

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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God Justifying

When God justifies a sinner, He is acting as judge. For God to justify the sinner is the opposite of Him condemning that individual. Every sinner who does not believe on the Lord Jesus is *not* justified; they are still under condemnation. Either they do not consider their need of salvation, or they are relying on themselves and what they can do to please God and think they can postpone considering this vital matter till some time in the indefinite future. For people to rely on what they can do themselves is a kind of self-justification, which is impossible; it is something like the accused in a criminal court being able to certify himself as innocent.

Saul of Tarsus was coming close to justifying himself, but to have done so would have done him no good if he had passed out of this world to meet the Judge of all the earth before the Saviour met savingly with him; he would have been condemned just as surely as the most careless of sinners in Tarsus or Jerusalem or anywhere else. And no one before or since has been any more successful than this man who was later to become known as Paul the Apostle. It was he who wrote insistently: “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in [God’s] sight” (Rom 3:20). God cannot accept anyone as righteous – not Saul or any other sinner with pharisaical tendencies – as a result of their own efforts to keep the commandments, no matter how successful they might seem to be outwardly.

As Paul wrote later in the same Epistle, the law is weak (8:3). Charles Hodge, in his *Commentary on Romans*, notes that “the law could condemn sin. What it cannot do is to free us either from its guilt or power. It can neither justify nor sanctify. . . . If men could comply with its righteous demands, the law would pronounce them just. . . . But as they are already under sin, under its guilt and power, the law is entirely impotent to their justification or sanctification.”

Paul goes on to state, “What the law could not do . . . God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh”. Paul emphasises that the nature the Saviour took was one, as Hodge goes on, “like to our sinful nature, but not itself sinful. Christ took our

physically-dilapidated nature, subject to the infirmities which sin had brought into it. It was therefore susceptible of pain, and weariness, and sorrow.” Christ did suffer, in the place of sinners. He took their guilt upon Himself and suffered the full punishment due to these sinners and so bore their sin away. His whole life was a life of suffering, but especially in the Garden of Gethsemane, at His trials and, above all, on the cross – where, as John Flavel and probably other Puritans have said, “The sufferings of His soul were the soul of His sufferings”. It was in the depths of these soul sufferings the Saviour cried, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” (Mt 27:46) – words used prophetically in Psalm 22:1.

This is the One, and the only One, whom God has appointed as a Mediator between Himself and sinners – in particular, to represent them before His Father as their High Priest in offering up Himself as a sacrifice to take away sin. And He continues His work as High Priest by making intercession before the throne of God, on behalf of those for whom He made reconciliation. The redemption He worked out is a completed work – He cried on the cross: “It is finished” (Jn 19:30) – so when He makes intercession, He cannot be rejected. In view of all He suffered throughout His life, the Saviour can be touched with a sense of our infirmities. He was tempted in all points as we are. He is therefore a merciful and trustworthy High Priest. He sees the sinners given to Him by the Father as spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, in their natural state. He has compassion on them and is faithful to His undertakings to His Father in the everlasting covenant.

Thus a time comes when He makes intercession for each of them. These are sinners who, as we have noticed, cannot save themselves, for the law is “weak”. They must therefore avail themselves of the divine provision that God has made for sinners in Christ; apart from this God-appointed Saviour, there is no hope whatever for any sinner. How necessary for everyone who hears the gospel to “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ”, as Paul and Silas directed the jailor in Philippi. And how necessary to do so with absolute urgency, for our life in this world is totally uncertain.

Here God’s sovereignty and the necessity for His working in the human soul meet with human responsibility, as in the Saviour’s words, “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (Jn 6:37). Sinners come to Christ because He draws them. They are made willing to come because the Holy Spirit works in their hearts, and the Holy Spirit so works because of Christ’s redeeming work and His intercession for them. They come and they are accepted. They are accepted because of what Christ has done for them.

To say that God accepts them is to say that He justifies them. Before they

believed they were under condemnation – condemned to suffer the wrath of God for ever. But now they are trusting in Christ as the One who died for sinners and who, as the exalted Saviour, is freely distributing the glorious gifts of faith, repentance and every other gift. Those who believe are united to Christ – in other words, they are *in* Christ. And “there is . . . no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1). Hodge comments that this “is not to be understood as descriptive of their present state merely, but of their permanent position. They are placed beyond the reach of condemnation. They shall never be condemned.” Rather than being condemned they are justified. God is treating them as if they had never sinned; He has forgiven all their guilt – their liability to condemnation – because of what the Lord Jesus did in their place when He suffered unto death for sin. It is God who has passed this sentence – a judicial sentence – for He has judged the sinner innocent because Christ became this person’s substitute and bore away all his guilt.

We must go further, for God also treats the sinner as perfectly righteous – again on the basis of what Christ did in this world as the substitute for sinners. When Christ, in this world, was made under the law, He kept it perfectly – so that there might be a perfect righteousness to be imputed to the sinner who believes in Jesus – that is, put to his account. Hodge notes, “The justification of believers involves a fulfilling of the law; its demands are not set aside”.¹ How wonderful is the provision that has been made for unworthy sinners! How perfectly suitable it is for their needs!

Think of the sinner making his way along the broad way to everlasting condemnation. The Lord arrests the sinner, making him conscious of his sin, his guilt and the condemnation he deserves. He is enabled to look by faith to Christ as the Saviour that God has provided for such as him. At once God pronounces him justified, and that justification can never be reversed. When death comes and he is to pass into the eternal world, he is received into heaven because he has no unforgiven sin to keep him out, and he has a perfect righteousness – not his own but what was wrought out by Christ and imputed to him – that entitles him to a place in eternal blessedness.

Yes, the good works of believers will be acknowledged at the judgement, but they do not form the basis on which they are accepted. They are rather the evidence which will show that all have been prepared for heaven who will gather on the right side of Christ, the righteous Judge. May all who read these pages seek earnestly to “be found in Him, not having [their] own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil 3:9).

¹Charles Hodge, *Commentary on Romans*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1983, p 262.

The Son Learning Obedience¹

A Sermon by *Charles Bridges*

Hebrews 5:8. *Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.*

A precious text, with unsearchable depths! What a sight is before us! The Eternally-blessed God with the humility of a child at school, *learning* a lesson! What reverence we need in beholding this sight! What an infinite stoop from the glory and worship of heaven! Then what love! Then what obligation!

It is the sight of the Humanity of Christ. Separate from His Godhead, this is a cold abstraction. In union with His Godhead, it is an overflowing fountain of tenderness, grace and love. This Humanity is as essential to the great work of salvation as His Divinity. What, you say, if He had been only man and not God? What, I add, if He had been only God and not man? Let the Christian's faith rest upon both: "Perfect God and perfect man".² Here we see Him as man. The Apostle speaks of what He did in the days of His flesh (v 7). Yet while man, He was not mere man, but the Son; as no other son, yet as a Son learning obedience by the things which He suffered. This deep mysterious subject opens to us three things: (1) His Person, (2) His Lesson, and (3) the School in which He learned it.

1. His Person. "Though He were a Son." So He was declared from His birth. "That holy thing," was the message to His mother, "which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Lk 1:35). Not that He then began to be so. The name was no mark of His humiliation, but of His fellowship with His Father in the eternal Godhead. Here had been His home from eternity – "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father" (Jn 1:18). This was His own witness: "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old" (Prov 8:22). Hence the reverential enquiry after God: "What is His name, and what is His Son's name, if thou canst tell?" (Prov 30:4). Hence the obligation long before His coming in the flesh, claiming for Him equal homage with God: "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him" (Ps 2:12). Who of us therefore will not respond to the noble words of the ancient Church: "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ: Thou art the Everlasting Son of the Father?"

But His dignity did not hinder His humiliation. No, it gave all the glory

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Family Treasury* for 1860. Bridges (1794-1869) was at this time an Anglican minister in Dorset. He is now best known for his commentaries, including one on the Book of Proverbs.

²From the Athanasian Creed.

to His humiliation. This is the record: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but . . . He humbled Himself” (Phil 2:6,-8). Here we see the God of glory in the lowest station of man, learning as a child.

2. His lesson: obedience. There is nothing out of the ordinary course in a son learning obedience. But that such a Son should do so! This is beyond reason; yet it is the testimony of God. It might be said: What need of the lesson? If He were the Son, invested with all the fullness of the Godhead, what obligation could there be for obedience? Truly He was indeed as the “red heifer . . . upon which never came yoke” (Num 19:2). He was in Himself under no yoke. Yet as man He stood in man’s place and took upon Him man’s obligation. He was “made under the law” (Gal 4:4). “Thus it becometh us”, He declares, “to fulfil all righteousness” (Mt 3:15).

He “learned obedience”, the obedience prescribed to Him. He did so in active exercise: “My meat”, He said, “is to do [My Father’s] will . . . and to finish His work” (Jn 4:34); “I do always those things that please Him” (Jn 8:29). He did so in passive exercise: “Not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Mt 26:39); “The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?” (Jn 18:11). And this obedience continued without one flaw “unto death” (Phil 2:8). He could challenge His enemies: “Which of you convinceth Me of sin?” (John 8:46) – even His great enemy: “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me” (Jn 14:30).

Now contrast His course with the highest standard of human perfection. Abraham, the man of faith, failed in unbelief (compare Gen 12:1-5, with vv 11-13). Moses, the meekest of “men which were upon the face of the earth” “spake unadvisedly with his lips” (Num 12:3, Ps 106:33). Elijah could stand alone against the autocrat of Israel and his idolatrous people, and yet he quailed before the threatened wrath of Jezebel (1 Ki 19:2,3). Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, as none before or after him, yet he would buy off the Assyrian invasion by selling the ornaments of the temple (2 Ki 18:5-7, 13-16). “Ye have heard”, says the Apostle, “of the patience of Job” (Jas 5:11), but who has not heard of his impatience also? “Every man at his best state is altogether vanity” (Ps 39:5); at his best state, for is there not infirmity in the highest graces of his renewed nature?

But there was no shadow in the obedience of this Son. He was always in union with His Father’s will. There was the same perfection in His manhood as in His Godhead. No sin was there either of commission or of omission. One apostle testifies, He “knew no sin” (2 Cor 5:21); another, He “did no sin” (1 Pet 2:22); a third, “In Him is no sin” (1 Jn 3:5). This threefold testimony is as complete as words can make it.

He *learned* obedience, as He tells us Himself, under His Father's divine teaching: "He wakeneth morning by morning; he wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned" (Is 50:4). Not indeed that the omniscient One needed instruction. Not that He learned to obey as something new; all the graces of obedience were in Him in innate perfection. But He placed Himself in the circumstances which called these graces into exercise, and thus He learned obedience in the exercise of it, as He could not otherwise have learned. Such then was the lesson.

3. The school in which He learned – by the things which He suffered. His outward sufferings were on the surface: "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting" (Is 50:6). But His inner sufferings – what they were, no tongue of man or angel can tell. It is one of those things of which it must be said, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father" (Mt 11:27). He was indeed pre-eminent in His suffering as in His glory. Grief with us is always a neighbour, often a visitor. But with Him it was His constant companion. He derived His name from it: "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Is 53:3). He could say with touching tenderness, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow" (Lam 1:12).

Nor was this sorrow confined to His latter days. It was the mark of the days of His flesh. There was no interval of ease. Every step was endurance, apart from the last act; though, indeed, if there had been ease, the prospect ever before Him of the concluding scene would have made it agony. Trials were continually shifting, never ceasing. Before He could ward off a stroke on one side, the enemy made an attack on the other. Such a weight of endurance! The strongest in his own strength could never have held up under it. Yet "I was not rebellious, neither turned away back" (Is 50:5). No, truly, He went onwards with noble majesty before His disciples, to their amazement and fear (Mk 10:32). "I have a baptism", He could say at another time, "to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Lk 12:50).

Thus it was the good pleasure of the sovereign Disposer, the only wise God, "in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb 2:10).

Now for the lessons to be learned from this holy subject:

1. *Adoring gratitude.* The Son of God schooled by suffering! What wisdom! What gracious consideration of us in this divine work! Why did He condescend to learn in this our school, but that He might sympathise with us in all the exercises of this school? And how this thought softens the galling weight of the trial! The Son of God carried the same burden, bore it under

the same yoke, was exercised in the same school, learned the same lesson! The dignity of affliction! To be one with the Son under the same Father's gracious, wise, though often unsearchable, discipline here, after years of knowledge and experience, we long, with the Apostle, to know more and more to the end: "the fellowship of His sufferings" (Phil 3:10).

Now, child of sorrow, look at this "Man of sorrows". Follow Him every step of His way, from the cradle – I was going to say so, but I remember He had no cradle. This comfort of the poorest of His children was denied to Him. The manger was the rough substitute. It was the same hardness to the end. "Foxes", He said on one occasion, "have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (Mt 8:20).

Travel onward through history to its close. The professing Christian says, I have read it often; I know all about it. Have you read it so often that it has become to you a mere tale, wearisome to hear? Plain proof indeed that you know nothing of it, that you have never read it at all – never, at least, as a Christian with God impressing it on your heart. I seem as if I am looking through a telescope, and yet am unable to fix it so as to get a clear view of the great object. If I did, would you not almost see the impression in the shining of the face? For here is the great secret of God's transforming work: "We all, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor 3:18).

2. *Intense desire to imitate.* Look at this holy example, and be what you behold. "Consider Him" (Heb 12:3). One great cause of our living so low is the lack of deep, pondering, and spiritual apprehensions of Him. We must study Him if we would know Him, if we would love, enjoy and be conformed to Him. Then indeed we shall receive "of His fulness", "and grace for grace" (Jn 1:16). The Holy Spirit will perform His own work. "He shall glorify Me" (Jn 16:14). He opens the eyes to behold, the heart to delight, and by His own heavenly pencil copies feature for feature, on our character, grace answering to grace. But how faint is the impression! O for a deeper moulding in variety as in extent, feature answering to feature, until the work of transformation is complete!

3. *See how the perfection of His obedience covers the imperfection of ours.* "By the obedience of [this] One shall many be made righteous" (Rom 5:19). What comparison can there be between the "smoking flax" of our poor beginnings, and the inexpressibly bright flame of His obedience? Who does not see the utter lack of all proportion between them? Yet poor as it is in itself, every act, thought and word is presented before the throne sprinkled with the blood, and perfumed with the merit and intercession, of the Son of God. We are so dissatisfied that we cannot endure the thought of bringing

it before God. Yet He looks upon it with infinite delight, as “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing”. How this view lays us low in humiliation and lifts us up in confidence! The precious work before the throne not only heals the festering of conscience, but invigorates, refreshes and consecrates to the service of God. With “lips touched with a live coal from the altar”, are we ready to respond to the call, “Here am I; send me” (Is 6:5-8)?

4. *Seek to bear the rich experimental fruits of the school of discipline.* How the teaching rod seals the blessing of the teaching law! The lesson may be costly, but rich indeed is the compensation. There must be exercise – painful exercise. If with a will in perfect union with His Father’s will, discipline was, for this blessed Son, the appointed school for obedience, how much more needful must this school be for us, with wills so wayward, so perverse, so rebellious! The schoolboy may revolt from the lesson and break away from the discipline. But is not this the path for his own misery? Do we not find our happiness by losing our will? For surely that will, which is enmity to a God of love (Rom 8:7), must be the greatest enemy to ourselves. Never can we be surprised at any stroke that may fall upon us, so hard is it for us to bend – yet so necessary that we should bend!

If therefore the question is asked in pettish impatience under chastisement, “If I am a child, why am I thus?” the answer is ready, “You are thus, because you are a child, because the Lord loves you, and therefore chastens you.” “For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?” (Heb 12:6,7). It is not therefore *hard*, but (as the confession will be brought out) “it is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes”; for “before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept Thy word” (Ps 119:71,67). This, then – let it never be forgotten – is God’s school. It is the stroke that humbles, the disappointment that breaks down the stubborn will, the exercise that weans from a world of vanity and sin. Nor is it for the believer’s interest or comfort to lift up a finger against his Father’s appointments. Bitter they may be to the flesh, but they are wholesome to the spirit.

Rather let his mind be absorbed in the blessedness of knowing that he is in his Father’s hands, who is too wise, too faithful, too kind to appoint anything but what in the end shall be for his happiness and for his glory. Discipline is the finishing school – the training for heaven. It allows one to mourn, not to murmur. There is peace in submission. Even when it tears the flesh, it heals the spirit. Shall the children complain of the course by which their Lord was pleased to learn obedience and to be made perfect for His work? (Heb 5:7, 2:10). Must believers not be content with school discipline until this finishing school shall have fully trained them to dwell for ever with their Father in His heavenly home?

The Spirit of Adoption¹

3. Love and Communion

James Buchanan

3. The spirit of adoption implies *a warm brotherly love* towards all who are members of God's family. This new affection corresponds to the new relation into which they have been introduced, and bears some proportion to the sacred, endearing ties by which, as Christians, they are connected with one another. The spirit of adoption points directly to God and consists in supreme love to Him; but it necessarily implies also love to the brethren, for John says, "Every one that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of Him". And: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also."

The intimate connection between the two – I mean between love to God as one's Father and to one another as brethren – is abundantly proved by the experience of believers, as well as by the express testimony of the Word. If, on the one hand, they experience at any time an enlargement of affection towards God; if they taste most sweetly and see most clearly that the Lord is gracious and have much liberty and comfort in crying to Him, "Abba, Father", then they shall also feel a corresponding love to all His people, a disposition to forgive as they hope to be forgiven, and a desire to do good unto all men as they have opportunity, but especially unto them that are of the household of faith.

If, on the other hand, they allow their spirits at any time to be ruffled by strife and contention; if, in the heat of undue excitement, they begin to think or speak harshly of one another, and allow the sun to go down upon their wrath, they will feel in the hour of prayer how fatal this unhallowed spirit is to enjoying fellowship with God, how it fetters their freedom and embitters their feelings; and even when they seek to cry, "Abba, Father," in the spirit of adoption, it infuses into their souls all the discomfort and anxiety of the old spirit of bondage. Hence our Lord's command to His disciples: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift"; and Paul's

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*. Last month's section dealt with two points: The spirit of adoption implies (1) reverence and godly fear and (2) a lively sense of gratitude and a principle of supreme love to God.

exhortation, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love."

4. The spirit of adoption implies *a disposition to hold communion with God as Father and with His children as brethren in Christ*. The spirit of adoption prompts the believer to hold communion with God, for it is by this spirit that he cries, "Abba, Father". As it leads him to be much engaged in prayer, so it gives a new character to his devotions; they are no longer the expression of an anxious and fearful heart, but the outpourings of a spirit confiding in a father's wisdom, rejoicing in a father's love, and committing itself to a father's care. So long as he was under the spirit of bondage, prayer was felt to be a task, or used only as a form, instead of being a sweet, refreshing privilege; his petitions were dictated by fear more than by faith, and he felt rather as a criminal speaking to his judge, or as a slave to his angry master, than as a child communing with his father.

But now, adopted into God's family and reconciled through the blood of Christ, he feels a confidence in drawing near to God, such as a child has in speaking to a wise and affectionate parent – a confidence which is only the more tender and deeply rooted in his heart because he has been a rebellious child and is now forgiven. The very recollection of his sins, when combined with a sense of God's pardoning mercy, will fill his heart to overflowing with love, gratitude and joy. While he is deeply humbled, and ready to acknowledge that he is "no more worthy to be called a son", he knows that his adoption was an act of sovereign grace – that it was granted, not on account of his own righteousness, but solely through the righteousness of Christ and the redemption of His cross. Thus he can "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that [he] may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need".

In doing so, he is encouraged by the relation in which God stands to him as his Father in heaven; and by the recollection of those gracious assurances in the Word which are founded on this relation; he remembers the words of Christ Himself: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to *thy Father* which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly"; "*Your Father* knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him"; and, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"

There is a rich fountain of encouragement to pray in the idea that God is the Father of His people, for if that is so, it assures them that even their

weakness and infirmities – indeed, their sins and shortcomings – will not stop Him paying attention to them. On the contrary, “as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him;” and this is His own promise: “I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him”. If this is the relation in which believers stand to God, and these are the feelings with which He regards them when they draw near to Him in the spirit of adoption, they need not be cast down or discouraged by a sense of their weakness and infirmities.

Consider how a father’s heart is touched by the weakness of his child, so that he never deals more tenderly with the child than when he is sick and faint;² consider how a father is all the more ready to stretch forth his arm to support his child when it is conscious of its weakness and clings to him for fear it should fall; and consider how a father’s sympathy and love are sure to be called forth when an obedient son seeks to serve him and grieves that he cannot serve him better, and the sympathy and love are never more sincerely or deeply felt than when, in the exercise of a wise discipline, he chastens and rebukes the child he loves. Just so God, as the Father in heaven – or rather *much* more, seeing His love is infinite and unchangeable – will regard the weaknesses and needs, the infirmities and imperfections of His children.

Hear His own gracious words, “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.” “Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.” With such views of God, and of his relation to Him as a Father, the believer’s communion with Him is sweet; he feels in prayer very much as a child does when he speaks to a father who is both able and willing to help him. Having liberty of access to God at all times, and frequent occasion as well as the richest encouragement to pour out his heart and to spread out his case before Him, he acquires a growing desire for His fellowship, and prayer comes to be his constant habit and his sweetest privilege. He is careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, he makes his requests known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep his heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

And just as the filial love which the believer bears to God as his Father is associated with a brotherly love to all His people, so the communion which he enjoys with God will ever be accompanied with the desire to hold communion also with all in every place who belong to the same family, who share

²Buchanan indicates that he had taken this idea from Robert Bolton, an English Puritan.

in his privileges and partake of his spirit and cherish his hopes, as children of the same Father, who expect the same inheritance. It is the counsel of God to all His children, “See that ye fall not out by the way”, “Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous”.

In token of their common relation and their mutual love, God is pleased to make them sit down at the same table, and to unite in commemorating the riches of redeeming grace. By partaking of the sacred symbols, they profess the same faith and are fed with the “children’s bread”. It is in “the spirit of adoption” that every communicant should approach the table; not in the spirit of bondage, as if it were a task, or a gloomy and uncomfortable service, but in the spirit of adoption, crying, “Abba, Father”. For the sacred symbols represent the broken body and the shed blood of the Saviour, through which we obtain liberty of access and may come boldly to the throne of grace. They point to the “new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh”.

Those who are called to partake of these symbols together, in an act of solemn worship together, should look on each other as brethren – as children of the same Father – seated around the same table, all sharing more or less in the infirmities and weaknesses which still cleave to His children on earth. But they should also remember that they share in the same precious privileges, partake of the same spiritual food and cherish the same everlasting hopes.

John Hooper – a Reformation Puritan¹

7. Faithful unto Death

Rev K M Watkins

“As thy days, so shall thy strength be” (Deut 33:25). Originally made to the Tribe of Asher, the Lord certainly made His promise good in the case of John Hooper. Amidst trials of grievous persecution culminating in a martyr’s death, the final chapter of Hooper’s life showed gospel faithfulness that only the God of all grace could supply.

As 1554 continued, the clouds announcing the imminent arrival of a yet more ferocious storm of persecution were ever darkening. Politically and ecclesiastically, things were moving on apace to re-establish England as a thoroughly Roman Catholic country, with Queen Mary at the helm. In February, Lady Jane Grey, who had been put forward unsuccessfully as a contender for the throne, was beheaded at just 17 years of age, remaining

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

faithful to the Protestant faith to the end. Her husband and father were also executed. In July, a closer alliance with Romanism was forged by Queen Mary's marriage to Prince Philip of Spain, a country where Rome's Counter-reformation was to prove so effective in snuffing out the Reformation in its infancy.

The legal reforms under Edward VI were reversed, one by one. In November that included the repeal of the Attainder Act, opening the way for the immediate return from exile of Cardinal Reginald Pole, arch-enemy of Protestantism, who arrived "as papal legate with the specific aim of accomplishing reunion between England and Rome".² By the end of November, Henry VIII's Act of Supremacy was repealed, by which England's divorce from Rome had been effected. Then on November 30, in a staged event in Parliament in the presence of Mary and Philip, Pole granted Rome's absolution to the realm of England, on the request of Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester. Two days later, the King and the Cardinal attended mass at St Paul's, conducted by Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London, with Gardiner preaching. Then "the huge congregation, numbering over 15 000, knelt down in submission".³ England's return to Rome was complete.

But what of Hooper? Unlike many letters from his friends, news of these discouraging events did not fail to reach him in his prison cell. He was particularly distraught that his friend Henry Bullinger seemed to have forgotten him. This was not so, of course. Bullinger's letters were being intercepted. But when things were almost at their darkest, eventually a letter from Bullinger arrived. Hooper's reply on December 11⁴ expressed his delight, but also his realisation that death could not be far off. "They are daily threatening us with death", he wrote. But Christ had not forsaken him, nor left him in unbelief, for he could add: "which [death] we are quite indifferent about; in Christ Jesus we boldly despise the sword and the flames. We know in whom we have believed, and we are sure that we shall lay down our lives in a good cause."

At the beginning of 1555, Hooper knew that his time was short. Foxe records a letter he sent to his friends on January 21. He wrote, "Now is the time of trial, to see whether we fear more God or man. It was an easy thing to hold with Christ whilst the Prince and world held with Him; but now the world hateth Him, it is the true trial who be His. Wherefore, in the name and

²Pete Sullivan, *A Gloucester Martyr: John Hooper and the English Reformation*, Country Books, 2004, p 97.

³Sullivan, *A Gloucester Martyr*, p 98.

⁴Letter to Bullinger, *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation*, vol 1, The Parker Society, ed Hastings Robinson, Cambridge, 1846, p 105.

in the virtue, strength, and power of His Holy Spirit, prepare yourselves in any case to adversity and constancy. Let us not run away when it is most time to fight. Remember, none shall be crowned but such as fight manfully; and he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”⁵

He continued: “Imprisonment is painful; but yet liberty upon evil conditions is more painful. The prisons stink, but yet not so much as sweet houses where the fear and true honour of God lack. I must be alone and solitary; it is better so to be, and have God with me, than to be in company with the wicked. Loss of goods is great; but loss of God’s grace and favour is greater. . . . I shall die then by the hands of the cruel man: he is blessed that loseth this life, full of miseries, and findeth the life of eternal joys. It is pain and grief to depart from goods and friends; but yet not so much as to depart from grace and heaven itself. Wherefore there is neither felicity nor adversity of this world that can appear to be great, if it be weighed with the joys or pains in the world to come” (*JF*, p 660). Clearly the Lord was sustaining him. His conclusion includes words reminiscent of Samuel Rutherford, who in the next century would be banished to Aberdeen for the Lord’s sake: “I am a precious jewel now, and daintily kept, never so daintily” (*JF*, p 660).

The next day, 22 January 1555, Hooper was brought before the Council, led again by Gardiner. He was offered mercy, if he would submit to the Pope’s authority. That he could not do. Foxe summarised Hooper’s reply: “Forasmuch as the Pope taught doctrine altogether contrary to the doctrine of Christ, he was not worthy be accounted as a member of Christ’s Church, much less to be head thereof; wherefore he would in no wise condescend to any such usurped jurisdiction. Neither esteemed he the Church, whereof they call him head, to be the catholic Church of Christ: for the Church only heareth the voice of her spouse Christ, and flieth the strangers” (*JF*, p 648). Hooper said that he was willing for mercy only if it “may be had with safety of conscience, and without the displeasure of God” (*JF*, p 648). He was told that the Queen would show no mercy to the Pope’s enemies.

After six more days in the Fleet, Hooper was summoned again, on January 28. Hooper was charged on three grounds: maintaining it was lawful for the clergy to marry; teaching that it was lawful to divorce on the ground of adultery; and “for denying the [bodily] presence of Christ in the sacrament, and saying that the mass was an idol”.⁶

John Rogers, another Protestant minister destined for martyrdom, was

⁵*The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, ed S R Cattle, London, 1838, vol 6, p 659. Further quotations from this volume are labelled *JF*.

⁶*Writings of Dr John Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester. Martyr, 1555*, The Religious Tract Society, nd, p 5.

examined the same day. Both being sent to prison in Southwark, Hooper encouraged his fellow-sufferer on the way, saying, “Come, brother Rogers! Must we two take this matter first in hand, and begin to fry these faggots?” Rogers replied, “Yea sir, by God’s grace”. Hooper then said, “Doubt not but God will give strength”. The people of the city crowded around, and “rejoiced at their constancy” (*JF*, p 649).

The next day, 29 January 1555, the Council condemned both Hooper and Rogers. They were to be degraded from the “priesthood” and were sentenced to death. Hooper was taken to Newgate prison, where for six days he was hounded by the Romanists to recant, using alternately feigned kindness and unveiled threats. When they could prevail nothing, they spread false rumours that he had recanted. Hearing the rumours, Hooper wrote an open letter to refute them, saying, “I thank God, I am as ready to suffer death, as a mortal man may be. . . . I have taught the truth with my tongue and with my pen heretofore; and hereafter shortly shall confirm the same by God’s grace with my blood” (*JF*, p 651).

On February 4, Hooper and Rogers were degraded together in the prison chapel. The proceedings were led by Bonner. First clothed in priest’s garments, they were stripped of these and deposed. Rogers was taken to be burned immediately, at Smithfield in London, where he died in faith, the first of some 300 Marian martyrs. Hooper was to be taken to Gloucester, to be burned there. On hearing this, “he rejoiced very much, lifting up his eyes and hands unto heaven, and praising God that He saw it good to send him amongst the people over whom he was pastor, there to confirm with his death the truth which he had before taught them; not doubting but the Lord would give him strength to perform the same to His glory” (*JF*, p 652).

When Hooper arrived in Gloucester a few days later, a number of interesting meetings took place. Sir Anthony Kingston, an old acquaintance whom Hooper had faithfully reprovved for his sinful life⁷ and had since become a sound Protestant, pointed Hooper to the Queen’s pardon. Foxe records the exchange (*JF*, p 654). Kingston said, “Alas, consider that life is sweet, and death is bitter. Therefore, seeing life may be had, desire to live; for life hereafter may do good.”

With “the ever memorable answer”, as Ryle described it,⁸ Hooper replied, “True it is, master Kingston, that death is bitter, and life is sweet; but, alas, consider that the death to come is more bitter, and the life to come is more sweet. Therefore, for the desire and love I have to the one, and the terror and fear of the other, I do not so much regard this death, nor esteem this life, but

⁷See the fifth article in this series, in the August 2018 issue of this Magazine, p 239.

⁸J C Ryle, *Five English Reformers*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1994, p 55.

have settled myself, through the strength of God's Holy Spirit, patiently to pass through the torments and extremities of the fire now prepared for me, rather than to deny the truth of His Word." They parted from each other as brethren in Christ, both in tears – for Hooper, "more tears than he had shed throughout the seventeen months of his imprisonment".⁹ Kingston's aim had not been to trick Hooper into denying the faith; "it was a simple human plea for Hooper to save his life".¹⁰

Another visitor was a blind youth called Thomas Drowry, himself imprisoned for his Protestant faith. After examining the boy, Hooper became convinced of his grace and said, "Ah, poor boy! God hath taken from thee thy outward sight, for what reason He best knoweth: but He hath given thee another sight much more precious, for He hath endued thy soul with the eye of knowledge and faith. God give thee grace continually to pray unto Him, that thou lose not that sight; for then shouldest thou be blind both in body and soul" (*JF*, p 654). Young Thomas did not lose that sight. Returned to prison, he was held until over a year later, when in May 1556 he followed Hooper in being burned at the stake in Gloucester.

When a Roman Catholic with a wicked life expressed sorrow to see him under sentence of death, Hooper replied, "Be sorry for thyself, man, and lament thine own wickedness; for I am well, I thank God, and death to me for Christ's sake is welcome". Hooper's response reminds us of the Saviour on the way to the cross, who said to the women of Jerusalem, "Weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children" (Lk 23:28).

Likeness to his Master continued when, after a night spent in prayer, the day appointed for execution arrived: 9 February 1555. The sheriffs arrived at his lodging to take him to the place of execution, armed with weapons. "When he saw the multitude of weapons, he spake to the sheriffs on this wise: 'Master sheriffs,' said he, 'I am no traitor, neither needed you to have made such a business to bring me to the place where I must suffer: for if ye had willed me, I would have gone alone to the stake, and have troubled none of you all'" (*JF*, p 656). One hears Christ saying to those who came to arrest Him in Gethsemane, "Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take Me?" (Mt 26:55).

Approximately 60 years old and limping from the hardships of imprisonment, Hooper was led to the stake. Being forbidden to speak to the people gathered to witness his death – and there were some 7000 of them – he knelt down to pray, continuing in prayer for half an hour. Part way through he was interrupted. They had brought a box which, they said, contained the Queen's

⁹Ryle, *Five English Reformers*, p 55.

¹⁰Sullivan, *A Gloucester Martyr*, p 105.

pardon if he would recant. His reply was insistent: “If you love my soul, away with it! If you love my soul, away with it!” And so he returned to prayer.

Part of the prayer was overheard and preserved. Like Elijah before him, Hooper gives us an object lesson in effectual, fervent prayer: “Lord, I am hell, but Thou art heaven; I am . . . a sink of sin, but Thou art a gracious God and a merciful Redeemer. Have mercy therefore upon me, most miserable and wretched offender, after Thy great mercy and according to Thine inestimable goodness. Thou that art ascended into heaven, receive me . . . to be partaker of Thy joys, where Thou sittest in equal glory with Thy Father. For well knowest Thou, Lord, wherefore I am come hither to suffer, and why the wicked do persecute this Thy poor servant; not for my sins and transgressions committed against Thee, but because I will not allow their wicked doings, to the contaminating of Thy blood and to the denial of the knowledge of Thy truth. . . . And well seest Thou, my Lord and God, what terrible pains and cruel torments be prepared for Thy creature: such, Lord, as without Thy strength none is able to bear, or patiently to pass. But all things that are impossible with man are possible with Thee: therefore strengthen me of Thy goodness, that in the fire I break not the rules of patience; or else assuage the terror of the pains, as shall seem most to Thy glory” (*JF*, p 657).

The one thing Hooper had asked the Gloucester authorities to give him was refused – a quick fire. Civic records show that “little expense was spared in terms of reward and hospitality for those involved”¹¹ – extra wine was procured and a dinner held – but the materials for the fire itself were poor. The wood was green and would hardly burn. Even the gunpowder was damp and failed to explode. The flames were blown by the wind, so that he was scorched rather than dispatched. His torments were extended for more than 45 minutes, causing him to cry out for more fire. But Hooper was enabled to be faithful unto death. Not one word of impatience against the Lord passed from his lips. “Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me; Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” – these “were the last words he was heard to utter” (*JF*, p 658).

The preface to a recent major biography of Hooper begins with the assertion that “in his own lifetime” he “was respected, even feared, but not much loved”.¹² Whatever some thought of him then and think of him now, with this we cannot agree. The fragrance of Hooper’s witness is very sweet, and God’s people will ever love him for it. We do not doubt that he went from the cruelty of the flames to the loving embrace of Christ and was welcomed with a most emphatic, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant”.

¹¹Sullivan, *A Gloucester Martyr*, p 115.

¹²David G Newcombe, *John Hooper: Tudor Bishop and Martyr*, Davenant Press, 2009, p vii.

A large monument, erected more than three centuries later, in 1863, now stands on the spot where Hooper was burned outside Gloucester Cathedral. Fittingly it records his testimony in these words: "For the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God, not accepting deliverance". Less fittingly, the statue has him in Bishop's vestments, which betrays the continued misunderstanding and rejection of this godly man's Puritanism. We cannot tell how long the statue will stand, but of this we are certain: "The righteous man's memorial shall everlasting prove".

J C Ryle rightly said that "Hooper was a leading instrument" in both the "subversion of Popery" and the "introduction of Protestantism".¹³ That would be enough to endear him to our hearts, alongside other Reformers. But for ourselves in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, it must be his Puritanism that makes him stand out. When it came to his desire for fully scriptural worship and practice, he was not just one of the English Reformers, he was *the* one, the Puritan of the English Reformation. In other areas, he was eminent; in this, he was pre-eminent. There was no one like him among the leaders of the English Reformation. Hooper was a Reformation Puritan indeed.

Needs of the Times¹

2. Distinct and Decided Views of Christian Doctrine

J C Ryle

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

2. The times require from us distinct and decided views of Christian doctrine. I cannot withhold my conviction that the professing Church of the nineteenth century is as much damaged by internal laxity and indistinctness about matters of doctrine as it is by sceptics and unbelievers without. Myriads of professing Christians nowadays seem utterly unable to distinguish things that differ. Like people afflicted with colour-blindness, they are incapable of discerning what is true and what is false, what is sound and what is unsound. If a preacher of religion is clever and eloquent and earnest, they appear to think he is all right, however strange and inconsistent his sermons may be.

These people are clearly destitute of spiritual sense and cannot detect error. Romanism or Protestantism, an atonement or no atonement, a personal

¹³Ryle, *Five English Reformers*, p 37.

¹A further section, as edited, from a chapter in Ryle's book *Holiness* (1879). The first part, last month, emphasised the need to maintain God's authority in the Bible and in Christian truth.

Holy Ghost or no Holy Ghost, future punishment or no future punishment, Trinitarianism or Arianism or Unitarianism, nothing comes amiss to them: they can swallow it all even if they cannot digest it! Carried away by a fancied liberality and charity, they seem to think everybody is right and nobody is wrong, every clergyman is sound and none are unsound, everybody is going to be saved and nobody lost. Their religion is made up of negatives, and the only positive thing about them is that they dislike distinctness and think all extreme and decided and positive views are very wrong.

These people live in a kind of mist or fog. They see nothing clearly and do not know what they believe. They have not made up their minds about any great point in the gospel; they seem content to be honorary members of all schools of thought. To save their lives they could not tell you what they think is true about justification, regeneration or sanctification; the Lord's Supper or baptism; faith, conversion, inspiration or the future state. They are eaten up with a morbid dread of controversy and an ignorant dislike of party spirit; yet they really cannot define what they mean by these phrases. The only point you can make out is that they admire earnestness, cleverness and charity, and cannot believe that any clever, earnest, charitable man can ever be in the wrong. So they live on undecided; and too often they drift down to the grave undecided, without comfort in their religion and, I am afraid, often without hope.

The explanation of this boneless, nerveless, jellyfish condition of soul is not difficult to find. To begin with, the heart of man is naturally in the dark about religion, has no intuitive sense of truth, and really *needs* instruction and illumination. Besides this, the natural heart in most men hates exertion in religion, and cordially dislikes patient, painstaking inquiry. Above all, the natural heart generally likes the praise of others, shrinks from collision, and loves to be thought charitable and liberal. The whole result is that a kind of broad religious agnosticism just suits an immense number of people, and specially suits young people. They are content to shovel aside all disputed points as rubbish, and if you charge them with indecision, they will tell you: I do not pretend to understand controversy; I decline to examine controverted points; I daresay it is all the same in the long run. Who does not know that such people abound everywhere?

I do beseech all who read this article to beware of this undecided state of mind in religion. It is a "pestilence that walketh in darkness" and a "destruction that wasteth at noonday". It is a lazy, idle frame of soul which doubtless saves men the trouble of thought and investigation, but it is a frame of soul for which there is no warrant in the Bible. For your own soul's sake, dare to make up your mind about what you believe and dare to have positive, distinct

views of truth and error. Never, never be afraid to hold decided doctrinal opinions and let no fear of man or morbid dread of being thought party-spirited, narrow or controversial make you rest contented with a bloodless, boneless, tasteless, colourless, lukewarm, undogmatic Christianity.

Mark what I say. If you want to do good in these times, you must throw aside indecision and take up a distinct, sharply-cut, doctrinal religion. If you believe little, those to whom you try to do good will believe nothing. The victories of Christianity, wherever they have been won, have been won by distinct doctrinal theology; by telling men emphatically of Christ's vicarious death and sacrifice; by showing them Christ's substitution on the cross and His precious blood; by teaching them justification by faith and bidding them believe on a crucified Saviour; by preaching ruin by sin, redemption by Christ, regeneration by the Spirit; by lifting up the brazen serpent; by telling men to look and live – to believe, repent and be converted. This is the only teaching which for eighteen centuries God has honoured with success and is honouring at the present day both at home and abroad.

Let the clever advocates of a broad and undogmatic theology – the preachers of the gospel of earnestness, sincerity and cold morality – let them, I say, show us at this day any English village, parish, city, or town which has been evangelised without dogma, by their principles. They cannot do it, and they never will. Christianity without distinct doctrine is a powerless thing. It may be beautiful to some minds, but it is childless and barren. There is no getting over facts. The good that is done in the earth may be comparatively small. Evil may abound, and ignorant impatience may murmur and cry out that Christianity has failed. But, depend on it, if we want to do good and shake the world, we must fight with the old apostolic weapons and stick to dogma. No dogma, no fruits! No positive Evangelical doctrine, no evangelisation!

Mark once more what I say. The men who have done most for the Church of England, and made the deepest mark on their day and generation, have always been men of most decided and distinct doctrinal views. It is the bold, decided, outspoken man who makes a deep impression, sets people thinking and “turns the world upside down”. It was dogma in the apostolic ages which emptied the heathen temples and shook Greece and Rome. It was dogma which awoke Christendom from its slumbers at the time of the Reformation, so that the Pope lost one third of his subjects. It was dogma which 100 years ago revived the Church of England in the days of Whitefield, Venn and Romaine and blew on our dying Christianity so that it became a burning flame. It is dogma at this moment which gives power to every successful mission, whether at home or abroad. It is doctrine – clear, ringing doctrine – which, like the ram's horns at Jericho, casts down the opposition of the

devil and sin. Let us cling to decided doctrinal views, whatever some may please to say in these times, and we shall do well for ourselves, well for others and well for Christ's cause in the world.

The Spirit's Help in Prayer¹

Thomas Boston

By whose assistance is acceptable prayer performed? By the help of the Holy Spirit (Gal 4:6, Rom 8:26). There are two sorts of prayers. (1.) A prayer wrought out by virtue of a gift of knowledge and speech. This is bestowed on many who are reprobates, and that gift may be useful to others and to the Church. But as it is merely of that sort, the prayer is not accepted, nor does Christ put it in before the Father for acceptance. (2.) There is a prayer wrought in men by virtue of the Holy Spirit: "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications" (Zec 12:10), and that is the only acceptable prayer to God; it is "effectual" (Jas 5:16). Right praying is praying in the Spirit. It is a gale blowing from heaven, the breathing of the Spirit in the saints, that carries them out in a prayer which comes as far as the throne.

Now the Spirit helps to pray: (1.) As an instructing Spirit, affording proper matter for prayer, causing us to know what we pray for (Rom 8:26); enlightening the mind in the knowledge of our needs, and those of others; bringing us to remember these things, suggesting them to us according to the Word, together with the promises of God, on which prayer is grounded. "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost . . . shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn 14:26). Hence saints are sometimes carried out in prayer for things which they had no view of before, and carried by some things they had.

(2.) As an enlivening Spirit (Rom 8:26), qualifying the soul with praying graces and affections, working in the praying person a sense of needs, faith, fervency, humility etc: "Thou wilt prepare their heart" (Ps 10:17). The man may go to his knees in a frame very unprepared for prayer, yet through the Spirit blowing, he is helped. It is for this reason the Spirit is said to make intercession for us, namely, in so far as He teaches and quickens, puts us in a praying frame, and draws out our petitions, as it were, which the Mediator presents.

This praying with the help of the Spirit belongs only to the saints (Jas 5:16); yet they do not have that help at all times, nor always in the same

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

measure; for sometimes the Spirit, being provoked, departs, and they are left in a withered condition. So there is great need to look for a breathing of the Spirit and to pant for it, when we are to go to duty, for if there is no gale, we will tug at the oars but heartlessly.

Let no man think that a readiness and volubility of expression in prayer is always the effect of the Spirit's assistance. For that may be the product of a gift, and of the common operations of the Spirit, removing the impediment to exercising it. It is evident that one may have few words and have groans instead of them, while the Spirit helps him to pray (Rom 8:26). Neither is every flood of affections in prayer the effect of the Spirit of prayer. There are those which puff up a man but make him no more holy or tender in his walk. But the influences of the Spirit are always humbling and sanctifying. Hence David says, "Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee" (1 Chr 29:14); and Paul says, "We . . . have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil 3:3).

Christ's Intercession¹

William Symington

The *authoritative* character of the Lord's intercession should not be overlooked. It is not enough that an advocate be a person of skill, integrity, compassion and zeal; he must also be authorised; he must bear a commission; he must be regularly licensed to practise at the bar. There must be a legal, as well as an intellectual and moral, qualification. In the case of Christ, this is undoubted. He does not of Himself assume the office of intercessor, nor does He derive His commission from His people, but from God. "I will cause Him to draw near, and He shall approach unto Me, saith the Lord."

His intercession is a part of His priestly function; and we know "Christ glorified not Himself to be made an high priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, today have I begotten Thee". His general suretyship implies such a special commission, for it supposes a right to see all the stipulations of the covenant fulfilled, all the debts of the covenant children discharged, and payment made of every purchased benefit. The very manner in which He conducts His intercession carries this much in it. He sues for the new covenant blessings more as a matter of right than of favour; He demands rather than

¹Symington (1795-1862) was a Reformed Presbyterian minister in Stranraer and Glasgow and latterly his Church's professor of theology. This article is an edited extract from Symington's *The Atonement and Intercession of Jesus Christ*.

petitions; He claims rather than begs. There is a tone about His request, "Father, I will", that bespeaks the authority under which He acts. They savour of the throne not less than of the altar. He is a Priest upon His throne.

Between the intercession of Christ and advocacy among men, there are, as we have seen, many points of resemblance, but in other respects, Christ's intercession is altogether unique. It possesses a character of utter exclusiveness; neither man nor angel may invade it; indeed it is so absolute as to exclude even the other persons of the Godhead. This peculiarity was set forth in the type. No man, not even the king himself, might intrude into the functions of the priesthood in general; nor was anyone but the high priest permitted to carry incense, on the day of expiation, into the holy of holies. There is no one else in heaven or in earth either qualified, or authorised, or required to make intercession. "No man", He says, "cometh unto the Father *but by Me*." "Through *Him* we have access by one Spirit unto the Father." "There is . . . *one* mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

The saints may indeed lawfully intercede for one another, but in a way very different from Christ. He intercedes in heaven, they on earth; He intercedes on the footing of His own merit, they are altogether denied to everything like personal worth as the ground on which they trust to be heard. Angels may not intrude on this high function of the Lord of angels. They are often said to praise, but never, that we are aware of, to pray. Nor can they have any personal disposable merit to form the foundation of vicarious intercessions. To represent either angels or men as joint intercessors with Christ, as is done by the Church of Rome, is to be guilty of a daring invasion of a high and exclusive prerogative of the one Mediator.

To the entrance into the holy place not made with hands, in the sense in which we are now speaking of it, the language of the prophet may be fitly accommodated: "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut. It is for the Prince." Yes, Messiah the Prince, the Prince of peace, claims the work of intercession as His special prerogative. It is indeed a prerogative which He claims as His to the exclusion, as we have said, even of the other persons of the Godhead. The Father, as the representative of Deity, who is the judicial sovereign with whom the intercession must be transacted, cannot be supposed to act in the capacity of intercessor.

The *prevailing nature*, or efficacy, of Christ's intercession is a feature on which we might speak at great length. It is an inviting theme, so full is it of comfort and encouragement. It often happens, among men, that the most urgent petitions, the most touching appeals on behalf of the oppressed, the wretched and the needy remain unheard. But not one request of the divine

Advocate can possibly share this fate. Him the Father hears always. This view admits of ample confirmation and illustration.

It was typified indeed under the law, by the success which attended the entrance of the high priest into the holy of holies on the day of atonement. Had he not been accepted, the fire would have been extinguished on the golden altar, the censer of incense would have dropped from his hand, and he would never have been permitted to return to bless the people. In Psalm 21, which, from the lofty terms in which it is written, must refer to a higher than the literal David, we read, "Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips". Nor did Christ ever intercede in vain while on earth. "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me," is His own testimony on one particular occasion, to which He subjoins the general affirmation, "I knew that Thou hearest Me always". The Apostle assures us that "in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears", He "was heard in that He feared".

One request only was He ever denied: "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me." But this was no part of His intercession; it was the natural shrinking of His holy human nature from the awful scene that was before Him. Instead of militating against our position, it gives it support, inasmuch as His drinking the bitter cup of mingled woe, which could not possibly pass from Him, laid a meritorious foundation for the success of His advocacy. If that one prayer had been heard on His own behalf, no other could have been heard on ours.

When the character of the Intercessor is considered, there can be no reason to dread that He will ever be unheard. The dignity of His Person must give weight and influence to His petitions; the relation in which He stands to God as a Son, must have its effect; nor are His personal and official qualifications to be forgotten here. That one who is infinitely wise, holy and compassionate – whose diligence, zeal and affection are boundless; who acts moreover under the high authority of a divine commission – should fail in His suit is utterly impossible. If He was only man, or even angel, failure was possible; but being the Son of God, Jehovah's fellow, He as a Prince must have power with God and shall prevail. The foundation on which His intercession rests affords further security. It proceeds on the footing of His atonement. He asks nothing for which He has not paid the full price of His precious blood. What He seeks is what He has merited, and He who has accepted His sacrifice cannot but grant "Him His heart's desire", cannot withhold from Him "the request of His lips".

Nor in the matter of His intercession, as before delineated, is there anything but what is good in itself, agreeable to the will of God, and fitted to

advance the glories of the Godhead. Those too for whom He pleads are all the chosen of God – the children, the friends of Him with whom He pleads – dear to the Father's heart as to His own, alike the objects of His affection and esteem. "The Father Himself loveth" them. Add to all these considerations the security which arises from the results of Christ's intercession that have already been secured. How many souls have been converted, how many sins pardoned, how many temptations repelled, how many acts of holy obedience performed and accepted, how many sons brought to full, eternal glory! In all of them, the efficacy of Christ's intercession has been proved by the best of all evidence – its actual effects. So abundant is the evidence of its prevalence that the timid can have no reason for distrust, the unbeliever no excuse for neglect.

All that remains is to observe the *constancy* of Christ's intercession. He is continually employed in this work. His redemption was the work of a comparatively short period, but His intercession never ceases. Human benevolence may become sluggish, may be interrupted for a time, or may finally die away altogether. But not so the benevolence which prompts the petitions of this Advocate. He can never become sluggish from ignorance of His people's needs, for He is omniscient; nor from lack of affection, for His love is abiding; nor from lack of merit, for His sacrifice is of unfailing virtue; nor from fatigue, for He is the almighty and immutable God. Nothing can ever suspend His intercession. A moment's intermission would prove fatal to the eternal interests of all the elect.

But while attending to the case of one, He has no need to suspend His attention to that of another. Innumerable as are His applicants, He attends to the needs of each as if there were no other that needed His care. Multiplicity cannot bewilder, variety cannot divide, importance cannot oppress His thoughts. To Him the care of millions is no burden. Ten thousand claims meet with the same attention as if there were but one. His understanding, His love, His merit, His power are all infinite; and we must beware of measuring Him by the low standard of our limited capacities.

Nor can His intercession ever come to an end. There will always be need for it. So long as His people sin, He will plead for pardon; so long as they are tempted, He will procure for them strength to resist; so long as they continue to perform services, He will continue to accept them; so long as they are in the wilderness, He will procure them guidance and safety; so long as the blessings of heaven are enjoyed, He will plead His merits as the ground on which they are bestowed. Through eternity He will continue to plead on behalf of His people. Never shall they cease to be the objects of His care; never shall their names be erased from His breast; never shall their cause be

taken from His lips; never shall the censer drop from His hand; nor shall His blessed merits ever cease to rise up in a cloud of fragrant incense before the Lord. "He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Book Reviews¹

John G Paton, Missionary to the Cannibals of the South Seas, by Paul Schlehlein, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 206 pages, £6.00.

John G Paton was the well-known missionary from Dumfries-shire who, in 1858, left Scotland for the Pacific islands then known as the New Hebrides, now Vanuatu. He had been brought up in a godly home, one of a family of eleven, and he recalled: "Never one of the eleven, boy or girl, man or woman, has been heard, or ever will be heard, saying that Sabbath was dull and wearisome for us".

Barely six months after landing on the island of Tanna, his wife Mary Ann died, to be followed a mere three weeks later by their baby son. After four very difficult years, the islanders attempted to burn down the church building and his house, with Paton and other missionaries inside, but the house was spared following a change in the wind direction which blew the flames away from the building. This was followed by torrential rain which made any further attempt to burn down the house futile. The local people acknowledged, "This is Jehovah's rain. Truly their God is fighting for them."

Soon afterwards Paton left Tanna, and the author comments, "It would be years before the seeds planted on that lonely island would sprout". He then sailed to Australia, which he criss-crossed, going from meeting to meeting, seeking to arouse interest in mission work in the New Hebrides – in particular, raising money to build a steamship which would make communication with the outside world much easier. He also visited Britain and addressed a series of meetings there also.

Paton's return to the New Hebrides brought him to another island, Aniwa, where he was to spend 15 years, described as "the most fruitful years of his life". While in Scotland he had married Margaret Whitecross, but life in Aniwa, though less dangerous, was by no means free from difficulty for them. Much of Paton's later life was occupied in raising awareness of the mission cause, in Australia and elsewhere.

The first part of this book gives a summary of Paton's life. Two of the main sources used are John G Paton's *Autobiography* and Margaret Paton's

¹The books reviewed here, and the two Paton books referred to also, are available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Letters and Sketches: The New Hebrides (reprinted as *Letters from the South Seas*). The second part gives lessons from Paton's life, under such headings as: "Paton's Godly Home", "Paton's Undaunted Courage" and "Paton's Relentless Evangelism". Probably the main use of this book is to introduce readers to its subject, but in it one misses the wonderful descriptive accounts of faith and courage which appear again and again in the *Autobiography* and make it so appealing. Anyone who really wishes to get a fascinating picture of missionary life in the New Hebrides, and the success of the gospel there, should read Paton's own book and that of his wife.

The Woman Who Helped a Reformer, Katharina Luther,
The Man Who Preached Outside, George Whitefield,
The Woman Who Loved to Give Books, Susannah Spurgeon,
The Doctor Who Became a Preacher, Martyn Lloyd-Jones,
 all by Rebecca VanDoodewaard, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, board books, 14 pages, £6.00 each (£21.50 for the set).

This is a new series of sturdy books that are intended to be read to very young children; they will stand up to a fair amount of rough usage from little ones. In an attractive way they convey a small amount of information to children about these four historical figures. Every double-page spread depicts what is being said at that stage in the story being told. The paintings are somewhat exaggerated but no doubt intended to catch the child's attention. There are plenty board books of a secular nature available for very young children, but not many suitable religious ones. These books should occupy the attention of young ones for some time, while conveying a small but appropriate amount of teaching.

The Path of Holiness¹

W K Tweedie

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

I can draw near by the blood of calves and of goats, exclaimed the Jew, who could not penetrate further than the letter of his religion. I can draw near with a mutilated body, exclaims a Hindu in a frantic attempt to appease his god. I can approach in the strength of an incantation, or by means of my fetish, rejoins a heathen. My penance, my fasting, my self-inflicted anguish, will open the way for me, claims a Romanist. My sound creed will throw open a path for me into the presence of God, is the whisper of the formalist,

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

or the man who thinks there can be religion without conversion, or salvation without a new heart. But He who has the key of David, who opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens, comes among these deluded ones and says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

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

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

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

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

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

A Plea for Reviving¹

A Sermon Outline by *John Kennedy*

Habakkuk 3:2. *O Lord, revive Thy work . . .*

Let us consider: (1.) The Lord's work, (2.) Why it needs revival, (3.) How revival comes, and (4.) This is asked in the midst of the years.

The Lord's work.

The whole work of providence, inclusive of what He does and what He permits to be done by others, may be called the Lord's work, but this is not what is meant here.

The work done by His servants is called the Lord's work. But this is not what is meant here, *it is a work of grace.*

This includes the quickening of the dead and the growth of the living.

This work is His, and can be done by no other.

¹Preached in Dingwall on 22 October 1882. It has been edited.

This is the work to which all else is subordinate.

In it God is glorified, and without which all church work is vain.

Why it needs revival.

Because it was in a state of decay.

The lack of conviction and conversion by the Holy Spirit.

The cause is provocation, provoking the Lord to withdraw His power.

The symptoms are increasing blindness among the unconverted.

The formality, unwatchfulness and conformity to the world by believers.

Lack of faithfulness in this generation of workers.

How revival comes.

Through an outpouring of the Spirit of grace and supplication.

The decay began in backsliding; the cure must begin in repentance.

Grounds of controversy removed between Him and the remnant.

In answer to their cry, He manifests His power and glory (Ezk 36:37).

This is asked in the midst of the years.

The years of decay had begun.

They were in the midst of them.

Let them not go on to the latter end.

There, in the midst, He came.

Protestant View

An Explosive Statement

The opposition to the Pope coming from senior conservative figures in the Roman Catholic Church is intensifying. An explosive statement released by Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, papal nuncio in Washington from 2011 to 2016, accuses the pontiff of covering up for the disgraced Archbishop Theodore McCarrick, who resigned in July after being accused of the immoral abuse of seminarians and minors. It is now alleged that the Pope knew, at least from 2013, that McCarrick was a serial abuser and not only refused to take action against him, but actually then employed him as an adviser. The letter goes as far as to call for the Pope's resignation along with others in the Roman hierarchy.

Vigano maintains that sodomite influence in the Vatican served to protect McCarrick for years. "The homosexual networks present in the Church must be eradicated", Vigano writes. They "act under the concealment of secrecy and lie with the power of octopus tentacles, and strangle innocent victims and priestly vocations, and are strangling the entire Church".

There is no doubt more to emerge about this business, but the allegations are of the most serious nature and the potential for damage to the Vatican is

enormous. Whoever is telling the truth in this matter, or otherwise, the Lord has His own purposes in permitting the Roman Catholic Church to expose its own hideous internal machinations. In all this we are seeing a display of the true evil nature of Romanism, the great apostasy predicted by the Apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2. These scandalous evils not only cause a legacy of dreadful personal anguish for those who have been abused, but they harden the hearts of the perpetrators in their wickedness and hasten their destruction. The failure to deal with such incidents, and the refusal to take responsibility for them on the part of both perpetrators and their ecclesiastical superiors, has obviously been rife in the Church of Rome over the generations. However distasteful it is to relate these awful matters, it would be good if the demise of papal Rome was being hastened by all these disclosures and dissensions. "If an house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand" (Mk 3:25). *AWM*

Notes and Comments

Legalisation of Immorality in India

According to a BBC report, the Indian Supreme Court has ruled that sodomy is no longer to be a criminal offence in India. This overturns a previous ruling of 2013 and a law dating from 1861. The five judges of the court were unanimous, and in their judgement they declared that the criminalising of sodomy had been "irrational, arbitrary and manifestly unconstitutional". The population of India is 1.3 billion, out of about 7.4 billion people in the world. The BBC report twice mentioned the "colonial-era" dating of the 1861 law, presumably in an attempt to suggest repression in the mind of the viewer.

The words of the Indian judges obviously reflect on all former judges and legislators in India, as being less rational and constitutionally-aware than themselves. Such pride is a characteristic of the homosexual movement and its supporters: "this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters" (Ezk 16:49). The words of the judges also reflect on God, who forbade sodomy in both the Old and the New Testaments, and before whose Son Jesus Christ the judges themselves must appear to give an account of "every idle word" that they have spoken (Mt 12:36). The BBC's association of the 1861 law with the "colonial-era" overlooks the fact that India has been an independent country for 71 years, since 1947, and also that sodomy was probably generally punished there for millennia before 1861. In any case, it is no dishonour whatever to the British administration of 1861 to have had laws against sodomy.

The political arrangements – which seem to be widespread – whereby "supreme courts" effectively make legislative decisions, instead of simply

administering laws passed by the parliament, seem to be unwise. Parliaments generally have better checks and balances than “supreme courts”, and the members of parliament are ordinarily elected by the people and answerable to them, whereas the judges are answerable only to their political masters or to no one. It is a matter of concern in Britain that, increasingly, vague laws are passed relating to human rights, and the interpretation of these laws in practical situations is then left to judges. It does not seem appropriate that a decision as basic as whether sodomy is criminal should by-pass the Indian Parliament and be decided by a handful of unelected judges. *DWBS*

Further Transgender Confusion

A few months ago we commented on the Rowe family, from the Isle of Wight, and the distress caused after one of their six-year-old son’s male classmates identified as “transgender”. The church school that the pupils attended, far from supporting the family, accused them of “transphobic behaviour”, even threatening that the Rowe’s son could be disciplined if he would not recognise this boy as a “girl”. Eventually the family felt that they had no alternative but to withdraw their child from the school.

Such intolerance is not, however, confined to our schools. Recent news revealed that a doctor has been sacked from his Government job for conscientiously upholding the scriptural view that gender is established at birth. The 55-year-old had worked in the NHS for over 26 years – most of that time on accident and emergency wards – but is now considered “unfit to work” after he refused to identify patients by their “preferred gender”.

Last May this doctor, from Dudley in the Midlands, took up training as a disability assessor for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The job consisted of compiling health reports on people claiming benefits. During the training period his instructor stated that these reports must refer to the client by the “gender that person self-identifies as”. The doctor answered that he “had a problem with this” and added, “I believe that gender is defined by biology and genetics and that . . . the Bible teaches us that God made humans male or female”.

The tutor passed on these comments, and subsequently a note was sent out stating that the “DWP was adamant that any reporting on clients should refer to people in their chosen sex or it could be considered harassment as defined by the 2010 Equality Act”. A DWP spokeswoman confirmed that this particular trainee “made it clear during his training that he would refuse to use pronouns which did not match his own view of a person’s biological gender”. She added, “We expect all assessors to handle assessments sensitively and adhere to the Equality Act 2010”.

The doctor responded that “in good conscience” he could not agree to those

requirements, and so his contract was terminated. He warns, “Firstly, we are not allowed to say what we believe. Secondly, as my case shows, we are not allowed to think what we believe. Finally, we are not allowed to defend what we believe. As a Christian, I believe gender is determined biologically and genetically.” He told *The Daily Mail* newspaper: “I knew it could be the end of my work as a doctor, but I could not live with myself if I didn’t speak up. It would be dishonest – and I didn’t want to live a lie.” He seriously believes that he may never obtain another government or National Health Service post.

The doctor concludes, “I believe with all my heart that God made us male and female and that I should be allowed to believe this. I care deeply about transgender people. But we must be able to say what we think, and defend what we believe in a non-combative way. Otherwise we will turn into a dictatorial state in which we are all enslaved.” He “fears other professional people of faith could lose their jobs simply for holding opinions about gender that are centuries old,” and contends, “I don’t think I should be compelled to use a specific pronoun. I am not setting out to upset anyone. But if upsetting someone can lead to doctors being sacked then, as a society, we have to examine where we are going.”

This case, amongst many others, shows how far we have departed from Scripture. “Lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?” (Jer 8:9). *KHM*

Church Information

Theological Conference

This year’s Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in the Free Presbyterian Church, Inverness, on Tuesday, October 30, and Wednesday, October 31. Rev D A Ross is to act as chairman. It is expected that the following papers will be read, all of them in public:

Man’s Eternal State

Rev J R Tallach

Tuesday 2.30 pm

Robert Findlater and Revival at Lochtayside

Rev K D Macleod

Tuesday 7.00 pm

Sanctification

Rev Roderick Macleod

Wednesday 10.00 am

The Restoration of the Jews

Rev J L Goldby

Wednesday 2.30 pm

The Temple

Rev J B Jardine

Wednesday 7.00 pm

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

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.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 6 pm; **Scourie:** Sabbath 11:30 am, Tuesday 7 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr A Ross; tel 01971 502099.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present. Manse.
- 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.
- Raasa:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 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 Brierclyffe Road, Burnley, BB10 2DQ; tel: 01282 835800.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.15 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623.

Northern Ireland

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

Canada

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

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

USA

Santa Fe, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 5 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith; tel: 409 927 1564.

Australia

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

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel. (02) 9627 3408; e-mail: sydneyfpchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

Auckland: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J D Smith, 9 Pedlar Place, Conifer Grove, Auckland; tel: 09 282 4195.

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev C Hembd, 14 Thomson St, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140.

Tauranga: Girl Guide Hall, 17th Avenue, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact: Rev J D Smith; tel: 09 282 4195.

Wellington (Carterton): 124 High Street North, Carterton. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; 3rd Wednesday of the month (not secondary school holidays) 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Hank Optland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743; tel: 02 7432 5625.

Singapore

Singapore: Sabbath: 9.30am and 5.30 pm; Beacon International College, 70 Martaban Road, Singapore 328667 (entrance is opposite 37/39 Mandalay Road); Wednesday: 7.45 pm, Lion Building B, #02-11, 12 Arumugam Road, Singapore 409958. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, 4 Chuan Place, Singapore 554822; tel: (65) 6383 4466, fax: 6383 4477, e-mail: byong1@singnet.com.sg.

Ukraine

Odessa: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 6 pm. Rev D Levytyskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytyskyi@gmail.com; or contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua.

Zimbabwe

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

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

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

New Canaan: Church.

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

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