

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

Contents

The Source of Salvation	225
Examining the Heart and Life	
A Sermon by Robert Gordon	228
John Hooper – a Reformation Puritan	
5. Work While It Is Day	
Rev K M Watkins	235
The Spirit of Adoption	
1. A Privilege	
James Buchanan	241
The Sin of Unbelief	
3. Conclusions	
W S Plumer	244
Receiving the Lord’s Supper by Faith	
Ashbel Green	245
The Way to the Father	
W K Tweedie	248
Learning to Love Prayer	
William Romaine	249
Book Review:	
<i>The Greatest Fight in the World</i> by C H Spurgeon	251
Notes and Comments	252
Protestant View	255
Church Information	255

August 2018

Vol 123 • No 8

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

Moderator of Synod: Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.

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:

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

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

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

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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

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

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

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

Communions

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

May: First Sabbath: Aberdeen, Donsa, Grafton, Leverburgh, London; **Second:** Achmore, Chesley; **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, 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.

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

Volume 123

August 2018

Number 8

The Source of Salvation

The Lord spoke to Jonah the prophet, directing him to go to Nineveh to “cry against it”. It is described as a “great city”, but one that was wicked. But Jonah had a mind of his own which he went on to exercise, with a wilful independence of the authority of the great God who truly exists, the God whom he professed to fear. Jonah did have a sincere respect for His Creator and for His commandments, however imperfect that obedience was. Instead of making his way toward Nineveh, he set off in the opposite direction, boarding a ship for Tarshish, possibly Spain – which meant that he was going “from the presence of the Lord” (Jnh 1:3). Jonah’s progress was impeded by a severe storm “sent out” by the Lord, which led to the wilful passenger being cast overboard at his own suggestion; he knew that his disobedience was the cause of the storm. But the Lord “prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah”, and he spent three days inside the fish.

From there, in spite of the utter unlikelihood of ever seeing dry land again, Jonah prayed. No matter how far away from God he felt, he said believingly: “I will look again toward Thy holy temple”, where sacrifices were offered for sinners. In particular, the morning and evening sacrifices were for all Israel, disobedient Jonah among them. Thus he could hold on to a hope of being delivered, and accordingly he stated in his prayer: “Salvation is of the Lord” (Jnh 2:9). He heard Jonah’s prayer, for the fish vomited Jonah out onto dry land.

Jonah was absolutely right: deliverance from perishing inside the fish was the Lord’s to give. And this is true of salvation from the power and guilt of sin, and in particular deliverance from perishing in a lost eternity; it is entirely the Lord’s. The whole work of saving sinners is the Lord’s; it is *He* who must save, or else they will perish.

The Psalmist makes it plain: no one “can by any means redeem his brother” (Ps 49:7); the ransom required in order to *forgiveness* is far too great for any human being to pay; it is altogether beyond their power. God demands the payment of “the uttermost farthing” (Mt 5:26) if the sinner is to escape from hell; the whole of the infinite debt that sinners owe to God because of their

sins must be paid off before the sinner may go free. This is clearly beyond the power of sinners; none of them can begin to deliver themselves from the wrath to come. And when sinners go down to a lost eternity, they continue to sin; they can never begin to do God's will sincerely, and so they are continually adding to the debt that they owe to Him. If they are to be delivered, God must provide the ransom; only He can provide a salvation for them, and that deliverance is only to be obtained in this life.

Paul emphasises, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Rom 3:20). No matter how well people might seem to keep the law of God, they cannot keep it perfectly – and that is God's standard. When he was rejecting Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, Paul no doubt impressed his fellow Pharisees with his keeping of the law; but if he had remembered this summary of God's law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut 6:5), he would surely have come to a more realistic view of his obedience to God than the view he actually held. He needed to learn, as David did: "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" (Ps 130:3).

In his commentary on the Psalms, J A Alexander points out that "to *stand* is to stand one's ground, maintain one's innocence, and perhaps in this case, to endure one's sentence". So if God was to note David's sin, or the sins of any individual, with a view to inflicting on them the punishment they deserve, they could not maintain their innocence or endure the sentence that the righteous Judge has passed against them. If the sinner is to be treated as innocent – in other words, if this sinner is to be justified – it is God who must justify; it is God who must do all that is necessary so that He can be righteous when He justifies the ungodly.

Just as salvation in general is the Lord's, so *He* must provide this particular aspect of salvation. Which is why He sent His only-begotten Son into the world – to suffer fully, on behalf of those who will believe on His Son, the punishment that must otherwise be inflicted on them; and also to keep the whole law perfectly in their place. Thus all their sins can be forgiven and they can be accounted righteous – treated as if they had never sinned. Thus they can be justified. It is God who justifies, no one else.

We not only need forgiveness; we need to be *purified*. No one can be received into heaven unless he or she is perfect. Yet we cannot change our nature; that is altogether beyond our powers; it is God's work; the Holy Spirit must transform the sinner. Paul was clear that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tts 3:5).

There must be good works in the one who is saved, says Matthew Henry's

Commentary on this verse, “but not among the causes of His salvation; they are the way to the kingdom, not the meriting price of it; all is upon the principle of undeserved favour and mercy from first to last”. It is God the Spirit who applies the benefits of salvation to the soul; it is He who must create a new heart, a clean heart, in regeneration; it is He who must put a new principle of holiness in the soul – so that there is the beginning of a holy life. And by the Holy Spirit’s continuing gracious work, that holiness continues and becomes stronger, until at last the soul is made perfect in holiness when it is separated from the body and passes into the eternal blessedness of heaven, where there is no sin – where there is no possibility of ever sinning again.

Matthew Henry’s *Commentary* further describes the results of the Spirit’s work: “It is the same man, but with other dispositions and habits; evil ones are done away, as to the prevalency of them at present; and all remains of them in due time will be so, when the work shall be perfected in heaven. A new prevailing principle of grace and holiness is wrought, which inclines and sways and governs and makes the man a new man, a new creature, having new thoughts, desires and affections, a new and holy turn of life and actions.” All this work of renewal is the Lord’s to give; to Him we must look, not only for its beginning, but also that it may be brought to a conclusion.

We must also remember that we are spiritually *ignorant*. How many people, when God has begun to deal with their souls, have realised that they do not know how to obtain deliverance! Bildad was right to acknowledge, “We are but of yesterday, and know nothing” (Job 8:9); we too should confess this in relation to the things of the soul. If we are to be saved, we need a revelation. And that is what we have in Scripture, where God gives us all the instruction we require for time and for eternity. But we need something further; we need to have our souls enlightened through the Holy Spirit applying the truths of Scripture to us. We need to learn, not merely intellectually, what God has revealed about sin and its consequences, and about the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. We need the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts – to make us able and willing to flee from sin and to look to Christ Jesus, as He calls, “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else” (Is 45:22).

It was obvious to Jonah that deliverance from perishing inside the great fish was God’s to give; no other power could avail. We need to learn that salvation from sin, and every part of that work, is in God’s power alone. May we then cry to Him that, in His infinite mercy, He would begin His work of salvation in our souls; or if that work has begun, that He would continue it “until the day of Jesus Christ”! How great is God’s goodness that makes ignorant, guilty rebels into holy beings who know the way to heaven!

Examining the Heart and Life¹

A Sermon by Robert Gordon

Psalm 26:6. *I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass Thine altar, O Lord.*

It appears from the first verse, and, indeed, from the general tenor of this Psalm, that it was composed at a time when David had reason to believe that he was lying under unfounded suspicions, if not actually exposed to injurious slanders. He begins by appealing to God, as the searcher of hearts, to bear witness to his integrity; and throughout he asserts that he was innocent of having associated with vain persons, or taking counsel with the ungodly. He does so in such a way as evidently implies that he had been suspected, or accused, of at least sanctioning the deeds of bloody and deceitful men, if not of courting their aid. Anyone who is familiar with the history of the Psalmist will recollect occasions when he might have been liable to such suspicions and unfounded aspersions.

David's circumstances. Let us refer, for example, to the period when David, after Saul's death, was called to the throne, and was proclaimed King in Hebron, over Judah. Immediately afterwards, there was a rival claim to the throne: Ishbosheth, one of Saul's sons, was acknowledged as king by the other tribes of Israel, through the influence of Abner, who had been captain of the host of Saul. For about seven years this claim was asserted; there was "long war", we are told, "between the house of Saul and the house of David". In this conflict, "the house of David waxed stronger and stronger, but the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker". At length Abner – who was in reality the ruler of Ishbosheth, though Ishbosheth was nominally King of Israel – made proposals to David to relinquish in his favour all claims to the throne, and to bring the other tribes of Israel to acknowledge him as King.

While the negotiations were going on, Joab, the captain of David's host, treacherously slew Abner in revenge for his brother Asahel's death, whom Abner had slain. Immediately afterwards, two of Ishbosheth's servants, slew their master while he lay on his bed, and carried his head to David, hoping thereby to ingratiate themselves with the King for having cut off his rival and enemy. Now it is plain that such deeds might give occasion to David's enemies to allege that he had some share in them and that, if he did not directly instigate them, he at least approved of them, or winked at them, as

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Scottish Christian Herald*, vol 1 (1836). The sermon was preached prior to the Lord's Supper. Gordon (1786-1853) was at that time minister of the High Church in Edinburgh. He is best known for his four-volume series, *Christ in the Old Testament*, republished by Free Presbyterian Publications.

the readiest means of becoming King of all the other tribes of Israel as well as of Judah.

That such suspicions were at least entertained, if not openly expressed, seems very probable from what is recorded in 2 Samuel 3-4; never was David more anxious about anything than to clear himself of all participation in these crimes and to manifest his righteous abhorrence of them. He sought to vindicate himself and his cause, which was the cause of truth and righteousness, from the suspicions and slanders of men by publicly disavowing all participation in crimes which might seem to have been perpetrated for his advantage. He also felt it necessary that he should stand vindicated to his own conscience, for his peace of mind and so that he might have confidence to engage in the solemn worship of the sanctuary. He needed to find, after a solemn trial of himself as in the very presence of the heart-searching God, not only that he was innocent of any share in the deeds which had been committed, but that he had never entertained any idea of such deeds with a view to extending or establishing his authority.

Accordingly he appeals to God that he was innocent of the charges brought against him, and that he had walked in his integrity, trusting in the Lord, not looking to the counsel or the aid of vain men and dissemblers. He prays that the Lord would examine him and prove him, try his reins and his heart so as to disclose to himself his own most secret thoughts and motives. He had the testimony of his conscience – quickened and enlightened as it had been by a sense of God’s presence – that the loving-kindness of the Lord, not the assembly of evil-doers, had been his stay and support. And he expresses the joy and boldness with which, having washed his “hands in innocency”, he would compass the altar of the Lord, to “publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all [God’s] wondrous works”.

David acquitted. But by washing his hands in innocency, we are not to understand merely that he stood acquitted, before God and his own conscience, of certain sins which had been laid to his charge falsely. That, no doubt, would be a delightful discovery to him, and the subject of warm, unfeigned gratitude to the God of all grace, who had, he said, “delivered . . . mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling”. But the rigorous self-examination which led to this discovery must inevitably disclose to him a great deal more than he would otherwise have known or thought of, as to the state of his heart and affections, and other aspects of his life. It must also bring to light much impurity, imperfection, and sin. Whatever comfort therefore he might derive from the consciousness of having been kept from sin on some points, that comfort would have restrained his freedom in approaching God if he was not cleansed from the guilt of other transgressions.

Accordingly he does not say, “I have washed my hands in innocency”, as if all he desired was to be acquitted from the sins with which he was charged; but “I *will wash* my hands in innocency”. That is to say, I will seek by penitence and faith, and through the appointed medium, the pardon of all my transgressions – I will deliberately renounce everything I have discovered in my heart or life to be contrary to God’s law. And through the grace of God, I will unreservedly surrender myself to His service and disposal; and having so washed “my hands in innocency, so will I compass Thine altar, O Lord: that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Thy wondrous works”.

How other believers can so speak. Such appears to be what the Psalmist meant, as he spoke of himself; and believers should still be prepared to adopt his language. We are not told what was the precise nature of the service that David contemplated, which is here called compassing the altar of the Lord. But it is plain that it was a very solemn act of religious worship to which he was looking forward, and for which he felt it necessary, in the way of preparation, to “wash [his] hands in innocency”.

And surely such a preparation is as necessary for those who are about to engage in the Lord’s Supper, the most solemn act of Christian worship – in which they, each one for himself, renew their baptismal engagements to be the Lord’s, renouncing the devil, the world and the flesh; where they receive what they profess to regard, not only as a sign but as a seal of their union to Christ as members of His spiritual body, and through which they expect to be “made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace”. And I would observe generally that, by washing our hands in innocency, we are to understand, looking by faith to the blood of Christ, as that alone which cleanses from all sin, and seeking to have this faith in lively exercise. Apart from Christ, there is nothing in us, as we appear in the sight of God, but guilt and pollution, for the Bible testifies that all men are “guilty before God”, that they “are all as an unclean thing”, that all their “righteousnesses are as filthy rags”, that they “all do fade as a leaf”, and their “iniquities, like the wind, have carried” them away.

As sinners therefore we are under condemnation. If “we are justified”, it is “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”; if we are “made the righteousness of God”, or treated as righteous persons in the sight of God, it is because Christ “was made to be sin for us” though He “knew no sin”; if we are held to be clean, it is because Christ has “washed us from our sins in His own blood”. But the Bible as plainly testifies that, if we are so justified, treated as righteous, and held to be clean, it is through faith in Christ. This is not merely an opinion that what the Holy Scriptures say of Christ is true – which,

as an opinion, may lie dormant in the understanding and be altogether ineffective as to any practical effect on the heart and life. Rather it is such a faith or belief as goes forth in the exercise of trusting in Christ and cleaving to Him, for acquittal and acceptance in the sight of God – to the exclusion of every other ground of hope whatever.

It must therefore be obvious that such an exercise of faith in Christ, such a cleaving in heart and soul to Him, is absolutely essential if we would make any approach to God that can either be acceptable to Him or profitable to ourselves. To address God, the supreme Lawgiver and Judge, without having on our minds a clear apprehension of the efficacy of Christ's blood and the necessity of His mediation, is an act of presumptuous self-righteousness; it is to challenge a scrutiny of our character by the demands of that very law which has pronounced us guilty. And just in proportion to the vividness of our apprehension of Christ's perfected work will be the freedom with which we offer up our prayers to God – and the confidence with which we expect that, in answer to our prayers, God will grant us whatever is really for our good.

Such a believing application to the blood of Christ – such a washing in the fountain of mercy opened for sin and for uncleanness – is necessary for every approach to the throne of grace, and for rightly presenting every petition there. If that is so, surely at a more solemn season like this, when believers are about to transact with God, in declaring before the Church their cordial acceptance of Christ as their covenant head, and their acquiescence in all the terms of that covenant of which He is surety, they are specially required thus to wash their hands in innocency before they compass His holy altar.

Preparation for the Lord's Supper. But our text implies a great deal more than this, in reference to preparation for the solemn service of the Lord's Supper. In that service, there is a formal, deliberate and professedly-unreserved surrender to God, and it calls for a very solemn and unsparing examination of the state of our heart and the tenor of our life, lest it should be found that believers, in word and in outward profession, are giving to God what in reality they are reserving for the world – for its frivolous pursuits and sinful enjoyments. On this point the Psalmist has set us a very holy and instructive example. He was not satisfied with seeking to discover, and honestly confessing, the sins which he had outwardly committed; but he made those also of which he was conscious of being unjustly suspected or accused the subject of a very rigorous examination. Thereby he turned the calumnies of the world to good account by making them the means of detecting the inmost secrets of his soul and bringing to light those hidden impurities which, but for such a call to examine himself, might have lurked and gathered strength in his heart.

Where is the Christian who has not been called on, in the same way, to

institute an inquiry into his motives and principles of action? For where is the Christian who has not, at times, lain under the suspicion, or been exposed to the charge, of having said or done what was inconsistent with his Christian character – while his conscience bore witness that he was unjustly accused? In all ages, the Church, in her collective capacity, has been in one way or other the object of reproach. And any individual member of Christ’s body who has not considered the possibility of having to bear his share of such slander must have very imperfectly understood the many warnings and admonitions of his divine Master, and have formed very low and partial views of the wisdom and rectitude of God’s administration.

But I fear it will be found that even those who, as they thought, were prepared to expect such trials have not always made such good use of them as the Psalmist. I fear that, in many cases where Christians have been so tried, they have given way to a haughty and self-righteous spirit instead of making such seasons times of deep humiliation and serious inquiry into the state of their heart and affections. Instead of examining, with a holy jealousy of themselves, whether they had not been guilty of entertaining in idea, at least, the sinful act imputed to them, though innocent of the act itself, they were satisfied with indignantly resenting the charge as an unjust and unmerited reproach. The satisfaction which they felt in the consciousness of their innocence was more nearly allied to pride than to gratitude to Him whose grace had kept them from falling, and who had led them “in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake”.

Need I remark that, in such a frame of spirit, they are in no condition to make the solemn appeal which the Psalmist made: “Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.” They may have been unjustly suspected or accused, and may have held fast their integrity in the case where they were charged with letting it go; but they have not made good use of their trial as it was the design of God’s providence that they should. They have incurred guilt by gratifying their pride from an event which was both fitted and intended to bring them into a humble and self-diffident spirit; they have not brought themselves to the tribunal of conscience, as they ought to have done, and into the very presence of God, to have His acquittal, and to give Him the glory. And if such guilt was contracted, then so long as they have not acknowledged it and repented of it, they have not, in that instance, so “washed [their] hands in innocency” as to be prepared for compassing the altar of the Lord.

Searching heart and life. Christians are seriously called to examine themselves, even about sins which may have been laid to their charge unjustly, so that they may enjoy the pleasing consciousness of being acquitted in the

sight of God, and have an opportunity to give all the glory and praise to His restraining grace. Surely then it is all the more necessary for them to make the sins of which they have been guilty the special subjects of solemn investigation, and special application to the fountain of mercy, where alone they can wash their hands in innocency. It is not enough for them to make a general acknowledgement of guilt and look to the blood of Christ for the removal of that guilt. If they confine themselves to such a general confession, and such a general application to the blood of atonement, it will be found that there is nothing very deep or heartfelt in their sorrow, and nothing very lively in their faith. It will also be found that, all this time, much unsubdued sin may be lurking in their heart, of which they have hardly ever been conscious, and against which therefore they have never seriously contended.

If they would wash their “hands in innocency”, they must make conscience of searching out and bringing to light their particular offences. They must honestly endeavour to look at them in all their extent and aggravation, tearing away the disguise which pride and self-love are ready to wear. Having seen them as they appear when tried by God’s law, without any extenuation, they must confess them; and looking to the blood of Christ with a simple, undivided reliance on its cleansing virtue, they must plead for the special exercise of God’s forgiving mercy for every sin so discovered and acknowledged. It is obvious that all this necessarily implies that, at the moment such a confession is made and such a plea is offered up, there is an earnest desire to be kept from these sins and an honest purpose, in the strength of promised grace, steadfastly to resist them in all time coming.

Where this is absent, where there is anything like mental reservation in favour of sinful indulgence, it gives a character of insincerity to the whole transaction. Their own conscience, as well as Scripture, will testify that they cannot sincerely expect to be heard; or if they can delude themselves so far as to hope that they will be heard, it is an unfounded hope, of which they will, sooner or later, see reason to be ashamed. In such circumstances, so far from washing their “hands in innocency”, they are willingly retaining the unclean thing by which they have been defiled. To be so washed, they must not only be sprinkled with that blood which cleanses from the guilt of all sin, but also be sanctified by that Spirit who alone can remove the pollution of sin. Both these must be the subject of sincere, earnest and believing prayer.

Further application. These principles are very plainly laid down in the Bible, and comprehensively stated in the text. Let us therefore apply them to our own character and state. In the prospect of compassing the table of the Lord, are we prepared to subject ourselves to the same scrutiny as David did? And while confessing our sins in the hope of finding mercy, are we

honestly desirous also of forsaking them? Let us not be satisfied with being able to give this question a general reply: that we do hope for pardon by the blood of Christ, and we desire also to walk as Christians ought to walk. Let us examine our character, the state of our heart, and the tenor of our life, as they refer both to God and our fellow men. Let us call to remembrance those offences against both, of which our conscience did accuse us at the time, but which we may have too easily and too speedily forgotten.

When we recollect any such offence committed more immediately against God, any gratification or deed which we know to be forbidden in His Word, any rebellious feeling against His dispensations, or any neglect of the homage due to Him – giving that homage to some worldly object which for the time was supreme in our affections – let us enquire whether we are ready to acknowledge such offences, without extenuation or disguise. Let us enquire also if we are as honest in supplicating His grace to cleanse us from its past pollution, and to preserve us from its future influence, as we are in imploring the pardon of its guilt. Likewise let us ask if we are prepared to deal honestly with ourselves, in connection with the offences against our fellow men with which we may have been chargeable.

If we are faithful to ourselves, we must inevitably recollect many such sins – occasions on which our pride, or anger, or some other selfish and ungodly principle was called into activity. Or we may recall times when we said or did something to injure the moral or spiritual character of others, by weakening their reverence for divine truth or their impressions of the necessity of Christian holiness. Are we prepared then to deal with unsparing justice towards these and similar offences? Are we anxious to see, in all their deformity, our selfishness, pride, irritation, uncharitableness (which is dishonesty), and every other unholy affection, whether it has only lurked in our hearts, or been actually manifested in words or deeds which caused harm to our neighbour? Above all, would we confess the guilt, and deplore the consequences, of having in any way hurt the spiritual interests of others – not only imploring forgiveness for such offences, but sincerely seeking to be preserved from them in all time coming?

Let us see to it also that we are not living in the practice of sin or in the neglect of duty about which our conscience may never have made us uneasy, just because, from the prevailing practices of society, we may have been taking for granted that we may safely do what the Bible forbids, or leave undone what it requires. Let us not allege that these are sins of ignorance. With the Word of God in our hand, such a plea is incompetent: for what is the use of God's Word but that, by perusing it carefully each day, we may become daily better acquainted with God's will.

If therefore we have been living in the practice of any one sin, or in the neglect of any one duty, in consequence of inattention or indifference to the Scriptures, such sin will be charged upon us as wilful and it will assuredly prove a “root of bitterness springing up” to trouble us. David was well aware of the danger of thus permitting any secret sin to lurk undiscovered and to gather strength in his heart; we find him praying, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting”. Such also was obviously his sentiment when he said in the words of the text, “I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass Thine altar, O Lord: that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Thy wondrous works”.

John Hooper – a Reformation Puritan¹

5. Work While It Is Day

Rev K M Watkins

One thing is certain. As soon as John Hooper became Bishop of Gloucester in March 1551, he threw himself into doing all that he could for the cause of Christ in his new and wide sphere of labour. That was as well, for soon a radical change for the worse would come over England. In less than two and a half years, Protestant King Edward VI would be dead, and his Romanist half-sister Mary would be on the throne. Hooper would be one of the first to be imprisoned and burnt at the stake.

The night was coming, when Hooper’s labours would be halted. While it was day, he worked with godly zeal, following the example of his Master, who said, “I must work . . . while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (Jn 9:4). Hooper’s time was short, and he worked at a rate that seemed to show that he had some presentiment of it. “Hooper’s energy seems rather to have increased than diminished when he arrived to take up his duties at Gloucester”.² There was no time to lose. John Foxe, the martyrologist, wrote of Hooper at Gloucester that he “did there employ his time . . . with such diligence as may be a spectacle to all bishops. . . . So careful was he in his cure [diocese], that he left neither pains untaken, nor ways unsought,

¹This article is based on the fourth part of a paper given at the 2016 Theological Conference. John Hooper, influenced by Zwingli and Bullinger, the Zurich Reformers, had imbibed a more thoroughly biblical approach to reforming the Church than his English colleagues. With great zeal he had written and preached accordingly. Now he was to be put to the test.

²F Douglas Price, “Gloucester Diocese under Bishop Hooper, 1551-1553”, in *The Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, vol 60 (1938), p 58.

how to train up the flock of Christ in the true word of salvation, continually labouring in the same.”³

J C Ryle, himself a Church of England bishop three centuries later, made a perceptive point. Other leading reformers in Hooper’s time, such as Thomas Cranmer (Archbishop of Canterbury) and Nicholas Ridley (Bishop of London), were unavoidably preoccupied with matters at the national level, centralised around the King and Parliament, and Cranmer was especially involved in crafting the Church of England’s constitutional documents. Although not entirely free of national duties (including attending the House of Lords), it was left to Hooper in Gloucestershire, over a hundred miles from London, to work at a local level in the daily demands of ministerial life. Ryle wrote, “For really working a diocese, and giving a splendid pattern of what an English Protestant Bishop should be, the man of the times was John Hooper”.⁴

Hooper could have been held back by allowing a root of bitterness to grow up because of the vestments controversy. Whilst not resiling from his view, he deliberately put it behind him, pressing forwards and focusing on the work in hand. From Gloucester, he wrote to Bullinger in August 1551, saying, “I very properly . . . found fault with the use of them [the priestly garments] in the Church, and contended for their entire removal. . . . But as the Lord has put an end to this controversy, I do not think it worthwhile to violate the sepulchre of this unhappy tragedy.”⁵

Newcombe sums up Hooper’s attitude perfectly: “Hooper was heading toward a task that would absorb him completely and give him the opportunity to put his ideas into practice in England for the first time and he concentrated on that”.⁶ Our Reformation Puritan now had a sphere of responsibility in which to implement what he had preached, in his sermons on Jonah, before King Edward. “Hooper hoped to transform his diocese and create a Church in the image of that he had left behind him in Zurich”.⁷

Unlike many a bishop before and after, Bishop Hooper gave the primary place to preaching. Behind this was not only scriptural conviction, but also the fact that he had reached this place of prominence largely on account of his preaching, and he was not going to neglect it now. Such was his zeal for preaching that his wife, anxious for her husband’s health, pleaded with

³*The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, ed S R Cattley, London, 1838, vol 6, p 643.

⁴J C Ryle, *Five English Reformers*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1994, p 50.

⁵Letter to Bullinger from Gloucester dated 1 August 1551, *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation*, vol 1, The Parker Society, ed Hastings Robinson, 1846, pp 91,92.

⁶David G Newcombe, *John Hooper: Tudor Bishop and Martyr*, Davenant Press, 2009, p 168.

⁷David G Newcombe, “The Visitation of the Diocese of Gloucester and the State of the Clergy, 1551”, in *The Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, vol 114 (1996), p 87.

Bullinger: “I entreat you to recommend Master Hooper to be more moderate in his labour: for he preaches four, or at least three, times a day; and I am afraid lest these overabundant exertions should occasion a premature decay, by which very many souls now hungering after the word of God . . . will be deprived both of their teacher and his doctrine”.⁸ Foxe recorded, “No father in his household, no gardener in his garden, nor husbandman in his vineyard, was more or better occupied than he in his diocese amongst his flock, going about his towns and villages in teaching and preaching to the people there”.⁹

But Hooper could preach in only one place at a time. The vast bulk of preaching in his diocese was done by others. We cannot approve the system whereby one minister has ecclesiastical authority over others, but we can applaud the way Hooper sought to use the opportunity for advancing true religion. He could not have been more diligent in this part of his responsibility. He prepared 50 “Articles” of doctrine, which he sent to all the clergy with the aim “that, first and principally, the true and pure worship of God may be restored; and that so many souls, being committed to my faith and yours, may, by our wholesome doctrine and cleanness of conversation, be moved unto the true study of perfect charity, and called back from all error and ignorance, and finally to be reduced and brought unto the high Bishop and Pastor of souls, Jesus Christ”.¹⁰

The first article not only set the scriptural foundation for the rest, but also overthrew the false foundation of Romanism: “First, that none . . . do teach or preach any manner of thing to be necessary for the salvation of man other than that which is contained in the book of God’s holy Word . . . and that they beware to establish and confirm any manner of doctrine concerning the old superstitions and papistical doctrine” (*LW*, p 120). Hooper was strong against the Anabaptists too: “Denying the christening [sic] of infants, and affirming the rebaptising . . . of those which were before baptised in their infancy . . . are very pernicious and damnable” (Article 6, *LW*, p 121). Carefully distinguishing faith and works, the clergy were to “teach and preach the justification of man to come only by the faith of Jesus Christ, and not by the merit of any man’s good works; albeit that good works do necessarily follow justification, the which before justification are of no value or estimation before God” (Article 7, *LW*, p 121).

As was to be expected, the articles were practical as well as theological.

⁸Letter from Anne Hooper to Henry Bullinger, written from London on 3 April 1551, *Original Letters*, vol 1, p 108.

⁹Foxe, vol 6, pp 643,644.

¹⁰“Visitation Book”, in *Later Writings of John Hooper*, ed Charles Nevinson, The Parker Society, Cambridge, 1852, p 119. The Articles appear on pages 120 to 129 of this volume, from which the following quotations are taken, labelled *LW*.

All remnants of Romanism were to be removed, with the altar replaced by a table for the Lord's Supper. Images were to be removed from windows and walls. Worship was to be conducted with reverence: people were "not to talk or walk in the time of the sermon, communion, or common prayers, but rather to behave themselves godly and devoutly at the same" (Article 47, *LW*, p 129).

These articles, along with those of others, were precursors of what eventually would become the Church of England's Thirty-nine Articles. Some of the phraseology reminds us of the Westminster Standards too. For example: "The sacraments are not of any force by virtue or strength of any outward work of the same . . . but only by the virtue and means of the Holy Ghost working in the hearts of the doers and receivers by faith" (Article 24, *LW*, p 125).

At the beginning of May 1551, Hooper embarked on his first visitation of the diocese, taking with him 31 "Injunctions" to ensure that the clergy implemented the articles.¹¹ Every quarter of the year, the clergy were required to give a "rehearsal of the contents . . . in Latin or English" of a stipulated book of the Bible: Romans, Deuteronomy, Matthew and Genesis (Injunction 6, *LW*, p 132). Communicants were required to recite the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer (Injunction 9, *LW*, p 132).

During the visitation, no fewer than 318 members of the clergy were examined by way of nine questions: three each on the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Some questions were as simple as where the Decalogue and Lord's Prayer were to be found in the Bible, how many Commandments there were and who was the author of the Lord's Prayer. Some clergy could not even answer those questions, but where many failed was reciting the Decalogue and giving Scriptural proofs for the Creed; 168 could not do the former and 218 could not do the latter.

The Gloucestershire clergy were probably no more ignorant than those in other places at this period of the English Reformation. To correct matters, Hooper left them with 27 "Interrogatories and Demands" by which to assess their people's progress; and the people with 61 "Interrogatories and Examinations" by which to keep their ministers under review.¹²

In the midst of constant preaching and the visitation, Hooper managed to publish a practical work on Romans 13 in May 1551, expounding Christian duties and responsibilities to public persons such as magistrates, and to all persons in their private capacities.¹³

Hooper bestowed much effort on ecclesiastical discipline. "There were

¹¹The injunctions appear on pages 130 to 140 of *Later Writings*.

¹²These appear on pages 140 to 143, and 143 to 150, respectively of *Later Writings*.

¹³"Annotations on Romans 13", in *Later Writings*, pp 93-116.

few tools that Hooper had at his disposal to impose the Reformation on a reluctant diocese. But he recognised that exercising such authority as he rightfully had over the courts was one such tool.”¹⁴ But sanctions could only go so far. If a man was deprived of his office, Hooper had no one to fill the vacancy. He had to work with what he had, and sought to improve the situation as much as possible. Some clergy were still attached to their former Romanist ways; many had been in office since the days of Henry VIII. Under Hooper they had no choice but to comply with Protestantism, but on Mary’s coming to the throne, they happily reverted to Romanism. Ryle tellingly comments, “They were ready to conform to anything, and subscribe anything, so long as they were allowed to keep their livings!”¹⁵

Discipline extended to the laity as well. No bishop was more diligent in sitting in his Cathedral’s consistory court than Hooper in Gloucester. One often-recounted case bears repeating. Sir Anthony Kingston was a man of some distinction, with royal connections. Unswayed by this, and convinced that justice applied to the high as well as the low, Hooper rebuked him for adultery. Kingston responded by smiting the Bishop on the cheek. This was reported to William Cecil, Secretary to the King, and Kingston was fined a substantial sum and required to submit to the ecclesiastical rebuke.

In October 1551, the bishopric of Worcester became vacant when its incumbent Nicholas Heath was removed for refusing to subscribe to Protestantism. The vacancy was continuing for too long, and in March 1552 Cranmer reported to Bullinger, “Master Hooper is in such great esteem among us, that he is now appointed Bishop of Worcester”.¹⁶ This was effected by dissolving the Gloucester bishopric and combining it with Worcester. Clearly, Hooper’s labours had not gone unnoticed. Ryle comments, “We need not wonder that the Government soon gave him the charge of Worcester as well as the diocese of Gloucester”.¹⁷

Hooper began in Worcester as he had in Gloucester, seeking to impose his articles on the clergy, and with a formal visitation to the diocese. No sooner was he away from Gloucester, though, than trouble flared up, with Romanising clergy resisting his Protestant measures. He wrote to Cecil, “The negligence and ungodly behaviour of the ministers in Gloucestershire compelled me to return”.¹⁸ Having quelled that, and established trustworthy men

¹⁴Newcombe, *John Hooper*, p 181.

¹⁵Ryle, *Five English Reformers*, p 50.

¹⁶Letter of Thomas Cranmer to Bullinger, written from Lambeth on 20 March 1552, *Original Letters*, vol 1, p 23.

¹⁷Ryle, *Five English Reformers*, p 50.

¹⁸Letter to William Cecil from Gloucester dated 6 July 1552, *Later Writings*, p xviii.

to act as superintendents in Gloucestershire, he returned to Worcester to deal with two traditionalist Canons of the Cathedral, Henry Joliffe and Robert Johnson, who were refusing to subscribe the Articles. In another letter to Cecil we can hear a godly man's heartfelt longings for better things: "Ah, Mr Secretary, that there were good men in the Cathedral Churches! God then should have much more honour than He hath, the King's majesty more obedience, and the poor people more knowledge. But the realm wanteth light in such Churches where as of right it ought most to be."¹⁹ In the same letter, we see that the burden of public duty was taking a heavy toll. In comparison, private labours were like playing and private troubles more like taking one's ease.²⁰

We should also note the godliness of Hooper's home life. John Foxe wrote, "Though he bestowed . . . the most part of his care upon the public flock . . . there lacked no provision in him, to bring up his own children in learning and good manners; insomuch that ye could not discern whether he deserved more praise for his fatherly usage at home, or for his bishop-like doings abroad: for everywhere he kept one religion in one uniform doctrine and integrity. So that if you entered into the Bishop's palace, you would suppose yourself to have entered into some church or temple. In every corner thereof there was some smell of virtue, good example, honest conversation, and reading of holy Scriptures. There was not to be seen in his house any courtly rioting or idleness; no pomp at all; no dishonest word, no swearing could there be heard."²¹

Foxe wrote from personal experience of Hooper's liberal hospitality: "Twice I was . . . in his house in Worcester, where . . . I saw a table spread with good store of meat, and beset full of beggars and poor folk: and I, asking his servants what this meant, they told me that every day their lord and master's manner was to have . . . to dinner a certain number of poor folk . . . and, when they were served (being before examined by him or his deputies, of the Lord's Prayer, the articles of their faith, and Ten Commandments), then he himself sat down to dinner, and not before."²²

Hooper made second visitations to both parts of his joint diocese. As long as it was day, the Lord's servant laboured on. He intended to spend six months

¹⁹Letter to William Cecil written from Worcester on 25 October 1552, *Later Writings*, pp xix,xx.

²⁰"There is none that eateth their bread in the sweat of their face but such as serve in public vocation. Yours is wonderful, but mine passeth. Now I perceive private labours be but plays, [and] private troubles but ease and quietness. God help us. Amen." *Later Writings*, p xx.

²¹Foxe, vol 6, p 644.

²²Foxe, vol 6, p 644.

in turn in each part of his diocese. But “any plans he had were soon overtaken by events”.²³ The night was closing in.

The Spirit of Adoption¹

1. A Privilege

James Buchanan

The spirit of bondage unto fear, which is produced by the law when it is applied to the conscience, can only be exchanged for “the Spirit of adoption” by believing the gospel. And the sinner is in a hopeful state of preparation for receiving the gospel when he is awakened out of the lethargy of nature and convinced in his conscience, or pricked in his heart, and begins to inquire, “What must I do to be saved?”

And (1) if under the teaching of the Spirit, he is enabled to understand the message of peace which God has sent from heaven; (2) if he is taught to apprehend the nature of the scheme of grace, the design and object of the Saviour’s work, the value and the efficacy of His death as an atonement for sin, His all-sufficiency as One who is able to save unto the very uttermost, and the richness and freeness of His grace as it is expressed in the free, universal calls and invitations of the gospel; and (3) if especially he is enabled to apply the truth to his own case, so as to feel that the gospel, which is glad tidings to all, is a gospel to him, and that Jesus, who is the Christ of God, is a Christ to his own soul – then, at the instant when he understands and believes the gospel message, and appropriates it to himself, the spirit of bondage is displaced by the spirit of adoption in his heart, and he may enter at once on the glorious liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free.

For it is simply *by faith*, simply by believing what God speaks to him in the Word, that the convinced sinner becomes a converted man; and there is enough in Christ’s gospel to produce and sustain a spirit of adoption in his heart, even if he was the very chief of sinners. The reason why we remain so long under the bondage of legal fears is not that the gospel is inadequate to remove them or insufficient to produce a spirit of adoption, but because there is either some defect or error in our apprehension of the truth, or some lurking spirit of unbelief concerning it, or some remaining unwillingness to close with it. If we would only believe, we would see the salvation of God.

²³Pete Sullivan, *A Gloucester Martyr: John Hooper and the English Reformation*, Country Books, 2004, p 71.

¹The first part of an extract from a chapter entitled, “The Work of the Spirit as the Spirit of Adoption”, in Buchanan’s book, *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*.

The most disconsolate sinner is to look out of himself to Christ and behold Him as “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world”. Opening his mind to the full impression of the truth, the sinner is to receive it as “a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”; that Christ speaks to him individually in the gospel, and offers him a free salvation, and calls, invites, beseeches and commands him to accept it; that He who died on the cross is now on the throne, a Saviour mighty to save. The sinner is to believe that God is not revealed in the gospel as the Lawgiver, Judge and Avenger, but as God in Christ reconciling (“the Lord God merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin”). If he would do so, the most anxious inquirer that ever smarted under the yoke of bondage would pass at once into a state of perfect freedom, and exchange all his misgivings, forebodings and fears, for peace and joy in believing. This peace is the peace which passes all understanding, and the joy is the joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.

For by faith in the gospel the inquirer comes at once into *a new state and relation to God*. Formerly he was a child of disobedience, a child of wrath even as others; now he is, by adoption, a son; and if a son, then an heir, an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. This change in his relation to God necessarily precedes the witness of the Spirit, by which it is declared and confirmed; and it is because believers are sons that God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying, “Abba, Father”. This filial relation is constituted by faith, for as soon as a sinner believes the gospel, he is adopted into God’s family and becomes a partaker of all the privileges of His children. His whole relation to God is changed, so that he may be addressed in the language of Paul: “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ”.

Adoption is a most precious privilege; it brings sinners into a new and most endearing relation to God; it makes them the children and the heirs of Him who graciously condescends to call Himself their Father in heaven. As it is bestowed, like every other privilege of His grace, through the mediation of His own Son, it confers an infallible security by making His children “joint-heirs with Christ” – heirs not in their own right, but in the right of Him who is God’s only begotten and well-beloved Son. This precious privilege – which brings them now under the fatherly protection of God and gives them a sure interest in all the promises of the gospel – is attained simply by believing; for there is enough in the message of the gospel to warrant even the very chief of sinners to draw nigh unto God as a forgiving Father. And as soon as that message is clearly understood and cordially believed, we may enter at once on the state and condition of children.

But this change in a sinner's *relation to God* will be accompanied with a corresponding change in his *views and feelings* towards Him; he will now regard Him as his Father. His state being changed, his spirit will be changed also; he will be conscious of a new frame of mind, which is here called "the spirit of adoption, whereby [he cries], Abba, Father". This childlike disposition can only be produced by the truth as it is in Jesus, received in the exercise of a simple faith, and applied with power by the Spirit of all grace.

The spirit of adoption springs as naturally from the Spirit's work in applying the gospel as the spirit of bondage does from the Spirit applying the law. It is part of the work of the Holy Spirit to unfold to the believer the unsearchable riches of Christ, to open up the freeness of His grace and the fullness of gospel privilege which His people have. For the Lord says of the Spirit: "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you". And Paul says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit. . . . Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

The work of applying the gospel to comfort and establish believers, considered as the children of God, consists of two parts. Although these parts may be closely connected and mutually related with each other, they can nevertheless be distinguished, and Paul mentions them separately. He refers to two distinct effects of the Spirit's operation; we read in one verse of "*the spirit of adoption*, whereby we cry, Abba, Father"; and in the next of *the witness of the Spirit*, whereby He assures believers that they are the children of God. The one denotes the childlike disposition which characterises every true believer; the other speaks of the assurance of their sonship, which is a higher attainment than the former, but one that is not always enjoyed, even by those who manifest much of the spirit of filial reverence, submission and love.

Some latent feeling of hope, some secret trust and confidence, is indeed necessarily implied in the spirit of adoption, by which the believer cries, "Abba, Father"; and he may really be drawing near to God with the confidence of sonship while, from some remaining darkness or defect in his faith, he may shrink from using the strong language of assurance and dare not say in so many words that the Spirit bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. But if he has believed the gospel at all, if he has been enabled to understand the gospel message and apply it to his own soul, he must have experienced a great and growing change in all his views, feelings and dispositions towards God; he must have been liberated in some measure from the spirit of bondage and pervaded with the spirit of adoption. Wherever this

new spirit exists, it is itself a proof of sonship and, in its growing strength and habitual exercise, it may lay the foundation of that full assurance of hope which is produced in the mind of a believer when the Spirit bears witness with his spirit that he is one of the children of God.

The Sin of Unbelief¹

3. Conclusions

W S Plumer

1. What a dreadful thing is sin! It is so daring, so stubborn, so mischievous, so ruinous to man, so dishonouring to God.

2. What mercy is found in God providing a Saviour, offering Him to our acceptance, waiting on ungrateful and rebellious men so long, and actually leading many to the Saviour!

3. What a dreadful doom awaits those who will not be reclaimed! "It shall be more tolerable for . . . Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement than for" them. "Unbelief brings greater guilt" and sorer punishment "than the sins of the worst of heathens, who never heard of these glorious things, nor have had this Saviour offered to them." "The moth shall eat them up like a garment," says God; "and the worm shall eat them like wool, but My righteousness shall be for ever, and My salvation from generation to generation" (Is 51:8).

4. Let us guard carefully against that great parent of unbelief, a self-righteous temper, which says, I am holy, I am clean, I am pure. "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal 2:21). To expect heaven on the ground of your own merit is, says Jonathan Edwards, to "arrogate to yourself the honour of the greatest thing that ever God Himself did. . . . To take on yourself to work out redemption is a greater thing than if you had taken it upon you to create a world." A self-righteous spirit is fatal to the soul.

5. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb 3:12). It dishonours and provokes God. It grieves the Saviour (Mk 3:5). It grieves the Holy Spirit of promise. An attack of fever is not so bad as an assault of unbelief.

6. The great business assigned us on earth by God Himself is believing – believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. When the multitude said to Jesus, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Rock of Our Salvation*. Previous articles have given scriptural reasons why unbelief is so serious. This is the final article in the series.

unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John 6:28,29). So when the jailor cried, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30,31).

This is the tenor of all Scripture. It is only by faith that we enter into rest. Be sure you truly believe, for "without faith it is impossible to please" God. "Till you have this faith," writes Richard Baxter, "you have no special interest in Christ. It is only believers that are united to Him, and are His living members. And it is by faith that He dwells in our hearts, and that we live in Him (Eph 3:17, Gal 2:20). In vain do you boast of Christ if you are not true believers. You have no part or portion in Him. None of His special benefits are yours till you have this living, working faith." The law presses until we believe. Forgiveness and acceptance do not come till we close in with Christ: "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already". Why, O why, do not all perishing sinners flee to Christ? Why will men involve their souls in deeper sin and more alarming danger by persisting even for an hour in the rejection of Christ?

Receiving the Lord's Supper by Faith¹

Ashbel Green

Let our first inquiry be, Who are the worthy receivers of this sacrament? In rebuking the Corinthian church (1 Cor 11:23-34) for scandalously profaning this sacred institution, the Apostle Paul twice speaks of eating and drinking "unworthily". From this, the terms *worthy* and *unworthy* have come to be applied to communicants and to the manner in which they attend on the table of the Lord. The meaning of the Apostle in using the word *unworthily* manifestly is, a manner *unsuitable* to the nature of the ordinance – which, in the case of the Corinthians, was a grossly profane, carnal and irreverent manner.

The general truth therefore taught by the inspired Apostle is: all who partake in a manner suited to the nature of the ordinance partake *worthily*, and those who partake in any way not suited to the nature of the ordinance partake *unworthily*. Our English word *worthy* is generally understood to denote merit or excellence of a high order when applied to persons or character; by thus understanding it of those who may properly partake of the Lord's Supper,

¹This extract is taken, with editing, from Green's *Lectures on the Shorter Catechism*, vol 2. He is here expounding the Lord's Supper. Green (1762-1848) was a prominent American minister.

many humble Christians fear to approach it. But truly if personal merit and deserving, as these timid believers seem to suppose, were the qualifications demanded of those who might lawfully go to the Lord's table, not one of our fallen race could ever appear there. Not one could ever affirm with truth that he had any such excellence of character as to entitle him to claim this privilege as a right. The Lord's parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, who went up to the temple together to pray, was intended to rebuke, in the most pointed manner, every plea of personal merit when a sinner stands before his God, and if anyone says that he has not sinned, he deceives himself, and the truth is not in him.

Deep humility of soul, self-emptiedness and a simple reliance on the grace of God in Christ Jesus, with an impressive perception of the solemnity of the ordinance, constitute the temper, feeling and views which are best suited to all who sit down at the Lord's table. These are therefore the qualities which constitute a worthy communicant.

Let us now consider that it is by faith that worthy communicants partake of the body and blood of Christ, with all His benefits, in this sacrament. By the body and blood of Christ, figuratively represented in the Lord's Supper, we are undoubtedly to understand His whole work of satisfying the justice of God on behalf of His people – together with the privileges and blessings resulting, both in this life and that which is to come, from their Saviour's finished work. This was completed when His body was broken and His blood shed on the cross of Calvary.

Faith receives and applies all these rich, inestimable gifts of divine grace, in the proper celebration of this holy rite. Not that faith is, in itself, more excellent than its sister graces; for an inspired apostle says, on a comparison of faith, hope and charity, that the greatest of these is charity, or true love, to God and man. Neither is faith separated from the other Christian graces, either in receiving the sacred emblems of our Saviour's death, or at any other time when it is exercised, for evangelical faith always "worketh by love" and is never separated from a measure of hope. Yet it is exclusively the grace of faith that appropriates, to the soul which exercises it, all the unspeakable benefits of Christ's redemption exhibited in this precious ordinance.

The inspired Word declares that Jesus Christ is evidently set forth there, crucified before the eyes of His believing people. Is it then essential to salvation that Christ Jesus should be seen in the glory of His mediatorial character? Faith is the eye which beholds this glory. It is indispensable that the infinite value of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and the perfect satisfaction which it makes to the offended justice of God, should be clearly perceived. This perception is obtained in the exercise of faith.

Is it all-important that the soul, in view of its aggravated guilt and misery, should be delivered into the hands of the Saviour – in confidence that His blood will cleanse away its deepest stains and remove the guilt of all its transgressions? Is it all-important that His perfect righteousness will be upon the soul for its complete justification before the tribunal of eternal justice, and for giving it a title to that everlasting life which the King of Zion has merited, and will assuredly confer on all His faithful subjects? It is faith, in lively exercise, that surrenders the soul to Christ; it is faith that confides in the cleansing efficacy of His blood; it is faith that puts on the robe of His righteousness; it is faith that pleads His righteousness now as a full answer to all the demands of God's holy law; it is faith that looks forward to the eternal crown which the Redeemer will give to everyone that overcomes, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life; and it is faith which precedes a measure of heavenly peace and joy – drawing them from the Saviour's fullness into the soul in which its vigorous actings are in operation.

In the Lord's Supper, in a pre-eminent degree, faith effects all this for the Christian believer – while it looks through the symbols to the spiritual blessings they represent and assure to every worthy participant. Justly does *The Westminster Confession of Faith* declare that “the body and blood of Christ are as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in this ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses”.

How blessed is what faith sees in the suffering, bleeding, dying, atoning Saviour. Then Gethsemane, Pilate's hall, the cross, the thorny crown, the nails, the spear, the hill of Cavalry, are in present view. Then the astounding cry of the co-equal Son of the Father passes through the ear to the heart: “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Then the joyous voice quickly follows, proclaiming, “It is finished. . . . Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit”.

Yes, it is here that faith sees the sinner's ransom amply paid; sees every divine attribute meeting, reconciled on the cross: “mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other”. Seeing all this, faith sees every crimson stain washed away. It looks at the finished work of redemption, accepts it as offered, and says in holy ecstasy, It is mine, mine for ever; and in sacramental emblems, seals it as its own, in the covenant of that God who cannot lie. It triumphs in the promise, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee”. It looks forward to a victory over death, the grave, sin and hell. It enters within the veil and beholds face to face the once-crucified but now-reigning Redeemer, prostrates herself at His feet, and joins in the praises of the adoring throng that shall last while eternity endures.

Well may it be added that “spiritual nourishment and growth in grace”

must be the result of views and exercises such as these. Be assured that the people of God will testify that often, when they have held in their hands and received the consecrated bread and the hallowed cup, their souls have been so refreshed and nourished, and they have felt their spiritual strength so increased and invigorated, that no duty appeared difficult, and no suffering by which their Saviour might be honoured seemed appalling or unwelcome.

The Way to the Father¹

W K Tweedie

John 14:6. *No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*

I can draw near by the blood of calves and of goats, exclaimed the Jew, who could not penetrate further than the letter of his religion. I can draw near with a mangled and mutilated body, exclaims the Hindu, gasping out his life in the frantic attempt to appease his bloody god. I can approach in the strength of an incantation or by means of my fetish, rejoins the heathen African. My penance, my fasting, my self-inflicted anguish, will open the way for me, re-echoes the deluded Romanist. My sound creed will throw open a path for me into the presence of God, is the whisper of the formalist, or the man who thinks there can be religion without conversion, or salvation without a new heart. But He who has the key of David, who opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens, comes among these deluded ones and says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me".

The way is *exclusive*. There is absolutely no other. Even to attempt to find another is sin; it is dishonouring to the Son of God.

It is a *blood-marked* way. For it was opened through the rent veil of a Mediator's flesh.

It is a *living* way. The dead cannot walk there. The first step in it is taken when the life-giving Spirit turns our feet into the way of peace.

It is a *little-frequented* way. "Few there be that find it." The invitation is free to all; but as men must drop the love of sin when they enter on that path, it is shunned by countless myriads. Yet it is a way in which men walk with God – a way which leads to something better than the city of refuge, even the city of our God. It is a path in which our companions are all they that fear Him, or have turned their faces Zionward, and in which the Spirit of God is our guide. He is like a voice behind us saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it".

¹Taken, with editing, from Tweedie's volume, *Glad Tidings of the Gospel of Peace*.

And such being the way, am I walking there? “It shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it;” is that verified in me? Have I brought my sins into the holy path, or did I through grace forsake them at the entrance?

Learning to Love Prayer¹

William Romaine

Prayer consists in keeping up daily converse with God upon all occasions. This is the breathing of the new-born soul. It wants to draw in the air of heaven and to live in its own proper element. A way is opened for it unto the throne of glory, and the children of God may approach it with boldness, for it is a throne of grace, and He that sits on it loves to answer their petitions. He is their Father. “I ascend”, says Jesus, “to My Father, “and your Father”; “the Father Himself loveth you”; ask what you will of Him in My name, He will do it. This is the beloved object of prayer, a reconciled Father in Jesus, whose heart is full of tenderness to the complaints and miseries of His family. His promises are the declaration of His pure love; to depend on His fulfilling them does honour to His truth and faithfulness, and always brings down the blessing.

The Holy Spirit abides with the children of God, to teach them thus to pray in faith. He helps their infirmities in prayer, strengthens their graces and bestows on them their comforts. He enables them to come with boldness and to have access with confidence. Whatever their Father has freely promised to give them in Jesus, they will ask in faith, nothing wavering, for they know His promises cannot fail. They find them daily fulfilled, whereby their holy familiarity with their Father increases. He draws nearer to them, and they draw nearer to Him. Thus their mutual intercourse may be interrupted, but it cannot be entirely broken off. God is always disposed to hear, although the believer is not always able to pray rejoicing. It is still his privilege, although he may not find any great delight in it; but if he continues to make constant use of his privilege, his delight will return, and God will fulfil to him the gracious promise, I will “make them joyful in My house of prayer”.

Thus the child of God learns to love prayer, indeed to pray without ceasing. He lives under his Father’s eye, and in dependence on his Father’s care for him night and day. Thus he has fellowship with the things of God in his soul as true and lasting as he has with the things of this world in his body.

¹Romaine (1714-1795) was a noted London minister. This article is an edited extract – directed to believers – from his well-known work, *The Life, Walk and Triumph of Faith*.

What an exalted privilege is this! How highly is prayer hereby ennobled! It is not a duty rendered to an absolute God, but a gracious intercourse with a covenant God. It is not practised that He may love us, but because He loves us; not to make us His children, but because we are His children. It should be performed always in this faith. If there are infirmities in it, such as wandering, coldness, or the like, we are to remember that we are not heard for the beauty of our prayers, nor answered for the fervency of them.

What makes our persons accepted obtains acceptance for our services also. We and all we do are only accepted in the Beloved. "Through [Jesus Christ] we . . . have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph 2:18). Our access is through Jesus Christ. Trusting to His finished salvation we enter into the presence of the Father and, guided by the Holy Spirit, we pray in faith. Whatever we ask in the Son's name, we know that we have the petitions which He desired of Him. This spiritualises prayer, and puts glory upon it because there is heavenly fellowship with God in it, with the Father through the Son, by the one Spirit.

These are some of the privileges of Christian prayer. Thou goest, O my soul, to meet thy God in it, to converse with thy Father, to call on Him for the fulfilling of His promises made in Jesus, to wait on Him for His answers, and to give Him His glory. What blessed times thou hast enjoyed in this communion with thy God! How He has manifested His nearness to thee, and bounty towards thee! Hast thou not found His heart open, His ears open, and His hands open to grant thee the request of thy lips? And when thou hast not found such sweet fellowship with thy God in prayer, yet thy dependence on His faithful Word has been exercised and improved.

Thou hast left thy petitions with thy Friend and Advocate, trusting to that most glorious description of Him: "Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto Him much incense, that He should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand" (Rev 8:3,4). Thou great Angel of the covenant, thus present my prayers; they are nothing worth but as perfumed with Thy divine odours. Let them ever ascend before God out of Thy hand, with the smoke of the incense of Thy sacrifice and intercession. Blessed Spirit of prayer, increase my faith, that I may trust more to a prayer-hearing God and Father, who is always ready to grant every good thing promised to His children in Christ Jesus. Amen.

What base ingratitude is it to be receiving and using the blessings of a bountiful providence and yet never acknowledge the hand from which they proceed!

Archibald Alexander

Book Review

The Greatest Fight in the World, Spurgeon's Final Manifesto, by C H Spurgeon, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 82 pages, £5.00, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

This address was delivered by C H Spurgeon in 1891 and proved to be the final one he was to give at the Pastors' College. A footnote to the introduction explains, "Having endured many years of poor health, which was not helped by the theological battles that had occupied his attention during the mid to late 1800s, he again became ill in the spring of 1891 and died in Mentone, France, in January 1892". What we have in this book very much highlights this struggle.

After a brief introduction, the address contains three points: (1) *Our Armoury*. Spurgeon simply describes this as the Bible and, for almost 40 of the 76 pages of the address, he emphasises such facts as: we need nothing more than what God has seen fit to reveal, and if that were not enough for our faith, what could we add to it? Again, we are not to cast away anything from the perfect volume. (2) *Our Army*. Here Spurgeon deals with the Church: first of all the question, Is there a Church at all? then, Is it real or statistical? and, Is it increasing or dying? He goes on to speak of such subjects as the importance of being busy and well-taught, and of ministers being an example to the flock. (3) *Our Strength*. This he identifies as the Holy Ghost and goes on to speak of, among other things, our need of dependence upon Him in our preparation and in the pulpit as well as for results.

Throughout this address Spurgeon pours scorn on those who denied verbal inspiration and were introducing error into the Church. For example he says, "We have nowadays a class of men who preach Christ, and even preach the gospel; but then they preach a great deal else which is not true, and thus they destroy all the good of all they deliver, and lure men to error. They would be styled 'evangelical' and yet be of the school which is really anti-evangelical. Look well to these gentlemen. I have heard that a fox, when close hunted by the dogs, will pretend to be one of them, and run with the pack. That is what certain are aiming at just now: *the foxes would seem to be dogs*. But in the case of the fox, his strong scent betrays him, and the dogs soon find him out; and even so, the scent of false doctrine is not easily concealed, and the game does not answer for long. There are extant ministers of whom we scarce can tell whether they are dogs or foxes; but all men shall know our quality as long as we live and they shall be in no doubt as to what we believe and teach" (pp 42,43).

There are just two points in the address with which the reviewer would take issue. First, endorsing the “Gap Theory” which, to accommodate the scientists of the day, posited millions of years between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 (p 34). This was a popular view in Spurgeon’s day and Thomas Chalmers taught it. However, the Hebrew does not allow for any such gap. The second point we take issue with is Spurgeon’s criticism of the Paedobaptist position which he calls an “addition . . . to the Word of God” and concludes wrongly, “Baptismal regeneration rides upon the shoulders of Paedobaptism” (p 37).

That apart, we have here an excellent address and, considering the fact that the situation today is even more serious than in Spurgeon’s day, we believe that all, especially preachers of the Word – to whom it was especially given – will profit from reading it.

(Rev) *W Weale*

Notes and Comments

Denominations on the Move

An internet posting of part of an Anglican-style litany from the 2018 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) contains the following words, supposedly a prayer to the Most High: “We grieve the disunity of your church. We grieve that many women in our congregations feel unvalued and unwanted, unheard and uncared for. We grieve that we have acted as though being male was more valuable than being female . . . that only male voices could be and should be heard. . . . We grieve that the poor, the blue-collar, the working class . . . find our churches uninviting and unwelcoming. . . . We grieve that black and brown people find our churches to be overwhelming and unsympathetic places. . . . We grieve that our loyalties to politicians who play on racial fears have been stronger than our loyalties to our black and brown brothers and sisters in Christ. . . . We grieve that those that have spoken the gospel truth on our racial unity-in-diversity have been shouted down as ‘cultural Marxists’ or ‘social justice warriors’ rather than celebrated as servants of the gospel. . . .” To all of which, the “people” are expected to reply, “Hear us, good Lord”.

Wikipedia describes the PCA as “the second largest Presbyterian church body (second to Presbyterian Church (USA)) and the largest conservative Reformed denomination in the United States”. The denomination was formed in 1973 in reaction to increasing liberalism in the PCUSA, but it now seems to be going the same way itself (though doubtless it still has a conservative wing). The matters confessed in the “prayer” – disregard for women, for the poor, and for those of other races – are indeed sinful, but there is no reason

to think that the PCA is markedly more guilty of such sins than are other members of humanity. Instead, the prayer reads as an exercise in propaganda, intended to wound the feelings of others in the Church, and to misrepresent and denigrate their views. It savours of the half-truths and malice of Satan rather than of the purity, gentleness and love of the Holy Spirit.

That the Assembly was prepared to participate in such worship shows that the Wikipedia entry needs to be updated: the PCA is neither conservative nor Reformed. Denominations change rapidly once they begin to take their standards from the world around them rather than from the Word of God, and Christians need to be on their guard against these powerful currents of defection: “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (Heb 3:12).

Meanwhile the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) has shown unexpected resistance to the common downward path. It first ordained women to the ministry in 1976 – which one would have thought would have been its ruin – but in 1980 it voted to leave the World Council of Churches; and this year it has broken ecumenical ties with the Church of Scotland over homosexual marriage, and has determined to exclude homosexual couples from communicant membership and to withhold baptism from any children that they may somehow come to have. Such signs of spiritual life are very welcome. Its next move should be to depose all female office-bearers and to excommunicate all members who deny cardinal doctrines – in particular the complete authority of Scripture. Perhaps that day will come. *DWBS*

A Welcome Court Decision

A court in Colorado, USA, decided that baker Jack Phillips had unlawfully discriminated against a same-sex couple when he refused to provide a cake celebrating their “marriage”. He was also directed to give comprehensive anti-discrimination training to his staff. He said that providing the cake would have violated his beliefs and appealed to the Supreme Court.

Thankfully the Supreme Court overturned the decision by a 7-2 majority. Yet their conclusion is not a guide to similar cases, for the important factor behind the majority opinion was the argument that the Colorado Civil Rights Commission, which brought the case against the baker, had been shown to be hostile to religion because of the remarks of one of its members.

Assisted Suicide Rejected

Amidst the moral malaise sweeping our nation it is heartening to find some restraints remaining. A recent Court of Appeal ruling means that assisted suicide continues to be illegal in the UK. Noel Conway, a retired lecturer with motor neurone disease, has wanted for some time to be allowed “help to die”,

while he claims he “still has the mental capacity” to make the “voluntary, clear, settled and informed” decision to arrange his death. Earlier this year he said that he could only legally receive this help if a High Court judge ruled in his favour. This was denied him in May, so Mr Conway took his case to the Court of Appeal, which also rejected his demands.

Three senior judges – Sir Terence Etherton, Sir Brian Leveson and Lady Justice King – stated that “the existing law achieves a fair balance between the interests of the wider community and the interests of people like Noel Conway”. They added, “The court had concluded it was not as well placed as Parliament to determine the necessity and proportionality of a blanket ban”. Further, “the Court had seen evidence to suggest Conway’s proposed scheme was ‘inadequate to protect the weak and vulnerable’ and failed to give enough weight to the ‘significance of the sanctity of life’ and to the scheme’s potential to undermine trust and confidence between doctors and patients”.

Dr Peter Saunders, Director of Care Not Killing, welcomed the ruling: “Our laws deter the exploitation, abuse and coercion of vulnerable people”, adding that numerous medical groups, including the British Medical Association, do not support assisted suicide. He insisted that assisted-suicide campaigners should “turn their attention instead to how we can secure equality of access to the very best health care for all”, which he stressed “must include palliative care and mental health support, because we know when the physical, psychological and spiritual needs of patients are met, there is no pressure for change”.

We would hope that the decision to prevent Mr Conway seeking assistance to usher himself prematurely into the great eternity would prove a blessing to him, but sadly he seems committed to his solemn course. He says, “I will keep fighting for myself and all terminally-ill people who want the right to die peacefully, with dignity and on our own terms. I want to thank my family, friends and members of the public who have shown such overwhelming support and who continue to spur me on in this fight.” This man – who is supported by the pro-euthanasia group Dignity in Dying – is dependent on a ventilator for up to 23 hours a day and has very limited movement.

He said: “This illness has already taken away my ability to breathe independently and I am now almost completely immobile. I know it will also rob me of my life, and I have accepted that. But what I cannot accept are the options I am faced with under the current law. I am told that I can choose between letting nature take its course until I am completely unable to move or communicate; hastening my death by removing my ventilator with no guarantee my suffering can be completely relieved; attempting to end my own life at home in potentially painful and traumatic circumstances; or making the arduous

and expensive journey to Dignitas and risking prosecution for any loved ones who accompany me. It is barbaric to force me to decide between these unacceptable options.”

While we must show sympathy and have deep compassion for those who endure such suffering, surely the only safe option is for Mr Conway – and for us all – to spend the rest of our time on earth, however difficult that may be, submitting to God’s will and seeking eternal salvation in Christ. To find salvation will ensure that, when our life ends in this world, we will have “life that shall never end” in the world to come.

KHM

Protestant View

Rome and Its Moral Teaching

We have often remarked that the present pope is subtly endeavouring to send out messages which appeal to the spirit of this corrupt generation, in order to make the Church of Rome appear more attractive in the eyes of the world. A further step in the downward progress of the papacy in softening its line on moral issues is the latest statement to emerge from the Vatican, that “LGBT” young people wanted to “benefit from greater closeness” with the Church. Instead of referring to sodomites as people of “homosexual tendencies”, as formerly, the papal propaganda machine is now beginning to refer to them as “gay” – their own preferred choice of identification.

Cardinal Baldisseri, a Vatican spokesman, commented on this change of tone: “We are open. We don’t want to be closed in on ourselves.” Yet, at the same time, the Roman Church’s own official position remains unchanged, and only last week the Pope stated that only opposite-sex couples were able to form families. “The family [as] man and woman in the image of God is the only one”, he remarked. Of course, sending out mixed messages is nothing new for this pontiff or for the Church of Rome more generally. How far the Roman harlot may depart from traditional moral teaching in its occasional pronouncements is impossible to predict, but when one form of gross sin is countenanced, there is no limit to the capacity of fallen men both to justify it and to indulge in it.

AWM

Church Information

Death of Elder

We note with sadness the death, on June 19, of Mr Alasdair Macdonald, an

elder in the North Uist congregation. May the Lord raise up many others to take the place of those whom He removes to eternal glory!

Theological Conference

This year's Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in Inverness, on Tuesday, October 30, and Wednesday, October 31, with Rev D A Ross as chairman. It is expected that the following papers will be read, all in public:

Robert Findlater and Revival at Lochtayside	<i>Rev K D Macleod</i>
Man's Eternal State	<i>Rev J R Tallach</i>
Sanctification	<i>Rev Roderick Macleod</i>
The Restoration of the Jews	<i>Rev J L Goldby</i>
The Temple	<i>Rev J B Jardine</i>

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

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Outer Isles: At Leverburgh, on Thursday, August 2, at 7 pm.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Tuesday, August 7, at 2 pm.

Asia Pacific: At Auckland, on Friday, August 31, at 10 am.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, October 9, at 11 am.

Western: At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, October 30, at 11 am.

Northern: At Dingwall, on Tuesday, November 6, at 2 pm.

Jewish and Foreign Missions Fund

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

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Matron for Ballifeary Home, Inverness

The present Matron of Ballifeary Home has indicated that she intends to retire in March 2019, DV. Applications are invited by the Ballifeary Care Home Committee for this post, or with a view to training for it. The position is not only professionally rewarding but is an opportunity to care for some of the elderly in the Church in their later days. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Mt 25:40). Applications should be addressed to the Clerk of the Committee: Mr A MacLean, Tabor, 32 Urquhart Road, Dingwall, Ross-shire, IV15 9PE.

Acknowledgement of Donations

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Achmore: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, In memory of a beloved husband, £100.

Inverness: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £50.

Lochbroom: Mrs E Steven, Elgin, £80.

North Harris: *Communion Expenses:* AML, £100; CMK, £20.

Portree: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for African Mission, £100. *TBS:* Anon, £100. *Where Most Needed:* H & G van den Wal, £40.

Santa Fe: Laide Friend, towards flood damage, £100.

Shieldaig: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £110. *Door Collection:* Anon, £80. *Where Most Needed:* Anon, £50.

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). **Lairg:** 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 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 R MacLeod, 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. Contact Rev R MacLeod; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- 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; **Strathry:** 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.
- Kinlochberrie:** 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.
- 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; Thursday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Manse tel: 01876 510233. Contact: Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- 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, F P Manse, Clachan, 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 Brierciffe 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 7.15 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, 5 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: Girl Guide Hall, 17th Avenue, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact: Rev J D Smith; tel: 09 282 4195.

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.

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: 00263 712 765 032.

Free Presbyterian Church Bookroom

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

E-mail: sales@fpbookroom.org

Book Selection

	RRP	Offer
What is a Reformed Church? by Malcolm Watts		
Reformation Heritage Books, 2011, pbk, 176 pp	£10.99	£8.79
The Free Offer: Biblical and Reformed by David Silversides		
Marpet Press, 2005, pbk, 128 pp	£7.95	£5.99
Man's Relations to God by John Kennedy		
James Begg Society, 1998 [1869], pbk, 95 pp	£5.00	£3.99
From Grace to Glory: Meditations on the Book of Psalms		
By Murdoch Campbell, Covenanters Press, 2017 [1970], pbk, 229 pp	£13.95	£10.99
The Art of Divine Contentment by Thomas Watson		
Free Presbyterian Publications, 2001 [1855], pbk, 115 pp	£3.75	£2.99

(Postage is extra)

Subscription rates, including postage:

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

Combined £39.00