

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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September 2018

Vol 123 • No 9

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

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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.

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

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

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Volume 123

September 2018

Number 9

Comfort for the Forgiven

“God is angry with the wicked every day” (Psalm 7:11), David affirms. People may react against the thought that God can be angry. But God, let us remember, is absolutely righteous and must therefore react against sin; every sin must be punished. To speak of God’s anger – and we have already quoted an example of this from the Bible – is to take something that is true about human beings and use it to describe what is true of God, but everything inappropriate is strained out of the idea when it is applied to God. So what is meant by *God’s anger*? It is His settled purpose to punish sin. And those sinners who keep on along the broad way of unbelief and wilful rebellion will suffer God’s anger eternally in hell.

But in the Bible, God makes clear how we may escape His anger. It is possible to do so because of what Christ Jesus did when He suffered unto death in the place of sinners. We are pointed to the love of God in making this provision for sinners: “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn 4:10). A *propitiation* is a sacrifice which turns away the anger of God; Christ was taking the place of sinners, and God’s anger was directed against Him instead of them. That was God’s love to the guilty, to those who deserve nothing except His anger. They had no love to God, but He had an eternal love to them and an eternal purpose to do them good by making a complete provision for their salvation – one that was entirely suited to sinners in their need. Through faith in Jesus Christ, sinners are forgiven; they are accounted righteous – just as if they had themselves kept the law of God perfectly. And all the other benefits which flow from Christ’s saving work are made theirs.

Let us notice also that God is righteous when He forgives sin; Paul states explicitly that God is just when He acts as “the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom 3:26). He can be so, as David Brown says in commenting on this verse, for “justice has full satisfaction” in the work of Christ. We can say that God is righteous when He no longer threatens to direct His anger against the sinner who believes in Jesus, but only because He has directed that anger against His own Son, the One who became a propitiation – who

turned away the anger of God by taking the place of sinners and suffering their punishment instead.

So the believer, having been forgiven, may say, "O Lord, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away" (Is 12:1). God is worthy to be praised for what He is: because of His glory, His majesty and, indeed, all His attributes. In particular, He is to be praised for His goodness to sinners: though He was justly angry with them because of their sins, He has made a righteous, effective provision so that His anger will be turned away when the sinner believes in Jesus.

The forgiven sinner may not only say, with praise in his heart to God, "Thine anger is turned away", but also, "Thou comfortedst me". But how does God comfort the believer? It must be through His Word, applied to the soul by the powerful work of the Holy Spirit. In this connection we may remember the title that the Saviour used for the Spirit: "the Comforter". Christ calls not only to unsaved sinners to look to Him and be saved (see Is 45:22) but He continues to call saved sinners to look to Him – in other words, to believe in Him, or, to trust in Him, as the One who "came into the world to save sinners" and who goes on working in the soul until He brings it to everlasting glory and who will unite a perfect body to a perfect soul at the resurrection.

How solid is the comfort granted to the believer by the promises of God's Word! For instance, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness" (Is 41:10). When other human beings tell us not to be afraid, they may have no solid basis on which to do so, or their encouragement may only amount to a wish that things will turn out well. But when God speaks with power to the soul, when the words of the promise are applied authoritatively by the Holy Spirit, the words have a solid foundation and the believer has every reason to take encouragement.

Because He promises to "be with" His children, there is no reason for them to be afraid. Matthew Henry comments, "They may depend upon His presence with them as their God, and a God all-sufficient for them in the worst of times. Observe with what tenderness God speaks and how willing He is to let the heirs of promise know the immutability of His counsel." He is "not only within call, but present with them; [He says,] 'Be not dismayed' at the power of those that are against thee, for I am 'thy God' and engaged for thee. Art thou weak? 'I will strengthen thee.' Art thou destitute of friends? 'I will help thee' in the time of need. Art thou ready to sink, ready to fall? 'I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness', that right hand [God's power] which is full of righteousness in dispensing re-

wards and punishments.” In the end, what God will give the believer is all reward and no punishment, though in this life believers may experience chastisement from Him, acting in a fatherly way for their good.

God’s children are to remember that these promises are made to them, not as strong believers or weak believers, but simply as *believers*, who are united to Christ. Ultimately, strength lies not in them but in God, whose word is sure. So when the Spirit applies the promise to the believing soul, there is real, solid comfort.

Let us notice another verse which He has given for the encouragement of His children: “Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded” (1 Pet 2:6). The chief corner stone, of course, is Christ, on whom believers rest; they trust in Christ as revealed in the Word – in particular, in its promises – and they are comforted; they are not confounded – not put to shame. The corresponding expression in Isaiah 28:16 – from which Peter quotes – is “shall not make haste”. It is easy to imagine that the foolish virgins, in the Saviour’s parable, made haste when the bridegroom came: they panicked. What panic there must be when eternity looms large before the sinner who went on rejecting the gospel, who did not trust in the chief corner stone, who never found Christ precious! But the believer, resting in Christ, however feebly, will not be left to panic; he or she will have no reason to be ashamed of an ungodly life and of rejecting Christ. What comfort flows from such verses to those who are graciously enabled to receive them as God’s promises!

And what about believers who feel that they are making no progress, or very little, in the Christian life? The Lord promises them that “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil 1:6). If He has begun a saving work in their hearts, turning them from their sins and enabling them to look to Christ Jesus, then He will not leave the work half done; He will complete it. He will make every grace perfect that He has implanted in their souls; He will subdue every form of sin until He has eliminated it completely; and on the day of Jesus Christ – the Day of judgement – He will present His people faultless at last, “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but . . . holy and without blemish” (Eph 5:27). They will be perfectly holy and without the least stain of sin.

Believers are to take comfort from these promises – indeed, from all God’s promises, for His anger has been turned away from them. He has shown them mercy; He will always show them mercy, not anger. Let them then “run with patience the race that is set before [them], looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [their] faith” (Heb 12:1,2). The comforting promises in the Bible assure them that they will at last arrive safely in eternal glory.

The Gospel or Another Gospel¹

Synod Sermon by Rev John MacLeod

Galatians 1:9. *As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*

At the very outset of the Epistle, Paul draws attention to his apostleship and the source of his appointment to that office: “Not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead”. This fact seems to do more than hint that a situation had arisen in the churches in Galatia that necessitated his intervention and the assertion of that authority invested in him by the great Head of the Church. In his salutation there is no commendation, no mention of any well doing on their part; it rather suggests that he is writing as one set for “the defence and confirmation of the gospel”.

We all know that Paul was certainly an apostle, called directly by the risen Saviour to that office, having appeared to him as “one born out of due time”. After being arrested on the way to Damascus, and after being led by the hand into the city, Ananias was to be summoned to reveal to him the answer to that enquiry: “What wilt Thou have me to do?” And the answer was that from henceforth he was to be Christ’s chosen vessel, “to bear [His] name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel”. It was in that capacity – as “the Apostle of the Gentiles” – that he came in due time to plant the churches in Galatia. There he had preached the gospel to them, the same gospel as had been committed to the other apostles, who were also directly commissioned by Christ after His resurrection, before His ascension to heaven. When Paul came to be associated with the other apostles, it was found that there was no difference between the doctrine which he preached and the doctrine which the Lord Jesus had instructed them to teach in going forth to disciple all nations, as embraced in His own summary: “all things whatsoever I have commanded you”.

But here in Galatia, hard on the heels of Paul, there had arrived “enemies of the cross of Christ” (as identified by him in another context). But here they are identified as those who troubled the Galatian churches and sought to pervert the gospel – that is, to change it around from being a matter of grace to being a matter of works; in a sense, taking it out of the hands of God and placing it in the hands of men. Paul’s language indicates the seriousness with which he views their departure from what he had taught them and their transferring to, and embracing, the heretical views of the Judaisers. He marvels that they are so soon removed from Him that called them “into the grace

¹The sermon preached at the opening of the meetings of Synod in May 2018. It has been significantly edited by Mr MacLeod for publication.

of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another". The matter at issue here is the sovereignty of God as far as salvation is concerned and that the sinner is not in any sense justified "by the works of the law . . . for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal 2:16).

We shall consider: (1.) The *gospel which they had received*; (2.) What is supposed: the preaching of *another gospel* to them; (3.) The *end* of such as preach another gospel: *let him be accursed*.

1. The gospel which they had received. The gospel which they had received was "the glorious gospel of Christ", that gospel committed to Paul, that to which he had been separated, and that, as he now reminds them ("so say I now again"), he had faithfully delivered to them when he first arrived among them. He regarded himself as on sure ground, having received it not "of man, neither was [he] taught it, but *by the revelation of Jesus Christ*". Having received it from that source, he was to prove himself faithful, from that very moment when visited by Ananias, through whom the answer to his question, "What wilt Thou have me to?" was provided. Paul was to be faithful as Christ's "chosen vessel" in preaching it wherever he was directed. He was not only to preach it as he received it, but also to defend it, if and when the occasion required him to do so.

As to the Corinthians, so also to the Galatians, he delivered what he had received. His summary to the Corinthians was "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures". It is always helpful when brethren are united – of the same mind in defending the truth. It is notable that those who were with Paul at the time when this epistle was written are mentioned in his salutation. As to the matter at issue, Paul does not delay to introduce it. In doing so, he gives us a statement that is perhaps as compact and as emphatic a scripture in regard to the sovereignty of God in man's salvation as may be found in the whole Bible: "Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Gal 1:3-5).

When his departure was at hand, he was able to leave on record that he had "kept the faith", and it is for us, as ministers, to be followers of Him, not shunning to declare all the counsel of God, exalting Christ above all, directing attention to Him with a view to persuading hearers to embrace Him as freely offered in the gospel. In handling the Word of God, which we are to commit to others coming after us, we must be careful, as Paul was, not to introduce anything of our own or seek to change anything in order to suit our hearers or to gain the applause of men.

The gospel we have then is Paul's gospel – the gospel of the grace of God. It taught that we are “justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified”. It was the gospel he had received, and he received it not of man, neither was he taught it, but by direct revelation from heaven. We have the privilege of having that gospel preserved to us by men who proved themselves to be faithful. That is why we are here tonight – because Rev Donald Macfarlane and Rev Donald Macdonald, supported by faithful students such as Neil Cameron, separated from the Declaratory Act Free Church and formed the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The constitution of the Disruption Free Church having been vitiated, they saw the danger the Church was in and that the only way in which they could preserve that constitution inviolate, and the whole doctrine of *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, was to separate in an orderly manner.

We are here this evening, distinct from other Churches, because they regarded that gospel which was committed to them as that which they were pledged to hand over unimpaired to others coming after them. Woe betide us if we fail to do the same in regard to those coming after us! We are to be on our guard lest Arminianism enter in among us and, for that matter, Hypercalvinism. Whatever difficulty we may have in reconciling the command to believe and one's inability to believe, there is no contradiction in the mind of the One who has directed that His gospel be preached in this manner. We must never lose sight of the obligation we are under to preach the free offer of the gospel. In this connection I cannot do better than quote a most clear and succinct statement from the pen of Charles Calder Mackintosh: “It is plain that if any of us shall perish for ever, it is not through want of mercy in God or want of merit in Christ to save us, and it is not through want of the fullest, freest and most gratuitous tender of both to every soul that hears the gospel that we perish, but it is through our own wilful and most criminal contempt of the mercy of God and the Saviour of a lost world”.

If any preach any other gospel unto you who are hearers here tonight; if you hear what amounts to a departure from the gospel that Paul preached, the gospel that was committed to the Apostles, the gospel that Paul committed to Timothy, who, in turn, was to commit it “to faithful men who shall be able to each others also”, we are confident that you would note that to be the case. If we sense that something has been said that is not consistent with what is written in the Word of God, then we are, Berean-like, to search the Scriptures to find out if these things are indeed so. If error is found, ministers are to become defenders of the gospel and follow Paul, who had the care of so many churches.

2. What is supposed: the preaching of *another* gospel to them. Hard on the heels of Paul came those who were out to pervert, or to turn around, the gospel of Christ. It was “another gospel: which is not another”. They taught that salvation was not altogether of sovereign grace, but that sinners were able, and under obligation, to make their own contribution; in a sense it was to take it out of the hands of God and place it in the hands of men. Those perverters of the gospel made circumcision a condition of salvation – as well as the observance of other ritual practices, prescribed in the Mosaic law but now abrogated by the coming of Christ and the ushering in of the New Testament dispensation. Some might think that, as the Galatians had not after all returned to heathenish practices, their departure from the gospel of Christ was not all that significant, but the holy, righteous indignation with which Paul condemns it reveals how serious a matter he regarded it.

The error that crept into the churches in Galatia resembles in some measure the errors that were embraced in the Declaratory Act which was passed in 1892 and which one old minister of the past, who is now in glory, summed up in one word: Arminianism. In condemning Arminianism, the late Rev William MacLean wrote a booklet which he entitled *Arminianism: Another Gospel*, which is worth reading – containing, as it does, much that is valuable for us to receive, to know and to keep in mind. We are not saying that the Galatian heresy exactly fits what we commonly think of as Arminianism, but it fits to this extent, that it was a “partitioning of salvation”, which is William Cunningham’s definition of Arminianism – a dividing of salvation between the sinner and Christ. Such a view reflects adversely on the finished work of Christ, as if it was not sufficient and the sinner was obliged to make his own contribution. That is what was totally rejected by Paul and which we also reject as being inconsistent with Word of God and our *Confession of Faith*. It is the religion of the natural man.

The natural man likes to be told that he has some ability of his own. “Rabbi” Duncan opined that “it is a gey come doon”² for the sinner to be told that he has nothing at all. We hold in honoured remembrance our founding fathers, who discerned the subtle introduction of Arminianism (“another gospel”) in the Declaratory Act. What they stood for and what they defended was what was precious in their eyes, so precious that they forsook all to follow their Master and to do their utmost to hand it down unimpaired to those who would come after them. That accounts for our meeting here this evening as the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and, we trust, by the grace of God seeking to adhere to the creed and constitution of the Disruption Free Church of Scotland, of which we are the true heirs.

²It is to be very much brought down (*Scots*).

3. The end of such as preach another gospel: *let him be accursed.* Paul uses language that indicates how much he felt it necessary to bring the Galatians to consider the seriousness of their departure from what he had taught and maintained among them. He marvels that they had so soon departed from what he had preached while present with them. It was as if they had been bewitched and that accounted for their failure to obey the gospel. They did not lack light, for it was not a glimmering taper, as Hugh Martin has it, that had been lit among them, but the sun shining in its strength. “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Cor 4:3-4). Satan, posing as an angel of light, had come with his agents hard on Paul’s heels, and Paul identifies them in another context as “enemies of the cross of Christ”.

But Paul says, “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed”. How solemn! What a fearful state awaits Christless ministers who do not bring the gospel of the grace of God! It is a fearful thing for a sinner to fall into the hands of the living God, if he passes from time to eternity without having undergone a saving change. But how much more shall be the condemnation or the judgement passed on ministers who have taken upon themselves to preach the gospel of Christ, if they do not preach it faithfully, as Paul did, not shunning to declare “all the counsel of God”.

The glory of the Divine Redeemer was affected by what the Judaisers taught and, in view of this, Paul is repeating with solemn emphasis what he had already said to them: “As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed”. What great care must be exercised by all who take upon themselves to handle the Word of God. It is no light matter to be found in a pulpit. We have to give account to Him before whose judgement seat we are to appear and who is making known beforehand that to add to, or to take away from, the doctrine of His holy Word merits His holy displeasure. Calvin thinks that Paul is referring to excommunication rather than final perdition, but we know that, in the absence of repentance, such “false apostles” will surely hear these dread words sounding in their ears: “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”.

There is a momentarily important statement at the end of the Bible that should sink right down deep into our ears and, in conclusion, I quote it here: “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the

plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (Rev 22:18-21).

The Spirit of Adoption¹

2. The Fear of God and Love to Him

James Buchanan

To understand the nature of this childlike frame of mind, and the new character which it imparts to the believer’s obedience, we may observe:

1. The spirit of adoption implies *reverence and godly fear*, such as is due to God’s infinite and adorable perfections, but it excludes that slavish dread and terror which a conviction of guilt is apt to inspire. We read in Scripture of *two kinds of fear*: one belongs to the spirit of bondage, the other to the spirit of adoption. They are usually distinguished, in the writings of divines, by the name of *filial* and *slavish* fear – the former being the fear with which a son regards his father, the latter the fear with which a slave regards his taskmaster. You can have no difficulty in distinguishing between the two, or in seeing that, while the one is excluded by faith in the gospel, the other will only be deepened and confirmed by it.

The fear which springs from a spirit of bondage arises from the terrible apprehension of God as an avenger, and is apt to exasperate our natural enmity, to widen our separation from God and to excite distrust, dislike and aversion; and one of the great objects of the gospel is to change this unhappy frame of mind by removing the ground of our apprehensions and proclaiming a message of reconciliation. But even where the gospel message has been so clearly understood and so sincerely embraced that it has destroyed the spirit of bondage and brought the soul into conscious enjoyment of that liberty which belongs to the children of God, that filial fear is not removed. On the contrary it is deepened, and His children ought to cherish that fear towards such a being as God is, even when He is regarded as their Father in heaven. It is a fear which properly consists in reverence, expresses itself in the language of humble adoration, and produces a circumspect and watchful

¹Another 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 first section, last month, was entitled, “Adoption, a Privilege”.

habit that Paul refers to when he tells believers: “Be not high minded, but fear”; “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”; and, “Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear”.

This reverential fear is not the fruit of guilt or mere conviction of conscience; nor is it confined to sinners; the angels and seraphim of heaven feel and cherish it when they veil their feet and their faces with their wings, and cry one to another, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts”. It was felt by all the saints of old who were admitted to near converse with God, or who witnessed any remarkable manifestation of His perfections. So Elijah covered his face with his mantle; Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake”; and John “fell at His feet as dead”. It is indeed an essential, permanent part of true religion, both on earth and in heaven; for it will always be true that “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him”.

Although the spirit of adoption delivers sinners from the spirit of bondage and the slavish dread which devils feel – of whom it is said that “they believe and tremble” – it has no tendency to cherish an undue familiarity with God, or to relieve believers’ minds from that salutary awe and godly fear which is the very beginning of wisdom. On the contrary, the same gospel which releases them from the yoke of slavish terror, by revealing the grace and mercy of God to them, is fitted to deepen even their deepest thoughts of the holiness and justice of God, His truth and majesty. Thus no believer can contemplate the cross of Christ without feeling a solemn sense of awe on his spirit, and without entering into the meaning of the Psalmist’s words to God, “There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared”.

2. The spirit of adoption implies *a lively sense of gratitude and a principle of supreme love to God*, such as a child feels towards a forgiving, affectionate father. And it excludes that sullen discontent and resentful opposition which the spirit of bondage is apt to inspire. Slavish fear, a fear arising merely from convictions of conscience and the prospect of judgement, naturally tends to increase our aversion to God, and to inflame our natural enmity. And whether it shows itself in violent opposition, as in the case of Herod, who feared John and afterwards cast him into prison, or in dark and dreadful despair, as in the case of Judas, when under the influence of remorse he went and hanged himself, it has no power to attract or reconcile the sinner to his Judge. But “what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”.

The gospel, as a message of love, is fitted to inspire the sinner with grati-

tude. Wherever it exists, faith works by love – by love to God for the benefits which He has conferred, for the compassion and mercy which He has exercised, and for all the adorable perfections of His divine nature which He has displayed in the work of redemption. This love, engendered by the glad tidings of salvation through Christ, utterly excludes the slavish anxieties and terrors to which the spirit of bondage gives rise. John says, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” But “we love Him, because He first loved us”. Who can describe the feelings of a convinced sinner when he is first enabled to look up to God as a forgiving Father, and to hear, as it were, from His own lips, the gracious words, “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee!”

Such were the feelings of the poor prodigal after his wayward and weary sojourn in a strange land. There, professing himself to be free, he inwardly felt that he was the slave of his own passions, and in “the spirit of bondage” preferred, even when he was in want, to go into a field and fill his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, rather than return to his father’s house. Yet remembering his father’s love, his heart relented, and he said, “I will arise and go to my father”; but still in the spirit of bondage he added, “Make me as one of thy hired servants”. He came, “and when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him”. The father said, “Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him . . . and bring hither the fatted calf . . . for this my son was dead, and is alive again”. Such, if we can conceive them, are the feelings of a sinner when the spirit of bondage unto fear is displaced by the spirit of adoption, whereby he cries, “Abba, Father”.

John Hooper – a Reformation Puritan¹

6. Prisoner of Jesus Christ

Rev K M Watkins

Hooper’s zealous labours as Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester were not to last for long. Had they done so, great blessing could have ensued to steer England’s Reformation in a more scriptural direction. But on 6 July 1553, a little over two years since Hooper was made Bishop, King Edward VI died, at the young age of 15. The Protestant reign of England’s reforming King was over. John Calvin was not overstating the case when he wrote to William Farel in August: “Indeed, I consider that by the death of one youth,

¹This article is expanded from the sixth part of a paper given at the Theological Conference in 2016.

the whole nation has been bereaved of the best of fathers”.² To Henry Bullinger in Zurich, Calvin wrote the next day of “mourning over the fate of the Church, which has met with an incalculable loss in the person of a single individual”.³ England has never again had a monarch like Edward, with a zeal for the scriptural reform of the Church.

An attempt to install the young and godly Lady Jane Grey on the throne failed after only nine days, and Edward’s half-sister Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and bigoted Romanist, became Queen. Although Christ’s cause and Hooper’s personal interests would have benefited from Lady Jane being Queen, he viewed Mary as the rightful heir according to English law, and therefore had no choice but to support her. There was no place in Hooper’s conscience for playing politics. Our Reformation Puritan was not for doing evil, that good may result. He did what he thought was right, and left the consequences with the Lord.

The consequences were not good. Calvin’s foreboding was well-founded when he wrote to Bullinger in September regarding Mary: “As I have always heard that she is a very haughty animal who now succeeds to the crown, and cruel withal, there sometimes steals over me a prophetic conjecture, that her audacity will carry her all lengths. . . . The Church of God will be . . . buffeted by manifold tempests.”⁴

Hooper was “renowned all over England as one of the boldest champions of the Reformation, and most thorough opponents of Popery”;⁵ so he was in danger immediately. A number of Protestant leaders fled to the continent of Europe, including all five men who were made Bishops under the same 1549 Ordinal as Hooper. Hooper himself had fled before, during Henry’s reign, but this time he thought it his duty to remain. Things were different now – he was a pastor of souls. Responding to friends urging his escape, he said, “Once I did flee, and take me to my feet; but now, because I am called to this place and vocation, I am thoroughly persuaded to tarry, and to live and die with my sheep”.⁶

Despite Hooper’s publicly declared support for Mary, he was soon arrested, purportedly for owing her money. He was brought before the Queen’s Council on 29 August 1553. Hooper’s old enemies, Edmund Bonner and Stephen

²Letter of John Calvin to William Farel, dated 7 August 1553, *Gleanings of a few scattered ears during the period of the Reformation in England*, ed George C Gorham, London, 1857, p 300.

³Letter of Calvin to Henry Bullinger, dated 8 August 1553, *Gleanings*, p 299.

⁴Letter of Calvin to Bullinger, dated 7 September 1553, *Gleanings*, p 302.

⁵J C Ryle, *Five English Reformers*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1994, p 54.

⁶*The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, ed S R Cattle, London, 1838, vol 6, p 645.

Gardiner, had been released from prison and restored to their former positions – Bonner as Bishop of London in place of Nicolas Ridley, and Gardiner as Bishop of Winchester. It was Gardiner who headed up the Council, attacking Hooper for his religious views. However, the law of the land was not yet on Gardiner's side, so Hooper was committed to prison on the trumped-up debt charge, while Mary negotiated the return of England to the Pope's jurisdiction and put in place the legal machinery for persecution. Mary's reign was thus a "throne of iniquity . . . which frameth mischief by a law" (Ps 94:20).

So Hooper found himself in the notorious Fleet prison again, as a "prisoner of Jesus Christ" (Eph 3:1) – that is, a man imprisoned because of his attachment to Jesus Christ. Only his execution almost a year and a half later would effect his release from incarceration. Nearer the end, on 7 January 1555, he would write of the cruelties he underwent: "I have continued a long time, having nothing appointed to me for my bed but a little pad of straw, a rotten covering, with a tick and a few feathers therein, the chamber being vile and stinking, until by God's means good people sent me bedding to lie in. On the one side of which prison is the sink and filth of all the house, and on the other side the town-ditch; so that the stench of the house hath infected me with sundry diseases. During which time I have been sick; and the doors, bars, hasps, and chains being all closed and made fast upon me, I have mourned, called, and cried for help. But the warden, when he hath known me many times ready to die, and when the poor men of the wards have called to help me, hath commanded the doors to be kept fast, and charged that none of his men should come at me, saying, 'Let him alone; it were a good riddance of him'."⁷

There was something that afflicted Hooper more than his own most trying circumstances, and that was the state of Christ's cause. He was of the same spirit as an earlier prisoner of Jesus Christ, even the Apostle Paul, who made a long list of his personal sufferings, and then added as the greatest burden of all, "that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (2 Cor 11:28). Hooper could do the same.

Two days after he was imprisoned, he wrote to Bullinger in Zurich, be-moaning what tore his Puritan heart so sorely: "The altars are again set up throughout the kingdom; private masses are frequently celebrated in many quarters; the true worship of God, true invocation, the right use of the sacraments, are all done away with; divine things are trodden underfoot, and human things have the pre-eminence. . . . All godly preachers are . . . forbidden to preach by public authority. The enemies of the gospel are appointed in their

⁷*Later Writings of John Hooper*, ed Charles Nevinson, The Parker Society, Cambridge, 1852, p 620.

places, and proclaim to the people from the pulpit human doctrines instead of divine truths.”⁸ The same day he wrote to Calvin in similar terms, “A miserable crowd of calamities have followed [the King’s] death. . . . All the services in the churches are performed in Latin. Pious men are in fear for themselves.”⁹

Two months later, he wrote to his Puritan friend John à Lasco, “The present condition of the Church . . . is indeed a wretched and miserable one”.¹⁰ As Romanism increasingly reasserted its grip on the country, he would later write, “We poor Englishmen be in captivity in our own land, and under our own countrymen, that make us commit more vile idolatry than ever did the Israelites in Egypt”.¹¹

In March 1554, Hooper was brought a second time before Gardiner and other commissioners of the Queen. Two matters were levelled against him. The first was his continuing in the married state, contrary to the Romanist dogma that clergy must be celibate. Hooper insisted, in full agreement with the Word of God, that he would “not be unmarried until death unmarry”¹² him. When his examiners referred to Christ’s words about those “which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake” (Mt 19:12), Hooper pointed to the preceding verse, which explains that not all men have the gift of living unmarried, but his adversaries became so heated that the text could not be discussed further.

The second matter raised was Hooper’s denial of transubstantiation, one of the cardinal heresies underpinning the edifice of Romanism. Hooper denied that, in the mass, the bread and wine really and physically become the very body and blood of Christ. As to any bodily presence of Christ in the mass, “Hooper said plainly that there was none such, neither did he believe any such thing”.¹³ He referred to Acts 3:20,21, “Jesus Christ . . . whom the heaven must receive until the time of the restitution of all things”. Again, any discussion became impossible for the railing of the Romanists.

A neutral person present at that hearing, observing the different spirit with which Hooper and his adversaries conducted themselves, wrote, “Whereas I stood in . . . doubt, which of these two religions to have credited, either that set forth by the King’s majesty that is dead [Protestantism], or else that now

⁸Letter to Bullinger, written from the Fleet prison on 3 September 1553, *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation*, vol 1, The Parker Society, ed Hastings Robinson, Cambridge, 1846, p 100.

⁹Letter to John Calvin, written from the Fleet on 3 September 1553, *Gleanings*, p 301.

¹⁰Letter to à Lasco, written from the Fleet on 25 November 1553, *Original Letters*, vol 1, p 101.

¹¹*Later Writings*, p 380.

¹²Foxe, vol 6, p 646.

¹³Foxe, vol 6, p 647.

maintained by the Queen’s majesty [Romanism]; their unreverend behaviour towards Master Hooper doth move me the rather to credit his doctrine, than that which they, with railing and cruel words, defended; considering that Christ was so handled before”.¹⁴ Hooper’s manner of defence spoke as loudly – if not more loudly, given the circumstances – than what he actually said.

Unsurprisingly, Hooper was judged worthy to be deprived of his bishopric, and a replacement Bishop of Gloucester was appointed a week later. Hooper was returned to prison and not until January 1555, ten months later, was he summoned again.

Although the pulpit was denied him, “Hooper continued steadfastly as a crusader for the Protestant cause”¹⁵ throughout his imprisonment, writing an unknown number of letters and even some treatises, to defend and advance Reformed truth. The volume entitled *Later Writings* contains 168 pages of Latin works from Hooper’s pen during this period.¹⁶ Much of this had to be done “by stealth”, without his jailors’ knowledge, for otherwise he would have been stopped.

Because Christ’s enemies were in the pulpits, some of the godly had begun to meet together informally, for mutual edification. Hooper encouraged these “certain godly persons” in a letter, giving them this advice: “Many times . . . [gather] assemblies together of such men and women as be of your religion in Christ, and there . . . talk and review among yourselves the truth of your religion, to see what ye be by the Word of God, and to remember what ye were before ye came to the knowledge thereof . . . and by such talk and familiar resorting together, ye shall the better find out all their lies, that now go about to deceive you, and also both know and love the truth that God hath opened to us. It is much requisite that the members of Christ comfort one another, make prayers together, confer one with another: so shall ye be the stronger, and God’s Spirit shall not be absent from you, but in the midst of you to teach you, to comfort you, to make you wise in all godly things, patient in adversity and strong in persecution.”¹⁷

When a company of 30 men and women were arrested as they met for prayer in a house in the churchyard at Bow, and imprisoned, Hooper was not slow to write for their consolation. “Oh, glad may ye be that ever ye were born, to be apprehended whilst ye were so virtuously occupied. Blessed be they that suffer for righteousness sake. . . . Doubtless it is a singular favour

¹⁴Foxe, vol 6, p 646.

¹⁵David G Newcombe, *John Hooper: Tudor Bishop and Martyr*, Davenant Press, 2009, p 220.

¹⁶*Later Writings*, pp 381-548.

¹⁷*The Letters of the Martyrs: Collected and Published in 1564*, ed Edward Bickersteth, London, 1837, p 86. All the remaining quotes in this article come from this book.

of God, and a special love of Him towards you, to give you this . . . pre-eminence, and a sign that He trusteth you before others of His people. Wherefore (dear brethren and sisters), continually fight this fight of the Lord” (p 91).

No doubt he was comforting them with the comfort wherewith he himself was comforted by God, when he wrote: “Read the second chapter of Luke’s Gospel, and there ye shall see how the shepherds . . . as soon as they heard that Christ was born at Bethlehem . . . went to see Him. They did not reason nor debate with themselves, who should keep the wolf from the sheep in the meantime, but did as they were commanded, and committed their sheep unto Him whose pleasure they obeyed. So let us do now, when we be called, and commit all other things unto Him that calleth us. He will take heed that all things shall be well: He will help the husband, He will comfort the wife, He will guide the servants, He will keep the house, He will preserve the goods; yea, rather than it should be undone, He will wash the dishes and rock the cradle. Cast therefore all your care upon God, for He careth for you” (p 92).

When he heard that some professing Protestants were attending the mass, but excusing themselves on the ground of their heart opposition to it, he sent an open letter “to the Christian congregation” to refute this specious line of reasoning. He wrote, “I know there be many evasions made by men, that judge a man may with safeguard of conscience be at the mass” (p 124). But along with Calvin, Bullinger and others, Hooper rejected it all: “It is not enough for a Christian man to say, I know the mass is nought; but to obey civil laws and orders I will do outwardly as other men do, yet in my heart abhor it, and never think it to be good. Doubtless these two minds, the spirit to think well, and the body to do evil, in this respect be both naught, and God will spue the whole man out of His mouth, as He did the minister of the congregation of Laodicea” (p 122).

Hooper, a prisoner for his loyalty to Christ, could not abide such unworthy compromises. He would have condemned outright the stance that led to the formation of the Associated Presbyterian Churches in 1989, more than four centuries later. He would never have accepted the argument that one may attend the mass out of respect to a deceased colleague without being involved in the abominable idolatry of that most injurious parody of the Lord’s Supper. Our Reformation Puritan understood that “liberty of conscience” does not excuse sinning against the sacrifice of Christ, which mass attendance unavoidably involves.

Even in a letter to his “dearly beloved wife”, written in October 1553, Hooper had the whole Church in view, foreseeing that his letter would come to wider notice. In this long letter, we hear the voice of a preacher rather than that of a husband, as he seeks to sustain and comfort the persecuted

people of God. "Is it then any marvel, if such Christians as God delighteth in be so mangled and defaced in this world, which is the kitchen and mill to boil and grind the flesh of God's people in, till they achieve their perfection in the world to come? And as man looketh for the nutriment of his meat when it is full digested, and not before; so must he look for his salvation when he hath passed this troublous world, and not before. Raw flesh is not meat wholesome for man: and unmortified men and women be no creatures meet for God. Therefore Christ saith, that His people must be broken and . . . torn in the mill of this world, and so shall they be most fine meal unto the heavenly Father" (p 118).

John Hooper, this prisoner of Jesus Christ, was truly a pastor of souls. Like the Apostle Paul before him, who kept on writing from prison, he did not let imprisonment hamper his endeavours. That was all the more necessary, for his remaining time on earth was to be short.

Deputy's Visit to Zimbabwe, June 2018

Rev I D MacDonald

I arrived at Bulawayo airport to be met by Mr Mpofu, the Mission Administrator and Miss Norma MacLean, the Deputy Head of John Tallach High School. The hospitality and kindness shown then was continued throughout my three-week stay.

During my time in Zimbabwe I was asked to preach on 17 occasions and I was able to visit all of the Church's institutions which are designed to be handmaids to the gospel. These include the hospital at Mbuma with its two rural clinics, the Mission head-office and Thembiso Children's Home in Bulawayo, the five primary schools and, at Ingwenya, the John Tallach High School. This took me to all of the Church's main congregations there with the exception of Nkayi. The sheer scale of the Mission is striking to the first-time visitor. Each of the Mission compounds with their primary schools and staff accommodation, the High School at Ingwenya, and the hospital at Mbuma bring an inflow of people from various backgrounds under our roof as a Church.

This was seen most strikingly in Zenka and Mbuma and Maware also, although we do not have our own school or compound at the last place. The mid-week prayer meetings in all these places saw packed churches, with the primary school children in their hundreds filling almost every square inch of the floor, upon which they sat without chairs or cushions and with a commendable stillness. Even the vestries were packed full with maybe 40 or so of

these little ones. Where the Primary pupils, and at Ingwenya the High School children also, attend these services the congregation can number close to 1000 souls. The Bulawayo congregation is flourishing numerically, with many young families, and on my last Sabbath I preached to a packed church there as the various stations gathered into one at Lobengula.

At Zvishavane, where the late esteemed Rev Z Mazvabo laboured, I visited four of the stations and took prayer meetings mid-week. Maware is one of these stations and, as mentioned above, the local primary school staff and children joined for the prayer meeting, although they are not connected with us as a Church. As a result the small church was packed full. One was left with the feeling that our five primary schools, with not far short of 3000 pupils in total, provide a tremendous opportunity to instruct the upcoming generation in the doctrines of the faith. The recent provision of dedicated Bible Knowledge teachers for each school, almost like catechists for children, will go some way to achieving this.

The setup at John Tallach High School, Ingwenya, with around 600 pupils, is perhaps better known to our people. It was here at Ingwenya that I had my main base throughout my stay. While many of the children seem to value only the educational side of the school, there are others who seem to be impressed with the religious side of the school's instruction.

A very brief and imperfect thermometer check on this point was provided when I took the senior Timothy group, a voluntary meeting for the study of the Scriptures. I had been told to expect around 50 pupils. I was a little disappointed when I arrived and a small group of 30 or so at most were huddled around the front of the assembly hall. But within five or so minutes a constant stream of newcomers began and ended only when the hall was around half full with, I estimate, roughly 250 to 300 pupils present. On questioning them on various topics I was impressed with their grasp of Scripture and doctrine. I spoke on John 3:14,15, and when I asked how they would describe the death which follows sin, as compared to the death which the serpent bites caused to the Israelites, one boy replied, "It is the death of the soul". When asked, "For whom did Christ die?" the answer was, "The elect". However, my time with them was too brief to judge whether there was any true concern of soul among them.

At Mbuma, where the hospital lies, within the large mission compound, along with two connected rural health clinics, there is an opportunity, as Rev James Fraser observed during his time there, for medicine to preach in its own way. The Mbuma congregation has 16 outstations with between 20 and 50 people attending at each. In addition to the Mbuma prayer meeting mentioned above, I had opportunity to preach at one of these outstations

during the week. Rev N Sibanda was my host during my time in Mbumba and he kindly drove me to visit one of the rural health clinics and to the station where I preached.

My overall impression was that there was still an open door for the Church to bring the gospel to sinners. At the same time, there are challenges facing the Church as she seeks to maintain her scriptural standards across so many institutions. It would be highly beneficial to our Mission in Zimbabwe to see more of our own people giving their time and careers to the schools and hospital. Above all, the great need is that the Lord of the harvest would send forth men, called and equipped by Himself, to the vacant congregations across the Mission.

Some Thoughts on Soul-Murder¹

Thomas Boston

Thou shalt not kill thine own soul. Our kind God forbids us to be self-murderers and soul-murderers. We become guilty of the blood of our own souls in these ways:

1. By *neglecting the means of grace and salvation* (Prov 8:34,36). The life of our souls is a flame that must be kindled from above, and fed by the means of grace. Those who then neglect them are guilty of their own blood. Consider this, prayerless people, you who are at no pains to get knowledge, who disregard public ordinances, private duties, reading, meditation etc.

2. By *opposing and fighting against the Lord's quickening work* in the soul. They that murder convictions murder their own souls, as if they were resolved that convictions should never stir in them (Prov 29:1). Some, like Felix, put them off with fair promises; some, like Cain, put them off with the noise of axes and hammers – in effect, they will not let their souls recover.

3. By *continuing impenitent in sin*. God calls to man by His Word and providence, as Paul did to the jailor: “Do thyself no harm”. But, as if he were resolved on his own ruin, he will not leave his sinful courses. Willful impenitence is the grossest self-murder, because it is soul-murder (Ezek 18:30,31). His soul is standing under a decayed roof; tell him that it will fall on him and he will not stir a foot. Is his blood then not on his own head?

4. By *unbelief, not coming to Christ by faith* (Jn 5:40). Even when many means are used to preserve the soul, it is still ruined because the main cure is neglected. Even if a man uses ever so many remedies for his health, he is

¹An edited extract from Boston's *Works*, vol 2, where he is expounding the sins forbidden in the Sixth Commandment.

his own murderer if he will not use the main cure necessary. So resolutions, watchings, promises are tried, but if faith and employing Christ for sanctification are not tried, he is still a murderer.

Consider this: murder, self-murder and soul-murder, is a notorious sin. What wonder if the man perishes who wills to perish? Will God spare the shedding of the blood of that soul of which the man himself is so liberal?

Hence see that people not only may seek the welfare of their souls, but this command of God obliges them to do so. Fear hell, hope for heaven, and let this stir you up to do your duty. But do not rest there; go forward and make the love of God your main motive. And that of itself would be sufficient to stir you up to all the duties of a holy life.

Needs of the Times¹

1. Maintaining God's Authority in the Bible and Christian Truth

J C Ryle

1 Chronicles 12:32. *Men that had understanding of the times.*

These words were written about the tribe of Issachar, in the days when David first began to reign over Israel. It seems that, after Saul's death, some of the tribes of Israel could not decide what to do. Under which king? was the question of the day in Palestine. Men doubted whether they should cling to the family of Saul, or accept David as their king. Some hung back and would not commit themselves; others came forward boldly and declared for David. Among these last were many of the children of Issachar, and the Holy Ghost gives them a special word of praise. He says, They "were men that had understanding of the times".

I cannot doubt that this sentence, like every sentence in Scripture, was written for our learning. These men of Issachar are set before us as an example to be followed, for it is most important to understand the times in which we live and to know what those times require. The wise men in the court of Ahasuerus "knew the times" (Est 1:13). The Lord Jesus Christ blames the Jews because they did not "discern the signs of the times" and did not know "the time of [their] visitation" (Mt 16:3, Lk 19:44). Let us take heed lest we fall into the same sin. The man who is content to sit ignorantly by his own fireside, wrapped up in his own private affairs, and has no public eye for what is going on in the Church and the world is a miserable patriot and a

¹An edited extract from a chapter in Ryle's book *Holiness*. There have been many changes in religious attitudes since 1879, when the book was first published in its present form, but Scripture principles remain unchanged – for other parts of the world besides England.

poor style of Christian. Next to our Bibles and our own hearts, our Lord would have us study our own times.

I propose in this paper to consider what our own times require from us. All ages have their special dangers for professing Christians, and all consequently demand that special attention be given to special duties. I ask my readers to give me their minds for a few minutes while I try to show them what the times require of English Christians. There are five points which I propose to bring before you, and I shall speak of them plainly and without reserve. "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (1 Cor 14:8).

I. The times require us to ***maintain boldly and unflinchingly the entire truth of Christianity, and the divine authority of the Bible.*** Our lot is cast in an age of abounding unbelief and scepticism. Never perhaps, since the days of Celsus, Porphyry and Julian,² was the truth of revealed religion so openly and unblushingly assailed. The words of Bishop Butler in 1736 are curiously applicable to our own days: "It is come to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is not even a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, *this* was an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."

In reviews, magazines, newspapers, lectures and even in sermons, scores of clever writers are incessantly waging war against the foundations of Christianity. Reason, science, geology, anthropology, modern discoveries and free thought are all boldly asserted to be on their side. No educated person, we are constantly told nowadays, can really believe supernatural religion, or the inspiration of the whole Bible, or the possibility of miracles. Such ancient doctrines as the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the atonement, the obligation of the Sabbath, the necessity and efficacy of prayer, the existence of the devil, and the reality of future punishment, are quietly put on the shelf as useless old yearbooks, or contemptuously thrown overboard as lumber! All this is done so cleverly and with such an appearance of candour and liberality, and with such compliments to the capacity and nobility of human nature, that multitudes of unstable Christians are carried away as by a flood, and become partially unsettled, if they do not make complete shipwreck of faith.

The existence of this plague of unbelief must not surprise us for a moment. It is only an old enemy in a new dress, an old disease in a new form. Since

²Two Greeks and a Roman who opposed Christianity in its early centuries.

the day when Adam and Eve fell, the devil has never ceased to tempt men not to believe God and has said, directly or indirectly, You shall not die even if you do not believe. In the latter days especially we have warrant of Scripture for expecting an abundant crop of unbelief: "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." "There shall come in the last days scoffers" (Lk 18:8; 2 Tim 3:13; 2 Pet 3:3). Here in England, scepticism is that natural rebound from semi-popery and superstition which many wise men have long predicted. It is precisely that swing of the pendulum which far-sighted students of human nature looked for, and it has come.

But as I tell you not to be surprised at the widespread scepticism of the times, so also I must urge you not to be shaken in your mind by it, or moved from your steadfastness. There is no real cause for alarm. The ark of God is not in danger, though the oxen seem to shake it. Christianity has survived the attacks of unbelieving writers in previous centuries. These men made a great noise in their day and frightened weak people, but they produced no more effect than idle travellers who scratched their names on the great pyramid of Egypt. Depend on it, Christianity likewise will survive the attacks of the clever writers of these times.

The startling novelty of many modern objections to revelation makes them, no doubt, seem more weighty than they really are. It does not follow, however, that hard knots cannot be untied because *our* fingers cannot untie them, or that formidable difficulties cannot be explained because *our* eyes cannot see through them. When you cannot answer a sceptic, be content to wait for more light, but never forsake a great principle. In religion, as in many scientific questions, said Michael Faraday,³ "the highest philosophy is often a judicious suspense of judgement". "He that believeth shall not make haste"; he can afford to wait.

When sceptics and infidels have said all they can, we must not forget that there are three great broad facts which they have never explained away, and I am convinced they never can and never will. Let me tell you briefly what they are. They are very simple facts, and any plain man can understand them.

(a) *Jesus Christ Himself*. If Christianity is a mere invention of man and the Bible is not from God, how can infidels explain Jesus Christ? His existence in history they cannot deny. How is it that without force or bribery, without arms or money, He has made such an immensely deep mark on the world – as He certainly has? Who was He? What was He? Where did He come from? How has there never been anyone like Him, neither before nor after, since the beginning of historical times? They cannot explain it. Nothing can explain

³An important British scientist who made a Christian profession, dying in 1867.

it but the great foundation principle of revealed religion, that Jesus Christ is God and His gospel is all true.

(b) *The Bible*. If Christianity is a mere invention of man, and the Bible is of no more authority than any other uninspired volume, how is it that the Book is what it is? How is it that a Book written by a few Jews in a small corner of the earth – written long ago without collusion among the writers, written by members of a nation which, compared to Greece and Rome, did nothing for literature – how is it that there is nothing that even approaches this Book for high views of God, for true views of man, for solemnity of thought, for grandeur of doctrine and for purity of morality? What account can the infidel give of this Book, so deep, so simple, so wise, so free from defects? He cannot explain its existence and nature on his principles. We only can do so who hold that the Book is supernatural, from God.

(c) *The effect which Christianity has produced on the world*. If Christianity is a mere invention of man, and not a supernatural, divine revelation, how has it wrought such a complete alteration in the state of mankind? Consider the moral difference between the condition of the world before Christianity was planted and its condition since Christianity took root; any well-read man knows it is the difference between night and day, the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of the devil. At this very moment, I defy anyone to look at the map of the world and compare the countries where people are Christians with those where people are not Christians, and to deny that these countries are as different as light and darkness. How can any infidel explain this on his principles? He cannot do it. We only can who believe that Christianity came down from God and is the only divine religion in the world.

Whenever you are tempted to be alarmed at the progress of infidelity, look at the three facts I have just mentioned and cast your fears away. Take up your position boldly behind the ramparts of these three facts, and you may safely defy the utmost efforts of modern sceptics. They may often ask you a hundred questions that you cannot answer, and start ingenious problems about inspiration, or geology, or the origin of man, or the age of the world which you cannot solve. They may vex and irritate you with wild speculations and theories, whose fallacy you cannot prove at the time, though you feel it. But be calm and do not fear. Remember the three great facts I have named, and boldly challenge sceptics to explain them away. The difficulties of Christianity are no doubt great; but, depend on it, they are nothing compared to *the difficulties of infidelity*.

A gracious man makes this request for his soul: Lord, let me rather have a gracious heart than a great estate; let me rather be pious without prosperity than prosperous without piety.

William Secker

The Spirit Striving in Vain¹

Henry Law

Genesis 6:3. *My Spirit shall not always strive with man.*

Frighful was the havoc wrought by sin's entrance! Its scythe laid low all inward godliness. Its poison tainted the whole man. Evil seized the rudder of the vessel and steered it far from God. Vile passions took hold. Earth became a dark downward road to hell.

But still the devil was not thoroughly triumphant. A power was soon found to counteract his. Barriers held back the flood of wickedness. The sweeping hurricane was restrained. The world was not unchecked rebellion.

Some captives were wholly rescued from the tyrant's grasp. Some souls burst from the tomb. They put off the graveclothes. They went forth new beings with new life. In surrounding darkness, Abel had sight to see redemption's path. Amid a stumbling crowd, Enoch had strength to walk with God. In other cases, evil was checked, but not subdued; enmity was shackled, but not removed; conscience was roused, but not enlightened; convictions troubled, but no conversion followed.

This counteracting agent was God the Holy Spirit. From the beginning He worked mightily. Creation's morn witnessed His going forth. When earth was formless, void, dark, an unsightly chaos, a shapeless mass, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen 1:2). Then lovely order smiled, and robes of beauty decked this lower world. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth" (Ps 33:6). "By His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens" (Job 26:13). The firmament obeyed His bidding and sparkled with its canopy of orbs.

But these material wonders are but faint shadows of His inward power. The soul is the place of His grand exploits. Here He sows seed for harvests infinite, eternal. But His interior dealings are wrapped in deepest mystery. The modes of acting differ. "The wind bloweth where it listeth" (Jn 3:8). Sometimes it rushes with the storm's furious force. Sometimes it sighs softly, as a summer breeze. Dissimilar too are the results. There are His special conquests. There are His common calls. Some men are His glorious trophies, others are beacons warning us not to resist His call. These diverse cases claim our notice. Holy Spirit, come; reveal Thyself now!

There are the heirs of life. God in eternal counsels marked them as His own. The Son received them as His bride, His body, His portion, His jewels, His delight. The Spirit knows them well. In the right time and in the best

¹Taken, with editing, from Law's *Beacons of the Bible*.

way, He works His wonders in them. He finds them indeed like other men, steeped in corruption, moulded in evil, aliens from God, blind in understanding, hardened in heart, Satan's willing slaves, wanderers on destruction's road, journeying without thought towards sin's last home. By heavenly rays He dissipates their darkness. He gives them eyes to see the beauty, the extent, the glory of the wondrous law. He reveals God and His attributes, God and His just demands. He implants the sense of terrible transgression. The sinner trembles and is full of shame. He feels that countless sins doom him to eternal wrath. Then wholesome thoughts bud forth: O whither can I fly? Is there no refuge? Am I for ever lost? Must I reap endlessly the dread fruits of my earthly course? Is hell my hopeless home?

Happy the day which witnesses these inward throes! Nature never sows such seed. Their origin is always one. They are from heaven. They are inwrought by the Spirit's power.

But when the Spirit thus slays pride, chases ignorance away, and leads into the vale of deep humiliation, the way is opened for reviving visits. He raises from this miry clay, He uplifts to a solid rock. He shows God's purpose of redemption. He tells the story of love, grace and mercy. Christ is revealed, ready to undertake the rescue, powerful to achieve it. The coming to our earth in human nature, the cup of suffering emptied to its dregs, the blood and all its cleansing power, the cross and all its expiating virtue, the death and all its ransoming effects, the Sin-bearer and His surety-agony, the Curse-remover and His liberating pains, the Law-fulfiller and the transfer of His righteousness, all pass in review before an adoring gaze. The contrite sinner looks, wonders, believes. He sees Christ, all mighty to save, all willingness to welcome. Subdued, melted, attracted, he ventures near, and nearer yet. He stops not till he falls into salvation's arms. He sits down under Christ's shadow with great delight. He is persuaded that sins are remitted, pardon conferred, God reconciled, heaven secured. Happy, glorious work! It is the Spirit's doing. He effects it in full accordance with eternal counsels.

He who begins this carries on the spiritual building to the glorious topstone. He constantly makes fuller, larger, richer, more glowing, more enchanting revelations of the Lord. The soul gazes more intently. And as it gazes, it joys the more and loves the more and brightens into divine resemblance. The mind is changed into the mind of Christ. The new man is put on, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph 4:24).

Thus as the title deeds to heaven are more clearly read and more devoutly prized, meetness for it ripens. The Spirit's daily visits daily elevate the walk. He is a guest mighty to warn, to teach, to guide, to cleanse, to purify, to sanctify, to cheer, to bless. In loving arms He safely bears the happy saint

above the billows of earth's stormy voyage. He guards him from the tempter's wily snares. At last He lands him in the haven of pure peace, the home of many mansions, the blessed paradise of the saved. He gloriously prevails. He goes on conquering till crowns of life encircle the Christian warrior's head. Thus every saved soul shines for ever a monument of calling, enabling, sanctifying grace. They who enter heaven are born again by the Spirit's renovating power, and brought to Jesus by His conquering arm. He mightily commences, prosecutes and completes the work. Omnipotence ceases not its marvels till victory tramples down each foe. Every pilgrim saint on earth, and every glorified saint above, is evidence of these sovereign triumphs. Hallelujah to the Father! Hallelujah to the Son! Hallelujah to the Holy Ghost!

But all are not thus graciously subdued. Earth is thronged by multitudes who are strangers to Jesus, never fleeing to His cross, never sprinkled with His blood. Hardened they live. Hardened they die. Is it then true that the Spirit never knocks at their hearts' door? Have they no outward warning and no inward check? Are there no gleams from above, ending only in darker darkness and more aggravated woe?

Let it be repeated that this mystery is deep. But Scripture is not silent here. And Scripture's voice is always echoed by experience. The Word is full of teaching: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man". It is a fact then that He sometimes strives for a while and ceases. He approaches and withdraws. He comes again. Admission is denied. Visits become more rare, and then are discontinued. The knocks unanswered faintly return and ultimately die away. Inward stillness is no more disturbed. The soul sleeps on and dreams into perdition.

It was so with the ungodly of the old world. The Spirit is the same in ages past, present and to come. He strove not always in those wretched days. He strives not always now.

But still He strove before the flood. What was His mode of dealing? Annals are brief. But yet they give some glimpses. He gave loud testimony. He sent forth the thrilling note of truth. He raised up preachers to warn and call. There was Enoch. His trumpet gave no doubtful sound. With words clear as the very light and awful as the thunder's roar, he told of coming judgement, and earth's final scene, and vengeance to the uttermost. There was Noah. He stands on a high pedestal, as a "preacher of righteousness". His theme then would unfold our gracious God – glorious in justice, holy in His claims, and yet providing a covering for the sinner, a suitable garment for heaven. Through many years he waved on high the gospel torch.

In all these warnings and displays of saving love, the Spirit put forth energy. Who can tell what frequent terrors shook the hearers! How often the

breast sighed, the heart quaked, the tears streamed! Again and again sin was seen as the worst foe and vows were formed to quit it. But the emotions were evanescent. The preacher ceased, and when his voice ceased, conscience resumed its stupor. The old allurements came. The Spirit was no more heeded. Impressions were obliterated. They were as words written on the sand. The coming tide effaced the whole. At last the heart became a very rock. Wave upon wave might now pass over it; wind after wind might now beat on it. But it continued to be rock. The Spirit ceased to strive. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man."

This sombre truth was thus solemnly put into effect. Reader, contemplate the fact. The mirror may reflect your state. Dealings with your spirit are obvious only to yourself. Your heart is hidden from your neighbour's view. No other eye can read these solemn secrets. But you may be conscious that frequently a voice has spoken in the inner chamber of your thoughts. You may well know that an unseen hand has sometimes touched you.

Perhaps in the place of worship, when men of God have deeply probed your shrinking mind and told of sin's sure end, of judgement near, of hell beyond, of flames which never die, of worms which ever gnaw, in terror you have resolved that wrath's tremendous thunderbolts should never fall on you. But the fear did not last. As the early dew it passed away. You still are what you have long been. You cannot forget the inward struggle. It ceased. It may return no more. "My Spirit shall not always strive."

Perhaps when, from the pulpit, Jesus has been most lovingly displayed; when in persuasive testimony He seemed to come as a suppliant to your heart's door, when all His grace and gentleness and love beamed beautifully before your eyes. Then meltings within have moved, and your soul has spread its wings to fly with rapture to His ready arms. But you delayed. The hardening world again surrounded you with entangling chains. The warmth expired. You fell back into deadness. An attracting Saviour receded from your view. Your dim eyes closed on salvation's glory. Will they see the lustre of that light again? "My Spirit shall not always strive."

There may have been times when thundering providence shook, as with earthquake-shock, the caverns of your slumbering soul. Some vast catastrophe, sweeping multitudes with relentless swoop into the unseen world; some desolating malady, stalking with death's scythe through the affrighted land; some sudden stroke, felling in life's prime a relative or friend; some strong disease, seizing with iron grasp your tottering frame; some loss of property, bringing chill penury to sit beside you; some blighted scheme, presenting you with disappointment's cup; some cruel slander, casting foul blight upon the fairness of your name – these or the like calamities may have revealed the

world's deceptive emptiness. Awakening from sleep, you have resolved to rise above such fleeting scenes. Weary of vanities, alive to peril, your thoughts have turned to lasting joys and safety in the only Saviour. You are conscious that the call was loud, was heard, was almost obeyed. But you paused. Earth's arts again put forth their witcheries. You are as far from Christ as ever. Will like visitations visit you again? "My Spirit shall not always strive."

Perhaps your eye rested on some Bible word, or pursuing texts haunted your ear. Exceptional light shone round you. Truth spoke in new and most convincing force. Time seemed to vanish. Eternity stared you in the face. Gigantic realities appeared gigantically real. You felt the duty and the wisdom of immediate change. But before you turned, some snare entrapped you. You are still unchanged. Will your Bible thus speak again? "My Spirit shall not always strive."

Perhaps some friend in pious earnestness grasped your hand, and reasoned and implored. You confessed, My course is wrong; I have no present peace; I dread the future; I hear of Jesus, and joy and peace in Him; I will arise and seek Him. But no. You loitered in the world's foul ground. The opportunity was lost. No one seems now to care for you. Will friendly calls again call you? "My Spirit shall not always strive."

Reader, do you in these sad lines discern your very picture? Does conscience herein perceive a pathway trodden by your hardening soul? Then listen to a solemn note. It may be another kind of conquering visit from the Spirit. It would be murderous cruelty to conceal that you are tottering on destruction's brink. You see there is a period in the downward course when warnings warn no more. The word, now ringing in your ears, proclaims, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man".

You have heard too of a "reprobate mind". This is no unmeaning sound, no shadow of an unreal form, no figment of imaginary woe, no term invented to give groundless terror. It is a sad description of a sadder state. It is the deathful blight of the poured-out curse. It is the midnight darkness of a soul drifted to realms uncheered by any gospel ray. Tremble, awake.

There is too a decree, which locks up in hopelessness, which paralyses all the means of grace, which freezes the streams of feeling, which chokes all the avenues of impression, which rivets the chains of Satan. God from His high throne may pronounce, "Let him alone". "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone" (Hos 4:17). Then the final curtain falls. Judicial deafness results. The hardness cannot melt.

Analyse God's dread decree. It blocks up all the channels through which saving mercy flows. "Let him alone", My ministers. When you set forth the Saviour's love and all the glories of His finished work and all the pardon

purchased by His blood and all the peace of faith and all the happiness of heaven, “let him alone”. Let all be dark before his eyes. Let no sound pierce the deep grave of his soul. Hearing, let him not hear.

My Bible, “let him alone”. When his eye rests on the brightest texts, inviting to the cross, warning of hell, depicting the eternal world, showing the ransomed with their harps of gold, unfolding the realms of agony, let the page be a vacant blank. Let every word be as a skeleton, breathing no life. “Let him alone.”

My providences, “let him alone”. If the whole universe were convulsed with earthquakes, hurricanes, appalling terrors, desolating plagues, let him look on unmoved. Let him stand hardened by the open grave. Let him lie hardened on the bed of pain. Let things most adverse, things most prosperous, be alike to him. Among them all, let his rocky heart become more adamantine. “Let him alone.”

My Son, “let him alone”. Thou art all love, all grace, all mercy. But love must not love him. Grace must not look savingly on him. Mercy must not yearn tenderly over him. Thy blood must not cleanse him. Thy cross is not for him a shelter. Thy righteousness is not his robe. Thou hast knocked often at his heart. Knock no more. “Let him alone.”

My Spirit, “let him alone”. It is Thy property to bestow grace. It is Thy province to convince of sin. It is Thy prerogative to reveal Jesus. It is Thy glorious grace to minister salvation. But leave him graceless. Break not his fetters. Give no sight of Jesus. Thou hast striven often. Strive no more. “Let him alone.”

Reader, what a beacon you have here! Do you tremble? Then the decree has not imprisoned you up in condemnation. Be wise and never trifle more. Heed every whisper of the Spirit. When He warns, turn. When He teaches, drink deeply of the lesson. When He calls, hasten with all speed. Quench not the first spark of His light. Never neglect His gentlest voice. Never resist His mildest drawing. Watch Him with intent gaze. Follow Him with instant step. Yield to Him full obedience. He leads from sin, from self – to Jesus and to heaven.

Holy Spirit, seal for glory all readers of this warning!

Protestant View

The Pope and Capital Punishment

The latest papal backpedalling from biblical truth concerns capital punishment. The Pope has rewritten the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in order

to promote the view that capital punishment is such an assault on “the inviolability and dignity of the person” that it is always inadmissible and that the Roman Church will now work “with determination” for its world-wide abolition.

We certainly do not expect the Pope to give a sound interpretation of the teachings of the Scriptures. The Word of God, however, solemnly teaches the inviolable requirement that the sin of murder be punished by the infliction of the death penalty upon the murderer (Gen 9:5,6). So we have another example of how Rome seems to be able to change its position on issues which, for centuries, it has held as fixed. At the same time, the Papacy still has the audacity to claim to be the infallible interpreter of Christian truth, with unchanging authority over the consciences of men. As one commentator has written, “If the [Roman Catholic] Church has been that wrong for that long about something that serious, why should we trust anything else she teaches? And if all previous popes have been so badly mistaken about something so important, why should we think Pope Francis is right?”

AWM

Notes and Comments

Spiritual Madness in Britain

Those in positions of authority and influence in Britain are vying with each other to show support for homosexuality and transgenderism. Prominent endorsers of these evils include the Prime Minister, the Mayor of London, the First Minister of Scotland, the Speaker of the House of Commons, many other political leaders, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Church of Scotland, the Methodists, the BBC, newspapers, the police, the armed forces, local councils, the National Trust, the Post Office, the RNLI, the Bank of England, and many large businesses such as Tesco, the Co-op, Virgin, Starbucks, Primark, Lush. The British “establishment”, publicly at least, is now wholly behind the movement.

Nevertheless, the “Gay Pride” marches – which are now simply known as “Pride” marches – continue unabated. Originally they were a protest against public opposition, but now that the opposition has been intimidated and silenced they are described as “celebrations”. Partly they are acts of open and public defiance against the law of God, and partly they are against the Christians, Muslims, Roman Catholics, Mormons and other members of society who still adhere to the morality of the past and, indeed, to the morality of the rest of the world which is not under the delusion of sodomy.

In recent days the promoters of sodomy and transgenderism have become bolder and more intoxicated than ever. All arguments against these evils are immediately shouted down as bigotry and hatred. A woman who complained about a transgender man in the women's changing-room at a fitness gym – the man spending an hour at the mirror putting on make-up and watching the women changing – was herself banned from the gym. A group of lesbians who protested at the “London Pride” march against the dangers to women from transgenderism were denounced by the march organisers as “sowing division and hatred” and showing a “level of bigotry, ignorance and hate that is unacceptable”. When a church in Aberdeen, meeting in a primary school, distributed rainbow-coloured leaflets warning against the sin of pride, the leaders of the “Grampian Pride” parade demanded that the Aberdeen council expel the church from the school and that the police investigate the “hate crime” that had been committed.

We are seeing the spectacle of a nation given over to a “strong delusion” and driven on by Satan. Politicians, businessmen, parents, and schoolchildren are doing his bidding unquestioningly, and there is little that can be done at present to halt them or to make them think. All that stand in the way are persecuted as far as the law will permit, and somewhat beyond that as well.

We are called to observe this exhibition of Satan's power over sinners when they are given into his hands; we are to use the spiritual weapons that we have, though with no great expectation of success until the Lord arises and pleads His own cause (Ps 74:22); but we have the encouragement that this mighty juggernaut trembles and cringes before the Word of God. Any witness to the truth, even a few rainbow-coloured leaflets, stirs up its venom and fury. Its day will soon come. “Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov 16:18). The watchers and the holy ones are demanding the downfall of such insolence against heaven: “this matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men” (Dan 4:17). *DWBS*

The steadfastness of hope is from the certainty of faith. Faith believes the truth of the thing, and hope waits for the accomplishment of it.

Christ is not loved at all until He is loved above all.

It is far better to go to heaven alone than to hell in company.

Death is in itself a terrible enemy. It hath a terrible and ghastly face. Christ by lying in the grave hath sweetened it, and by rising out of the grave hath conquered it. Death could not keep Him prisoner, and it shall never keep prisoner any that are His. He that considers that Christ is risen cannot well be afraid of the grave, especially if he hath an interest in Christ.

Ralph Robinson

Church Information

Committee Meetings

These Synod committees will meet, DV, in Inverness Free Presbyterian Church as follows on Tuesday, October 9:

- 10.00 - 10.30 Church Interests Committee
- 10.30 - 12.00 Training of the Ministry Committee
- 12.00 - 1.00 Sabbath Observance Committee
- 2.00 - 5.00 Finance Committee
- 2.00 - 3.00 Outreach Committee
- 3.00 - 5.00 Religion and Morals Committee
- 6.00 - 7.30 Publications and Bookroom Committee
- 7.30 - 8.30 Welfare of Youth Committee
- 7.30 - 8.30 Overseas Committee (Rev) *K M Watkins*, Clerk of Synod

Overseas Fund

By appointment of Synod, the special collection on behalf of the Overseas Fund is due to be taken in congregations during September.

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Southern: At Glasgow, on Tuesday, September 25, at 2 pm.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, October 2, at 12.30 pm.

Leverburgh Care Home Staff Needs

The Home has recently lost a number of senior staff who have either retired or have left the island. It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit staff locally in Harris as there is comparatively a small working population.

The Committee would appeal to anyone within the Church who would be interested in working within the caring sector. For more information about the posts and for an application form please contact Mrs Isabel Campbell (Manager), Leverburgh Care Home, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520296; e-mail: leverburghhome@hebrides.net.com.

(Rev) *Donald Macdonald*, Committee Convener

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

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

General Fund: Anon, £100.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: Anon, for Thembiso Home, £100.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Duirinish/Bracadale: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £20.

Glasgow: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10, £25, £200, £20, £10, £20. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £70, £70, £70.

Greenock: *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £50. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £50.

Sustentation Fund: Anon, Kingussie, £60.

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

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

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

Zimbabwe

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

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

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

New Canaan: Church.

Zenka: Church. Rev M Mloyi. Postal Address: Private Bag T5398, Bulawayo; cell phone: 00263 712 765 032.

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