

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, Fiffth: Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

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

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

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

July: First Sabbath: Beaulay; **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, Tauranga.

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

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

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

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Christ's "Day" on Earth

God "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 Jn 4:14). The Son of God came into the world to carry out the work that His Father gave Him – to do all that was necessary for the salvation of sinners, so that they would not go down to eternal destruction, but would enjoy perfect blessedness in the presence of God for ever. When we think of Jesus going about doing good during His time in this world, we must think of Him as always conscious of His "Father's business", as He said when Mary and Joseph found Him in the temple at the age of 12. They should have realised more than they did that He who had been born of Mary was indeed "called the Son of God" – according to the angel's message (Lk 1:35) – because He actually was the Son of God and had a divine work to do in this world.

Among the good things Jesus was commissioned to do was to give sight to a man who had been born blind and, more wonderfully still, to give him spiritual eyesight, for, as Jesus said, "the works of God [were to] be manifest in him" (John 9:3). Immediately after Jesus had spoken these words, He went on to say, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work". The works He had to do, He must carry them out while the opportunity lasted; after that time of opportunity had come to an end, it would be impossible to work any longer.

When that "day" was drawing towards its close – when the time of opportunity for His work was coming to an end – the Saviour showed signs of particular earnestness in His attitude to the work that still had to be completed. He had always been conscious of what would complete His work; accordingly He had warned His disciples "that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mk 8:31). His work was to involve suffering – severe suffering, even unto death – for He was bearing the sins of many. So it had been prophesied; so the sacrificial types had indicated; for "thus it behoved [that is, it was necessary for] Christ to suffer" (Lk 24:46) as the sin-bearer. So He reminded His disciples after the resurrection, when they were to go out with the gospel.

But “when the time was come that He should be received up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem”. He showed even greater urgency, because the “night” was approaching, when it would no longer be possible to work; He must work while His “day” lasted, the fixed period of time that had been ordained from eternity during which He would be in this world. He must finish the work for which the Father had sent Him.

The Father had sent Him, we have already seen, “to be the Saviour of the world”. But what did that involve? One answer lies in the words that Christ used in Capernaum: “This is the Father’s will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day” (Jn 6:39). He was thinking of those whom the Father had given Him to save, for He must endure God’s anger instead of them. He must do so in the time appointed; He must suffer the full punishment due to them as their substitute; He must keep God’s law in their place. And He did so; He did so perfectly; and He did it in the appointed time, before “the night” came.

This perfect work provided a suitable basis for sinners to obtain salvation. None of those whom the Father gave Him can possibly perish in hell, through any inadequacy in that basis, and therefore all that the Father gave to Christ in eternity “shall come” to Him. Among them was the man born blind, to whom Christ gave the power to see. But that was not spiritual eyesight. When Jesus found him afterwards and asked, “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” the man showed his spiritual blindness by asking, “Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?” Then Jesus revealed Himself to the man as the Son of God, so that the man, having now seen the Saviour by faith, confessed, “Lord, I believe”. What is more, we are told that “he worshipped” the Saviour, showing that he now had spiritual life. In His dealings with this man, Christ was engaged in that part of His work in His “day” on earth which involved bringing sinners into His Father’s kingdom.

Let every sinner recognise that Christ has never rejected anyone who came to Him and will never do so – no matter how serious their sins were, no matter how long continued they have been, no matter what aggravating factors these sins have involved. No one coming, on the basis of Christ’s finished work, will be turned away, for He gives the emphatic assurance: “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (Jn 6:37). How strongly He expresses Himself! He is describing what is totally impossible: to cast out a sinner who is approaching Him. The words of this verse express, Matthew Poole comments, “the freeness and readiness of Christ to receive every one who truly believeth in Him, and to preserve him to eternal life and salvation. Who they are that are given to Christ, and that will . . . believe in

Him, is a secret that is known unto God alone; but this may be known to all, that Christ will not cast off any soul that is willing to receive Him as its Saviour, and that no such soul shall perish for ever."

None of these believing souls will be lost. In this world, from the time of their conversion, they will be "kept by the power of God through faith unto [their final] salvation" (1 Pet 1:5), until they appear before God "without spot or wrinkle". No one can pluck them out of Christ's hand; not even the devil can overwhelm them by his temptations so that they will fall out of God's kingdom. The Father gave them to His Son, who died for them; the Holy Spirit has called them effectually, so that they now follow Christ in the ways of new obedience; besides, Christ is making continual intercession for them.

Nor will Christ lose any of them in the river of death; He will bring them safely through, whatever concerns they may have beforehand about that solemn event. Christ will bring them all safely into the glories of heaven, where they will for ever enjoy Him and the blessings He has purchased for them. But do they not lose their bodies in the river of death? That is so, yet the separation between body and soul is not permanent; Christ is to "raise [the body] up again at the last day". How clearly it will then be seen that the work of redemption – what Christ did during His "day" on earth – was perfect! It accomplished everything that God intended it to do. What a cause of eternal praise it will be at last, among the people of God, that He has brought many sons to glory, that He has lost none of them, and all because of the perfection of the work He accomplished in this world!

From Christ's determination to finish His work on earth within the appointed "day", we should learn: (1.) Our obligation to receive the blessings that Christ wrought out at such cost to Himself and so willingly. When He calls us, with all His divine authority, to "come" to Him – that is, to believe on Him – how dare we reject "so great salvation"? Indeed "how shall we escape" if we do so? (Heb 2:3).

(2.) How God's children should worship Him, even in this life, for the wonderful works He did, in such a display of mercy, for unworthy sinners!

(3.) We should seek to imitate Christ in His determination to use His "day" to the full. This applies to the urgency and earnestness with which the unconverted should seek the Lord, for He may only be found in the "day" of one's lifetime, the only opportunity in our unending existence to be saved from our sins and all their consequences. It applies also to those who have found salvation: they have the opportunity to serve God in this evil world. The "night" will soon come when they will no longer be able to work. They have only a short time in which to do what may, even in a small way, advance God's cause and bring some degree of glory to Him on earth.

Christ's Delight¹

A Sermon by *John Kennedy*

Proverbs 8:30,31. *Rejoicing always before Him . . . and My delights were with the sons of men.*

In these words, two “rejoicings” are ascribed to Christ. To one accustomed to look on the face of Christ, it will not be difficult to recognise that it is of Himself He speaks as rejoicing always before God and having His delights with the sons of men. His face was wont to be veiled in Old Testament times, but surely enough glory shines here through the veil to assure the hearts of all His people that it is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who now speaks, and speaks of Himself “rejoicing always before Him . . . and My delights were with the sons of men”.

These two rejoicings must be consistent with each other. It may be difficult to see how He who was ever rejoicing before the Father, finding infinite joy in His Father’s communion, should have His delights with the sons of men. I do not know if we shall ever see how the two are consistent, but they must be so; for it is the same Person who is “rejoicing” and “delighting”, and it is the same Person who tells of both. What a wonder that the Son of God is telling us this! I do not wonder at Him telling of His rejoicing before His Father, but what a wonder that He tells of His delights being with the sons of men! But He tells it and, whether I can understand it or not, these two delights are perfectly consistent.

As that is true, so is this: these two delights must concur. At the same time that He was rejoicing He was delighting. He was “rejoicing always”, and thus there could be no opportunity for having His delights with the sons of men except while rejoicing before His Father. There is no change in that joy; therefore He is “delighting” while rejoicing before the Father.

Further, as that is plain, so also is this: these two must act together as well as consist and concur. His great joy as the Son is in His Father; and if also His delights are with the sons of men, I am sure that what so delights Him must give Him an opportunity of gladness as the Son. His paramount joy is rejoicing as the Son in communion with His Father, and I am sure what gives Him delight towards the sons of men must give Him gladness as the Son. I wish I had got faith’s hold of this for myself, and you for yourselves. Whatever it is that gives joy to the love of Christ bearing on men, and gratifies that love, gives Him, I am sure, an opportunity of joy as the Son. Were it not for that, how could I enjoy the love of Christ?

¹Notes of a sermon, taken by a hearer at the Dornoch Free Church communion in June 1881. Taken, with editing, from the Appendix to *Life of John Kennedy DD.*

What I wish specially to bring before you from the text is that what was a delight to Christ in connection with the sons of men was a delight to Him because of His love to the Father. What views of the sons of men were before Christ when delighting in them while rejoicing before His Father? The Word of God does not leave us in doubt as to that, and as to what it was in connection with them that gave joy to Christ:

(1.) His delights were with the sons of men because among them were those given Him by the Father. "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me." Again, "I thank Thee, O Father . . ." That is surely one cause of His delight. (2.) It delighted Him to think of becoming, through His incarnation, the Brother of the objects of His love. "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Love seeks nearness to its objects, and so the love of Christ sought nearness to His people by becoming their Brother. (3.) It was a delight to Him that He was to be their Redeemer, to set them free from the curse they were under. Whatever it cost Christ to secure that, I am sure it did not stand between Him and delighting in them from a past eternity. (4.) It delighted Him to think of coming forth to gather them in His time of love and day of power. (5.) It delighted Him to think of shepherding His gathered ones throughout their wilderness journey. (6.) It delighted Him to think of them as in His presence during the eternity to come. Let us look a little at these and see how there was an opportunity of joy to Christ in connection with each of them.

1. They were given to Christ by the Father. "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me." Surely it was pleasant to Christ to get a gift from His Father. But what a gift it was! you say; what a miserable set they were: poor, wretched, lost! Yes, you may say a good deal of that about them, but let me give you two reasons why they were precious to Christ: (1.) Because He set His love upon them and, as His infinite love was set upon them, how precious they were! Every object of love is precious to the one who loves. As objects of His love they were infinitely precious. (2.) Because of His Father's purpose to save them. If that was true, their salvation became the cause of God's glory, and in it He was to give the highest manifestation of His glory. These were precious to Him as was the glory of His Name.

Do not think that it was not much to give such as these to the Son. However vile and loathsome they were as sinners, they were infinitely precious as loved by the Father and with His purpose of salvation bearing on them. I do not wonder that He bestowed such a gift upon the Son. If the Son got them as the objects of His Father's love, and as a people with whom was connected the manifestation of the Father's glory, I do not wonder that Christ delighted in them. And was it not a delight to Christ that the Father *trusted* Him with the loved ones, and with the manifestation of His glory by means of them?

One may be trusted with what one fears he cannot perform, and his sense of weakness prevents rejoicing. But Christ knew that He had all the resources of the Godhead in Himself and that, through the promise of the Father to Him as Mediator, all the resources of the Godhead were pledged for the fulfilment of the Father's purpose. Therefore there was nothing to prevent Christ's delight in receiving this trust from His Father. Seeing in it what was gratifying to the Father's heart and glorifying to the Father's Name, He saw enough to give Him infinite delight. O if we could get into the heart of Christ in these words, "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me," we could echo them with the words, Thy "delights were with the sons of men!"

2. Christ's thought of becoming the Brother of His people through His incarnation. It is Christ who says to His Father: "A body hast Thou prepared for Me". A body prepared by the Father! Surely He might rejoice in everything He got from His Father. He got the people from the Father, and now He gets the body from Him. That *body* was the human nature.

You say, I cannot think of human nature without seeing what befell it in Eden, as trampled under the foot of the destroyer. Yes, it has been made vile by sin, made an utter ruin! God was dishonoured in that nature, and it is now under the power of Satan! But here is human nature – perfect, true human nature – and here it is the tabernacle in which the Son of God is to manifest Divine glory. The more I think of the entire power of the destroyer, the more certain I am that it was joy to the Son that the Father's Name would be glorified through Him, in this nature and on this earth. Remember too that, as it gave Him joy because of His love to the Father, so also because of His love to those whom He was to call His brethren.

What a joy to the heart of Christ to be able to call His loved ones *brethren*, to get such a near relation to them as to be no longer at a distance! The divine and human natures are infinitely distant, but in the Son of God they are in one Person – no longer at a distance, but united in a way that implies no diminution of His glory and blessedness as the eternal Son of God. How sweet also to Christ that He was in human nature so that He might be a Brother not only in name to His people, but that He might act towards them a Brother's part! What joy this was to the love of Christ! O give up your hard thoughts of Him.

3. What He was to do as the Redeemer of His people. You say He could not think of their redemption without thinking of the shame and suffering of His life as the "Man of sorrows", and of His death as lifted up on the accursed tree. I believe that, in a past eternity, the mind of Christ was set on His own humiliation, but there was nothing in it to bring sorrow to the heart of Christ in that eternity. He was thinking of it as Divine; and there was nothing in it

to diminish His blessedness, but there was in it what gave Him joy. To His love to the Father it was delightful, as seeing how the Father's purposes were to be accomplished through His humiliation. It was always a delight to Christ to do His Father's will. "My meat", He says, "is to do the will of Him that sent Me." And having His eye on His own finished work throughout eternity, what delight that gave to His infinite love to His Father!

Again, He was delighting in the redemption of His people because by means of it He was to show forth the glory of the Father. What joy it was to Christ to be charged with the glory of His Father's Name, to come forth with it through His life and death, and to unfold the treasures of glory that are in the Father's Name! There was in *this* something that was a wellspring of gladness to Christ when rejoicing before His Father! Also what delight it gave to Christ to see, in connection with the accomplishment of redemption, a channel opened up through which Divine love could reach His people – that the Father could, to the praise of all His glory, express His love to each and every one of those given to the Son! As sure as I am that He was the Son, so sure I am that He had infinite delight in the redemption of His Father's people.

Turning to the other side, surely there was in redemption what was delightful to Him in His love to His people. Little do we know of the love of Christ. Through all eternity it took in the awfulness of God's wrath and the curse of the broken law, and that love would have its loved ones delivered from it all. We can only stand on the verge of this ocean of the love of Christ. Then think what delight it likewise was to Christ to see a free and full salvation bestowed on all His people as the result of His finished work. To the mind of Christ, His work was the channel through which Divine love flowed, bearing salvation free, full and everlasting, to all His people.

Yes, to those here, in this house today, in whom Christ was delighting from a past eternity, it was a joy to Him to know that salvation was to be theirs from Him and through Him, at the cost of His precious blood – of His pouring out His soul unto death! I tell you, the more what He had to do and to suffer was present to the mind of Christ, the more it was delightful to Him to think of His people as a people redeemed by Him. I say again, Give up your hard thoughts of Christ. It is better to try what He is, to try what is in His heart, going as a poor hell-deserving sinner and casting yourself upon Him to see what welcome He will give you. You will never regret that experiment. You will find His love to be a love that "passeth knowledge".

4. What Christ was to do in gathering His redeemed ones to Himself. What, in relation to His love to the Father, was delightful to Him in this gathering? It was another opportunity for a gift of the same people from the Father. Do not imagine that the gift of the loved people can come too often.

No, no. The Father gave them to Christ in a past eternity and now He gives them again. “No man can come to Me except the Father draw him”; and if that “drawing” of the Father implies a fresh putting forth of His power in causing them to “come” to the Son, I am sure the Son rejoices in thus getting them from the Father. When the Son goes to gather them, He is to bring them to the Father. The Father is to bring them to Him by the Spirit, and He by the Spirit is to bring them back to the Father.

Think of what it is to the heart of Christ to get a poor sinner and bring him to the mercy seat, and get for him there a full and free remission of sin as an earnest of all the blessings of the everlasting covenant. Think of that poor sinner then delivered over to the Father’s bosom, to have the place of a child in that bosom for evermore! That must have been a delight to Christ. Also what joy to Him to get them into His own hands! O Blessed One, through all eternity Thou didst love Thy chosen, and for 33 years on earth Thou didst love until Thou didst die for them! I would like Thee to get them into Thy hands at last. But it must be a day of power on His part before it can be a day of love on their part. He finds one of them in his tenth year, another in his twentieth and another in his thirtieth. Christ finds them at the appointed time, place, and means of grace. He gets into their heart by His Word and Spirit, apprehends them, brings them to Himself, and gives them a place as a member of His mystical body.

What must it be to Christ to get the loved one thus to Himself, to bring him in to the Father, and to get the blessing of the Godhead to rest on that loved one, as now redeemed and brought back to the family of God! O my dear fellow sinner, do not grudge that joy to Christ in connection with your own soul! If you come to Christ, although you only stepped this moment from the brink of hell into His bosom, at the gospel call, it would be infinite gladness to Christ to receive you, to bring you to His Father, and to obtain for you all that you need. Would that not be wiser than leaving yourself in the hands of the enemy, who is a liar and a murderer from the beginning? May the Lord have mercy on all whose choice it is to remain there! Little do they know the light to which they are blind and the danger to which they are exposing themselves. O may the Lord bring souls to a right mind!

5. It was a delight to Christ to think of shepherding them from the moment of their vital union to Himself. In His love, the Son was not disposed to complain of it being a 40 years’ journey through the wilderness. The greater the wilderness, and the more certain that they were to be there for a considerable time, amidst enemies and dangers, the more was His love to His Father gratified in having to care for them so long.

And think of what it is to Christ, not only to care for them so that none of

them shall perish, but to deal with them in such a way that they shall become more and more like the Father. The Father then sees them more and more conformed to His mind – the children growing more and more like their Elder Brother, and so more and more like the Father! And what must it be to Christ to see the fruit of His redemption appearing in them, as they serve His Father in the world! I was trying to conceive what it must be to Christ to see the fruit of His travail coming out in the souls of His redeemed ones in such a way that His Father in heaven is glorified. “Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.” I think that seeing the Father glorified in and through them is something that must delight the Son, who lives and rejoices before His Father.

Again what must it be to Christ that His people are a company with whom He can associate in their wilderness journey? Does it give more joy to Christ to bear company with them, to visit them and to bestow on them the fruit of His labour, or for His people to enjoy His presence and fellowship? I think it is infinitely more joy to Christ to have the opportunity of being with them than for them to have His company and communion. For what joy it must be to Christ to see them living by faith, transformed into the image of God, the Father's face shining on them, His likeness drawn on them, His Spirit dwelling in them and communicating to them the grace treasured up for them, until they advance from strength to strength to the journey's end! This indeed is delight to Christ as to no other.

6. The joy of Christ in having His people during the eternity to come.

All of them were so present to the mind of Christ that He knew not only what they were and are, but what they shall be at last. Do not forget that there is no tomorrow, as there is no yesterday, in the mind of God – all is present to Him. We think of yesterday and of tomorrow, but He inhabits eternity; and what is to come is as present to Him as what is past. Thus would it not be a delight to Christ to think of the Father's house with nothing in it that the Father would see out of it, and nothing out of it that the Father would see in it? And would it not be a delight to Christ that those who were haters of Himself and of His Father would through Him be made such as would spend eternity glorifying and praising God with all their hearts?

There was also present to Christ the opportunity the Father would have of letting out His fatherly love to them, throughout eternity, and they for ever glad before Him! O Blessed One, Thou wast Thyself Thy Father's delight, and sure I am that no one shall ever be His delight as Thou art; but if Thy Father will have Thee in Thy place rejoicing always before Him, Thy Father, as the Father of His people, shall delight to have them as the objects of His love also before Him.

And will it not be Thy joy to give Thy Father this delight – to have Thy Father’s love fully gratified through the Father’s people being fully blessed, and the blessed people spending eternity in the light of their Father’s love, to the praise of the Father’s Name? I think we may say that this will be a delight to Christ. And will it not be joy to Him to have His people where no wicked one shall trouble them, where no one shall say, I am sick, where there shall be no spot or wrinkle on them, but all like Himself, where they shall have the nearest and most intimate communion with Him, as He leads them to the fountains of living waters, and the Father wipes away all tears from their eyes?

What have I done but endeavoured to point you to one infinite field after another, while standing at an infinite distance from the wellspring of joy at which He was drinking who “was set up from everlasting”? But if it has in some measure overwhelmed me, it has left some shame of heart because of coldness, and some wistfulness of desire after faith’s enjoyment of that love. And what have you been doing while I was speaking? You were talking high things, you say. Some are in the habit of speaking in this way of some lessons we need to learn as the alphabet of God’s teaching. If I was pointing to what was high, it was as a poor scholar who has not yet got beyond the alphabet in the things of God; and let me tell you that, if you are an utter stranger to the love of Christ that made Him have His delights with the sons of men, you are undone for ever!

But, you say, how am I to find the love of Christ? I cannot say that I am an object of that love, or that Christ was thinking of me when rejoicing before the Father.

I do not ask you to say that, but I will tell you how to get a sip out of the joy of which we have been speaking. The first movement in that direction is to learn that you are a hell-deserving sinner, that the desert of hell is upon you, the corruption of hell within you, and the wrath of God lying over you. Until you learn this, I despair of you learning about the love of Christ. How so? Because until then you will not be shut up to Christ as the only hope for you, a sinner. The way to know the love of Christ is for you to be brought as a sinner to cast yourself upon Him, not because He loved you from everlasting, but because He is the Christ of God, who came to seek and to save the lost. And you, as a lost sinner, are to cast yourself upon Him, because He has said, “Come unto Me”. What then? Christ will welcome you and fulfil His promise, “Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out”. That is the first time you will get through faith a taste of the love “which passeth knowledge”.

Enough will follow that. Should there not be on the earth one so deserving of hell as you are, one with not so much of hell in his soul as you have, one

who never did so much to prove himself an enemy to God as you have done, yet it would give infinite delight to the heart of Christ to get you as you are, this day, into His everlasting arms that He might clothe you with His righteousness, seal you with His Spirit, introduce you to the Father, and get for you, in His own right, the blessing, even life for evermore! O my dear fellow sinners, do not grudge to Christ that delight. If He will get that, who can tell what you will get? “Whoso findeth Me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.”

Is there any one of you today whose desire is that Christ would get delight? Then go to Him, as a fool, for wisdom; as a criminal, for righteousness; as a leper, for sanctification; as a lost one, for redemption. What will delight Christ will be the opportunity given Him in your salvation of His being your all in all? Come to Him; He hates putting away. His delights are in receiving sinners. His delights have been, and shall be, with the sons of men.

Thoughts on Sanctification¹

2. Its Imperfection in This Life

Rev Roderick Macleod

It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that a soul is born again. It has been said that He comes into the soul in the chariot of the Word and, in His train, He brings all spiritual graces which make spiritual life and sanctification possible. But grace is weak at first and sanctification is not perfect.

1. One reason for the imperfection of sanctification in this world is the opposition that the “new creature” meets in the soul. “The imperfection of sanctification in believers ariseth from the remnants of sin abiding in every part of them, and the perpetual lustings of the flesh against the spirit; whereby they are often foiled with temptations, and fall into many sins, are hindered in all their spiritual services, and their best works are imperfect and defiled in the sight of God” (*Larger Catechism*, Ans 78).

An inscription on the memorial stone of a soldier read something to this effect: “The sorest battle I ever was in was the battle with self in the conquest of sin”. This accords with biblical truth; it is very helpful.

(1.) It teaches that there is a holy principle in the soul of the converted which breaks the tyranny of the state of nature, and enables one to repent and struggle for “the conquest of sin”. The *Confession of Faith* calls this “a new heart and a new spirit”. The Lord Jesus Christ has called this holy principle “a

¹Based on some of the material on this subject presented to the 2018 Theological Conference. The previous article, last month, considered sanctification as “a work of God’s free grace”.

well of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jn 4:14). Paul has called it the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:2). In Ephesians 4:24 it is called the “new man” which the believer is “to put on” more and more.

(2.) It teaches that there remains after his conversion, present and active in the believer’s soul, an opposing principle: sinful self. The *Confession* calls this “remaining corruption”. Paul calls the remaining corruption “the flesh”, in Galatians 5:17: “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would”. He describes it as “the law of sin” in Romans 7:23 and “the body of this death” in Romans 7:24. In Ephesians 4:22 it is called “the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts”, which the believer is to “put off”. In Romans 8:7 it is called “the carnal mind”, which is “enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be”.

(3.) It declares in no uncertain terms that there is a conflict between these two principles. The *Confession* refers to this as “a continual and irreconcilable war; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh” (*Westminster Confession* 13:2).

(4.) It also helps us, strange as it may seem, to interpret the complexities of the doctrine of the will as expounded in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (chapter 9, “The Liberty of the Will”).

(a) Section 1 in chapter 9 teaches that, in considering the will, one has to think of it, not merely as the faculty which directs the whole man’s actions, but that it is governed by either a holy principle or by a sinful principle. The will is not self-determining; it is determined by the prevailing moral disposition that governs it.

(b) Section 2 says that the will of Adam in innocence was governed by a holy disposition.

(c) Section 3 says that, in the fall, man lost that righteous governing principle; the throne of the will was then invaded by a sinful principle.

(d) Section 4 deals with the conversion and sanctification of believers. The holy principle, forfeited in the Fall is created again in the soul by the power of the Holy Spirit. This takes place in the new birth. Then it reigns on the throne of the will, directing the whole man, but not without the opposition of sinful self, which is not yet destroyed. This section states: “When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, He freeth him from his natural bondage under sin; and, by His grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that, by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly, nor only, will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil”. This describes theologically “the sorest battle I ever was in”. The battle is so sore that nothing but the

power of God can preserve the new creature in the stream of corruption that rises from the spring of one's corrupt nature. A state of perpetual antagonism exists between the "old man" and the "new man"; "a continual and irreconcilable war; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh" (*Westminster Confession* 13:2).

The Westminster divines were not strangers to the sore spiritual conflict of the writer of the inscription on the gravestone. The answer to Question 195 in *The Larger Catechism*, "What do we pray for in the sixth petition?" does not possess the brevity of our interesting quotation,² but what is lost in pithiness is gained in fullness:

"In this petition, (which is, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,) acknowledging that the most wise, righteous, and gracious God, for divers holy and just ends, may so order things, that we may be assaulted, foiled, and for a time led captive by temptation; that Satan, the world, and the flesh, are ready powerfully to draw us aside, and ensnare us; and that we, even after the pardon of our sins, by reason of our corruption, weakness, and want of watchfulness, are not only subject to be tempted, and forward to expose ourselves unto temptations, but also of ourselves unable and unwilling to resist them, to recover out of them, and to improve them; and worthy to be left under the power of them: we pray that God would so overrule the world and all in it, subdue the flesh, and restrain Satan, order all things, bestow and bless all means of grace, and quicken us to watchfulness in the use of them, that we and all His people may by His providence be kept from being tempted to sin; or, if tempted, that by His Spirit we may be powerfully supported and enabled to stand in the hour of temptation; or when fallen, raised again and recovered out of it, and have a sanctified use and improvement thereof: that our sanctification and salvation may be perfected, Satan trodden under our feet, and we fully freed from sin, temptation, and all evil, for ever".

The believer is black, as to sinful self, but he has a new nature which is spiritually beautiful. "I am black", he often confesses with grief. But the prevailing bent of his will, which grapples for the victory over sinful self, is most beautiful to Christ.

This battle makes the believer understand the sinfulness of his own sinful nature; it makes him also attribute the whole of his salvation to the grace of God and not to his personal sanctification. He cries out with Paul: "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing"; and, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" When the Lord gives His people fresh discoveries of their sinfulness, they see more clearly the wickedness of sin, its power to deceive them, and the unfathomable love

²In the third paragraph of this article.

of God, who by the blood royal of heaven cleanses them from all sin. They become more and more conscious of the exceeding breadth of the law's requirements and of their inability to keep it.

God thus makes them value Jesus Christ more and lean more and more upon Him as they come up out of the wilderness. They feel they are going from one degree of weakness to another, but that man who "breakfasts every morning on spiritual prayer and sups every evening on the same"³ will be going "from strength to strength", no matter what he feels.

2. Another reason for the imperfection of sanctification here is that believers see Christ "through a glass darkly". When "we shall see Him as He is", says the Apostle John, then "we shall be like Him" (1 Jn 3:2). "The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone, in the state of glory only" (*Westminster Confession* 9:5). They, like David, may be assured of this:

"Surely that which concerneth me the Lord will perfect make:
Lord, still Thy mercy lasts; do not Thine own hands' works forsake"
(Ps 138:8).

The men of God whom we have known are proof that, despite the cursed enmity of the old man, grace can grow in this life. With the blessing of God on the diligent use of the means of grace, where "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, [believers] are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor 3:18). "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 Jn 3:3).

Christ and His Sheep¹

James Brewster

John 10:27,28. *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.*

One of the most beautiful and expressive emblems employed in sacred Scripture, to describe man's condition as a fallen creature, is that of lost sheep, sheep that have gone astray. Other emblems imply our guilt and rebellion against God, but this expresses chiefly our misery and danger in ourselves, as wandering from God and seeking our good from the things of this world: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one

³See the description of "the Happy Man" in last month's article.

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

to his own way". The emblem, in its natural meaning, is remarkably descriptive of man's inability to secure himself from the miseries of his spiritual estrangement from God and aversion to Him. A sheep that is lost is specially helpless and exposed, incapable of finding its way to the fold or the flock which it has left; neither is it swift enough to flee from its various enemies, nor strong enough to resist. It is liable to a multitude of dangers, of which it has no experience or apprehension. Unless speedily recovered by the care of the shepherd, it is sure in some way or other to be destroyed.

Thus its rescue and restoration is the apt similitude of our redemption by the great Shepherd of souls, who came "to seek and to save that which was lost". He fulfills all the offices of a good Shepherd in this work which was given Him and which He gave Himself to do; but there is one point in which He did more than what we can ever imagine any shepherd to do. In this therefore the comparison utterly fails – in that He gave His life for His sheep.

A shepherd among men may expose his life to risk for the sake of his flock, as when the young shepherd of Israel threw himself against the lion and the bear and, at his own peril, plucked his sheep from their mouth. But the gracious Redeemer, as the good Shepherd, came deliberately to suffer death for His flock: "I lay down My life for the sheep. . . . No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." He made Himself, as one of the helpless and unresisting flock, an offering and a sacrifice unto God, that they might go free. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth." "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Now to this flock, "the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood", Christ continues to fulfil all the offices of a great and good Shepherd, till He will carry them safe through the dark valley and bring them all to the heavenly fold. There they shall go out and in for ever and find pasture, in the full enjoyment of that eternal life which He has given them. In this office as the Shepherd of souls, there is presented to our minds the most engaging and moving view of His care for their safety, and compassion for their misery, and condescension to their infirmities – even more, in some respects, than in the similitude of a father's watchfulness and labours for his children's welfare; inasmuch as a family may grow up and guide themselves, and even support their parents in their turn. But a flock is always helpless and continually dependent on the shepherd's care. In no words can the Redeemer's care, as a Shepherd, be so truly and beautifully described as in those of His own Holy Spirit in the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel (34:6ff).

The Lord is thus to His people, in a spiritual sense, what a shepherd is to his flock: "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd"; He is the Shepherd and

Overseer of their souls. He possesses every necessary qualification for this office, in the highest degree, and fulfils its duties in the most effectual manner. He is “mighty to save” and, though they are so feeble in themselves and surrounded with so many adversaries seeking to devour them, not one of them shall be lost, and no being is able to pluck them out of His hand.

Though they are found in every place and require His aid at every moment, He is able by His divine presence to watch over every one of those committed to His charge, who cast themselves on His care: “He calleth His own sheep by name”. He feeds them as a hungry flock, vainly seeking their souls’ happiness in the barren wilderness of this world; leading them to the pasture of His Word and ordinances, feeding them with knowledge and understanding of their true good, and giving them “that meat which endureth unto eternal life”. He guards them in their defenceless state, from all things that would do them harm, making all things that happen to them work together for their good, and enabling them to walk safely amid the powers of darkness that surround them on every side and seek their destruction every moment. He guides them in their readiness to stray, warning them as by a voice behind them: “This is the way, walk ye in it”. And when wandering at any time from His paths, and made to feel their need of His help, He is at hand to hear their cry, to bring them back to His fold, and to restrain them by His gracious influence on their hearts.

He does all this, not only as the great Shepherd, but as a good shepherd, knowing their weakness and touched even with a feeling of their infirmities, going before them by His example and encouraging them to follow His steps – constraining them by His love, strengthening them by His grace, carrying the feeblest, as in His bosom, and gently leading along those that are heavy laden with their burdens. In all this He is faithful to the charge which He has undertaken. Having loved them as His own He loves them to the end, and nothing shall be able to separate them from His love, having come to seek and to save them when they did not know Him. He will never leave or forsake them after having brought them to know His voice and to obey His call, but will carry them on “from strength to strength [till] every one of them in Zion appeareth before God”.

How great the blessedness of having such a Shepherd as the object of our faith and trust, and of being able to rejoice in the sense of His superintending care and unchangeable love! How precious such a persuasion to every soul, in his earthly pilgrimage and lost, ruined state as a spiritual being, when truly feeling his weak and defenceless condition! How precious such a persuasion, founded not upon his own worthiness, but upon the Lord’s faithfulness, enabling him to say with Paul: “I know whom I have believed, and

am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day”.

How important also to consider and to keep in mind the character which He Himself gives of His flock! Many, He tells us, who now appear as His sheep shall be found to lack this character when He shall come to separate them one from another, as the last act of His office – as a shepherd divides His sheep from the goats. This character is, generally, that we welcome Him as our Shepherd; then it may said of us: “Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls”; and we will then indeed say, each for himself, “I have gone astray like a lost sheep, seek Thy servant”; “Let my soul live, and it shall praise Thee; and let Thy judgments help me”.

The character of His flock is, further, to wait on Him for all the direction which they need, to give heed to hearing His voice, and to show that we know His voice and follow Him as He calls us. So may we be warranted to say, “The Lord is my shepherd”; and may the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

An Objection to Prayer¹

Benjamin M Palmer

Here we meet another objection, which professes to be founded on experience and is the product of feeling rather than of reason. Though shallow in itself, yet because it is popular in its form, it is wider in its reach and more tenacious in its grasp than some others. It may be stated thus: In the very instances where we might have anticipated that God would interpose, we are often disappointed; this leaves us with the alternative: either God was unrighteous in His denial, or His providence did not cover the case and the prayer was unwarranted.

This dilemma is most apt to be suggested in times of bitter disappointment and grief. A gifted young lawyer once said to the writer, at a time of a public disaster: “I used to believe in a great many things, but now I am drifting into universal scepticism. I used to believe in human progress, but now history seems to move in a narrow circle; and Solomon was about right when he wrote, ‘The thing that hath been is the thing that shall be’. I used to believe

¹Benjamin M Palmer (1818-1902) had a long ministry in New Orleans. This is a chapter, edited, from his *Theology of Prayer*. It deals with the third of four objections he refutes.

in civilisation, but now culture seems only to make a man a more cunning savage, the velvet paw only concealing the tiger's claw. I used to believe in providence, which, as my pious mother taught me, upholds and governs all things; now I am not certain there is a God."

What answer could be returned to this wail of despair but this: "My friend, you and I are the last persons who can afford to do without God, for we particularly need Him just now"? The incident is recited in this connection as showing how the irritated heart is prone to fly out against God and His providential dispensations in times of great distress and anguish. It is this that makes the present objection so fraught with danger to those who, in this tempestuous life, are brought to the wreck of all their hopes. It will be the aim of this chapter to unmask the fallacies which lurk within it.

There are three directions in which we are liable to err in considering unanswered prayer: we may err in judgement, supposing that we are asking for what is right, which the outcome may show to be otherwise; or we may be at fault in the spirit and temper of the prayer, and this failure in the fundamental condition of true prayer explains the outcome; or we may sadly misconstrue the whole providence of God in relation to the answer which was expected. The fallacy is to be sought in one or other of these three directions: in the *matter* of the prayer, or its *manner*, or in the *response* to it. Let us examine and see.

1. *We may err in assuming that the request is intrinsically right, justifying a confident appeal to God's integrity.* The objector urges that his prayer in a particular case should have been heard, and that for God to withhold a favourable answer proves either that He was unjust, or else that His providence did not rule in the situation. The assumption here, on which the reasoning turns, is that God was under obligation to grant that special request.

Now there are two classes of objects which may be covered in prayer. The *first* embraces all things about which God's will is clearly known. In this nothing remains but to believe the promise and to pray in constant expectation of the answer. Thus believers pray for their daily bread, by which they are nourished; and thus they should pray for sanctifying grace, whereby they are "filled with the fruits of righteousness". God may see fit to delay the answer even to these prayers, which are definitely prescribed; or He may answer them by methods so unexpected that we shall fail to trace their connection with our petitions. Nevertheless, the duty is simply to believe and pray and wait until the response is given. In this case there can be no doubt as to the matter of the prayer, that it is for things agreeable to God's will. The answer must come in the time and way determined by infinite wisdom; "for the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and

not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; for it will surely come, it will not tarry”.

But there are other things, falling into the *second* class, in regard to which the will of God is not known beforehand; they are perfectly certain as to God, but uncertain as to man, to whom the disclosure comes only through the outcome. Here the prayer is to be offered with entire submission to the sovereign pleasure of Him who will give or withhold at His discretion. Where the will of God is not revealed, how is the objector to know that He is bound in righteousness to grant a favourable answer? Until this knowledge is absolute, the alternative which the objector presents does not exhaust all the possibilities in the case. There is the disagreeable, but very probable, supposition that he desired what he ought not to have, and which nothing can explain but his own ignorance of the fact.

Therefore God in His righteousness, so confidently invoked, is compelled to refuse the petitions. When the plea comes to be examined, it amounts only to a presumption, more or less strong, but insufficient to justify so bold a claim. It may be thought that the prayer rests on a solid foundation, such as the known perfections of God, or the admitted principles of God’s rule. But what margin there is here for the widest mistakes of interpretation! Who can claim such a knowledge of God’s character as to pronounce infallibly what He is under obligation to do in every case? Who is so versed in the diplomacy of heaven as to detect every principle of God’s administration? Man’s judgement often fails in the earthly sphere, and he must hold all his opinions open to the correction of superior light. In addition to this peril, arising from the limitations of his knowledge, how much he is in danger of being warped by his prejudices, and of being seduced by his passions!

Shall such a being – who constantly trips in his earthly walk, and mourns the errors which have made his life here one huge blunder – intrude within the supernatural sphere and interpret the secret of the Most High’s purpose, which He conceals? The objection is therefore illogical, since, with a possible error in the assumption, the alternative presented is not exhaustive. The fatal flaw in the reasoning, which makes inferences simply from the silence of God, is that the prayer may be at fault in the very substance of the request.

2. *The matter of the prayer may be right, while its spirit may be wrong.* It thus lacks the first element of prayer and is discounted as worthless. Prayer must have its boundary within God’s will. This arises from the supremacy of the Creator and the dependence of the creature. Nothing can be desired by the creature which is not already known to God, and known because it is included within His sovereign will. Nothing can be executed on earth which was not embraced in the purpose of heaven. The prayer then which springs out of a sense of emptiness and need must recognise the provision already

made in the divine counsels for its supply. Its first acknowledgment is the sovereignty of that wisdom and goodness upon which it relies for succour. It opens with a filial submission of its wishes to the discretion of One whose office as ruler requires the revision of all requests by His superior wisdom and judgement. Without this submissiveness of spirit, the prayer lacks its fundamental condition. It ceases to be prayer, and degenerates into a wild foray upon God's prerogatives.

In man's present sinful estate, the opportunities for mistakes are fearfully multiplied. The prayer may be insolent, dictating to the Almighty rather than supplicating His favour. It may be arrogant, claiming as a right what can only be granted as a privilege. It may be presumptuous – disregarding, like Cain, the appointed way of approach to the mercy seat. It may be intensely selfish, having regard only to the creature's advantage rather than the honour of Him who is supreme. It may rob God of all discretion in the time and mode of the answer. In these and other conceivable ways, the spirit of true prayer may be lacking – as shown by the resentment which flaunts its defiance against God in the very objection now before us. Thus, while in substance the petition is proper, the fault in its temper causes it to be disallowed. And in this rejection God's jurisdiction is as clearly vindicated as in the quickest response which could be given.

As previously shown, prayer is the condition that goes before the answer – rather than a producing cause in which the human will blends with the divine, and man's fitness to receive the promised blessing is indicated. Thus the absence of the necessary condition, of submission to God's will, rests the denial of the prayer on the very justice of God that the objection assails. There was really no prayer, in any true sense, to be answered at all. Thus again the alternative, presented as conclusive against the usefulness of prayer, fails to exhaust the suppositions in the case, and the reasoning is shown to be defective.

3. *The prayer may have been unexceptionable, both in its substance and in its spirit, whilst the providence of God may have been misconstrued in relation to the answer.* It is mainly here that human judgement is most likely to err. It will therefore be necessary to specify matters further.

(1.) *The answer may be only postponed as a means of moral discipline.* The key to the interpretation of the believer's earthly life is this: it is a state of discipline. It is rendered so by the intervention of grace, which provides and offers a redemption from the curse and punishment of sin. We are here to be educated for a higher and holier sphere, and each life is ordered, in all its details, to develop and cultivate the virtues which shall fit us for that higher state. Hence the faith which must rest eternal hopes upon the pledge

of God's veracity, without craving the testimony of sense in regard to things unseen. Hence the patience which waits upon God's will in fulfilling all the promises. Hence too the continuous discipline by which these and co-ordinate graces are brought to their fullness of growth and ripeness of fruit. We cannot perhaps appreciate the wisdom of this moral training, the more beneficial in proportion to its severity, until we reach the results in the world of reward. It will be the peculiar happiness of the redeemed that the whole of life's painful experience will be poured into song before the throne.

The infirmity of our nature, however, betrays itself in the haste with which we misjudge the dealings of God with us. We say God does not hear when, in His higher wisdom, the answer is only delayed to adorn us with the graces of humility, patience and hope. It should not be forgotten too that the Lord is under obligation to Himself as well as to His creatures. He must vindicate His sovereignty in the fulfilment of His pledges. It is astonishing that God should seem to fetter His own movement by oath or promise of any sort; but the more He binds Himself, the more necessary it becomes to illustrate His perfect freedom. Not only was He sovereign in the first disclosure of grace to the sinner, but in the outworking of that grace in the after experience there must be the current assertion of a supreme will which the creature shall reverently recognise and obey.

Thus while the promise which is given may be absolute, there is a reservation as to the time and mode of fulfilment – which is a fresh reminder of the subject's dependence upon the will of his King. The methods also by which prayer is finally answered come as so many surprises, bringing the creature to a fresh persuasion and acknowledgment of God's supremacy. The delay of the answer, so necessary to Jehovah vindicating Himself, becomes thus an important factor in our religious training. Yet such a delay is rashly assumed, in the objection before us, as the basis of the charge that prayer is unwarranted and unprofitable.

(2.) *The present denial may be ordered to secure the answer which is desired.* It is not well to be at cross-purposes with God, in the intricacies of God's complex providence. It may be His will to confer the benefit we ask, but the jewel must have its own setting. In the impatience of desire, it may be sought when the providential arrangement for others requires to be disentangled from this before the petition can be granted.

Take a concrete illustration from a case within the writer's knowledge. An anxious mother wept with bitter tears on finding all the rooms in a certain steamer booked, so that she was detained a fortnight in the city of New York after a summer's absence from her distant home. But the sorrow was turned into thanksgiving when, within a few days, she learned that this vessel was

buried in the depths of the treacherous ocean. Earnest was her desire to look upon the faces of the children at home, and keen was the disappointment of that unexpected delay. The prayer was denied, only that it might be answered; and to this end, she must first be separated from those who were to be drowned. This typical case, better than any reasoning, will set forth the principle announced above. God takes care of His own, through easy and natural combinations in His providence, and it is often recognised as an answer to prayer, only when it is set over against a previous denial.

A larger instance is furnished in the history of ancient Israel. The promise made to Abraham slumbered for 400 years before it was redeemed in the deliverance from Egyptian bondage. They were brought out under a distinct promise of being led into the land of Canaan. Yet they must first experience 40 years of wandering. Did this delay forfeit God's pledge given of old to the patriarchs? No, it was only thus it could be redeemed at all. The foolish generation which came out of Egypt was unfit to enter the "land flowing with milk and honey". They could not grapple with the sons of Anak, for the mere report of their size filled them with cowardly fear. Those children of bondage were not the race to found an empire and rule its destiny. Hence the promise assured in the covenant could only be fulfilled through a generation reared under the discipline of the desert. The denial of many a fervent prayer came before its final answer. Thus a thousand times in the history of the Church, the march to victory and triumph is through defeat. How then shall the flippant argument stand, that God's present silence is of necessity the denial of His people's prayer?

(3.) *God may answer prayer, not in form but in substance, by substituting higher blessings than those asked for.* In such cases the answer reaches the petitioner in disguise, as it were. While he is looking for it in a certain shape, lo, it comes in another form and from another side. He may trace the hand of a Father in bestowing it; but he does not discover the exchange involved in the gift, because he does not see the connection with his prayer as accepted before God. Yet the moment the disclosure is made, a fervent gratitude recognises that divine love has exceeded the desire in bestowing what an instructed heart would surely have preferred.

Thus David, in response to God's gracious covenant with him, exclaims, "This was yet a small thing in Thy sight, O Lord God; but Thou hast spoken also of Thy servant's house for a great while to come" (2 Sam 7:19). In like manner God gave Solomon not only the "wisdom and knowledge" for which he prayed, but also "riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had . . . before" him (2 Chr 1:12). In the New Testament, Paul sets forth this principle in the grand doxology with which he closes his prayer

for the Ephesian Christians: “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Eph 3:20). It would be easy to furnish familiar instances of this in the experience of the pious. A mother bends over her sick babe and, with the instinct of motherly affection, prays fervently for its recovery. But if the conviction should lodge in her heart that its early removal may be the fixed condition of its eternal salvation, her prayer finds its answer in the higher blessing which swallows up the lower. In view of this she becomes more than reconciled to her bereavement.

Thus we see the difficulty of interpreting divine providence, especially when we are in the swell of the current. Until we shall have power to look through the entire scheme in all its details, we cannot assume the failure of any prayer offered with faith in God’s goodness and power. The reasoning then from occasional disappointment, in tracing the answer to prayer, falls to the ground as faulty.

Advice to a Congregation¹

John Erskine

Be thankful for a gospel ministry. Let the infidel and godless account it a burden, not a blessing to society, but you ought to admire the goodness of God in a provision so wisely calculated to promote your best interests. If it was not for public teaching, ignorance and vice would soon grow to so prodigious a height that not even the form of religion would remain.

Receive with becoming affection him who is this day ordained as your pastor. Consider the dignity of the office which is now his, and show him suitable respect. Ministers are men of God; they minister in His name and by His appointment.

See then that your pastor is with you without fear, because he works the work of the Lord. Esteem him highly in love for his work’s sake. Ministers would labour with better success if they lived more in the hearts of their people. Do not add therefore to your pastor’s difficulties by undutiful behaviour. Rather assist and strengthen him to bear up under them. Put the best construction on his words and actions that they can possibly bear. Curb disrespectful, intemperate zeal by reflecting on the Apostle’s direction: “Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father”. Contempt cast on faithful ministers, and injuries done to them, Christ will resent as done to Himself.

¹An address to the congregation at the ordination of a minister. It is taken, with editing, from *Discourses Preached on Several Occasions* by Erskine (1721-1803), a minister of Old Greyfriars church, Edinburgh.

Let your pastor therefore ever find you humble and teachable, swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. Do not come to church with a fault-finding, quarrelsome disposition. With what heart can ministers preach when hearers are eager to pick up something with which to find fault? Act a worthier part. Laying aside all malice and guile and hypocrisy and envying and evil-speaking, listen with meekness to that ingrafted Word, which is able to save your souls. Like the noble Bereans, receive the instructions of your teacher with all readiness of mind – not yielding them, however, an implicit faith, but searching the Scriptures daily, whether these things are so. Insofar as these instructions stand the test of that infallible touchstone, do not regard them as the word of man but, as they are in truth, the Word of the living God.

See that you do not reject Christ when, by His ministers, He speaks to you from heaven. When He calls, do not refuse; when he stretches forth His hand, do not disregard it. Be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls. While you have the light, walk in the light, lest darkness come upon you. It is only for a little time that ministers can be useful; before long, they must cease to preach, and you to hear. Those servants of God, who now show you the way of salvation, must after a while resign their places; and the eye that now sees them must see them no more. Comply then with their wholesome counsels while you enjoy them, lest you mourn at the last and say, “How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!”

Support the labours of your minister by private endeavours, suitable to your various positions, for the good of souls. Train up your children in the way that they should go, and encourage any serious impressions made on them. When discipline is exercised against open offenders, show that the honour of God, and the happiness of precious souls, lie nearer your hearts than the ease and reputation of any man. The efficacy of church censures will much depend on your conduct towards those who fall under them. Have no company with such, that they may be ashamed; and if they will not hear the church, let them be to you as heathen men and publicans.

And when you are allowed the nearest access to a throne of grace, and feel your hearts in the most devout and heavenly frame, wrestle and make supplication for your minister that his soul may prosper and be in health, and that the presence of God may accompany him in all his ministrations and that, when he plants and waters, God Himself may give the increase. May his doctrine drop as the rain and his speech distil as the dew. And may the soul of every one of you be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.

Zimbabwe Mission News

Rev J B Jardine

The work of the Zimbabwean Mission has been much in the thoughts of the home Church the last few months due to the worsening economic situation in Zimbabwe and the threat of significant food shortages later in the year, following a poor harvest.

The economic situation is particularly worrying as it makes it very difficult to obtain fuel to visit the outlying preaching stations of the Presbytery. However, we are encouraged by recent correspondence from Rev S Khumalo. In reporting on the difficulties faced, he said, "Nonetheless, we soldier on in the grace of the Lord".

Mr Khumalo mentions that there are many challenges for the work of the Presbytery, yet "the preaching of the gospel is progressing well in all our congregations". In the Lord's providence, the gospel continues to be freely preached, without the threat of persecution.

Communion seasons. With over 40 established congregations and preaching stations, it is not possible to have communion seasons in every place. However, they are kept as in other parts of the Church, in the main congregations and the larger preaching stations. With the ministers of the Presbytery assisting one another on such occasions, it allows for times of brotherly fellowship otherwise impossible given their heavy workload. This year the Revs M Mloyi and N Sibanda were able to assist at the two communions in Ingwenya.

As in the Church in the United Kingdom, communion seasons continue to prove times of refreshing from the Lord. The baptism of one adult and three children at the time of the Bulawayo communion in June, was an encouraging token for good from the Lord to the Congregation there.

Theological Conference. A theological conference is held in Bulawayo every August. The Conference was well attended this year in spite of difficulties in travelling, due to the fuel shortage. As in previous years, the papers given were both spiritually instructive and beneficial. The papers this year were: "The Covenant of Works" by Rev S Khumalo, "Dangers of Arminianism" by Rev N Sibanda, "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper", by Rev M Mloyi, "Church Discipline" by Mr M Mpofo, "The Holy Bible – Inspired Word of God" by Mr W Nkomo. The Presbytery hope to hold a youth conference in December.

We ought to be thankful that the Lord has sustained three faithful ministers of the gospel in health and strength. We also have much to be thankful for

in the faithfulness of numerous elders and professing men who, like Aaron and Hur, are able to assist their ministerial brethren in the furtherance of the gospel. May we all be given a burden to pray for others to be called to labour in this mission field. “The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest” (Lk 10:2). “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk 16:15).

Obituary

Rev Angus Smith

On Tuesday, 27 August 2019, Rev Angus Smith passed from time to eternity in his ninety-first year. Born into a godly family, of Lewis stock, in Glasgow, he early came under soul concern after the death of a brother and professed faith publicly in his late teens. University and teacher training followed but, after a few years teaching in Airdrie, he was moved to offer himself as a student for the ministry, in the Free Church. Service of 10 years in the charge of Snizort, Skye, and 30 years in Ness, Lewis, followed, but he became increasingly unhappy with, and isolated by, trends and decisions in his denomination.

He applied and was accepted as a retired minister of the gospel into the Free Presbyterian Church at the Synod of 1999. For the remaining 20 years of his life, Mr Smith was active in Free Presbyterian pulpits in the Long Island and much in demand at communions throughout the Church, including in congregations in Canada and the USA. The Stornoway congregation were honoured to have him among us and he was always eager and willing to help where supply was needed. The sword of the Word was never allowed to rest, far less to rust, in its scabbard as long as Rev Angus Smith had strength to wield it.

Mr Smith’s last illness extended over a few short months and was not easy. Death is the last enemy and, in the generations that followed the Fall of man, it has lost none of its potential to cast a shadow over the departing saint. In a letter which comforted Thomas Halyburton (an eighteenth-century Scottish divine) on his deathbed, Samuel Rutherford writes of heaven: “It is in the bud; but there be many things to do before the harvest comes. And we take ill with it, and can hardly endure to set our paper-face to one of Christ’s storms and to go to heaven with wet feet and pain and sorrow. We love to carry a heaven to heaven with us, and would have two summers in one year, and no less than two heavens. But this will not do for us: one (and such a

one) may suffice us well enough. The man, Christ, got but one only, and shall we have two?"¹

To his bereaved wife, Johan, son Murdo, daughters Jessie, Ruth and Shona and grandchildren and great grandson we extend our deep sympathy and acknowledge our personal and congregational debt to the Rev Angus Smith and our sorrow at his passing.

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev 2:7). (Rev) J R Tallach

Saved Through Grace¹

A Sermon Outline by *John Kennedy*

Acts 15:11. *Through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved.*

In directing your attention to this text, I propose to consider: (1.) What we are to understand by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; (2.) The hope of those saved through that grace; (3.) Their faith in the promise of it.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

By grace we are to understand His grace in redemption.

Or, the grace of God treasured up in Him, the fullness of the Godhead.

Both must be taken into account.

This fullness is in Him as Christ, and dispensed according to the Father's will.

This fullness of grace is for sinners; His name is Jesus.

He is the Lord over all this fullness.

He is entitled and able to preserve and dispense it.

The hope of those saved through grace.

We shall be saved as others were.

This is the beginning; much remains to be done.

Salvation from all guilt, which exposes to death.

Salvation from the corruption of sin.

Salvation from all tribulations in the world.

Salvation from wrath in the day of judgement.

Salvation from all bodily ills at the resurrection.

Their Faith in the Promise.

They believed this on the warrant of God's promise.

How did they come to deal with this promise?

This is not the first exercise of faith.

¹Andrew A Bonar, ed, *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, Banner of Truth 1984 reprint, p 170.

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

They found a right to it on the ground of Christ's righteousness.
The promise grasped, as the Spirit of faith applied it.

Application.

Evidence of the fruits of having faith.
Proofs of an interest in the grace of the promise.

Book Review

Saved By Grace Alone, Sermons on Ezekiel 36:16-36, by D Martyn Lloyd-Jones, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 247 pages, £7.50, may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

The 14 sermons in this book were preached in London in 1956, with the unconverted in view. The publisher emphasises "the preacher's conviction that the whole of the Bible is God's word for all time" a vital matter in these days when "every man [does] that which [is] right in his own eyes".

Two further matters stand out in these sermons. One is the considerable time Dr Lloyd-Jones spent refuting contemporary ways of thinking – which were not fundamentally different from today's thinking, except that succeeding generations have increasingly thrown off the constraints of the United Kingdom's Christian heritage. He speaks of people "living for the moment", who "seem to be heedless and unconcerned" about what God has to say, although it is the only source of hope. Again, "It is the depravity within us that makes us antagonists of God. It is this evil within us that makes us hate the law of God and the biblical teaching about holiness." This warning note is absolutely necessary, particularly in an age such as this when God's authority is so much rejected almost everywhere.

The second matter is a call to repentance and faith. One has to say, however, that to express the gospel to all and sundry in these terms, "God sent His Son into the world to die for *you* and for *your* sins",² does not reflect Scripture. No preacher can be sure that Christ died for every sinner before him. Yet Dr Lloyd-Jones speaks elsewhere of "the people who had been given" to Christ, and that "God gave Him a certain work to do with respect to them",³ which indicates belief in a definite atonement.

The title of the book has been taken from the title of the last sermon in it. There Dr Lloyd-Jones emphasised that "the Christian message always, everywhere, displays the glory of God". But the gospel "offers to undo all the consequences of the fall", and he specifies the need for forgiveness, and the power

²Italics have been added by the reviewer.

³D Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *God the Father, God the Son*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1996, p 219.

and pollution of sin. In drawing to a conclusion, he states that God's way of salvation "is one which has so been designed that no flesh should glory in His presence", and so the Christian confesses "that it is God's work".

Apart from the point made in the third paragraph, the sermons in this volume, though preached over 60 years ago, speak appropriately to the needs of sinners today.

Notes and Comments

Named Person Scheme

On September 19 the Scottish Government officially announced the end of the Named Person Scheme. The Scheme was first put forward six years ago and proposed that, for every child, a named person would be appointed, an employee of the state, who would be responsible for overseeing their "well-being" or happiness. The intended legislation created a great deal of alarm amongst both Christian and secular families.

In 2016 the Christian Institute launched a legal challenge in the Supreme Court which ruled against some of the key requirements of the scheme on the ground that some of these requirements were contrary to data protection law. Nevertheless, the Scottish Government refused to abandon it. Earlier this year lawyers who had been tasked with making the scheme compliant with the law admitted that this could not be achieved. Now the Deputy First Minister, John Swinney, has announced that the scheme has been scrapped. Some aspects of the scheme may continue with a minority of local authorities, but only with parental agreement and they would have no legal teeth.

Concerns regarding the Scheme centred on it inevitably undermining the role of parents and creating a direct relationship between the child and the state. The named person would have been privy to information that the parents would not receive and would have been able to act on the basis of that information without the knowledge or consent of the parents. Teachers, for example, were to inform the named person, but not the parents, of any concerns about a child's sexual activity.

The stated intention of the scheme was to protect a child's wellbeing but, in its outworking, the scheme could have proved extremely intrusive and disruptive for family life. Government guidelines said that "the child should do activities that they like to do, have a say on what to watch on television, can be part of a group such as Scouts, Brownies or a football group if they want to". Parents could potentially have had their Christian principles undermined, or had their wishes countermanded by the named person. This was

alarming for all parents but for Christians it was contrary to the biblical understanding of parenthood.

The Named Person Scheme was the subject of a Protest to the First Minister of Scotland by the Synod meeting of 2016. It is cause for much thankfulness to the Most High that this pernicious and misguided piece of legislation has finally been dropped. FRD

Smacking Ban

The July issue of *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* commented on the Scottish Parliament's intention to introduce legislation to ban the smacking of children. On October 3 the Parliament at Holyrood passed the necessary legislation for this Bill to be enacted in the coming months, thus replacing, with an outright ban, a parent's right to apply reasonable chastisement as a means of disciplining a child. Scotland will be the first part of the United Kingdom to introduce such a restriction, which effectively criminalises loving parents for applying so much as a gentle smack on the back of the hand. The results of the Scottish Government's own consultation revealed widespread opposition to the plan; of those who responded, 89% opposed a ban, while just 11% supported it. Nevertheless, MSPs voted by 84 to 29 in favour of the bill.

Once again, our legislators are showing themselves to be wise in their own conceit and flying in the face of God's wisdom. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Prov 22:15). FRD

The "Prosperity Gospel"

One of the most insidious and dangerous enemies of the gospel in our day in many parts of the world is the so-called "prosperity gospel". This false teaching holds out the promise of health and material prosperity to its followers, often in response to appeals for donations. The attraction of this type of religion in a materialistic age is very strong, especially in third-world countries, in South America and Africa particularly. There are sad parallels here with some of the practices of the Roman Church, particularly before the Reformation, but the main difference is that Rome mostly held out the hope of future rewards whereas the modern peddlars of the prosperity gospel hold out the prospect of rewards in the present life. Both of these forms of religion are founded upon falsehood and works-righteousness but, in addition, the prosperity gospel is unashamedly worldly.

One of the leading exponents of this false gospel in recent decades is Benny Hinn, a Charismatic Greek-Israeli "televangelist" now based in the USA. He has, however, recently renounced his former advocacy of prosperity

teaching, especially the practice of asking for “seed money” where Hinn has repeatedly promised, for example, that God will give material blessings in exchange for a gift of \$1000. He now claims to be correcting his theology, stating that “the blessings of God are not for sale”. He distanced himself from prosperity teaching on two previous occasions but subsequently reverted to it.

Hinn’s latest change of tack is being greeted with scepticism by those who have observed him over the years and was qualified by his own statement: “I still believe in prosperity. . . . But you can’t put a price on it.” Hinn has been investigated for tax evasion, and numerous allegations have been levelled against him, not least for the lavish lifestyle he leads and for his spurious claims to perform miracles of healing. May the Lord deliver multitudes from such a wicked perversion of Christianity and bring to nothing the ministries of false prophets such as Benny Hinn. *AWM*

Apologising for the Past

Britain spends a lot of time at the moment apologising for the past. In September, the Archbishop of Canterbury prostrated himself on the ground in Amritsar, India, in connection with a massacre there in 1919, and soon afterwards the Government expressed “regret” for the shooting of Maoris following Captain Cook’s landing at Gisborne, New Zealand, 250 years ago.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of events of the distant past, there is certainly “great wickedness” when a professed minister of the gospel exercises his ministry contrary to the gospel, as the Archbishop of Canterbury has done for several years. How many souls has he confirmed in unbelief and sin through his false doctrine? And how many thousand unborn children has the present UK Government allowed to be massacred in the womb in the years that it has been in power? The condemning of the past is often a hypocritical cloak for the sins of the present. The Day of Judgement will justly apportion blame for these past events, but in the meantime there must be many Maori and Indian souls which will rejoice eternally over the day that a European – whether British, Dutch, German, or Danish – arrived in their parts with the gospel of Jesus Christ. *DWBS*

Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) Education

The Scottish Government is to issue mandatory guidance on the teaching of this subject in schools. It is thoroughly unacceptable because it is completely unscriptural and promotes the immoral ideas that are gaining increasing traction in our degenerate times. It is hoped that further comment will appear in the next issue of this *Magazine*, DV.

Church Information

Day of Humiliation and Prayer

The Synod has appointed a Day of Humiliation and Prayer to be observed throughout the Church on Wednesday, December 4, “that we may plead for a breath of God’s saving power upon Church and state. Our need of such a blessing comes before us with renewed urgency due to the spiralling dark clouds of moral and spiritual wickedness in our own and other nations. And though we see small results from our petitions at the throne of grace, we are never to despair of the boundless compassion and power of our blessed Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, being yet exercised to bring all nations to repentance and new obedience. We are assured from the Word of God, ‘The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much’ (Jas 5:16). We do well to follow the example of Hezekiah, whose lot was in an exceedingly evil day: he earnestly directed Isaiah and Israel: ‘This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy . . . wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left’ (Is 37:3,4).” (Rev) *K M Watkins*, Clerk of Synod

Outreach Fund

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

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Eastern Europe Fund: Anon, for the work in Ukraine, Ps 60:4, £100.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: Anon, for Mbuma Hospital solar panels, £450; Providence Strict Baptist Chapel, Irthlingborough, for Zimbabwe Mission, £600.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Duirinish: Anon, “In memory of my grandparents, Kate & Alex Ross”, £100. *Communion Expenses*: Anon, £20.

Fort William: *Communion Expenses*: Anon, £30.

Halkirk: N Pearce, £140.

North Harris: The family of late Mrs E Morrison, Glasgow, £80.

North Uist: 2 Blackpoint, Grimsay, £60.

Portree: *Bus Fund*: Anon, £100. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund*: Dutch Friends, £10. *TBS*: Anon, £100.

Raasay: Estate of late Mrs A Baxter, £1000.

Those who go about to establish their own righteousness in vain expect to enjoy its blessings and are guilty of an impious attempt to disannul the eternal agreement between the Father and the Son. This is the tendency of the doctrine of the merit of good works, in the mildest form in which it can be proposed. *John Dick*

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. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achary Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.

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 MA, 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 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 BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.

Greenock: Sabbath 2.30 pm, held in Free Church of Scotland hall, 14 Jamaica Street, PA15 1XX. Sabbath 2.30 pm. Contact Rev R MacLeod; tel: 0141 954 3759.

Halkirk: Sabbath 11.30 am; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev WA Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Duncan Street; Sabbath 5 pm; **Strathy:** Sabbath: 6 pm (first and third Sabbaths of month).

Harris (North): **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Tarbert** and **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7.30 pm alternately. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.

Harris (South): **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. **Sheilebost:** as intimated. Rev KM 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 Dr 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. Manse tel: 01851 810228. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.

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 BA, 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, 6 pm; Wednesday 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.

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. 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, Wednesday 7.30 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.

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

New Canaan: Church.

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

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