

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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*“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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## The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

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

**Clerk of Synod:** Rev K M Watkins BA, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271; e-mail: kmwatkins@fpchurch.org.uk.

**Assistant Clerk:** Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.

**General Treasurer:** Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283, fax 0141 332 4271, e-mail: wc.fpchurch@btconnect.com.

**Law Agents:** Brodies LLP, 15 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh, EH3 8AH; tel: 0131 228 3777.

### Clarks to Presbyteries:

**Northern:** Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.

**Southern:** Rev R MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.

**Western:** Rev D A Ross, F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.

**Outer Isles:** Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.

**Asia Pacific:** Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel: 02 9627 3408.

**Zimbabwe:** Rev S Khumalo, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo; tel: 00263 9407131.

**Zimbabwe Mission Office:** 9 Robertson Street, Parkview, Bulawayo; tel: 002639 62636, fax: 002639 61902, e-mail: fpchurchheadoffice@gmail.com.

### Residential Care Homes:

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

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

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

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

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## Communions

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

**February: Second Sabbath:** Dingwall; **Third:** Stornoway; Carterton; **Fourth:** Zenka.

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

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

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

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

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

**August: First Sabbath:** Dingwall; **Second:** New Canaan, Somakantana; **Third:** Laide; **Fourth:** Farr, Stornoway, 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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## **Manoah's Wife – Her Firm Trust in God**

It was a time when Israel had, to a very large extent, departed from the Lord. And He, in judgement, had sent the Philistines to conquer and rule over them – for the long period of 40 years.

Among those who would have felt the oppression of the Philistines – and felt it especially because of the sin which gave rise to God's judgement – were Manoah, who belonged to the tribe of Dan, and his wife. They had no children, but the Angel of the Lord came to her one day and promised that she would yet have a son, one who would “begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines” (Jdg 13:5).

Manoah was anxious that “the man of God” would return and “teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born”. And surely it was a proper desire that he expressed; likewise it is proper – indeed essential – for parents, including prospective parents, in every generation to pray that the Lord would teach them how to bring up their children, and that He would bless the whole family as they seek to follow out the principles of Scripture in this responsible area of life. Manoah's request was granted; the Angel of the Lord did re-appear and gave further instructions about bringing up the child, whom they named Samson.

In kindness to “the man of God”, Manoah offered to provide him with a meal. This was declined, but Manoah was told that he might offer the food as a sacrifice to the Lord. Manoah did so, and the Angel caused fire to go up from the sacrifice towards heaven, which, as Matthew Henry expresses it, “signified God's acceptance of the offering”. It was then that Manoah “knew that he was an Angel of the Lord”.

Then he went further and described the Angel as “God”. But he did so with the thought, as expressed to his wife: “We shall surely die, because we have seen God”. Matthew Henry describes it as an “opinion generally received among the ancient Jews that it was present death to see God or an angel”. Yet others had seen the Angel and had been preserved from death. For instance, though after Gideon had seen the Angel of the Lord, he at first said, “Alas, O Lord God, for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face

to face!” the Lord graciously assured him: “Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die” (Jdg 6:22,23). And Gideon did not die. Again when Jacob had wrestled with the Angel at Peniel – which was another theophany, an appearance of the Son of God in human form before His final incarnation – he was spared for many more years. He said, “I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved” (Gen 32:30).

Manoah may have been despondent about the implications of seeing God, but his wife showed a much clearer understanding of the Lord’s dealings with them. She replied, “If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would He have showed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these”.

First, she recognised that God had promised her that she would have a son; if that son was to be born, she must be spared for some time yet. She knew that she could trust God’s promises. And if she was to be spared, surely her husband would also be; his request for further instruction had been answered. Similarly all God’s promises to His people today are absolutely sure; He will never go back on any of them.

So Balaam was directed to say, “God is not a man, that He should lie . . . hath He said, and shall He not do it?” (Num 23:19). He is to be trusted as One who will always do what He has promised. He promised Israel on the verge of Jordan, as they were about to enter the land: “The Lord thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee” (Deut 31:6). The promise was fulfilled; the Lord did not forsake them. In the same words, God assures His people today that He will remain with them always. He has never forsaken His people in any generation, and His people today are to trust in Him, with the same confidence, that He will bring them safely into the heavenly Canaan.

Again, Manoah’s wife could be sure that their sacrifice had been accepted. It was true that they were both sinners and, as such, they could not stand in the presence of God. That was what exercised David’s mind in a later age: “If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?” But his mind was led on immediately to consider the mercy of God: “But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared” (Ps 130:3,4). There is mercy in the heart of God towards sinners, although they deserve to have their iniquities marked against them and accordingly to be condemned. There is forgiveness, on the basis of a sacrifice.

Granted that Manoah’s sacrifice could not itself take away sin, it pointed to the sacrifice that the Son of God was to offer in the fullness of time, when He would take our nature so that He might die in the place of sinners.

Manoah's wife, who had only the dimmer light of Old Testament revelation, was looking on towards the coming of the promised Messiah, through whom there was full forgiveness for those who, even then, would receive the testimony of God's revelation concerning Him. And we, who have the brighter and clearer light of the New Testament age, are to trust in Christ as the One who *has* come and whom God has "exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give . . . forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31) – not only to make salvation possible, but also to give it freely, and to give every part of that perfect salvation, including forgiveness.

Just as God accepted Manoah's sacrifice, so He accepted the sacrifice which Christ offered, and He showed His acceptance of it by raising Christ from the dead. We should therefore be convinced that all are safe who believe in Christ as the Saviour of sinners; such believers cannot ever be condemned. Though in themselves they cannot be accepted before God, yet as united to Christ, having all the benefits of Christ's redemption made over to them, they are safe; they will never be cast out to a lost eternity but will be received into the full blessedness of heaven when they die. Just as God has accepted Christ's sacrifice, so surely are the saving benefits it secures made over to all who believe, however weak their faith.

We are all called to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may be saved. Those who have been saved are called: "Trust ye in the Lord *for ever*: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength" (Is 26:4); they are to go on, for as long as they are spared in this world, trusting in the Lord in the light of the saving provision He has revealed. He is able to put into effect everything He has promised. His power is unchanging; it can never weaken. Not even the devil himself can threaten the supreme power of the great King who rules over everything from His throne in heaven.

Matthew Henry thus applies the words of Manoah's wife: "Let those good Christians who have had communion with God in the Word and prayer . . . take encouragement thence in a cloudy and dark day: God would not have done what He has done for my soul if He had designed to forsake me and leave me to perish at last, for His work is perfect; nor will He mock His people with His favours."

We are pointed in Judges 13 to the example shown by Manoah's wife: even when her husband was overwhelmed by the coming of the Angel, she continued to trust in the faithfulness of God to His revelation to them. Henry further tells God's people to reason thus: "If God had designed me to perish under His wrath, He would not have given me such distinguishing tokens of His favour". So Isaiah: "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song" (Is 12:2).

# Spiritual Worship<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by Archibald Alexander

Philippians 3:3. *We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit.*

Everything around us shows that there is a God, and that He is wise, powerful and good. Our own minds lead us to believe that God approves of good conduct, and will punish evil doers. From the Scriptures, we learn that God is Almighty and can do whatever He pleases, that He knows all things and is perfectly acquainted with our most secret actions and the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts, that He is a witness of every word we speak and of everything we do, and that we cannot escape from his presence.

How beautifully this is expressed in Psalm 139: “O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. . . . Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. . . . If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day. The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.”

The duty of worshipping God – praising Him for His glorious perfections and wonderful works; thanking Him for the blessings, both temporal and spiritual, that He gives us; confessing before Him our dependence and sinfulness; and praying to Him in humble confidence for such things as we need – is so evident to every serious mind that it is unnecessary to spend time proving it. The proper method of performing this duty and the benefits to be expected from it will be the subjects of this sermon.

1. *God should be worshipped with a knowledge of His true character.* To worship our Creator, without knowing what kind of being He is, is to worship an “unknown God”. This is the great fault of heathen religion. They may take great pains in their worship, but they do not know the true character of God; therefore they ascribe the passions and frailties of men to the imaginary beings they worship. They foolishly bow down to wood and stones and pay homage to gods of gold and silver which they have made. No service can be acceptable to God which is not founded on a right knowledge of His character. To offer Him worship, imagining Him to be the opposite of what He is, is to offer an insult to Him. Hence the great importance of true religious knowledge, and you know where this may be obtained.

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Alexander’s *Practical Sermons*.

The works of God in creation all proclaim His power, wisdom and goodness. If we look at our bodies and consider how wisely they are formed, with everything adapted to a good purpose, we may again adopt the words of Psalm 139: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made". If we do not then learn to know God, it is because we do not like to retain Him in our knowledge, and so are without excuse. This, Paul assures us, was the real origin of idolatry, with all its vile abominations. Many grow up to manhood without ever reflecting seriously on God's works, or raising admiring thoughts to the great Creator of the universe. As men do not desire the knowledge of God or make use of their opportunities of knowing Him, it is just in Him to leave them to the darkness they have chosen, and to punish them for the enormous sins they are constantly committing.

But as man is a fallen creature, the knowledge which reason can furnish is not sufficient. It does not reveal the mercy of God to sinners. It does not show how man can be reconciled to a holy God – how sin can be pardoned, or how the corrupt nature of man can be purified and restored to the image of God which has been lost. Therefore God in great mercy has made a further revelation of His character in His Word. In the time of Moses, God's communications were committed to writing and, from time to time, inspired men added other books to those of Moses, until the canon of the Old Testament was finished by Malachi.

Then, after four or five hundred years, Christ, the promised Deliverer, came and taught the way of salvation much more clearly. Having died for sin and risen again, He commanded His apostles to instruct the world. These holy men were inspired to write in the books of the New Testament all that was necessary for the instruction of the Church for all time to come. From these two parts of the Bible, all necessary information may be obtained. So plain are the lessons of instruction given here that "the wayfaring men, though fools," need not err. Those with access to the Bible can therefore have no excuse for not knowing God. Let them come to it with a humble, teachable disposition, and they will not go away disappointed. Those of the weakest understanding may here become wise unto salvation. And if they learn the true character of God, as given by the unerring pen of inspiration, they will be led to worship Him with knowledge and will be delighted to ascribe glory and honour, praise and blessing to this majestic Being.

2. *God should be worshipped with reverence, or godly fear.* It is natural to feel overawed in the presence of one greatly our superior. How proper this is when we draw nigh to the great God in worship! There is a slavish dread which leads men to flee from God, and there is a superstitious fear which arises from erroneous views of His character; but godly fear is so necessary

to true worship that worship is often expressed by fear in Scripture. The wicked are described as having no fear of God before their eyes; and the common character of the righteous is, "they that fear God". Several inspired writers declare that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Nature itself dictates that God should be worshipped with reverence. All nations, when they worship, put themselves in an attitude of reverence. They bow their heads, fall on their knees, or prostrate themselves on the ground. Indeed, the literal meaning of *worship* is to bow down, or to lie prostrate.

Everywhere in Scripture, worship is coupled with fear or reverence; so there is no true worship where this is lacking. God is a jealous God and will not be mocked with merely the external forms of worship; much less will He accept service that is prompted by pride and levity. "God is greatly to be feared in the assemblies of His saints, and to be had in reverence of all that are about Him." "Him shall ye fear, and Him shall ye worship." Reverence is represented as most remarkable in the worship in heaven, where the most exalted among creatures veil their faces and fall prostrate before the throne of the Almighty. The wise preacher has left us this precept: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil".

It seems then that a lack of serious consideration is the common evil to which men are liable when attending the worship of God. It is shocking to see the thoughtless levity with which many enter the place of worship, and the careless indifference of most of them. This is a great evil, but it is not laid to heart. Many feel they perform a meritorious act when they spend an hour in the house of God, whereas God, who searches the heart, may know that they did not have one solemn impression of His presence during the service. Reverence may thus be considered a criterion to distinguish true religion from the spurious. False religion may have as much fervour as true, but one may notice that the fear of God is not felt in the raptures of the fanatic. Such people often show a disgusting familiarity with their Maker, using a freedom with Him which would not be allowed towards an equal. Where religious feeling runs to excess, reverence for the presence of God's majesty is always defective. A consciousness of this would preserve the mind from indulging human passions as sometimes happens in public worship.

3. *Humility is another essential ingredient in a truly devotional spirit.* Whatever service lacks this, and however exactly conformed to God's rule it is in other respects, it will appear abominable in the sight of God, instead of being a sweet savour. For we know from the Word of God that nothing is more odious in His sight than pride; and of all pride, religious pride is the most hateful. The parable of the Pharisee and the publican was intended to



teach this very point. The Pharisee represents the proud worshipper who boasts of his own performances and of his superiority to other men; the publican represents the humble penitent, who brings the sacrifice of a broken spirit. We are taught emphatically that “a broken and a contrite heart [God] will not despise”. We do not need here to make any distinction between the humble spirit and the penitent disposition. They are produced by the very same views; indeed humility is an essential part of true repentance.

This is the spirit that is more pleasing to God than any other He sees in the human heart; and this is found in no heart but that which is renewed. “The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” “Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me? For all these things hath Mine hand made, and all these things have been, saith the Lord; but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word.” And again, “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” says the Saviour, and, “Blessed are they that mourn”. The Psalms express every variety in the feelings of true worshippers; thus we find humility strongly expressed in a large portion of them.

That worshipper who approaches the throne of God, clothed with the modest robe of genuine humility, always meets with acceptance. Let us then worship the Almighty with a humble and contrite spirit, and let us seek such a frame of mind more earnestly than ecstatic delight or overflowing joys. Set it down as undoubted truth that, as your views of the character of God are exalted and spiritual, you will in the same proportion sink down in deep abasement, from a view of your own vileness and unworthiness. And when you rise to join the worshippers in the courts above, this same sentiment of profound humility will accompany you and you will feel that you are, in the presence of the Most High, less than nothing and vanity. You will also, with unceasing and unaffected humility, acknowledge your unworthiness of the dignity to which you shall be advanced, and the happiness which you will enjoy there for ever. But the deeper your feelings of self-abasement, the more ardent and constant will be your gratitude to Him that loved you and washed you in His own blood, and made you kings and priests unto God.

4. “*Without faith, it is impossible to please [God];* for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” Indeed, without faith all worship must be a mere empty form and, however decent and orthodox this form may be in itself, it is no better than

the worship of idols in the sight of God. To exercise faith when praying is expressly required in many places of Scripture. The Saviour attributes a mighty efficacy to prayer offered up in faith. We must rely implicitly on the promises of God, believing assuredly that He will perform what He has said.

The question is often asked, Ought we to believe, in every case, that we shall receive what we ask? Those who had the gift of miracles possessed a faith of miracles, and also most of those for whom the miracle was wrought. This was a full persuasion that, by the power of God, the miracle would take place. But since miracles have ceased in the Church, there is no room for faith of this kind. The confidence, or faith, which should now accompany prayer is a full belief that whatever we ask, in accordance with the will of God, will be granted. God's promises should be our guide in offering up our petitions. But if we pray for blessings not specifically promised, we have no certain ground of confidence that the blessing shall be given, for we do not know that it is agreeable to God's will. But when we pray in humble submission to the will of God, believing that He will grant whatever is best, we may rest assured that our prayers will be answered and that we shall receive the thing asked, or something as good or better.

The principal exercise of faith in worship has respect to Jesus Christ, the divine Mediator. As guilty sinners, we cannot approach a just and holy God. We must draw near in the name of Him whom God has appointed to be the great High Priest. As, under the Old Testament, no one could offer a sacrifice but by a priest, so all our sacrifices must be offered through Christ, the great High Priest. It is only through Him that any of our services can be acceptable. He must offer up our imperfect prayers and praises, giving them efficacy through His own precious merits. In our worship then we should look constantly to the Lord Jesus Christ as our Mediator, Advocate and Intercessor and expect to be accepted only for His name's sake.

It will be found profitable to have in our minds such promises of God as it may be proper to rely on in our petitions, and which we may plead before the throne of grace. We cannot stand on more favourable ground, when we appear before God, than when we rest on His word. We should fill our mouths with arguments derived from His faithful promises, and then we shall be sure to prevail. "He cannot deny Himself." He will never disappoint the hopes which rest upon His word.

But we should see that our faith is scriptural in its nature, as well as in its object. It must not only be a speculative assent, cold and ineffectual – but a spiritual, cordial persuasion of the truth as it is in Jesus. A true faith may be always known by this: it works by love and purifies the heart.

*5. God should be worshipped with fixed attention of mind and fervency of*

*spirit.* Spiritual worship is especially interrupted by the wandering of our thoughts. It is to be feared that most worshippers do not have their thoughts steadily directed to the great object of all true worship. They lay no restraint on their thoughts, ever prone to wander, and when they stray, they are not watchful and resolute to bring them back, and place them on their proper object. Even pious people are much to blame for negligence in this respect. They are indeed troubled when they reflect seriously on the matter; but they are apt to forget the sinfulness of professing to worship God while the heart is far from Him. This is one of the accusations God brings against His ancient people. “This people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour Me, but have removed their heart far from Me.”

Fervency of spirit is properly joined with fixedness of attention, for they go together and influence each other. If the affections are lively they will carry the train of thought with them, and if the attention is fixed on the object of worship, fervency of spirit will be kindled. The offering of the affections of the heart is the soul of devotion. Such offerings alone will God accept. All external services without this, however solemn and decent, are abominable in His sight. The crying defect of our worship is the lack of heart; it is mere formalism or hypocrisy. We should strive then to worship God in spirit, and this we can only do by the aid of the Holy Spirit. We should be much concerned to have that blessed Monitor abiding with us at all times. Keep your hearts with all diligence when you seek to worship God, in public or in private. Let your attention be fixed and your spirit fervent.

6. *God must be worshipped according to the Scriptures*, only by such ceremonies as He has appointed, and not by forms and institutions of man’s devising. As to the external circumstances of worship – time and place, for instance – they should be regulated by Paul’s comprehensive rule: “Let all things be done decently and in order”. But as it relates to the worship itself, nothing should be introduced but what is authorised by the Scriptures: including prayer, singing the praise of God, reading the Bible and administering the sacraments. “In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Appointing ceremonies belongs exclusively to the Head of the Church. If men may decree one ceremony, they may decree a thousand; and by adopting this principle, the Christian Church was burdened with ceremonies devised by man until her ritual was more burdensome than the ceremonial law of the Jews. The ceremonies introduced often savoured of paganism; they were adopted to conciliate pagans and reconcile them to the Church. But God is jealous of His authority, and His challenge to all these is: “Who hath required this at your hand?”

It is very important for the spirituality of our worship that its simplicity

and purity is preserved. Striking ceremonies may attract attention for a while, but then people's minds will be occupied with externals, and they will trust in these human rites. Faith and spirituality in the worship of God will be banished. There is a constant tendency in human nature to lay great stress on externals. After a while, human actions and signs acquire, in the view of men, a sacredness which only belongs to what God has appointed; and these too may be so observed that the external rite is substituted for the spiritual grace which it was merely intended to represent.

7. *God should be worshipped constantly.* Men are not required to spend all their time in the worship of God, because they have other duties which the law of God requires. But God should be worshipped daily, morning and evening; and the Lord's day should entirely be devoted to His service as far as possible. In the temple, the daily sacrifices took place every evening and morning, by God's appointment, and were accompanied by prayer and praise. On the Sabbath the services were doubled, as God directed this day to be sanctified by a rest from all worldly pursuits. We cannot go to an excess in the worship of God, unless we make this duty exclude others which ought not to be neglected. Some people may be so situated that they can devote their whole time to prayer and other devotional exercises, as did the aged Anna, who spent all her time in fasting and prayer at the temple. And some aged widows now might pursue a similar course.

But all who have families and worldly occupations must attend not merely to one duty, but to them all. A woman in England took up the opinion that her whole time ought to be spent in prayer, and she entirely neglected her family and other duties at home. A godly minister visited the house and saw everything lying in filth and confusion. He raised his voice and asked authoritatively, "Is there no fear of God in this house, that the care of the family is so neglected?" This cutting reproof had the effect of reclaiming the misguided woman from her error. But, in our day, there is little need to warn people against spending too much time in their devotions, especially in private. There is more need to excite them to greater diligence in this noblest employment in which a creature can be engaged. We find that the saints, in Scripture, were frequent in their prayers. David says in one place, "Seven times a day do I praise Thee because of Thy righteous judgments"; and, "Evening and morning and at noon will I pray".

Our prayers and praises should not only be frequent, but constant. It is asked, "Will [the hypocrite] always call upon God?" Perseverance in prayer is often taught by the Lord and His apostles. Success is especially ascribed to earnest continuance in prayer – in the case of the oppressed widow, and the neighbour seeking bread to set before his friend. Paul's exhortations are

frequent and urgent on this point: “Pray without ceasing”; “continuing instant in prayer”; “Pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands”.

**Application.** 1. Under all dispensations and in all worlds, *the highest duty of all rational creatures is to worship God*; and all who live in the neglect of divine worship are in a state of rebellion against the King of heaven. They constantly disobey one of the fundamental laws of His kingdom and are practical atheists, for they are “without God in the world”. They are more inexcusable than the atheist; he does not worship God because he does not believe in His existence; yet these believe and refuse to worship. They are more irreligious than the heathen, for all these worship some sort of gods.

2. *How unreasonable it is for a creature to refuse to worship his Creator*, from whom he derives his being! What base ingratitude it is to receive the blessings of providence and yet never acknowledge Him from which they come! How preposterous is the hope of such people that they shall go to heaven when they die – for they have no taste for the activities of heaven! There God is worshipped without ceasing by all the inhabitants, but what would they do in such society who have always hated prayer and devotion? Their presence would disturb the harmony of the heavenly songs. If by accident they could enter that holy place, it would immediately be necessary to cast them out. And they would wish to depart, for the songs of saints and angels could bring no pleasure to those whose hearts are alienated from God.

3. If any wish to know *how they may glorify God most effectively and most in accordance with His will*, it is by sincerely engaging in His worship. Then the noblest exercises of the soul are elicited: adoration, love, gratitude, joy, faith, repentance, humility, confidence, self-dedication and hope. The more often and the more purely we worship God, the more is genuine piety kindled, and the more constantly will the holy flame be kept alive. And the livelier our spirit of devotion is, the stronger will be the impulse which will bear us on in performing other good works. And this spirit, like leaven in the mass of meal, will pervade and sanctify all our other doings.

If the Christian desires a happy life, let him cultivate a devotional spirit. This is how pure joy may be drawn from the fountain of living waters. Certainly our chief joy should be in God, and this joy of the Lord would be our daily strength. In the dark day of adversity, when all His billows go over us, what will be our condition unless we have a refuge from trouble in God? If heaven is a place of sublime devotion, what better preparation can we make for it than by cultivating the spirit of genuine devotion? If we find it to be our highest privilege and greatest pleasure to draw near to God here in devotional exercises, we shall not be reluctant to be translated to that world where we shall be able to worship Him perfectly.

## Coming Near to Death (3)<sup>1</sup>

*Thomas Halyburton*

To two ministers who came from the country to visit him, Halyburton said, “Brethren, I’ll only say this, we need to take care, with the great Apostle, lest when we preach Christ to others, we be castaways (1 Cor 9:27). If it is so, we have need to fear; happy is the man that fears always. Be diligent in preaching the gospel. I presume, in the case I am in, to suggest this advice, that it may not only be your care to be diligent in composing sermons, but, above all, to examine your own hearts, and make use of what discoveries you get there, to enable you to dive into consciences, to awaken hypocrites, and to separate the precious from the vile; and to do it with such accuracy and caution as not to make sad the hearts of those God has made glad (Ezek 13:22). This is the great point in religion and in the management of your ministry: that you may obtain the testimony of the great Shepherd, when He shall appear.

“Now, it is probable I may not be far from the conclusion of my work. As to the work of the ministry, it was my deliberate choice. Were my days lengthened out much more, and days as troublesome as they are like to be, I would rather be a contemned minister of God than the greatest prince on earth. I preached the gospel of Christ with pleasure, and I loved it; for my own soul’s salvation depended upon it; and since I lay down, I have not changed my thoughts about it. I commend it to you all, to make it your business to double your diligence; there may be hard conflicts. You have a prospect of difficulties between you and the grave; we are all good when untried; but we have need to have ‘on the whole armour of God’ (Eph 6:11), to watch and be sober.” . . .

To his successor in the parish from which he was transported,<sup>2</sup> he said, “I have this to say, as to my congregation, the people were my choice. With much peace and pleasure I preached as I could, though not as I should, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Though in all things I acknowledged myself to have sinned exceedingly before the Lord, yet I have peace that I aimed with concern at leading them to the Lord Jesus, and other foundation can no man lay. I hope you will build on that same foundation; as you will in that way save

<sup>1</sup>This is an extract, lightly edited, from “an account of some of his last words on his deathbed” in 1712, taken from *Faith and Experience*, volume 4 of the James Begg Society edition of Halyburton’s *Works*. This article is a continuation of the report of what he said on September 18, as printed last month. This is the final article at present.

<sup>2</sup>Halyburton had been minister in Ceres, a village 7 miles from St Andrews, before he was appointed a professor of divinity in St Andrews University.

your own soul, so it is the way to save them that hear you. From experience I can say that pursuing this sincerely is the way to salvation. Signify to them that, if it please the Lord to take me away, I die rejoicing in the faith and profession of what I often preached to them under a low state of body, and without this I could have no relief. I would have my people understand that that gospel which I recommend to them, if it is not received, will be a witness against them.”

His successor said, “I am persuaded you have seals to your ministry in that parish”. He answered, “We are like our Master, ‘set for the fall and rising again of many’ (Lk 2:34). Though we can reach no more, if we are faithful, ‘then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them’ (Ezek 33:33).”

To one that came in to him, he said, “Learn to die. It is rare to die as a Christian; the most part think there is nothing more to do but to lay down their heads and die. This is even as if one would cover his face and leap over a rock into the sea.”

To a lady he said, “I may cry shame on me, and woe is me, that began not sooner and ran not faster; for the Lord’s way is as silver tried. We should never, in matters of eternal moment, choose a way that we will repent of again. I will not detain you; you will have your uncle: he will be a good friend to you; follow his advice; and follow the example of such persons as he. In a word, follow the example of Jesus Christ, and be acquainted with the Word; be careful in not only reading the Word – you may soon weary of that – but cry for the Spirit of the Lord to make the Word alive, and then you will be with it as the child that cannot live without the breasts. Be diligent in attending the ordinances. The Lord bless you. As for me, for anything I see, I am dying; but I die – I bless His name – in the way that I have hitherto chosen deliberately, and I have no ground to complain. Commend me to all friends. Carry this commission along with you – what I say to one, I say to all – Seek the Lord. And all I have to seek is that I may stand fast.”

To a private Christian he said, “Seek the Lord, and be in earnest about religion; content not yourself with the form of it. A mere profession will not serve the purpose; this will be but the shell without the kernel; but they that are sincere shall inherit the crown. Let not the scorn and contempt that is cast on religion cause you to give it up. It is not in vain to seek the Lord; you have found it.

“The Scriptures of truth are a book contemned by men, but they are able to make you wise unto salvation. Beware of quarrelling with them, and throwing them by as a useless book, but converse with them, and you will find your account in them. All the books of the world could not have stood me in the stead that since yesterday they have been to me. Choose good

company; beware of ill company; keep at a distance from it. Seek that God may guide you into religious company, and make good use of it – persons by whom you may learn something, without learning anything which may be hurtful. You have a sad set of gentry round about here; take heed ye be not drawn aside by them. This is a friend’s advice, that is suitable for me in my circumstances especially to give, and suitable for you to receive.”

After a little pause, he said, “I will tell you one difference there is this day between my case and the case of many in the world. The course I have followed, though feebly, has been at least to join with them that are on God’s side. Now it is come to a push, and I have peace; I always wish to have God for my God, and the heritage of His chosen. But they that walk contrary to God and forsake Him – I have seen them when they were come to a strait – they frequently cry then, O shame upon the way I have been following.”

In the night time, to some present he said, “Do you observe this growing weakness of my eyes?” They answered, “No”. He replied, “Yea, but I know it is so; now that is a foreshadowing of a change. If He shut my eyes, He will open my eyes, no more to behold vanity. But I shall behold Him in righteousness, and when I awake I shall be satisfied with His likeness.”

Afterwards he said, “If this be the day of the ending of my conflict, I would desire even humbly to seek of the Lord that He would of His great mercy condescend to be tender to one that loves His appearance; that as He has dealt wonderfully and condescendingly with me, so He may even deal tenderly to the end, in loosing the frame of my tabernacle, and that I may be helped to honour God by a composed resignation of my spirit into His hand. O, religion and the glory of it, in this degenerate age, has been much on my heart; and He has said, ‘Them that honour Me I will honour’ (1 Sam 2:30).”

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## Robert Findlater<sup>1</sup>

### 2. “The Great Sacrament”

When Findlater came to Lochtayside, there were between 500 and 600 communicants in the district – everyone above a certain age unless they were guilty of some serious outward sin. But he feared that not many of them were converted, although the people were well acquainted with scriptural

<sup>1</sup>The first section of this Theological Conference paper appeared last month and spoke of Findlater’s early years: his studies, his profession of faith, his appointment as a missionary minister at Rothiemurchus and then at Lochtayside, in Perthshire. All page references that are otherwise unidentified are from: William Findlater, *Memoir of the Rev Robert Findlater*, Glasgow, 1840.



truth. Yet a few among them prayed earnestly for better days spiritually. Some of the followers of the Haldanes so criticised the Church of Scotland, her ministers and her doctrines that many people treated all her ministers as unsound, rejected her services and even *The Shorter Catechism*. The work of some Independent preachers, including John Farquharson, who proclaimed the gospel briefly in the Isle of Skye, was blessed to the good of souls in the wider area in Perthshire.

Writing some years after Findlater's death, a neighbouring minister spoke of the earnest piety of the missionary minister at Lochtayside, his humble disposition, and how clearly, faithfully and in the spirit of the gospel, he expounded Scripture and applied its doctrines to the conscience and the heart; the result was that he gained the esteem of the congregation. Findlater was responsible for a district with a population of about 1500, extending more than five miles on each side of the middle of Loch Tay, which is over 14 miles long and about a mile wide. The manse was at Ardeonaig, on the south side of the loch, but he lodged for the first year on the other side at Lawers, near the foot of Ben Lawers, one of the highest mountains in Scotland.

The story is told of a young woman who came to visit her daughter's grave at Ardeonaig the first Sabbath that Findlater preached there. She had walked some miles over a hill and arrived well before the people gathered for the open-air service. When she was ready to leave, the congregation were assembling in the churchyard and she felt obliged, against her will, to join them. Before the minister was halfway through his sermon, the woman was so much arrested by his manner and doctrine that she forgot for a time why she had come there. Before he had finished, she was so convinced of her lost, sinful condition that sorrow because of her daughter's death gave way to concern for the salvation of her immortal soul. She heard too, in that sermon, of a living Saviour and she was to give evidence for the rest of her life that she was indeed trusting in Him. The minister just quoted wrote, "She uniformly maintained a holy and consistent profession and was distinguished as one of the most pious and zealous for the glory of God and the salvation of sinners, in her day, in that part of the country" (p 138).

There seems at first to have been only one service on Sabbaths, alternately on each side of Loch Tay, perhaps a long service by our standards today. Later Findlater began to hold a second service about 5 pm, on the opposite side of the Loch, while there was sufficient daylight. One motive was that otherwise, in his own words, "the Sabbath must be profaned by idleness and indifference to their religious concerns" (p 156). He did not expect many to cross the Loch for the second service but, as it turned out, so many wanted to cross that the difficulty was to find enough boats to take them over.

In October 1812 Findlater tells his brother about a recent communion season, when John Macdonald – then in the Edinburgh Gaelic chapel and later Charles Calder’s successor in Ferintosh – made what was presumably his first visit. Findlater commented, “May the Master of assemblies crown the work with His blessing! I hope it was not without His presence” (p 158). After some future communions there could be no doubt of the Master’s presence and blessing.

In a letter to his brother, the following December, Findlater speaks of planning to begin a prayer meeting and adds, “We are very destitute of spiritual life”. When the dark afternoons prevented the people coming to a second service, he visited the Sabbath school he had begun the previous summer; he reported that it “continues to flourish and increase in numbers, and really their progress is commendable. I find more pleasure in it than with the old people” (p 159). Indeed he believed that two of the pupils, about 14 or 15 years old, were under “deep concern” of soul. His catechising sessions revealed that, while some said there was a real improvement, he felt that it was, on the whole, only a change “from open unconcern to formality”. Though people were acquiring knowledge, he said that “it would grieve a feeling mind to observe the vanity and want of concern of a rising generation. At this season of the year they collect at the public houses to dance. Nothing effectual will do but omnipotent grace – the exercise of which, alas, is little to be seen or felt in our day or generation” (p 160).

It must have been rather encouraging for Findlater when a young man started walking nine miles from Glenlyon to hear his preaching in Lawers, having to climb over part of Ben Lawers in the process. Two years later, in 1814, one or two others joined him; in 1815 a few more; and in the spring of 1816 the number increased to 12 or 14. During their morning journey one man, in some ways a leader of the group, might recount what he had heard or read about revivals in various parts of Scotland. On their way home they would go over the sermon they had heard that day. Over a period of months in 1816 people felt that Findlater’s sermons were becoming more and more impressive. They noticed that he “was unusually urgent in pressing home truth upon the consciences of his hearers. . . . Some confessed a sense of shame for withstanding so much earnestness” (p 180). Findlater had in fact been influenced to seek an outpouring of the Spirit in his own district by reports that had reached him of a work of grace in Ferintosh, under Macdonald’s preaching. Local prayer meetings were set up and, not long afterwards, people were coming to Findlater under concern of soul.

The increased spiritual impressions continued till, in August, the Lord’s Supper was held in nearby Killin. Donald MacGillivray, then of Strathfillan

– described as “truly faithful and godly” – preached on the Sabbath evening in the churchyard, on the “fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness” (Zec 13:1). The people from Glenlyon who were attending Findlater’s preaching in Lawers were present and “felt a more than ordinary solemnising influence on their minds under the preaching of the gospel” (p 178). John Kennedy of Dingwall, in his life of John Macdonald, soon to be known as the Apostle of the North, describes Findlater as “a godly man, a faithful, fervent preacher, and the lack of learning and talent in his discourses was well supplied by the unction of a broken heart”.<sup>2</sup> If Findlater’s abilities were indeed comparatively limited, it is clear that the results of his preaching were all the more clearly brought about by the Holy Spirit – by divine power rather than human power.

A month later a communion season was held at Ardeonaig, and John Macdonald, now of Ferintosh, took most of the services. During Macdonald’s sermon on the Thursday, “an extraordinary degree of attention was excited, and towards the close of it a young woman from Glenlyon cried out, unable to repress her feelings”. He preached again on the other side of Loch Tay later in the day; the service was followed by a night so dark that the people from Glenlyon could not return home. In any case, some were quite unfit for the journey; they were so deeply convicted of their sin. Those who walked home the next morning told of the tremendous effects of Macdonald’s preaching; the result was that most of the people in Glenlyon were at Ardeonaig for the Sabbath morning service.

Macdonald preached for two hours and 20 minutes with particular unction to a congregation reckoned to be between 4000 and 5000. His text was: “For thy Maker is thine husband” (Is 54:5). Findlater reported to his brother: “I may say, during the whole sermon, there was hardly a dry eye. Eagerness to attend to the word preached was depicted on every countenance, while tears were flowing very copiously . . . . The most hardened in the congregation seemed to bend as one man, and I believe, if ever the Holy Ghost was present in a solemn assembly it was then. Mr Macdonald himself seemed to be in raptures. . . .

“The people of God themselves were as deeply affected as others, and many have confessed they never witnessed such a scene. It will be a day remembered through the ages of eternity, as many, I trust, have enjoyed eternal good” (p 182). Many hearers cried out as they listened to the sermon, in spite of their efforts to restrain themselves. Kennedy once met a man who had been converted under this sermon; everyone who knew him believed he

<sup>2</sup>John Kennedy, *The Apostle of the North*, Inverness, 1932 reprint, p 64. This valuable book has been reprinted by Free Presbyterian Publications.

was truly godly. The man testified that he knew 50 in all who had been awakened under that sermon, and that he was the only one of the 50 whose conversion he was tempted to suspect.

Macdonald preached again on the Monday on: “Give an account of thy stewardship” (Lk 16:2). “Several”, wrote Findlater, “were pierced to the heart and some came to speak to him [Macdonald] after [the] sermon. I have seen and conversed with some of them myself and have every reason to believe that they are under the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit. Some of them probably I may never see or hear of in this world, but it is a glorious consideration that real good is done in the conversion of sinners and in the edification of His people” (p 183). Findlater expressed the hope that the impressions made on those who attended the services would not wear off quickly and asked for prayer that what had taken place would be only a beginning of glorious days in the district. He went on: “Let our thanksgivings be accompanied with continued and fervent prayers for [God’s] blessing to accompany His own Word and ordinances and that we may not grieve His Spirit to withdraw His gracious influences from us”. Nearly 60 years later, this time was still referred to in the district as “the great sacrament”, and the main preacher as “the great Macdonald”.<sup>3</sup>

## God’s Wisdom in Redemption (2)<sup>1</sup>

*W S Plumer*

Redemption is God’s chief work. He has expended more on it than on all His other works, more than in creation and providence. Of Jehovah it is said: “He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore His arm brought salvation unto Him; and His righteousness, it sustained Him” (Is 59:16). Jehovah was the sole author of redemption. He alone devised it. He alone executed it. He alone applies it. “Salvation is of the Lord.” Let us notice some particulars.

1. God’s wisdom shines out in redemption, as *His plan reconciles all His attributes*. Redemption must not weaken God’s government, must not impair His honour. God could consent to nothing that might indicate the possibility of Him denying Himself. When human governments pass by offences, it is a confession of weakness. God could ignore no offence. Yet the eternal ruin of all men would have meant that men and angels would never see a single case of mercy being shown to the guilty.

<sup>3</sup>Duncan Macgregor, *Campbell of Kiltarn*, Edinburgh, 1874, pp 29,41.

<sup>1</sup>Another edited extract from Plumer’s *The Rock of Our Salvation*; it follows last month’s.

“Mercy pleads, If man is ruined, the creation is in vain. Justice pleads, If man is not sentenced, the law is in vain. Truth supports justice and grace abets mercy. What shall be done in this seeming contradiction? Mercy is not manifested if man is not pardoned; justice will complain if man is not punished. Therefore an expedient is found out by the wisdom of God to answer these demands and adjust the differences between them.

“The wisdom of God answers, I will satisfy your pleas. Punishment shall be inflicted, yet pardon shall be bestowed. Justice shall not complain for lack of an infliction of wrath, nor mercy for lack of an exercise of compassion. I will have an infinite sacrifice to meet the demands of justice, and the virtue and fruit of that sacrifice shall be the delight of mercy. The rights of both those attributes shall be preserved, and the demands amicably brought together in punishment and pardon, by transferring the punishment of sinners’ crimes upon their Surety, exacting a recompense from His blood by justice, and conferring life and salvation upon them by mercy without one drop of their own blood being required.

“Thus is justice satisfied in its holy severities, and mercy in its gracious indulgences. The riches of grace are entwined with the terrors of wrath. The glories of divine mercy are wound about the flaming sword of justice; and the sword of justice protects and secures the glories of mercy. Thus is God righteous without being cruel, and merciful without being unjust. His righteousness remains inviolable, and the sinner becomes recoverable. Thus is resplendent mercy brought forth in the midst of all the wrath threatened to the offender.”<sup>2</sup>

This scheme has no parallel in heaven or earth. Such a suretyship as that of Christ was never before heard of. It stands by itself. Around the cross of Christ were assembled Jews and Gentiles, men and devils; but in the cross of Christ justice and mercy, righteousness and peace, severity and compassion embrace and kiss each other. So that now forgiveness to the believing sinner is no less consistent with justice than is the destruction of the unbelieving reprobate. God is just to forgive sins, and to cleanse from all iniquity. All penitent souls may say, We are “justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God” (Rom 3:24,25). God’s rational creatures had never before seen it on this wise. So far from being able to devise or execute such a scheme, man is not able to comprehend it. All he can do – at least the best he can do – is to embrace it, obey its calls, wonder and adore.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted from Stephen Charnock.

# The Flood of Evil<sup>1</sup>

*Henry Law*

Genesis 6:5. *God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

A solemn scene opens here. Who can contemplate it and not shudder? God appears looking down on earth's inhabitants. What sight meets His eye? It is wickedness, great wickedness. He sees evil – only evil – in every imagination of every thought of every heart.

Can it be so? Man, who entered Eden's garden the happy image of his God, who stepped onto the earth decked in pure robes of innocence, whose early thoughts carried the fragrance of heaven, whose natural bias moved in the line of holiness, whose infant affections beat with the pulse of righteous love, whose dawn was the clear light of godliness – can man now be so changed?

How is the sparkling jewel tarnished! How is the bright gold dimmed! The crown is fallen from the head. The lovely robe is tattered. The features no more smile in beauty. The flower once fragrant is a weed. The holy nature is degenerate. Love hardens into enmity. Blasphemy pollutes the lips so lately tuned to praise. The one who was a subject now holds the rebel's armaments. The child is an apostate alien. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Man, can he now be so changed?

Yes, sin has come with its debasing power. What ruin it has wrought! How terrible are its properties! How frightful are its effects! How desolating is its step! How withering is its touch! The garden of Eden – the beauty of all beauties – bloomed before it. It passed the gate, and the misery of all miseries followed in its rear. Man, lovely as a ray of righteousness, stood before the fiend. He parleyed with it, and became this mass of evil.

Such was the change. And sin effected it. Reader, think deeply; it is a fearful thing to stray from God. Behold the dark abyss, into which transgression fell, and hate the erring path. Mark these wide ravages, and loathe the spoiler. Contemplate a world undone, and execrate the murdering monster.

But perhaps, while you survey the record, some doubting thoughts arise. The inquiry may intrude: Is this description literally correct? Are not the colours too darkly laid? Is there no rhetorical excess?

Let such misgivings be cast out. They hold the germ of sceptic blindness. Nothing here can be exaggerated. The speaker is eternal Truth. If man had framed the sentence, it might have been tinged by inability to judge or prone-

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Law's *Beacons of the Bible*.

ness to misstate. But no created intellect here decides. God the Holy Ghost, from His bright throne, makes the announcement. Heaven's voice sounds in the words, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually". God's all-piercing eye cannot read wrongly. The Spirit's hand cannot pen error. Let then all heads bow low. Let every ear devoutly listen. Let every heart assent. Undoubted truth speaks here with open mouth.

Thus with sorrowing reverence we draw nearer to the fearful picture. In the foreground stands "wickedness". This is a frightful monster. It is antagonism to our God. It rears a counter-standard to His will. It tramples down His laws. It defies His authority. If possible, it would scale the skies and hurl Him from His throne. Its aim is to convert heaven into hell.

Whose is this wickedness? The "wickedness of man". Man, and man alone, of all who breathe the vital air, claims wickedness as his own. "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom 8:22). But the blame is not theirs. Theirs is the suffering. But man's wickedness let loose the plague. "Cursed is the ground." Thorns and thistles bristle on its soil. But the fault is not in it. Man is wicked: therefore in his abode is this disorder. Creatures endure much anguish, hardship, suffering, death. But their disobedience roused not avenging wrath. Man is the culprit. His crime sinks earth into a slough of woe. The degradation is worldwide. The cause is wholly his. Wickedness is his sole property. Therefore, O man, see your distinctiveness. Do not boast of any excellency. Do not glory of reason, faculties, power, mind, intellect, talent. Do not parade your stores of acquired wisdom, your investigating knowledge, your elaborating skill. But rather blush that your superiorities claim wickedness as their territory.

The picture next exhibits man's heart. This is the home of the affections, the spring-head of desires, the cradle of each impulse. Here the character receives its form. This is the rudder of the life. This is the guide of how he walks. As is the heart, such is the individual. Here schemes and plans and purposes are conceived. This is the mother of contrivance and device.

What is naturally transacted in this laboratory? The reply here meets us: "Every imagination" – every germ of idea, every incipient embryo of notion, every feeling when it begins to move, every passion when it stirs, every inclination as it arises – is "only evil".

Terrifying word! *Evil*. Here wickedness comes forth in another, but not less frightful, form. Evil. It is the offspring of the evil one. It bears the impress of the devil. It is foul, as he is foul. It is vile, as he is vile. It is accursed, as he is accursed.

"*Only evil*"! No ray of light mitigates the darkness. No spark alleviates

the impure night. No righteous spot relieves the sinful monotony. No flower of goodness blooms in the rank desert. Uniformity rules without one check. "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart" rushes out in one stream. It all flows in the one channel of evil – "only evil".

Turn not too quickly from this picture. It is not yet complete. The full hideousness is "only evil *continually*". What, is there no respite? Is evil never weary? Does no intermission break the tremendous sameness? Ah no. There is no moment of a brighter dawn. "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [is] only evil continually." There is continually this miserable continuity. Thought chases thought with lightning rapidity, but each is only evil without mitigation – without pause. Swiftly they rise and swiftly fly, but their wings are only evil, never flagging, never varying. Countless are these imaginations, but they all show one feature: evil continually. There is no better aspect.

The point is reached now for application. Draw back the curtain and mark the contents of your breast. Your own heart in its natural state is this flood of evil. Are you startled? Are you indignant at the charge? Is your first impulse stoutly to contradict? If so, it is a fatal sign. It proves decisively that the imaginations of the thoughts of your heart are truly evil.

When the Father of lights gives saving grace, then instantly the foulness of the inner man is seen. Then the enlightened conscience testifies, "Behold, I am vile". When the revealing Spirit uplifts the heaven-lit torch, then new-born vision discerns the sin-sick ruin. Till then you cannot see – indeed, you deny – the rule of sin within you. But may not the plague, although unfelt, exist? Night hides, but cannot nullify, the landscape. Lack of perception does not destroy surrounding realities.

Appeal to a regenerate man. The response most readily asserts that no description can exaggerate the flood of evil which once deluged his heart. Charge him as shapen in iniquity, he meekly sighs, Alas, how true! But, blessed be God, through grace I am a new man now.

But *your* experience is unconscious of a change; therefore you are unchanged. And if you are unchanged, you flounder yet in evil's flood. May the Lord of life then give light, give sight, to see your own ailment in the mirror of these words: "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [is] only evil continually". But you reject this sentence as depicting yourself. You half hope that it belongs to some bygone days. You confine it to some long-past period of especial evil. You reject its general features. You question its application to man's whole family, in every age.

But is it not a life-likeness of our first parents, from the moment of their fall? Behold them sinless. God was their hearts' delight. Behold them guilty. What is their conduct? Shame overwhelms them. Therefore evil has torn off



innocence. Trembling occupies their hearts. “They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day” (Gen 3:8). They spring not joyous to the loved communion. They flee. They seek some secret place. They shrink into concealment. Is it not evil to shun God? This is their desire. Thus the imagination of the thoughts of their hearts prove wickedness – great wickedness. They dream that trees can hide from the all-probing eye. This folly is most evil! Evidence is clear, that evil now is the parent of their imaginations.

Adam, when called, speaks in reply. What are his words? Alas, we see no penitence, no humility, no cry for pardon. He avows his fear. Thus he betrays evil, for he allows that punishment is due. Adam’s lips unwittingly attest that the imagination of his thoughts is now a flood of evil.

When God probes, deeper evil rises to the surface. The blame is cast on others; indeed on God Himself. “The woman, whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree.” While Eve is charged as bringing the temptation to his hand, God is implicated, as bringing a tempting partner to his side. Can evil exceed this?

Eve too is now a flood of evil. She screens herself behind the serpent’s craft. “The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.” The main sin is another’s. I only yielded to seducing guile. Here the broad fact stares us broadly in the face. Every imagination of the thoughts of man’s heart, from the first day of sin, was only evil. Each word, each act, the product of each thought, was evil – only evil.

It is clear then that evil gained universal sway in Adam’s heart. Thus it poisoned the spring of future streams. It utterly corrupted the soil of human thought. Now the source being unclean, cleanness cannot issue from it. It follows then that man in every age must enter life with a heart evil – only evil continually. “As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.” Think then no more that this portrait delineated peculiar vileness. Such was the first sinner soiled by sin. Such are all born in sin’s family.

So it is your very state, as a corrupt branch of a corrupted tree. It is your pollution, as descending from this tainted fount. Until grace works its wondrous change, wickedness – great wickedness – prevails. “Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually.” Evil is the common flood.

But out of these materials God peoples heaven with a redeemed multitude, pure and glorious as Himself. Yes, through grace, there is relief large as the need. There is a remedy, mighty to heal the deepest depths of the disease. The sinner is not for ever buried in hopeless guilt. God from all eternity, foreseeing the fall and its tremendous woe, devised a reparation wide as the breach. This gracious work is entrusted to His beloved Son. Jesus consents

to take the guilty's place. He opens on the cross the fountain of all-cleansing blood. The flowing stream is efficacious to wash away all sin. Its virtue obliterates all stain of evil.

Thus, though iniquities are more than all wide ocean's sands, and each of deepest dye, the atoning death can make them whiter than the purest snow. The blood of Jesus touches them, and they for ever vanish. They recede far as the east is from the west. They sink from discovery, deep as the sea's unfathomable depths. The believer's wickedness doubtless has been very great. The imaginations of the thoughts of his natural heart have long been only evil. But not one speck of all this vileness can now be found; the glorious merits of the dying Jesus have expiated all. Sin has done its worst to ruin; Jesus has done far more to save.

But Jesus meets the children of His love with more than cleansing blood. He clothes them also with His robe of righteousness. He, in their nature and their stead, obeyed to the utmost all the holy will of our most holy God. He places this obedience to their account, as if it were the garment wrought by their own hands. In this they stand at heaven's portals, and the gates fly open. Their plea avails. They are counted suitable for living in the palace of the King of kings – fit partners for His very throne. Sin destroyed creature-righteousness. Jesus brings in a righteousness divine.

But gospel mercy is richer yet. Nature's heart is, as has been shown, a quarry of vile materials. It cannot be mended. These stones can frame no holy fabric. But grace works wonders. The Holy Spirit comes, and a new creation springs to life. He takes away the stony heart. He creates it gloriously clean. Thus old things pass away. Thus all things become new. The moral desert smiles fruitful and fragrant as Eden's garden. It rejoices and blossoms as the rose (Is 35:1). Instead of the thorn comes up the fir tree; instead of the brier comes up the myrtle tree; and it is "to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (Is 55:13).

The love of God is implanted. Delight in evil is rooted up. Conformity to the image of Jesus is inwrought. Holy communion and holy ways are now the sweet delight. Heaven is longed for, as the realm of perfect purity. The call to cross death's Jordan is welcomed, that sin may be for ever left behind, and sinful sounds no longer vex, and sinful sights no longer pain, and sinful temptations no longer trouble. The soul longs for scenes and company and atmosphere where all is love. The believer's wickedness has doubtless been very great; the imaginations of the thoughts of his natural heart have been very evil; but he is born again. Sin made man very vile. The Spirit enters, and a new fabric rises. Blessed be God for His sovereign work of grace! Blessed be God for Jesus and the Spirit!

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This beacon tells you what man is by nature – what you were by birth.  
What is your present state?

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# Obituary

## Mr Malcolm Gunn

The death of the late Malcolm Gunn, elder, North Tolsta, has left a breach in the walls of Zion that is keenly felt in Lewis and farther afield. Calum, as he was commonly known, was a man of sterling worth and integrity, who was enabled to guide the affairs of God's cause with discretion and wisdom during many years of service as an elder.

Calum was born in November 1934, the son of Donald and Margaret Gunn of Skigersta, Ness. His mother was a bright and warm-hearted Christian, who followed him in her prayers with maternal love and spiritual anxiety for the welfare of his soul. Calum had the further privilege of being reared in a place where the gospel was faithfully declared and where the witness of the Lord's people was clearly and consistently before the eyes of the community. He remembered the practice of one of the elders in the congregation, Mr Donald MacDonald, *Dòmhnall Rudair*, who lived nearby. Whenever Calum would happen to be in his house, the godly man would ask him to fetch him a drink of water out of a barrel at the end of the house and, when he would return with a filled vessel, this would give him an opportunity to ask a blessing in Calum's presence and pray for the welfare of the young boy's soul. Calum could not have failed to understand that he, at that stage of his life, was outside the kingdom of God and that the spot of God's children was not upon him but, sadly, this did not seem to concern him unduly when he left home to go to sea at the age of 16.

After around seven years at sea, Calum decided to join the police and, after his initial training, he was stationed in various locations in Central Scotland. His abilities were recognised in the police service and he steadily rose through the ranks, eventually attaining the position of Chief Superintendent. His methodical and clear intellect were valued to the extent that he was employed in lecturing for a time at the Scottish Police College at Tulliallan. He used to say of the earlier period in his life that all that was in his mind was ambition to progress in his chosen career.

The time came, however, in the Lord's providence when he was apprehended by the claims of the law of God so that his mind was diverted from pursuing his ambitions for earthly advancement and was now brought to desire to be among the Lord's people and to be able to say with the Apostle

Paul, “that I might apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ”. On conveying the late Mrs Catherine Ross, latterly of Laide, to a railway station, Calum was struck by her parting comment that “without Christ there is nothing”. Try as he might to shake it off, he could not escape from the fact that all his earthly pursuit was for nothing if he would remain without the one thing needful. A period of months passed when Calum could find no relief for his distressed soul. When he would open the Bible to seek for encouragement during this time, all he would read would bring charges of condemnation against him.

The year of Christ’s release was near at hand, however, and he was brought to gospel liberty through a sermon preached in Ness on the subject of “the blood of sprinkling” (Heb 12:24) by Rev John MacLeod, then of Stornoway. This sermon was preached, as far as we are able to ascertain, in the summer of 1973, when Calum was at home with his young family on annual leave. He went to his Bible that night and found Christ near as he read through the Song of Solomon. That wonderful allegory of the love of Christ to His Church now opened up a whole new realm of spiritual communion to his soul. He could now relate to his mother how he felt that the whole burden of his sin, which had been troubling him so much previously, was now entirely removed through that precious blood of sprinkling. His bonds being now loosed, he was given the strength to make a public profession of his Saviour in the Glasgow congregation shortly afterwards.

He married Etta Murray from Ness in 1960 and they were blessed with a family of two sons and two daughters. Etta predeceased him, passing away in 1995. Some time later he was married to Miss Agnes Campbell, of the North Tolsta congregation. Calum was initially ordained to the eldership in the Stirling, Perth and Dundee congregation in 1984 and was elected to the eldership in the Ness congregation in 1991, on retiring from his work as a police officer to his native Skigersta. After his removal to North Tolsta in the year 2006, he was again elected to the eldership in the congregation there. As a Session Clerk he performed his duties with meticulous care, and gave wise and faithful counsel and encouragement to his brethren. Calum served on both the Synod’s Finance Committee and the Jewish and Foreign Mission Committee for considerable periods of time and we have no doubt that his prudent opinion was valued by his brethren on these important Committees. The number of Synod members who wished to pay public tribute to our late friend was an indication of their respect for him.

In the year 2000 Calum and Agnes spent six months in Kenya, where Calum’s abilities were highly appreciated when he acted as Mission Administrator. He served in the same capacity again for a further period in 2004. The

local people around the mission recalled him as a fair-minded man and Calum had a great affection for them likewise. In Lewis, he was involved from the outset in the establishment and governance of the Bethesda Care Home in Stornoway, where many have received nursing and palliative care during the final stages of life.

Through grace Calum adorned his office and profession and was enabled to keep his garments unspotted from an evil world. As a Christian he was firm, modest and humble in his walk before men and was therefore held in the love and esteem of the people of God. His gifts were of a high order, as was seen in his edifying addresses on the Word of God and the orderly manner in which he prayed publicly. Calum's prayers were filled with earnest and impressive petitions that sinners would lay to heart their need of preparing for eternity. He was possessed of a serious disposition and his gravity in the courts of God's house was just one measure of how real the solemnities of the world to come were to him. It was his constant desire to be melted at the feet of a crucified Saviour and frequently quoted the words of the prophet Habakkuk, "Though the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive shall fail and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab 3:17,18).

One notable feature of Calum's public exercises was his ability to speak to the question at fellowship meetings. He did not attempt to expound the passage or give direct exhortations to the audience, rather he was able to give edifying remarks and illustrations about the marks and evidences of the faith and life of God's true people in connection with the actual point under discussion. One verse he often quoted on such occasions was from Philippians 2:3, "In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves".

Greatly beloved in his family circle, he was highly respected by all in the wider community and was a generous and kind-hearted friend to young and old alike. He battled bravely with serious illness for the last decade of his life and he was prepared for the final summons when it came from the Judge of all the earth on 23 March 2017. We mourn his absence from our midst but have the confidence concerning him that "if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor 5:1); "A good man showeth favour and lendeth, he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be had in everlasting memorial" (Ps 112:5,6). We extend our sympathy to his like-minded widow, Agnes, and to his children, Joanne, Donald, Eileen and Iain. Our desire for them is

that their father's God would become their God and that his people would become their people. (Rev) *A W MacColl*

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## Protestant View

### Rome's Ultimate Problem

The scandal of child sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Church has reached new levels with two of the most senior cardinals being found guilty of detestable crimes against those under their care. Theodore McCarrick, former Archbishop of Washington, was expelled from the priesthood after a Vatican investigation found him guilty of serial abuses over many years. George Pell, Archbishop of Sydney and the head of the Vatican's finances until February of this year, was found guilty in an Australian criminal court of abusing two altar boys in the 1990s, while a previous investigation involving accusations dating back to the 1970s collapsed due to lack of sufficient evidence. Pell's sentence is yet to be decided. He is currently appealing the verdict but, in the meantime, the Vatican has suspended him from official duties. Both McCarrick and Pell were trusted advisers of the current Pope.

As has been reported in a previous issue of this *Magazine*, it has been alleged that the Pontiff was aware for a number of years about McCarrick and yet chose to do nothing. A special conference has recently been held at the Vatican in an attempt to deal with the issue, and the Pope is promising to take action. But the problem simply will not go away, since it is abundantly clear that this fearful abuse has been found at every level of the priesthood from the top of the Vatican and reaching down through every part of the globe where Rome's tentacles are extended.

It is not just a matter of abandoning the unbiblical notion of clerical celibacy – which certainly has its own baneful influence on the matter – nor is it simply that many of the priests have been closet sodomites “forced” to live double lives. The watching world can recognise that these have played a major role, but the world is not able to discern the underlying reason for the endemic moral corruption of the Roman Church. The ultimate factor is that the Roman Catholic Church is opposed to the truth of the Word of God and, in her doctrines and practices, she has fostered deceit, unholiness, misery and spiritual ruin wherever her influence has been felt. Rome is, and always will be, under the curse of a holy God, and the bringing to light of such abuses further emphasises that fact. As has been said by others, the Church of Rome is like the carnal mind: there can be no reformation for it but only destruction.

*AWM*

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# Notes and Comments

## Royal College of Physicians and Assisted Dying

Following on from the British Medical Association's announcement of guidelines advocating withdrawal of food and hydration from patients who are not imminently dying, it is alarming now to hear that The Royal College of Physicians (RCP) appears to be going down a similar route. At a meeting of its council it has decided – before consulting its wider membership – to take up a *neutral* position as to whether the law on assisted dying should be changed. Until now it has always strongly *opposed* any change in this law, a position which has consistently been backed by a majority of its members.

In its latest move, the College has adopted the new position first and, strangely, it is going to ballot its members afterwards. Even stranger – and some would say unconstitutional – is the announcement that a two-thirds majority would be required to overturn the new position. Critics say that the ballot has been framed to make the neutral result inevitable, and a former chair of the RCP's ethics committee, warns that the ballot “is manifestly unreasonable”. The RCP has been threatened with a judicial review over its handling of the issue but it began the consultation process in February, with results expected later in the spring. Over 1800 doctors have signed a letter opposing the proposed shift to this neutral position.

In 2014 – the last time the RCP consulted its 35 000 members – over 58% said they “would not be prepared to participate actively in assisted dying”, while over 62% stated, “We believe that, with improvements in palliative care, good clinical care can be provided within existing legislation, and that patients can die with dignity. A change in legislation is not needed.” When asked what position the RCP should take if the law did change to permit assisted dying, 44% said that the RCP should oppose it, while 31% said it should be neutral, and 25% said that the RCP should support a change.

These are solemn times when some of those organisations, which were once renowned for striving to uphold the sanctity and dignity of human life, are now moving in the opposite direction. Mercifully, as yet, assisted dying is illegal in the UK, and doctors still face jail sentences of up to 14 years if convicted. Many medical professionals are strongly opposed to a change in the law, as are the major disability rights groups in Britain, such as Disability Rights UK and SCOPE. They see, as one of them has stated, that “good palliative and clinical care mean that patients can be properly cared for right up to death. This should be the priority in terms of policy. Persistent requests for euthanasia are extremely rare when people are well cared for.” Yet, when prominent groups such as the RCP weaken their stance, it can seriously

influence those in the medical profession who do not have strong Christian values. This would be yet another step down the secular humanist road.

As has often been argued, if euthanasia is legalised, it would seriously affect the doctor-patient relationship. The doctor may even try to show that death is in the best interests of the patient. If so, how could doctors be trusted to do everything possible to protect patients' lives? The cruel legalising of euthanasia would also increase pressure on the weak and vulnerable to believe that they are a burden on their families and that they have a duty to die. Protective laws are vital, especially in the present secular culture. However, the real argument is based on the relationship of man, as a sinner, to God, his Creator. A report accurately states, "Ultimately, human life is sacred . . . regardless of any disability or how ill or incapable we are or have become. No one has the right to end a person's life, and the law should stand as a protection for all people in society." Yes, and the law should reflect God's holy law, which states, "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex 20:13). KHM

### **The Lion of Sin**

A man in the Czech Republic has just been killed by one of the two illegal "pet" lions which he kept in his back garden. His badly mauled body was found in the enclosure and the lions were shot dead by the police. An internet search shows a surprising number of other people who have been killed or severely injured by "tame" lions in recent years, including professional zoo-handlers and lion-tamers.

There is a well-known story in Paul White's *Jungle Doctor* series about an African who finds an attractive orphaned baby leopard which he insists on keeping to adulthood, against the dire warnings of the other villagers, until one day it kills his son and himself. Other people keep poisonous snakes or spiders, and these sometimes escape through tiny holes in their tanks and cages, endangering their owners and their families. The spiritual application of these stories is obvious: the dangerous animal kept as a pet is sin, and its deadly character and strength and subtlety remain, no matter how long it may appear to be harmless.

Many of the Lord's people have a strong lion in their bosom – whether anger, or lust, or love of alcohol, or gambling, or covetousness, or bad language, or whatever – which they long to be rid of, but the Lord leaves it there for wise and holy purposes. They are to starve it and avoid it and hate it and seek its destruction, and not to pamper it and visit it and play with it. These stories of foolish or careless people with their dangerous pets are a reminder to them of their own spiritual danger.

When someone other than the owner is killed or injured by a dangerous pet, it reminds us, too, that our sins may have fatal effects on others – as, for



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example, a bad witness before our children may drive them away from Christ – even though we ourselves repent and are restored. Or perhaps we can identify the dead or injured child with some precious aspect of the Christian life, as closeness to Christ; and though we ourselves survive, yet this may be lost for months or years, as David lost “the joy of Thy salvation” (Ps 51:12).

*DWBS*

### **The Separation in 1893**

The *Free Church Witness* for March 2019, published by the Free Church (Continuing), contains the second of four articles by Rev Alasdair J Macleod on the Free Church of Scotland. This is a good article, until it begins to deal with the aftermath of the passing of the Declaratory Act in 1892.

The writer states, “There was extensive dissent and protest throughout the Church against the Act. One minister went further, and tabled a protest in the form of separation. Another minister joined him, and some thousands of people, chiefly in the Highlands, formed the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Others . . . remained in the [Free] Church under protest. The point is important: no one has an automatic right to separate when they choose.”

Without going into the details of the effects of a protest in a Church court, it is necessary to stress the necessity for separation in 1893, for, however many attempts have been made to minimise the effects of the 1892 Declaratory Act, it *did* change the constitution of the Free Church. Mr Macleod claims that “the Act placed no obligation upon any man. You did not have to agree with it . . .” But the Act made it impossible for those who remained in the Free Church to launch a successful prosecution against any of her ministers who was guilty of doctrinal failures. All such ministers had to do was to claim, under the Declaratory Act, that their errors did “not enter into the substance of the Reformed Faith” and the prosecution must fail.

The article is followed by a quotation from Charles Hodge, beginning, “Schism is separation from the Church without adequate cause”. This is true. But the separation in 1893 certainly did have adequate cause: the constitution of the Free Church was then drastically changed. The question may be asked: Did the separation in 2000 which led to the formation of the FCC have adequate cause in the absence of a change in the constitution of the present Free Church at that point in time?

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## **Church Information**

### **Southern Presbytery Letter**

This is the text of a letter sent by the Southern Presbytery to Mrs Arlene Foster, the leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, in Northern Ireland.

“The Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland has a congregation in the town of Larne in Northern Ireland.

“While we deplore the physical violence committed in the name of Protestantism, the people of our Church have, nonetheless, followed with interest, the unashamed witness to our shared Protestant heritage which has been made in Northern Ireland. Part of that shared heritage has been keeping holy unto God the Christian Sabbath and I have been instructed to write to you to express our sadness at your desecration of the holy Sabbath. We read in the press of your attendance at a sports event on the Christian Sabbath earlier this year and that it was described by you as taking steps towards reconciliation in Northern Ireland. Our chief business as individuals in society and as communities in a nation is to be reconciled to God. The God of providence says, “I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things” (Is 45:7). If this is so, reconciliation amongst men (however desirable in itself), if it be purchased at the cost of alienation from God, we may look for ‘darkness’ and not ‘light’; ‘evil’ and not ‘peace’.

“Another part of our common Protestant heritage is a set of Bible-based moral values. We live in an age when the moral framework provided in the Ten Commandments is openly rejected, and a secular moral framework, which frequently calls good evil and evil good, is imposed on us. This being the case, it is the duty of all politicians to sound the alarm; but, bearing in mind the Protestant heritage of the DUP, its leader should be one of the first to do so. I have been instructed to write to you, to register our Presbytery’s dismay that you showed your support for the alternative morals by attending and addressing a meeting at Stormont, organised by the LGBT community. Such an event, in such a place, is seen as a show of strength; and the support of ministers of state make the event a political triumph. If we consult the Christian set of values, drawn from the Word of God, we find that abnormal sexual practices are described as immoral. We refer to such passages as Romans 1:26,27: ‘For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.’ It gives us a sense of real foreboding and great sorrow that political leaders, standing on a Protestant platform, encourage our people to question the rightness of Christian moral values.”

### **General Building Fund**

By appointment of Synod, this year’s special collection on behalf of the General Building Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during April.

*W Campbell, General Treasurer*

# 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, IV15 9JP; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr K H Munro; tel: 01463 831783.
- 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.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, EH3 9NU, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227, e-mail: dcampbell1560@gmail.com.
- Farr** (by Daviot); Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatinn:** 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 WA Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Duncan Street; Sabbath 5 pm; **Strathy:** 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. Rev K M Watkins BA, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- 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.
- Raasay:** 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). Contact Mr R Middleton, 2 Emerald Drive, Sandbach, CW11 4ND; tel: 01270 761673.
- 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 R Macleod; tel: 0141 954 3759.

#### 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.

**Carterton**: 124 High Street North, Carterton. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Hank Optland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743; tel: 02 7432 5625.

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

**Tauranga**: 45 Cliff Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 6.30 pm (but on first Thursday of month place will be as intimated locally). Contact: Rev J D Smith; tel: 09 282 4195.

#### Singapore

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

#### Ukraine

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

#### Zimbabwe

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

**Ingwenya**: Church and Secondary School. Postal Address: Ingwenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo.

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

**New Canaan**: Church.

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

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