

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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Communions

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

February: Second Sabbath: Dingwall; **Third:** Stornoway; 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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Reactions to the Truth

Paul had travelled from Thessalonica to Berea and on to Athens. As he waited there for Silas and Timothy, his fellow preachers, he was disturbed to see that Athens was a city “wholly given to idolatry” (Acts 17:16). The people wanted to hear his “new doctrine”, and he took the opportunity of speaking the truth to them, as an ambassador for the true God. Paul drew their attention to Him as the Creator: “God that made the world and all things therein”. He spoke against their idolatry and pointed to the final judgement and to the resurrection of Christ, insisting that God was now commanding “all men everywhere to repent”. We are told about three reactions to Paul’s words: (1.) “Some mocked”; (2.) “Others said, We will hear thee again of this matter”; (3.) “Some believed”. In various proportions, these reactions have appeared again and again throughout the generations.

1. *Some mocked.* They mocked the thought of a resurrection from the dead. They had never seen anyone rise from the dead; so they assumed that the whole idea was absurd. But they obviously ignored or rejected Paul’s statement about God as the One who created the world and everything in it. For the *Creator* to raise those who have died – and to raise Jesus, the Son of God, in particular – is by no means impossible. Accordingly the resurrection is not an idea to be mocked. Yet today the whole idea of the supernatural is rejected; the resurrection is probably despised with greater confidence than in Athens; even the idea of a Creator is often treated as a subject for ridicule. It is assumed by leading scientists that evolution is the only coherent theory of origins, and other opinion-formers also push this theory as the only option for self-respecting human beings.

But it is not. No doubt a time will come when people will look back on the present age and view as ridiculous the idea that the world and everything in it came into existence through a whole series of random changes, and that they took place quite apart from any purposive control. But God exists and He has revealed Himself in the Scriptures – though we should be able to recognise His existence through the things He has made (Rom 1:20). And the Scriptures clearly reveal that He created the whole universe – “the heavens

and the earth” – and everything in it. This is revealed, not only in the first chapters of Genesis, but repeatedly throughout the Bible.

The resurrection at the end of the world is an important fact of the Christian religion, as Paul clearly asserted. First he argued, “If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen” (1 Cor 15:13); even more fundamental to the whole Christian message of salvation is what Paul presents as a further step in his argument: “If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain”. We need to know, not only that Christ died so that sinners may be saved, but also that His sacrifice was accepted in heaven. And we know that it was accepted, because God raised Him from the dead; He was not left under the power of death, for He had conquered death. He had done all that was necessary for the salvation of every sinner who, until the end of time, will look to the Saviour. Scripture testimony to the resurrection is serious truth; it most certainly ought not to be a subject for mockery. Thus Paul, when appearing before Agrippa, asked, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” (Acts 26:8).

2. *Some said, We will hear thee again of this matter.* These were people who did not mock the ideas that Paul presented to them. They may have found Paul’s claims interesting; after all, the Athenians were always anxious “to hear some new thing”. But they did not consider his claims, in particular about the judgement to come, to be of such importance that they must give them immediate serious consideration. They may have thought that, some other day, Paul might present some further new ideas and that their interest would be stirred again.

So it is with many people today: they who are content to come, Sabbath after Sabbath, to hear the Word of God. They would never think of mocking the sermons they hear; they do not feel free to argue against the truth of God’s Word. Yet they never submit to the authority of the truth; they tell themselves that “tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant” (Is 56:12); they assume that their life will go on as at present for many more years and they will have plenty more opportunities to hear the Word of God, to seek Him and to look to Christ for salvation. They may put off seeking the Lord only one day at a time, or one week at a time; but if they go on rejecting the warnings of Scripture and the message of salvation, they will eventually do so one last time – and they will reach a day without a tomorrow for them, a day when they will pass into eternity. And because they are still unsaved, it will, solemnly, be a *lost* eternity.

What God tells us is: “Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth” (Prov 27:1). We cannot know when we will

reach the day of our death; so we should seek to be ready now, before it is too late. Let us take seriously Scripture teaching about the resurrection, the judgement and eternity, with application to ourselves. When Christ is set before us in the gospel – the good news about a crucified Saviour who died in the place of sinners – we should seek earnestly to obey the call, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31).

3. *Some believed.* Two of them are mentioned by name, a man and a woman: Dionysius and Damaris. They not only accepted that Paul’s statements about the resurrection and other scriptural doctrines were true, but they trusted in the Saviour he taught them about. Yet Paul had no power to create faith in the heart of any sinner; neither has any preacher today. This is clear in the salvation of Lydia; it was *the Lord* who opened her heart so “that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul” (Acts 16:14). Matthew Henry comments, “Conversion work is God’s work; it is He that works in us both to will and to do; not as if we had nothing to do, but of ourselves – without God’s grace – we can do nothing; nor as if God were in the least chargeable with the ruin of those that perish, but the salvation of those that are saved must be wholly ascribed to Him”.

It was through the work of the Holy Spirit that Dionysius, Damaris and the others who believed in Athens were saved, and Lydia in Philippi. So it must always be. Granted that the responsibility is laid on every sinner who hears the gospel – whether in Athens or Philippi in Paul’s time, or anywhere in the world today – to receive the doctrines of the Word of God and to trust in the One who is there revealed as the Saviour of sinners, yet it is the Holy Spirit who must open the sinner’s heart and savingly apply the truth to that individual so that they believe.

What are the evidences of this saving work? Let us confine ourselves to two. First, the desire Paul expressed: to “be found in [Christ], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil 3:9). It is the Holy Spirit who enables sinners to recognise that salvation is all of grace, not of works. It is He also who enables them to desire a righteousness to be imputed to them which they cannot create. The second evidence is an urgent sense of their duty to obey God’s commandments, as expressed in the words, “I made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy commandments” (Ps 119:60) – yet acknowledging that it is only by God’s continuing grace that such obedience goes on.

But what is *our* response to Scripture teaching? Do we mock? Do we procrastinate? Or do we believe? Let us rephrase this last question: Do we trust in Christ Jesus, whom the Father sent into the world to save sinners?

“A Chosen Generation”¹

A Sermon by *Donald Fergusson*

1 Peter 2:9. *Ye are a chosen generation.*

This Epistle is addressed “to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1 Pet 1:1). These are supposed to have been Hebrews, and Peter appears to have preached the gospel of Jesus among them. They had lent a willing ear to it; the whole bearing of the Epistle proves that many of them had believed the gospel. These Jewish believers would recall the great deliverances God had wrought for them. They would point to the law and the worship established by God’s command, and ask, When did God deal so with any other people? They would be ready to imagine that, if they conformed to the religion of Jesus – so simple in its ritual and universal in its invitations – they would give up their high claims of being “a chosen . . . peculiar people”, and they would strip themselves of the privileges which distinguished them from the Gentiles as “an holy nation”, a people consecrated by God’s choice, honoured by God’s special favour, and devoted to God’s service.

In this Epistle, and especially in the verse which includes our text, Peter seeks to dissipate the mistaken views of those Jewish Christians – to show them that the distinctions and honours enjoyed by the Hebrews of old were just a type of still richer honours and privileges that were to be conferred on the spiritual Israel. The former were only the shadow, the latter the substance. Throughout the whole history of the Jewish people, there was an analogy between God’s dealings with His ancient Israel and His dealings with the ransomed Church of Jesus. Thus, in embracing Christ and adopting His faith, they would just be reaping the full harvest of privileges and blessings, of which the Jewish dispensation was nothing more than the seed time.

Fear not, Jewish believers, is Peter’s argument, that you lose any of your privileges in accepting Jesus; fear not that you will forfeit your right to be reckoned an elect people. You confirm the fact more surely than ever by professing the gospel faith; for all Christians have been elected “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 1:2). So it is specially true of them that they are “a chosen generation”.

1. The text represents the Church as a *generation*. This expression conveys two opposite ideas: an idea of separateness and the existence of a union. These

¹Taken from *The Free Church Pulpit*, vol 3, and abridged. Fergusson (1811-97), spent most of his ministry as a Free Church minister in Scotland, but when this sermon was published he was minister of St George’s English Presbyterian Church in Liverpool.

are both most applicable to the character and the circumstances of the Church of Christ. When you use the word *generation*, you distinguish one section of individuals from all others. Thus the Jewish nation was emphatically singled out from other nations – a generation characterised by privileges and favours beyond all other people, distinguished by duties, discipline and rules of faith and practice from all their neighbours. In this the Jewish Church is a type of the believing Church of Jesus.

Believers, you are a special generation, separate from an unbelieving world around you and distinguished by another faith, another character and other desires from those which affect the carnal. You cannot be united to Christ and the world, to sin and holiness, at the same time. “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” You cannot enjoy the world’s friendship and God’s. If you are Christ’s people, then you must not be worldly in your habits, feelings, language, desires, but you must practise the habits, speak the language and cherish the feelings of your Lord. You must have such a savour of Christ about you that men may take knowledge of you that you have been with Him; that the believer may recognise you as a brother, and that the worldling may not count you as one of his allies – that they may see that, though in the world, you are not of the world. You must be recognised as a little colony of heirs of glory, left here for a brief time, to ripen for the inheritance, and by your example reprove a world lying in wickedness.

But *generation* also implies a close connection. Among the Jewish nation of old, there were certain features of national character which distinguished them from the surrounding nations, but proved their connection as members of one great community, observing the same laws and worshipping the same God. They also had one and the same object. In the wilderness, they looked forward together to one resting place; while entering Canaan, they laboured together to expel the heathen; while dwelling in Canaan, they prayed together for the same kingdom to be established.

So it is with the people of Christ; though they are scattered throughout all lands, they are a united people, bound together by the same laws, cherishing the same feelings, practising the same habits, distinguished by the same privileges, and looking forward to the same glorious reward. They are as one great united body; if you touch one member, you affect the whole body. Their pains are one, and their pleasures also; although separated far from each other, they have one heart, one sympathy pervades the whole; so they feel they are brethren when they meet; they feel they have one common Head, one common heart, one common object, one common joy.

They have *one common character*. They are united in their sympathies. The natural man has been slain; the new man has been assumed. The world

has become a wilderness; eternity is their home. Their conversation is not of earth but of heaven. Their lives are not regulated by their senses but by faith. An atmosphere of heaven's holiness and joy is around them; and Christ Jesus is inscribed on all they do, think and say. They are living epistles of Christ Jesus, exhibiting His character and publishing His will.

They have *one common object*: to honour Jesus, to walk with Him, to be like Him, to have no mind but His, no will but His, no righteousness but His, no strength but His, no joy but in His presence. They are crucified with Christ and risen with Him, having had their sins nailed to His cross, and leaving their corruptions buried in His grave. Their constant aim, day by day, is to be conformed to His likeness, so as to manifest His glory.

They have *one common hope*. There is a heaven of joy, glory and perfection before them, where the face of Jesus ever shines, where there is no night of sorrow, no cloud of sin. They are journeying to this their common home. Faith has revealed its glories to them from afar. She has told of its purity, whispered of its peace, exalted its joy and testified of its perfections. And since this privileged generation has beheld such glories in store, is it wonderful that, with one common heart, they should turn their backs on the world and their faces Zionward? Is it wonderful that, with united desires, they should press forward by Jesus as the way, facing perils, surmounting difficulties, triumphing over adversaries, fighting onward through all the opposition to that glorious resting place where this generation shall join together in one song of triumph and enjoy eternal rest?

Yet, in the world, they are not equally advanced in grace. Some are babes, others are youths, others strong in the faith. Some walk without being weary, having little joy but pushing on. Some run without being faint; they have more comfort and confidence, and make faster progress. Some mount up on wings as eagles, with wings that never weary. There is a difference in degree, not in kind. The same faith animates every heart; the same love glows in every bosom; the same hopes are kindled in every soul. Although they do not have equal strength, they are the same in nature and object. One star differs from another in brightness, yet the qualities of the light are the same; so while the believing people of God are not equally advanced, the same nature animates them all; all the stars in the firmament of the Church, though not of equal brilliance, combine to make their lights so shine before men that others, seeing their good works, may glorify their Father in heaven. The one great object which the meanest as well as the mightiest believer is desirous of advancing is the glory of Christ.

When you speak of a generation, you always combine it with the idea of a family, a body of individuals with a common father, united together by ties

of a blood relationship. So the Jews were all one united family of the seed of Abraham. Believers in Christ, you have a more glorious Father, a more illustrious family. He is not your Father by creation alone; you are His children by grace; in Christ Jesus you have been begotten again by the Spirit of God, unto righteousness and true holiness. This is the grand secret of your separation from the world, of your union as a Church: the Holy Ghost has begotten a new nature in you, separating you from all your old nature loved, uniting you to Jesus, and by Him to all that is holy, pure, and heavenly.

You are one with Christ Jesus: members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones – partakers of His nature, animated by His Spirit. You are one in Christ; the same heart throbs through the whole mystical body; the same holy desires and affections animate it; the whole family are united in Him, and consequently united to one another. One is their Father and all they are brethren. All the living Church is one great family, animated by a family spirit, adorned by a family likeness and hastening on to the family home.

Is this not a glorious privilege? Do not deceive yourselves; you do not belong to this generation unless you were begotten again by the Holy Spirit – unless born again “not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”. Unless the saving change has taken place, you belong to another generation: you are of your father the devil. By nature you were animated by his spirit, bore his name, loved his children, did his work. If you are not converted, this is still your condition.

Have you been converted? Does any one say, I do not know? I ask, Have you ever questioned yourselves thus: Am I separated from the world? Am I in love with holiness? Do I love God? Do I long after Jesus? Do I treasure His people? Do I reflect His image? Do I press forward after Him to heaven? Such alone have a right to consider themselves that “chosen generation” of whom God says, “I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters”.

2. Why have this generation the character described? They are chosen to it: “a chosen generation”. It is all God’s work; none of it is your own. It would indeed have been long before you had chosen anything so pure, so precious, so soul-satisfying as the portion of the believer. *God has chosen this generation for Himself.* Believing brethren, you were chosen, and how?

1. *God chose in His sovereignty.* The foundation of all genuine religion is to believe that we are all created to advance God’s glory; and that Jehovah has sovereign authority over all His creatures to advance that object. And the submission appropriate to the creature in God’s presence should express itself thus, Lord, glorify Thyself in me according to Thy will; I am ready as Thy creature to fulfill Thy pleasure.

In His sovereignty, Jehovah chose a generation for Himself when all had rebelled against Him. He saw the whole earth accursed, the whole race doomed to perdition, the whole universe in rebellion. In His sovereignty He passed by the rebel angels, reserving them under chains of darkness for ever. He passed by myriads of our guilty race, dooming them to eat the fruit of their own ways and be filled with their own devices. Seeing the guilty lying in their blood, He lays His hand on one here and another there, “one of a city and two of a family”, and says, Live. Thus He chooses of His own sovereign will and says, I will that you be saved; I will that you escape the fire; I will that you reach heaven; I will that you have life everlasting; I will have mercy on whom I will, and whom I will I make alive.

Jehovah elects them as trophies in His sovereign authority out of a rebellious world. And who will say to Him, What doest Thou? Or who dare assert that He has assumed an authority or exercised a prerogative that is not His? The sovereignty of God, His absolute propriety in His creatures and His absolute authority over them, is a doctrine too little appreciated and too little believed. You will never be happy until you recognise God’s hand in all things, until you see God working in everything that occurs – and until you are ready to say, He does all things well. It may often be hard to bear His dealings and difficult to understand them; it may often be long before you see the end from his beginning; but you will never be happy until you are able to see the hand of a sovereign in it all, and amid darkness, clouds, fears and pains to say, “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight”.

2. *God chose in justice and holiness.* The language of the believing heart is: He “is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works”; but, the carnal man says, How can God pass over one and save another, when all are equally guilty? But who are you, O worm of the dust, that would call the Sovereign of the universe to account? Would He not be just in condemning you? Was not the sin your own voluntary act, and is not damnation your fitting doom? Has He doomed you to one pang more than you deserve?

All are guilty and condemned, and would it not be just in God to allow all to perish in hell for ever? He did so to the apostate angels, and where was the injustice? So He will do with impenitent men, and even souls in perdition dare not say that their doom is unjust. Can it be unjust in Him to allow some to endure the doom which all deserved? Or can it be unjust in Him to save some from the perdition which their sin deserved? Was it unjust to save from falling the angels that kept their first estate, while He left the fallen angels to perish? Was it unjust in Him to choose Abraham and his seed to high privileges, while the rest of the world was left in darkness? Assuredly, where all deserved death, it could not be injustice to choose some to eternal life.

See how it is in ordinary matters. If from a thousand traitors who have forfeited their lives, the king grants a free pardon to a few, does this involve any injustice to those that bear the fury of the law they have broken. So no sinner can charge Jehovah with injustice in passing by guilty souls, leaving them to eat the fruit of their own ways, while He saves souls just as guilty, thus proving His sovereign propriety in His creatures. Let every mouth be stopped that would condemn God’s justice; let us rather recognise God’s justice in harmony with His mercy, the one ransoming souls from death, and the other condemning guilty, unbelieving souls for their iniquities, thereby proving Jehovah’s righteous authority in condemning the breakers of His law. Let us then say with Paul: “Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another into dishonour?”

Yet if God had passed over sin without punishment, He might have been reckoned unjust; if He had pardoned the elected sinner without an atonement, God would have been unjust – not to men, but *to His own holiness, righteousness, truth and law*. The elect could not be saved unless their sins were punished and the law of God avenged. Thus the electing decree ordained the means as well as the end. The souls of the elected were chosen in Christ. He is their covenant Head in grace, as Adam represented the race in the first covenant. And as Adam broke the covenant, and made himself and all his seed covenant breakers, even so, as Christ fulfilled the law, all His seed are reckoned covenant fulfillers in Him. As the first brought sin upon his seed, so the second brought righteousness as an inheritance to His offspring; as the first brought death into the world and all our woe, so the second brought life and immortality; as the first Adam brought the curse and lost the blessing, so the second bore the curse and regained the blessing.

In Jesus, the decree ordained that sin should be punished. In Him the law was honoured, and the holiness of God vindicated. Therefore He is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, judicially offered in covenant, virtually offered when the first promise brought the balm of hope to the guilty heart, typically offered in all the sacrifices of the Old Testament, actually offered on the cross of Calvary. When He thus bore “our griefs, and carried our sorrows”, when He bowed His head and died for sin, God’s justice was more honoured than if every sinner perished for ever.

Look at this work and rejoice. See justice sheathing its sword in Immanuel’s bosom, the law visiting His holy soul with its curse, the wrath of Jehovah smiting Him. Then give thanks at the remembrance of God’s holiness; give thanks at the vindication of His law and say, My God is a holy as well as a loving God. And when you see justice arming itself against unelected, unbelieving sinners, hide in Christ and take God as your shield.

3. *God especially manifested His love in the electing decree.* Election is usually, in plan and purpose, ascribed to God the Father; but this is solely because the initial step in executing the decree is the Father's. The act of election is equally also the act of the Son and the Spirit. All the Persons of the Godhead were at one time enacting, ordaining, concurring in and consenting to the act – exercising their independent functions as three divine Persons, and their united functions as one divine essence. While the Father gave His Son, the Son gave His life, and the Spirit devotes Himself to arresting, converting and sanctifying the souls of those ordained to life everlasting.

See now God's sovereign love exhibited in election – His sovereign grace in choosing, His victorious grace in executing. This is the theme of the believer's praise, the source of his joy, what binds him more lovingly to his Lord. When surveying all he was, all he is, and all he hopes to be, well may he say, "By the grace of God I am what I am". It was all of love, of free grace, on God's part – of compassion in His heart, and no merit in us.

God chose you, believers. You had no claim on Him; you had fallen from your holiness when it was in your power to have resisted temptation, and so you could have no claim on Jehovah. Yes, you had a claim on His wrath, a full title to hell. If the unjustified soul was to claim from God his due, what would he ask but wrath and ruin? But such were not His sovereign purposes towards you, believers; in love He chose you to enjoy His love, but not because of anything in you. You had nothing but what was filthy and hateful – all the race was corrupted. Yet then grace came.

God did not choose you, believers, because of works you would do. You were elected to bring forth fruit to God. The works wrought in the believer by the Spirit are not the reason for his salvation; it is electing grace. The worst reprobate in hell, had God seen fit to choose him, would have been as precious a vessel of mercy in God's hands as the brightest soul in glory.

Nor did God choose you because of the works wrought by Immanuel for you. From all eternity God loved the elect. This love was the source of the covenant; the covenant was not the source of the love. It was the love of God that sent the Son, and not the achievements of the Son that begat the love. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to save lost souls. O that our souls were now lost in wonder, in the heights and depths of this matchless love of God, who thus from all eternity chose a people for Himself, ordaining them in Christ to life everlasting.

Believers, you all have reason to adore this love. The work is all grace. It is grace in the decree; it is grace in the execution of the decree; therefore let grace have all the praise. "Ye have not chosen Me," says Jesus, "but I have chosen you, and ordained you." It is all of sovereign grace in electing, in

converting – grace in issuing the decree and in executing it. Here is free forgiveness, a full salvation; yet, believers, did you not pass by them a thousand times, until the grace of God opened your eyes, ears and hearts, to adore the wonders of electing grace and redeeming love?

Let no one say the decree is past. If I am elected, I am safe; God will accomplish His decree, and I may leave it in His hands! If I am not elected, all my labours are unavailing; my soul is lost. But God has ordained the means along with the end; the end is hidden, you cannot see it, your heart cannot be affected by what is unseen and unknown. But you see the means; He tells you to use them, and He promises to bless the use of the means.

Use the same argument in the ordinary things of life. God has decreed the number of your days. Will you say it is needless to provide food and clothes for your bodies because of this decree of God, leaving God to provide, without any effort of your own? The merchant sends his vessels to the ocean, although the result of the voyage has been decided from eternity. He ventures his treasures and his life, although he does not know but his ship may founder under the first blast of wind.

And what is God’s message? Here is a salvation, freely offered without money and without price. Here are means provided by which to find salvation. Here is the blessing promised to all who use the means and seek the salvation. And if you reject the invitation, if you neglect the means, is God to be blamed for your obstinacy? Rather is your damnation not of your own choosing? In all its features, electing grace is to be praised; even the condemned can bring no accusation against it, for it threw no hindrance in their way. Everyone who is redeemed must rejoice in it, confessing that, if electing grace had not chosen him, he would never have chosen God; and if supporting grace would not uphold him, he would never reach heaven.

Now let me put a practical question to you all; press it solemnly to your heart: Are you a chosen generation? Let no one reply, How can we tell? Are you chosen to heaven? Yes, but not first; you are first chosen to holiness; and without holiness wrought in you, you shall never reach heaven. Unless you are a chosen generation, the decree of election can give you no comfort.

Have you received Jesus as your Saviour? If so, remember that they who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh. What have you done to prove this? What passions have you curbed, what lust crucified? Search your hearts. If you find something to comfort, you will find much to humble – much sin to be cast out, much corruption to be crucified; all calling for greater earnestness for the comforts and duties of which Paul speaks, “The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity”.

The Eternal State¹

2. Heaven

Rev J R Tallach

The Holy Spirit was pleased to foreshadow heaven in types in the Old Testament: 1. The land of Canaan flowing with milk and honey was a figure of the supply of good things to be found in heaven.

2. The city of Jerusalem, whose structures, beauties and stability are before us in the Word, will be far more perfect in glory when the types are spiritually fulfilled as in Revelation 21: "I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (v 2).

3. The tabernacle of Moses and the temple of Solomon foreshadowed the temple of glory (Rev 21:3). The redeemed, when glorified, will be with God for ever.

4. The Sabbath is a type of the eternal Sabbath to be spent in heaven, in which the saints will rest in their God from sins and from the fight of faith in this world. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Heb 4:9). It is a heavenly and eternal rest from every evil, with all joy and peace.

God is in heaven, as His royal palace, in which He displays His glory in an eminent manner. In heaven there is a richer display of God's glory and grace. As the Israelites turned towards the ark and the temple in Old Testament times because the Lord specially displayed His glory there, so we of the New Testament age ought to look towards heaven and meditate on it.

It is called "the third heaven" (2 Cor 12:2), "the heaven of heavens" (1 Ki 8:27) and "paradise" (Lk 23:43), "whose builder and maker is God" (Heb 11:10). Heaven is bright, "for the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev 21:23); it is incapable of failing, as it rests on the finished work of Christ (Eph 4:10); it is constituted far above the visible heavens by the One who said, "I go to prepare a place for you" (Jn 14:2); it is the hope of the believer as a place flooded with the light of Christ; it is secure as resting on the promises of the One who cannot lie. Little wonder that Jonathan Edwards speaks of eternal embraces and eternal joys. Heaven, for him, is also a place in space and to this place the soul of the penitent thief went.

The locality of heaven seems to follow from the doctrine of the resurrection since bodies occupy space and can only be in one place at one time. It is the place from which Christ descended and to which He ascended. The voice of the Father came down from heaven commending the Son, and from heaven the Holy Ghost was poured out at Pentecost. "The new heavens and

¹The first section, in last month's issue, of this Theological Conference paper dealt with hell.

the new earth” cannot be heaven, because heaven never changes and cannot be moved, whereas the earth is in constant motion. At the same time heaven is capable of increasing glory – just as the body of Christ, His blood-bought people, are capable of an increase of glory. Eternity is begun in the soul’s experience at the death of the believer and will be fully consummated in the whole man as to soul and body after the resurrection.

Both the vision of God and the love of God are involved in the blessedness of heaven. “For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Cor 13:12); “sight” (2 Cor 5:7, 1 Jn 3:2); “love” (1 Jn 4:16). The three elements which come together are sight, love and joy, and these three give rise to the glory of heaven. Sight perfects the intellect, love the will, and joy the conscience. Sight answers to faith as the substance of things hoped for. Love is perfected in those whom God first loved (1 Jn 4:19). Joy answers to hope, and comes with the things hoped for. “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away (1 Cor 13:9,10).

From this communion with God will arise the glory with which the saints are endowed in heaven, both as to soul and body: as to the soul, perfect knowledge and holiness, and as to the body a removal of all weakness, misery or pollution arising from sin and our natural life here, leading to what Paul calls “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor 4:17). “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away” (Rev 21:4).

Degrees of blessedness in heaven. Edwards writes, “The saints are like so many vessels of different sizes cast into a sea of happiness where every vessel is full”. All the pollution that attends acts of faith will be hidden and, where there is the least sincerity, it is precious in God’s sight and will be honoured on the Day of Judgement. The pollution is hidden in the sense that it is atoned for by the sacrifice of Christ. The saints are like vessels of different sizes, but it is of God’s sovereign good pleasure to determine the largeness of the vessel.

Degrees of glory may be argued from the following Scriptures:

1. “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Dan 12:3). Thus eternal life is promised to all the pious in common, but to those who instruct others in the knowledge of God particularly, there is a greater glory and brightness in eternal life.
2. “There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and an-

other glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption" (1 Cor 15:41,42). Here the Apostle uses the diversity of the stars and other heavenly bodies as an illustration of diversity among the saints in heaven. Just as these heavenly bodies differ among themselves in degree of beauty, so the saints after the resurrection will differ greatly, not only from themselves as they were, but also from each other in degrees of splendour.

3. "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor 3:14,15).

Leaders in the Church of Christ are likened to builders and divide into two classes: first, those who build a solid doctrinal building in harmony with the foundation itself; and second, those who use the stubble of vain or useless doctrines. Paul says that, however long the work of the builder may be concealed, the day will come when it will be tried with fire. Then the work of the doctrinally-sound builder will stand and "he shall receive a reward". The work of the unsound builder is burned (that is, is judged vain and worthless) and "he will suffer loss" and receive no reward though "he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire" – that is, he will retain his salvation since the foundation is sound. He will be saved, yet with difficulty, as one who escapes a fire. In 2 Corinthians 9:6, sowing sparingly and sowing bountifully have their corresponding outcomes, and the parable of the pounds in Luke 19: 11-27 demonstrates that rewards at Christ's coming will be commensurate with faithfulness in the things of the gospel in this life.

The patriarchs, prophets, apostles and faithful are given a special place of honour in heaven. "The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom" (Lk 16:22). "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev 21:14). In addition Elijah and Moses were seen on the Mount of Transfiguration with the Lord. The Thessalonians would, Paul said, be his hope and joy and crown of rejoicing at the coming of the Lord (1 Th 2:19). Some also think that the Lord's reference to "many mansions" in John 14:2 speaks not only of numbers but of diversity of glory.

The teaching of all of the above would lead us to believe in degrees of blessedness in heaven.

Growth of the saints in heaven. Edwards believed that the saints grow spiritually in heaven. They will have "glorious rewards in heaven at death."² They will go on to new-found discoveries and eternal progress but in their intermediate state between death and resurrection, seeing through the glass

²Quoted in John Gerstner, *Jonathan Edwards on Heaven and Hell*, Baker, 1980, p 24.

of Christ's glorified human nature and His works of redemption, they await the judgement day (Rev 6:9,10). At the resurrection the bodies of the saints will become "refined bodies". The renewed mind will be a conduit of pleasures through the body. Every faculty will be "an inlet of delight".

There is both change and growth in heaven, but that change is within the saints. There is perfect rest, yet more activity than here on earth. Edwards has several reasons for maintaining this: (1.) Man is a rational creature and must be rationally happy. (2.) They will see the lost in their lostness and appreciate heaven. (3.) The remembrance of their own sins will generate growth in gratitude. (4.) Increasing knowledge of the work of redemption will again increase gratitude. Edwards says, "In heaven it is the direct reverse of what is on earth; for there [in heaven], by length of time, things become more and more youthful; that is, more vigorous, active, tender and beautiful". As Edwards says, "The saints will be in their natural state of union with their bodies, glorious bodies, bodies perfectly fitted for the uses of the glorious soul".

The body of Christ will be perfect. The only other party present at the wedding is the bride, in all her loveliness. Then the Mediator will have triumphed over His enemies. Christ will have obtained the full end of His work. God will make more abundant manifestations of His glory. The wedding day will have no end. The highest point of the saints' blessedness is that they will see God.

Revival in Moulin¹

1. Attaining Confidence in the Love of Christ

Alexander Stewart

The inhabitants of the Highlands have the Scriptures in Gaelic, their native tongue. The New Testament, the Book of Psalms,² and *The Shorter Catechism* have been long read in the schools. By these means the people in this part of the country had some knowledge of the principal events in the

¹Reprinted, with editing, from *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* for 1913. It was written in 1800 in the form of a letter to David Black of Edinburgh and published as *Account of a Revival of Religion in the Highlands*. Stewart was then parish minister of Moulin, of which Pitlochry is the main town, but later minister of Dingwall and of the Canongate church in Edinburgh. He speaks of "written notes" by which his memory was assisted in writing the letter, of which this article is the first part. Stewart's son, also Alexander, was minister of Cromarty and author of *The Tree of Promise* (reprinted by Free Presbyterian Publications).

²*Editor's note:* These are the Psalms in metre; the complete Old Testament in Scottish Gaelic was only published in 1801. Stewart himself was involved in the work of translation.

history of the creation and fall of man, and of the Saviour's life, death, resurrection and ascension. They knew also some of the outlines of Christian doctrine, but in general their knowledge of the principles of Christianity was superficial and confused, and their religious opinions were erroneous in many important points.

Very few indeed knew the way in which the gospel informs us that a sinner may be reconciled to God. The opinion of their own works recommending them to the favour of God, and procuring a reward from His bounty, was almost universal. It showed itself in their ordinary speech, in their common remarks on more solemn occasions, and in almost every religious sentiment that was uttered. Their apprehensions of the demerit and consequences of sin were exceedingly defective. I have heard many on a sickbed – after acknowledging in common form that they were sinners – deny that they ever did any ill. And in the view of death they have derived their hopes of future happiness from the reflection that they had never wronged any person. Very few seemed to attach any meaning to their words when they said that they expected pardon for Christ's sake.

Being without the true knowledge of God, of Christ, of the gospel, of their own character and state, they lived – as might be expected – to themselves and to the world. They were not indeed addicted to open vice, if we except lying and swearing. They were rather distinguished for sobriety, industry and peaceable behaviour, but they were destitute of religious principle. Men may love and adore an unseen God, but they cannot love or serve an unknown God. They may dread pain or death or eternal misery, but that is not to fear God. Our people were strangers alike to the true fear and the true love of God. They had evidently little concern about the present or the future state of their souls. They attended church, partook of the sacraments, and rested from their work on the Sabbath. But these outward observances were almost the only appearance of religion. There was little reading of the Scriptures at home, little religious instructing of children, hardly any family worship, no religious conversation, no labour of any kind “for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life”. Even on the Lord's Day, most of the time was spent in loitering, visiting and worldly talk, and on other days religion was scarcely thought of.

In narrating the means by which the people were brought to pay more serious attention to their eternal interests, it is necessary to say something of my own case. I was settled minister of this parish in 1786, at the age of 22. Although I was not a despiser of what was sacred, I felt nothing of the power of religion on my soul. I had no relish for its exercises, nor any enjoyment in the duties of my office, public or private. A regard to character, and the

desire of being acceptable to my people, if not the only motives, were certainly the principal motives, that prompted me to any measure of diligence.

I was quite well pleased when a diet of catechising was ill attended, because my work was over sooner; and I was always satisfied with the reflection that, if people were not able or did not choose to attend on these occasions, that was no fault of mine. I well remember that I often hurried over that exercise with a good deal of impatience, to get home to join a dancing party or read a sentimental novel. My public addresses and prayers were for the most part cold and formal. They were little regarded by the hearers at the time, and as little recollected afterwards. I preached against particular vices and promoted particular virtues. But I had no notion of the necessity of a radical change of principle, for I had not learned the meaning of those assertions of Scripture: "The carnal mind is enmity against God"; "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"; and, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God". I spoke of making the fruit good, but I was not aware that the tree was corrupt, and must itself first be made good, before it could bear good fruit.

The people, however, were satisfied with what they heard, and neither they nor I looked further. Almost the only remark made by anyone on the discourse, after leaving church, was, "What a good sermon we got today!" to which another would coldly assent, adding, "Many good advices do we get, if we did but follow them". Such a heartless compliment was all the use made of the discourse and, I believe, all the fruit of my preaching. The hearers readily gave me credit for a desire to do my duty, and they as readily took credit to themselves for a willingness to be taught their duty. But whether any improvement was actually taking place, or whether there was any increase of the fruits of righteousness, was what gave neither minister nor people much concern.

If there was anyone in the parish at that time who lived a life of faith, under the influence of pure evangelical principles, I did not know them, nor was I qualified to discern and understand what spirit they were of. I have since had reason to believe that there were a very few spiritually-minded persons, but their life was hidden and all but one or two of them had left this world before they could acknowledge me as a brother. I was in a great measure ignorant of the doctrines of Christianity: the corruption of the human will, the fullness and freeness of the redemption which is in Christ, justification by faith, and the necessity of the Holy Spirit's work on the human soul. And what I knew not myself, I could not declare to others.

I never thought of praying for God's direction in my search after divine truth. I believe I had read the *Confession of Faith* of our Church before I

declared my belief of its contents, but I had taken little pains to compare it with the Scriptures. I certainly did not distinctly understand many propositions contained in it, nor was I at all convinced of the truth of them. Yet I do not remember that I had any scruples about subscribing it as the confession of my faith, or about declaring my assent to it solemnly in the presence of the congregation whereof I was about to take the pastoral charge.

While I was yet ignorant of the truth and unacquainted with Christian experience, two persons applied to me for advice who were under conviction of sin and terrors of conscience. They supposed that a minister must of course be a man of God, and skilled in administering remedies for the diseases of the soul. They were widely mistaken in their judgement of me, for I had learned less of the practice than of the theory of pastoral duty. I said something to them in the way of advice, but it brought them no relief. They were, however, under the care of the good Physician. He applied His own balm to their wounded spirits and healed and bade them live. Being progressively and effectually taught of God, they are both now established, judicious Christians. These are the first that appear to have been converted since I came to Moulin, but they cannot be reckoned the fruits of my ministry.

The Lord was now preparing to gather to Himself a fuller harvest in this place. He might have removed me out of the way as a useless encumbrance, or rather an intervening obstacle, and subjected me to the doom of the unprofitable servant. But He was graciously pleased to spare me and visit me in mercy, and even to employ me as one of His instruments in carrying on His own work. Glory to His name, who commanded light to shine out of darkness! The writings of pious men which were put into my hands by one or another Christian friend were made the means of making me acquainted with the truths of the gospel. Among these I may mention the works of John Newton and Thomas Scott as eminently useful to me. I was slow in receiving the doctrines maintained by these writers. By degrees, however, I was persuaded that they were agreeable to Scripture and that no doubt they must be admitted as true.

I therefore did not dare preach anything which I conceived to be directly contrary to these doctrines, but I brought them forward rarely, incorrectly and with awkward hesitation. The trumpet was sounded, but it gave an "uncertain sound". My preaching now consisted of a mixed kind of doctrine. I taught that human nature is corrupt and needs to be purified, that righteousness cannot come by the law, that we cannot be justified in the sight of God by our own works; that we can be justified only by the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us and received by faith. But in explaining the nature of saving faith, I conceived it as including many of its effects – not only a

cordial acceptance of the plan of redemption by a Mediator but also ardent gratitude to God our Saviour on account of that redemption, devotedness to His service, good will to our brethren of mankind – in a word, every pious and benevolent disposition of heart. I thought and taught that, on possessing *this* faith, we should, because of it, have an interest in the redemption purchased by Christ and consequently be accepted by God and rewarded as righteous persons.

Thus I arrived at the same point from which I had set out, still resting a sinner's acceptance with God on the conformity of His will to God's law or, in other words, on the merit of His good dispositions. Thus I endeavoured to establish a human righteousness under the name of faith in Jesus Christ. It was plain indeed that this conformity of the will to God's law could be imperfect in this life; yet, imperfect as it was, it must, as I saw it, be the ground of our acceptance with God.

Here I stumbled on that stumbling-stone of sincere obedience, in substance at least, if not in so many words. Imagining, like many in whose writings I have since met with that opinion, that the great favour procured to men by Christ's sufferings and mediation was a relaxation of God's law, and that an imperfect obedience, dignified with the name of sincere, was all that was now required. But this was "another gospel", which could never be owned by God as the gospel of His Son, nor accompanied by that sanctifying power which belongs exclusively to the truth. If it set any of my people on thinking, it only bewildered and misled them. They remained, as before, unenlightened and unchanged.

The biographical sketches in the *Evangelical Magazine* were principal means of impressing my heart, of opening my eyes to perceive the truth, of exciting a love to godliness and a desire after usefulness. The power of divine grace appeared illustrious in the composure, the joy, the triumph with which many pious Christians left the world. I saw their triumphant hope supported, not by a complacent reflection on a well-spent life, but by a confidence in the unmerited love of Christ and in His power and willingness to save even the chief of sinners. I was particularly struck with the account of ministers who had laboured with much diligence and success and had died at an early period of life, full of good fruits; while I, who had already lived longer and been longer in the ministry than they, could not say that I had taken any pains with my people, nor that I had been the means of reclaiming one sinner from the error of His way or of saving one soul from death.

The conversation and example of some persons of a truly spiritual mind to whose acquaintance I was admitted, and who exhibited to my view what I found only described in written memoirs, conduced much to impress on my

mind the truths with which I was gradually becoming more acquainted. I may also mention the blessing I enjoyed in the preaching, the prayers and the conversation of that much-favoured servant of Christ, Charles Simeon, of King's College, Cambridge. He was a man sent from God to me, was my guest for two days in June 1796, preached in my church, and left a savour of the things of God which has remained with us ever since.

The Remedy for Sad Times¹

C H Spurgeon

Psalm 61:2. *When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*

So David prays. It is a very wise and appropriate prayer. He is in great sorrow and asks to rise above it; he has great faith and therefore is sure that there is a safe refuge for him; and he is conscious of great weakness, for he does not speak of climbing the rock of safety by himself but implores divine leading that he may come to it. His prayer well befits the lips of people like ourselves who dwell where troubles rage and toss their waves on high.

The heart may be overwhelmed by many forces. A sense of guilt may do it. Carelessness and indifference are swept away when the Holy Ghost works conviction of sin upon the conscience, reveals the justice of God and leads a man to see that he is in danger of the wrath to come. Then heart and flesh fail, courage and hope depart, and the man is overwhelmed. Such a season is the fittest time for crying, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I". If you can but find shelter in the rifts of the Rock of Ages, what security will be yours! The rock of atoning sacrifice rises higher than your sin, and upon it the most guilty may stand far above the surging billows of vengeance. Led by God's hand to cling to the great Redeemer and Substitute, the utterly shipwrecked soul is safely landed and may sing because of his escape.

Sometimes, however, believers in Jesus, though quite secure from God's wrath, are overwhelmed by trouble. They should not be so, for if their faith acted as it ought, no fear would fasten upon them; but through infirmity of the flesh and, partly, also through inbred sin, unbelief comes in like a flood and deluges the anxious heart. At times the trials of life roll onward like enormous Atlantic billows, and toss our poor ship till we reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man. The ship becomes waterlogged and does not answer to the helm of reason; she drifts with the adverse current wherever it pleases to hurry her, and eternal shipwreck seems near at hand.

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Sword and Trowel* for March 1878.

It is good for a Christian then to cry, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I", for though a rock is to be avoided in a natural storm, yet in our spiritual tempests, there is a high rock which is to be sought unto as our shelter and haven. Truly that rock is higher than we are and its very height is our comfort. God, infinitely high and glorious, is not troubled or dismayed; His purposes are far above and out of our sight; and they are also far beyond the operation of evil. Hence by confidence in God we leave the storm beneath us and smile at the turbulence down below.

To me the most overwhelming thoughts do not come to my heart from my personal sin, for I know it is forgiven; nor from worldly trouble, for I am persuaded that all things work for my good; but I am deeply distressed by the present condition of the Church of God. Men who are called of God to care for His flock are grievously bowed down when the signs of the times are dark and lowering. Moses carried the whole people of Israel in his bosom in the wilderness, and they were sometimes a heavy load to him. Thus each true minister bears the Church upon his heart and is often sorely burdened. At this moment I can sorrowfully cry with Jeremiah: "My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart . . . I cannot hold my peace."

It is overwhelming to my spirit to see *the growing worldliness of the visible Church*. Many professed Christians – the Lord alone knows whether they are true believers or not – give us grave cause for apprehension. We see them tolerating practices which would not have been endured by their fathers; my blood chills when I think of how far some fashionable church members go astray. There are families connected with the churches in which there is no household prayer, but much luxurious eating and drinking and extravagance. I have my suspicion that there are a considerable number who attend the theatre, spend their evenings playing cards, read the most frivolous and foolish of books, and yet come to the Lord's table. If they differ from the world, it is hard to see how or where. Neither in their dress, nor in their speech, in their mode of trading, or in their habits at home are they at all superior to the unconverted. Is this not an evil?

When the Church descends to the world's level, her power has gone. Yet we cannot root up suspected tares; we are forbidden to do so lest we root up the wheat with them. If those falsely professing Christianity were more open in their conduct, we should know them, but their evil is secret and therefore we are obliged to let them grow together with the wheat. Yet sometimes the sorrowful husbandman goes to the great owner of the farm and cries, "Didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? From whence then hath it tares?" The answer is, "An enemy hath done this", and we are overwhelmed in spirit because we fear that our sleeping gave the enemy the opportunity.

I look again and see *numbers of professed Christians apostatising altogether*. In this great London, people who were members of churches in the country fall into the habits of their neighbours and absent themselves altogether from the means of grace, or treat the worship of God on the Lord's Day as if it were optional, and when they attend to it they go tripping from one place of worship to another and forget the duties of Christian fellowship. Many others are content to hear noted preachers, not because they preach the gospel but because they are reputed to be "clever men". Once men were esteemed for soundness, unction and experience, but now men crave after popularity and cleverness. Some who call themselves Christians make fine music their grand requisite. God's house was never meant to be a hall where one may vie with another in pleasing man's ears.

Not a few choose their place of worship because the "church" is an imposing structure, and the congregation is composed of "very respectable people", but in the worship of God "the rich and poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all". It is an ill sign when God's poor ones are despised, but so it is in this day. If tradesmen save a little, they grow too great for the assembly in which they were once at home and must needs become part of a more fashionable congregation. These things also cause my spirit to be overwhelmed, not because in one single instance it has happened to members of my own church, but because the fact is open to the view of all and is the subject of general comment.

It is equally grievous to the heart to see *the spread of superstition*. You can hardly go down a street but you will pass some Episcopal church, where self-styled priests entice silly women to the confessional and amuse them with masses and processions. Impostors! Clergy of an avowedly Protestant church, and supported by this nation, they are yet ravenous to eat out the very vitals of Protestantism. Fools enough are found to believe in these priests and bow before their crucifixes and their stations of the cross and the like rubbish. And the abomination evidently spreads like the leaven among the meal as the Lord Jesus described it. Heaven alone knows where this England of ours is going, and he who loves his country feels his spirit overwhelmed within him.

Nor do I think this to be the worst sign of the times. All around is growing up in tangled masses *the ill weed of "modern thought"*, which is nothing better than an infidelity too cowardly to wear its proper name. There are preachers in Christian pulpits who deny the authenticity of various books of the Bible, and reject plenary inspiration altogether. There is not a doctrine of the gospel which is not denied by some "thinker" or other, and even the existence of a personal God is regarded by the more advanced as a moot

point; yet the churches bear with them and allow them to pollute the pulpits once occupied by godly preachers of Christ.

After having denied the faith and plunged their daggers into the heart of vital doctrines as best they can, they still claim to be ministers of the gospel and ask to be received into union on the ground of some special inward virtue which exists in them apart from all doctrinal belief. Men who might justly be prosecuted for obtaining property under false pretences by violating the trust deeds of our churches may well wish to abolish creeds and articles of faith, because these are perpetual witnesses against their knavery. I would not care what became of the money if the churches were saved from error. I see this leaven of unbelief working in all directions, and many are tainted with it, in one point or another; it eats like a cancer into the very soul of churches. God deliver us from it!

It is hard to know what to do, for no one wishes to suspect his fellow, and yet a plague seems to be in the very air, so that it penetrates into the best guarded rooms. We hear of this man and then of another broaching strange notions, and those who were thought to be pillars in the church suddenly become rolling stones. Who next? And what next? In the midst of this confusion, our heart is apt to be overwhelmed within us. Is there not a cause? It is not our household, it is not our estate, it is not our bodily health which is in danger, or we would bow in silence and bear it; but it is the household of God, it is the estate and kingdom of Christ, it is the Church of God on earth which is thus suffering. And well may those who love the Lord and His Christ and His truth tremble for the ark and feel a holy jealousy burning within them. At such a time the prayer of David is priceless: "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I". Let us see how this petition meets the case.

First, let us remember that *God lives*. Glorious thought! "The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever." "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." Still He effects His purposes and accomplishes His will. It would be very childish if we were afraid for the moon because dogs bark at her when she walks in her splendour; it would be absurd to fear for the eternal mountains because the winds blow upon their granite peaks, and it would be equally idle to tremble for the truth of God. The stable things will stand, and those which cannot stand are better gone. God lives, and everything that is of God lives in His life. On this rock let us rest.

Next, let us remember that *God's truth is still the same*. It does not matter whether fifty thousand espouse its cause, or only five, or only one. Truth does not reign by the ballot box, or by the counting heads; it abides for ever. All the tongues of men and angels cannot make truth more true, and all the howling of devils and doubters cannot transform it into a lie. Glory be to God

for this! Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever. The eternal verity has those who deny it in derision, for they are as the chaff which the wind drives away. "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

Another rock may also afford us shelter: the high doctrine that *the Lord will save His own*. The much-despised truth of election stands us in good stead in troublous times. We sigh and cry, because so many worship the deity of the hour, but the Lord answers, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace". The words of the Apostle Paul are true at this moment: "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded, (according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear,) unto this day".

I bow before the awful sovereignty of God, and the clamour of the people does not come into mine ears. Jehovah's purpose shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure. No drop of the redeeming blood shall be spent in vain; no line of the everlasting covenant shall be erased, no decree of the Eternal shall be disannulled. This angers the adversary, but in its divine truth we find our consolation while the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing.

A rock that is higher than I may be useful not only for shelter but for elevation. If you stand upon high ground, though you may be a dwarf, you can see farther than the tallest man who remains below; and now standing on the high rock of God's Word, what do we see? Look. Clear your eyes of doubt and mist, and look. Forget the present for a while and gaze through the telescope of faith. What do we see? Systems of error broken in pieces, superstitions given to the moles and to the bats, the clouds vanishing, the darkness of night disappearing, and the beasts going back to their dens, for the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing beneath His wings. A day of the triumph of the truth must dawn, to the confusion of the Lord's adversaries and to the delight of His saints.

We can afford to wait, for eternity is on our side. We can afford to see the ranks of the Lord's army pushed back for a while; we can afford to see the standard fluttered by the rough winds; we can afford to hear the "Aha, Aha!" of the Philistines, for when the Prince comes, they shall know His name and the power of His might. If they will not yield to Him now and kiss His sceptre silvered with love, they shall bow before Him when they see the naked iron of His rod breaking them in pieces like potters' vessels. O to be on God's side! The whole matter lies there. If a man knows that his heart and soul are given to the cause of God and truth, he is entrenched within an impregnable

fortress, and he shall find in the eternal verities munitions of stupendous rock. He shall be steadfast "though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof".

What then are we to do? We are to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. See to that, for, though some denounce such holy care as selfishness, our Lord and Master knows best, and He charged His servants, not so much to rejoice in their power over devils, as in the fact that their names were written in heaven. Watch over your own spirit, and cast not away your confidence. Then zealously, in dependence on God, do the little you can do; do it well, and keep on doing it. You and I are not called upon to regulate the world, nor to stop the raging sea of human sin. Let us not attempt to wield the divine sceptre; it does not befit us. Naturally you would like to set everyone right and make all preachers orthodox. But the task is beyond you. Be careful to be right in your own life, and be resolute to bear your complete, honest, obedient testimony to all the truth you know; and there leave the business, for you are not responsible beyond what is possible for you.

None of us is much more than an ant on its little hill. Now, if the tiny ant is to indulge in serious reflections on the state of London and forget to assist in the labours of the insect commonwealth, it would be a foolish creature. But if it will let those great matters alone and go on doing ant-work, as an ant, it will fill its little sphere and answer the purpose of its Maker. A mother teaching her little ones and doing all she can to bring them up in the fear of God, a humble village pastor with his score or two of people around him, a teacher with her dozen children, a quiet Christian woman at home bearing her quiet godly testimony, a young man speaking for Jesus to other young men – there is nothing very ambitious about the sphere of any one of these but they are wise in the sight of the Lord.

Leave the reins of the universe in the hand of the Maker of the universe, and then do what He has given you to do in His fear and by His Spirit, and more will come of it than you dare to hope. We are like coral insects building, each one his minute portion of a structure far down in the deeps of obscurity. We cannot as yet war with those vaunted warships which sweep the ocean and hurl destruction upon cities, and yet – who knows? – we may build and build until we pile up a reef upon which the proudest navies may be wrecked. By the steady, simple, honest, Christian upbuilding of holiness and truth, we may nevertheless create a situation which will be eminently perilous to the boastful craft of falsehood and scepticism. A holy, earnest, gospel church is a grand wrecker of superstition and of infidelity.

The life of God in man, patience in suffering, perseverance in well-doing,

faithfulness to truth, prayer in the Holy Ghost, unstaggering faith in the unseen God and supreme zeal for His glory – these are our battle axe and weapons of war. And by the aid of the Holy Ghost we shall win the battle before the day comes to its close. Till then, O Lord, when our heart is overwhelmed, lead us to the rock which is higher than we are.

The Blessedness of Heaven¹

James Brewster

Revelation 21:4. *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

The end of faith is the salvation of the soul, and this salvation can be completed only in a spiritual and eternal world. “A new heaven and a new earth” are promised as the future habitation of the redeemed; but the blessedness there provided for them is also spoken of as something which is above their present power to comprehend or to conceive. “It doth not yet appear what we shall be”; and the things which are to be seen and heard in the heavenly paradise are declared to be impossible to speak in the words of man – indeed, such as a man would not be allowed to utter.

Its blessedness is therefore represented to us by figures; it is compared to those things which, though not really the most excellent in themselves, men are disposed to consider as the most precious or glorious – such as golden crowns and shining garments, inexhaustible treasures, incorruptible inheritances, thrones of glory, rivers of pleasure. More especially it is described by negative terms, by exemption from things evil, by the assurance that no such evils shall ever, in any measure, be found in that blessed abode. All mankind feel these evils more or less and are able to understand the blessedness of feeling them no more, of being secured from them for ever. To be at rest from toil, to be at peace from trouble, to be at ease from pain, to be exempt from sorrow, to be secure from dying – these are blessed reliefs and exemptions, which our feelings in the body and fears in this life make us able to understand, appreciate and desire, ready often to say with the Psalmist: “O that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away and be at rest.”

“There shall be no more death”, even in its mildest shape; no more departing from things that have pleased us, from persons who are dear to us; no more dread of those more appalling forms and accompaniments of death,

¹Reprinted, with editing, from *The Christian's Daily Companion*. Brewster (1777-1847) was parish minister of Craig, near Montrose, when he wrote this piece.

which make him the king of terrors and the executioner of divine justice; no more sight of ghastly disease, mangled limbs, or garments rolled in blood; nothing to hurt or destroy in all the holy place. There shall be “neither sorrow nor crying”; nothing to cause grief or call forth weeping; no more sympathetic sorrow for the sufferings and oppressions of fellow creatures; no more affectionate sorrow on account of the unkindness or misconduct of friends; no more sorrow of soul at the sight of transgressors, or under the sense of our own sinful nature; “sorrow and sighing shall flee away” for ever.

“Neither shall there be any more pain”; there will be no more feeling of suffering in the glorified bodies of the saints; no wearisome nights on a bed of disease; no tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day; no inhabitant among them saying I am sick; no sense of weariness, of cold and nakedness, of scorching heat or of pining need; “they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat”. “The former things are passed away”; all things causing such evils have come to an end; and there can be no more experience of them where no cause for them exists. “There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth” – no more sin and no more curse; “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes”. They are no longer in a dying world, or in a weeping world, or in a wicked world, where there are daily so many occasions of sorrow to the heart of the believer. In this world, the more he has of the mind of his Lord, the more he is, like Him, “a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs”.

Not only have all such things passed away, so as not to exist and not to be experienced. Indeed, they are not to be remembered as reasons for sorrow – or, at least, they are to be swallowed up amidst the surrounding sources of unceasing blessedness to the soul. “The former things” shall not be remembered or come into mind. Not only shall there be no cause for tears to flow, but God Himself shall dry them all up for ever; there shall be no new cause for weeping, and all past reasons for sorrow shall be changed into grounds of rejoicing. He has trained His children, chastening them in His affection, and suffering their tears to flow for their good; but now that these days of trial are past, He removes all the traces of their grief and turns their very mourning into joy and makes them rejoice from their sorrow. “The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.”

But we must not confine our thoughts of heavenly blessedness to mere freedom from all present evils, or to those views of it which are drawn from earthly similitudes, of which even earthly minds may be glad to hear and to which they may look forward with satisfaction as good things to be enjoyed. Let us ever remember the pure and spiritual character of all the happiness that is enjoyed in heaven, and the proper sources from which it flows. It is

not merely that there shall be no tears, but that God is present there to wipe them all away; it is because God Himself will dwell with them and be with them and be their God. It is not merely that “they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more”; but because “the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them” as His flock and “lead them unto living fountains of water”. So God, in such ways and by such means, “shall wipe away all tears from their eyes”.

It is not merely being delivered from all evils for evermore, but being for ever with the Lord their deliverer, that shall form our future blessedness. It is to be where He is, to see Him as He is, to love Him as He is, to be like what He is. It is, as He Himself has expressed it, to behold His glory and to enter into His joy as our Lord. In our desires of a heavenly portion, let us never forget that to learn Christ is the way to heaven; and in all our thoughts of its blessedness, let us bring the whole into one bright point as its sum and substance: that it is “to be with Christ”. Let us never imagine that we can have the spirit of that heavenly society formed in any measure in our souls if, in our anticipations of its happiness, we are overlooking His presence who is the Lord of that heaven, the light of that heaven, the life of that heaven, the object of adoration and praise to all who dwell in that heaven above.

To Him let us now learn daily to ascribe all the hope that gladdens the heart – the hope of such a blessedness as our eternal portion. “I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest.” Thus honouring Him in our hearts and before men, as the author of our eternal salvation, we should be daily preparing to join the company of His saints in casting their heavenly crowns before His throne, and singing their eternal song of praise: “Thou art worthy . . . for Thou . . . hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation”.

Protestant View

American Roman Catholic Politicians

The US edition of the *Catholic Herald* begins an article with the statement that “if Catholics were barred from public office, our politics might be greatly improved”. More than 30% of members of Congress and Senate are Roman Catholic (as against 20% of the adult population), but these members have a markedly worse voting record on abortion than the non-Romanist members. “If every Catholic were removed from Congress tomorrow,” says the article,

“the unborn would have less cause for fear; if the Senate and House were suddenly purged, the defenders of life would enjoy better odds against their enemies. Overturning *Roe v Wade* [this Supreme Court case effectively legalised abortion], passing a federal ban on abortion, enacting a constitutional amendment defending life – all these would be within easier reach.” The same moral weakness has been evident among British Roman Catholic politicians, or those who were flirting with Romanism, such as Tony Blair. *DWBS*

Notes and Comments

Church of Scotland General Assembly 2019

In reading the newspaper reports on the Church of Scotland General Assembly, one is struck with the unbiblical nature of the proceedings, and with the close relation between the dire state of the Church of Scotland and that of the whole nation. Communicant membership has dropped from 413 000 in 2011 to 336 000 in 2017, and the Church had a financial deficit of £4.46 million in 2018.

Assembly events began with Sabbath breaking in Princes Street Gardens, at which a prominent lesbian politician was to the fore. The retiring Moderator was a woman minister, as were many of the speakers at the Assembly. One speaker was an impenitent sodomite who continues in the ministry; and another minister was given a special opportunity to speak about a pilgrimage he had made to a Roman Catholic site in Spain. The First Minister Nicola Sturgeon addressed the Assembly and thanked the Church for the support that it had given to Scottish Muslims after the Christchurch shooting.

Other Assembly matters that made the news were concerns over Universal Credit; a supposed need for a “gender-balance” among the new panel of Assembly Trustees; and fears that a loss-making Church of Scotland hotel at Tiberias in Galilee might be sold to those with “Israeli interests”. Others at the Assembly were “demonstrating” because the Church was not withdrawing fast enough from her investment in fossil fuels and was insufficiently alarmed over the “need for radical action to save the planet”. Alas, it is their own souls that need saving, not the earth, which will continue to serve its purpose of sustaining human life until the end of time (Gen 8:22).

The Church of Scotland’s response to the numerical and financial decline is to reduce the number of Presbyteries from 43 to 12, and to aim at cutting staff at 121 George Street by 20-30%. The individual parish fees to central funds are reported to vary between £10 000 and £150 000 per annum which suggests a heavy central bureaucracy. Probably this arises partly from a lack

of local commitment and partly from a central distrust as to how money might be spent locally. It might be spent on gospel work instead of promoting political correctness! On the important moral and religious matters of the day – smacking, homosexuality, transgender, abortion, Romanism, Islam, evolution, the Sabbath – the Church of Scotland Assembly had nothing useful or Christian to say. *DWBS*

Persecution of Christians

The widespread levels of persecution faced by many professed Christians in various areas throughout the world has attracted the attention of some prominent figures recently. It is estimated that around 215 to 245 million professed Christians now face some form of persecution with an average of around 4000 being killed for their faith every year. Prince Charles has written concerning such persecution and violence: “There are times when it can feel as if the light has gone out of the world and darkness reigns”. The present Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, has set up a review into how the Foreign Office handles cases of persecution.

It would be good if other influential voices were raised and that real pressure were put on governments in those nations where persecution is taking place. The record of the British Government and that of other European governments has been far from impressive in recent times in using their influence to counteract the terrible menace of persecution.

In China, where the Communist regime had seemed for a period to have been less determined to oppose Christianity, the tide seems to have once again turned against the underground churches. The reports of pastors and congregations being imprisoned and brutally treated are harrowing. In neighbouring North Korea, a country where Christianity is entirely forbidden, it is estimated that there are 200 000 to 400 000 Christians. It is believed that between 50 000 and 70 000 of these are cruelly incarcerated in labour camps as enemies of the state.

The carnage in Sri Lanka where churches were bombed during worship services is but one dreadful indication of the enmity of the kingdom of darkness to the Church and the gospel of Christ. In many predominantly Muslim countries, such as Pakistan, attacks on Christians seem to take place with impunity. While we may differ significantly in doctrine and practice from many of those persecuted, and while the definition of “Christian” used in the media is very broad, we must, nevertheless, feel an instinctive sympathy for all who suffer for their allegiance to the adorable name of Jesus Christ.

Indeed, we ought to bear them on our spirits at a throne of grace and plead that the Lord would bless those who suffer for His name’s sake with real

grace to testify to the truth as it is in Jesus. “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev 2:10). *AWM*

Ban on Smacking Children

Concerned at the prospect of the Scottish Government introducing legislation to ban the smacking of children, the Free Presbyterian Synod of 2018 sent a protest to the Office of the First Minister of Scotland indicating our objections to proposals which would criminalise parents for chastising their children. In its Protest, the Synod stated that the biblical principle of parental chastisement is one of the measures necessary to restrain a child from following the natural inclination of its sinful nature, and sometimes it is the most effective way of training a child to understand right and wrong. “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him” (Prov 22:15).

The Synod made clear its opposition to physical abuse and emphasised that parents, when disciplining, must be especially careful to have the child’s good in view and not to use it as a means of venting their own frustration or displeasure. The Word of God prohibits this in its warnings against improper anger: “Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil” (Eph 4:26-27), and, “An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression” (Prov 29:22). There is no place for unrighteous or uncontrolled anger in the life of any Christian.

The Scottish Government invited comments on the planned legislation and 89% of respondents were against a smacking ban. Despite this, the Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Bill was debated and overwhelmingly approved in principle by the Scottish Parliament in May 2019. The bill, introduced by John Finnie, MSP for the Green Party, is said to be designed to give children the same protection from assault as adults. This first stage of the bill was passed by 80 votes to 29. It will now go to a Holyrood Committee, where it will be considered in greater detail, before MSPs are asked to give their final approval so that it can become law.

The law in Scotland currently permits a parent to claim a defence of “justifiable assault” when punishing their child, but the use of an implement, shaking or striking a child on the head is banned. Mr Finnie’s bill would end that defence, meaning parents could face prosecution for any physical punishment of their children. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, parents are currently allowed to use “reasonable chastisement” but can face criminal charges if they hit a child so hard that it leaves a mark, or causes bruising, swelling, cuts, grazes or scratches.

In his introduction, Mr Finnie said 54 countries across the world already prohibit the physical punishment of children, and claimed that his bill would bring Scotland into line with international best practice. He said that it was now time for action and that “a growing body of international evidence shows that physical punishment of children is harmful to their development and not an effective means of discipline”. He added, “We often in Scotland talk about zero tolerance for domestic abuse and violence, but we allow the use of physical punishment for children. This sends a message to our children that hitting someone is a way of resolving a dispute, or if you don’t like their behaviour.” The Conservatives argued that banning smacking is unnecessary and risks criminalising parents for disciplining their own children. Tory MSP Oliver Mundell stressed that violence against children was wrong but argued that the bill was an “assault on family life” as it would see the state intervene in cases where a child’s welfare is not at risk.

If this bill is passed, those who use what is currently regarded as reasonable chastisement will become guilty of assault. Anyone who argues, as some do, that this bill will not criminalise parents who transgress its requirements are denying reality.

This is yet another piece of proposed legislation which undermines the Word of God, in this case seeking to interfere with the responsibility of loving parents to exercise their God-appointed responsibility to chastise their children and placing those who do so outside of the law. *FRD*

Church Information

New Contributor

At this year’s Synod, Mr K H Munro resigned from the Editorial Board for this *Magazine*. Since the Board was first set up, it has taken primary responsibility for contributions to the Protestant View and Notes and Comments. We thank Mr Munro for his work, over several years, in supplying helpful reaction to matters of current moral concern. In his place, the Synod appointed Mr F R Daubney, an elder in the Glasgow congregation, whose first such contribution appears in this issue.

Induction in Dingwall

The Northern Presbytery will meet, God willing, in the Dingwall church on Friday, August 9 at 6.50 pm for the induction of Rev A W MacColl to the Dingwall and Beaully congregation. The service is to begin at 7 pm.

(Rev) D W B Somerset, Clerk of Presbytery

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. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch** (Ross-shire); Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.
- Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev R MacLeod, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Greenock:** Sabbath 2.30 pm, held in Free Church of Scotland hall, 14 Jamaica Street, PA15 1XX. Sabbath 2.30 pm. Contact Rev R MacLeod; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** 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. **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. No F P services. 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 Levytskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytskyi@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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