

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

July: First Sabbath: Beaulay; **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, Vancouver, Vatten, Zenka.

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

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

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

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe, Tauranga.

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Does God Dwell with Sinners?

Solomon had finished the enormous task of building a temple that would suitably show forth the glory of the true God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. It was constructed with huge stones, already prepared before they were brought to the site. It was lavishly decorated “and the whole house [was] overlaid with gold” (1 Ki 6:22). Inside and out, it was altogether a magnificent structure.

The time had now come for the temple to be set apart for the worship of God, and Solomon engaged in prayer. But in spite of the grandeur of the building, he had a highly-significant question to ask: “But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house which I have built” (2 Chr 6:18). God is infinite in every way; He cannot be restricted to any finite space. The answer to Solomon’s question was obvious: the temple, magnificent though it was, most certainly could not contain God.

But Solomon could see a more serious difficulty. In his prayer he referred to the possibility of God’s judgement coming upon Israel; he could foresee a time “when the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, *because they have sinned against Thee*” (2 Chr 6:26). Sin has a separating power; Isaiah understood this well and he warned his people of their danger: “Your iniquities have *separated* between you and your God” (Is 59:2). Solomon feared that, because of their sin, the people would be separated from God and His favour. This might be seen, for instance, in God not sending rain; then the crops would not grow well, or not grow at all; there would be terrible hunger.

It is even more serious when, because of sin, God does not send spiritual blessing, when there is “not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord” (Amos 8:11) – a spiritual famine. This very largely is the situation in the Western world, and we might ask, How can God “dwell with men on the earth” when they have forsaken Him, when they refuse to pay attention to His commands and reject the gospel of His Son? How can He deliver them from the consequences of sin in this life – and especially from the terrible sufferings of a lost eternity?

The basis for an answer to such questions was to be found near where Solomon stood, at the temple. There was an altar just outside the temple on which sacrifices were to be offered. Here there was much teaching for guilty sinners separated from God by their iniquities: (1.) They could learn that *a substitute for sinners* may be accepted. The animal being offered for an individual or for the entire people of Israel was a substitute for them. Although the animal sacrifices could not actually take the guilt of sin away from them, guilty Israelites ought to feel encouraged to look forward to the coming Messiah, the Substitute that God had appointed for sinners – whose sacrifice would truly take away sin.

(2.) The people could further learn that *God is merciful*; although He is perfectly just, He is willing to pardon sin. David asked, “If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?” (Ps 130:3). Clearly if there was no mercy in God, no one could stand before Him – “stand one’s ground, maintain one’s innocence”¹ before Him – particularly at the final judgement. Yet David can add, “But there is forgiveness with Thee”. Although God is inflexibly just, He is willing to do good to sinners – in particular to pass by transgression if a substitute will suffer the punishment instead of the sinner. And the substitute God has provided is His own Son, who suffered and died at Calvary in the place of sinners. What a demonstration of infinite mercy! John Calvin comments, “Men never serve God aright unless they know He is a gracious and merciful Being”. And W S Plumer noted that “it is both safe and obligatory for us to proclaim the doctrine of the full and free forgiveness of sin through faith in Christ”.²

(3.) The question may further arise: Has the sacrifice been *accepted*? First, were Solomon’s offerings accepted at the dedication of the temple, when he “sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be . . . numbered for multitude”? The sign of acceptance was that, “when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices” (2 Chr 7:1). In the same way, God showed that He accepted the sacrifices at the tabernacle when Israel were still in the wilderness (Lev 9:24). Likewise God showed that He accepted Elijah’s sacrifice on Mount Carmel; it was burnt up by fire from heaven in spite of being drenched with water. This demonstrated that He is the living God, who had power to act, in contrast with Baal, who was only a product of the imagination of fallen human beings (1 Ki 18:38).

The same question arises in connection with Christ’s sacrifice of Himself. The demonstration that this sacrifice was accepted lies in His resurrection,

¹J A Alexander, *The Psalms Translated and Explained*, Evangelical Press reprint, 1975.

²Both comments are taken from Plumer, *Psalms*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1975, p 1127.

for God “loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it” (Acts 2:24). Death could not hold Him because He had received the wages of sin in full, on behalf of all His people. God was well pleased with His work, for Christ had fully satisfied divine justice for them. And the sinner should also be satisfied with the work of Christ. If His Father was satisfied, how dare we be less than satisfied? How dare we refuse to receive Christ and all saving benefits through Him, when He calls to each of us: “Come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28)?

Let us also notice that, not only did the fire come down on the sacrifice, but “the glory of the Lord filled the house”. Because the sacrifices at the temple were accepted, God was willing “to dwell with men”. No sinner needed to stay away from Him if only he or she would look by faith to His provision, as illustrated in the sacrifices at the temple.

God still comes to dwell with human beings in spite of their sin: “thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place” – which suggests, if we read no further, that He will not dwell with sinners. But the Lord goes on: “with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit” (Is 57:15). He dwells with those who are repentant, turning from sin and looking to Christ as the sacrifice for sinners. They are those in whom the Holy Spirit has begun the work of making them holy. But though that sanctifying work is not yet complete and sin remains active in them, the Spirit now dwells within them; so Paul asks believers: “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?” (1 Cor 6:19). It is a place set apart to holiness and indwelt by the Spirit – and all because of Christ’s sacrifice. Likewise their prayers, though tainted by sin, are acceptable, for they are presented to God through the Mediator, Jesus Christ.

Just as God dwells in the individual believer, so He dwells in the His Church collectively. He assures her: “God is in the midst of her” (Ps 46:5). In spite of remaining sin, He will never forsake His Church; there will always be a people who seek to show forth His glory; there will always be a remnant according to the election of grace.

And when, in the end, the earth will be consumed with fire, none of God’s children will perish; as a glorified Church they will be eternally safe. In almost the final vision he saw, John “heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Rev 21:3). They will be perfectly holy; the great difficulty in the way of God dwelling with them will have been removed totally, for the Holy Spirit will have finished His work. In heaven there will be no more sin, no more guilt, no more curse. There will be no more separation.

How to Make Religion Our Business (2)¹

A Sermon by *Thomas Watson*

Luke 2:49. *Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?*

Application 2: *Trial*. Let us deal impartially with our own souls, and put ourselves on a strict trial before the Lord as to whether we make religion our business. And for our better progress herein, I shall lay down ten signs and characteristics of a man that makes religion his business. By these, as by a gospel touchstone, we may try ourselves.

1. *He does not place his religion only in externals*. "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly" (Rom 2:28). Religion is not only outward forms and shadows; this is to give God leaves instead of fruit. It is often seen that the pomp of worship destroys the purity, as paint on glass hinders the light; it is no untruth to say that formality may damn as well as profaneness. A superstitious Pharisee may as well be in hell as a drunken glutton. A Christian's main work is with his heart. He that makes religion his business gives God what is inward; he worships Him "in spirit and in truth" (Jn 4:24). In distilling, the spirits are strongest. The good Christian distils out the spirits for God. Aaron must offer the fat upon the altar: "He shall offer . . . an offering made by fire unto the Lord; the fat that covereth the inwards. . . . All the fat is the Lord's" (Lev 3:3,16). If Aaron had offered the skin instead of the fat, it would not have been accepted. External devotion alone is offering the skin; and they that give God only the skin of duty shall carry away only the shell of comfort.

2. *He avoids everything that may be a hindrance to him in his work*. A wicked man does not care whether the matter of religion goes forward or backward; he stands in the way of temptation. As if sin did not come fast enough, he draws it as "with a cart rope" (Is 5:18). But he who makes religion his business flees from temptation; and while he is running the heavenly race, he lays aside every weight of sin which does so easily beset him (Heb 13:1). A man may as well miss heaven by loitering in the way as by losing the way. "The king's business required haste" (1 Sam 21:8); so the business of religion requires haste. Therefore the good Christian is careful not to be taken off the work, and so be found late in it.

3. *He takes care to preserve his conscience from dishonour*; he had rather offend all the world than offend his conscience. "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience" (2 Tim 1:3). Much religion lies in conscience. Faith is a precious jewel, but conscience is the cabinet where

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Morning Exercises at Cripplegate*, vol 1. Watson (c1620-1686) was a noted Puritan minister. In the first part of this sermon, after explaining what it is to make religion our business, Watson spoke on a first point of application: *Information*.

this jewel must be kept: "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (1 Tim 3:9). Love is a beautiful flower, but this flower grows most in the garden of a pure conscience: "charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience" (1 Tim 1:5). So sacred a thing is conscience that, without this, all religion drops in pieces. He who makes religion his business labours to get conscience regulated by Scripture; having done this, he keeps his conscience as his eye, so that no dust of sin falls into it.

4. *His secular actions are under the influence of religion.*

(1.) *His eating and drinking.* He holds the golden bridle of temperance; he eats sparingly. "The godly man does not feed to please his bodily appetite," Chrysostom² says, "but so that he may be more fit for the cheerful discharge of spiritual services, by the strength he receives from what is created." He does not make his food fuel for lust, but a help to duty. Gluttons dig their own grave with their teeth; they feed without fear. Sinners do not fear that their table will become a snare (Jude 12); they do not fear the process of justice; while the wine is in the cup, they do not fear the handwriting on the wall. But the godly man, being regulated by religion, puts a knife to his throat, that he may cut the throat of intemperance (Prov 23:2).

(2.) *His recreation.* The strings of the viol must sometimes be slackened, lest they break; God affords His people generous delights; Scripture allows the use of the bow (2 Sam 1:18). But we are apt to offend most in lawful things; more are killed with wine than with poison. Religion has a moderating influence on the soul. The man influenced by religion dares not make play an occupation; it is oil to make him more alive in God's service, not a sea to engulf him. He who is devoted to religion puts bounds to the Olympian sports; he knows where to stop; he sets up a boundary pillar on which he writes, "No farther than this".

(3.) *His buying and selling.* The wicked often get a livelihood by lying; sometimes they debase commodities: they "sell the refuse of the wheat" (Am 8:6). They would pick out the best grains of corn and then sell the rest. Sometimes they falsify their weights: "He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand" (Hos 12:7). But he who makes religion his business is regulated by it in the shop: he is just in his dealings; he dares not hold the book of God in one hand and false weights in the other; he is faithful to his neighbour, and makes as much reckoning of the Ten Commandments as of his creed.

(4.) *His marrying.* He labours to graft upon a religious stock; he is not so ambitious of parentage as of piety; nor is his care so much to espouse dowry as virtue: in a word, he seeks for "a meet help", one that may help him up the hill to heaven; this is marrying "in the Lord". That marriage indeed is

²A noted Church father of the late fourth century, particularly renowned for his eloquence.

“honourable” (Heb 13:4) when the husband is joined to one who is the “temple of the Holy Ghost” (1 Cor 6:19). Here is the man that makes religion his business: in all his civil transactions he is influenced by religion; religion is the universal ingredient.

5. *He is good in his calling and relationships.* Grace in one’s relationships with others much graces religion. I shall suspect his goodness who does not conform to this standard. Some will pray and speak well, yet it appears they never made religion their business, but took it up more for ostentation than as an occupation, because they are defective in relative duties: they are bad husbands, bad children etc. If someone should draw a picture and leave out the eye, it would take much from the beauty of the picture; to fail in a relation stains the honour of one’s profession. He who makes religion his business is like a star shining in its proper place, where God has set him.

6. *He cares about his company.* He dares not bind a cord of friendship with sinners: “I have not sat with vain persons” (Ps 26:4). Diamonds and rubbish will not bind together. It is dangerous to mingle with the wicked, lest their breath prove infectious; sin is very catching. They “were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them” (Ps 106:35,36). If you mingle bright and rusty armour together, the rusty will not be made bright, but the bright will be made rusty. He who makes religion his business does not like to be near those whose nearness sets him further off from God and whose embraces, like those of the spider, are to suck out the precious life. The godly man engrafts himself into the “communion of saints” and thus, as a graft, he partakes of the sap and virtue of their grace. He who makes it his business to get to heaven associates only with those who may make him better, or whom he may make better.

7. *He keeps a spiritual watch always around him.*

(1.) He watches his *eye*. I made a covenant with mine eyes (Job 31:1). When Dinah was gadding about, she was defiled (Gen 34:1,2). When the eye is gadding about, by impure glances, the heart is defiled.

(2.) He watches his *thoughts*, lest they should turn to froth: “How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?” (Jer 4:14). What a world of sin is minted in the fancy! A child of God sets a spy over his thoughts, he summons them in and captivates them “to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor 10:5).

(3.) He watches his *passions*. Passion is like gunpowder, which the devil sets on fire and blows up the soul. Jonah in a passion quarrels with the Almighty (Jnh 4:1,9). He who is devoted to religion watches his passions lest, when the tide rises, reason should be carried down the stream and be drowned in it.

(4.) He watches his *duties*. “Watch and pray” (Mt 26:41). First, he watches

in prayer. The heart is liable to be remiss; if it is not dead in sin, it will be dead in prayer. A Christian watches lest he should abate his fervour in duty; he knows that if the strings of his spiritual viol slacken, he cannot “make melody in his heart to the Lord” (Eph 5:19, Col 3:16). Second, he watches *after* prayer. As a man is most careful of himself when he comes out of a hot bath, the pores being then most open to cold; so a Christian is most careful when he comes from an ordinance, lest his heart should decoy him into sin. Therefore, when he has prayed, he sets a watch. He deals with his heart as the Jews dealt with Christ’s sepulchre; they “made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch” (Mt 27:66). A good Christian, having been at the Word and sacrament (that sealing ordinance), after the sealing he sets a watch.

(5.) He watches his *temptations*. Temptation is the scout which the devil sends out to discover our forces; it is the train he lays to blow up our grace. Satan ever lies at the catch; he has his “depths” (Rev 2:21), his “methods” (Eph 4:14), his “devices” (2 Cor 2:11). He is continually fishing for our souls; and if Satan is angling, we need to be watching. He who makes religion his business is full of holy watchfulness. He acts as a sentinel and, with the prophet, stands upon his watchtower (Hab 2:1). Solomon says of a virtuous woman: “Her candle goeth not out by night” (Prov 31:18). The good Christian keeps his watch-candle always burning.

8. Every day he makes up *his accounts* to see how things go in his soul (Lam 3:40). Solomon says, “Know the state of thy flocks” (Prov 27:23). A man who makes religion his work is careful to know the state of his soul; before the Lord brings him to a trial, he brings himself to a trial; he had rather use the mirror of the Word to see his own heart than put on the broad spectacles of censure to see another person’s fault. He acts as a critic on himself, he searches for sin in his heart that he has not repented of; and, having found it out, he labours by his tears, as by the waters of jealousy, to make the thigh of sin to rot (Num 5:22). He searches whether or not he has grace, and he tests whether it is genuine or spurious. He is as much afraid of painted holiness as he is of going to a painted heaven. He traverses things in his soul and will never leave till that question, whether he is in the faith, is answered (2 Cor 13:5). Here is the man making religion his business: he is loath to be a spiritual bankrupt; therefore he still calls himself to account; and wherein he comes short, he gets Christ to be his Surety.

9. *He will be religious, whatever it may cost him.* He is a resolved man: “I have sworn, that I will keep Thy righteous judgements” (Ps 119:106). There are some who will be rich (1 Tim 6:9) and there are some who will be godly (2 Tim 3:12). He that makes religion his business will not, as Luther says,

be put off with other things; he can lack health, riches and friends, but he cannot lack Christ or grace. He will be godly; let the times be what they will, they shall not take him off the work of religion. He will follow Christ upon the water; the floods of persecution cannot drown his zeal. He does not say, "There is a lion in the way"; he will wrestle with difficulties and march in the face of death. The Christians of the primitive Church cried out to the persecutor: "Hew us in pieces, burn us; we will never worship your idols". These were in good earnest for heaven.

There is a great deal of difference between those who go to sea for pleasure and those mariners who are to go on a voyage to the East Indies. The first, upon the least storm, retreat back to shore; but they who have embarked for a voyage hold on their course, even though the sea is rough and stormy, and will venture their lives in hope of a golden harvest in the Indies. Hypocrites seem religious when things are calm, but they will not sail in a storm. Those only who make religion their business will hold out on their voyage to heaven in the midst of tempests and death-threatening dangers.

10. *He lives every day as his last day.* He prays in the morning as if he were to die at night; he lives as if he were to be called at once before God. He walks "soberly, righteously, and godly" (Tts 2:12); he girds his loins, trims his lamp, sets his house in order, that when death comes for him, he may have nothing to do but to die. Behold here the man who makes religion his business.

Application 3. Exhortation. Let me persuade all you whose consciences may smite you for former neglect, to set upon the work now, to make religion your business. Bestir yourselves in this as in a matter of life and death.

Question. But how must we make religion our business?

Answer. That you may be serious in this work, I shall lay down several rules for your help and direction herein:

Rule 1. Follow this maxim: religion is the end of your creation. God never sent men into the world only to eat and drink and put on fine clothes, but the end of their creation is to honour Him: "That God in all things may be glorified" (1 Pet 4:11). If only the body is looked after, this is to trim the scabbard instead of the blade: it is to invert the very end of our being and frustrate it.

Rule 2. Get a change of heart wrought in you. Breathe after a principle of holiness. He cannot make religion his business who has no religion. Can the body move without a principle of life? Christian, get your heart made spiritual by grace. An earthly heart will no more trade in heaven than a mill-stone will ascend, or a serpent fly in the air. The heart must be divinely touched with the Spirit, as the needle with the loadstone, before it can cleave to God

and follow him fully (Num 14:24). Never expect the practice to be holy till first there is a holy principle.

Rule 3. Set yourselves always under the eye of God. The master's eye makes the servant work; God's eye will enliven our devotion. "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8). If we leave off work, or loiter in our work, God sees it. He has a window which opens into our breasts; "this eye of God that never sleeps", as Chrysostom calls it, would make us active in the sphere of duty. If indeed God's eye were at any time off us, we might slacken our pace in religion, but He is ever looking on. If we "take the wings of the morning", we cannot fly from His presence (Ps 139:9) and He who is now the Spectator will be the Judge. How this consideration of God's omniscience would keep us from being truants in religion! How it would infuse a spirit of activity and gallantry into us, making us go forward with all our might in the race to heaven!

Rule 4. Think often of the shortness of time. This life is but "a vapour" (Jas 4:14), "a shadow" (1 Chr 29:15); it is "as nothing" (Ps 39:5). We are wheeling apace out of the world, and no work can be done for our souls in the grave: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device . . . in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccles 9:10). Now is the time of life; now is the day of grace; you do not know how soon these two suns may set. The shorter our life, the swifter should be our pace.

Rule 5. Get an understanding heart. Weigh things seriously in the balance of reason and judgement. Think of the infinite importance of this business; our eternal misery or happiness depends on it. Other things are but for convenience, this is of necessity. If this work is not done, we are undone; if we do not do the work which believers are doing, we must do the work which devils are doing; and if God give us a serious heart to lay ourselves out in the business of religion, our income will be greater than our expense. Religion is a good trade, if it is well followed; it will repay the cost: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1 Pet 1:9). God will shortly take us from the workhouse to the throne and will set upon our head a fresh garland made of the flowers of paradise.

Rule 6. Implore the help of God's Spirit. All we can do is but lost labour, unless the Spirit excites and accelerates. Beg a gale from heaven. "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden . . ." (Song 4:16). If the Spirit joins with our chariot, then we will move to heaven swiftly, as "a roe upon the mountains" or as "the chariots of Amminadib" (Song 2:17, 6:12).

Now, having laid down these rules, let me in conclusion press all Christians to this great duty of making religion their business; I use just two weighty *motives*:

1. *The sweetness that is in religion.* All her paths are pleasantness (Prov 3:17). The way of religion is strewn with roses, in regard of that inward peace which God gives: "In keeping of [Thy precepts] there is great reward" (Ps 19:11). This is such a labour as has delight in it. As while the mother tends her child, and sometimes beyond her strength too, yet she finds a secret delight in it; so while a Christian is serving God, there is that inward contentment and delight infused, and he meets with such transfigurations of soul that he thinks himself half in heaven. It was Christ's "meat and drink" to do His Father's will (Jn 4:34). Religion was Paul's recreation (Rom 7:22); even if I do not speak of wages, what God gives us in this life is enough to make us in love with His service.

2. *Millions of people have gone wrong for eternity, because they did not make religion their business.* They have done something in religion, but not to purpose; they have begun, but have made too many pauses. They have been lukewarm and neutral in the business; they have served God as if they served Him not; they have sinned fervently, but prayed faintly. Religion has been a thing only by the by; they have served God by fits and starts but have not made religion their business; therefore they are ruined to all eternity. If you could see a wicked man's tombstone in hell, you might read this inscription on it: Here lies one in the flames of hell, for not making religion his business. How many ships have suffered shipwreck, notwithstanding all their glorious names of *The Hope, The Safeguard, The Triumph!* And how many souls, notwithstanding their glorious title of saintship, have suffered shipwreck in hell for ever, because they have not made religion their business.

Zimbabwe Update¹

Rev I D MacDonald

Our brethren in Zimbabwe can join with the too frequent complaint of the Church at home in Scotland, "Who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Yet it is fresh cause for gratitude to the glorious King of Zion that the Lord's people are being refreshed in their souls from time to time by the preaching of the Word and that poor sinners here and there are being gathered into the Kingdom.

It is often at communion seasons that these blessings are found, both at home in Scotland and overseas. At the September Ingwenya Communion, a good number gathered, with visitors from Mbuma, Bulawayo and Insiza. The habit of visiting neighbouring communion seasons has long been instru-

¹Written on behalf of the Jewish and Foreign Mission Committee.

mental in forming bonds of Christian fellowship among the Lord's people, and it will be a sad day if a lack of spiritual appetite for the hearing of the Word brings this custom to an end. On this occasion Rev S Khumalo and Rev M Mloyi had the privilege of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ to those who gathered, including some who did not normally attend the church.

Rev M Mloyi preached on Thursday morning from a most suitable portion of the Word, "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth" (Jer 31:18-19). At the second service Rev S Khumalo preached on that precious account of Manasseh's repentance unto life in 2 Chronicles 33:12-13.

On the Friday the congregation were led into the vital duty of self-examination with the help of a sermon from Rev M Mloyi on John 10:27,28: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand". At the Fellowship meeting the elder Mr P Moyo gave out a question which concentrated the minds of the brethren on the crucial matter of a saving interest in Christ. The verse given was 1 John 5:12: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life". Elders from Nyathi, Cameron and Insiza joined the brethren, providing another opportunity on this sinful earth to fulfil the Psalmist's exhortation, "Among the people gathered let them exalt His name; / among assembled elders spread His most renowned fame" (Ps 107:32, metrical).

On the Saturday Rev S Khumalo preached from Jeremiah 50:34: "Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is His name: He shall thoroughly plead their cause, that He may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon". The first head brought out the comfort of the Lord's people from the truth that their Redeemer is strong. Then the great commitment of this glorious and divine Redeemer to His people was brought out in His promise to plead their cause thoroughly. Finally, there was the rest which He was to bring them to. One new member was accepted, while another young lady came to the Session seeking her own baptism and was also accepted.

On the Sabbath, the action sermon was preached by Rev M Mloyi on Isaiah 53:10, a text which brings out the covenant obligations of the Father and the Son in the great work of redemption: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an

offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand". At the second service, Rev S Khumalo spoke on Acts 27:31, "Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved".

The absence of Rev A B MacLean due to his ongoing illness and treatment in Scotland was sorely felt, and there was much prayer for his speedy recovery. In this they join with the Church at large in earnest desire that Mr MacLean will be sustained by the Lord in his time of trouble and that his health and usefulness will be restored in due time – "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" (Acts 12:5). His sister Miss Norma MacLean is greatly missed in her capacity as assistant head of John Tallach High School as she continues her compassionate leave at home in Beaulieu.

Elsewhere on the Mission, the Shona translation of the Bible is ongoing and is due to finish next year. Mr Trycot Mwedzi, part of the translation team, has been accepted as a divinity student and is due to begin his divinity course next year, God willing.

Overall, there is growing pressure on the Mission's finances as the Zimbabwe economy faces a shortage of cash in US Dollars. Prices are rising steeply and the fear of aggressive inflation looms again. At the same time, our kind Mbumba Zending friends in the Netherlands, who finance our Mission in Zimbabwe, are finding that their donor contributions are declining. This is putting increasing pressure on the budget which they make available to us each year to spend on the running of the Mission. We remember that the Lord of hosts has said, "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine" (Hag 2:8). Nevertheless prudence is required and cost management is becoming an increasing priority for the Mission. It is encouraging to note that recently the Zimbabwe congregations have increased their contributions to the Sustentation Fund for their ministers' salaries, although the total contribution is still only around 20% of the total.

The practical support and prayers of our people are greatly appreciated by our friends in Zimbabwe and, more importantly, are not forgotten by the Most High, "for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Heb 6:10).

A godly life is the infallible evidence of conversion. When our fruit is unto holiness, we know that the end shall be everlasting life.

That repose of the soul on the bosom of the Redeemer which is found in believing is a foretaste as well as a pledge of the rest which remains to the people of God hereafter.

W S Plumer

Luther and the Reformation¹

12. Reaction to the 95 Theses

J H Merle d'Aubigné

Reuchlin² received the 95 theses. He was wearied of conflict with the monks. "Thanks be to God!" he exclaimed after reading them, "at last they have found a man who will give them so much to do that they will be compelled to let my old age end in peace."

The cautious Erasmus internally rejoiced at witnessing his secret wishes, for removing abuses, expressed with so much courage. He approved of the author, exhorting him only to greater moderation and prudence. Yet, when someone reproached Luther's violence in his presence, he said, "God has given men a physician who cuts deep into the flesh, because the malady would otherwise be incurable". When the Elector of Saxony was asked his opinion on Luther's business, he replied with a smile: "I am not at all surprised that it has made so much noise, for he has committed two unpardonable crimes: he has attacked the Pope's tiara and the monks' bellies".

Emperor Maximilian, predecessor of Charles V, read and admired the theses of the monk of Wittenberg; he perceived his ability and foresaw that this obscure Augustinian might one day become a powerful ally for Germany in her struggle against Rome. He accordingly said to the Elector of Saxony through his envoy: "Take great care of the monk Luther, for the time may come when we shall have need of him".

At Rome, even in the Vatican, these theses were not so badly received as might have been imagined. Leo X judged them as a patron of letters rather than as pope. The amusement they gave him made him forget the severe truths they contained. When Sylvester Prierio, master of the sacred palace, who was in charge of examining books, requested him to treat Luther as a heretic, he replied: "Brother Martin Luther is a very fine genius, and all that is said against him is mere monkish jealousy".

Myconius³ had entered a monastery; he was as eager to find holiness as Luther and gave himself up to all the vigils, fasts, mortifications and practices invented by men. But at last he despaired of ever attaining his object by his

¹This is a further abridged extract from d'Aubigné's *The History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*, vol 1. Last month's article focused on Luther's 95 Theses, written in response to the sale of indulgences in the vicinity of Wittenberg and some of the reaction.

²Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522) was born in Germany; he was a scholar in Greek and Hebrew. Although suspected of Protestant sympathies, he remained a Roman Catholic.

³Myconius (1490-1546) was German, he became a Lutheran theologian and a colleague of Luther.

own exertions. He neglected his studies, and employed himself in manual labour, yet his outward activity was unable to quiet his troubled conscience. This state of anguish endured for several years. People have sometimes imagined that the paths of the Reformers were smooth and that, when they had renounced the observances of the Church, nothing but pleasure and comfort awaited them. They did not consider that these Reformers arrived at the truth through internal struggles a thousand times more painful than the observances to which slavish minds easily submitted.

At length, in 1517, when Luther's theses were published; they penetrated into the monastery where Myconius lived. He hid in a corner of the cloister with another monk, John Voigt, that he might read them at leisure. Here were the self-same truths he had heard from his father; his eyes were opened; he felt a voice within him responding to what was then echoing through Germany, and great consolation filled his heart. He began immediately to profess the doctrine that Luther had proclaimed. The monks grew alarmed as they heard him; they argued with him and declared against Luther and his monastery. But Myconius compared it to "our Lord's sepulchre . . . they wish to prevent Christ's resurrection, but they will fail".

At last his superiors, finding they could not convince him, forbade him for a year and a half to have any contact with the world, permitting him neither to write or receive letters, and threatening him with imprisonment for life. But the hour of his deliverance was at hand. He was nominated pastor of Zwickau, and was the first to declare against the papacy in the churches of Thuringia. "Then", he said, "I was enabled to labour with my venerable father Luther in the gospel harvest." He was described as a man capable of doing everything he undertook.

No doubt there were others besides to whose souls Luther's propositions were a signal of life. They kindled a new flame in many cells, cottages, and palaces. While those who had entered the monasteries in quest of good cheer, an idle life, or respect and honours began to load the name of Luther with reproaches, the monks who lived in prayer, fasting and mortification returned thanks to God. Even the common people, who did not clearly understand the theological question, who only knew that this man assailed the empire of the lazy monks, welcomed him with bursts of acclamation. An immense sensation was produced in Germany by these daring propositions. Some of the Reformer's contemporaries, however, foresaw the serious consequences to which they might lead, and the numerous obstacles they would encounter. They expressed their fears aloud and rejoiced with trembling.

"I am much afraid", wrote the canon of Augsburg, Bernard Adelman, "that the worthy man must give way at last before the avarice and power of

the supporters of indulgences. His representations have produced so little effect that the Bishop of Augsburg, our primate and metropolitan, has just ordered, in the Pope's name, fresh indulgences for St Peter's at Rome. Let him haste to secure the aid of princes; let him beware of tempting God; for he must be void of common sense if he overlooks the imminent peril he incurs." Albert Kranz, a historian, was at Hamburg on his deathbed when Luther's theses were brought to him "You are right, Brother Martin," he said, "but you will not succeed. Poor monk, go to your cell and cry, Lord, have mercy on me". Not only did a great number of Luther's friends entertain fears as to what he had done, but many expressed their disapproval.

The Bishop of Brandenburg was grieved at seeing so violent a quarrel break out in his diocese and desired to stifle it. He resolved to do so by mildness. "In your theses on indulgences," he told Luther, "I see nothing opposed to the Catholic truth; I myself condemn these indiscreet proclamations; but for the love of peace and for regard to your bishop, discontinue writing on this subject." Luther was confounded at being addressed with such humility by such a great dignitary. Led away by the first impulse of his heart, he replied with emotion: "I consent; I would rather obey than perform miracles if that were possible".

The Elector regretted the start of a combat that was no doubt justifiable, but its results could not be foreseen. No prince was more desirous of maintaining the public peace than Frederick. Yet what an immense conflagration might be kindled by this spark! He frequently intimated to Luther the uneasiness he felt.

The prior and sub-prior of Luther's monastery at Wittenberg were terrified at the outcry made by Tetzl and his companions. In alarm they went to Martin's cell and said, "Do not bring disgrace upon our order!" Luther was moved at these words, but he soon recovered, and replied, "If this work is not of God, it will come to nothing; but if it is, let it go forward". The prior and sub-prior did not answer. "The work is still going forwards," added Luther, after recounting this incident, "and, God willing, it will go on better and better to the end."

Luther had many other attacks to endure. At Erfurth, he was blamed for the violent and haughty manner in which he condemned the opinions of others. This is the reproach usually made against those men who possess that strength of conviction which proceeds from the Word of God.

"He was also accused of being precipitate. "They require moderation in me," answered Luther, "and they trample it underfoot in the judgement they pass on me. . . . Truth will not gain more by my moderation than it will lose by my rashness. Who does not know that a man rarely puts forth a new idea

without having some appearance of pride, and without being accused of stirring up quarrels? If humility herself should undertake something new, her opponents would accuse her of pride. Why were Christ and all the martyrs put to death? Because they seemed to be proud despisers of the wisdom of the time, and because they advanced novelties without having first humbly taken counsel of the oracles of the ancient opinions. . . . Whatever I do will be done, not by the prudence of men, but by the counsel of God. If the work is of God, who shall stop it? If it is not, who can forward it? Not my will, nor theirs, nor ours, but Thy will, O Holy Father, which art in heaven.”

However, the reproaches and accusations which were showered upon Luther from every quarter could not fail to produce some impression on his mind. He had been deceived in his hopes. He had expected to see the heads of the Church and the most distinguished scholars in the nation publicly unite with him, but the case was far otherwise. A word of approbation which escaped in the first moment of astonishment was all that the best disposed granted him; on the contrary, many whom he had hitherto respected the most were loudest in their censure.

He felt himself alone in the Church, alone against Rome, against which he had aimed so daring a blow. Doubts which he fancied he had overcome returned to his mind with fresh force. He trembled at the thought that he had the whole authority of the Church against him. To be deaf to the voice which people had obeyed for centuries, to set himself in opposition to that Church which he had been accustomed from his infancy to venerate as the mother of the faithful – as an insignificant monk, this was an effort too great for human power! Yet this was the step which decided the Reformation.

No one can describe the combat in his soul better than himself: “I began this business with great fear and trembling. . . . Who was I to oppose the majesty of the Pope, before whom . . . the kings of the earth and the whole world trembled . . . ? No one can know what my heart suffered during these first two years, and into what despondency . . . I was sunk. Those haughty spirits who have since attacked the Pope with such great hardihood can form no idea of it, although with all their skill they would have been unable to do him the least harm, if Jesus Christ had not already inflicted through me, his weak and unworthy instrument, a wound that shall never be healed. But while they were content to look on and leave me alone in the danger, I was not so cheerful, so tranquil, nor so confident; for at that time I was ignorant of many things which now, thank God, I know.

“There were, it is true, many pious Christians who were pleased with my propositions and valued them highly, but I could not acknowledge them . . . as the instruments of the Holy Ghost. I looked only to the Pope, to the car-

dinals, bishops, theologians, lawyers, monks and priests; it was from them I expected to witness the influence of the Spirit. However, after gaining the victory over all their arguments by Scripture, I at last surmounted – through Christ's grace, but with great anguish, toil and pain – the only argument that still checked me, namely, that I should 'listen to the Church', for, from the bottom of my heart, I revered the Pope's Church as the true Church. I did so with far more sincerity and veneration than all those scandalous and infamous corrupters who, to oppose me, now extol it so mightily. If I had despised the Pope, as those men really despise him in their hearts who praise him so much with their lips, I should have trembled lest the earth should have instantly opened and swallowed me up alive like Korah and his company."

Who will dare assert, after all the features we have pointed out, that the Reformation was a political affair? No, it was not the effect of man's policy, but of God's power. If Luther had been urged forward solely by human passions, he would have sunk under his fears. His errors, his scruples would have smothered the fire kindled in his soul, and he would have shed upon the Church a mere passing ray, as many zealous and pious men have done whose names have been handed down to us. But now God's time was come; the work could not be stopped; the emancipation of the Church must be accomplished. Luther experienced the truth of that glorious promise: "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles". The Divine power which filled Luther's heart and impelled him to the combat soon restored to him all his early resolution.

Bannerman's *The Church of Christ*¹

1. Introduction

Rev A W MacColl

These articles deal with a theological work which, more than any other, gives a comprehensive treatment of the whole field of ecclesiastical theology, from the Scottish Presbyterian position. It is James Bannerman's treatise entitled *The Church of Christ*. A native of Perthshire, born in 1807, Bannerman was initially a minister in the old Established Church and played a fairly prominent part in the Evangelical Party before the Disruption, joining the Free Church at its foundation in 1843. Bannerman was widely regarded as an expert on ecclesiastical issues, Church history and Church law, and in 1849 was appointed to the chair of Apologetics and Pastoral Theology at

¹The first section of a paper delivered at this year's Theological Conference.

New College, Edinburgh. He held this position until his death in 1868. He is recorded as having been a man of impressive bearing, with a commanding voice and a powerful intellect.

Bannerman also wrote a treatise on the doctrine of the plenary verbal inspiration of the Scriptures and helped to edit the four volumes of William Cunningham's *Works* along with his New College colleague, James Buchanan. *The Church of Christ*, however, is his great legacy to theological literature. It comprises the course of lectures which he gave to fourth-year students in Pastoral Theology. It is arranged in four parts dealing, first of all, with the nature of the Church itself; then with the power of the Church; thirdly, with the functions which the power of the Church is involved in, and finally, with the mode of governance of the Church. As we can see therefore, the bulk of the work is devoted to an analysis of the power Christ has vested in His Church, and we might say at the outset that Bannerman's 1000-page discussion forms a very full and comprehensive analysis indeed.

Clearly, it would be far too much to endeavour to summarise all of Bannerman's arguments in one paper. While the treatise has its own "grave and stately eloquence", it is nevertheless dense, though Bannerman's writing style is not quite as involved as the writings of his New College colleague, William Cunningham. Again, like many of Cunningham's writings, Bannerman's work deals largely with principles rather than with detailed exegesis – that is, interpretation – of particular passages of Scripture. As Robert Candlish indicates in the Preface, the method adopted here is mostly a mapping out of the terrain for students to explore for themselves by means of further reading and reflection. But in the places where Bannerman does handle particular parts of Scripture, his exegesis – like Cunningham's – is masterly for penetration and balance.

We will therefore confine ourselves to considering some of the leading features of the work. The main emphasis will be on the first two sections, which deal respectively with the nature of the Church and the power of the Church. We will also highlight certain features of the Romish controversy, in light of the five-hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation of the Church of Christ from the impurities of Popery.

By way of introduction, Bannerman notes that the Bible does not speak merely to individuals. Rather, it speaks very largely to the society of believers, who constitute one collective body. The existence of such a body of believers "is not an accidental or voluntary union which has grown up of itself" but has been intended by God from the very beginning. "Without the existence of a Church, or of a body of believers, very much of what is contained in the Bible would be unintelligible, and without practical application". Two

features stand out in the biblical descriptions of the Church: firstly, it is the body of Christ and, secondly, it is the earthly dwelling-place of the Spirit.²

What is meant in Scripture by the term *Church*? The Greek word *ecclesia* basically means an assembly gathered together from a multitude. It is similar to the Hebrew term translated *congregation*. In this case, the Church has been “called out” from the world through the gospel to the fellowship and worship of God. Five different but closely allied meanings of the term *church* can be gathered from Scripture:

1. It is used to describe the whole body of the faithful: for example, Ephesians 5:25: “Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it”. Christ’s promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church is “language which plainly refers to the society or association of all those who had believed or should believe in Him” (p 7).

2. The name *church* may apply to the whole body throughout the world of those that outwardly profess the faith of Christ. “This outward society of professing Christians is frequently spoken of and delineated in Scripture under the term *Church*.” It is spoken of in Acts when the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved; and in Corinthians and Ephesians, where lists of office-bearers are given, these officers being the “outward provision which God has made for the order and government and edification of the Church”. The figure of the vine and the branches indicates a “two-fold union” to Christ, one with living, fruitful branches and the other “a dead or mere external union” (pp 9-11).

3. The term *church* may refer to a body of believers in any particular place, associated together in the worship of God. The New Testament contains abundant examples of particular gatherings of believers denominated as churches in their particular localities, even down to the smallest groups who met together in private houses.

4. The term *church* is given to a number of congregations associated together under a common government, for example, the Church at Jerusalem. Bannerman, following the *Westminster Form of Presbyterian Church Government*, holds that “no one building could have contained the many thousands of believers that crowded Jerusalem at the time, in the fullness of a Pentecostal harvest; nor is it possible, except under the influence of some misleading theory, to believe that they formed no more than one congregation. . . . When we read of *the Church* at Jerusalem, we find the term applied, not to a single congregation of believers, but to a plurality of congregations, connected together as one body or Church by means of a common government” (p 14).

²J Bannerman, *The Church of Christ*, Banner of Truth, 2015 reprint, pp 1-3. Other references to this book are given in brackets in the body of the article.

5. The body of professing believers in any place, as represented by their rulers and office-bearers, are called “the church”. In Matthew 18, there is recourse to “tell it to the Church” in cases of offence where redress has not been obtained privately or before two or three witnesses. This usage is rooted in Jewish Synagogue terminology and is thus employed “to denote the rulers or office-bearers of the Christian society” (p 15).

From the first sense of the word – the whole body of the faithful – all the others are derived. The whole body of the faithful in every generation is the fundamental idea which underlies the whole biblical view of the Church. Of course, differences have emerged as to the validity of these descriptions of the Church. On the one hand, Romanists deny the invisible Church; while on the other hand, we have the Independents who tend to deny the doctrine of the visible Church. This shows the need to have the right understanding of what Scripture actually means by the word *church* (p 18).

It is very important to bear in mind that, while the invisible Church is the fundamental source of the idea of the Church, yet in studying ecclesiology *we must largely deal with the visible Church* – whether viewed as universal, local, under a shared government or as represented by its office-bearers.

Now, the Church is a divine institution, originating with Christ, not with man. It is neither a voluntary association (the Voluntary theory) nor a creature of the state (the Erastian theory). The Church of Christ is a spiritual institution; “in its primary character it is a spiritual instrumentality for working out the spiritual good of man”. The era of the New Testament Church therefore “is emphatically that of the manifestation of the Spirit”. Bannerman goes on: “In the Divine appointment of a spiritual society, distinct from and independent of the state, God has taught before our eyes the grand and vitally important lesson of the fundamental distinction between things civil and things spiritual; and has made provision that the Christian Church, His own appointment, shall never become either the tyrant or the slave of the kingdoms of men” (pp 26-29).

With regard to Church-state relations, Bannerman outlines the view that “an alliance can be formed between the two, without sacrificing on the one side or the other their independent character or public functions and on which it may be their duty to act in concert for the promotion of certain common ends”. While it is necessarily the duty of the state to *recognise* the true religion, since Christ is the Head over all things to the Church, he suggests that it is not so clear if it is the duty of the state to *maintain* or *endow* a particular Church at all times (pp 103, 132-4). He points to the example of Christ before Pilate appealing to the claims of truth as the real warrant for the Church to demand recognition of its teaching and protection by the civil powers

(pp 171-2). Furthermore, Bannerman often draws heavily on the writings of George Gillespie, whom he holds in the highest esteem as an ecclesiastical theologian. He argues, as Gillespie does, for the separate identities of Church and state in Israel under the Old Testament (pp 127-132).

Book Review

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, by George Smeaton, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 389 pages, £16.00, available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Smeaton begins this excellent work by highlighting that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is as much an article of a standing or falling church as the doctrine of justification by faith. In considering God's great work of redemption, we must begin with the electing love of the Father, and proceed to the redeeming love of the Son, but we must not fail to include the love of the Holy Spirit in applying the redemption purchased by Christ and in sanctifying the soul. Smeaton shows how the glorious revelation made of the Trinity in the scheme of redemption is in accordance with the divine method in every instance. All divine works are from the Father, through the Son and by the Holy Spirit. Smeaton was afraid of a cold intellectualism which despises the need for the Third Person of the Trinity to apply redemption and to continue to bless the Word of God to the hearts of those who read and hear. At the same time, he does not fail to stress the fact that the work of the Spirit and the Word of God, while distinct, ever go together.

He deals with the doctrine in three sections. First there is the biblical testimony from Genesis to Revelation. He shows how the Holy Spirit was given before Christ came, but that the degree to which He was given from the day of Pentecost on was so superior that it could be said of that day: "It was the opening of the river of the water of life, which shall flow on for ever". The second section is a theological discussion of the doctrine of the Person of the Holy Spirit and then His work in anointing Christ, inspiring Scripture, regenerating sinners, sanctifying saints and establishing and strengthening the Church. Then finally he gives a historical review of the doctrine as handled by the Church since the days of the Apostles.

In all this, Smeaton is at pains to point out that this emphasis on the Spirit's work is not at the expense of Christ's role as the living and active Prophet, Priest and King of the Church. He shows, for example, the significance of the Father sending the Holy Spirit in Christ's name, "which implies that the Spirit, previously forfeited and withdrawn from mankind in consequence of

sin, should, on the grounds of Christ's merits and intercession as the Mediator, be sent by the Father for all the purposes of His redemption".

The book is rich in experimental Christianity. When speaking on the work of the Spirit in effectual calling, Smeaton observes that although "the mode in which the Spirit produces faith cannot, in all its outlines, be fully comprehended by believers in this life, of one thing there can be no doubt: He takes out of the heart every hindrance and obstruction, pleasantly persuades the judgement, and gently binds the will – nay, works in us both to will and to do".

This work is widely recognised as a classic on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It will be appreciated by those who have an appetite for theological works, and it would make them long for a fresh outpouring of the blessed Spirit, to make the wilderness of their heart and of the Church to blossom as the rose, even to blossom abundantly.

(Rev) *I D MacDonald*

A Time to Remember and Reflect¹

Rev Donald MacLean

The close of the old year and the opening of another is a time to remember gratefully the many mercies bestowed on us and to reflect solemnly on our future prospects. For this duty, human wisdom is altogether insufficient. Divine teaching is necessary. Thus Moses, the man of God, prayed, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps 90:12). The empty places by the fireside in many of our homes, which last year were occupied by those now in the eternal world, are eloquent reminders that here we have no continuing city. This world is not our abiding place, but we sojourn as our fathers did before us – the end of our journey being the eternity from which there is no return. There we must stand before the God who gave us our being and by whom the actions of men are weighed.

As we cross the threshold of another year, we have many reasons for praising Him who is the sustainer of all things. For the health and strength granted us, for the many who were sick and are now raised once more to walk in the land of the living, for the opening of His liberal hand, whereby all our necessities have been provided for – all praise is due alone to Him of whom the psalmist said, "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches" (Ps 104:24).

Gospel ordinances have still been continued among us. In the gathering

¹The first of the pastoral letters that Mr MacLean wrote to his congregation in Portree. It is dated 1 January 1950 and is printed here with some editing.

gloom of a backsliding age, the banner unfurled by our fathers in 1893, as a witness on the side of Christ and His Truth, is still, we humbly believe, displayed in the parish of Portree. This is an inestimable blessing, for “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God” (Mt 4:4). May the gospel be made precious to young and old, that they may “buy the truth and sell it not”, and so “cleave to that which is good”, abstaining “from all appearance of evil!” “Though our iniquities testify against us” and “our backslidings are many”, He has not as yet removed His candlestick from us. “For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children” (Ps 78:5). Truly He may say of us: “What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it?” (Is 5:4).

Yet none of these things considered separately, nor all of them taken together, will avail us anything in view of eternity, unless by the blessing and power of the Holy Spirit they bring us to repentance. “Despise thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Rom 2:4). They are happy this New Year’s Day who have godly sorrow for sin; who, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, have come to see sin as an abominable thing; who are mourning because of their lack of the spirit of prayer, their lack of spiritual-mindedness and zeal in the Lord’s cause; who are thus driven out of every earthly refuge and every carnal hope, and led to embrace the Divine Redeemer, of whom the Apostle testified, “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly” (Rom 5:6).

For them there is now no condemnation. God is the portion of their inheritance, and with David they may say, “The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage” (Ps 16:6). Although poor in themselves, they are rich in Christ, who is their Prophet, Priest and King, their advocate and forerunner within the veil. “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb 9:24).

Let us therefore, during this coming year, set our faces to seek the Lord. “Seek ye the Lord while He may be found” (Is 55:6). “His blessed and His gracious face seek ye continually” (Ps 105:4). May the Holy Spirit be poured upon our families and congregation so that it may be said of Zion: “This and that man was born in her” (Ps 87:5). “Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it” (Ps 90:16,17). “The Lord bless thee and keep thee: the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the

Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace” (Num 6:24-26).
With best wishes for your spiritual and temporal welfare.

Notes and Comments

Anti-Smacking Bill

Despite excluding it from their manifesto, and assuring the electorate that a smacking ban would not be “appropriate or effective”, the Holyrood Government is now endorsing a bill which, if passed in parliament, will threaten parents with criminal action if they are found smacking their children. The Scottish Government says it will “ensure the proposals become law” after the idea was put forward by Green MSP John Finnie, in a private member’s Bill. The Scottish Labour Party is also promising its backing, so unless MSPs refuse to toe the party line, it seems inevitable that the bill will be voted on to the Scottish statute book.

This continued obsession with political correctness follows on from the controversial Named Person Scheme which was challenged by the Christian Institute under a judicial review. In its original form, that scheme was set to intrude heavily into ordinary parents’ lives as they tried to bring up their children in a loving manner, and this latest move is no less invasive.

An online commentator echoed the fears of many parents when he stated, “A smacking ban would be deeply worrying and an attack on parental sovereignty and familial privacy”. He adds, “Smacking is not violence or assault . . . the intention is to discipline and educate. Violence is a physical act designed to belittle and hurt. Parental smacking is the opposite of that.” He concludes, “The consequences of the bill will be dire. Loving parents will suffer.” *The Herald* columnist Kevin McKenna commented that a “ban carries the risk of depleting the resources of already hard-pressed social workers in their attempts to deal with real abuse of vulnerable children”, adding, “The law as it stands on protecting children from abuse is good, and it works”.

A recent poll revealed how much the Edinburgh administration is out of touch with its own people on this, as on many other issues. The majority of Scots do not want the bill to become law: 74% said smacking should not be a criminal offence; 78% fear that vital police and social work resources will be deployed needlessly; 75% believe that it is the parents who should decide whether to smack their children or not, and 66% are clear that it is sometimes necessary to smack a disobedient child. These figures themselves should give our Government cause for concern.

However, we need to go beyond human opinion and hear God's Word. Proverbs 13:24 tells us: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes", and again the inspired penman instructs us, "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die" (Prov 23:13).

Commenting on these words, one writer states, "If a parent refuses to discipline an unruly child, that child will grow accustomed to getting his own way. He will become, in the common vernacular, a spoiled brat. The Lord uses discipline to reveal our sin to us. This is also how parents reveal the truth of our need for a Saviour to their children. When a child does not feel the consequence of his sin, he will not understand that sin requires punishment". He goes on to explain that "the word *rod* indicates a thin stick or switch that can be used to give a small amount of physical pain with no lasting physical injury". The writer stresses that "a child should never be bruised, injured or cut by a physical correction," and emphasises, "The Bible warns that parents should never abuse the power and authority they have over their children while they are young, because it provokes the children to righteous anger", adding, "physical discipline [should be] always done in love, never as a vent to the parent's frustration. It is also just one part of discipline and should be used when the child shows defiance to a clear limit, not in the heat of the moment".

Sadly the Scottish Government is once again ignoring biblical principles and putting unwarranted constraints on parents. If this bill succeeds, parents may be afraid to restrain their children, potentially resulting in crime increasing as the fear of punishment is removed. New Zealand outlawed smacking in 2007 and a Family First spokesman there said, "The law has had a 'chilling' effect on parenting and, rather than tackling rotten parents who are abusing their children, it has targeted well-functioning parents. We would warn Scottish parents that this law will harm and rip apart families." Be Reasonable Scotland, backed by The Christian Institute and The Family Education Trust, are presently working hard lobbying Holyrood. We can only hope and pray that they will succeed in their efforts and that this bill will be thwarted.

KHM

Baby Murdered by Homosexual Adoptive Father

A homosexual man has been sentenced to 18 years in prison for the murder of an adopted baby girl. The man and his homosexual partner, to whom he is "married", had been looking after the baby for eight months from September 2015. The adoption was finalised in May 2016 and the baby was murdered two weeks later. The girl had two fractures to her leg by November

2015, and a series of injuries, including damage to her eyes, thereafter. She died after a few days in hospital from having been shaken and deliberately thrown on the ground. She was aged 18 months. At the trial, neighbours testified to hearing the man shouting furious obscenities at the child on previous occasions. Social workers had routinely visited the home six times between September 2015 and April 2016, but neither they, nor the neighbours, nor the homosexual partner had expressed any concerns, nor had the man admitted that he was unable to cope with the child. The two men also have another adopted child.

The care of children who require fostering or adoption (in this case the mother was a drug-addict) is exceedingly difficult, but the difficulties are made worse by the use of homosexual couples for the purpose. God created man male and female, and He did so for both theological and practical reasons. A motherly and patient woman might have stopped the child crying, which this furious man was apparently unable to do. The child should not have been given to a homosexual couple in the first place. *DWBS*

Christianity in the Middle East

We gather from a well-informed source that Christianity (of the Coptic variety) is flourishing in Egypt, notwithstanding the persecution: “when they burn down a church, the congregation doubles”. There is a similar enthusiasm for Christianity in Iran, in the face of persecution. Meanwhile Middle-Eastern Christians in parts of Britain are active in seeking the conversion of their Muslim compatriots. Generally the doctrinal and ecclesiastical position of the Coptic Church is very far from biblical, yet the above shows that Islam is not having everything its own way, although such news is little reported. *DWBS*

Protestant View

Church of Scotland Moderator and Rome

The current Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Rev Derek Browning, visited the Pope in Rome while en route to Wittenberg to celebrate the five-hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation in Germany. To those nominal Protestants committed to the ecumenical movement, the visit to Rome might have seemed nothing more than a charitable and appropriate gesture after five centuries of division between Rome and the Protestant Churches. To those who have their eyes open to the true antichristian nature of Romanism, however, it can only be regarded as one

further concession to the false claims of the Pope for recognition as the world-wide leader of Christianity.

In his address to the Church of Scotland delegation, the Pope mentioned that the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church were on an ecumenical journey towards full, visible unity and that the “mutual purification of memory is one of the most significant fruits of this common journey”. It is a solemn and sad day for Scotland when the memory of the impurities of Romanism – and the cost of standing against her falsehoods and tyranny at the Reformation – have obviously been forgotten by the national Church.

The Church of Scotland ought to be seeking repentance for its departures from the biblical teachings of the Reformation rather than desiring to find common ground with Rome. We rejoice in the memory of the noble stand taken by Martin Luther for the Word of God and we long for the day when the Protestant Churches will return to the pure gospel doctrines he preached along with Calvin, Knox and others. Of course, the Roman Catholic Church claims never to have changed, but this only demonstrates that it remains as much the enemy of truth today as it was in Luther’s days. *AWM*

Church Information

Induction of Rev Donald Macdonald to Staffin Congregation

Although the weather was inclement, making travel somewhat difficult, the Staffin church was almost full for the happy occasion of the induction of Rev Donald Macdonald to the pastorate of our Staffin congregation. Some visitors had travelled considerable distances from the mainland and other islands to be there; also present were people from other denominations. It was gratifying to see so many people gathered but especially to witness the Staffin congregation, in the kind ruling of the Lord, provided with a pastor after a short vacancy of 14 months. Some time after their previous pastor for 15 years, Rev W A Weale, was translated to Halkirk, the congregation approached Rev D Macdonald, North Uist, desiring him to be their pastor. In due time, Mr Macdonald was led to accept the call of the Staffin congregation to be their minister. There is rejoicing when a vacant congregation obtains a pastor, but one feels for any congregation which loses a pastor and one seeks that the Lord will provide for it.

The evening began with the Western Presbytery meeting in the church; it found there were no objections to Rev D A K Macdonald’s life and doctrine and proceeded with the induction. Before public worship commenced, Rev W A Weale, Rev R MacLeod, Rev K M Watkins and Rev H I MacKinnon

were associated with the Presbytery. The Moderator of Presbytery, Rev I D MacDonald preached suitably from Acts 13:2: "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them".

At the conclusion of this part of the worship, the Moderator called Mr Macdonald to answer the questions to be put to ministers at their induction. When the pastor-elect had answered them satisfactorily and signed the Formula, the Moderator, in the name of the Presbytery, inducted Mr Macdonald to the pastoral charge of the Staffin Congregation and the brethren present gave the newly-inducted pastor the right hand of fellowship. Rev A E W MacDonald then addressed Mr Macdonald appropriately from the Word of God, "Be thou faithful unto death . . ." (Rev 2:10). Rev D A Ross addressed the congregation from Hebrews 13:7: "Obey them that have the rule over you".

Rev W A Weale was invited to speak and expressed his joy that the congregation now had Mr Macdonald as their pastor and wished them and their new minister much of the Lord's blessing. Rev R MacLeod, in his remarks, directed pastor and people to look to the Most High for the supply of all their needs. Messages of good wishes from other ministers of the Church were read. Afterwards the newly-inducted pastor went to the front door of the church to be welcomed by the congregation.

Most of us were able to attend the sumptuous buffet prepared by the congregation. The people having dined, the congregation then showed their appreciation of their Interim Moderator, Rev I D MacDonald, and of their new pastor, Rev Donald Macdonald, by presenting gifts to them. Both ministers fittingly replied by warmly thanking the congregation. Thereafter the large gathering slowly dispersed and in the good care of the Lord returned to their homes safely, some not arriving until the following day.

We look to the Lord graciously to bless this new ministry by bringing many sinners to have a saving interest in Christ and by feeding the Lord's people with the finest of the wheat. We also pray that Mr Macdonald will be blessed in his preaching throughout the congregations of our Church, and that he and Mrs Macdonald will be given the health and strength for the many and varied duties before them. "The Lord of us hath mindful been, and He will bless us still" (Metrical Psalm 115:12).

(Rev) *Donald A Ross*, Clerk of Presbytery

College and Library Fund

By appointment of Synod, the second of the year's two special collections for the College and Library Fund is due to be taken in congregations in December.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

2017

Volume 122

Editor:
Rev Kenneth D Macleod

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

Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

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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. **Beauty** (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). **Laig:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Mr A Sutherland; tel: 015494 02115.
- Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, EH3 9NU, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227, e-mail: dcampbell1560@gmail.com.
- Farr** (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.
- Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev Roderick MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Greenock:** Sabbath 2.30 pm, held in Free Church of Scotland Hall, 14 Jamaica Street, PA15 1XX. Sabbath 2.30 p.m.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Sabbath 5 pm; **Strathy:** Sabbath: 6.30 pm (first and third Sabbaths of month).
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Tarbert** and **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7.30 pm alternately. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South):** **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. **Sheilebost:** as intimated. Manse tel: 01859 520271. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, IV1 1NA, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 6 pm; **Scourie:** Sabbath 11:30 am, Tuesday 7 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr A Ross; tel 01971 502099.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present. Manse tel: 01571 844484.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist:** **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Manse tel: 01876 510233. Contact:
- 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. Rev D Macdonald, 4 Clachan Road, Staffin, IV51 9HY tel: 01470 562243.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Tain:** Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev A W MacColl; tel: 01851 810228.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.

England

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

Northern Ireland

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

Canada

Chesley, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 7.30 pm; Tuesday 8 pm. Contact: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367; or Mr Gilbert Zekveld; tel: 519 363 5899. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

Vancouver: Burnaby Community Room, 3605 Gilmore Way, Burnaby, BC, V5G 4X5. Sabbath 9.30 am, 6.30 pm. Contact: Mr Douglas Spratt, tel: 604 990 4051, or Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. E-mail: info@fpchurchvancouver.ca.

USA

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

Australia

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

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6 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 Levytskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytsky@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.

Ingwenya: 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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