preparing a table for him in the presence of his enemies; and one can think of the Lord, in His providence, making provision for David when King Saul and other enemies were near at hand, so that he did not starve. But we are, no doubt, to understand that the “table” is loaded, not so much with temporal blessings as with spiritual, and that the spiritual blessings are absolutely abundant.

Christ told His hearers: “I am the bread of life” (Jn 6:35), “the true bread from heaven”. The Jews had referred to the “manna in the desert”, which was miraculously given to the Children of Israel to preserve their natural life. But One was present among the Jews who was able, not only to sustain spiritual life as the manna did, but to bring that life into existence. Jesus told them: “If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (Jn 6:51). We are to feed on Christ – that is, to receive Him by faith – as the One who died for sinners; and if we so feed, we will have eternal life. At the same time, Jesus warned, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you” (Jn 6:53). So if we do not believe in Him as the Son of God, who took human nature and died in the place of sinners, we can never have eternal life; we must perish in our sins.

But why should we perish? There is an abundance of blessing on the gospel table; no one need starve, spiritually speaking, who hears the gospel or reads the Scriptures. Christ has made an abundant provision for sinners; that is why the call goes out to all and sundry to come to Christ to receive spiritual blessings: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Is 55:1). If the provision is wonderfully great, it is also perfectly suited to the needs of every sinner. No one has any right to turn away, thinking that their sins are too great or that they are too unusual. We must always remember that the provision on the gospel table for the spiritual needs of sinners can never run out. No sinners will ever come to the gospel table to find that there is no salvation for them. Christ assures us: “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (Jn 6:37).

Think of Manasseh; he “did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out before the Children of Israel” (2 Chr 33:2). If we do not read to the end of the account given of him in 2 Chronicles, we might very seriously question if he could possibly be saved from eternal destruction; he was such a notorious sinner. But we should take another look at what is revealed about the gospel table; the blessings placed on the table and set before sinners, even particularly wicked and rebellious sinners, are so abundant and so wonderfully suitable for such sinners that when Manasseh humbly approached the God of his fathers, his supplication was heard. The provision on the gospel table proved perfectly suited to his need, in spite of how long he had gone on in rebellion against the living God.

It is fundamentally the same salvation that all sinners need. Most people have been restrained, in God’s mercy, from going to the same length in sin

as Manasseh, but the seeds of his sins lie in their rebellious hearts also. In particular, they have been guilty of the same sin of unbelief – though not necessarily rejecting the authority of God to the same extent. They are rejecting His authority when they refuse to come to the gospel table and receive the blessings of salvation – when they refuse to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners.

The provision is so great that those who come to the gospel table are encouraged to keep on receiving from the blessings that are on it. “Eat, O friends;” they are encouraged, “drink, yea, drink abundantly” (Song 5:1), for the blessings laid on this table are limitless. Among these blessings are all the promises of God as revealed in Scripture. Paul assured the Philippian believers: “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:19) – whatever their needs are, no matter how many, how complex or how longstanding they may be. And God makes the same promise to each of His children; they are not to hold back from receiving by faith the supply of all their needs, for it is Christ’s glorious riches – which He has purchased for them – that lie on the table so that His children may receive them freely.

Is the believer conscious of a special need for grace in the face of some particular difficulty, or some particular duty that he ought to carry out? Let him come to the Lord with that difficulty, knowing that He “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Eph 3:20). However one might feel in the face of the difficulty or the duty, believers are to trust in the abundance of the divine provision, a provision that is perfectly suited to them in their exact need. Yet they are to bear in mind that one aspect of the abundance of blessing is that the Lord knows when it is best to bestow it on them. He knows when to give an answer to prayer, and that may be very different from the time when they would wish to experience help.

Are believers specially concerned to be delivered from particular sins, or to have the principle of sin within them subdued? Are they specially conscious of their need to grow in grace, feeling that their progress is limited, or even non-existent? Let such believers come to the gospel table by way of the throne of grace so that they “may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”. Or is their concern focused on a lack of assurance? Let them come again to the gospel table and look once more to the Good Shepherd, who has provided, through His redeeming work, a full salvation for sinners. And even if you feel sure that you have never come to Christ before, He invites you to the gospel table to receive from Himself all that you can ever need, for time and for eternity. A full salvation for needy, guilty sinners is displayed on this table. Come now, for it is indeed an abundant provision.

The Unity of the Spirit¹

Synod Sermon by Rev D W B Somerset

Ephesians 4:3-4. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

In this Epistle, we have Paul writing to the Ephesian church, a church where he had laboured for more than two years (Acts 19:8,10), and where he had seen many converted, both Jews and Greeks. Paul was writing to confirm them in the faith, and to instruct them in the great privilege that they had received in their conversion: “that ye may know . . . the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power” (Eph 1:18,19). But he wanted them also to understand God’s work on a different scale: not only what He had done in their hearts, but also what He had been doing in the world from everlasting, in making known the glory of His Son and in gathering a people to Himself: “that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him” (1:10).

In bringing these things before the Ephesian Church, Paul was also showing them their duty – to live as the children of God: “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children” (Eph 5:1). One particular matter which affected the Ephesian church was that, while many of them were Gentiles – as we see in this chapter: “that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk” (v. 17) – some of them were Jews; and there was to be a Christian unity between Jews and Gentiles.

In Chapter 2, Paul speaks about a middle wall of partition which had been separating Jew and Gentile but which was now removed in Christ: “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us” (Eph 2:13-14). This was particularly relevant to their duty of loving one another: their differences of background were to be surmounted by their Christian unity and love that they now had as brethren, as the children of one Father. That is what we have in our text: that they should be endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling” (Eph 4:4).

This matter of unity is of importance to us as we gather together as a part

¹Preached by the retiring Moderator at the opening of this year’s meetings of Synod.

of the visible Church of the Lord Jesus Christ; and there is no doubt that, where the people of God gather together in this world, there the wicked one will be too. He goes up and down in the world seeking to do as much harm and to spread as much discord as he can; and we are warned, in the last chapter of this Epistle, about the conflict that we must have with him: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph 6:13). Among the arms that we have is the shield of faith, wherewith to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (v 16). Where Satan is active, there the people of God must be vigilant as well, in resisting him as we have it here: "Neither give place to the devil" (4:27). Thus the people of God are trying to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in opposition to the divisive work of the devil.

We want to consider three things with the help of the Spirit: (1) that the true Church is one body; (2) that there is therefore a unity among the people of God, as there is in the body; and (3) that this unity has to be kept.

1. The true Church is one body. The true Church consists of all those who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, who are joined to Him by faith, who are depending upon Him, and who are making Him their hope for their entrance into the eternal world. As they draw ever nearer to death, their hope is in the finished work of Christ. They desire, with Paul, to "be found in Him, not having [their] own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil 3:9). The true Church is the body of Christ, because those depending upon Him are joined to Him as members of His body. By trusting in Him they become "one spirit" (1 Cor 6:17) with Him, and thus living members of that mystical body of which He is the Head: "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph 4:15-16).

The true Church is therefore "one body" with "one Spirit", the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. The members of that body have the Spirit in their hearts: "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal 4:6). At their conversion the Spirit entered their hearts, laid hold on them, and gave them spiritual life, so that they in their turn would lay hold on Christ by faith. Christ apprehended them that they might apprehend Him and become one with Him. Every believer has this: there is one body and one Spirit dwelling in every one of them. There are not "many

spirits” in the Church, as there are many deceiving spirits that “are gone out into the world” (1 Jn 4:1). The kingdom of Satan is divided in this way, with false spirits deceiving men so that they hate and murder each other, but the true Christian Church has one Spirit, uniting the body of Christ.

This one Spirit has caused the members of the body to trust in Christ, so that they have one hope, the common hope of them all. The hope of the believer is that of being with Christ, “to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better” (Phil 1:23), and every child of God wants that above all else. This is his heart’s desire; as Paul says, “So shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Th 4:17-18). It is a comfort to the people of God to think of leaving the sorrow and sin and trouble of this world for ever and of being with Christ, enjoying His acceptance and His love, and seeing His glory. “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory” (Jn 17:24).

As there is one body and one Spirit and one hope, so there is “one Lord” (Eph 4:5). Believers acknowledge one Lord: they have one Master. “One is your master, even Christ” (Mt 23:8). They acknowledge the authority of Christ; they are subject to Christ. The Word of Christ, which is the Word of God, has authority over them. They recognise its commanding power, they seek to keep it, and they are constrained by it. “If ye love Me, keep My commandments” (Jn 14:15). Christ is their Lord also in the sense that He is the One whom they worship: “for He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him” (Ps 45:11). There are “gods many and lords many” (1 Cor 8:5) in the world, that people worship and set their hearts upon, but the people of God set their hearts on Christ, and give honour and glory to Him. It is the will of God “that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father” (Jn 5:23). The people of God want to honour the Son; they regard Him as worthy of all honour; they desire to pour out their souls before Him and to give Him all that they have.

There is “one Lord” and there is also “one faith”, as all believers have a common faith in Christ. They have the same faith in Christ that Abraham had when he “rejoiced to see [Christ’s] day: and he saw it, and was glad” (Jn 8:56), and the same faith that Job had when he said, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth” (Job 19:25). Believers now “have obtained like precious faith” with Peter through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Pet 1:1). They are “strangers and pilgrims on the earth”, on the same journey as those who have gone before (Heb 11:13). They are sojourners, as were their fathers (1 Chr 29:15).

The people of God have “one faith” also in the sense that they have a common belief or doctrine: “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). They have one creed. The Bible teaches us what we are to believe: concerning God, concerning ourselves, concerning Christ and concerning eternity. A complete and perfect system of doctrine is set forth in the Word of God: “the form of sound words” (2 Tim 1:13). This system is imperfectly understood at present – we expect more light at the Millennium – and parts of the Christian Church are in error, we believe, on certain matters such as baptism. But on the matters of the greatest importance – those which concern the honour and glory of Christ and the way of salvation – the Church is indeed one; and all Christians agreed in this: “My Lord and my God” (Jn 20:28).

Believers have also “one baptism”, which we understand as one way of entrance into the Covenant. This way of entrance was by circumcision in the Old Testament and by baptism in the New. Both ordinances speak of the putting away of sin, and Christ is the One who cleanses the heart and who takes away the sin of His people, who baptizes “with the Holy Ghost and with fire” (Mt 3:11). Those who come to Him receive that spiritual washing which the outward baptism represents. This one baptism is the baptism of the Christian Church: “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Mt 28:19). The outward baptism is applied inwardly to the hearts of the people of God by the Holy Spirit, who brings them to Christ that He in turn may bring them to God: “One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”.

This is the unity of the Christian church – there is one Spirit (v 4), and one Lord (v 5), and one God and Father (v 6); the triune God, the One God in the Three Persons, whom the people of God acknowledge and of whom they have experience. The doctrine of the Trinity is not merely an intellectual matter for them but a matter of the heart, because the One that died for them is one Person; and the One who purifies their hearts by faith, and who strengthens them and enables them and gives them understanding and stirs up love in their hearts is another Person; and the One who gave Christ, “the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ”, is a third. These are the Three Persons of the Godhead, and believers have distinct experiences of each. This then is the true Church throughout the world, the undivided body of Christ.

2. The unity there is among the people of God, “the unity of the Spirit”. It is that unity of which the Holy Spirit is the author, dwelling in the hearts of God’s people and joining them together, so that they are at peace with each other. There is a bond or chain or band of peace between them which holds them together. Peace binds men together, just as hostility and hatred

and envy and dislike drive them apart. Men do not want to be with those whom they dislike, but when they are at peace they can dwell together, as sheep in a pasture. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity” (Ps 133:1).

A story was told in *The Young People’s Magazine* of a man who was lost in the woods at night, and saw a house and went into it. He found there a fierce-looking man who welcomed him but left him feeling afraid. He feared that the fierce-looking man would murder him during the night, but his mind was set at peace when the fierce-looking man said to him, before they retired to bed, that it was his practice to have worship before he slept. When he heard the fierce-looking man in prayer to God through Christ, his fears were allayed. This gives us a picture of the bond of peace that there is between the people of God. Christ makes peace in the heart, and those that are at peace with Christ are at peace with their fellow men. This is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts. However fierce that man’s exterior may have been, he was a man of peace, being joined to Christ, and the other man had no further fear of him.

That is how it is with the people of God: if they are at peace even towards strangers, how much more are they at peace with their companions – with those that are of one mind with them in spiritual things. The Holy Ghost gives the people of God a common mind regarding spiritual things.

(a) They are agreed about the way of salvation; they have a “common salvation” (Jude 3). They have all put their trust in Christ; they are not disputing about the way of salvation, but are rejoicing in it together.

(b) They have a common desire for the glory of Christ. As He has done great things for them, so they desire that His name should be honoured: “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil 1:21). Paul was living unto Him, and every believer is and ought to be doing the same. They are of one mind with other believers in the world in their desire for this.

(c) They have a common desire for the prosperity and well-being of the Church. There is “joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Lk 15:10), and there is joy in the hearts of God’s people too when they hear of souls being saved. They desire the spreading of the gospel and the prosperity of Zion and they have a fellow feeling with those of the same mind as themselves.

(d) They have a common desire that men should keep the commandments of Christ, and that these commandments should be kept in their own hearts. They desire that they themselves might be brought into conformity to Him, that their sins might be subdued, that the work of holiness might be advanced, and that they might be enabled by His grace to cleanse themselves “from all

filthiness of the flesh and of spirit” (2 Cor 7:1); and what they desire for themselves, they desire for others: “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Mt 6:10).

The Holy Spirit gives them a common mind in these matters, and how different this is from the spirit of the world, and from the spirit that they had before! We see the opposite of a brotherly spirit – a callous and discordant and vengeful spirit – in Cain and in Esau; and we see it in the human heart generally in the attitude to the sin and suffering and death of others. At the end of this chapter we have these two things put in opposition to each other: “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph 4:31-32). Being forgiven by God, believers are of a tenderhearted and forgiving spirit to their fellow men.

The discordant spirit of the world can especially be seen in the estrangement between Jews and Gentiles. There was a “middle wall of partition between them”, so that they could not so much as eat together. They were at enmity. It was a separation of God’s own appointing: the separation between the Old Testament Church and the heathen nations round about, appointed by God for His own wise and holy purposes. Among other things, it was to be a picture of that spiritual division between the people of God and the world lying in wickedness. God’s chosen people were called out by Him and gathered together and serving Him according to His commandments, while the nations round about ignored God and were hostile to His people. “Mine heritage is unto Me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her” (Jer 12:9).

God appointed the separation between Jew and Gentile for a time and a purpose, but when these were fulfilled, Christ broke it down: “Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances;” (the ceremonial law especially, and the moral law as a covenant of works) “for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” (Eph 2:15-16). This is part of Christ’s great work of bringing unity in place of estrangement. The Christian Jews and Gentiles in Ephesus were gathered together in one in Christ. All the divisions which sin and Satan create are undone in Him: “until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be” (Gen 49:10).

Believers are gathered together as one body, and there is a unity in this body as there is a unity in our own bodies. The members of the body co-exist harmoniously together; they are all different, and have a different

purpose, but there is no conflict between them. One hand may be stronger than the other but they are not in rivalry with each other. They co-operate in many things which they could not accomplish alone. This is a picture of the body of Christ. He received gifts for men: “some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers” (v 11). The Holy Spirit has bestowed these different gifts that they might be used harmoniously for the service of Christ. Thus there is a unity among the people of God.

3. The necessity of keeping this unity: “endeavouring to *keep* the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”. There is an essential unity among the people of God, and yet it may be stronger or weaker, depending on the care with which they have preserved it. We see from the history of the Christian Church that this unity was broken even in apostolic times. In the Galatian Church, it was broken by the false gospel that some were trying to bring in. The Apostle John says of others, perhaps Gnostics, that “they went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us” (1 Jn 2:19). People came into the Church appearing to be Christians, but then embraced some error, and either tried to take over the Church, or else departed, seducing others to follow them.

There are three things that disturb the unity of the Church. The first is *error*. Even a small and temporary error may break the unity of the Church and the bond of peace. Paul and Barnabas had a dissension over John Mark, and there was a division between them for a while, until it was healed (Acts 15:39). Perhaps such things are unavoidable. A more serious error was that of Peter in Galatia, when he ceased to eat with the Gentiles for fear of the Jews. Paul regarded this as a threat to the gospel itself, and he withstood Peter to the face (Gal 2:12-14). Peter broke the unity of the Spirit by withdrawing from the Gentiles, and Paul confronted him, to restore that unity.

Some errors are of such gravity that they require excommunication. The sinful man in Corinth was excommunicated until he repented, and he was restored (1 Cor 5:5, 2 Cor 2:7). Hymeneus and Alexander were “delivered unto Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme” (1 Tim 1:20). Sometimes the error becomes so prevalent in the Church that the people of God cannot put it out, and they have to separate themselves in order to preserve the truth. This happened in 1843 at the Disruption, and in 1893 at the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church, when the denial of the Word of God had become quite open in the old Free Church. Keeping the unity of the Spirit involved departing from error at that time.

We must be aware of the danger of error, and of stubborn persistence in

error. We have to watch for errors coming into the Church, but we also have to watch ourselves individually. If we find ourselves widely at variance from our brethren, there is a possibility that we are in error, and that Satan is using us to break up the unity of the Church.

A second thing that disturbs the unity of the Church is *pride*: “Only by pride cometh contention” (Prov 13:10). An example of this was Diotrephes, “who loveth to have the pre-eminence” (3 John 9). Being puffed up with pride, he fell into the condemnation of the devil and divided the Church: “neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church” (v 10). Not only was he guilty, but so were those giving him the undue place that he was demanding. Paul says that we are not to encourage such things, but to oppose them. “Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Rom 16:17). In place of pride, we are to esteem others as better than ourselves. “He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted” (Mt 23:11,12).

The third thing that disturbs the unity of the Church is a *party spirit*. In Corinth, there were factions saying, “I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ” (1 Cor 1:12). Probably there were Gentiles giving great place to Paul, and Jews preferring Peter as the Apostle of the circumcision, and others preferring Apollos because he was “an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures” (Acts 18:24). Paul sets all these things aside; they were to join no party, not even that which went by the name of Christ. Where there is such a party spirit, Satan has a field day in stirring up bitterness and suspicion among the people of God.

These are some of the dangers mentioned in the Word of God. There is a unity among the people of God, but it is a unity that has to be kept, and therefore we have to flee from those errors that we have spoken of. We are to have a spirit of peace towards all true Christians. “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen” (Eph 6:23-24).

Hypocrisy is the high road to apostasy.

When you go to the door of a physician and knock, you do not need to make an apology; it is his business to be a physician. So it is with Christ. We may go to Him as we would to a physician and tell our wants and our diseases.

Aaron had a little compassion. He could say, “Come unto me, and I will show you where you will find rest”. But Christ could say, “Come unto Me and I will give you rest”. The high priest offered up sacrifices; Christ offered up the true sacrifice.

R M M'Cheyne

Prayer¹

3. The Spirit of Prayer

Rev Donald Macdonald

True prayer is the gift of God. It is the Spirit of God who begins true prayer in any soul. True prayer is the evidence of spiritual life. The Word encourages men to pray – to call upon God. This is not the tendency of the natural man, because of the state of his heart; he does not like to retain God in his knowledge; yet in times of grave danger or special difficulty he may pray earnestly. The Lord in His sovereignty may answer his prayer, although there may not be any spiritual delight in the action; his petitions are not offered in faith; he does not have the spirit of true prayer.

Are such prayers to be discouraged? The answer is, No. While the Spirit of God is the author of true prayer in the soul, no one can pray without the Word. Paul says, “I will pray with the Spirit, I will pray with the understanding also” (1 Cor 14:15). The understanding is of the utmost importance, not just in the reading of the Word, but also under the faithful preaching of the Word, which leads to the conversion of sinners. The breath of prayer in the soul is one of the gracious activities in the soul connected with the understanding. “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom 10:14).

1. Many men give *prayer as a mark of grace* at Question meetings. But this should be qualified; devout Romanists pray as well as devout Presbyterians, and Muslims and Hindus – everyone in every religion – calls upon his god as a matter of devotion and ritual. Saul of Tarsus would have offered many prayers as a devout Pharisee, before it was said of him: “Behold he prayeth”, when he began to fear God (Acts 9:11). The Athenians worshipped the unknown god in ignorance; they had many deities.

2. “*Behold he prayeth.*” When a man begins to seek the Lord, he may do so under a law work, through slavish fear, afraid of being lost and having to endure the punishment of his sins. However, the true spirit of prayer begins in the new birth, at the commencement of faith; the man begins to worship truly and to call on the name of the Lord. There may be much that is superficial in the beginnings, but if the law of the mind is towards Christ, it is genuine; it is a coming to God in the way He has appointed.

In the new birth, man is passive; he is made alive. This transformation is

¹The previous part of this Theological Conference paper, last month, discussed “the basis for prayer”. This article covers the fourth main point.

wrought by the Holy Ghost. When God created man at the beginning he possessed faculties of memory, judgement, conscience, heart and will; this is what constitutes him a responsible being. In that original creation he possessed a holy principle. As B M Palmer says, "This principle sin has destroyed. The soul remains in its structure what it was before the fall. The same faculties remain to the sinner which are necessary to him as man. He could not be divested of one of these without being divested of responsibility." In the Fall the disposition of man "has been changed. The principle of holiness has been supplanted by that of sin, which henceforth, as a regulative principle, moves the man in a direction forbidden by God's law. In the new birth the Holy Ghost restores this lost principle of holiness, which is from the beginning the principle of spiritual life in man."²

As has been often stated at fellowship meetings, the new-born infant cannot express itself in words to the parent; yet when it cries it has three things which the parent understands: Wash me; feed me; clothe me. This is also the language of the new-born soul: new-born babes desiring the sincere milk of the Word that they may grow thereby (1 Peter 2:2).

3. *The Spirit of Adoption.* The Holy Spirit is the bond of union between the Saviour in heaven and the believer on earth. This relationship is essential for the Spirit of true prayer – to pray in the Holy Ghost. "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 20). Again: "As many as received [Christ], to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn 1:12,13). Also: "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. . . . For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom 8:11-17).

This is the Spirit of God's own Son, The Holy Spirit presides over that new life which He has implanted; the Spirit not only gives life but urgency, fervency and power to prevail with God at a throne of grace.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas 5:16). What renders prayer effectual? Palmer answers, "Not its length, nor its vehemence, nor its eloquence, nor its passion; but simply the living sympathy which is established between the soul pleading in the closet and the

²B M Palmer, *The Theology of Prayer*, Sprinkle Publications reprint, 1980, pp 307-8.

Saviour interceding in the heavens. This is secured through the intervention of the Divine Spirit. He takes the desires which are in the heart of Jesus Christ, and works them into our hearts so they become our desires.”³

This in part blends in with what Paul says to the Romans: “The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God” (8:26:27). The One intercedes for us; the Other intercedes within us.

Luther and the Reformation¹

8. “I Hope that the Lord Will Deliver Me from Fear”

J H Merle d’Aubigné

Luther’s teaching produced its natural fruits. Many of his disciples already felt impelled to profess publicly the truths which their master’s lessons had revealed to them. Among his hearers was a young scholar, Bernard of Feldkirchen, a professor in the university. Five years later he was the first of the evangelical clerics to marry. Luther wished Feldkirchen to argue for certain theses, or propositions, at a disputation in 1516. Luther’s doctrines gained additional publicity at this meeting. It made a great noise and has been considered the beginning of the Reformation.

This was Luther’s first attack on the dominion of the papacy. Weak as it was, it caused him some uneasiness. “I allow these propositions to be printed,” he said many years later, when publishing them in his works, “principally so that the greatness of my cause, and the success with which God has crowned it, may not make me vain. For they fully manifest my humiliation – that is to say, the infirmity and ignorance, the fear and trembling with which I began this conflict. I was alone; I had thrown myself imprudently into this business. Unable to retract, I conceded many important points to the Pope, and I even adored him.”

Some of the propositions were as follows: “The old Adam is called the flesh, not only because he is led by the lusts of the flesh, but also because even if he is chaste, prudent and righteous, he is not born again of God by the Holy Ghost.”

³Palmer, *The Theology of Prayer*, pp 318.

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’s emphasis on Scripture as the source for his doctrine.

“A man who has no part in the grace of God, cannot keep the commandments of God or prepare himself, either wholly or in part, to receive grace, but he rests of necessity under the power of sin.”

“The will of man without grace is not free, but is enslaved, and that too with its own consent.”

“Jesus Christ, our strength and our righteousness, He who tries the heart and reins, is the only discernor and judge of our merits.”

“Since all is possible, through Christ, to the believer, it is superstitious to seek for other help, either in man’s will or in the saints.”

The Reformation was about to burst forth. God was preparing the instrument He was to use. The Elector had built a new church at Wittenberg, which he called All Saints, and sent Staupitz into the Netherlands to collect relics to adorn the new building. The vicar-general commissioned Luther to replace him during his absence, and in particular to make a visitation of the 40 monasteries of Misnia and Thuringia. Everywhere Luther tried to establish the truths that he had discovered and to enlighten the members of his order. “Do not bind yourselves to Aristotle, or to any other teacher of a deceitful philosophy,” he said to the monks, “but read the Word of God with diligence. Do not look for salvation in your own strength or in your good works, but in the merits of Christ and in God’s grace.”

An Augustine monk of Dresden had fled from his convent, and was at Mentz, where the prior of the Augustines had received him. Luther wrote to the prior, begging him to send back the stray sheep, and added these words so full of charity and truth: “I know that offences must come. It is no marvel that man falls; but it is so that he may rise again and stand upright. Peter fell so that he might know he was but a man. . . . The very angels – a thing that exceeds all imagination – have fallen in heaven, and Adam in paradise. Why then should we be surprised if a reed is shaken by the whirlwind, or if a smoking taper is extinguished?”

From Dresden Luther proceeded to Erfurt to discharge the functions of vicar-general in that very convent where, 11 years before, he had wound up the clock, opened the gates, and swept out the church. He nominated to the priorship of the convent his friend John Lange, a learned and pious but severe man: he exhorted him to be affable and patient. “Put on,” he wrote to him shortly afterwards, “a spirit of meekness towards the prior of Nuremberg: this is but proper, seeing he has assumed a spirit of bitterness and harshness. Bitterness is not expelled by bitterness, that is to say, the devil by the devil; but sweetness dispels bitterness, that is to say, the finger of God casts out the evil spirit.” We must regret that on various occasions Luther did not remember this excellent advice.

At Neustadt there was nothing but disunion. Dissensions and quarrels reigned in the convent, and all the monks were at war with their prior. They assailed Luther with their complaints. The prior Michael Dressel laid all his troubles before Luther, who said, "You seek peace, but it is the peace of the world, and not the peace of Christ that you seek. Do you not know that our God has set His peace in the midst of war? He whom no one disturbs does not have peace. But he who, troubled by all men and by the things of this life, bears all with tranquillity and joy, he possesses true peace. You say with Israel: Peace, peace! And there is no peace. Say rather with Christ: The cross, the cross; and there will be no cross." On his return to Wittenberg, Luther permitted the monks to elect another prior; he wished to put an end to these dissensions.

Luther returned to Wittenberg after an absence of six weeks. He was afflicted at all he had seen, but the journey gave him a better knowledge of the Church and of the world, increased his confidence in his interaction with society, and gave him many opportunities of founding schools, of pressing the fundamental truth that "Holy Scripture alone shows us the way to heaven", and of exhorting the brethren to live together in holiness, chastity and peace. There is no doubt that much good seed was sown in the different Augustine convents during this journey.

The monastic orders, which had long been the support of Rome, did more perhaps for the Reformation than against it. This is true of the Augustines in particular. Almost all the pious men in the cloisters turned towards the gospel. As yet nothing was known in the world of Luther's new ideas, while they were already the chief topic of conversation in the monasteries. Many a cloister thus became a nursery of reformers. As soon as the great struggle took place, pious and able men issued from their obscurity and abandoned the seclusion of a monastic life for the active career of ministers of God's Word. At the period of this inspection Luther awakened many drowsy souls by his words. Hence 1516 has been named "the morning star of the gospel day".

Luther resumed his usual occupation. He was at this period overwhelmed with work: it was not enough that he was professor, preacher and confessor; he was burdened still further by many temporal tasks for his order and his convent. "I need almost continually," he writes, "two secretaries; for I do nothing else all the day long but write letters. I am preacher to the convent; I read the prayers at the table; I am pastor and parish minister, director of studies . . . inspector of the fish-ponds at Litzkau, counsel to the inns of Herzberg at Torgau, lecturer on Paul, and commentator on the Psalms . . . without speaking of my struggles with flesh and blood, with the devil and the world. . . . Learn from this what an idle man I am!"

About this time the plague broke out in Wittenberg. Many students and teachers left the city. Luther remained. "I am not certain", he wrote to his friend at Erfurt, "if the plague will let me finish the Epistle to the Galatians. Its attacks are sudden and violent: it is making great ravages among the young in particular. You advise me to flee. Whither shall I flee? I hope that the world will not come to an end if brother Martin dies. If the pestilence spreads, I shall disperse the brothers in every direction; but as for me, my place is here; duty does not permit me to desert my post, until He who has called me shall summon me away. Not that I have no fear of death (for I am not Paul, I am only his commentator) but I hope that the Lord will deliver me from fear." Such was Luther's resolution. Shall he then shrink before Rome? Shall he yield through fear of the scaffold?

God's Command and Noah's Faith¹

A S Patterson

“The world,” as Joseph Hall says in his *Contemplations*, “was so foul with sin that God saw it was time to wash it with a flood.” As men grew in number, wickedness increased. Even those of whom better things might have been expected – men who are called by Moses “the sons of God”, who probably were descendants of Seth – were led, by carnal desire, into unsafe connections by marriage. True religion declined, and gross corruption triumphed. “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen 6:5). He waited long, and at length He interposed to vindicate His honour and denounce His enemies. But Noah, faithful among the faithless, was treated by the avenging Ruler as a friend.

The very name which his father had given him – *Noah*, meaning *rest* – spoke of good. Great things are said of him in Scripture. Moses declares, not only that “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord”, but also that he “was a just man and perfect in his generations”, and that he “walked with God” (Gen 6:8,9). In Ezekiel 14:14, his name is associated, as one of pre-eminent moral distinction, with those of Daniel and Jacob. In 2 Peter 2:5, he is called “a preacher of righteousness”. And in the present verse of the Epistle to the Hebrews (11:7), he is represented as one adorned by an honourable character, devoted to a high calling, and preserved by a great deliverance.

1. He was “warned by God of things not seen as yet”. In the expression,

¹An edited extract from Patterson's *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Patterson (1805-1885) became minister of Hutchesontown Free Church in Glasgow.

“things not seen as yet”, there is probably a reference to the description of faith given in verse 1. The things meant are the waters of the flood and the devastation of the world. When God instructed Noah to build the ark, these horrors were still unseen. But though as yet invisible, they were sure – though still future, they came within a few fleeting years. The flood of wickedness introduced the flood of waters. Sins reaching up to heaven drew desolating torrents thence. The soil which groaned beneath the corruption and the crimes of men called forth its hidden streams. These mingled with the descending floods, overflowed the loftiest hills and swept the godless multitude away. They were “eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage” (Mt 24:38). While the heavens were blue and the air was calm, they did not fear any future ill.

Noah’s sermons and his ominous erection of the ark were the objects of ridicule or neglect. But when men were merry and wickedness was bold, the judgement – the devastating judgement – came. Did they climb the tallest trees, or ascend to the summits of the loftiest hills? The surging waters reached the top of those trees and ascended to these mountain tops along with them. But the ark – did the scoffers not find refuge there? Too late! Alas, too late! The door was shut, and hope was lost, and in vain did anyone flee whom God’s omnipotence pursued. The things which were “not seen”, and therefore by the godless multitude not looked for, now were come – the earth was overflowed, and that guilty multitude was gone.

Noah was “warned of God” of these things, while as yet they were “not seen”. The warning referred to is recorded in Genesis 6:13-16; here two things are included: (1) a declaration of the impending judgement; (2) corresponding directions for the construction of an ark. The warning was given in mercy to Noah, in mercy also to the world. Time was also still given to the world for repentance; throughout another century they were summoned to flee for refuge to the bosom of the angry, but still pitying, God – through what Noah said, but also what he was required to do.

2. Noah, thus “warned . . . of things not seen as yet”, was “*moved with fear*”. There is a kind of fear which God does not approve in His children – there is a stormy terror worthier of a slave than of a child. It must be a commendable, appropriate fear that is referred to here. A reverential fear of the God who warned him, and the judgements which the pure and righteous Ruler of the world had spoken of – these occupied Noah’s mind and prompted and sustained his active efforts. This godly fear referred, no doubt (1) to God, considered as the sin-hating, sin-avenging Majesty, “clothed with” moral “light as with a garment” and, while infinitely wise to plan, is also infinitely strong to punish; (2) to himself and his family, as summoned to an arduous

enterprise and about to witness an awful tragedy; (3) to the world – that guilty, godless world on which such horrors were about to fall. (Similar examples of the fear referred to are presented in Ps 119:120, Hab 3:16, Mal 2:5, and such fear is taught in Heb 12:28,29.)

3. Noah thus “warned of God” and “moved with fear”, “*prepared an ark to the saving of his house*”. And by the preparation of the ark, his house was saved, his family were preserved, when the devastating deluge came.

He “prepared an ark”. “Make thee an ark”, said God, and in meek submission to His will, Noah went and built one. Jehovah prescribed the dimensions, the materials and the arrangements of the structure; and Moses, the sacred historian, says in reference to these: “Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he” (Gen 6:22). The work was vast, but Noah undertook, continued and completed it. The scoffers who despised his preaching probably also ridiculed his work; but, in spite of all, he persevered – and in the outcome, who proved to have been the fool? Alas, his admonitions were rejected and despised; but still by what he did, as well as by what he said, he obeyed God and also warned the world.

The warning was unavailing, in so far as the scoffers were concerned; but by the preparation of the ark, Noah and his house were saved. There was no refuge in the shadows of the woods or the caves, or on the summits of the hills. But the ark – designed by God – was a refuge for those who entered it. Within its wooden walls, with animals fierce and tame beside them, and with the surging, and still-increasing, waters around them, they were safe. “Come thou, and all thy house”, said the Lord to Noah, “into the ark.” They entered; “the Lord shut them in”; and in the divinely-guarded vessel, they rode the waters in which others found their cold and cheerless grave – until those waters were dried up. Like the dove – though it first returned to the ark with “an olive leaf plucked off” – it then returned no more, so the family preserved by God went forth to tread the soil of the earth.

4. *By faith* Noah, “moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house”. He built the ark because he believed God. God had told him there was danger, and therefore he believed there was. God had told him that destruction would come, and therefore he believed it would. God had told him that he and his family would be saved through preparing an ark, and therefore he believed they would. Believing these things, he acted in accordance with them; persuaded of them he yielded to their influence; “by faith . . . he prepared an ark to the saving of his house. “Methinks”, Joseph Hall says in his *Contemplations*, “I see those monstrous sons of Lamech coming to Noah and asking him what he means by that strange work – whether he means to sail upon the dry land. To whom, when he records God’s purposes

and his, they go away laughing at his idleness and tell one another in sport that too much piety hath made him mad; yet cannot they all flout Noah out of his faith – he preaches and builds and finishes.”

Yes, he kept sight of the threat, the promise and the commandment of his God, and “Thus saith the Lord” was the ground of his confidence and the warrant for his work. Nature – unconsecrated Reason – might have suggested that surely, under the government of the kind Creator of the world, its inhabitants would not, at least thus early in its history, be destroyed, and that if they should be destroyed, by a universal flood of waters, such a wooden ark as man might build would be unable to protect those inside. But listening to God’s voice, receiving God’s word as true and faithful, Noah “prepared an ark”, in fear and yet in hope. Nor was his work in vain; it was “to the saving of his house”.

5. By his faith, which showed itself in the construction of the ark, Noah “condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith”. He “condemned the world”. In his sermons and by his preparations, he rebuked the wickedness of men and vindicated the threatenings and punishments of God. His character, his words and his works rose up in judgement against that generation and condemned it, in that it was not thereby led to repentance. In the face of what the “preacher of righteousness” had said and done, the inhabitants of the earth had no excuse for saying that they had not been admonished of their sin and danger. And when the judgements actually came, Noah acknowledged that they were true and righteous, and nothing more than the aggravated and accumulated wickedness of the world deserved.

Noah also “became heir of the righteousness which is by faith”. He was justified. His sins were pardoned and his person was accepted, in virtue of the Redeemer and the redemption strikingly illustrated and probably designedly prefigured by the ark of Noah and the deliverance of his house. Noah saw, more or less clearly, that Redeemer and this redemption by the eye of his faith. And by that heaven-born principle, he appropriated the virtue of the one and attained to the experience of the other.

Let *us* believe in Messiah’s name. Let *us* stand in awe of God. Let *us* anticipate the judgement that awaits the world. Let *us* find refuge in Christ the Ark. Man does not need to build the ark, but standing as it already does in its complete proportions and its finished majesty, man must enter it and, having entered, must abide within its walls. The clouds are lowering; the storm is coming; the deluge is at hand; the trials of life, the agonies of death, the terrors of judgement, the fiery wreck of earth, the fiercer horrors of hell – sinner, sinner, all these are approaching towards you.

But yonder is the ark: the ark of covenanted safety, the ark of everlasting

peace. Place yourself within its walls. Flee, sinner, flee while yet you may. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." Enter it by faith; and believing, still believing, beckon others to its glorious shelter. Then, though no rainbow tells you that the *fiery* flood denounced by heaven will never overtake the world – yet the "rainbow round about the throne" will be a token firm and sure that *you* shall never be destroyed. Then that unchangeable covenant will be yours: "This is as the waters of Noah unto Me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee" (Is 54:9,10).

A Letter to a Young Minister¹

S Simpson

You are now engaged in the difficult, yet honourable, service of the gospel ministry. You may justly cry out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" This is a work indeed. What piety, what prudence, what zeal, what courage, what faithfulness and what holy watchfulness is necessary to discharge so great an office rightly! The work is great; our strength is small. Indeed of ourselves we have no strength, but all our sufficiency is from God. To Him therefore we must go for it. Here is our comfort and our hope: "It pleased the Father that in [Christ] should all fullness dwell" – fullness of merit and righteousness, of strength and grace. God Himself has said that if any lack wisdom, they should ask it of Him who "giveth to all men", and, He has expressly added, "It shall be given". Let us therefore make application to Him; let us "come boldly unto the throne of grace", deeply impressed with a sense of our weakness and folly, and let us thus ask wisdom. We need not fear being disappointed, but shall receive out of His fullness, and grace for grace.

I trust that you have really been converted – that the pure water of life has been communicated to your soul which will spring up to eternal happiness. But still watch over the frame of your mind continually; see to it that you are a Christian. How many are occupied in publishing the pure Word of God who never felt and handled and tasted the word of life! Let it be a matter of serious and frequent examination – close, heartfelt examination – whether the truth is in you; whether you are habitually living under its influence;

¹Reprinted from *The Scottish Christian Herald*, vol 2 (1837). Simpson was minister of the Scotch Church, Usher's Quay, Dublin.

whether you are growing “in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”; whether you are a thriving, healthy, growing, consecrated Christian.

Live near to God; be frequently in secret prayer; pour out your heart before the Father of spirits; hold communion with the God of heaven. It is thus that strength will be supplied to you to discharge your ministry well. Satan cares but little about a minister who altogether neglects his closet, and disregards the personal exercises of religion. It is in secret communion with God that strength is obtained for the discharge of ministerial duties, and he who is much with God in private will come forth before his people in the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ.

I dare say you often feel much anxiety about your present situation – and perhaps, at times, some depression of spirits – lest your labours should be ineffective. It is, however, a considerable relief to the mind when we know that we are in the path of duty and performing the will of providence. And submission to God’s purpose for the success or the failure of our efforts, and for the time that we may be called to labour without effect, is a disposition which is invariably connected with tranquillity of mind.

Perhaps you may be called to spend your time and strength for years without seeing any good resulting from it; it may be that you will even leave the scene of action before any effective attack has been made on the enemy’s forces. You may be sent only to prepare the way for others, to sow the seed of which they will reap the harvest, to lead the army close to the opposing host, and then be called to a higher scene to survey, from your elevated and happy station, the contest and the victory. But, however this may be, if you faithfully hold forth the word of life in your ministry, and strive with all your might, according to your opportunity, to stop the progress of error and vice, you will not lose your reward.

Success is desirable. Who loves to toil in vain? Who loves to plant and water, and see no increase? In general, God blesses His servants with some considerable degree of usefulness. But a ministry may be valid even if it is not useful. The Saviour Himself preached with very little effect; He said, “I have laboured in vain; I have spent My strength for nought, and in vain”. “Yet”, He adds, “surely My judgement is with the Lord, and My work with My God.” And so may every minister say under discouraging appearances. We serve a good Master: He does not make us answerable for success; He knows infinitely better than we do that conversion is His own prerogative, and does not depend upon us. Duty only is ours; and even in this, He allows us to depend on Him for ability to discharge it. And in estimating our service, He takes into account, not only all we do, but all we try to do and wish to do,

though we may be hindered in it. He says, "Thou didst well that it was in thine heart". The language of promise is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life".

We go further; we are persuaded that there are many cases in which ministers are dearer to God in their disappointments than in their successes. It is pleasant to labour when we succeed; and there is always some danger that pride will mix with our pleasure and that, while we acknowledge God to be the author of success, we should feel some little importance at least in being the instruments. The trial of principle is to labour without success – to bear the burden and heat of the day without murmuring, to abide at our post under every temptation to leave it, to say, If He is pleased to use me, I shall deem it an honour; but if He refuse me, I have no reason to complain; He has a right to choose His own instruments. We should be willing to lay a foundation upon which another is to build; or to set as another rises, and say, without envy or regret, "He must increase, but I must decrease". Here is the true spirit of a servant; here is real greatness in the sight of the Lord; and such magnanimity shall not lose its reward.

But, my dear brother, though our discouragements are numerous, our supports are great. We have the promises of our Lord, the examples of the saints, the certainty of a happy ending. The faithfulness and omnipotence of Jehovah are engaged on our side; our cause is the cause of truth and must finally prevail; our position and work are the most honourable in the world. And if we are found faithful, we shall shine "as the stars for ever and ever". Having therefore such a ministry and such prospects, let us not faint. The recollection of past mercy and grace, afforded in times of great perplexity, will lead us to say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us", and will induce us to hope that He, who has hitherto delivered, will yet deliver.

I find that exalted views of the importance and responsibility of the ministerial office have a very beneficial effect on my mind; they tend to produce solemnity and seriousness, and to stimulate to greater, uniform activity. Indeed, who can be idle and trifle with such a momentous charge? O that we may be so kept by the power, and so directed by the grace, of our God as ever to keep His glory in view, and rejoice in the happy prospect of doing good to immortal souls! Whatever others do, let it be our aim to study hard, labour diligently and pray earnestly for the good of our fellow creatures. I think we shall not have to complain on our dying day that we have done too much for Him who has done so much for us; but in all probability we shall have to regret that we have done so little.

Let us not be discouraged if we meet with difficulties in the way. They will be all needful, and will not make us preach the worse but the better. If

our hearts are in the work, we may hope we shall have comfort in it also. As Richard Baxter, in his *Reformed Pastor*, well observes, “God seldom blesses any man’s work so much as his whose heart is set upon the success of it”. My earnest prayer is that we may be made faithful, laborious and active ministers of the New Testament and be preserved from every snare.

Christ’s Temptations – Some Lessons¹

David Mitchell

1 We may learn from Christ’s temptation *the doctrine of satanic influence*. We believe that no doctrine is more neglected by professing Christians than this doctrine of satanic influence. Some deny it absolutely, and the conduct of many demonstrates that they disbelieve it in practice. Some ministers of the gospel scarcely ever select it as a subject for their discourses and, when it is chosen, it is often treated in general terms. There are classes in the community who treat the subject with scorn, and many of those who use the name of Satan freely will scarcely admit his existence when they are put to the test.

But if words are capable of conveying meaning to the mind, we must at once admit that the agency of Satan in this world is extensive and pernicious. He is the subtle enemy of man, going to or fro with the rapidity of lightning. We are not to ascribe omnipresence to him, but he seems to possess a power which enables him to examine all places and all men. Hence we find him called the prince of the power of the air, and he is extremely subtle. He has been studying the constitution and history of man for nearly 6000 years. He presents his temptations to our understandings, our consciences, our wills, and our affections. He studies our constitutions, our desires, our mental powers, and the train of our thoughts.

Peter said to Ananias: “Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” He is intent on destruction – as a beast of prey goes in quest of food after being long deprived of it – ever raging with boiling wrath against God and man, ever seeking where he may devour, ever destroying and never satisfied, ever standing like a thief at the door and ready to dart forward when he finds an opening, perpetually panting after the work of destruction, although every victim he seizes will bring a new accession to his punishment, and every attempt that he makes

¹This is the conclusion of a sermon on Matthew 4:1-11. It is taken, with editing, from the preacher’s *Pastoral Recollection and Sermons*, which has a preface by George Smeaton. Mitchell (1798-1882) was latterly minister of Free St Luke’s, Glasgow.

to dishonour God will add a coal to the flame that is to scorch him for ever. So full is he of rage and mischief that he is called in Scripture the destroyer; “and they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon,” that is, the destroyer.

2. We learn, not merely the existence of Satan's influence, but also *the character and work of Christ*, who “was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil”. It appears to have been Satan's aim to have placed man in a position whereby it would be impossible for him to be restored to the favour and enjoyment of God; and he was not only frustrated in his attempts, but he was vanquished in a manner which must have been galling to his pride. He was not only conquered and compelled to flee; he was vanquished on the theatre of this lower world, the place he had chosen for man's disgrace and intended ruin. Trophies were not only to be prepared to crown the head of the victorious Saviour, but these trophies were to be selected from the victims of Satan's rage and seductions. Satan was not only to be vanquished and laid prostrate, but he was to be overcome by the heel of the woman's seed. Christ came into the world to break in pieces the bulwarks of superstition, to destroy the temples of idolatry, to rescue man from the vile drudgery of Satan, and to rear upon the ruins of the Fall a goodly structure against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

But if we would behold Christ in a proper attitude, we must look on Him as our deliverer from sin as well as from Satan. We must behold Him, not only as exposed to the hatred and enmity of Satan, but also as enduring the wrath of an offended God. We must behold Him as the substitute for sinners, bearing the indignation of the Lord, satisfying inflexible justice, bringing in everlasting righteousness, pleading the cause of His Church before the throne, and presenting His people's supplications before the mercy seat. We are called to consider Him as the great High Priest who has passed into the heavens, who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin; who in that He suffered being tempted, is able to succour them that are tempted.

3. There is a common lesson to be learned from these three temptations of Christ, and that is *to resist the enemy of souls*. In the language of James: “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you”. The instrument by which we may defeat him is the Word of God. As this Word is the sword of the Spirit, we can only be expected to use it aright when under the influence of the Holy Ghost, under the direction and illumination of the same Spirit who led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

We may learn from the first temptation the necessity of guarding against being led astray when we are in straits and labouring under temporal needs.

Strong inducements may be held out to us to cross the line of demarcation and to find a supply for our needs. We may be tempted to say, like the Israelites, Is the Lord among us or not? We may be tempted by the urgent necessity of our case. We may be tempted to think that the thing suggested is only a very small crime – that it is nothing more than what our stern necessities demand. But let us remember that God knows that we have need of these things. Man shall not live by bread alone.

Again, we may be set upon a pinnacle of the temple, we may occupy an elevated position among men, and we may be surrounded by the breath of popular applause; our mountain may appear to stand strong. Powerful incentives may be presented to our minds to induce us to make a rash, wanton and unscriptural exposure of ourselves to danger under the plea that even the Word of God is on our side. Let us not be led astray by these dangerous seductions; for while God has promised to be with His people in all their trials and send them deliverance, we are not to expect His aid if we go out of the way, for it is written: “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God”.

4. *Let us guard against being led away by the gilded baits of Satan*, by false colouring and by the deceitful mirage of this world. If we have been correct in the exposition we have given of the last temptation, we see that Satan, under the guise of great friendship, may be plotting your overthrow and utter destruction. Such will be many of the seductions to which we are exposed; such have been the temptations of the Church in all ages. The persecutors of the Church have often pretended to cherish regard for those whom they were torturing and preparing for death. This was the kind of friendship which the Pope pretended to cherish for Martin Luther; and even where guilt has a less glaring aspect, men will be in danger of being led away by a similar temptation.

The natural man goes in quest of a kingdom. His treasure is upon earth. It may lie in the learning of the wise and in the knowledge of the ancients. It may consist in choice silver and the gold of Ophir. It may consist in acquiring fame or in the empty plaudits of an admiring multitude. Men may risk their all on a vain and sinful speculation; the prize may appear great and attractive, the risk small and trifling, and the results magnificent and enduring. The steps to obtain this prize may be plausible; they are such steps as are taken daily by hundreds of competitors; and if there is any deviation from the path of rectitude, it is only by a hairbreadth, and weighs no more than the dust in the balance when compared with the prize at stake. Alas, the man is entangled by the meshes of the enemy. Satan’s line is placed before him, and the language of the tempter is, “All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”

Such a kingdom as this will crown trespassers with confusion. Its honours will terminate in shame, and its pleasures in tribulation and woe. But, blessed be God, there is a kingdom which is no phantom, a goodly land where joy reigns. There is a kingdom whose possessions are divine, where the plant of renown shall never wither, and where the tree of life shall never fade. There is a court where there is no intrigue, a king whose glory no one can eclipse, an advocate always ready to plead the poor man's cause, and a mansion of bliss for everyone who passes through the gate into the city.

And who grants admission? Who but the Son of God? No adversary or accuser of the brethren, no framer of deceit, but He who is the pillar of truth, the foundation of rectitude.

Book Review

Introducing Tyndale, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 109 pages, £5.50, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

William Tyndale deserves to be remembered wherever English is spoken for his pioneering work in translating the Bible into his native language. But Tyndale was not only a translator; he wrote several works in defence of the true religion (these occupy two substantial volumes in the current Banner of Truth reprint).

The main part of the book under review is an extract from Tyndale's *An Answer to Sir Thomas Moore's Dialogue*. Moore became Lord Chancellor of England in 1529. He fiercely opposed Protestant doctrines and was a persecutor of those he called heretics. Yet in 1980, amazingly, Moore was added to the Church of England's "calendar of saints and heroes of the Christian Church". Less surprisingly, Pope John Paul II made him patron saint of statesmen and politicians. In 1528, Moore wrote *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*; it claimed that Rome was the one true Church, established by Christ and the Apostles; Moore defended her authority, traditions and practices. Tyndale's 1531 *Answer* was from a firmly-Scriptural position.

The extract used to introduce Tyndale to twenty-first-century readers begins with his explanation of the Scripture meanings of the word *church* and of his translation of the word as *congregation* – which he did because "the clergy . . . had appropriate[d] unto themselves the term that of right is common unto all the whole congregation of them that believe in Christ". Tyndale goes on to defend his use of *repentance* rather than *penance* – "when all the Scripture preacheth that Christ hath made full satisfaction for our sins to God-ward". So he gives the testimony of Scripture: "Repent . . . and believe the gospel,

or glad tidings, that is brought to you in Christ, and so shall all be forgiven you, and henceforth live a new life". On the matter of women preaching one would wish that Tyndale had expressed himself differently, yet we should be very thankful for how sound his doctrine was.

Clearly the English in the extract is not altogether that of today, but it is manageable, with out-of-date words being explained in footnotes. The spelling has been updated, probably in the nineteenth century.

The book begins with a 29-page introduction by John Piper, which helpfully describes the historical background (though one would not necessarily recommend John Piper's other writings, and why should Reformed readers be familiar with the world of "movies"?) The final 16 pages give a fine summary of "William Tyndale's Legacy" by the late Robert Sheehan. He naturally begins with: "Since Tyndale the English [speaking] people have had the Bible available to them". Other headings include: "Tyndale restored the authority of Scripture in the Church", "Tyndale gave great emphasis to the doctrine of justification by faith alone", and, "Tyndale laid the foundation for the Puritan commitment to holy living" – which does not include watching films.

It is good that this generation should learn of this important figure, who suffered death for his remarkable efforts for the cause of Christ.

Notes and Comments

An Unnatural Slaughter

The gross evil of abortion has been brought once more into the public eye with the announcement that women from Northern Ireland will be eligible to receive fully-funded journeys at the NHS's expense to abortion clinics in England. Abortion is currently illegal in Northern Ireland; exceptions include cases where the mother's life is in jeopardy. At the same time, a BBC Scotland report recently characterised the lack of provision of late-stage abortions north of the border as "Scotland's dirty little secret"; 180 women travelled to England to receive abortions last year, of whom 73 were within one month of the legal limit of 24 weeks.

This report, which appeared on the BBC website, was completely one-sided in its coverage of this dreadful subject and did not include any comment from pro-life sources at all. Scotland's shame is not the failure to provide access to late-stage abortions but rather the fact that such an unnatural slaughter of unborn children was perpetrated about 12 068 times on Scottish soil in 2016. Equally disturbing in the BBC report was its suggestion that a medically-induced abortion was so traumatic that the surgical method might

be preferable for many women at the later stage. Needless to say, there was no word about the barbaric nature of the surgical procedure, nor anything concerning the plight of the defenceless unborn child.

Above all, there was no consideration that abortion is a moral outrage against God's law, which says, "Thou shalt not kill", and prohibits "the taking away of our own or our neighbour's life unjustly". We believe that when the cause of Christ revives again, future generations will regard abortion as one of the cruellest and most appalling abominations of our era. "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation" (Ps 51:14). *AWM*

Memorial Service for Gordon Wilson

The memorial service for the former SNP leader Gordon Wilson raises some very serious questions. It was held at St Peter's Free Church in Dundee, at which Mr Wilson was a communicant member. Mr Wilson's body had been cremated beforehand and the main ceremony or service was attended by important Scottish political figures and followed exactly the instructions that Mr Wilson had given before his death. It was led by the minister of the congregation, Rev David Robertson, who prayed twice and pronounced a blessing, with a third prayer from the Roman Catholic Bishop, Vincent Logan (all the prayers, incidentally, being read).

One question that the event raises is: Where is Mr Wilson's soul presently? This might seem an inappropriate question to ask at such a time, but Mr Robertson and Bishop Logan openly disagreed on the matter, so the question is in the public domain. Mr Robertson has no doubt that Mr Wilson is in heaven, whereas Bishop Logan thinks that he is in purgatory. The present writer does not pretend to know the answer; but the fact that Mr Wilson wanted Bishop Logan to pray at his funeral shows that Mr Wilson did not have clear views on the way of salvation, through faith alone in Christ alone. Bishop Logan has made it his life's work to promote a different and false way of salvation. Mr Wilson has left at best an indistinct testimony regarding his faith in Christ.

A second question, often raised in this *Magazine*, concerns Mr Robertson's religious beliefs. While disagreeing with Bishop Logan over purgatory, he describes him as "a man who has served Christ for many years". But according to the ministerial vows Mr Robertson has several times taken, Bishop Logan's religious views are false, and he has not served Christ, but opposed Him. Mr Robertson is once again the editor of the Free Church magazine, *The Record*, following the fearful fall and suicide of Rev I D Campbell, but how can Mr Robertson instruct others when there is such a discrepancy between his vows and his conduct? Is keeping one's vows part of the Christian religion or not?

A third question arising from the memorial service is, Was it a Christian service? “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20), says Christ; but to what extent can one modify and dilute Christian worship with music, photographs, eulogies, anecdotes and jokes before Christ is no longer present? Again, we do not know the answer, but when Mr Robertson states in his blog that “the gospel [was preached] in front of the First Minister, the former First Minister and the government ministers responsible for Health and Education”, he is claiming more for the occasion than the truth warrants. A few aspects of the Christian religion were presented to the politicians, but with little solemnity, and they were not the aspects that they most needed to hear. There was nothing concerning sin, hell, repentance, or the cross of Christ. Had the tone of the service been more biblical, the politicians might have been less ready to stay and “chat” afterwards.

Mr Robertson was obviously well pleased with the occasion, but it was a sad day for Scottish Christianity. It is sad that a communicant member of a church professing to be Reformed should enter eternity, and his circle of acquaintances should have so little idea of how to respond appropriately and how to lay to heart the lessons that God was teaching them by that providence.

DWBS

Resignation of Mr Tim Farron

Mr Tim Farron has resigned as leader of the Liberal Democrat party because he found it “impossible . . . to be a political leader . . . and to live as a committed Christian”. One prominent homosexual member of the party denounced Mr Farron’s religious views as “outdated and frankly offensive”. Many other members of the party, however, were embarrassed at the obviously illiberal attitude of senior party members towards Mr Farron. The homosexual movement is deeply intolerant, especially towards Christianity, and the world is starting to realise this. Perhaps the earth will soon start to help the woman (Rev 12:16).

DWBS

Islamic Persecution of Christians in Kenya

In Britain we are reeling from several recent attacks by Islamic extremists – and the UK is still on “severe” alert – yet there is evidently a global assault on Christianity. Barbaric followers of Islam are determined to dominate the whole world. The inspired Apostle Peter reminds us of Satan’s attacks: “The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world” (1 Pet 5:9). Islamists have committed fearful atrocities in Kenya, a country where the Free Presbyterian Church has had an interest. Statistics indicate that Kenya remains professedly a Christian country, with around 80% of the

population being Christian, at least nominally, a group that the Islamists are seeking to eradicate.

Elly Ojiema, a Christian teacher from a village in Garissa in north-east Kenya, was brutally murdered by Al-Shabaab militants – an Islamic terror group associated with Al-Qaeda. Around 9 pm on June 14, armed men broke into the school grounds. A worker for the Barnabas charity reported that “they found Elly under the bed and shot his leg, dragged him out and killed him by cutting his throat”. Another Christian teacher managed to escape.

Al-Shabaab, rose to power in neighbouring Somalia in 2006 and is determined to establish a fully-Islamic state in that country. In 2011 troops from Kenya were sent in to help their neighbours counter this escalating terrorist activity. Since then Kenya has been plagued by acts of violence, particularly against Christians. Playing a video of Jihadists at a “graduation ceremony” for militants in May this year, the terrorist group called on “graduates” to target Christians specifically, particularly in Kenya. A leading speaker urged the newly-trained Jihadists, many of whom are Kenyan, to return to their own country to conquer Christians. The Al-Shabaab leader claimed that Christians have “occupied” what “used to be a Muslim land”. The Jihadists’ mission is “to work towards the implementation of the sharia of Allah so that it governs the entire world”. They must “eliminate all other systems of governance and laws of Kufr [infidels] such as democracy, communism and secularism . . . and govern the land according to the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet”. Their objectives are brutally clear: “victory or martyrdom” and they “should not be content with anything less than that”.

In October last year, two assaults were carried out on Christians in the town of Mandera, in north-east Kenya. The first killed six people, the second 12. A spokesman for Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the first attack, on a residential compound. He informed the news agency Reuters, “We are behind the Mandera attack in which we killed six Christians”, adding that a police vehicle had also been hit by a roadside bomb. The second attack was on a guest house, with guns and grenades and was carried out by the same group. A resident said, “We, the Christian community in the region, are living in fear of attack. The security forces appear to be unable to protect us from these targeted attacks, two in a month.”

The worst single atrocity to date took place in April 2015, when 148 people were killed by Al-Shabaab at Garissa University. After entering a university block, gunmen shot students randomly before targeting the Christians. Mocking their victims, the militants separated Christians from Muslims. “If you were a Christian you were shot on the spot”, said a student who escaped. Witnesses said the gunmen beheaded those who could not recite the Quran.

An aid worker reported, “There were bodies everywhere in execution lines. We saw people whose heads had been blown off, bullet wounds everywhere; it was a grisly mess.” A local church leader stated: “There were 13 Christian Union members in early morning prayers; all were slain with one dying on his knees”.

Such barbarism is unspeakably horrifying yet it shows the depths of wickedness in the human heart, if not restrained by God. As individuals, as a Church and as a nation we need to pray ever more earnestly: “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Mt 6:10). *KHM*

Church Information

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Western: At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, August 29, at 11 am.

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

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, September 5, at 11 am.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Tuesday, September 26, at 2 pm.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, October 10, at 11 am.

Northern: At Dingwall, on Tuesday, November 7, at 2 pm.

Education Committee

The recommendations of a report from the Education Committee to the Synod were approved on 24 May 2017. The Committee now has the task of implementing these recommendations as follows:

1. Form a development team to convert the pre-school part of the existing Zimbabwe Primary School Bible Knowledge course to a Web-based learning facility. This is intended to be a demonstration of capability using the online Learning Management Systems (LMS) Moodle.

2. Recruit volunteers (not specific to those with children) with education and/or information technology (IT) skills and experience to assist with the development of online teaching and learning resources.

If you wish to express an interest in being part of the project team, receive a copy of the report, or require more information, please contact the Committee Convener, Mr Frank Daubney; email: f.daubney@ntlworld.com, providing brief details of your expertise, and what contribution you are prepared to make.

Jewish and Foreign Missions Fund

By appointment of Synod, the second of the year’s two special collections for the Jewish and Foreign Missions Fund is to be taken in congregations during August.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Glendale** and **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thursday 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, 10 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. **Sheilobost** 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): 124 High Street North, Carterton. 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 Levyskiy; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevyskiy@gmail.com; or contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua.

Zimbabwe

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

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

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

New Canaan: Church.

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

Free Presbyterian Church Bookroom

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

E-mail: sales@fpbookroom.org

Book Selection

	RRP	Offer
Conversations with a Dying Man by Samuel Rutherford Reformation Press, 2017 [1649], pbk, 77 pp	£4.95	£3.95
I Shall Not Die but Live: Facing Death with Gospel Hope by Douglas Taylor, Banner of Truth, 2016, hbk, 360 pp	£13.00	£10.39
Jonathan Edwards on Knowing Christ Banner of Truth, 1997 [1839], pbk, 276 pp	£6.50	£4.99
A Method for Prayer by Matthew Henry Christian Heritage, 2017 [1712], pbk, 304 pp	£8.99	£7.19
The True Bounds of Christian Freedom by Samuel Bolton Banner of Truth, 2010 [1645], pbk, 224 pp	£5.75	£4.59

(Postage is extra)

Subscription rates, including postage:

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

Combined £39.00