

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

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

September: First Sabbath: Chesley, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Munaka, Portree; **Third:** Tarbert; **Fourth:** Aberdeen, Barnoldswick; **Fifth:** Ingwenya, 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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Our “Day” on Earth

Last month we considered how Christ, in His life on earth, made maximum use of the time He had to do His Father’s will. We did so in the light of Christ’s own words, “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4). We will now seek to consider Him as our example; we too, by God’s grace, are to make good use of our time in this world. We have only a “day” in this world, but we do not know how long our day will last, how long we have until the night of death will fall on us, when we will have no further opportunity to do anything here on earth to God’s glory.

First, let us think on the situation of those who are still unconverted. They have sinned; their sins have not been washed away; they are still under condemnation. And that condemnation will continue unless they will look by faith to Christ Jesus as the One who came into the world as the Substitute for sinners. They have only a limited time – maybe a very limited time – in which to find Christ. In contrast with a literal day, when sunset and the darkness of the literal night that follows it can be exactly predicted, we cannot normally know when any of us will pass from this world into eternity. This darkness could fall without any warning, and the unconverted soul will enter “the blackness of darkness for ever” (Jude 13), where no light, nothing good, nothing conducive to happiness, no glimmer of gospel hope can ever enter.

How earnest everyone who has ever heard the gospel should be to make use of their opportunity while the day of gospel light lasts, to find Christ, salvation through Him and deliverance from eternal darkness! What authority we should feel to lie behind the call, “Seek ye the Lord while He may be found”, to search for the Lord and the salvation He has set before us, before the darkness of eternal night falls and it becomes absolutely impossible to find salvation. It is God who has spoken; He knows the reality of the matter. Surely we should take Him seriously and seek Him at once. As another year draws to an end, we should feel all the more the urgency of the situation.

The same divine authority lies behind the words that follow: “Call ye upon Him while He is near” (Is 55:6). Christ is near us now, but He will not always

be near. When the darkness of death comes, He will leave those who have rejected Him to the consequences of their sin; they can never again be called to come to Christ. Commenting on this verse, Matthew Henry warns, “There is a day coming when He will be afar off and will not be found, when the day of His patience is over and His Spirit will strive no more”. Henry further, and even more solemnly, warns, “There may come such a time in this life when the heart is incurably hardened”. It is as if a night of permanent spiritual darkness descends, before death, on some who have gone on wilfully rejecting Christ, refusing to call on Him while He was near them, as they sat under the preaching of the gospel. May we realise how serious a matter it is for sinners when Christ comes near them in the gospel and they remain determined not to seek Him or to call upon Him!

Yet there is a great danger of people imagining that they are walking in the light, on the way that will bring them to everlasting glory, although they have never sought the Lord in the way that He has appointed and have never called upon Him in faith. Christ warned, “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name have cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity” (Mt 7: 21-23). Nightfall would come and find them unprepared. Whatever their standing in the Church, whatever their religious activities, whatever other people thought of them, Christ would not know them – He never heard them calling on Him from a sense of spiritual need. How great is our need to make our calling and election sure (2 Pet 1:10).

Second, believers, who have sought Him and found Him, still need to consider Christ’s example in making full use of the opportunities provided by the short “day” of life. Abraham and others like him, who lived by faith in the coming Messiah, considered themselves to be “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Heb 11:13). As a *stranger*, or a *foreigner*, Abraham did not belong to Canaan, and spiritually he did not consider this world to be his home. As a *pilgrim*, or a *temporary resident*, Abraham, so to speak, did not have a permanent visa for residence in Canaan; so he knew he would not stay on in this world indefinitely. That is how God’s children today are to think of themselves: they will not be here always. So it is their duty to follow the example of Christ and make full use of their opportunity, while the light of this life remains, to live according to the will of God and do whatever they can for His glory.

Some of them may feel that, because of their circumstances, they have no

opportunities to serve God. Edward Pearse was a noted Puritan minister who suffered from tuberculosis for some time before he died in 1673, when he was only about 40 years old. He was conscious, in declining health, that he had done comparatively little of what he had wished to do; no doubt he felt that his opportunities for doing good had come to an end. But he prayed earnestly that something that he had done might be useful after he passed away; he was anxious to work while his short day of life would last. God answered his prayer through a book he wrote, entitled, *The Great Concern, or, A Serious Warning for a Timely and Thorough Preparation for Death*.¹ One assumes that the person who recorded his prayer believed that the Lord had blessed this book to many souls after the author’s death.

Others may feel that, because they are not ministers and do not have any prominent role in society, they have no opportunity to do anything spiritually useful. But we may notice two ways in which every believer may do good to others and may live, however imperfectly, to God’s glory.

(1.) Paul speaks of believers being an “epistle . . . known and read of all men” (2 Cor 3:2). Other people could recognise in the lives of the Corinthian believers evidence that their attitudes had changed, and their whole manner of life was different. As these other people read such a letter, they may have asked questions about the source of the change and, having been told that it was through Jesus Christ, they may have gone on to ask further questions. When people live a consistent godly life today also, it may have a good effect on those who, for example, work with them. By God’s grace, their outward lives show something of love to God and their neighbour. May believers seek grace, so that they may be epistles that others may read and so be led to seek true religion! And even if these epistles are ignored, and no good is done to anyone else, God is glorified in the holy lives of His children.

(2.) Even those who, in their providence, scarcely come in contact with others may make good use of the remainder of their “day” on earth through their prayers to God. What encouragement to persevering prayer the Saviour gives through his parable of the “importunate widow”! She went on asking for justice from the unjust judge and, in the end, he gave her what she pleaded for. “And”, Jesus added, “shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? (Lk 18:7). Will He not answer persistent prayer? Indeed He will. Yet their time to serve Him in this way is limited; indeed nightfall may come far sooner than expected. May believers get grace to make full use of their opportunity to “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that [they] may obtain mercy” (Heb 4:16) for themselves and for others, for the Church and for the whole world!

¹Pearse is best known today for his *The Best Match*; he was also author of two other books.

Gifts to Men¹

A Sermon by Rev Neil M Ross

Ephesians 4:8. *Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

Our text is prefixed by the word, *wherefore*, which indicates the connection between it and the previous verses. There the Apostle Paul is exhorting and beseeching the Christians in Ephesus to “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”. As an incentive for them to do so, he implies that there was already a oneness among them. No fewer than seven times he uses the word *one* with reference to them: “one body, and one Spirit . . . one hope . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all”.

Paul also makes it clear that, while there was unity among them, there was also variety in the gifts and graces bestowed on individual believers: “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ”. Those gifts from Christ were bestowed through the Spirit, as Paul speaks elsewhere of “the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will” (1 Cor 12:11).

Now our text refers to Christ’s activity of giving: “He . . . gave gifts unto men”. The text implies that there could be no such giving by Christ to men if He had not previously “ascended up on high”. Nor could He have given gifts if He had not previously “led captivity captive” or conquered His enemies. Christ’s giving of gifts is the consequence of His ascending up on high and conquering His enemies. So here is this wondrous giving by Christ: “He gave gifts unto men”.

Let us now, with the Lord’s help, think about these three things in our text regarding Christ: (1.) Christ as the *ascended* One, “He ascended up on high”; (2.) Christ as the *conquering* One, “He led captivity captive”; and (3.) Christ as the *giving* One, “and gave gifts unto men”.

1. Christ as the *ascended* One, “He ascended up on high”. Our text, which is a quotation from Psalm 68, begins with the words, “Wherefore He saith”. That is, God, through the Psalmist, says about Christ in that Psalm, as we have been singing, “Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, / ascended up on high; / And in triumph victorious led / captive captivity” (Ps 68:18 metrical). Here then is the divine proclamation about the glorious ascension to heaven of the Son of God in our nature.

We are told in the Acts of the Apostles of the historical fact that Christ “ascended on high”: “When [Christ] had spoken these things, while they

¹The sermon preached at the induction of Rev K D Macleod, to the pastorate of the Inverness congregation, on 3 March 2017.

beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven” (1:9-11).

This most wonderful record of the ascension of Christ informs us of certain facts about Him. It tells us, for example, that He ascended *bodily* into heaven – not just that His soul went into heaven, but also His body. He was seen to ascend; His disciples “beheld” His ascension and “looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up”. The record of His ascension also shows that it was to a *certain place* He ascended, even “into heaven” – that is, the heaven of heavens that we find in verse 10: He “ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things”.

We see also that the *manner* of His ascending shows how He will come again. “This same Jesus,” said the angels to the disciples, “which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” He ascended with great glory, as we sang in Psalm 47: “God is with shouts gone up” (v 5). Also, in Psalm 24:7, we see that Christ, the King of glory, entered the portals of heaven gloriously: “Ye gates, lift up your heads on high; / ye doors that last for aye, / Be lifted up, that so the King / of glory enter may”. O what a glorious ascending was that of the blessed Saviour! And so He shall come again in like manner – He shall come with great glory. Also the ascension of Christ was part of His *exaltation* – not only was He exalted by being taken up gloriously but also by being seated “on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb 1:3).

But we must take particular note of the fact that Christ could not be exalted by ascending “up on high” if He had not first descended into the depths of humiliation. In the verse following our text we read, “Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth”. We should think especially of His humiliation in descending into the dreadful suffering unto death that He had to endure on the accursed tree. So great, so terrible, was His humiliation that He cried in His distress: “I downward in deep mire do sink, / where standing there is none” (Ps 69:2 metrical). O how unfathomable were the depths of His humiliation as He made atonement for the sins of His people!

But glory followed His sufferings; exaltation followed His humiliation. To the two sad disciples on the way to Emmaus He said, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?” (Lk 24:26), and Peter wrote of “the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow”

(1 Pet 1:11). This glory was something He prayed for in His intercessory prayer: “Now, O Father, glorify Thou Me . . . with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was” (Jn 17:5). On several occasions He referred to ascending to His Father. He said to His disciples, “I go unto the Father” (Jn 14:28); then, “I go My way to Him that sent Me” (Jn 16:5). And in His intercessory prayer He uttered that profound phrase, “Now come I to Thee” (Jn 17:13). So it was truly in a glorious manner that He ascended.

What a precious truth is the ascension of Jesus Christ, not only because it displays His glory, but also because it teaches us further facts about Him. It shows us, for example, that He is *the Messiah*. The high priest of the Aaronic order, who was a type of Christ, went into the holy of holies with the blood of the sacrifice, thus showing that the sacrifice was accepted by God. So Christ, the great High Priest, the antitype of the Aaronic high priest, entered into the holy place not made with hands, when He ascended, and He entered in with His own blood. His ascending up on high therefore shows that He was accepted by the Father as having done the work which the Father commanded Him to do. He fully satisfied divine justice on behalf of His people. His sacrifice was altogether acceptable.

His ascension also teaches us that He has entered into heaven *for His people*. “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God *for us*” (Heb 9:24). And why has He appeared in the presence of God for His people? Why but to present His own blood, having by it obtained eternal redemption for them, and also to make intercession for them, which He ever lives to do?

The glorious manner of His ascending also shows that it was a *triumphant* ascension. Scripture tells us, as we mentioned, “God is with shouts gone up” – shouts of triumph! His ascending victoriously is also seen in Psalm 24:7, already quoted: “Ye gates, lift up your heads on high; / ye doors that last for aye, / Be lifted up, that so the King / of glory enter may”. Then verse 8 continues: “But who of glory is the King? / The mighty Lord is this; / Ev’n that same Lord, that great in might / and strong in battle is.”

2. Christ as the conquering One. Christ as the Conqueror is seen in our text in the phrase, “He led captivity captive”. The picture we have here is of a conquering king leading his subjugated captives into captivity. Such a sight says clearly that this king is truly a conqueror. So Christ, the glorious Conqueror, “led captivity captive”. This is the language of complete conquest, of total victory.

Whom and what did Christ conquer? Several answers may be given to this question. We see from Scripture that, for example, He conquered *death*.

Through the prophet, He said about His people, "I will redeem them from death", and then goes on to say, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hos 13:14).

Now those sinners whom the Father gave to Christ to redeem could be redeemed only by price and power, as is sometimes said. The *price* paid for their redemption was not silver and gold but Christ's own precious blood. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet 1:18-19). Christ redeemed them by *power* also. He stated, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Mt 28:18). By the exercise of His mediatorial power He swallowed up death in victory. Therefore His believing people may say in the exercise of hope: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor 15:55).

So death has been conquered for everyone who is looking to and resting on Christ. Eternal death, the just consequence of our sin, cannot touch the sinner who is hid in Christ. He or she will certainly have the victory over death, through faith in this glorious, all-conquering Conqueror. You say, What about the solemn reality that, when the believer reaches the end of his pilgrimage, the spirit leaves his body; he dies; people mourn his passing? Ah, remember this: the sting of death, which is sin, has been taken out of death for the believer. Therefore death for the believer is actually the gateway into the glory of heaven.

Christ has also conquered *Satan*. This evil one is compared by Christ to "a strong man armed". How powerful he is! What an intelligent being he is! And what great and extensive power he has! But Christ is stronger than the strong man armed; He came in God's great name to save by exercising His power against this powerful foe of precious souls. Therefore when Christ came "conquering, and to conquer", He freed His people. You will remember that God said to Pharaoh, "Let My people go". Although that wicked ruler was determined to continue holding the Israelites in slavery, they were liberated by the God of salvation. Here then is Christ, the blessed Conqueror Himself, overcoming Satan by the exercise of His power and thus effecting His people's deliverance. Therefore Satan, since Christ has removed his destroying power over them, shall not have dominion over them. That Christ did indeed vanquish the evil one is confirmed by the Epistle to the Hebrews, where we are told that Christ destroyed "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (2:14).

Christ also conquered *sin*. Believers are assured: "Sin shall not have dominion over you" (Rom 6:14). Christ bore all the sins of all His people "in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet 2:24) and made full atonement for them. Therefore we say to each poor sinner who has received Christ and is resting

upon Him alone for salvation: Sin shall not have dominion over you as to its condemning power; sin shall not have dominion over you as to its destroying power; and the sting of death, which is sin, will not be in your death.

How did Christ conquer these powerful enemies? He conquered them by *dying*, We are to note that it was “through death He [destroyed] him that had the power of death”. Here is something altogether amazing: He conquered these foes of His people by His dying – by His dying on the cross. The eminent Hugh Martin said, “We do not act in dying; we are acted on, and we endure it. Christ acted in dying. . . . We speak of His ‘doing’ and ‘dying’. His dying *was* His grandest doing.” So this is the stupendous fact: Christ by dying at Calvary conquered those enemies. And He became man for this very purpose: “forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb 2:14). By becoming man and dying, He delivered His people from death and from all their enemies.

Let us not forget that Christ, the blessed Conqueror, is *still conquering*. Revelation 6:2 tells us that “a crown was given unto Him: and He went forth conquering, and to conquer”. He has conquered in the past and He will conquer in the future. Psalm 110 tells us that His enemies will be made His footstool – that is, they will be completely conquered. And they will be conquered either in judgement or in mercy. His impenitent enemies will be scattered and shall perish because of their impenitence and especially because of their unbelief in rejecting Christ, who came to redeem and rule. They shall be destroyed with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. O what a dreadful end for unbelieving, impenitent sinners! But blessed be this conquering One, for He also conquers in mercy certain poor sinners by making them willing. “A willing people in Thy day of power / shall come to Thee” (Ps 110:3 metrical). O what marvellous conquering is here – bringing sinners down by grace to be His willing, loving subjects and to deny themselves, take up the cross and follow Him.

We need so much that He would exercise His power in mercy on ourselves personally, in our congregations, in the visible Church throughout our land, and within our whole nation. O that He would come in the power of His Holy Spirit, open the windows of heaven and pour down a blessing! This is what He promises to do; He will bring peoples and nations to be subject to Him. However, He requires us to enquire of Him that He would fulfill the promise. Having promised the Jews of long ago that He would bless them greatly, He said to them (but He speaks to us also), “I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them” (Ezek 36:37).

We must pray, “Awake, awake, O arm of the Lord.” The phrase, “arm of the Lord”, is a reference to the Messiah, Jesus Christ, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given. Let us earnestly plead as others did: “Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old” (Is 51:9). Only He can do what needs to be done for us. Only He can give to us nationally and personally what we stand in need of – to us poor sinners in our spiritual need, to yourself and myself, friend.

3. Christ is the *giving* One. This is brought before us in our text by the words, “and gave gifts unto men”. In Psalm 68 it is rendered, “received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also”. That is, Christ received, or obtained, gifts in order to give them to those who are in great need of them. Those in such need are described as “rebellious”, which is what we all are by nature – rebels against the God of heaven and opposed to the Christ of God. “Away with Him, away with Him”; “we will not have this man to rule over us”; this is our response by nature to Christ. What a wonder that there are gifts for such people – that He gave gifts unto men, even to the rebellious.

What are these gifts? Think, friend, of the great gifts of *repentance* and *forgiveness*. Repentance is indispensable! “Except ye repent,” said Christ, “ye shall all likewise perish.” And what a great gift forgiveness is! “O blessed is the man to whom / is freely pardoned / all the transgression he hath done, / whose sin is covered” (Ps 32:1 metrical). Christ is ascended on high to give these gifts; “Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). Do you need these gifts, friend? Go to the Giver; go to the Giver! And if you have these gifts, all is well. When death comes you will have nothing less than life that shall never end.

Everlasting life is, of course, another gift which Christ gives. He said about His people, “I give unto them eternal life”. His ascension shows that He is the living One, having risen victoriously from the dead. At the same time He is the one who gives life. He said to Martha, “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (Jn 11:25). So every sinner who looks to Him in faith, trusting in Him, shall not perish but have everlasting life. To such He says, “Because I live, ye shall live also” (Jn 14:19).

Those who are so favoured as to be given these gifts, of forgiveness and the title to eternal life, stand in need of many other gifts as they proceed along the narrow way to eternal life – for example, the gift of the continued indwelling of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. Before Christ ascended He promised His disciples that He would send the Holy Spirit. “It is expedient for you that I go away”, He said. Why? “If I depart, I will send Him [the

Comforter] unto you.” Well, friend, without having the presence and working of the Holy Spirit in our souls, there can be no blessing for you or me; we cannot have such graces as repentance, faith, love, patience and hope within us. Without the Holy Spirit, there can be no profit from the Word or other ordinances of His house. How much we need an outpouring of the blessed Holy Spirit!

The *ordinances* of His Church are indeed gifts from Christ. *Scripture*, for example, is called “the word of Christ”. “The Lord Himself did give the word / the word abroad did spread” (Ps 68:11). Holy men of old, as they were carried along by the Spirit of Christ, committed to writing the mind and will of God. Therefore we have from Christ this precious volume, the Word of God. The *sacraments* of the Lord’s Supper and Baptism are also gifts from Christ. “I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you” (1 Cor 11:23), said Paul about the ordinance of the Supper. Also the precious gift of the *ministry* of the gospel is spoken of in verse 11: “And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers”. We are to pray for this gift. “Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest” (Mt 9:38). We see something of that this evening in that He has given another pastor to this congregation. How thankful we should be for His gifts! And how much we need that He Himself would be among us in the person of His Holy Spirit.

This is another gift we may mention, again from Psalm 68, where we read that He “received gifts for men . . . that the Lord God might dwell among them” (v 18). Here is a most sublime blessing and privilege – God in Christ *dwelling* in the midst of His people! Even where there are only two or three gathered together in Christ’s name, He is in the midst. In fact, He also dwells in the very heart of every believer. “Christ in you”, is said by Scripture to believers – not only that they are in Christ by faith, but that Christ is in them by His Spirit.

They must go on looking to Christ to give them what they need. “A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven” (Jn 3:27). We must be utterly dependent upon the Lord for every good and perfect gift – for “He ascended up on high . . . and gave gifts unto men”. You can rest assured, friend, that if you are the recipient of these gospel gifts – these spiritual blessings from Christ – you shall have an exceeding weight of glory from His hand at the end. Then on the last, great day, when He comes to judge the world, He will give the inheritance to the redeemed. “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Mt 25:34).

We need all these gifts and we can only have them by having Christ. Indeed, Christ Himself “is freely offered to us in the gospel” (*The Shorter Catechism*, Ans 31), and He is spoken of as One who is *received* by those who believe in Him. “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God” (Jn 1:12). If you are united to Christ by faith, He is yours and “all things are yours” (1 Cor 3:21). O what great giving is here – great giving that was preceded by Christ giving Himself (“He gave Himself a ransom” for many), and preceded also by God the Father giving Him.

In conclusion, let us consider Him: the *ascended* One, the *conquering* One, and the *giving* One who is opening His hand to sinners to give to them liberally. He is saying to you this evening in your spiritual need: “Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it” (Ps 81:10). He is standing at your door, sinner, this night and saying, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock” (Rev 3:20), calling you to receive Him. O may you heed His voice and have open arms to embrace Him as He is freely offered to you in the gospel! May you know Him for yourself as the glorious One who ascended up on high and who is freely giving innumerable priceless gifts to perishing sinners in their desperate spiritual need!

At the End of a Year¹

Rev Alexander McPherson

I am sending a copy of this pastoral letter to each household in the congregation. As the year draws to a close, we tend to review its events and take stock, as it were. Perhaps we also wonder what the year before us has in store. Each person will look at last year in his own way. The businessman will be concerned about the state of trade; the farmer will think of the prices of livestock and crops.

But I would suggest that the most important aspect of review is the very one that, because of our fallen nature, we are apt to consider least and also least carefully. I refer to our spiritual condition. You will not be surprised that a pastoral letter should dwell on such a subject. I would be unfaithful to the charge given me and to you whose souls are involved in it, if I did not, in writing you, mention those things that matter most.

Can we say then, at the end of another year, that we have grown in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ? Has it been for you a period in which your knowledge of God, as the God of glory, grew

¹This pastoral letter is dated 27 December 1961, the year in which the writer was ordained and inducted to the Dornoch and Rogart congregation.

alongside a knowledge of yourselves as full of demerit, unworthiness and sinfulness? This would surely have been the case if you have been saved. But perhaps in your consciences you know that you are still unsaved! In that case, what do you recall in your review?

You will be bound to admit that God has been kind in giving you a measure of health and providing for your bodily needs so that you have not lacked. Has His goodness in these ways led you to repentance? You can also say that you have had access to some or all of the means of grace. You can either read God's Word or have it read to you. It contains many invitations to taste and see that God is good, and assures you that who "trusts in Him is blessed".

Why then are you still of an unbelieving heart? The throne of grace is open to you. Have you sought, asked for and found Christ for your soul? Evidently not! It may also be that you were in a position to go to God's house when you chose. Have you always done so, and gone prayerfully, looking for a blessing? Perhaps also the voice of death has spoken to you loudly of the eternal world awaiting you beyond the borders of time. Have you determined to flee from the wrath to come? Maybe too you have experienced strivings of the Spirit urging you to discharge the duties which you most owe to your immortal soul. Finally let me put this to you who are still without Christ: you have not found in the *world* that fragrant herb called "heartsease". You never will.

If, on the other hand, you to whom this letter comes are a soul saved by grace and thus bound to the Saviour by ties of love and gratitude and likeness of spirit, you will see in the past year what causes you mixed feelings. Like Paul you will say, "I count not myself to have apprehended". There is much that you can only regret, mourn over and repent of. Opportunities were not fully used, privileges were not as highly appreciated as they ought to have been, the world was given an undue place, the corruptions of your heart were not mortified, and Satan not always resisted so that he would retreat.

But, on the other hand, there *will* be progress to note in some directions at least. You have increased in the knowledge of God's great name as revealed in His works of creation and providence, but especially in His grace, mercy and love. Christ is more precious to you than ever He was. Your deepened views of sin have taken you sorrowfully to His throne of grace over and over again, and you have ever found Him to be the same merciful, pitying, compassionate Redeemer, "Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today and for ever". You can say also, today more than ever, that you feel your complete dependence upon the blessed Holy Spirit for every religious duty. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." His spiritual comforts afford greater pleasure than anything earthly. Afflictions have not

come and gone unnoticed and unimproved, and the world is a more barren place than last year.

Now friends, whatever your case may be spiritually, and whatever your review brings to light, I commend to you the use of the means of grace, public and private, more and more. Application to this duty is the surest method you can use to ensure that the year 1962, or whatever part of it you may see, will be happy and prosperous in the highest sense of the words. Read your Bible much and pray over what you read. Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together in God's house on Sabbath and weekday. If there are two Sabbath services, attend them both, praying for speaker and hearers. The prayer meeting is held alternate Wednesdays at Evelix and Rogart and we are engaged in a series of "Studies in the Gospels", systematically working through the events in the Gospel histories. If you are not attending and could, please resolve to do so. Your eternal salvation depends upon knowing Jesus Christ, whom God has sent (Jn 17:3).

I wish you well in every way, but especially thus: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Num 6:24-26).

Thoughts on Sanctification¹

3. In the Light of the Last Things

Rev Roderick Macleod

David said, "Surely that which concerneth me, the Lord will perfect make" (Ps 138:8 metrical version). The thought that strikes one in relation to this subject is that God's purpose to make His people perfect in holiness overcomes every obstacle that stands in the way of that perfection. Every provision of the covenant of grace stretches forward, as it were, to being with Christ in glory.

Give repentance a voice and we will hear it say, "I will arise and go to my Father". If effectual calling could speak, it would say, "Surely that which concerneth me, the Lord will perfect make" in the new birth. Let the new birth speak and, longing for glory, it will speak of being made perfect in sanctification. Let sanctification speak and, "forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before" (Phil 3:13), it speaks of being made perfect in holiness at death. Give a voice to

¹Based on some of the material on this subject presented to the 2018 Theological Conference. The previous article, last month, considered sanctification's "imperfection in this life".

the frequently-assailed “assurance of God’s love”, the oft-interrupted “peace of conscience”, the assaulted “joy in the Holy Ghost”, the seeming impossibility of “grace”, the “increase” of it, and its “perseverance unto the end” and, though they must dispute every inch of their way to glory, they are warranted to say, in holy defiance of the formidable opposition they meet, “That which concerneth me the Lord will perfect make”. Lachlan Mackenzie wrote that the Happy Man “loves Christ and longs for glory”.

What about the body? We think of these words in connection with the believer’s soul, but what about the believer’s body? Does the believer have promises of sanctification for his body? In Job 14, he is musing sadly on a stark contrast between trees and men. “There is hope of a tree,” he says, “if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant” (Job 14:7-9). The second part of the contrast refers to dead men: “Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?” (Job 14:10). Job is saying that nature can revive nature but nothing in nature can resurrect a dead man’s body.

He then goes on in the same elevated language to sweet, believing thoughts of the resurrection of his body by the power of God: “All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come”. Then, on the morning of the resurrection, “Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee: Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands” (Job 14:14,15). Job knew and loved Christ as his Redeemer, and longed for glory through His redemptive work, not only for his soul but in view of a glorious bodily resurrection: “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me” (Job 19:25-27).

Ah, blessed holy expectation: “Surely that which concerneth me the Lord will perfect make”!

Rev John Ross of Brucefield, in Ontario, Canada, is the esteemed subject of a volume called *The Man with the Book*. A memorial stone, marking the place where he is buried, is inscribed with these words, “Surely that which concerneth me the Lord will perfect make”. His mourning friends believed that these words represented his faith in the redemption of his body (as well as the redemption of his soul). The Happy Man’s body, asleep in the grave, is still united to Christ. The deceased bodies of believers “sleep in Jesus” (1 Th 4:14). They “rest in their graves as in their beds” (*Larger Catechism*, Ans 86). The words of Jesus about the deceased Lazarus: “Our friend . . .

Lazarus is dead . . . let us go unto him” (John 11:11,14,15) indicate (a) that though the believer’s soul is in heaven and his body is in the grave, they are viewed by Jesus as belonging to the one redeemed person and (b) that a bond of love exists between Jesus and the person of the deceased both as to his soul and his body.

For the redemption of the body as well as the redemption of the soul, Paul looked to Christ, “who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself” (Phil 3:21). “It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (1 Cor 15:42-44,49).

When the mortal remains of a believer are lowered into the grave, we ought to think of his or her soul alive in glory. We ought also to think of the Lord’s conquest of the grave and, with the well-founded faith and hope of Job, David, Paul, John Ross and thousands of others who lived and died in faith, we ought to think of their being raised up in glory at the last day, for “Thou shall call and I will answer Thee”.

Everlasting glory and holiness. *The Larger Catechism* speaks of the communion in glory that believers have with Christ: in this life, immediately after death and “at last perfected at the resurrection and day of judgement” (Ans 82). Sinners saved by grace are brought to glory. Is the entrance on glory the point at which the provisions of the covenant of grace are finally and fully realised? The souls of believers are then made perfect in holiness. This means that they are as holy and as happy as they can be. It does not mean they are infinitely holy, as God is. It does not deny that after death there is a capacity to grow in the knowledge of the goodness of God and so a corresponding capacity to grow in love to God.

In an affectionate letter to Mr John MacKenzie (a student for the ministry) Rev Neil Cameron wrote that the soul on entering glory will say of Christ, like the Queen of Sheba said of Solomon: “The report I heard of Him in my own country was true, but the half was not told me”. Mr Cameron went on to say that this initial flood of light is but the beginning of an eternal spiritual feast: “Sinners saved by grace will require an endless eternity to learn a little of the depth of the love, pity and mercy that are in Him”. He asserted, “It will keep them in a mist of amazement for ever and ever – in complete forgetfulness of themselves – while their understanding and affections are being enlarged to receive more and more of the knowledge of God and of Christ.

Some with whom we had sweet fellowship on earth are now being led by the Lamb into those fountains of living waters.”

John saw the Church of the firstborn being fed by Jesus Christ, not on the mountains of the earthly Zion but the heavenly: joining in an eternal feast corresponding in its nature to the spirituality of the Church in the glory of her triumphant state in Immanuel’s land. He saw them being led to fresh and refreshing spiritual fountains of living water. Now they see, not “through a glass darkly, but then face to face”, seeing “Him as He is”. Now they “know even as also [they are] known”. In heaven, the same unerring right hand and holy arm that got Him the victory, in every contested step of their way on earth, is leading them and feeding them in every uncontested step of their rest in glory. “For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Rev 7:17). “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God” (Rev 19:9).

Encouragements for Seeking Souls¹

John Newton

Rejoice in this: that Jesus has foreseen your cases and provided accordingly. He says, “Come”; that is, believe, as He Himself expounds it: “He that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst”. See how His promises suit the state you are in.

1. Are you heavy laden with guilt? The gospel message is, “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin”.

2. Are you groaning under the power of indwelling sin? Hear His gracious words: “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live”. And to the same purpose His prophet said, “He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength”.

3. Are you striving in the fire to keep the law? “Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?” Forego the vain attempt. Is it not written, “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”?

4. Are you in temptation? He that says, “Come unto Me,” has been tempted

¹The conclusion of a sermon on: “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28). Newton here applies the text to “convinced, striving and tempted souls”. Taken, with editing, from Newton’s *Works*, vol 2.

Himself and knows how to pity you. He has power over your enemy and can deliver you with a word. Did He not thus dispossess Satan in the days of His humiliation? If so, surely He is no less able now, for since that time He has gloriously triumphed over the powers of darkness. And as His arm is not shortened, neither is His ear heavy; He has said, without making any exception, "Whosoever cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out". And thousands who have been in the same distress as you have found that promise fulfilled: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly".

Bunyan's Conversion and Great Trial¹

A Review Article by Roy Middleton

Grace Abounding is not a conventional autobiography: it is John Bunyan's "spiritual" autobiography.² When he wrote *Pilgrim's Progress*, besides describing Christian's journey to the Celestial City, Bunyan was also detailing his own spiritual experience. His personal testimony is a very similar account to that which he relates in the allegory of *Pilgrim's Progress*. The state of despair in which Christian finds himself at the beginning of *Pilgrim's Progress* resembles that of Bunyan at the beginning of *Grace Abounding*. Christian had a great burden upon his back; Bunyan had a great burden upon his spirit.

Rev Donald Beaton in the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, volume 7, has a series of six articles titled "Some Famous Books and Their Authors".³ The fourth in the series is Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*.

He begins the article by making this observation regarding the book: "It has by no means obtained such a worldwide reputation as Bunyan's immortal allegory, *The Pilgrim's Progress*; nevertheless it is a book bearing the impress of one of the finest writers in our literature, and relates in graphic and eloquent

¹The book being reviewed is *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, by John Bunyan, Banner of Truth Trust, 2018, hardback, 177 pages, £10; it may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

²Whilst there are many biographies of Bunyan, the five-hundred-page volume by John Brown, minister of the Church at Bunyan Meeting in Bedford, has not been superseded. *John Bunyan (1628-1688), His Life, Times and Work*, Tercentenary Edition revised by Frank Mott Harrison, London, 1928. The first edition was published in 1885.

³This series of articles by Mr Beaton in *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 7, along with a further 13 articles which he wrote in later volumes of the *Magazine* are an excellent introduction to some of the finest volumes of Christian literature. The articles are very similar to the series that Principal John Macleod wrote for the *Monthly Record of the Free Church of Scotland* between 1918 and 1922 and was reprinted as a small volume by the Banner of Truth Trust in 1988, with the title *Some Favourite Books*.

language the long and, at times, terrible experiences of a soul fleeing from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. In the introduction to the work, he warns against all expectancy of fine literary finish in language characteristic enough. 'I could also have stepped,' he says, 'into a style much higher than this in which I have here discoursed, and could have adorned all things more than here I have seemed to do; but I dare not. God did not play in convincing of me; the devil did not play in tempting me; neither did I play when I sank as it were into a bottomless pit, when the pangs of hell caught hold on me; wherefore I may not play in my relating of them, but be plain and simple, and lay down the thing as it was.' This is Bunyan's own estimate of his work, as far as *Grace Abounding* is concerned."⁴

Bunyan's Conversion. Bunyan tells how his first serious thoughts about eternity were awakened by reading two fine Puritan books on practical divinity that his wife's father, a godly man, had left her when he died. They were Arthur Dent's *Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* and Lewis Bayly's *Practice of Piety*.⁵ He then set about reforming himself so that he might be more acceptable in the sight of God. He attended church regularly, adoring with great devotion the priest, the clerk, and the vestments, but the thought that he was a sinner had not as yet crossed his mind. However, the day of salvation was near at hand.

On the Sabbath the pastor preached a sermon on the duty of observing the Lord's Day and keeping it holy. Bunyan, after hearing the sermon, according to his usual custom proceeded to Elstow Green to play games. He was just beginning a game when, with all the suddenness of a flash of lightning, he heard a voice, as it were, speaking to his soul: "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" He was startled by the solemn question. Around him were his companions, utterly oblivious of what was before his mind. They played their game thoughtless of the momentous truths that were stirring Bunyan's soul to its depths. There came, immediately after this, the temptation that Christ would not forgive him his transgressions, as he had sinned so greatly against Him.

Sadly, he concluded that there was no hope for him and that he would abandon himself to drift down the stream with the world. He then entered upon a course of sinful behaviour, only to be rebuked by an ungodly woman for cursing. She told him that he "was the ungodliest fellow for swearing that ever she heard in all her life". This rebuke from such a quarter shamed him and he reformed his life and became proud of the change that had taken place. He forsook dancing and other practices and concluded no one could

⁴*Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 7, p 300 (December 1902).

⁵Both books have been reprinted by Soli Deo Gloria Publications in America.

serve God better. From an outwardly sinful life he now had become self-righteous. His employment took him to Bedford and, passing through the streets, he heard four women sitting in a door talking of their religious exercises. They were speaking about a new birth and the work of God on their hearts and how they had been convinced of their miserable state before the change in their lives. This was so completely new to him that he could not get their words out of his mind and he was irresistibly drawn to their company. The Holy Spirit was in this way carrying out a gracious work.

His mind was turned to the issues of eternity. Following many temptations and questionings about whether he had a real faith and about the doctrine of election, the Bedford tinker was enabled to cast himself as a lost sinner on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. The Saviour's voice in Scripture broke in upon his soul with the words, "Compel them to come in, that my house might be filled," and, "yet there is room." As Owen C Watkins has observed regarding Bunyan's conversion, "There was no single dramatic moment at which he became conscious of his rebirth but from the time when 'the thoughts of religion were very grievous' there were four incidents which all had a lasting effect".⁶ These were the reading of the two books on practical divinity, the sermon on Sabbath breaking, the rebuke for swearing and his overhearing of the conversation about the work of grace in the soul.

Pieter de Vries, in his sympathetic account of Bunyan's theology, notes, "The Puritans did not intend the preparation unto the new birth to be an obstacle for coming to Christ, which is not to say that they all escaped this danger. Occasionally, if often unconsciously, this preparation came to function as such. An intense fixation on the work of God in the heart diverted the interest in Christ. For fear of a superficial Christianity, a number of Puritans extensively dwelt on the marks of a sinner coming to Christ. That was the reason they did not always escape the danger of having certain matters precede – if only logically – the implanting in Christ through faith. Continually speaking about the marks of a coming to Christ, they sometimes obstructed the vision of Christ himself."⁷ In 1678, over a decade after the first edition of *Grace Abounding*, Bunyan wrote his treatise, *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ*. By then he had become conscious, not only of that danger, but also of the necessity of warning against thinking that all true conversions must follow a similar pattern.

In *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ* Bunyan warns, "Thy fears that

⁶Owen C Watkins, "John Bunyan and His Experience", in *Servants of the Word*, Puritan Conference Report 1957, p 37. See also Owen C Watkins, *The Puritan Experience*, London, 1972, pp 101-120.

⁷Pieter de Vries, *John Bunyan and the Order of Salvation*, Peter Lang, 1994, p 142.

Christ will not receive thee may arise from thine own folly, in inventing, yea, in thy chalking out to God a way to bring thee home to Jesus Christ. Some souls that are coming to Jesus Christ are great tormentors of themselves upon this account; they conclude that if their coming to Jesus Christ is right, they must needs be brought home thus and thus: as to instance: (1.) Says one, If God be bringing of me to Jesus Christ, then will He load me with the guilt of sin till He makes me roar again. (2.) If God be indeed bringing me home to Jesus Christ, then must I be assaulted with dreadful temptations of the devil. (3.) If God be indeed bringing me to Jesus Christ, then even when I come at Him, I shall have wonderful revelations of Him. . . . God hath more ways than thou knowest of to bring a sinner to Jesus Christ; but He will not give thee beforehand an account by which of them He will bring thee to Christ (Is 40:13, Job 33:13). Sometimes He hath His ways in the whirlwind; but sometimes the Lord is not there (Nah 1:3, 1 Ki 19:11).

“If God will deal more gently with thee than with others of His children, grudge not at it: refuse not the waters that go softly, lest He bring up to thee the waters of the rivers, strong and many, even these two smoking fire-brands, the devil and guilt of sin (Is 8:6-7). He saith to Peter, ‘Follow me’: and what thunder did Zaccheus hear or see? ‘Zaccheus, Come down,’ saith Christ; and ‘he came down’, says Luke, ‘and received Him joyfully’. But had Peter or Zaccheus made the objection that thou hast made, and directed the Spirit of the Lord, as thou hast done, they might have looked long enough, before they had found themselves coming to Jesus Christ. Besides, I will tell thee that the greatness of sense of sin, the hideous roaring of the devil, yea, and abundance of revelations, will not prove that God is bringing thy soul to Jesus Christ: as Balaam, Cain, Judas, and others can witness.”⁸

Bunyan’s Great Trial. A very significant part of *Grace Abounding* is taken up with what Bunyan considered the greatest temptation which ever distressed his soul; he believed for a time that he had committed the unforgiveable sin.⁹ It seems to have occurred shortly after his conversion. Faith is often tried, and after Bunyan had been assured of his interest in Christ, he was assailed again by the devil, whispering to him that he should sell Christ and let go of Him in exchange for the things of this world. He was haunted by this for a whole year and nothing seemed to diminish the power of the temptation.

⁸*The Complete Works of John Bunyan*, National Foundation for Christian Education, vol 2, 1968, p 231. This edition of Bunyan’s *Works* is a reprint in three volumes of the four-volume edition edited by Henry Stebbing.

⁹The account of this severe trial covers just over a quarter of *Grace Abounding*: sections 133-252. In this review article, citations to *Grace Abounding* are given by section number rather than page number in order to make the reference applicable to any edition of the book.

Whilst he was working, when he was eating, "Sell Him, sell Him, sell Him," kept ringing in his ears. At first, he resisted: "I will not, I will not, I will not; no, not for a thousand, thousand, thousand worlds".

Finally, worn out by the struggle he felt the thought pass through his heart, "Let Him go, if He will," and he thought also that he felt his heart consent to it. At this Bunyan felt a deep despair well up in his heart, and a terrifying storm engulfed him. He considered this to be the heaviest temptation he ever had to bear in all his life. For two long years he saw nothing but judgement and damnation awaiting him. The words of Hebrews 12:16-17, concerning Esau, seized upon his soul, "who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Bunyan was to say, "These words were to my soul like fetters of brass to my legs, in the continual sound of which I went for several months together" (s 144).

For two years he had few moments of relief; he trembled at the idea that he might have counted the blood of Christ an unholy thing. He was unable to derive any consolation from the promises of the gospel. Though tempted by Satan that prayer was valueless, he did not give up prayer, and gradually the storm subsided. Whilst in prayer he writes, "That piece of a sentence darted in upon me, 'My grace is sufficient'. At this methought I felt some stay; as it were there might be hope" (s 204). He would later add, "This scripture did also most sweetly visit my soul": Christ's words in John 6:37, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" – in particular the words "in no wise" – were made precious to his soul (s 215).

In retrospect Bunyan was able to say that he had emerged from the trial stronger than when he had entered it. As he was grappling with the question whether Christ could ever be his, any trace of doubt about Christ's divine nature or the truthfulness of God's Word had disappeared. The Bible had become a guide for him in every plight and on every issue. The knowledge of his lost state had brought him to a full realisation of the vast riches of God's promises. Bunyan would later see the advantages he had gained by the temptation. Four stand out:

(1) He was made continually to possess his soul with a wonderful sense of the Being of God and of His beloved Son. He realised he had been assaulted with atheism (s 244).

(2) The Scriptures were now wonderful to him (s 245).

(3) He was enabled to see more of God's promises than ever he had before and to suck sweetness from them (s 247,248-251).

(4) He testified that never again had he seen such heights and depths of

grace, love and mercy as he saw after this temptation. Great sins draw out great grace. He could hardly bear up under the sense of God's grace (s252).

Grace Abounding concludes with an account of Bunyan's call to the ministry, the false accusation made against him of immoral conduct, details of his imprisonment and finally with what is termed a "Continuation of Bunyan's life, beginning where he left off and with the time and manner of his death and burial, together with his true character".¹⁰

John Bunyan's writings are of great value. It is recorded that King Charles II asked John Owen, the distinguished Puritan theologian and Oxford scholar, how such an educated man as he could sit and listen to John Bunyan, a tinker. Owen replied, "I would willingly exchange my learning for the tinker's power of touching men's hearts".¹¹ It is also indicative of the value placed on Bunyan's writings in the Free Presbyterian Church that ministerial students are examined on three of Bunyan's treatises in their Presbytery examinations during their training. The Banner of Truth is to be thanked not only for reprinting the standard three-volume edition of *The Works of John Bunyan* but also for making available a number of his treatises as single volumes. *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* is the latest, well-produced addition to these individual treatises, which include, *The Pilgrims Progress*, *The Jerusalem Sinner Saved*, *The Saint's Knowledge of Christ's Love* (retitled *All Loves Excelling*), *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ*, *The Acceptable Sacrifice* and his book on *Prayer*.

Book Review

Preparing for Eternity, by Alexander Nisbet, published by Reformation Press, paperback, 88 pages, £6.30, obtainable from the F P Bookroom.

This book is an extract from a commentary which the author, a Scottish covenanting minister of the seventeenth century, wrote on the Book of Ecclesiastes. Aimed at the ordinary reader, it is accessible to all, while useful on the preacher's shelf too. It provides succinct, fresh, and most satisfactory explanations of each verse. The twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes abounds in allegorical language and Nisbet's comments shed floods of light on these passages.

¹⁰Roger Sharrock in the introduction to the Oxford University Press edition of *Grace Abounding* (1962) says the author of the "Continuation" was reputed to be George Cokayne, an ejected minister and a ministerial colleague of Bunyan. But as Sharrock points out, this has been challenged and the identity of the author is not certain (p xiii and note 1).

¹¹John Brown, *John Bunyan, His Life, Times and Work*, p 366.

To give an example, he says on verse 2 (“While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain”): “By the returning of the clouds after rain seems clearly to be understood that continual succession and frequent returning of one shower of trouble after another which befall dying men. And the allegory or similitude seems to be borrowed from the tempestuous and stormy seasons of the year, when it is not as in summer, that after a shower clears up again and becomes fair and warm, which represents the time of youth, in which ordinarily, after some fit of sickness and distemper, ease and health come again. But as it is in winter, after one shower the clouds presently [soon] gather for another, so it will be in the time of old age.”

On each verse he also adds applications which tend to emphasise the relevant duties of practical and devotional religion. On the part of verse 4 which speaks of rising up at “the voice of the bird” and which he takes to be the loss of sleep common in old age, he exhorts the reader in the following way: “So, while men enjoy it [sound sleep], they should use it soberly and employ all the refreshment they get by it in the service of the Giver: labouring so to walk in the daytime that their sleep may be sanctified, their reins may teach them in the night season (Ps 16:7), and they may rise early for holy exercises (Ps 5:3), that whenever they awake they may be still with God (Ps 139:18). And if at any time sleep departs from them, they may then think upon and prepare for the case they shall be in when death draws near.”

On verses 9 to 11 suitable advice is given to the minister of the gospel on his duties of studying and preaching. On verse 13 there is a helpful summary of the scriptural use of the term “the fear of God”, where he distinguishes between its being put for “the whole worship and service of God”, and the more precise meaning as “that inward filial reverence and awe of God which the Lord has promised in the covenant of grace to put in the hearts of His people”.

Death, judgement and eternity, along with the need to make urgent preparation for these, are the constant theme throughout. This book is well worth purchasing and reading more than once. (Rev) *I D MacDonald*

It is an easy thing for a man to fall under the curse of God. It is but forbearing to love Christ; and how easy a thing is that! It is but denying Christ your heart, your hearty love, and the curse is your own; and how easy a thing is that! To obtain the blessing is hard, is exceedingly difficult; for there must be a weaning of our love from the world, and getting that under our feet which was predominant in our hearts; and how hard a task is this! There must be a calling off the love of the heart from sin, which was as our right eye or right hand unto us, and how difficult a work is this!

Thomas Doolittle

Notes and Comments

Hypocrisy

Several people have expressed “disgust” at two Aberdeen University medical students who attended a fancy-dress party dressed as orthodox Jews, with ridiculous fake beards. In speaking to a newspaper, the person who originally reported them to the University authorities took God’s name in vain, and the newspaper repeated the blasphemy without comment. In distancing themselves from the conduct of the medical students, the University authorities stated that they did not “condone anti-social or offensive behaviour”.

Whether the comical costumes were offensive to Jews, we cannot say (the medical students may even have been Jews), but blasphemy is certainly offensive to religious Jews and to Christians. The Aberdeen University authorities have frequently condoned deliberately offensive behaviour in their support for sodomy and in their promotion of transgenderism. The glaring inconsistency of these various people shows that, whatever their real motives, the gratuitous giving of offence to others is not something that troubles them. Christians, by contrast, do avoid giving needless offence: “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Rom 12:18). The sincerity of Christians in this matter is seen in their consistency; the insincerity of the world in its inconsistency. *DWBS*

Relationships Education

Recent headlines have been full of the controversy surrounding relationships education in schools. This has concerned promotion of the LGBT agenda primarily but also explicit and inappropriate material. In England it is called Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and in Scotland it is Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) education.

Forthcoming draft statutory guidance is expected to prioritise LGBT issues in Scotland. This is due for consultation soon and it is critical that as many as possible respond to it. It is important that such teaching is not made compulsory in the same way as in England. A new Government-sponsored resource (www.rshp.scot) promotes LGBT from age 3 and is also disturbingly graphic, inappropriate and immoral in later primary and secondary stages. In the overwhelming majority of schools, the danger is not simply the potential introduction of this resource. Existing materials and resources in the vast majority of secondary schools (and many primary schools) already promote the same agenda and are immoral.

It is important that parents use their legal rights to make enquiries about what is taught in the schools their children attend. To be blissfully ignorant

in this area risks exposing children to some of the worst messages that they could experience. They may see things that they cannot unsee and hear things they cannot unhear. Parents may not be aware that many of the most obscene materials being used are not in printed form but are shown in slides and on video. They may be used as part of lessons taken by outside agencies or involve other websites. Parents need to find out not just exactly what is taught but who is to deliver it. While there is scope at present for withdrawing children from RSHP in primary school, there is resistance to this in secondary. But there is still a legal right that children should not be educated contrary to the beliefs of their family.

The Larger Catechism, in speaking of the sins of parents against their children in relation to the Fifth Commandment, identifies the sin of “careless exposing, or leaving them to wrong, temptation, and danger” (Ans 130). The wisest and safest course of action may well be for parents to withdraw their children from such classes entirely. Only when we have dealt faithfully in relation to baptismal vows in protecting our children from such permissive and warped values will we, as parents, be able to say in sincerity: “Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge” (Prov 19:27). MV

Micro-evolution in Tanzania

In 1966, Rubondo Island in the south-east corner of Lake Victoria was cleared of its few hundred inhabitants and small numbers of various species of animals were introduced, including 17 chimpanzees (from captivity), 12 giraffes, 16 rhinos, 20 columbus monkeys, and (in 1973) six elephants. The island has been uninhabited ever since, except for rangers; and some of the biological developments have been unexpected.

The rhinos were all poached, and another introduced species became extinct, but the chimpanzees adapted well to their release into the wild, and now number about 50. They are divided into two social groups at different ends of the island, one group being observed daily by the rangers and the other group hardly at all. Those that are observed enjoy the attention, and one of them threw a stone at a ranger whom he felt was not noticing him sufficiently. There are now 100 elephants but – presumably the result of inbreeding from the original small gene-pool – they are “aggressive and odd”, being unusually wide-bodied, bulky and tall, with short, fat tusks. Most surprising of all, however, are the giraffes, which were of the dark Masai variety but are now distinctly pale and much taller (the trees are very high on Rubondo).

The scientists are surprised at how quickly these changes have happened. The experiment sheds unintended light on the small number of gene-rich

“kinds” that Noah would have needed in the Ark, and the rapid development thereafter of subspecies, and even species, within these kinds. *DWBS*

Population of Scotland

The Scottish government has announced that immigration (discreetly renamed “inward migration”) “will be essential to ensure that Scotland’s population continues to grow. . . . No natural growth is expected, meaning that deaths are anticipated to outweigh births each consecutive year from now on, with the only population increase coming from inward migration. . . . Our pension age population is projected to grow while our working age population falls, and could decline even further if EU migration is reduced. This is why Scotland needs inward migration to support our public services and economy, particularly in sectors like tourism, hospitality, construction and agriculture, but also to enrich and diversify our society.”

In other words, the present government of Scotland, while pretending a special love to things Scottish, is complacently overseeing the numerical decline and possible extinction of the Scottish race, and the populating of Scotland by foreigners. The culture of contraception, abortion and sodomy brings rapid extinction. “Lo, children are God’s heritage, the womb’s fruit His reward” (Ps 127:3, metrical). *DWBS*

Equality Act Used Against Christian in Transgender Issue

In July 2018 Dr David Mackereth, who had worked for 26 years in the NHS, was sacked one month after being appointed as a disability benefits assessor in the West Midlands for the Department of Works and Pensions. In training, he was told that reports should only refer to patients by the gender they identified themselves as. Exception was taken to his stating his belief that gender is defined by biology and genetics and that the Bible teaches that God made humans male and female, and his contract was subsequently terminated. A DWP spokeswoman said that the Equality Act makes it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly against a person on grounds of a “protected characteristic”, such as gender reassignment.

Dr Mackereth sued the government for discrimination on the grounds of his religious belief. He told the employment tribunal in July 2019 that he was suspended after being “interrogated” by his boss for refusing to “call any six-foot-tall bearded man ‘madam’ on his whim” and was advised he was “overwhelmingly likely” to lose his job. He argued that he was dismissed, “not because of any realistic concerns over the rights and sensitivities of transgender individuals, but because of my refusal to make an abstract ideological pledge”.

In a written statement to the tribunal he said, “I appreciate that in the present political climate, some people, including some of those who believe they are transgender, may find my beliefs offensive. However, in a free society it is not a good enough reason to censor my beliefs and coerce me to act contrary to my conscience. Moreover, as a doctor, my responsibility is always to act in good conscience in the best interests of the patient – not to adopt various fancies, prejudices, or delusions, to avoid offence at all cost.”

Dr Mackereth added that his inherent belief is that transgenderism is a “rebellion against God, which is both pointless and sinful”. He said, “I am, of course, aware that there are men or women who believe they have been trapped in the wrong body, and I do not question the sincerity of their convictions. A small number of such people have always existed. Up until recently, such a belief was considered by medics to be delusional and a symptom of a medical disorder. It is only recently that transgenderism has been recognised as normal and such delusional beliefs accepted at face value. What is responsible for that change is political pressure, not scientific evidence.”

In early October, the tribunal panel found the DWP had not breached the Equality Act. The judgement stated, (in the writer’s opinion, chillingly), “a lack of belief in transgenderism and conscientious objection to transgenderism in our judgement are incompatible with human dignity and conflict with the fundamental rights of others”. Dr Mackereth intends to appeal. It is a matter of great concern that, if the tribunal’s decision is upheld at appeal, it will have consequences for those who are prepared to voice their belief that “from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female” (Mk 10:6). *FRD*

Protestant View

The Rosary Sending Sinners Further Away from God

The Pope recently invited Roman Catholics to pray the rosary, stating that October was “the month of the Rosary”. His most recent predecessors also have greatly encouraged this idolatrous rite, though the use of a string of beads as an aid to prayer has been common in the Church of Rome for centuries. Other religions such as Islam have similar practices. When Romanists “pray the rosary” they imagine that by reciting certain statements in rotation – turning a bead at each point in the ritual – they are entering into meditation on themes in the life of Christ.

The real focus of the Rosary, however, is on Mary and “participation in the life of Mary”, with the idea of coming “to Christ through Mary”. Such misguided devotion therefore leads poor sinners away from Christ’s mediation

and sets up a human mediatrix between the soul and the Saviour. When the Pope invites the recital of the rosary, he is actually sending sinners further away from the God against whom they have sinned, substituting a ritual in the place of the true prayer for mercy that the sinner needs in drawing near to the Lord.

In this connection John Owen states, “They have, under the name and pretence of the means of mortification, or the duties of it, invented and enjoined, like the Pharisees, a number of works, ways, duties, so called, which God never appointed, nor approved, nor will accept; nor shall they ever do good to the souls of men. Such are their confessions, disciplines, pilgrimages, fastings, abstinence, framed prayers,¹ to be repeated in stated canonical hours, in such a length and number. In the bodily labour of these things they exercise themselves to no spiritual advantage.”² The solemn question that the framers and practitioners of such unscriptural worship will yet be forced to answer is, Who hath required these things at your hands? AWM

Church Information

Rev Donald Macdonald

Mr Macdonald, minister of the Staffin congregation, passed away on October 31. We express our sympathy to his family. When two ministers have recently been removed by death from the Free Presbyterian Church, it should arouse the people of God to renewed prayer that He would send out more labourers into His harvest.

Deposition of Zenka Minister

At a meeting of the Zimbabwe Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland held at Zenka Church on Friday, 18 October 2019, Rev M Mloyi was deposed from the office of the ministry for adultery. The Zenka congregation was declared vacant from that date.

(Rev) *S Khumalo*, Clerk of Presbytery

College and Library Fund

By appointment of Synod, the second of the year’s two special collections for the College and Library Fund is due to be taken in congregations in December.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

¹It is likely that, among other things, the recitation of the rosary is intended in this reference to “framed prayers” – that is, prayers framed by others.

²John Owen, “Meditations and Discourses on the Glory of Christ Applied to Sinners and Saints”, in *The Works of John Owen*, vol 1, Banner of Truth Trust, 1965 reprint, p 453.

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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Editor:
Rev Kenneth D Macleod

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

Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

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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 Achany 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; no F P services; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Mr J Campbell; tel: 01863 766296.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, EH3 9NU, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, 35B Barrton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227, e-mail: dcampbell1560@gmail.com.
- Farr** (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6 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; **Strathay:** 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. 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.

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eds, Matthew & Catherine Dickie, Banner of Truth, 2019, hbk, 437 pp	£16.50	£12.99
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