

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, Fiffh: Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

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

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

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

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

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

September: First Sabbath: Chesley, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Munaka, Portree; **Third:** Tarbert; **Fourth:** Aberdeen, Barnoldswick; 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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A Last Opportunity

Some months ago a minister prayed that we would all listen to the Word of God as if it was our last opportunity. Of course, any particular opportunity may not be our last, but one day will certainly bring our opportunities to an end. It should be obvious too that we can never know which will be the last. But it surely makes sense to treat each opportunity of hearing the Word of God as if it might be our last, seeking to get as much benefit as possible from it, especially by seeking God's blessing on it. Each time we read the Bible or hear it being read – and each time we hear the Word of God being proclaimed – is a real opportunity to get good for our souls.

Time is passing, and some people must acknowledge that they feel time passing very quickly indeed. We are now approaching the end of another year; so we ought to realise – even more than at other times – how quickly time is passing and how few may be our opportunities to listen to what God has to say to us. Indeed, each time we are in contact with God's Word we should pray, as the minister did, that we would listen to it as our last opportunity to get good for our souls.

We should take up the words of the Psalmist: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak" (Ps 85:8). It is God who speaks to us through Scripture, though He used human writers to record what He purposed to reveal. This means that Scripture is completely reliable; it is without error of any kind; so "we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Heb 2:1). The words we have heard from Scripture have such authority that it is daring rebellion against God to reject them or be careless about them. Besides, it is extreme foolishness to neglect them, for the eternal well-being of our souls is at stake. If we listen to them attentively and believe them as God's testimony to us, especially what is said about Christ Jesus coming into the world to save sinners, and if we trust in Him, we will reach heaven at last. But if we are careless about what we hear; if we let what we have heard slip out of consciousness; if we neglect to seek the Lord while He may be found, we will, solemnly, arrive in hell, to endure its never-ending torments.

Everyone who attends public worship will have a last opportunity to hear about *sin*. Surely no one who makes use of opportunities to hear the Word of God can deny that he or she is a sinner. It is another matter, however, to take seriously the fact of sin and feel the tremendous importance and urgency of seeking the Lord. It is not only that sin is dangerous, that sin has terrible consequences, that sin unrepented of will result in the sinner experiencing the bitterness of sin throughout eternity; but we must also realise that sin is evil, for it is committed against a holy God. He is our Creator and therefore has a right to our entire obedience. What He requires is that we should be holy as He Himself is holy (see 1 Pet 1:15).

C H Spurgeon states that those who have broken the law are “in constant danger of judgement and condemnation. [But] the careless try to shake off the thought as much as possible by putting off the evil day, by forgetting death, and by pretending to disbelieve in judgement and eternal wrath; but still more or less this thought disturbs them.”¹ Accordingly the Saviour told His disciples that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to convince of sin (see Jn 16:7-9), both as to its danger and its evil; human power is not sufficient.

Let no one deduce from what has been said about the insufficiency of human power that we have no responsibility to adopt a right attitude to sin. Rather we are called to seek the Lord while He may be found and to call upon Him while He is near (see Is 55:6,7). And if we feel our inability to seek Him in a right way, let us acknowledge this and cry out to the Lord for grace to do so – praying for the sake of Christ and what He has done in this world for the salvation of sinners.

Everyone who attends public worship will have a last opportunity to hear about *the Lord Jesus Christ*. He, and salvation through Him, should be at the centre of all preaching, for He is the Saviour whom God has appointed. As Saviour He is perfectly suited to the needs of every sinner. As God, and as One who is absolutely holy, He is able to enter the presence of the Father on behalf of sinners. But He is also fully man, for He has taken our nature, and so is able to represent human beings before God and to suffer on their behalf. He is the priest appointed to offer up Himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice in the place of sinners, who are altogether unable to do anything even to lessen their guilt before God, far less to remove it altogether.

It is significant that the particular sin that Christ referred to, as what the Spirit convicts of, is not believing on the Saviour. This points to the seriousness of rejecting Him. It was not only during Christ’s time on earth that people, according to Isaiah’s prophecy, saw “no beauty” in Christ that they “should desire Him” (Is 53:2). Many see Him in the Bible using no more than

¹Spurgeon, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol 24 (for 1878), p 231.

their natural understanding, yet they do not see any spiritual beauty in Him and have no desire to follow Him and serve Him. But Paul could say to believers in Corinth: “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich” (2 Cor 8:9). It is the Spirit that opens the eyes of the sinner to see the beauty of Christ becoming poor in the place of unworthy human beings, that He might have great gifts to bestow on them, gifts that make them eternally rich.

There will be a final opportunity for every unbeliever that continues to come to church to hear the glad tidings about the glorious One who came into the world to save sinners on their way to a lost eternity. It will be a last opportunity to have the Holy Spirit apply the truths of salvation to them and give them faith in the Saviour. We should recognise God’s kindness in sending warnings to us about our danger as well as the good news of salvation through Christ Jesus, the crucified Redeemer. We should recognise the precarious position we are in if we neglect these gracious warnings and reject “so great salvation”.

Many people put themselves to great inconvenience because of the risk of catching Covid-19. They recognise the risk of becoming seriously ill from this dangerous virus and even of dying as a result. Yet many of these same people refuse to address the danger of entering eternity unsaved. Even among those who are ready to come to public worship, there are many who do not properly consider the uncertainty of life and do not recognise the possibility that any particular service may be their final opportunity to find Christ. Will you not, if you are still unconverted, take seriously the reality of a lost eternity and flee now to the Lord Jesus Christ, who still calls you to look by faith to Himself and has promised, “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (Jn 6:37)?

With the end of the year approaching, and perhaps the end of a lifetime, you may have to confess, “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved” (Jer 8:20). How sad, especially for someone who has had a large number of opportunities to hear the gospel over a lifetime, to approach death still bearing the guilt of sin, and therefore still on the way to a lost eternity! You should treat even this article as a last opportunity to listen to God speaking to you, warning you of the danger of death finding you unsaved. And treat this moment as a last opportunity to believe in Christ for the salvation of your soul. How often have you heard His ambassadors directing you: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31)? Today is not too late. But tomorrow may be. Flee from the wrath to come, while God in His mercy still sets salvation before you.

The Travail of Christ's Soul¹

A Sermon by *Finlay Cook*

Isaiah 53:11. *He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.*

On this day set apart as a preparation day for the Sabbath, especially one which will see the solemn ordinance of the Lord's Supper, you have in this chapter set before you the nature of the Lord's Supper, what you are to remember there. It would be good for you and me to be mediating upon it this evening and to get into this prophecy, as there is a mystery in it. Here we have a promise of Christ; His travail was not to be in vain. He was to have numerous offspring. Are you a converted sinner? What does Christ see of the travail of His soul in you? It cost Him the pangs of His soul, it cost Him the anguish of His soul.

1. Christ's soul travail. Christ needed to have a soul and a body, just as you do. Here is the mystery of godliness: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful", a holy soul; the image of God was on that soul. The second Adam had a soul and body, He brought back what the first covenant head had taken away. This soul and body was the workmanship of the Holy Ghost; it was not simply created as Adam was created. He was formed in the Virgin's womb by the power of the Holy Ghost. "The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Lk 1:35).

But not only was His soul formed as holy, harmless, undefiled, this soul was in union with God. It was in union with the Second Person of the Godhead. This was the greatest mystery of godliness. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:14). He assumed our nature and this is the soul that was suffering for sinners. The holy soul of Jesus, united to Jehovah, was anointed by the Holy Spirit with the oil of

¹Finlay Cook, the Free Church minister of Reay in Caithness, and Alexander Moody Stuart were the assisting ministers at a communion season in April 1848 in John Knox Free Church, Glasgow, where Jonathan Ranken Anderson was the minister. This sermon was preached on the Saturday before the communion Sabbath and is preserved in a hearer's notes; they have never before been published. The notes of Finlay Cook's sermon on the Friday of the same communion season, dealing with self-examination, were printed in the October issue of *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*. RM

Sidelights on Two Notable Ministries (those of Finlay Cook and his brother Archibald) is still available as a paperback from Free Presbyterian Publications for £3.50.

gladness. The Spirit was in Jesus' soul continually pouring out a blessing.

His soul must have travail, the text speaks of travail of soul. What had He but travail all the time He was in this world? He travailed. Why? So that He might have sinners. It was done to bring sinners back to God. He had to answer all the demands of the law, and the curse of the law was imputed to Him. Thus He had travail of soul. You will never see the evil of sin and the holiness of the law until you see it in the work that Jesus Christ finished, in the travail of His soul. You see the evil of sin as you will see it nowhere else. The law must be magnified in all its demands, and justice must be satisfied. Hence the Shepherd must be smitten before the hand of mercy is turned to the little ones. "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones" (Zec 13:7). Think of it – a sword in the soul.

He opened a door for mercy, for redeeming love, for free grace. His body was broken and His soul was wounded. He shall see His seed – that is, souls would be born to Him. The divine nature supported the holy soul of Jesus when He gave it as an offering for sin. This is the altar that sanctified the gift and that gave this sacrifice a sweet-smelling savour. It was travail of soul that no creature can comprehend. Behold Him as a Lamb. Behold Him on Calvary a sacrifice there. What there was between the Father and the Son none can tell. He was drinking a bitter cup, and neither men nor angels can tell what was in it. There is dreadful evil in sin. A ransom must be given and what a ransom! That was life for life, soul for soul, body for body.

2. Christ seeing of His travail. "He shall see of the travail of His soul", or the fruit of the travail of His soul. It was not in vain. He shall see it. The Father gave the Son. Christ did travail for them and He must see them. He must see them brought back, restored to the love, favour and friendship of God. Jesus will have a reward for His suffering – in seeing sinners brought from darkness to light. When the gospel is preached, good news is sent out to the world. This is the fruit of His soul's travail. As the gospel goes out among sinners, He sees of the travail of His soul. He sees it when the Spirit is sent as showers from heaven.

Jesus never sees of the travail of His soul, but as the Holy Ghost applies His redemption to the souls of sinners. He sees it in every sinner's conversion. The soul must have travail; until you have soul travail for your sins you will not appreciate what Christ did – you cannot form a right idea of it till you have soul travail for your own sins. The poor sinner must travail as in birth till he is brought out of the womb of nature and from darkness to light, from the old covenant back into the favour of God.

Jesus sees of His travail – and this promise is fulfilled – when He sees poor sinners crying for mercy. Whenever you are concerned for your soul, Jesus sees of His travail. It is by knowledge, by faith in Him – gracious faith and knowledge of Him as a Saviour for sinners, as a Prophet sent from God, as a Priest offering a sacrifice and as a King on His holy hill of Zion – that souls are saved. It is by knowledge of the work which He finished, of His suitability to be a Saviour, of His power to save to the uttermost, and by the sinner seeing himself as poor, miserable, wretched, blind and naked.

Whenever you receive Christ by faith, God will justify you. God looks upon His Son, the Surety, upon His travail, and receives into His favour the very chief of sinners on this foundation. He imputes to you what Christ did. You did not suffer for sin! No. You did not pay the debt! No. But the Surety paid it. Then the Creditor looks upon the Surety and receives payment from Him; then Christ sees of the travail of His soul. The Holy Spirit enables you to receive Him by faith, as the Lord your righteousness. “Behold the Lamb of God.” Look at Him, poor sinner – guilty, hell-deserving sinner. Come to Him with the burden of sin. You have a soul and body out of hell because Christ travailed for such sinners, and He shall see the fruit of His travail. God preserves His seed in the world, the fruit of Jesus’ soul travail. He shall have a numerous offspring. He shall see it. He must see it. He deserves to see it and He shall see it to all eternity.

3. He is satisfied. The Saviour does not repent of what He undertook. The Father was satisfied when Christ finished His work on Calvary. He needed no more pardon; everything was done, and a new and living way was opened. The debt is now paid and the prisoner set at liberty.

Thus it was proved that the Father was satisfied. Hence the Son was satisfied; He is satisfied as He is crowned with glory and honour. He is satisfied when He sees of the travail of His soul in sinners. “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor 6:9-11). There is the satisfaction that Christ has made.

But the work is not perfected until the sinner is satisfied, and when the sinner comes to this satisfaction, O happy sinner! When is he satisfied? “When God revealed His Son in me”. All professions, preparations, knowledge and education will not satisfy a hungry soul, but the Father is satisfied and the Son is satisfied. And the sinner, when brought back by the

power of the Holy Ghost, is brought to this satisfaction too. Do not be satisfied with a mere profession. What will it do to you? He is satisfied when He is in possession of His property; He purchased His Church with His blood. He takes possession of the soul.

The strong man is cast out and Jesus takes the throne. He is Prophet, Priest and King in the soul and He is satisfied. Much did it cost Him. O the travail of soul that He had, but now He is satisfied when He is in possession of His own property. A father is satisfied when he sees his children about the table. Now you will have a table spread here on Sabbath. Are you true communicants? He will be satisfied in seeing His children. Do not come there in filthy rags; seek the wedding garment. The garment Christ asks of you all is love to Him. You must be clothed with redeeming love before you are welcome to this table. Yes, redeeming love. Pray for this; wait for it and He will give it to you. Love to the Bridegroom must gain your heart from every other object. The teacher is satisfied when he sees his scholars improving, so Jesus is satisfied when He sees you improving under the gospel, growing in grace, in humility, in love, in experience, in knowledge. Then Jesus is satisfied – satisfied when He sees His people in the world walking according to their profession and bearing witness for Him.

If you are on Christ's side, He is satisfied; and He is satisfied that you are among those for whom His soul travailed. Poor sinners under the cross, poor comforted sinners, He is satisfied when you come to Him for help and for deliverance. He is satisfied in every victory His poor people have over the world, the devil and the flesh. O cry to Him for mercy, for the preparation of your heart for tomorrow – to prepare you to sit at this table as a poor sinner. Christ can do it. Be advised to flee to Him for refuge, to the life set before you. Cry for the Spirit this night.

O pray for the Church of God, for ministers of the gospel. Pray particularly for this place, for this congregation, for speakers and hearers, for the rising generation, that God will raise up a seed to serve Him.

You young ones going forward for the first time to the Lord's table, you are taking up the cross; come under His yoke. You are advised to sit down and count the cost. Do not go in your own thoughts; be strong in the grace of the Lord Jesus and you need not fear. You cannot begin too soon to profess Christ. Give in your heart to Him, or you will soon go back to the world. And seek from Him the grace to help you in every time of need.

In the experience of the unregenerate a painful sense of degradation and defilement may, and often does, coexist with a prevailing wish to continue in it. Why? Because the man loves the very thing which he acknowledges, and really feels, to be degrading.

J A Alexander

Coming Near to Death (5)¹

Thomas Halyburton

About five in the morning, when he was asked to lie quiet and try if he could rest, he answered, “No, no, should I lie here altogether useless? Should I not spend the last portion of my strength to show forth His glory?” He held up his hands (his hands and legs were greatly swollen) and said, “Lame hands and lame legs, but see a lame man leaping and rejoicing!”

Speaking of his children to his wife, he said, “They are all a devoted thing to the Lord; and I can say, sometimes, when they were baptised, that the Lord helped me to devote them to Him and bade me bring the rest, and He would accept them”.

Afterwards finding some disorder in his body, he said, “This is just one of the forerunners of the change, the great change”. Someone said, “Blessed be the Lord that He is providing you with relief”. He replied, “His Word is a good word; and He has been condescending, astonishingly condescending! And I am even made to say, Why are His chariot wheels so long a-coming? (Judg 5:28). When shall I be admitted to see the glory of the higher house and, instead of that cloudy light of a created sun, to see that clear and perfect glory and the Lamb in the midst of the throne?”

After a while’s silence in the forenoon, finding himself very low, he took farewell of his wife and children, greeting them all one by one, and spoke particularly to each of them. Then he said, “A kind and affectionate wife you have been to me; the Lord bless you, and He shall bless you”.

To a minister who came in, he said, “I am at a trying work; I am parting with my wife and children. Resolve on that, I bless His name, though I have had one of the best of wives, yet she is no more mine, but the Lord’s.”

Then to his children he said, “Now you are fatherless; your father is to be taken from you, but seek God. I had you from the Lord, and I give you to Him. Now I leave you upon Him; you are no more mine.”

To his son he said, “God bless the lad, and let my name be named upon him. But O what is *my* name? Let the name of the Lord be named upon him. I do not say, Keep up my name; but O that you may be honoured to tell the generation following how good God is and to hand down the testimony! And O that you may all be the Lord’s.”

After that, he spoke to his servants and said, “As for you, my servants that

¹This is a further edited extract from “an account of some of his last words on his death-bed”, in 1712, taken from *Faith and Experience*, volume 4 of the James Begg Society edition of Halyburton’s *Works*. This is the second of two articles at present, giving an account of what he said on September 19. The previous article appeared in October.

have been in my family, my dear friends, make religion your main business and mind that above all things. I charge all my servants in my house, beware of graceless masters. Avoid them, as what may turn to your destruction; seek to be with them that fear the Lord.”

Then he said, “I will not bring up an ill report on religion; nay, I cannot but give a testimony to it: ‘Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed’ (Rom 5:3-5). God has shed abroad His love in my heart, and I am waiting for His salvation. Here is a demonstration of the reality of religion: that I a poor, weak, timorous man, once as much afraid of death as any – I that have been many years under the terrors of death – come now in the mercy of God and by the power of His grace, composedly and with joy, to look death in the face. I have seen it in its paleness and all the circumstances of horror attending it; I dare look it in the face in its most ghastly shape and hope within a little to have the victory.” Then he said, “I hope He will deal tenderly; but pray for me that my ‘faith fail not’ (Lk 22:32); I loved to live preaching Christ and love to die preaching Christ”.

To some ministers that had come in, he said, “My brethren, I have been taking farewell of wife and children; I have been giving them up to God, from whom I received them. I am upon the wing of eternity; but glory to God, I know in whom I have believed (2 Tim 1:12).”

Then he said, “Dear brethren, will you begin and speak a word to one who longs to hear of Christ? I love to hear the gospel! I love to preach it; it is a joyful sound, a sweet sound; I love to hear of His name; His ‘name is as ointment poured forth’ (Song 1:3); the efficacy lies here: they are His ordinances, His institutions, and He has promised to bless them. That makes me desire them. The gospel as dispensed is the ‘ministration of the Spirit’ (2 Cor 3:8). I have need of grace that I may be helped to stand to it to the last, and in the last conflict to honour Him.”

Someone said, “God has been gracious to you hitherto, and you know He is always the same; He is the same to those that belong to Him. Here is a good word: ‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee’ (Heb 13:5).” He answered, “Blessed be His name that He will stand by me. O to have Him shut my eyes Himself and then to open them, that I may behold Him in His own light.”

Afterwards he said, “Well, Sirs, what shall we say of the Lord Christ? ‘He is altogether lovely’ (Song 5:16). Religion is a mystery; but I was looking through the promises this night, and observing how to provide against the last conflict. I was astonished and at a stand when I saw the sweet accomplishment of them; every promise of the Word of God is sweet; they are sure

promises. O Sirs, study the Word; observe the accomplishment of it; it was the thing I loved all my days, and it is sweet to the last. O the accomplishment of the Word is worthy to be observed, and especially when I was looking this same night to what He has already fulfilled to me.”

To a minister he said, “Now, Sir, though I will not limit the Lord as to time, I am expecting the onset from the last enemy; and I know not but I may get my enemies about me ere then.”

Then exhorting some to think on death, he said, “To remember death is a profitable thing; to remember death is not to go to churchyards and visit tombs, but it lies in this: to be habitually under the impression of death in its rise and cause, in its present state and relation to both covenants, the various issues and consequences of it and the way of delivery from it and all the circumstances attending it.”

Then, as to his spiritual enemies, he said, “I think I am now almost out of their hand”. Someone said, “That is a great victory”. He answered, “I dare not speak of victory; but He holds me up, though I cannot keep pace. I am afraid to speak, lest a cursed enemy, namely self, lie at the door to catch; for when I had the greatest advantages, I have felt corruption stirring and making no small work, inclining me to spoil my Lord of His glory.”

Someone said, “We shall neither under mercies nor afflictions be free of this trial”. He said, “O strange that when death has so long been kept in view, it should be so!” Someone said, “You have reason to count it a victory that the Lord has helped you over your recent fears. You know what a dread you had on Wednesday, and what a sweet relief you got.” He answered, “I desire to bless His name for it, but I should yet have as great a dread if He should withdraw. Holy fear, caution and jealousy are still needful.”

After that, he said to the ministers: “Brethren, I take this opportunity to acknowledge your tenderness to me, that I am most unworthy of it in many respects. I can say I desired to live in love with you, and I bless God there was harmony amongst us. The Lord bless you and your labours; the Lord himself multiply spiritual blessings on you and your families, support you against discouragements, and the Lord in mercy look on the rising generation. The Lord keep His hands about the schools in this place. God look with pity on them.”

Then he said to one of them: “My dear brother, who has been my comfort in affliction, stand your ground; quit yourself like a man; be strong. Now, my dear friend, I shall only say, as I wish you the blessing of God on your family, so I desire that you will even show kindness to the dead, in sympathy and kindness to my dear wife and children. I recommend her to your care; she has been the friend of my bosom, the wife of my youth, a faithful friend.”

And turning to all the ministers present, “O Sirs, check my poor babies if ye see anything in them disorderly; I have lent and devoted them to the Lord. Last spring the Lord has made proof of it, and has taken me at my word.² Sirs, it is an evidence of the decay of religion that sympathy and love among the saints are decayed. O that the Spirit were poured out from on high!”

Then he said, “Pray, Sirs, pray for grace. I would have the praise of the victory to Him.” Afterwards he said, “Patience must have its perfect work. I will wait for it; my soul longs more than they that wait for the morning. Sweet Lord Jesus, make haste, ‘until the day break, and the shadows flee away’ (Song 2:17). Then to a minister he said, “Pray a word for patience to me to stand this last trial”.

Effectual Calling¹

3. Its Circumstances Vary

James Foote

In so far as effectual calling consists in the mind becoming obedient to the word of the truth of the gospel, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, it is always substantially the same. But it differs in various circumstances.

It is not practicable in most cases, to ascertain exactly when it takes place, nor is it necessary in any of them; but it is clearly justifiable to say that it varies in the circumstance of *time*. One person is called in very early life, so that he can say with Isaiah: “The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath He made mention of my name”. And Paul says it is a special privilege to be called early, and a cause for much thankfulness: “Salute Andronicus and Junia, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me”. Others are called in middle age; a few, and only a few – so that no one may despair and no one may presume – are called towards the close of life. In the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, some were called very early in the morning, and others at the third, sixth, ninth and eleventh hours.

Effectual calling varies also in the circumstance of *place*. Some become obedient to the faith in the privacy of their closet, many more in public worship. Some accept the gospel invitation in the land where they were born, in the midst of kind friends and abounding privileges. Others have, in a state

²A reference to the death of his son George.

¹Taken, with editing, from Foote’s *Treatise on Effectual Calling*. Foote (1781-1856) was a minister in Aberdeen, latterly in the Free Church. Last month’s section spoke of effectual calling as secret, taking place in the secrecy of the soul.

of carelessness and rebellion, gone abroad to countries where there was, humanly speaking, everything to fear and nothing to hope for, as to their highest concerns; there they have been graciously arrested by the Lord's call, and thus in the land of heathens, or at least the land of strangers where they had gone in quest of gold that perishes, they have been brought home to God and gained a better fortune than the wealth of all such countries. The woman of Samaria was effectually called by Christ at Jacob's well, whither she had gone to draw water. Lydia had left Thyatira to be a seller of purple at Philippi, and there the Lord opened her heart, so that she attended to the things which were spoken by Paul.

When we were considering the *outward means* which the Spirit of God uses to bring sinners to Christ, we found that they varied, and we need not say more on that point here. It is important, however, to observe that, while the change is radically the same in all cases, it differs as to the *exact process* through which the mind passes, especially as to the degree in which the different ideas and impressions prevail. In all, there is some conviction of sin and misery; but that conviction is much deeper and more painful in some than in others. In all, there is knowledge; but the illumination is far clearer in some than in others. In all, there is a quickening to newness of life; but in some there is much more vigour than in others. In all, there is some faith; but some are weak in the faith, even very weak, and others are strong. In all, there is some feeling, both of the danger arising from the violated law, and of the attractions of gospel grace – something of the influence of terror and something of the influence of love; but some cases are characterised chiefly by one of these features and others by the other.

It may be useful to keep properly in mind this diversity as to circumstances. It should prevent those whose duty it is to act as instructors to others from laying down positively and minutely any fixed and regular process, holding it necessary for people to pass through all its steps, and in a certain order. It should also prevent all from judging rashly and unfavourably of the state of others, whose experience may not have been conformed to theirs, or to their favourite model. This too should serve to allay that uneasiness which some serious people are ready to feel, because they have not been led on in the same way as some others whom they are accustomed rightly to regard as true Christians.

The great question is, Are they indeed savingly called? If they are, the circumstantial points are of comparatively little importance. These points ought not, it is true, to be disregarded. On the contrary, as far as they are known, they should be devoutly considered. Still it is beyond dispute that the calling itself is the grand work, a work which must ultimately be referred to

the Spirit of God, in whatever way it may have been accomplished. When God exerts His ordinary converting power, as well as when He exerted His miraculous power, “there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God who worketh all in all. . . . All these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.”

The Forgotten Bunyan¹

2. The Background to *The Pilgrim’s Progress*

Matthew Vogan

2. The forgotten companions of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. These are the books Bunyan wrote beyond *Grace Abounding* and *The Holy War*. Indeed, he wrote almost 60 books in all. They all had the purpose of engaging spiritual experience with the Scriptures, even in the case of *A Book for Boys and Girls*. Many of them were expanded sermons or sermon-treatises. These were popular at the time, accounting for about 30% of the cheap book market – some cost as little as sixpence (for example, Bunyan’s *The Strait Gate*, 1676). There are various types of sermon-treatises – most are straightforward practical treatises, but others have a doctrinal or typological emphasis or deal with controversial issues.

The more straightforward of the expanded sermons often develop a central metaphor. Some of these are obvious, such as *The Water of Life* and *The Holy City*. Others, such as *The Saints’ Privilege and Profit*, deal at length with meditating on the throne of grace and the heavenly realities of prayer. *The Saints’ Knowledge of Christ’s Love* spends time meditating on, and fully exploring, the breadth, length, depth and height of Christ’s love. *The Acceptable Sacrifice* focuses at length on what it means spiritually to have a broken heart, comparing it to the pain and disability of having broken limbs. *The Advocateship of Jesus Christ* dwells on many legal terms as Bunyan seeks to set forth Christ by the comparison of a lawyer. This practice of meditating on a biblical metaphor and ransacking Scripture to understand it is the approach to Scripture and to preaching that gave rise to *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.

Bunyan’s preaching could have descriptive power. For instance, at the end of *The Barren Fig Tree*, terrifyingly to the reader, Bunyan seems to foresee the deathbed experience of the fruitless professing Christian in all its horror: “Wherefore death comes not to this man as he doth to saints, muzzled, or without his sting, but with open mouth, in all his strength. . . . Now he hath

¹This series discusses aspects of Bunyan’s life and work that have been forgotten. Last month’s article spoke of him as a preacher.

his fruitless fruits beleaguer him round his bed, together with all the bands and legions of his other wickedness. His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden in the cords of his sins (Prov 5.22). . . . Now some terrible discovery is made out unto him, to the perplexing and terrifying of his guilty conscience. . . . The dark entry he is to go through will be a sore amazement to him; for fear shall be in the way, yea terrors will take hold on him, when he shall see the yawning jaws of death to gape upon him, and the doors of the shadow of death open, to give him passage out of the world. Now who will meet me in this dark entry, how shall I pass through this dark entry into another world?"

3. The Forgotten Origin of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. What has been forgotten is that *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a sermon – or at least a sermon-treatise, an expanded sermon. It has the same purpose and approach as his sermons. It actually has its origin in a sermon preached 20 years before this book was ever published. It is even possible that it was the sermon he intended to preach when first arrested in 1660. This indicates that the themes and approach of *The Pilgrim's Progress* were germinating from the very outset of Bunyan's work of preaching.

The sermon was eventually published four decades later as *The Heavenly Footman, or, A Description of the Man That Gets to Heaven*. It is a sermon on the text, "So run, that ye may obtain" (1 Cor 9:24). It is constantly emphasised, "They that will have heaven must run for it", and there are clear directions as to how to do this. The sermon develops very fully the comparison that the Christian life is a race – a race to heaven. That is a long distance. "It is an easy matter" says Bunyan, "for a man to run hard for a spurt, for a furlong, for a mile or two. O but to hold out for a hundred, for a thousand, for ten thousand miles! That man that doth this must look to meet with cross, pain and wearisomeness to the flesh; especially if, as he goeth, he meeteth with briars and quagmires and other encumbrances, that make his journey so much the more painful." "Because the way is long (I speak metaphorically), and there is many a dirty step, many a high hill."

It is easy to see how the ideas of *The Pilgrim's Progress* are forming there. Those who run in this race must be clear that they are in the right way, the gospel way of trusting in the death and righteousness of Christ alone. They must beware bypaths and wrong turnings. "Notwithstanding the kingdom of heaven be the biggest city, yet usually those bypaths are most beaten, most travellers go those ways; and therefore the way to heaven is hard to be found, and as hard to be kept in." Many will seek to turn them back or aside. They must run in a particular way – so run that they may obtain. There are many who seem to be running for a while but they do not last the course.

There must be perseverance. They must get rid of all that would weigh them down or keep them back.

It is likely that Bunyan returned to this sermon to enlarge it around a decade later. This was during the latter part of his first imprisonment, which lasted from 1660 to 1672. He tells us how this process of writing then turned into *The Pilgrim's Progress*:

When at the first I took my pen in hand
Thus for to write, I did not understand
That I at all should make a little book
In such a mode; nay, I had undertook
To make another; which, when almost done,
Before I was aware, I this begun.
And thus it was: I, writing of the way
And race of saints, in this our gospel day,
Fell suddenly into an allegory
About their journey, and the way to glory,
In more than twenty things which I set down.
This done, I twenty more had in my crown;
And they again began to multiply,
Like sparks that from the coals of fire do fly.
Nay, then, thought I, if that you breed so fast,
I'll put you by yourselves, lest you at last
Should prove ad infinitum, and eat out
The book that I already am about.

It would be fair to say that *The Pilgrim's Progress* is clearly a very expanded sermon. It expounds the same text as *The Heavenly Footman* and has the same purpose; only it does this in a much fuller way and to a greater extent.

4. The Forgotten Historical Context of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. *The Heavenly Footman* was probably written during 1667 and after this *The Pilgrim's Progress* was developed. The period 1667-1673 was the first Restoration crisis during which there was hope that the repression of non-conformists would be relaxed. John Owen and others published pleas for greater religious freedom. There were even riots in London concerning the way that brothels were being tolerated by the authorities while religious meetings or conventicles were being repressed. But by the end of this period in 1673, there were heightened fears of Roman Catholicism regaining strength in the land – and the kind of absolute rule that Charles II exercised was being associated with Romanism.

The period during which *The Pilgrim's Progress* was eventually published

was just after Bunyan's second imprisonment – it was a time that witnessed renewed efforts to repress the conventicles or illegal meetings of nonconformists. Meetings were being broken up forcibly and the consequences for those attending them could be severe, involving heavy fines if not imprisonment and banishment. Frequently the authorities might take away the tools of their trade, which was a huge economic blow for working people. The Bedford church certainly suffered in this way as a publication from the year 1670 records. In general, there was considerable pressure on people in remaining true to the gospel way. There was considerable suffering involved in continuing to hear those who were preaching the gospel outside the Church of England. There is a record of Bunyan needing to admonish a church member from withdrawing from worship in 1668.

While *The Pilgrim's Progress* is an allegory of spiritual experience it is written in a particular historical context of suffering. Those who seek to turn Christian from the narrow way are figures of a particular social standing as well as of religious views. Mr Worldly Wiseman, for instance, represents a particular self-satisfied, comfortable, affluent lifestyle as well as a self-righteous outlook. The restrictions on nonconformists in education, politics and society meant that social status went hand in hand with the religion of the Church of England. By-ends is a similar figure who conforms to what is popular in religion in order to suit his worldly ease. He loves to follow religion as long as it goes in silver shoes. Others are Money-love, Save-all and Hold-the-World.

It does not take much of a stretch to see in Vanity Fair the sinful debauchery of Restoration England and its repression of the truth. Ignorance rejects the gospel way and thinks he can follow his own path to the Celestial City, showing the danger of such courses. Christian must resist constant pressure to turn back from those who are leaving the true way. There are Pliable, Timorous and Mistrust, Turn-away and Talkative. There is also Atheist who has searched for the celestial city for 20 years and concluded "there is no such place as you dream of in all this world", because he can only think in terms of this world. These were realities too often known in the persecuting England of Bunyan's time. The pressures were similarly described by the nonconformist Benjamin Keach in a poetic dialogue published in 1673 called *War with the Devil*. A young man called Youth is instructed by Truth in relation to conflict with the powers of evil. In an appendix, Youth is discouraged by an old man called Apostate, who is turning back from the journey towards Canaan.

Obituaries

Mr Ian G MacLean

Ian G MacLean was born, the eldest of four children, on 24 June 1926 at Mulchaich, Ferintosh, on the Black Isle. He was called up for his national service in August 1944 and was stationed in India and Japan, serving in the military police. He was discharged from the forces in February 1948. Back in civilian life, he became a lorry driver and then a bus driver with Highland Omnibuses. He was later promoted to the position of bus regulator, the company's term for an inspector. After that he worked for Gilbert Ross, in an ironmongery shop in Inverness, and later in their Invergordon branch. He was then asked to manage the new Farm and Household Stores in Inverness, which he did for 21 years, until he retired in 1997.

In later life he referred to his disappointment when he was not accepted for the police service in Scotland. He unexpectedly failed the medical because of his eyesight. But, looking back, he used to say that this disappointment was from the Lord: he believed that it was for his spiritual good.

Ian married Margaret MacLeod in August 1953; the service was conducted by Rev D A Macfarlane, then minister of the Dingwall and Beaully congregation, and they settled in Inverness. They had four sons and, having been spared to a ripe old age, they had grandchildren and great grandchildren.

As a boy, Ian had attended the Free Church, and Margaret had been brought up a Free Presbyterian. After their marriage they used to attend the Free Church for one service on Sabbaths and the Free Presbyterian Church for the other, but by the time their first child was born, they realised that this was not a practical arrangement, and they started attending the Free Presbyterian Church all the time. Before seeking baptism for his first child, Kenneth, Ian gave up his employment with Highland Omnibuses – it involved Sabbath work – and moved to Gilbert Ross's shop.

When he arranged to meet Rev A F Mackay, then the Inverness minister, with a view to receiving baptism for Kenneth, he was reluctant to go alone and asked Hugh Gunn, who was married to his sister-in-law, to go along with him, which he duly did. During the course of the meeting, it became evident that both Ian and Hugh were under concern about their souls and, shortly afterwards, they were both accepted as members in full communion in the Church. When he came to the Kirk Session in June 1959 to profess faith in Christ, he told them that since beginning to attend the Free Presbyterian Church he had come to see that he was a sinner and to feel his need of Christ. He indicated that a sermon on the verse, "The Spirit and the bride say,

Come,” had been blessed to him. He mentioned also that some of Rev A F Mackay’s sermons and Mr Finlay Beaton’s addresses had been helpful to him. He had a life-long regard for Mr Mackay.

He was elected an elder in 1962 (at the same time as his brother-in-law Hugh Gunn). He acknowledged the benefit he received as a young elder, from the advice of more experienced men on the Inverness Kirk Session, including Finlay Beaton, Robert Watt and Murdoch Campbell. He was very conscious of his duties as an elder, and people found Ian approachable when they had matters they wanted to discuss. He is recalled as a balanced man who always sought to resolve difficulties in kirk session meetings amicably but without compromise of biblical principles.

He served on a number of the Synod committees, including those with responsibility for Foreign Missions, for Finance and for Ballifeary Care Home. He was an assessor elder for other congregations in the Northern Presbytery for many years. He was often asked to take services in the Inverness congregation and elsewhere, particularly in places within the Presbytery. Psalm 40 was a particular favourite of his and he would often give it out to be sung when he was taking a service. He was an able speaker and people found his addresses interesting; they were much appreciated. He could explain the truth well and present it in an evangelical way. He taught the senior class in the Sabbath School for many years.

A member of the Inverness congregation recalls that “he was listened to with attention, holding your interest throughout the service”. She mentioned two Scripture passages which she associates with Mr MacLean. He used them as texts but also quoted them in prayer and when speaking in public. “The first is Psalm 106:4: ‘Remember me, Lord, with that love which Thou to Thine dost bear; / With Thy salvation, O my God, to visit me draw near’. The second is Ezekiel 16:6-9, but especially verse 8: ‘Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love . . . and thou becamest Mine’.” He was in the Inverness congregation for 65 years and an elder for 57 years.

Hugh Gunn and Ian MacLean often attended communion seasons together and no doubt received spiritual benefit from doing so. He visited Zimbabwe in March 1992 with Mr Eleneth Sutherland, also an Inverness elder; it was a trip which he thoroughly enjoyed. The Mission staff showed them much kindness and they were able to see almost all aspects of the Church’s work there. He also visited the Kenya Mission on a number of occasions.

Due to his wife’s failing health and need for 24-hour care, they moved into Ballifeary Care Home in Inverness in September 2016, and it was a pleasure to visit him there. Another minister also recalls: “I always enjoyed

conversations with him as they inevitably centred around the truth". His wife passed away in May 2018, and naturally he felt the loss deeply. Just under a year later he suffered a further stroke, which meant that he had to be taken into hospital. While there, he developed pneumonia and passed to his eternal rest on 2 May 2019, aged 92.

When the Lord removes His children to a better world, we would wish that the Lord would bring many others to Himself who would be clearly on His side, not least in an ungodly generation such as this – and particularly men who would serve Him as office-bearers in His Church. We would express our sincere sympathy to Mr MacLean's family, and to his sons in particular.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" (Rev 14:13).

(Rev) K D Macleod

Mr William G Macleod

The Ullapool congregation have suffered a great loss in the removal by death of Mr William (Willie) George Macleod, at the age of 87 years on 3 October 2020. William was born on the 12 December 1932, one of six siblings. He was brought up in Strathkanaird, eight miles from Ullapool. After the normal course of schooling he entered further training in agriculture at Balmacara and Craibstone before returning home and in providence built up a successful business over the years. In 1969 he was moved to profess faith in Christ publicly for the first time and thereby began what would be a long and sometimes very trying wilderness journey to the heavenly Canaan.

On 12 August 1975 William was joined in marriage to Morag Macaskill, daughter of the late Rev A Macaskill, Lochinver, who had been a spiritual father to William and now in providence his father-in-law, whom he held in the highest regard. This marriage was blessed with three daughters but sadly the eldest died at four months of age.

William became an elder in April 1981. He was esteemed in many respects and chiefly his attention to the preaching of the gospel. He was gifted by God for this duty and obviously blessed with much understanding in the fear of God. He had clear and deep spiritual experience which manifested itself in prayer and preaching along with clear evidence of his humility, esteeming others greater than himself.

Ullapool congregation had been left vacant following the departure of Rev Neil Ross and William felt this most keenly. Since then, until now, the task of the elders was increased in the absence of a settled ministry. The burden fell on William and his brother elder, and for many years this led to William being engaged more frequently in taking church services and in other aspects of church life. It could be said of him as David, King of Israel, said about

Abner, who had come to his help: “Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?” (2 Sam 3:38)

The Kirk Session together with the congregation express their genuine sorrow and sense of loss and would extend their sympathy to his widow, a true helpmeet, and those of the family that remain. Our prayer is that they would experience the promises, “Thy God commands thy strength”; “As thy days, so shall thy strength be” (Ps 68:28; Deut 33:25). (Rev) *A E W MacDonald*

Book Reviews¹

From the Mouth of Lions, Sermons on the Book of Daniel, by Hugh M Cartwright, published by Reformation Press, 240 pages, hardback, £23.40; paperback, £12.90.

This is an excellent volume. It contains 12 sermons, one on each chapter in the Book of Daniel. And in each of these sermons – preached on consecutive Sabbath evenings from mid-January 2008 – Mr Cartwright succeeds in giving an overview of the whole chapter.

For example, in summing up the account of the fiery trial of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, he notes that attention is concentrated especially on “the faithfulness of these three men to God and their readiness to adhere to the principles of their religion, no matter what the consequences. They were instrumental in maintaining a testimony to God in Babylon, and they did so, not knowing . . . what the outcome of their stand would be. But they did believe that it was for them to worship the one living and true God, and not to give way, not to compromise the principles of their religion in any way.” This leads him to announce his three main points: (1.) They “were habitually prepared for this crisis”. (He goes on to explain that this was “because it was their habit, by the grace of God, to be governed by the fear of God”). (2.) They “were sustained by their confidence in God”. (3.) They “were committed to God, whatever the outcome”. And in his concluding remarks, Mr Cartwright makes the point: “That is the call that is addressed to us in our generation – not to compromise with evil”.

In concluding this sermon, the preacher also notes that “in the book of Daniel, Christ is at the heart of it. In Chapter 2, Christ was the stone that was going to break the great image. In Chapter 3, Christ was there to sustain His people.” At the start of his sermon on Chapter 6, there is a further comment on the main theme of Daniel: “The incidents recorded in the first six chapters of the book of Daniel illustrate the theological message of the book – the

¹Both books reviewed here may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

sovereignty of God in the affairs of men and the care which God takes of His own people and His own cause”. Again, at the start of the final sermon, the preacher notes that “the general thrust of this book is . . . that the history of the Church is completely under the control of God, and that although God brings His people through times of great trial and testing, both individually and collectively, yet He is making everything work together to the accomplishing of the purposes which He has in view”.

Chapter 4 of Daniel records Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and his being cast out to eat grass as an animal. This lesson is brought out: “We have a God who really is God – a God who rules. We see that working out in the salvation of sinners. We see how the sovereignty of God comes to expression in saving sinners – in bringing sinners to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we see it in all of providence, that God was working everything according to His plan, in a way that will manifest the glory of all His perfections.”

Again, the concluding remarks on chapter 6 begin thus: “Surely this whole incident is calling on us to set the Lord always before us. To be governed by the fear of the Lord. To be aiming at the glory of God. And to follow the Lord fully – to be faithful to Him, in all the pressures which may be brought to bear on us. Whatever the seeming outcome may be, we are to believe that the right way, whether it leads to a den of lions or not, is always to be followed. The right way is not to be determined by the consequences, but by the revealed will of God.”

When Mr Cartwright comes to the more difficult parts of Daniel, in chapters 7-12, he continues to expound the passage before him and to apply it, with his feet firmly fixed on solid Scripture principles. He emphasises, “Whatever may be said about the details, there is no doubt that the overall thrust of these visions is to convey to Daniel and to God’s people that, however triumphant the powers of ungodliness may seem to be, God is in complete control of the situation. All these kingdoms will pass away. But the kingdom of Christ will endure for ever.” He mentions the general principle: “When we come to the Bible, we should come with a desire to understand something of what God is saying to us and to benefit from it, and to be stirred up to live in a way that is glorifying to Him”. Yet he warns that “when people are trying to work out what this and that puzzling thing means, they risk losing sight of the purpose for which it has been given to us”.

In expounding chapter 8, for instance, the preacher explains the fulfilment of the prophecy in some detail, but the main thrust lies in the general lessons to be learned. His main points are: (1.) “Evil may rise to great heights and seem to triumph.” (2.) “Everything is under God’s control, and He will triumph in the end.” (3.) The “instruction we should derive from these facts”.

He makes the further point, in introducing Chapter 12: “Many people are very serious about trying to work out the times and the seasons. But whatever may be the particular significance of these times and years and days, the emphasis is certainly that although the time may be long, yet it is limited. It is controlled by God, and He has His time for everything, and when His time would come, Christ would appear.”

The final main point on this chapter deals with “the encouragement” to Daniel that he would “rest and stand in [his] lot at the end of the days”. The preacher says, “When the Lord’s people leave this world, when soul and body are separated, they rest. Their body rests in the grave, and their soul enters immediately into the blessedness of heaven, where they rest from temptation and they rest from sin. . . . One moment they’re struggling. They’re in conflict with the corruption of their own natures. . . . And the next moment, their souls are made perfect in holiness! Sin has been banished from their lives for ever, they never have to worry about temptation again, and they never have to worry about falling into sin again.”

Mr Cartwright was describing here what we fully believe he has now experienced. We trust that many will profit from these sermons both in understanding the Book of Daniel better and by receiving the scriptural application that is made in them. May readers lay this book down with a (clearer) conviction that God is ruling over everything that happens.

The Priesthood of Christ, by Peter MacBride, published by the Scottish Highlands Reformed Book Trust, paperback, 107 pages, £7.95,

MacBride was born in Argyllshire in 1797. For part of his teenage years, he lived with his uncle Neil MacBride in Arran, who was a minister there. During that time, in 1812-13, “a great awakening occurred under the ministry” of his uncle, and it was probably about this time that “he received his first serious religious impressions”.² As a student in Glasgow, Peter MacBride attended the ministry of the noted John Love and no doubt benefited greatly from what he heard. In 1825 MacBride became a minister in Rothesay, in the Isle of Bute, and continued there till he died, in 1846.

His death brought the following tribute from “Rabbi” John Duncan: “How can I forget that it was ever my privilege to hold familiar converse with one whose mind, naturally of the noblest mould, carefully stored with the best and solidest learning, divine and human – deeply subdued in days long past to the obedience of the gospel, and richly filled with the Word of God dwelling in it in all wisdom and spiritual understanding?” He “was ever”, Duncan continued, “pouring forth without straining, and as it were without

²*Disruption Worthies of the Highlands*, Edinburgh, 1877, pp 159-60.

effort, streams of wholesome doctrine, hallowed affection, and growing aspirations after the glory of God and the salvation and universal good of his fellow men”.

This book contains a series of sermons on Hebrews 4:14-16: “Seeing then that we have a great high priest . . .”. It treats such subjects as: the Person of Christ, His appointment to be a priest, His work in making atonement, His suffering, the fruit of His sacrifice, His intercession and ascension, and His character as High Priest.

In speaking of Christ’s priestly intercession, MacBride speaks of Him as “perfect in His office, for He engages and undertakes to do for sinners all that they need to be done for them that they may be saved. Are they guilty? He engages to reconcile them to God, and instate them in His favour and Fatherly love. Are they ignorant? He engages to instruct and enlighten them in all that concerns their eternal peace and well-being. And are they disobedient and helpless? He engages to bring them to submit, and to protect them in His service and ways. In short, are they lost? He engages to save them.”

A little later, the preacher shows his warm desire that sinners would come to Christ and receive at once from Him a full salvation: “He is perfect in His salvation. All things are now ready. ‘Come ye’, it is said, ‘to the supper.’ . . . O sinner, come to Christ this day; you will find, on so coming, all that yourself could wish Him to be.”

When speaking of the gifts that Christ procured for sinners, MacBride refers to (1) redemption, so that these gifts may be imparted through the means of grace; (2) the Spirit, “for rendering the means effectual”; (3) “access unto the favour of God through faith”; (4) deliverance from sin, so that God’s people may be sanctified; (5) “grace for every duty and trial”; (6) fellowship with God and “His indwelling by His Spirit in them”. MacBride sums up: “He has secured every blessing of salvation here and eternal glory hereafter; all is enjoyed through the merits and intercession of the glorious Redeemer. See here the rich fruit of His mediation and ministry above.”

MacBride’s *Remains* were first published in 1848. The book under review is the second, and smaller, section of the *Remains*. The editor was Alexander MacBride, a relation of his, who also was a minister in Bute. Probably because of a lack of time, the editor had the volume printed directly from Peter MacBride’s manuscripts, apart from omitting repetitious material at the beginning of each sermon. Consequently the present publishers have felt it necessary to do some editing “to improve grammar”, for instance, and “to clarify ambiguous wording”. *The Priesthood of Christ* is recommended as an example of the profitable preaching from Scottish pulpits in an age which knew more of the blessing of the Holy Spirit than, sadly, we know today.

MacBride concludes this series of sermons by emphasising several aspects of the greatness of this High Priest. No doubt there was sincere worship in his heart when he asked his hearers: "Can you see any to commit your case to [who is] more worthy of it than this Saviour?" May readers come to an end of this book with something of that worshipful spirit in their own hearts!

Let Israel Rejoice in the Lord¹

A Sermon Outline by *John Kennedy*

Psalm 149:2. *Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.*

These words call us to consider the children of Zion and the duty here presented to them.

The Children of Zion.

These are not all the members of the visible Church.

They are the living, lawful children.

They are born again by Divine power.

They are justified by God through Christ.

They are adopted, and sanctified by the Spirit and the Word.

None but the lawful children, whatever their profession may be.

They have a King.

Psalm 2 tells us who He is.

He is called Messiah, the Son of God.

He has been appointed King by God.

He is also Head of the Church.

He is the lawful King; God has anointed Him.

He has an eternal right to a place on the throne of God.

He has the Rank of a King.

Being the eternal Son of God, King of kings.

His wealth includes all Divine resources.

He has all covenant promises, all power.

He is the Lord of hosts, has infinite wisdom.

He has the grace and faithfulness required by His children.

They are to be Joyful in Him.

He is their elder Brother in their nature.

He partook of flesh and blood.

He is both King and Brother.

He is your Shepherd to feed and guide.

¹Preached in Dingwall on 28 November 1882. It has been edited.

He is the Healer of your soul and Prince of Peace.
He sent the Spirit to comfort you.

Application.

Think of Him who delivered you. Be zealous for His rights.

Notes and Comments

Free Church (Continuing) and Reformed Presbyterian Church

The Free Church (Continuing) and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland are pursuing ecumenical relations and have reached the stage of encouraging ministers from each denomination to preach in the other. Union between the denominations is under discussion, though said not to be imminent.

The development is both puzzling and disturbing. The R P Church rejects the Revolution Settlement of 1690, acceptance of which is fundamental to the Established Church of Scotland and the ecclesiastical bodies which derive from her, being part of the ordination vows of ministers and office-bearers. How do the ecumenists in the FCC and the RPC intend to get round this problem? Do not their own ordination vows preclude them from pursuing this union?

Again, the form of worship differs between the two bodies. The FCC uses the Authorised Version and the 1650 metrical psalms in public worship, and generally the “thee” and “thou” forms in public prayer. The RPC generally uses modern versions of the Bible and modern metrical psalms, and the “you” form in public prayer. People sometimes suppose that these are small differences, but they are mistaken. The differences may be small in their own minds but they are not so in the minds of many who are committed to the AV, nor of many who have turned their backs on it. Some people use modern versions because they have known nothing else, but there are others who have known the AV and who did not like the reverence and restraint that it imposed upon them. They wanted a version that fitted better with the modern world, and that presented God in less of an eternal and unchanging light and more as One who could be accommodated to current trends and fashions.

The modern-versions path is a dangerous one. This has been seen in Scotland with the APCs and the Free Church, and in England with many Independent and Baptist congregations. Most of the RPCs are going down that path, and there are some in the FCC embarking on it as well. One APC minister ended up as Moderator of the Church of Scotland, associating with heretics, women ministers, and sodomites. The fearful fall and suicide of a

highly praised Free Church minister sounded a loud warning to the whole Church. We are to learn from these lessons. “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor 10:12). It would be the wisdom of the FCC to terminate these discussions with the RPC. “Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls” (Jer 6:16). *DWBS*

Euthanasia in New Zealand

On October 17, a referendum on assisted dying was held alongside the New Zealand general election. Over 65% of voters supported the End of Life Choice Act, which is now expected to come into effect in November 2021. In a separate non-binding referendum held at the same time, New Zealanders rejected a proposal to legalise recreational cannabis.

The End of Life Choice Act was passed by the New Zealand parliament in 2019, but with the proviso that it should first be put to a referendum and would only come into force if more than 50% of voters endorsed it. According to the Act, there are several criteria a person must satisfy to ask for assisted dying. These include suffering from a terminal illness that is likely to end their life within six months, showing a significant decline in physical capability, and being able to make an informed decision about assisted dying. The Act does not allow assisted dying for reasons of advanced age, mental illness, or disability alone.

An organisation called Euthanasia-Free NZ, a group which campaigned for a No vote, said it was “disappointed that the New Zealand public voted to pass a flawed euthanasia law” and that Parliament “could have made this law safer” by passing further amendments. We question whether a law which permits euthanasia could ever be safe when it accommodates and allows the killing of a human being, contrary to the law of God.

We have now reached the very sad position where euthanasia is legal in Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Luxemburg, the Netherlands and, in 2021, New Zealand, while assisted suicide is permitted in Switzerland. Several states in the USA and the Australian state of Victoria have also made assisted dying legal.

At this time, we see the Lord’s judgements abroad throughout the nations of the world in the Covid pandemic and we do not have to look far for reasons why. The blood of the unborn aborted in the womb, and increasingly those institutionally killed with the blessing of people and rulers, cry to the Lord. Worst of all, “the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good” (Ps 53:1). May the day soon come when “all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord” (Ps 22:27). *FRD*

A Vaccine for Covid-19

In the middle of the second lockdown in England – the result of increasing numbers of Covid cases – pharmaceutical giant Pfizer has announced successful trials of a vaccine. It is claimed that it can protect from the virus 93% of those inoculated. This is a welcome development, and it led Sir John Bell, Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford University, to agree, in response to a radio interviewer’s question, that “life will return to normal by spring”.

If that does indeed take place, we should be very ready to give thanks to the Lord for, in particular, allowing us to gather publicly around His Word and observe the Lord’s Supper. One fears, however, that the vast majority will continue to ignore God and follow their own deities of pleasure and consumption. Even at the height of the pandemic, people very largely ignored God, rejected His authority and refused to consider the thought that He can come in judgement against those who despise Him.

Covid-19 has been a loud call to people and nations to turn to the Lord, forsake their own gods and serve the Lord in sincerity. Yet “how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Rom 10:14,15). So there is a further call: to God’s people to pray that He would send out preachers, so that the gospel might be spread everywhere, and especially for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit to apply to rebellious sinners the truth preached and the Word of God read. We must remember that “except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it” (Ps 127:1). We should plead with the Most High to bless His dealings with individuals and nations, whether in mercy, in longsuffering or in judgement.

Protestant View

The Pope and Civil Unions

The Pope has voiced his fullest support yet for the sin of Sodom, calling for a “civil union law” in order that sodomites can have legal recognition for their vile, ungodly relationships. “Homosexual people have a right to be in a family”, he said in a recent documentary. He went on to add, “They are children of God and have a right to a family. Nobody should be thrown out or made miserable over it. What we have to create is a civil union law. That way they are legally covered.” Though this comes short of an official endorsement of homosexual “marriage”, it goes beyond his previous comments on this subject. It is monstrously absurd that the same man who presides over an institution which forbids its own priesthood the “right to be in a

family” is seen in the documentary encouraging two sodomites “and their three children” to attend church.

As has previously been stated here, the current pope speaks with a forked tongue on this issue. On the one hand, he voices support couched in terms which are intended to display a “compassionate” side to the Roman Catholic Church but, at the same time, his support has not yet resulted in significant doctrinal or practical change. In Scripture, antichrist is characterised by deceit and depravity. Clearly the support which the current incumbent of the seat of antichrist lends to this great moral evil of our day demonstrates how utterly opposed to Christ and to true gospel holiness the Roman system actually is.

True compassion for those ensnared in the sin of Sodom would bring reproof of their sin, seeking not to countenance it in any way. “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. . . . And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret” (Eph 5:5-7, 11-12). AWM

Church Information

Removed by Death

Mr Levi Ndlovu passed away on November 4 at the Lutsha clinic. He was an elder on the Kirk Session of the Mbumba congregation in Zimbabwe for many years and had been the headmaster of the Free Presbyterian Church primary school in Lutsha.

Mr Harry Martin, of Manchester, who was an elder in the Barnoldswick congregation for many years, passed away on November 12.

We send our sympathy to the families of both these men.

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

Day of Humiliation and Prayer

The Synod has appointed Wednesday, December 9, as a Day of Humiliation and Prayer.

(Rev) K M Watkins, Clerk of Synod

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

2020

Volume 125

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. **Beaully** (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. 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 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. **Strathly:** 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. **Sheilebos:** as intimated. Rev K M Watkins BA, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, IV1 1NA; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochberrie:** 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. Rev A B MacLean, 5 Forteviot Cottages, Pomarium Street, Perth, PH2 8JF; tel: 01738 270 213.
- 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. 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:** Kellbrook 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@fpcchurchvancouver.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:sydneyfpcchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

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

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

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

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

Singapore

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

Ukraine

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

Zimbabwe

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

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

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

New Canaan: Church.

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