

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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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:

Ballfearry 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.

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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.

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Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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After 500 Years

This month marks 500 years since the day which is conventionally identified as the beginning of the Reformation. On 31 October 1517 Martin Luther, a monk and theological professor in Wittenberg University, nailed to the church door a set of 95 theses, statements intended for debate. They were provoked by the unscrupulous sale of indulgences not far from Wittenberg, promising deliverance from the consequences of sin while leaving sin itself entirely unchallenged. Such an attitude to sin completely contradicted Luther's own spiritual experience and, more seriously, contradicted the teaching of the Scriptures.

The October 31 date is more symbolical than anything else. Luther still had much more to learn, but he was a man who could sincerely write, "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ says, *Repent*, He means that the whole life of believers upon earth should be a constant and perpetual obedience,"¹ and this indicated that he now took sin and the authority of God seriously.

An article in this *Magazine* 100 years ago, marking the four-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation, said of Luther: "He restated the fundamental doctrines of the gospel against the delusive errors of the Church of Rome, and spoke in trumpet tones of remonstrance and appeal against the many forms of practical iniquity which these errors produced and encouraged".

The article continued: "We do not say that he was perfect in idea or practice – he was newly out of Rome's darkness – but we maintain that the vast proportion of his teaching was entirely wholesome and beneficial. He plucked up by the roots the false doctrine of justification by human works, and proclaimed in words of clear and burning eloquence the grand gospel truth of justification by faith in Jesus Christ and His perfect substitutionary righteousness. He declared in no uncertain terms the truth that the human will was in bondage through sin, and that they only were free indeed whom the Son of God made free.

"Let there be no mistake about it: Luther was a spiritual Samson who,

¹The first of the 95 theses, quoted from J H Merle d'Aubigné *The History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*, vol 1, Baker reprint, 1976, p 97.

endued with power from on high, broke the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron in sunder which ‘the Man of sin’ had forged and fastened, to the moral and spiritual destruction of whole nations. And who that has ever read, without prejudice, the inner history and life of this noble-hearted man and observed his daily wrestlings with sin, his close communion with God, his cordial, loving warmth to his friends, and his generous liberality to the needy but has felt that here was a burning and a shining light, a living epistle of Christ to be known and read of all men?”²

Clearly Luther did have much more to learn, but he did make considerable further progress in understanding the doctrines of Scripture. As we look back, we should be very thankful that the Lord raised up a strong-minded man such as Luther and placed him in a position where, by God’s blessing, he was able to make such a tremendous impact on Europe’s desperate spiritual condition in the early sixteenth century. Luther was never altogether alone in preaching truth, but later God raised up many other godly men, including John Calvin and John Knox, who were to take the work of the Reformation further. We should be thankful for them also, and for the many others through later ages whom God used as instruments to advance His cause, and likewise for those whom He used to restrain the influences that have tended seriously to weaken the Church.

If we are to single out one central point of early Reformation doctrine, it must be justification by faith. The Reformers emphasised that justification, God’s acceptance of the sinner as righteous, must be *only* by faith in Christ, not by works. Sinners cannot contribute to their salvation in any way; the sinner must, by a God-given faith, lay hold of Christ and what He has done as the Substitute for sinners. So Paul emphasised, “Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph 2:9).

Luther made the clear statement: “I Dr Martin Luther, the unworthy evangelist of the Lord Jesus Christ, thus think and thus affirm: That this article – namely, that faith alone, without works, justifies us before God – can never be overthrown, for . . . Christ alone, the Son of God, died for our sins; but if He alone takes away our sins, then men, with all their works, are to be excluded from all concurrence in procuring the pardon of sin and justification. Nor can I embrace Christ otherwise than by faith *alone*; He cannot be apprehended by works. But if faith, before works follow, apprehends the Redeemer, it is undoubtedly true that faith *alone*, before works and without works, appropriates the benefits of redemption, which is no other than justification, or deliverance from sin. This is our doctrine; so the

²*The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 22, no 7 (Nov 1917), pp 237-8. The writer was the then Editor, Rev J S Sinclair.

Holy Spirit teaches, and the whole Christian Church. In this, by the grace of God, will we stand fast. Amen.”³

We should be immensely thankful for the heritage that has been passed down to us from Reformation times – which, not least, includes the Bible in our own language. And we should remember Luther’s great labour in translating the Bible into German while he was shut up in the Wartburg Castle for his own safety. It is a heritage that every generation is duty bound to value and preserve, and to pass it on intact to succeeding generations.

And as we remember the valuable work of generations of godly men in advancing the cause of Christ, we should praise God for His great kindness to the world in making these men His instruments in preaching the Word; in explaining the doctrines of Scripture and in putting them into a systematic form; in writing books, some more difficult and others more popular, which spread the teachings of the Bible, and sometimes take them where the human voice cannot reach. We are to be particularly thankful for men like Luther whom God raised up to be leaders of others.

We live in an age when our Reformation heritage is valued by very few. Accordingly God is largely ignored, the Bible and its teachings are despised, sin is not taken seriously and eternity is disregarded. Of course, there are exceptions; there is still a remnant according to the election of grace; but God is very much leaving people to themselves. And we have reason to mourn how little we see of the work of the Holy Spirit in applying the Word powerfully to the hearts of sinners. Not even the most terrible military conflicts in history – the two world wars of the twentieth century – had any effect in restraining the declension from scriptural standards and teachings. Most people are giving themselves up to the twin secular idols of pleasure and possessions. The Psalmist says of the wicked: he “will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts” (Ps 10:4); and how accurately these words describe the vast majority of people today! There is a refusal to see that God is ruling over everything, that He is to be worshipped and obeyed. But God cannot be mocked, certainly not without serious consequences following.

The situation is serious. What hope is there that nations such as Britain and Germany can recover their Reformation heritage? We must be clear that, humanly, it is impossible. But, as the Saviour made clear, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (Lk 18:27). It was by divine power that the Reformation of the sixteenth century was brought about, and it is only by the same divine power that there can be deliverance from the prevailing unbelief within the professing Church and the secularism and false religion outside it.

³Quoted in James Buchanan, *Doctrine of Justification*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1961, p 143.

But God uses means. We see this when we look back to the various influences on Luther's spiritual life, as he was delivered from a state of ignorance and brought to a saving knowledge of Christ by faith alone. We must also look back to the whole web of providences in Luther's later life which resulted in true religion making a great advance. Besides Luther, various other men were raised up in many European countries, through whom further advances – some more permanent than others – were made. We lose much if we lose sight of the great works of God in the past, for "He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered" (Ps 111:4). We do well to remember the human instruments, but particularly we are to remember that ultimately the effects were the wonderful work of God.

As we look forward with the hope that further wonderful works of God will yet take place on a large scale, we may ask, as Paul did: "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? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom 10:14,15). The means of spreading the gospel, preachers in particular, are necessary, and it is God who must send them, or else these preachers cannot go out with divine authority, and therefore no blessing can be expected from their work. We noted that Luther was suited to the work he was to carry out; that was part of God's providence in raising him up at that particular point in time, in his particular circumstances, and to carry out the very work that God intended him to do. So in asking the Lord to send out labourers into His harvest, we must pray that some of them would have particular gifts which would make them specially suitable to be leaders in the Church in these days of unbelief and rejection of God.

Clearly all God's children have a duty to pray, "Revive Thy work . . . in wrath remember mercy" (Hab 3:2). Wrath is what we deserve as a generation – though the withdrawing of the Holy Spirit and leaving people to go on their way unhindered towards a lost eternity is the severest judgement possible. So we must pray for an outpouring of the Spirit. At the same time, we must ask God to send out ministers and to bring about whatever other circumstances God sees to be appropriate in order to turn multitudes of sinners to Himself and change the whole face of society throughout the world, until true godliness appears perfectly normal everywhere.

Yet, while it is our duty to pray for a new reformation, we must also seek grace to obey the call, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die" (Rev 3:2). Our heritage is precious; may we truly value what God has done in the past and what He continues to do now! And may each one of us personally make a profitable use of our heritage!

The Blessedness of Trusting in God¹

A Sermon by Archibald Alexander

Psalm 2:12. *Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.*

That this psalm relates to the Messiah is admitted by Jews as well as Christians. Whether it has a primary respect to David and the establishment of his kingdom on Mount Zion, or should be referred entirely to the Messiah, is a point on which expositors are not agreed; and it is not important enough to discuss it here. That it does contain an important prediction of the Lord Jesus Christ is expressly decided by the authority of divine inspiration, it does not rest on the interpretation of fallible men.

The text speaks of Christ. The passage, “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His anointed,” is expressly applied to Christ by the whole band of apostles after they had received the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, on the Day of Pentecost. On hearing the report of Peter and John, who had been brought before the Sanhedrim, the apostles all broke out in praise to God, saying, “Lord, Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of Thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? . . . For of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done” (Acts 4:24-28.)

The Apostle Paul assures us that such a remarkable declaration as, “This day have I begotten Thee”, was never made to the highest of created angels. There is but one to whom it could with propriety be made; and orthodox commentators have, from time immemorial, supposed it to have referred to the eternal generation of the Son; for the expression “this day” is not to be taken as referring to any particular day but to perpetual duration.

Trusting in Christ. The exhortation to “kiss the Son”, and the blessing pronounced on all who trust in Him – can refer to no one but the Saviour. We are never, in Scripture, exhorted to trust in any mere creature, however exalted. On the contrary, a curse is pronounced on everyone “who trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm”. This portion of the Psalm can therefore have no application to David or Solomon, but must refer solely to the Messiah, who is the eternally begotten Son of God.

The act of trust is so familiar to everyone that it requires no explanation. Even children know what is meant by *trust* in anyone. Two things are always

¹Taken, with editing, from Alexander’s *Practical Sermons*. The headings have been added.

implied in trusting; the first is a conviction of need and a sense of dependence. He who needs nothing will, of course, not trust someone else for what he has in himself; and he who, though destitute, does not realise his need, will never be induced to trust in someone else. The second thing implied in an act of trust is a persuasion of the good will, ability and fidelity of the person in whom we trust. A child in danger will flee to the arms of its father with confidence, but will not trust another child, however affectionate, because it is not persuaded of its ability to protect it. Neither would a child trust an entire stranger, having no assurance of his good will; nor would it flee to the arms of someone who had often deceived it.

The exercise of saving faith is not more frequently expressed by any term than by trust. Indeed, whenever we believe in anyone's promise – that is, when we are fully persuaded of the truth of a promise – that act of faith is properly termed *trust*.

Man is so dependent on providence for the common blessings of this life that trust in God for these is the proper state of mind for us. For, although we procure many temporal blessings by the use of our own faculties, or the labour of our hands; yet these blessings are as really God's gifts as if we used no means whatever; for without His blessing, all our toil and ingenuity would effect nothing. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." God is the "Father of lights", from whom every good and every perfect gift" comes down. We should feel this dependence on God in relation to all our efforts to procure common blessings; and not only feel it, but openly acknowledge it, when we receive the common blessings of God's providence.

But for spiritual and eternal blessings, our dependence is still greater; for man has lost the favour of God and has fallen under His dreadful curse. Man has also sunk deeply into a state of depravity. He has lost all true knowledge of God His Creator; he is not only a miserable but a helpless creature. He is unable, by any sufferings which he can endure, to expiate the smallest of his sins. He is unable to give life to his dead soul, or bring back life into his benumbed faculties. Even if his salvation depended on it, he could not make his heart go forth in love to God, or bring to an end the undue exercise of self-love and of love to the creature. "The carnal mind is . . . not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Human inability. But this inability of the heart and will is far from providing the sinner with any excuse; it is the chief ground of his criminality. What! A heart so depraved that nothing can induce it to reverence and love its Creator! Will anyone dare plead that such a heart is a reason why he should not be punished when brought before God's tribunal? In his natural state, man is also blind and ignorant. Some, like the Pharisees of old, will be

ready to ask, "Are we blind also?" Yes, all are blind, however acute their intellect, however much their minds are stored with human learning. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor 2:14).

Here then is a threefold misery common to all the children of Adam: blindness, deadness, and guilt. To qualify himself as a physician to cure the threefold malady, Christ as Mediator has assumed the office of a prophet, of a priest and of a king. In these offices, the sinner must trust in Him for salvation. But it may be alleged that this misery of man is merely imaginary, that the majority of men are in a good moral condition and behave as well as could be expected in their circumstances. It is admitted that all are not equally abandoned to iniquity. It is admitted that many maintain a decent outward appearance. It is admitted that many are strict in observing the forms of religion, showing the same spirit as the Pharisees of old. It is evident that few seem to have any particular conviction of the miseries already mentioned.

But this blindness is rather an aggravation of their misery than an alleviation. Indeed, this lack of awareness of spiritual concerns and eternal interests is the very worst symptom of their desperate disease. If they were conscious of their sins, if they lamented their blindness, if they were crying out, What must I do to be delivered from this dreadful curse? there would be some hope of them. But as long as this state of blindness remains, there is no hope, for they never can be induced, in this state, to apply the only remedy, a remedy that must be apprehended and appropriated by the rational mind. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Christ says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

If you saw, in a public prison, a number of criminals condemned to suffer capital punishment, and should observe some of them indulging in singing and dancing and every species of mirth and levity, and using all their influence to bring their companions to do likewise, would you call them happy? Would anyone in his senses envy such happiness as this? On the contrary, would not all be shocked at this most unseasonable and reckless levity? And if obliged to choose between this state of mind and that of those who were mourning their unhappy lot, who would not prefer the condition of the latter?

The refuge provided. All need a refuge to which they may flee for safety, and blessed are they who have been made conscious of their danger and misery so that they anxiously seek a place of safety. Their case is urgent; their danger is imminent; the misery that awaits them is inconceivably great. They are utterly helpless in themselves, unable to extricate themselves from

their miserable circumstances, or to ward off the danger which threatens to burst on their guilty heads. As they cannot escape by their own wisdom or power, so no other creature is able to rescue them from ruin. Where then shall they turn? To whom shall they apply for deliverance? The only one who has power to save them is the Person whom they have offended, and whose displeasure they have incurred – the very Person who holds in His up-raised hand the sword of justice ready to strike the sinner dead. The Judge of all the earth will do right. It is right to inflict deserved punishment on impenitent sinners, who have long rejected the gracious offers of reconciliation.

Where then is there any hope for the sinner, justly condemned by the law of his God? Nowhere but the gospel of salvation. Here, and here alone, a door of hope is open for the guilty. Sin cannot escape punishment in the just government of a holy God. He says, I will “by no means clear the guilty”. “Surely Thou wilt slay the wicked: O God.” But, blessed be God, sin may be punished in an adequate substitute. It has been punished in the divine Surety, for “He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities”. He was made a curse for sinners to redeem them from the curse of the law. Their iniquities were laid upon Him. The satisfaction is complete; it is of infinite value. It is impossible that any sins should be so heinous that the application of the blood of Jesus will not cleanse it. “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Is 1:18).

Jesus of Nazareth is revealed as the true Messiah, God’s Anointed, the King of Zion; He is the only true High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, the prophet by whom all God’s people are taught. He is the Saviour of the world; and “there is none other name under heaven . . . whereby we must be saved”. “Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.”

Trust in the Redeemer supposes that He has manifested, in some way, a willingness to save us. In order that trust have a firm foundation, there must be, not only a general expression of good will, but also explicit promises of relief. Such promises are especially necessary in the case of the sinner; he can with difficulty be convinced that there can be any salvation for one so vile as he now sees himself to be. Therefore we find the gospel full of kind invitations and gracious promises to all who will come to Him and receive salvation as a free gift. These are the glad tidings by which so many wounded spirits have been healed and comforted. The convinced sinner (for no other will trust in the Redeemer) finds every other refuge to be false, and every other arm to be weak. At length, his attention is turned to a crucified Saviour. He hears words of mercy and kindness.

But, at first he cannot believe that they are addressed to him. He thinks this good news is for others less vile than himself. He imagines that Christ might receive him if in some way – by prayers, tears or penances – he could purify his heart, or even get it softened to some degree of tenderness. But he cannot easily be persuaded that he will be welcomed in his present wretched state of mind. He is therefore kept back by his unbelieving fears, and by what has the semblance of humility, and does not see the evil of refusing to believe the words of Christ – and so he virtually makes Christ a liar.

Difficulties. The sinner delays; he strives; he prays and fasts and, finally, almost despairs. These efforts seem to have the effect of driving him further from salvation than before. He therefore concludes that he may as well give over seeking, as he is now conscious of his utter impotence. But in this dark, distressing hour, when he nearly despairs of mercy, he is surprised by a view of the way of reconciliation. Christ appears both able and willing to save him, and he sees how God can be just and yet justify him through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Everything appears so plain that he wonders he never saw it before, so plain that he feels confident that he could cause anyone to understand it.

But the first views of faith are not always so clear; more commonly the first light is like that of the dawn of day, which gradually increases. Often the convinced, discouraged sinner is first made to see the fullness of Christ; whereas previously he feared that his sins were too great to be pardoned, he is now brought to believe that “He is able . . . to save to the uttermost, all who come unto God by Him”. Even this is like life from the dead, to a sinner on the borders of despair. Here is a real exercise of faith, while the believing soul entertains as yet no persuasion of being in the favour of God – and this is an evidence that such a persuasion is not of the essence of faith. But when the view of the way of salvation is at first clear, or whenever it becomes clear, nothing fills the soul with greater wonder and gratitude than that Christ is waiting to receive sinners in all their guilt and vileness – to receive them just as they are, not only without merit but also without preparation, and that He undertakes to do the whole work of their salvation gratuitously.

The experience of trusting. Now he begins to know by experience what it is to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now he willingly commits his soul into Christ’s hands, in confidence that He will keep it safely. The sinner trusts in Him for pardon and justification, and this he can do without hesitation, for he sees that He has borne sin and has become “the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”. He trusts in Christ also for divine teaching, knowing that His people are all taught of God by His Spirit, and led into the knowledge of all necessary truth. He trusts in Him for complete

deliverance from inherent corruption and from the power of the grave. In short, he trusts in Him as his complete and eternal Saviour, who through His love and merit will bring him off conqueror and more than conqueror. He is satisfied with the Redeemer in all His offices and mediatorial work. The language of his heart is, "He hath done all things well".

When the soul, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is led to view Christ as "the way, the truth, and the life," it is a very common experience to have precious promises brought successively into view. They come dropping into the soul as honey from the comb, or rather as manna from heaven. Sometimes, however, the soul is absorbed in the contemplation of the truth contained in a single text, for there are incomprehensible riches in the Word of God. Often the whole plan of salvation is suggested by a single passage of Holy Scripture. All we need is to have the illumination of the Spirit accompany the reading or preaching of the Word, to cause us to see wonderful things in texts which had often been heard or read without emotion, and in contemplating them the mind is filled with unspeakable joy.

Now the enlightened soul has no need of arguments to convince it that the Scriptures are indeed the Word of God. This is evident from the excellence which is seen in them. And as the light of day reveals to us the sun shining in its strength as the most conspicuous and glorious object in the visible heavens, so the light of divine truth reveals Christ, "the Sun of righteousness", as the most glorious object of contemplation, for it is in His face that the glory of God is manifested. Christ is "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person" (Heb 1:3).

The soul which has thus been raised from the horrible pit and miry clay of natural corruption and condemnation, and is established on the rock of ages, has a new song put into his mouth, even praise for salvation. He can now rejoice in God: in His existence; His attributes; His providence; His redeeming love in Christ, in all His glorious work of redemption; in the promise of God; in the means of grace; and in the hope of glory!

They who have once found Christ and trusted in Him, however they may be tossed with temptation, or distressed by doubts of their acceptance, never think of any other refuge but Christ – they never attempt to build on any other foundation. They show themselves to be His by trusting in Him, even when they walk in darkness and have no light. The more violent the storm by which they are assailed, the more tenaciously they adhere to the rock of their salvation. And when oppressed with a painful conviction of unfaithfulness and shortcoming in the service of Christ, no ease or peace is experienced until they come anew to the cross and by faith obtain a fresh sprinkling of the blood of reconciliation. The blood of Christ is the only balm for a soul

wounded with a sense of sin. As to his best works, instead of pleading them as a ground of pardon or a reason for acceptance, he is ashamed of them in the sight of God and continually prays that their imperfection may not be charged upon him.

Still he feels thankful to God that He has given him a heart to delight in His law after the inner man, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to aim at the glory of God and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. He is thankful for every evidence of being renewed in the spirit of his mind, for he knows that, if he is a new creature, it is altogether because of grace. Though the believer's past sins are forgiven, he needs fresh forgiveness every hour. But when he sins, he has an Advocate with the Father, whose propitiation has merit to take away all iniquity. There is no ground of confidence more satisfactory to the soul than the intercession of Christ. Thousands of trembling souls have trusted in that one declaration, and have found peace: "He is able . . . to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them". They have a great High Priest to appear in the presence of God for them; so they can come with boldness to the throne of grace to "obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need".

Future benefits. The believer also trusts in Christ for future help and future good. He relies on Christ for guidance in the way of truth and duty; he depends on Him for strength to encounter all enemies, to endure all afflictions, and to perform the most arduous duties. As he must, in his pilgrimage to heaven, pass the valley of the shadow of death, he relies on the faithful word of the great Shepherd, that he will be present to drive away all fear and distress. And in regard to bodily need, there is no ground for anxiety, because He has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee".

True believers trust in Christ that, when this earthly pilgrimage is finished, He will administer to them an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. On this point, the promises of God are clear and abundant. Christ says, "In My Father's house are many mansions". "I go", He says, "to prepare a place for you." Again: "Father, I will that they also . . . be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory". "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And at the last day He will say to every one of them, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "And these shall go away . . . into life eternal."

They trust also that these mortal bodies shall be raised from the grave, incorruptible and undying, and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. Christ is the resurrection and the life and, as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all believers be made alive.

Particular blessings. We need not dwell long on the blessedness of those who trust in the Redeemer; this has been in some measure anticipated in what has been said already. Yet it may be useful to mention their blessings:

(1.) They have received *forgiveness of sin*, and are assured that they shall never again come into condemnation. "There is . . . no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

(2.) They have *the indwelling of the Spirit of God*, which secures that they will continue in a state of grace. This enables them to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ – to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness. If believers were left to themselves, their conversion would be of little value, for they would soon be overcome by their spiritual enemies, and their last state would be worse than the first.

(3.) They are under *the special care of God's providence*. All things work together for their good. The very hairs of their head are numbered. Their afflictions are fatherly chastisements, which shall work for them the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Indeed these light afflictions are but for a moment and work out for them an exceedingly great and eternal weight of glory. Even death itself is reckoned in the catalogue of blessings. Not only are Paul and Apollos and Cephas theirs, and things present and things to come, and life – but death also, the sting of which is extracted, for the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but when the law is satisfied the sting is taken away.

(4.) They enjoy *inward peace*. They have peace with God, peace of conscience, peace from the jarring elements of corrupt passions. They look forward to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Hope that does not make ashamed is the anchor of their souls in all the storms of life.

(5.) When they leave the world they shall be blessed in the open vision of God's glory, for they shall see no more darkly as through a glass, but face to face. They shall know as they are known. They shall be perfectly cleansed from the pollutions of sin, and when they shall see the Saviour, they shall be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is. Glorious state of complete happiness! Blessed indeed are all they who have a right to the inheritance of the saints in light.

In religion we can do nothing without faith. The faith demanded is not that of devils, which makes them tremble and leaves them unsanctified; nor the faith of Agrippa, which was without intellectual doubt but brought him to no decision; nor that of the stony ground hearers, who anon with joy received the word but had no root in themselves, but it is that faith which is of the operation of God and transforms the whole soul.

W S Plumer

Luther and the Reformation¹

10. Forgiveness for Sale

J H Merle d'Aubigné

Great agitation prevailed among the German people, for the Roman Church had opened a vast market upon earth. From the crowds of purchasers, and the shouts and jokes of the sellers, it might have been called a fair, but a fair conducted by monks. The merchandise that they were extolling, and which they offered at a reduced price, was, they claimed, the salvation of souls!

These dealers traversed the country in a handsome carriage, living in great state and spending freely. When the procession approached a town, a deputy waited on the magistrate, and said, "The Grace of God and of the Holy Father is at your gates". Instantly the priests and nuns, the council, the schoolmasters and their pupils, the tradesmen with their banners, men and women, young and old, went out to meet these merchants, bearing lighted tapers. The procession moved towards the church. The Pontiff's bull of grace was carried in front on a velvet cushion, or on a cloth of gold. The chief of the indulgence-merchants came next, holding a large red wooden cross in his hand. All the procession thus moved along amidst singing, prayers and the smoke of incense. The cross he carried was placed in front of the altar.

One person in particular attracted attention. It was he who carried the red cross and played the chief part. He was robed in the Dominican dress, and was known as John Tetzel. From the year 1502 he had uninterruptedly dealt in indulgences. His skill had soon procured him the office of chief commissioner. He had been convicted of adultery and infamous conduct, and Emperor Maximilian had ordered him to be put into a sack and thrown into the river, but the Elector Frederick of Saxony obtained his pardon. But he had not learned modesty. He led two of his children about with him. To him all means were good that filled his chest.

When the cross had been erected, Tetzel went into the pulpit and began to extol the value of indulgences. "Indulgences", said he, "are the most precious and the most noble of God's gifts." "This cross (pointing to the red cross) has as much efficacy as the very cross of Jesus Christ." "Come and I will give you letters, all properly sealed, by which even the sins that you in-

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, still learning biblical principles, trying to bring about debate on a set of theses dealing with doctrine – but unsuccessfully. This article leads up to the much-more-famous 95 theses which he posted on the door of the church in Wittenberg on 31 October 1517, 500 years ago.

tend to commit may be pardoned.” “I would not change my privileges for those of St Peter in heaven, for I have saved more souls by my indulgences than the Apostle by his sermons.” “There is no sin so great that an indulgence cannot remit . . . only let him pay well, and all will be forgiven him.”

Tetzel then passed to another subject: “Indulgences avail not only for the living, but for the dead. For that, not even repentance is necessary. Priest, noble, merchant, wife, youth, maiden, do you not hear your parents and your other friends who are dead, and who cry from the bottom of the abyss: We are suffering horrible torments! A trifling alms would deliver us; you can give it, and you will not!”

“At the very instant,” Tetzel continued, “that the money rattles at the bottom of the chest, the soul escapes from purgatory and flies liberated to heaven. . . . With 12 groats you can deliver your father from purgatory, and you are ungrateful enough not to save him! I declare to you, though you should have but a single coat, you ought to strip it off and sell it, in order to obtain this grace.

“Do you know why our most holy Lord distributes so rich a grace? It is to restore the ruined Church of St Peter and St Paul, so that it may not have its equal in the world. This Church contains the bodies of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and those of a multitude of martyrs. These saintly bodies, through the present state of the building, are now . . . dishonoured, reduced to rottenness, by the rain and the hail. . . . Shall these sacred ashes remain longer in the mire and in degradation?”

Such were the discourses that Germany listened to with astonishment in the days when God was preparing Luther. “As for those,” people were told, “who wish to deliver souls from purgatory and procure the pardon of all their offences, let them put money into the chest; contrition of heart or confession of mouth is not necessary. Let them only hasten to bring their money, for thus they will perform a work most useful to the souls of the dead, and to the building of the Church of St Peter.” With what skill were presumptuous and lying words foisted in between holy and Christian expressions!

At Magdeburg, Tetzel refused to absolve a rich lady unless, as he told her, she would pay one hundred florins in advance. She requested the advice of her usual confessor, a Franciscan. “God grants the remission of sins gratuitously,” replied the monk; “He does not sell it.” When Tetzel heard the counsel she had received, he exclaimed, “Such a counsellor deserves to be banished or to be burnt”. Tetzel rarely found men enlightened enough, and still more rarely men who were bold enough, to resist him. In general he easily managed the superstitious crowd.

Luther, as far as we know, heard of Tetzel for the first time at Grimma in

1516, just as he was commencing his visitation of the churches. It was reported to Staupitz, who was still with Luther, that there was a seller of indulgences at Wurzel named Tetzel, who was making a great noise. Some of his extravagant expressions were quoted, and Luther exclaimed with indignation: "If God permit, I will make a hole in his drum".

Staupitz, taking advantage of the confidence the Elector Frederick placed in him, had often called his attention to the abuses of the indulgences and the scandalous lives of the vendors. The princes of Saxony, indignant at this disgraceful traffic, had forbidden the merchant to enter their provinces. He was therefore compelled to remain in the territories of his patron, the Archbishop of Magdeburg; but he approached as near as he could to Saxony. The people flocked in crowds from Wittenberg to the indulgence-market at Jüterbog, only four miles from Wittenberg.

At this period Luther was still full of respect for the Church and the Pope. "I was at that time", he said, "a monk and a most furious papist, so intoxicated, so drowned in the Roman doctrines, that I would have willingly aided, if I could, in killing anyone who should have had the audacity to refuse the slightest obedience to the Pope." At the same time, his heart was ready to catch fire for everything that he recognised as truth and against everything he believed to be error.

Luther was one day seated in the confessional at Wittenberg. Many of the townspeople came successively and confessed themselves guilty of great excesses. Adultery, licentiousness, usury, ill-gotten gains – such were the crimes acknowledged to him by those souls of which he would one day have to give an account. He reprimanded, corrected, instructed. But how great was his astonishment when these individuals replied that they would not abandon their sins!

Greatly shocked, Luther declared that, since they would not promise to change their lives, he could not absolve them. They then appealed to their letters of indulgence; they showed them and maintained their virtue. But Luther replied that he had nothing to do with these papers and added: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish". They cried out and protested, but Luther was immovable. They must cease to do evil and learn to do well, or else there was no absolution. "Have a care," he added, "how you listen to the clamours of these indulgence-merchants; you have better things to do than buy these licences which they sell at so vile a price."

The inhabitants of Wittenberg, in great alarm, hastily returned to Tetzel. They told him that an Augustinian monk had treated his letters with contempt. Tetzel bellowed with anger from the pulpit, employing insults and curses. To strike the people with greater terror, he had a fire lighted several times in the

market place, declaring that he had received an order from the Pope to burn all heretics who presumed to oppose his most holy indulgences.

This fact was not the cause of the Reformation but its first occasion. A pastor, seeing the sheep of his fold in a course in which they must perish, sought to withdraw them from it. As yet he had no thought of reforming the Church and the world. He had seen Rome and her corruptions, but still he did not rise up against her. He had a sense of some of the abuses under which Christendom groaned, but he did not think of correcting them. God willed a reform, and selected Luther to be its instrument. The same remedy which had been so efficacious in healing his own wounds, the hand of God was to apply by him to the sores of Christendom. He remained tranquil in the sphere that had been assigned to him. He walked wherever his Master called him. He fulfilled at Wittenberg the duties of professor, preacher and pastor. It is there the evil attacked him, and error sought him out. They would prevent him from executing his office. His conscience, bound to the Word of God, revolted. Is it not God who called him? To resist was a duty. He must speak.

Luther, who was impelled equally by obedience to the Word of God and charity towards men, ascended the pulpit. He forearmed his hearers, but with gentleness, as he says himself. His prince had obtained from the Pope special indulgences for the castle chapel at Wittenberg. Some of the blows that he was aiming at the inquisitor's indulgences might fall on those of the elector. It matters not! If he sought to please men, he would not be Christ's servant.

"No one can prove by Scripture", said the faithful minister of the Word to the people of Wittenberg, "that the righteousness of God requires from the sinner a penalty or satisfaction. The only duty it imposes is a true repentance, a sincere conversion, a resolution to bear the cross of Christ and to perform good works. It is a great error to pretend to make satisfaction for our sins to God's righteousness by oneself; God pardons them gratuitously by His inestimable grace.

Attacking the pretences under which indulgences were published, he continued: "They would do much better to contribute for love of God to the building of St Peter's, than to buy indulgences with this intention. But, say you, shall we then never purchase any? I have already told you, and I repeat it, my advice is that no one should buy them. Leave them for drowsy Christians, but you should walk apart and for yourselves! We must turn the faithful aside from indulgences and exhort them to the works which they neglect."

Finally, glancing at his adversaries, Luther concluded in these words: "And should any cry out that I am a heretic (for the truth I preach is very prejudicial to their strong box), I care but little for their clamours. They are

gloomy and sick brains, men who have never tasted the Bible, never read the Christian doctrine, never comprehended their own doctors, and who lie rotting in the rags and tatters of their own vain opinions. May God grant both them and us a sound understanding! Amen.”

After these words, Luther left the pulpit, leaving his hearers in great emotion at such daring language. This sermon was printed, and made a profound impression on all who read it. Tetzl replied to it and Luther answered again, but these discussions did not take place till the year 1518.

Love to Christ or the World?¹

Richard Sibbes

From Demas forsaking Paul and embracing the present world, we learn that the love of Christ and of the world cannot lodge together in one heart.

Reason 1. They are two masters, ruling by contrary laws. Christ was resolved to suffer, but the world says, “Spare thyself” (see Mt 16:22). How can these agree? I deny not but a man may be truly religious and abound with all outward blessings, but the love of the world and love of religion cannot live in one breast. When the love of the world entered into Judas, it is said the devil entered into him (Jn 13:2). Now Christ and Satan are contrary one to the other. Where religion is, it carries the soul upwards to heaven and heavenly things; but where the love of the world is, it brings the soul downward to the earth and things below.

Application. This shows the gross hypocrisy of such men as labour to bring God and the world together – which cannot be. Where the world has possession of the heart, it makes us false to God and false to man. It makes us unfaithful in our callings and false to religion itself. Labour therefore to put the world in its own place, under your feet; for if we love the world, we shall break with religion, with the Church, and with God Himself. We see how it hindered the man in the Gospel from blessedness: when once Christ told him he must sell all that he had and give to the poor, “he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions” (Mt 19:22). How these things steal the good word out of our hearts, as the birds stole the seed that was on the wayside (Mt 13:4)! It even chokes the word, as the tares choked the corn when it sprang up (Mt 13:26). Where this worldly love is, there can be no true profession of Christ – let men delude themselves never so much.

¹The second of two extracts from a sermon entitled, “The Danger of Backsliding”; Sibbes’ text was: “For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world” (2 Tim 4:10). Taken, with editing, from *Works of Richard Sibbes*, vol 7.

Question. But how shall I know that I love the world?

That will be seen by observing the bent of our heart, how it is swayed towards God and His service and how towards things below. When two masters are parted, it will be known who their servants are as they each follow their own master. Blessed be God, in these times we enjoy both religion and the world together; but if times of suffering should approach, it would be known whose servants we are. Consider therefore beforehand what you would do. If trouble and persecution should arise, would you stand up for Christ and set light by liberty, riches, credit, all – in comparison of Him?

Yet we must know it is not the world as such that draws our heart from God and goodness, but the *love* of the world. Worldly things are good in themselves and are given to sweeten our passage to heaven. They sweeten the profession of religion; therefore do not bring a false report upon the world. It is your falseness that makes it hurtful, in loving it so much. Use it as a servant all your days, and not as a master, and you may have comfort in it. It is not the world itself that hurts us but setting our hearts upon it. When God should be in our thoughts, our spirits are even drunk with the cares below. Thorns will not prick of themselves, but when they are grasped in a man's hand they prick deep. So this world and the things of it are all good, and were all made by God for the benefit of His creature, unless our immoderate affection makes them hurtful, which indeed embitters every pleasant thing to us.

This is the root of all evil. When once a man's heart is set upon the world, how lightly he treats God, and the peace of his conscience, to attain his ends! How he breaks with God, His truth, religion and all, to satisfy a lust! Indeed as we fasten our love, so we are either good or bad. We are not as we know, but as we love. If we set our love on earthly things, we ourselves become base and earthly; but if we love heavenly things, our way of life will be spiritual and divine. Our affections are those things which declare what we are. If we do not love religion, it is no matter what we know or talk of it.

He that loves the world brings it into the Church with him. It is chief in his thoughts, and therefore he carries it about with him in his heart wherever he goes. As it is said of Israel that they brought Egypt with them into the wilderness, so these bring the world to the ordinances of God; they come to the hearing of the word like drones, leaving their stings behind them.

Paul does not say here that Demas forsook him for fear of persecution, but for the love of the world. Faults are aggravated by deliberation. Peter denied his Master, but it was not after deliberation, whereas Demas did it in cold blood. He loved the world; he set up something created higher in his heart than the Creator.

Application. Labour to know the world so that you may detest it. In religion, the more we know the more we will love; but the more we know all worldly things the less we will love them. So a picture afar off will look good, but come near it and it is not so. Let us see then what the world is. Alas, it is but the present world, which will vanish away suddenly. Poor Demas thought a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush, and therefore he would brave it out a while; but what has become of him now? Often, when a worldling seeks these things, he loses himself and the world too; but a Christian never loses what he seeks after: God and Christ, and the things of a better life. The better we know the vanities of the world and the excellences of grace, the more we will love the one and hate the other.

Labour then for faith, that you may overcome the world. It was an excellent speech of Christ, when He sent forth His disciples, “Lacked ye any thing?” And they said, “Nothing” (Lk 22:35). Labour therefore for faith to rely on the promise for provision, protection and all things needful. If God is our shepherd, we are sure to lack nothing.

And cherish a waking heart; lay hold of eternal life. The way to get this is not to be drunk of the world, but to be wise, redeeming your time; and balance these earthly things with heavenly. See what these fading comforts are in comparison with eternity. All the things we see here are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal (2 Cor 4:18). Therefore we should let our affections run the right way and have Abraham’s eyes to see afar off, and feed our meditations with the things which we shall have hereafter, as Moses did.

I beseech you, let us prize the favour of God above all that the earth affords. What though we endure hardness here! Did Christ come to this earth to suffer for us, and shall not we suffer some difficulties for Him? Faith can see greater good in Christ than in the creature. This is what will set out the vanity of the world and the excellence of heaven, the certainty of the one and the perishing nature of the other. It will make things to come seem present with us, and find out a sufficiency in the worst state.

This is given as the glory of the grace that was to be administered under the gospel – that it should change the nature of the vilest men; that it should take away cruelty from the wolf and violence from the leopard, rage from the lion and poison from the asp – making them gentle and useful as the kid and the calf, the cow and the ox (Is 11:6-9). The main business of believers in this world is diligently to seek after the city of God, or the attainment of eternal rest with Him; and this is the character whereby they may be known.

Divine worship respects, as its object, each person of the blessed Trinity equally, not as this or that person, but as this or that person is God.

John Owen

Acknowledging God¹

Charles Bridges

Proverbs 3:6. *In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.*

Let our confidence be uniform: *In all thy ways acknowledge Him.* Take **L**one step at a time, every step with God's warrant and under His direction. (Compare Ezra 8:21-23, Neh 1:11.) Always plan for yourself in simple dependence on God.² It is nothing less than self-idolatry to conceive that we can carry on even the ordinary matters of the day without His counsel. He loves to be consulted. Therefore take all your difficulties to be resolved by Him. Be in the habit of going to Him in the first place – before self-will, self-pleasing,³ self-wisdom, human friends, convenience, expedience. Before any of these have been consulted, go to God at once.

Consider no circumstances too clear to need His direction.⁴ In all your ways, small as well as great – in all your concerns, personal or relative, temporal or eternal – let Him be supreme. Who of us has not found the unspeakable “peace” of bringing to God matters too minute or individual to be entrusted to the most confidential ear?⁵ Abraham thus acknowledged God. Wherever he pitched a tent for himself, there was always an altar for God (Gen 12:7, 13:18). In choosing a wife for his son, there was a singular absence of worldliness. No mention was made of riches, honour, beauty – only of what concerned the name and honour of his God (Gen 24:1-8; see also his servant: vv 12-27).

Thus did the wise man's father acknowledge God in all his ways, asking counsel of Him in all his difficulties and was never disappointed.⁶ Now if we are weaned from the idolatry of making our bosom our oracle, and our heart our counsellor; if in true poverty of spirit we go every morning to our Lord, not knowing how to guide ourselves for the day, our eye constantly looking upward for direction (Ps 5:3, 143:8-10, 25:4,5), the light will come down.⁷

¹An edited extract from Bridges' commentary on Proverbs.

² Jas 4:15. “If the Lord will” – as Fuller remarks with his pithy quaintness, “a parenthesis, and yet the most important part of the sentence”.

³See the awful hypocrisy of, and the judgement following, asking counsel of God under this deadly influence in Jer 42:1-3, 19-22; Ezek 14:1-6.

⁴See the evil consequence of this inconsiderate neglect in Jos 9:14.

⁵Phil 4:6,7: “In every thing”.

⁶1 Sam 23:9-11, 30:6-8; 2 Sam 2:1, 5:19. Compare the smarting rod with the neglect of this godly habit (1 Sam 27:1 with 1 Sam 29).

⁷Mt 6:22. Compare Ps 32:8, 34:5; Neh 1:4-11, 2:4-8. When nearly 80 years old, Sir Matthew Hale left it on record, as his experience, that whenever he had committed his way simply and unreservedly to the Lord, He had always directed his path.

“*He shall direct thy paths.*” We do not need new revelations or visible tokens (such as Ex 13:21,22). Study the Word with prayer. Mark God’s Spirit shedding light on it. Compare it with what you observe of the providences of the day (Ps 107:43), not judging by constitutional bias (a most doubtful interpreter) but pondering with sober, practical, reverential faith.

Let the will be kept in a quiet, subdued, cheerful readiness to move, stay, retreat, turn to the right hand or to the left, at the Lord’s bidding – always remembering that what is least our own doing is best, and that a pliable spirit always secures the needful guidance (compare Ps 32:8,9 and Is 48:17,18 with Is 30:21). We may be led, for the exercise of our faith, “in a way that [we] knew not” (Is 42:16, 50:10) – perhaps a way of disappointment, or even of mistake. Yet no step well prayed over will bring ultimate regret. Though the promise will not render us infallible; our very error will be overruled for deeper humiliation and self-knowledge; and thus even this mysterious direction will in the end be gratefully acknowledged; “He led them forth by the right way” (Ps 107:7).

A Finished Work Foretold¹

J C Ryle

This part of John’s narrative of Christ’s passion contains points of deep interest which are silently passed over by Matthew, Mark and Luke. The reason of this silence we are not told. Suffice it for us to remember that, both in what they recorded and in what they did not record, all four Evangelists wrote by inspiration of God.

Let us mark, for one thing, in these verses, *the many fulfilments of prophetic Scripture throughout every part of Christ’s crucifixion*. Three different predictions are specially mentioned – in Exodus, Psalms and Zechariah – which received their accomplishment at the cross. Others, as every well-informed Bible-reader knows, might easily be added. All combine to prove one and the same thing. They prove that the death of the Lord Jesus Christ at Golgotha was a thing foreseen and predetermined by God. Hundreds of years before the crucifixion, every part of the solemn transaction was arranged in God’s counsels, and the minutest particulars were revealed to the Prophets. From first to last it was a thing foreknown, and every portion of it was in accordance with a settled plan and design. In the highest, fullest sense, when Christ died, He “died according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor 15:3).

¹Taken, with editing, from *Expository Thoughts on John*, vol 3. This article contains the first two points in Ryle’s comments on John 19:28-37.

We need not hesitate to regard such fulfilments of prophecy as strong evidence of the Divine authority of God's Word. The Prophets foretell, not only Christ's death, but the particulars of His death. It is impossible to explain so many accomplishments of predicted circumstances upon any other theory. To talk of luck, chance and accidental coincidence as sufficient explanation is preposterous and absurd. The only rational account is the inspiration of God.

The Prophets who foretold the particulars of the crucifixion, were inspired by Him who foresees the end from the beginning; and the books they wrote under His inspiration ought not to be read as human compositions but Divine. Great indeed are the difficulties of all who pretend to deny the inspiration of the Bible. It really requires more unreasoning faith to be an infidel than to be a Christian. The man who regards the repeated fulfilment of minute prophecies about Christ's death, such as those about His dress, His thirst, His pierced side and His bones, as the result of chance and not of design must indeed be a credulous man.

We should mark, secondly, in these verses, *the specially solemn saying which came from the Lord's lips just before He died*. John relates that "when Jesus . . . had received the vinegar . . . He said, It is finished; and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost". It is surely not too much to say that, of all the seven famous sayings of Christ on the cross, none is more remarkable than this, which John alone has recorded.

The precise meaning of this wondrous expression, "It is finished", is a point which the Holy Spirit has not thought good to reveal to us. That there is a depth about it, we must all instinctively feel, which man has probably no line to fathom. Yet there is perhaps no irreverence in conjecturing the thoughts that were in the Lord's mind when the word was spoken.

The finishing of all the known and unknown sufferings which He came to endure, as Substitute; the finishing of the ceremonial law, which He came to wind up and fulfill, as the true Sacrifice for sin; the finishing of the many prophecies, which He came to accomplish; the finishing of the great work of man's redemption, which was now close at hand – all this, we need not doubt, the Lord had in view when He said, "It is finished". There may have been more, for anything we know. But in handling the language of such a Being as the Saviour, on such an occasion, and at so mysterious a crisis in His history, it is well to be cautious. The place whereon we stand is holy ground.

One comforting thought, at all events, stands out most clearly on the face of this famous expression. We rest our souls on a "finished work" if we rest them on the work of Jesus Christ the Lord. We need not fear that either sin,

or Satan, or law shall condemn us at the last day. We may lean back on the thought that we have a Saviour who has done all, paid all, accomplished all, performed all that is necessary for our salvation. We may take up the challenge of the Apostle, “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died: yea rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom 8:34). When we look at our own works, we may well be ashamed of their imperfections. But when we look at the finished work of Christ, we may feel peace. We “are complete in Him” if we believe (Col 2:10).

The Opening of Vova Clinic

Rev J R Tallach

My wife and I travelled to the Free Presbyterian Mission in Zimbabwe on June 12 and we returned on June 28. After a night in Bulawayo we went to Mbuma to be welcomed and well cared for by Dr Snoek, her parents and sister and Willy Geursten, the Matron. Dr Snoek and Miss Geurtsen are holding the fort at the hospital, which is being increasingly recognised as a centre of medical excellence by the Government. Dr Snoek spoke of the possibility of creating an accident and emergency department and a physiotherapy unit.

I took the prayer meeting the next day at Rev N Sibanda’s request. Mr Sibanda is busy taking prayer meetings every day of the week except Monday. Mrs Sibanda, his wife, is a great asset as a nurse at the hospital. Later that Thursday morning, June 15, we set out to fulfil the main purpose of our visit by attending the opening of a new clinic at Vova, a 20-minute journey over a very bad road from Mbuma; it is the second clinic to be set up under the auspices of the Hospital. The chief guest was Mr Mathema, a Government minister, and on his arrival, proceedings got underway.

The chairman for the occasion was our Mission Administrator, Mr M Mpofu. We began with worship, which I was asked to conduct. Several speeches followed, including one by Chief Sikobokobo, who spoke of being treated for an eye complaint as a boy while I was at Mbuma, and ending with Mr Mathema, the principal guest. We were shown round the very impressive clinic, given a main meal in a marquee in the bush and then went our separate ways. At the end of the week, Dr Snoek left for a well-earned break with her parents and sister, and Dr Janlouis Bezemer took her place for two weeks.

Having stayed two nights at Mbuma and seen round the hospital, we travelled down to Ingwenya on Friday for the weekend. The absence of Rev

A MacLean and his sister Miss N MacLean was something we felt acutely while at Ingwenya, but we were warmly received by the Ingwenya people. The congregation of over 600 pupils and around 60 of the local people must be an almost unique sight in these difficult days and, with three diets of worship, the Lord's Day passed swiftly. On Monday two men from the congregation, one a member, asked if there was anyone from Scotland who could go to help at Ingwenya during Mr MacLean's illness.

Following the Sabbath we moved into Bulawayo and I assisted Rev S Khumalo at Bulawayo communion. Good congregations gathered, with around 250 on the Sabbath and an encouragingly-high proportion of young adults. The singing was excellent. Two new members were accepted and one person received for baptism.

On Monday we were shown around Thembiso Home by Mr Busiso Maphala and his assistant, Mr Clifford Moyo, and I had an extended worship with the children, speaking on Psalm 23. The children sang enthusiastically and our prayer is that the Lord would teach them the new song of Psalm 40. We also met Nonceba Mzamo, a daughter of the late Rev P Mzamo, now employed as House Supervisor. The Home appeared clean and the children well cared for.

We left the next day and are thankful to the Lord for travelling mercies and to our hosts for kindness shown to us while on the Mission.

Motives and Advice for Ruling Elders¹

Thomas Boston

I exhort you to labour rightly to discharge your duty and I offer the following motives.

1. Consider it is a sacred office in the house of God to which God has called you; therefore let us together take that exhortation: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). The office is honourable in itself, however the world may esteem it. David, though a king, would have thought it no disparagement to himself to say, "A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps 84:10). But the office has work annexed to it; and being sacred, it is not to be played with. Labour to approve yourselves to your Lord and Master.

¹An edited extract from Boston's *Works*, vol 2.

2. By it you have a fair occasion to be serviceable to God and to advance Christ's kingdom in the congregation and suppress that of the devil. And what should we not do to do good to souls? "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas 5:20). I think that now, for a considerable time, I and my brethren in the eldership might have said, "The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall" (Neh 4:10); and it has gone near to sinking some of our spirits.

But now that God has inclined the hearts of so many to come over and help us – if we take courage in our Master's work, to ply it faithfully, diligently, zealously and prudently, and the Lord bless us with unity among ourselves and real zeal for His honour, to put our shoulders jointly to the work – we may hope, by the blessing of God, to see a more promising face on this congregation, sin more discouraged and piety more increased.

3. You and I must give an account to our great Master how we have carried ourselves in this work (Heb 13:17). If we are faithful, we shall not be without our reward from the chief Shepherd, who will give us a crown of life. If we are unfaithful, woe will be unto us for betraying our trust.

I give you a few advices:

1. Remember always that it is God with whom you have to do. This will make you pay little regard to men's feud or favour, if you do your work agreeably to God's will.

2. Study to act in dependence on the Lord, for He sends no one to warfare at his own charges. Look to His promised assistance when you set about your work.

3. Labour to believe that the way of uprightness and faithfulness is the sure way. "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Prov 16:7). "He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth" him (Prov 28:23). Let men's corruptions say what they will, their consciences will speak in favour of faithful dealing.

4. Watch over your own persons, to be blameless and exemplary in your personal walk (1 Tim 3:1-3). If you are not tender in your walk, you will do more hurt than you can do good. Being honoured to be rulers in the house of a holy God, you must be holy as the Master is holy: tender in your words, circumspect in your actions, and therefore watchful over your hearts.

5. Watch over your families. Everyone who has a family is obliged to do this, and you in a special manner (1 Tim 3:4,5). The sinful practices of those in your family will reflect a peculiar dishonour on you and, through you, on

your Lord and Master. Therefore your family should be a church where God is to be duly worshipped morning and evening, and good discipline kept up by admonition, reproof and watchfulness.

6. You must watch over one another, each over his fellow elders, knowing that anything scandalous in one of the society reflects dishonour on the whole, and by them on the Lord Himself. And if you are not careful on that side, there will be little good of your watching over the flock. Therefore strict discipline among yourselves is absolutely necessary.

Book Review

The Mysteries of Christianity, Revealed Truths Expounded and Defended, by T J Crawford, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 347 pages, £15.50, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Crawford (1812-1875) is now largely forgotten except perhaps for his controversy with Free Church of Scotland minister R S Candlish over the latter's book *The Fatherhood of God*. Principal John Macleod calls Crawford's answer to Candlish "one of the most important contributions to the literature" on this subject. Crawford stayed in the Church of Scotland at the Disruption, becoming Professor of Theology in Edinburgh University in 1860. Yet he is described by Principal Macleod as "a sound and able theologian", and the book under review demonstrates the truth of his comment. This volume, first published in 1874, preserves the material originally given as a set of public lectures.

The word *mystery* is used in Scripture to mean a truth that we could not know unless it was revealed from heaven. However, Crawford points out that he uses the word to refer to "some matter pertaining to the divine character or procedure which, even when revealed, is not fully comprehensible by us; something which is only revealed to us *in part*, and which, so far as it is revealed, transcends the limits of human knowledge" (p 2).

The first five lectures provide a general discussion of the mysteries of Christianity; this is the more difficult part of the book. Among other issues, Crawford speaks of the problems that arise in our understanding of various doctrines because of the limited extent to which they are revealed, and insists that "it is necessary to take into account the professed aim and object of the Christian revelation". He explains that it is not "the avowed aim of Christianity to give us a full and thorough comprehension of the attributes, plans and doings of the Almighty, and to leave nothing untold or unexplained concerning them which men of a speculative or inquisitive spirit might wish to know".

He states further: “The grand design of Christianity was not to raise up a race of speculative philosophers, but to redeem and regenerate a race of sinners; to save men from the guilt and misery of a fallen state” (p 72).

Again the author points out that “the Bible does not profess or undertake to remove all mystery from the subjects of which it treats. . . . the Scriptures expressly teach us that the knowledge of God is ‘too wonderful for us,’ and so ‘high that we cannot attain to it;’ that ‘we cannot find out the Almighty to perfection’ . . . and that ‘secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever’”. Thus “we are warranted to conclude that whatever knowledge the Bible has withheld from us, pertaining to the reasons or explanations of its great truths, is probably such as our finite minds are for the present incapable of receiving” (p 73,74).

Crawford further reminds us that the doctrines of Christianity are more mysterious than they would otherwise have been, because of “the darkening and perverting influence of sin, by which the minds of fallen men are incapacitated for rightly discerning and appreciating spiritual things” (p 112). Having referred to the inability of the natural man to “receive or discern the things of the Spirit of God”, he asserts that “it would be matter of just reproach to a system of religion professing to be divinely revealed, if its doctrines were not in any respects mysterious due to the bleared or jaundiced vision of the carnal mind” (p 121).

Lectures 6-11 deal with five individual doctrines: the Trinity, the Person of Christ, the atonement, the work of the Holy Spirit and the purposes of God (the last of these doctrines occupying two lectures). In discussing the first of these, the author explains what is meant by the doctrine and states some of the Scripture evidence for it, before going on to refute some of the errors that have been put forward. He concludes that the doctrine “is *above our reason*”. Thus our powers of reasoning are incapable “of proving that it is contrary to reason” (p 151); the human mind is too limited.

This section of the book is extremely helpful in showing how we are to view such doctrines as are listed above. We should realise that these doctrines, in particular, have been revealed by God Himself, that we are to submit to the revelation and not submit them to the judgement of our own fallible, sinful minds. We ought to be thankful that God has condescended to give a revelation which is sufficient to guide us safely through this world and to bring us to the blessedness of heaven at last. Would that the theologians of the late nineteenth century had listened to Crawford!

In the final Lecture, the author provides “Cautions Against Prying into Matters Which Are Unrevealed”. He points out that it was the constant prac-

tice of Christ “to turn away the thoughts of His disciples from matters of a merely speculative nature to the great principles of the Christian faith and Christian duty” and he cites, as an example, the question, “Lord, are there few that be saved?” (pp 285-6). Again: “We have no right or reason to seek a higher knowledge of religious truths than God has given us” (p 295). After quoting Jesus’ question, “What is that to thee?” Crawford asks, “What real advantage can you derive” from “seeking a farther insight into divine mysteries than God has been pleased to give you in His Word?” (p 297).

In conclusion, Crawford draws attention to the fact that “religion is to every man a matter of personal concern” and a matter “of personal duty”. So he reminds the reader of the Saviour’s words, “What is that to thee? Follow thou Me.” Therefore “instead of searching into things that are beyond our reach, let us ponder well the weighty instructions and comply with the plain directions of the Saviour” (pp 301-3). The quotations given in this review are intended, not only to give something of the flavour of the book, but also to be profitable – teaching us, to some extent, the attitude we should have to the doctrines of Scripture.

This is a somewhat unusual book; parts of it are rather demanding; but it should be very useful in directing its readers away from arguing with God, and His revelation to mankind, towards submission to the form in which He has given that revelation and the extent of it. The republication of this volume is to be welcomed, especially at a time when it is far too readily, and falsely, assumed that the Bible has nothing to offer to the people of the twenty-first century. God still speaks authoritatively through His Word.

Notes and Comments

The DUP and Moral Issues

After agreeing to prop up Theresa May’s Conservative Government, the Democratic Unionist Party’s moral stance has come under heavy criticism. Many at Westminster, including the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, appear to be harassing the party leader, Arlene Foster, over abortion, same-sex “marriage” and LGBT “rights”. Such conduct displays the British Government’s resolve to push its secular agenda throughout the UK, even when it relies on the DUP’s support in parliament.

However, Mrs Foster has made it clear that she will do “everything in her power” to maintain the Province’s position on these vital moral issues. Recently she met up with the Northern Ireland anti-abortion group, Precious Life, and confirmed that the DUP was indeed coming under increasing

pressure to change Northern Ireland's law on terminations. This followed on from a Westminster decision to grant NHS funding to Northern Irish women so that they can have abortions free of charge in England and Wales. In addition, Labour MP Stella Creasy – who is firmly in the pro-abortion camp – is calling for funding to cover the women's travel costs to Great Britain. She came to Belfast to speak to the Family Planning Association on abortion rights – further seeking to “whip up” support for her cause amidst much controversy and protest. In 2016 Stormont rejected moves to weaken the current abortion law in Ulster, and a consultation on the question found clear support for maintaining the present legal position.

It is heartening to hear from Precious Life that Arlene Foster fully supports its work. A spokeswoman told *The Times*, “I can assure you that Mrs Foster was unequivocal in her pro-life conviction and assured us that the DUP will use their power to keep abortion and the 1967 Abortion Act out of pro-life Northern Ireland”. Its report adds that “the DUP leader congratulated Precious Life on its youth campaign group, which has travelled around Northern Ireland this summer promoting the retention of its laws on abortion, which are at odds with legislation in the rest of the UK”. Its message was clear: “With [pro-abortion] groups conspiring in a concerted and direct campaign to change our pro-life laws, our aim as a youth project of leading NI campaign group Precious Life was to remind our politicians that, without the right to life, all other rights are meaningless”. How true!

The DUP leader is also resisting pressure to introduce same-sex “marriage” into the Province. Arlene Foster has said publicly that the DUP believes “marriage is between a man and a woman” and “it remains my position very firmly”. She expressed frustration and sadness at being branded homophobic by supporters of same-sex “marriage”, adding, “If you stand up for marriage and if you stand up for the definition of marriage as we believe in it, then in some way that makes you homophobic and a hater of gays”. She adds, “Nothing could be further from the truth as far as I personally am concerned, and it really does hurt me when people call me a homophobe just because I stand up for the definition of marriage which I believe in, and I think this debate has become very toxic”.

Recently at a so-called gay pride event in Belfast, calling for the introduction of same-sex “marriage”, the UK Government approved the flying of the LGBT “rainbow” flag at an official building. When it was reported that Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein led a “gay rights” march, one commentator tellingly remarked, “I can't help but remember the ‘right’ his terrorist organisation denied 1800 ‘innocents’ directly and 3634 human beings in total: the most precious right of all: *life*.”

So when the DUP is feeling pressure on these moral issues both from inside and outside Northern Ireland, it is good to see Arlene Foster nailing her colours firmly to the mast and not yielding to the demands of a morally-lax British Government. It is hopeful too that when the British Government, in God's providence, is so dependent on the DUP for its support in Parliament that a degree of restraint will be exercised on moral issues. Of course it would be far more hopeful if we saw an outpouring of God's Spirit, not only on Northern Ireland, but on the whole of the UK and beyond. Perhaps the Democratic Unionist Party of Northern Ireland has "come to the kingdom for such a time as this".

KHM

Today's Godless Climate

A recent survey by the National Centre for Social Research suggests that more than half of people in Britain do not identify themselves as religious. Out of nearly 3000 people questioned, 53% described themselves as having "no religion". Of those aged 75 and over, 75% held themselves to be religious whereas among 18 to 25 year olds the figure dropped to 29%. Only 15% of the population now claim to be Anglicans, whereas in a previous survey in 2000 the figure was 30%. Roman Catholic adherence has remained stable for the past 30 years at 10% of the population, but the proportion belonging to non-Christian religions is currently 5%.

These statistics do not come as a surprise. The godless climate of our society, the gross moral evils which abound and the prevalence of false religion within the visible Church and beyond, are bound to lead to a lessening of religious consciousness and observance. The Anglican bishop of Liverpool, Paul Bayes, commented that being non-religious is not the same thing as "considered atheism". He argues that if the Church could only find ways "to show and tell those who say they have 'no religion' that faith – faith in the God who loves them still – can make that life-transforming difference for them and for the world". The bishop does not seem to consider that only the Holy Spirit can bring sinners to repent and believe the gospel and that false religion, as well as atheism, leads multitudes of blind souls to eternity "without God and without hope in the world". Indeed, the most solemn consideration suggested by this survey is that the Lord is leaving the people of Britain to walk on in darkness. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt 6:23).

AWM

The Absurdity of the Transgender Movement

The transgender movement continues its surprising progress in Britain, the latest news being that the store John Lewis no longer divides its children's section into "boys" and "girls". Although increasingly fashionable, the idea

that people can choose their sex is as absurd as that they could choose the colour of their skin. Our sex is not only a physical aspect of our bodies but an unalterable part of our genetic make-up. One can no more be “a woman trapped in a man’s body” than one can be “a black man trapped in a white man’s body” or “a genius trapped in the body of a simpleton”. A tiny handful of people may be of indeterminate sex, but the overwhelmingly majority are not; and the differences and interactions between men and women are an integral and God-given part of human life. “Male and female created He them” (Gen 5:2). The implications of trying to eradicate “gender” from human life are so colossal that one doubts that the proponents of transgenderism have thought their aims through in any detail.

In promoting this evil, our leaders are being left by God to declare their folly to the whole world, and to all future generations. “Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool” (Ecc 10:3). DWBS

The God of Judgement

The people of God are often impatient for judgement. In Revelation, the martyrs are seen crying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (6:10). The Lord, on the other hand is patient. He is “longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet 3:9). Nevertheless, He does judge, though His judgements may be long delayed.

We may not live to see the judgements on the present generation of ungodly leaders in Britain, but there is a former generation passing into eternity whose works are finally catching up with them. The generation that endorsed *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and subsequent obscene publications, that abolished the death penalty for murder, and that legalised abortion and homosexuality, is being gradually summoned into the presence of God. Many have died already but others are still alive. They have lived to see the resulting flood of obscenity, the most flagrant terrorists and murderers escaping their deserts, the millions of abortions, and the ordination and marriage of homosexuals.

Perhaps some of them have realised the error of what they did, while others have brazenly hardened their consciences. Along with their other sins, they will be confronted in eternity with this: that they chose to support these evils, not in the debauched society of the present day but in the relatively sober and church-going society of 50 or 60 years ago, with all the light that was still shining at that stage. They sowed the wind, and they will now reap the whirlwind, if eternity finds them without Christ (Hos 8:7). DWBS

Church Information

Theological Conference

This year's Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in St Jude's Free Presbyterian Church, Glasgow, on Tuesday, October 31, and Wednesday, November 1. Rev J R Tallach is to act as chairman. It is expected that the following papers will be read, all of them in public:

The Temple

Rev J B Jardine

Tuesday 2.30 pm

The Early Reformation

Mr Matthew Vogan

Tuesday 7.00 pm

James Bannerman on the Church of Christ

Rev A W MacColl

Wednesday 10.00 am

Luther and the Doctrine of Justification in Scotland

Rev D W B Somerset

Wednesday 2.30 pm

Ulrich Zwingli

Mr Frank Daubney

Wednesday 7.00 pm

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

Induction of Rev Donald Macdonald to Staffin Congregation

This induction will be held on Tuesday, 24 October 2017, in the Staffin Free Presbyterian church at 6.30 pm, and the Western Presbytery will meet in the church vestry at 6.15 pm. The Moderator, Rev I D MacDonald, will preach and preside, the Lord willing.

(Rev) D A Ross, Clerk of Presbytery

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Eastern Europe Fund: Anon, Ps 60:4, £100.

Home Mission Fund: Alexander MacKnight Trust, £37 645.16, per Balfour & Manson LLP.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Bracadle/Duirinish: Anon, for Struan communion expenses, £20, in Portree plate. Anon, for Vatten communion expenses, £20.

Glasgow: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10, £10. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £65, £25, £60, £65, £65, £65, £65. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £20 per DWN.

Greenock: *Bus Fund:* Anon, for Glasgow bus, £10. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £40. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £40. *TBS:* Anon, £40.

Inverness: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £20. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, "towards African ministers salaries", £20.

Laide: Anon, £50. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Friend, Aultbea, £30, £30, £30; Anon, £50, £40; Isleview Residents, for Bibles, £3, £3. *Magazines Fund:* Friend, Aultbea, £30. *Sustentation Fund:* Friend, Aultbea, £30; Anon, £40, £60.

Portree: Anon, £1000; Dutch Friends, £20. *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Dutch Friends, for Mbuma Mission, £20. *Sustentation Fund:* CMP, £20, £20, £20 per Rev IDM.

Staffin: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, Portree, £20.

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Glendale** and **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thursday 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr A MacLean: 01349 862855.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01847 831758.
- 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 Barrton 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 pm.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Sabbath 5 pm; **Strathg:** Sabbath: 6.30 pm (first and third Sabbaths of month).
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm. **Tarbert** and **Stockinich:** 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. **Sheilebost** 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.
- Kinlochervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01847 831758
- 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.
- Lochinvar:** Church. No F P services at present. Manse tel: 01571 844484.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist:** **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS; tel: 01876 510233.
- Oban:** Church and Manse. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Rev D Campbell; tel: 0131 312 8227.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev I D MacDonald, F P Manse, Achachork, Portree, IV51 9HT; tel: 01478 612110.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01470 562243. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Tain:** Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev A W MacColl; tel: 01851 810228.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.

England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Rev K M Watkins BA, 252 Brierclyffe Road, Burnley, BB10 2DQ; tel: 01282 835800.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623.

Northern Ireland

- Larne:** Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01282 835800.

Canada

Chesley, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 7.30 pm; Tuesday 8 pm. Contact: 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 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 Levyskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevyskyi@gmail.com; or contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua.

Zimbabwe

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

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

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

New Canaan: Church.

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

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