

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; **Fifth:** 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, Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

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

May: First Sabbath: Aberdeen, Donsa, Grafton, Leverburgh, London; **Second:** Achmore, Kinlochberrie; **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: Grafton, Lochcarron, North Tolsta; **Second:** Gairloch; **Third:** Leverburgh, London, Odessa; **Fourth:** Edinburgh, Gisborne; Fifth: Mbumba.

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

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

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Christ's Authority as Teacher

The Saviour had begun to call disciples to follow Him: four fishermen working at the Lake of Galilee. They went into the village of Capernaum and, on the Sabbath, "He entered into the synagogue, and taught" (Mk 1:21). We are not here told what He said, but we are told about its effect on those who heard Him: "They were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes". "He taught them," so J A Alexander explains this statement, "not as a mere expounder, but with the original authority belonging to the author of the law [which He] expounded. This is not a description of mere outward manner, but of that self-evidencing light and self-asserting force which must accompany all direct divine communications to the minds of creatures. . . . He was speaking with authority, declaring His own will, and expounding His own law, not that of another."¹

Let us note the authority that the people felt as Jesus taught them. Whether that teaching, and the authority with which it was given, had a saving effect on them is another matter. Some may have so felt that authority in their souls that they did repent and believe the gospel, a duty which was at the centre of Christ's earliest preaching (see Mk 1:15). Others certainly did not; indeed it would seem that the vast majority did not believe; "He came unto His own [the seed of Abraham], and His own received Him not" (Jn 1:11). Many of them recognised His authority when He spoke to them, but they did not submit to what He told them with such authority. After they had seen the feeding of the 5000, many said, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (Jn 6:14); they recognised Jesus as the Prophet whom Moses (in Deut 18:18) foretold would come into the world. Yet they did not generally receive Him by faith.

So it is today. There are still people who accept that Jesus has authority, and yet, when He calls them to repent and believe the gospel, they do not turn from their sins and they refuse to trust in Him for the salvation of their souls. They may imagine that if Jesus was to appear in their place of worship and teach the people as He did in Capernaum, they would most certainly

¹Alexander, *A Commentary on Mark*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1984.

repent and believe. But now He is the exalted Saviour on the throne of glory; His authority now is most certainly not less than it was while in His state of humiliation in this world. We will not hear His voice sounding from the skies, but He sends ambassadors to us, and ambassadors speak with the authority of the head of the state that sent them. Christ's ambassadors, the preachers of the gospel, speak with Christ's authority when they speak as their King has authorised them – that is, when they preach in a way that is consistent with the revelation that God has given in Scripture.

It should encourage us to expect the exalted Saviour to exercise His authority when people assemble to worship, and His ambassadors speak on His behalf, that He promised, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt 18:20). When even a few people gather at His command, should we not expect that Christ Himself will be present and will, in one degree or another, make His authority felt in connection with the Word read and preached? And should it not encourage us to pray for a blessing, however few may attend a service?

Christ taught in the synagogue in Capernaum; He taught in the synagogue in Nazareth; He taught at the temple in Jerusalem; He taught at the well of Sychar, where He had just one woman to listen to Him. In each case He taught with authority; and on many such occasions, there no doubt were some who received His words when there was divine power – the power of the Holy Spirit – accompanying what He said. This was certainly so at Sychar, for the woman confessed that He "told me all things that ever I did" and asked the believing question, "Is not this the Christ?" (Jn 4:29). What power accompanied the words in which the Saviour revealed Himself to her: "I that speak unto thee am He" (Jn 4:26)! He was telling her: I am the Messiah. And the power was that of the Holy Spirit, through whom God's purposes for the salvation of sinners will always be accomplished.

In his old age, the London minister, Rowland Hill (1744–1833), recalled a time when he had preached outside and a man came to him afterwards to confess, "I wanted to stone you as much as ever Saul wanted to stone Stephen, and I came with my pockets full of stones for that purpose. I stood to hear you, and my heart was touched; I put my hand in one pocket and cast away a stone out of that, and then I put my hand into the other, and did the same, till I had dropped them all, for I trust the Lord was taking the stone out of my heart."² We can assume that there was authority in the way Hill preached on that occasion, but especially what the man felt in his heart was the authority of *Christ*, working through the Holy Spirit.

²Edwin Sidney, *Mature Reflections and Devotions of the Rev Rowland Hill in His Old Age*, London, 1836, p 213. (Scripture does not, of course, state what Saul wanted to do.)

On the occasion when Christ's authority was recognised in the Capernaum synagogue, He exercised His power on a man there who was under the influence of an unclean spirit. The devil cried out and, although recognising that Jesus was "the Holy One of God", there was a display of the evil spirit's enmity. Jesus told him to be quiet and to come out of the man. With one final display of his evil power, tearing the man and crying with a loud voice, the devil obeyed. Clearly, if He had wished, the Saviour could have prevented the spirit acting as he did, but Jesus permitted this to happen – obviously for His own wise purposes. It showed that Jesus' authority was sufficient to make the evil spirit obey His command. We can be sure that it did not obey willingly, that it would have resisted if it could have done so. But there is no power, even from hell, that can resist the power of the Lord Jesus. And once more the people recognised His authority. They asked, "What thing is this? . . . for with authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him" (Mk 1:27).

Similarly, however strong Satan may be, and however determined to keep a sinner in his kingdom, he must let the sinner go whenever the Saviour exercises His authority in giving the Holy Spirit to call that sinner effectually. The sinner cannot resist that call once he is made willing to come to Christ, and Satan is no more able to resist, however unwilling he is to release his hold on someone who has remained, for his entire lifetime, in the kingdom of the evil one. Yes, the call of the gospel may be resisted, and very often is. But what cannot be resisted is the authority of Christ when He sends the Holy Spirit to work powerfully and effectively in the heart of a sinner.

We are not to think that Christ has somehow lost His authority when Satan retains so many of the world's population in his kingdom and so few begin to follow Christ. Here again we may note that the Lord is following out His own purposes and we should recall that, when the last will come to the last, those who have felt Christ's authority and have begun to follow Him will be, not a few, but "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (Rev 7:9).

The conversion of a sinner who is obviously doing the will of the evil one, going on in a course of outward sin, will normally cause amazement. But every conversion should bring God's children to glorify God for such a display of His grace and power. Let them also pray, earnestly, that Christ would come to make His authority felt whenever the Word of God is proclaimed and that, even in our time, He would exercise that authority on vast numbers of sinners so that they would turn from sin and live to His glory for the rest of their lives. And let sinners pray, Make *me* feel in my own soul the authority of Christ and make me willing to trust in Him.

“Much People Gathered unto Him”¹

Synod Sermon by Rev Roderick Macleod

Mark 5:21. *And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto Him: and He was nigh unto the sea.*

This verse is part of a report of an event in the life of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in this world. The event is also recorded in Matthew and Luke, with interesting details in each. To get a full picture, one needs to study all three accounts. The Lord Jesus had left Capernaum (called His own town) by boat on the Sea of Galilee, to go where a man was known to be possessed of a legion of devils. After setting this man free from his diabolical masters, the Lord Jesus returned to His own town.

The intention is to dwell on the delight the people of Capernaum had in His return, with this in view: to examine our own desires for the gracious return of the Lord Jesus Christ to us. The text tells us much about the people’s desires towards the Lord. Luke’s report tells us about the people’s desire, which is eminently worthy of our attention: “they received Him gladly”.

1. The place. We will come closer to the details if we consider Capernaum, the place where they gathered. The Lord and Saviour has passed over from Gennesaret, where Legion was healed. He was sitting, clothed and in His right mind, Satan’s possession of him being terminated by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. That was a great thing. Little wonder there were some people waiting for Him; people who had diseases, had death and demons reigning in their hearts, which they had no power to dismiss. O blessed Saviour, come with that glorious power to perform a saving work in our hearts; to cure our spiritual diseases; heal our wounded consciences; terminate the reign of sin, Satan and spiritual death, as Thou alone art able to do. When we meet in the public means of grace, we ought to ask to receive Him, seek Him in the opening of the Word, find Him for ourselves, and knock till the door of access to heaven’s riches is opened to us.

The people of Capernaum “received Him gladly, for they were all waiting for Him” (Lk 8:40). Isaiah, almost 700 years earlier, had prophesied of the area where Capernaum was. Matthew mentions this prophecy: Jesus “came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: the people which sat in darkness saw great light: and to them which sat in the region and the shadow of death light is sprung up” (4:13-16).

¹Sermon preached at the opening of the Synod by the retiring Moderator in October 2020.

Scotland is like Capernaum, for the almighty Lord has visited this land; He came and dwelt with us; He has healed the spiritually sick; pardoned their sins; raised our dead; spoken to us. Scotland “waited on Him” and multitudes “received Him gladly”. They saw Him through the lattice of His Word. They fell down and worshipped Him; they shed their blood, rather than deny His honour. Our women were crowned with martyrdom in the Solway; they were put to death in Edinburgh, choosing death rather than deny Him. In Scotland, as in Capernaum, “the people which sat in darkness saw great light”. Like Capernaum, Scotland was a place where the horn of the New Testament David budded and where the crown that was upon His head flourished. History testifies that it flourished in greater majesty among our fathers than in any other nation, our Scotland being described as the fairest daughter of the Reformation.

Scotland sat in the darkness of pitiless Popery, and our fathers saw a great light shining in the doctrines of the Reformation. This same Jesus was made known to the two from Emmaus, in the breaking of bread at their family table, but he was made known in Scotland in the breaking of spiritual bread, in the preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This is what Scotland has to a large extent neglected and lost. Ichabod is written over large tracts of our land. The glory is departed.

We need to lay this to heart and cry unto the Lord, beseeching Him to return. We need to wait for Him, ready to “receive Him gladly”. Are we looking for Him to visit our land as in days past, with a reformation of true religion in the visible Church? There is a great danger that we are effectively breaking the chariot wheels of the gospel of Christ by the feebleness of our desire, the offspring of our unbelief, for “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (Jas 5:16).

The preaching of the gospel is the light that sprang up in Galilee. The same light, the same gospel, which had brought Christ to Capernaum, brought Christ to Scotland. But a change came on Capernaum, partly because of the influence of the Jewish ecclesiastical leaders and partly because some grew weary of Him. Once they grew weary of His Word read and preached, they came near to destruction. So it is in Scotland. As a nation we have been given over to our sins. Paul spoke of men being delivered into the hand of Satan – for their eventual recovery from their sins. But when men or nations are given over to their sins, the situation is worse. Then they are under the dominion of their sins; there is little or no hope to be entertained for them. The whole United Kingdom is in a very large measure delivered up to its sins. O for help from heaven to cry longingly that the Lord would not deliver us altogether, that He would not remove His candlestick altogether.

The ark of the testimony was known as the throne of God, who “dwelleth / sitteth between the cherubims” (Ps 80:1; 99:1 etc); it was in the most holy place when the Children of Israel rested from marching in the wilderness. There were two rings on each side of the ark. Two poles passed through the rings for carrying the ark when they were on the march. The ark was a type of Christ and of the presence of Christ by His Spirit in the Church. The staves were to be left in these rings so that the ark could instantly be removed when they were called to resume marching in the wilderness. Is not this a symbol of the fact that the Lord can remove His presence – perhaps not formal worship but the power of His presence – without any warning.

This is a suitable occasion to think about this and how weak we are. We are told that 14 000 people came out of the Disruption Free Church with Mr Macfarlane and Mr Macdonald. Are we taking stock? How small our congregations are now! Is the Lord departing from Scotland? There is much talk of uniting separate presbyterian churches. That is not the solution: union at the expense of truth is a conspiracy against the truth. We must not ignore the solemn fact that this favoured people grew weary of Christ; He said, “Thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. . . . It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgement than for thee”. May the Lord pour upon us “the Spirit of grace and of supplications” and enable Scotland again to look upon Him whom we have pierced and to mourn!

2. The People. “Much people gathered unto Him”. There was a remnant there. A man in Capernaum was irresistibly drawn to follow Jesus, to lay down a notorious occupation at “the receipt of custom” and follow Jesus. A woman with an issue of blood knew what it was to go to Him out of a felt need. She, like many others in Capernaum, was healed. She knew it, and He knew it. When she touched the hem of His garment she knew in herself, immediately, that she had been made whole. The Lord communicated that power to her body and that light to her mind, so that she knew immediately in herself that she had been made whole of her plague. He knew it, for He asked, “Who touched Me?” He asked because He wanted her to own it. A spiritual correspondence between Christ and His people is possible in the worst of times and places. If sinners were blessed in Capernaum, a town on which the Lord pronounces many woes, why not in Scotland?

Even in Scotland in 2020 there is a trade between the praying soul and heaven. There is communion between souls and the God of heaven and earth. Yes, the Lord’s princes are prevailing in prayer. Though they have in their providence what makes them lame in the world, they are “the lame [who]

take the prey” (Is 33:23). That is what communion with God is. They have nothing to give but what is marred. “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” (Is 64:6). Everything we give must go through the hand of the Mediator so that it may be cleansed, but everything that He gives is to be received as it is. That is the nature of communion with God through our Lord Jesus Christ by the sweet influence of the Holy Spirit upon our souls: He giving and we receiving. What a glorious gospel!

How did they receive Him? He was offered freely. What a blessed day when a sinner is enabled at his door to receive Christ! What a night has come on us! But there is still in Scotland a divine knocking at the Church and the hearts of ministers and people: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him and he with Me” (Rev 3:20). Do you believe that the Lord is still speaking to us: calling us to return, to lay down the arms of our rebellion, to repent and believe the gospel, to receive Jesus Christ as He is freely offered to us? The Lord’s people are receiving Christ at every turn in their journey. He is saying, “Who touched Me?” and they are saying, Who has thought on me in my low estate and healed me? He is saying “Who touched the hem of My garment” with the hand of faith? and they are saying, Who has given me peace of conscience? Who has given me joy in the Holy Ghost? Who has given me pardon and more pardons, grace and more grace, peace and more peace, joy and more joy? None but He!

They looked for Him, not for another, as they gathered. People like Levi, people like the man that had the palsy and was healed, people like Jairus; “saw Him”. Is someone saying, O that I could see Him as Jairus saw Him? Friend, see Him set forth by God in the preaching of the gospel, whom God has set forth so that you may see Him with the eye of faith and that your soul may run out to Him in the chariot of your heart’s affections to embrace Him warmly. When Jairus “saw Him, he fell at His feet” – an outward act indicating inward reverence to the One you receive as your Lord God. Jairus besought Him greatly. Do you beseech God greatly on behalf of your soul, for healing and eternal happiness, for your family and for your congregation, “saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her”? He believed he could trust Jesus and commit his great trouble to the One that was able to help him. No doubt there were others too, for “much people gathered unto Him”. Poor blind Scotland! How few gather to meet Him and give Him a glad reception!

“Turn us again, Lord God of hosts, and upon us vouchsafe
To make Thy countenance to shine, and so we shall be safe.”

3. The gathering. The people gathered unto Jesus when He had “passed

over again by ship". What a beautiful picture of the brief months of Christ's popularity in Capernaum. He had parted from them and they were waiting for Him to return. This illustrates a fundamental part of true piety: waiting for the Lord to return to us, by His Spirit accompanying the Word with spiritual influences: such power as regenerates the soul; binds up the broken hearted; sanctifies believers and prepares them for glory.

We have gatherings. Is it to see Jesus? David desired, "One thing I of the Lord desired, and will seek to obtain, / that all days of my life I may within God's house remain; / that I the beauty of the Lord behold may and admire, / and that I in His holy place may reverently enquire" (Ps 27:4). Why was this David's desire? He tells us: "Since better is Thy love than life, my lips Thee praise shall give. / I in Thy name will lift my hands, and bless Thee while I live". This was the language of certain of the Greeks who "came up [to Jerusalem] to worship at the feast", who said to Philip, "Sir, we would see Jesus" (John 12:20,21). It was in the desire of Mary Magdalene (Jn 20:13) at the empty sepulchre, and it was the ardent desire of some of those who gathered to Jesus as described in this text.

Sadly, this is not the language of many in our day; generally it is this: "We will not have this Man to rule over us", telling Him to depart from us, "for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways". What a happy posture of soul they had who loved His appearing! Do you not wish you had it? Yes, child of God, you say, If only I had that waiting posture constantly, for "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength (Is 40:31). If only I was giving Him the honour of my patience, waiting, expectation, faith, hope.

One wonders why they were gathered. He had dwelt with them; He had taught among them; they understood something of the power that accompanied His doing good among them and His teaching, for no man ever spoke like this man. Some of them understood that He received sinners, for He had received and healed them. They had called on Him, and come to Him to ask and they received, to seek and they found, to knock and the door was opened to them. They brought their palsied ones, their sick, their diseased and their dying. The woman with the issue of blood went to Him herself. Yes, they gathered to wait for Him and they received Him gladly. They could not endure His absence. That was a good sign. We may know we have a desire after Him when we cannot endure the sense of His absence. Let us ask if we can endure the sense of the absence of Christ in the pulpit, in the pew, during the pastoral visit, in the sick bed, at family worship, in secret prayer and reading the Bible? Can you endure an absent Christ? Or like Esau, having the world, do you have no need of Christ?

Scotland goes on with an absent Christ but the Lord is speaking to her and

to all the nations of the world. Maybe the Lord will speak until the ears of men are opened – burying their dead out of their sight, crying to the great God of eternity to come to have mercy upon them, from the highest in the land to the lowest. Maybe! The Lord has visited the land with a war and then another war; millions of men were slaughtered but it did not bring the nation to repentance. It made us harder. Ought we not to pray that He would not leave us altogether now to the mastery of our sins, whatever it will cost to bring us to repentance: people and rulers, Church and state?

So it is important to preserve the distinctive testimony of the branch of the Church to which we belong. When the Lord begins to work in the hearts of men, they will look for truth – in doctrine, practice, Church government. People will then ask, Where shall we hear the truth of the gospel? Where shall we hear the truth about our condition? Who can explain God’s anger against us? Where shall we learn to walk in the ways that please the Lord? So we have to preserve what we have! “Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee that it may be displayed because of the truth.”

Perhaps the gathering of the people was greater because they had heard of the storm when Christ was asleep in the hinder part of the ship as it crossed over to Gennesaret. The storm threatened the vessel and experienced fishermen were alarmed; they had never heard the wind like this, they had never heard the vessel creaking so much, they had never seen the waves filling the ship to the gunwales. At last they cried out, “Master, carest Thou not that we perish?” (Mk 4:38). What need we have of that cry! The Church, as a body of praying men and women, must cry to the Hearer of prayer, “Carest Thou not that we perish?” Is He asleep today? Where is His saving power, the power that accompanied the Word in the early days of the Reformation, the days of the Second Reformation, the days when the two Margarets were giving their lives rather than submit to the claims of the Stuart dynasty? Is He asleep? Of course, He is not asleep; God does not sleep.

When He was in the fiercest storm the disciples had experienced, He was upholding all things by the word of His power. This divine Person was not asleep, His human nature was weary, but He was perfectly aware of what was taking place. He continued to appear oblivious to their danger because they were not arousing Him, and He appears oblivious to our danger in stormy Scotland in 2020 because He is not being aroused by our prayers! We do not seem to see the peril that we, our children and our children’s children are in if Christ departs from us. We need to lay to heart that the sun looks like it is going down and the night drawing near, a spiritual night where all is still: no more gospel, no more absolute moral truth, nothing for the immortal soul, plenty pulpits but no Christ; everything relative, like sinking

sands! Why are we are not crying unto Him, “Carest Thou not that we perish?” Of course He cares! Why do we not care to ask Him sooner?

His heart yearns over His Zion, His bride. “How beautiful”, He says, “are thy feet with shoes, O prince’s daughter.” That is the language of His loving-kindness and care. “Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past”. It is not that He does not care for His Zion, but He wants to hear her cry. We can plead with Him; we can fill our mouth with arguments as Job did. Remember the lawyer who said, “Who is my neighbour?” Jesus told him his neighbour was one that he was in a position to help – someone in need. The Good Samaritan was a good neighbour to the man that was left half dead. Can we not cry to Him who required the lawyer to help the helpless – to come and help us? That is a good argument: a motive to believe that He is too kind not to care; too wise to appear for our help before we ask; too mighty to fail. O come, blessed One, to the Church that is half dead, with Thine oil and Thy wine, Thy beast and Thy riches, Thine inn and Thy promises! Stir us up to ask and seek and knock.

They gathered to Him; they heard of the miracles perhaps. They were saying, “O come back, blessed One, to Capernaum; cast out our devils, heal our sick and wounded consciences; raise our dead and make the dumb to speak. Where are they among us who are crying out to Christ to come back to Scotland and cast out our corruptions, heal our diseases, restore the fallen, heal our backslidings, love us freely?

They gathered. The Holy Spirit was revealing to some of them the desirableness of Christ, “the desire of all nations”; He was making them willing in a day of His power. The Holy Spirit was conquering them and bringing them to the blessed Lord. They had a new affection – not all of them but those whom the Father was drawing. The Holy Spirit was operating savingly in the hearts of some, operating on the natural conscience of others, so that they were willing for a season to rejoice in His light. That is a good place to be – gathering in the house of God, under the glorious gospel, and asking for Christ to come.

Christ came to Scotland; He came to the hearts of men with such power and conviction of the truth that they were willing to give their lives. He came with a display of His power, as in Cambuslang and Kirk of Shotts. That is how the great light came to Nephthalim and Zabulon, to Capernaum: He came in the ship of gospel mercies. It is with gospel mercies that Christ comes to a person and to a congregation. It was in gospel mercies that He came to Scotland at the Reformation. While we have the preaching of the truth, we have the ship that carries Christ to the souls of men. “They were gathered to Him”. “They received Him gladly.” Gospel ordinances have this power when

Christ comes to the souls of men and women. And we say to Him: “Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Rev 22:20).

Application. Today there is little evidence of true religion. Scotland grew weary of waiting on the Saviour. We began trampling on the Sabbath to get rich quicker. Sabbath-breaking farmers, merchants, entertainers and others did not believe the warning that using the Sabbath Day for farming, playing, buying and selling would lead to financial ruin. But God’s holy, wise and powerful providence is now trampling on the Sabbath-breaking riches of the nation. They have been putting money into bags with holes: “Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes” (Hag 1:6). We have said to our Sabbaths as to the Lord of the Sabbath: “Depart from us for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways”. That is a sad tale to tell.

There is a little remnant still desiring that the Lord of the Sabbath would return, that the Lord would come by His Word and Spirit to work in their own hearts and the hearts of others in our beloved land. Those who welcome Christ in their shores seek more than the forgiveness of sins; they seek the power of Christ to heal their spiritual wounds on a personal, an ecclesiastical and a national level.

The Church is nothing in the eyes of the rulers of this nation. It seems to be looked on as a voluntary club which has no reason to exist beyond a human need. But it exists for the glory of God, who is worthy to be worshipped in a manner instituted by Himself. In our Scotland, now and again, we get the scent of Erastianism – the notion that the Kingdom of Christ on earth is subordinate to the state and that the civil government can dictate to the Church on spiritual matters. But the Lord Jesus Christ is the great Head of the Church. The eternal King of the Church is sitting upon the throne of glory at the right hand of God the Father; all power being committed into His hands. On the day of His coronation, the Father set Him on His throne with these words, “Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool” (Ps 110:1).

Some described in our text learned what the loveliness of God in Christ was: compassion, generosity, willingness to relieve those in misery, healing broken-hearted ones, setting prisoners free, giving the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. They longed to see Him again, experience His power again; hear Him speak again. They were waiting for Him, longing for His return. May that be true of us in these dark and stormy days. Shall He arise and still the storm, granting us a great peace on the stormy waters of disturbing providences? “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

A Remarkable Experience (1)¹

A Letter from John Campbell

I am deep in your debt for a train of favours for which I have often thanked you and still remember them gratefully. I cannot give a greater proof of my confidence in you than by committing to your trust brief details of my extraordinary case and cure. This I promised to do in a former letter, saying that my main intention was by it to give you a still greater capacity for speaking to the case of distressed, disturbed minds as they come in your way. My motive has not altered.

I am not very anxious whether my friends judge I was a believer or not, before my furnace-state; but I have no freedom myself in calling it in question. If not a believer, I was greatly mistaken indeed; surely I ate bread of which the people of the world are ignorant – at least I think so. I was awakened by the testimony of Jesus; after a time of terror, I was comforted by the doctrine of a Saviour.

My knowledge of downright believing was exceedingly scanty; my hopes were too easily raised or sunk, in proportion to the fineness or agreeableness of my inward feelings on the one hand, and their dullness or disagreeableness on the other. I was not fully instructed in the unchangeableness of God's truth and love. I mean no reflection against my teachers, but only against my own perception of the truths revealed and taught. I read the Bible, but my mind was not sufficiently opened simply to receive what it taught me without intermixing fancied trash of my own. I knew some of my contemporary brethren were in the same predicament; they spoke like me, so I suppose they felt like me. But leaving this aside, the length I afterwards went in secret departure from the God of Abraham was great. As a singular monument of

¹This letter was written to John Newton on 1 July 1795 and is taken, with editing, from *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* for December 1902. The rest of this footnote is the substance of the introductory note supplied by the then editor, Rev J S Sinclair. John Campbell was, in Newton's old age, his chief correspondent. He was born and brought up in Edinburgh and, from his youth, mixed with the most serious circles there. He was much attached to John Erskine, John Colquhoun, and the other godly ministers about Edinburgh. He was early brought under the influences of the gospel. He was foremost in every good enterprise in Edinburgh in his day and, after the severe and sweet discipline he underwent, as recorded in this letter, he felt directed to enter the ministry. He became one of James Haldane's companions in his gospel tours through Scotland, and finally settled as a minister in London. The London Missionary Society, in its early and great days, when John Love was its secretary, found one of its warmest friends in John Campbell. He repeatedly visited its mission stations in South Africa, and at home he advocated its claims throughout Britain. Born in 1766, he died in 1842.

the superabounding riches of saving, sovereign, redeeming mercy, I say what follows.

My falling away was gradual, like the declension from noon to night. I think the decay of comfort in secret prayer was the first bad symptom which made its appearance. This ruffled me for a while, but it soon became familiar as a companion and caused little uneasiness. I had pleasure in attending the administration of the Word for a long time after this took place; and when this abated in a great degree, my profession dwindled into formality. All along I had a regard for the truly godly and associated with none else; these were the men of my counsels. For a considerable time I had little heart for attending private societies of Christians and was pleased when apparently there was a good excuse for non-attendance; though, upon the whole, I was one of the most regular attendants on the meetings of which I was a member. I am relating facts, so I must not accuse myself except where I was guilty. At this time I knew I was doing wrong, and lazily wished I had a heart to do better but had no resolution to carry out my desire.

In my worst situation I had a keen desire to be useful to others; and I cannot say it was wholly from selfish motives. I often had an opportunity to visit the sick and the dying, but seldom possessed a proper spirit or frame for talking to them in a way suited to their case. Though the poor creatures might seem on the frontiers of eternity, no sympathising emotions would arise; dumbness would seize me; I could not speak; I could not pray. I lost much of my reverence for the Sabbath; I found the commandment to sanctify it exerted no internal restraint upon my mind. I began to use freedoms with it – to talk about news or some occurrence which my judgement told me was unsuitable conversation for such an occasion. This did me great injury, defacing all that the Word had effected, and throwing me open to a thousand temptations through the week.

I always had a value for real religion, judging those alone happy who possessed it, and would have given a world to be like-minded with them. But the influences of the Spirit are not to be bought with money,

For a long time I only considered myself a Christian under backsliding; indeed I had partial recoveries. But I had a secret sin which easily beset me and, in process of time, I became its humble servant. I often opposed it, but oftener complied with it. I pleaded in favour of it at the bar of my mind, endeavouring to silence every witness which appeared against it. Something would say, Will you commit this sin and risk heaven? Another thought would start up and say, Do it, please do it; you know that you can repent of it at a future time; it is as easy to repent of many sins as of one; do comply. So I complied. Then Satan would suggest, Now you have eaten the forbidden

fruit like Adam; you are a lost man; you have gone too far for repentance to have any weight. This affair would create a bustle for a while, but it was soon over. However, the memory of it was never effaced when I was on my own, but it often filled me with uneasiness and anxious concern, although it was long in reaching the conscience.

I often omitted prayer when I was away from home, without much uneasiness, and was always conscious that I was unprepared to die. I became afraid at the thought of death, but some glimmering hope continued for years. I thought I saw hypocrisy written upon all my actions, but had some hope that I was not a hypocrite. I often desired that self would not interfere with my actions, but it always had a large share in them. I often groaned after performing a generous action. My natural temper led me to be helpful to everybody, and I was universally esteemed and spoken well of, but I was seldom commended without a gloom overspreading my mind.

I sometimes pitied mankind, who could be easily imposed on, who could only judge from the external appearance. Though my relish for spiritual converse was often so flat as to incapacitate me for promoting it, I mostly desired that it should be the chief topic of discourse among the Lord's people and I had most satisfaction when it was. I was often tempted to lay a little stress upon my having a name to live but was conscious that I was dead, and this stung me to the heart. To reflect on my conduct was not pleasant during any day. When I turned my eye to the offers of the gospel, my mind was always dark and full of embarrassment. I confessed them all to be true, but none of them pointed at me directly; consequently the most explicit gospel offer yielded me only a perhaps.

I think it was about the beginning of 1794 my conscience began to harass me. This, for a considerable period, happened only about bedtime, or when I awoke during the night; but ordinarily this passed unnoticed during daytime, and then I was cheerful, secretly hoping things would turn out, by and by, better than my fears. O my deceitful and desperately wicked heart!

At this period I was continually harassed by invitations to suppers. At these I generally remained too long, the company being always agreeable. May the Lord ever deliver me from supping in strange houses! They almost ruined my soul. Family duty was neglected at home, a bad example set to others, secret duty hurried over, and the mind totally dissipated!

About the beginning of November 1794, I officially attended a company for three or four nights, to a late hour. Several serious young people were part of the company; this stared me in the face as a most destructive example to them, and this conduct was the first thing, as far as I recollect, that mightily roused my conscience. Then all my guilt rushed into my mind like a mighty

torrent, so that I thought I should have perished in my affliction. By night I could not sleep for the horrible anguish which gnawed upon my guilty soul; the horrors of hell took hold of me, and I did not know what to do, feeling that my day of grace was gone, my damnation just and sure. I was filled with a fearful looking for judgement, and fiery indignation to consume me as God's adversary.

I looked into the Bible, and always stinging texts looked me in the face. I often tried to find comfort from that precious word, "Though your sins be as scarlet . . ." (Is 1:18), but I could not reason myself into receiving it. That word, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man", pierced me to the quick; as did that other, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God". The flames of hell seemed beginning to take hold on me. I shrank; I moaned; I cried. For all this, my heart was as hard as the nether millstone. A sight of the horrors into which sin has plunged us may terrify, but can never melt, the sinner's heart. Indeed, indeed, I was brought very low, as much as Satan could well bring a guilty soul on this side of death.

Glad would I have been to have been metamorphosed, not almost, like Nebuchadnezzar, but altogether into a beast, that I might avoid the awful, but righteous, indignation of Jehovah. Day and night was I tortured; nor had I freedom to reveal my case to any man. I was often on the eve of doing so; but the Lord had determined that flesh and blood were not to be the means of my relief. During many sermons that I heard, I sat as a condemned criminal, believing that others were fed while I was hungry – no food for me. Some people desire to have what is called a law work, but had they an hour of what I have faintly described above, they would wish they had never been born.

The arrows of the Almighty stuck faster and deeper as days and hours moved on. The comforting testimonies of Jesus all flew past me, or rather were all rejected by me. Judas, Julian,² and such rejecters of the gospel were viewed as the men who were to be my eternal associates. I often wished I had never known the gospel – envying the situation of the most abandoned debauchee who remained unawakened, untormented before the time. And though I am now relieved, I feel horror in committing it to paper. But I have this reason, among others, for doing so: that it may prove a means to humble and stir me up in a day of pride or unwatchfulness, and that I may never forget gratitude to my great Deliverer, who snatched me from the gaping mouth of such a horrible pit. My dear Saviour, let me never forget this hour and power of darkness, and never think of my darkness without wondering at Thine. Mine was but a drop, Thine an ocean. Mine I deserved, Thine was for me.

²Roman emperor from 361 to 363, he was known as Julian the Apostate because he forsook Christianity for paganism and became a persecutor.

It is a most mournful proof of the dead hardness of the impenitent heart of man when he can smile while deliverance from wrath remains an uncertainty. It is no less wonderful to think that the redeemed of the Lord are not always filled with rapturous triumph while on earth. O the patience, the kindness, the love and the forbearance of the Almighty! What a plague sin has introduced into the world! What glorious grace God has manifested! I have to praise the Lord this day that my life and reason were both preserved.

I just now recollect that, in the midst of my anguish of soul, I thought I should be under the necessity of applying to strong drink for relief from my tormented mind, but I was preserved from putting this into execution, except one time about midnight, being so tormented that I feared my bowels would rend with the burning and boiling of my fired conscience. I rose and took one glass of spirits, but ah, this was but poor relief. It had no effect, but rather sharpened my anguish. I then lit a candle and pored, with extreme horror, over Psalm 88 from verse 14. I perceived my case worded there, but my hour not yet being come, it afforded no alleviation. This to me was indeed the hour and power of darkness.

All the invention of Popish tormentors could not have caused such agony as I then felt. I thought many of my friends should look for me in heaven and not find me. This thought also stung me to the quick. I believed God would make me the butt of His vengeance. When I felt the smallest impediment in a simple breath, I trembled as if a harbinger of death had appeared. The fidelity of God in the execution of His threatening was a tremendous truth. This moment my flesh shrinks on identifying to my mind my most amazing horror.

I had as strong impressions of the fidelity of heaven in the midst of this distress as ever I had; this deepened and enlarged my wound. I beheld the glories of heaven as the rich man may be supposed to have viewed the happiness of Lazarus from the centre of hell. The state of infants, and such as had not lived long enough to reject the gospel, appeared happiness; there was a possibility of their being recovered and pardoned, but all this was over with me.

I thought that I believed the Bible was a true revelation from God, but I soberly believed it was the highest presumption for me to receive any comfort from the truths recorded in it because, having tasted of the powers of the world to come, I afterwards fed upon sin as if I was preferring it to the chief good. I called this atrocious, and so it was, but ah that I should have admitted the thought that my sin overtopped the merit of the Mediator's righteousness! But I was led captive by, and bound under, the sin of unbelief.

I believed Christ was once friendly to me in months past, but His friendship I had disregarded and neglected – so that now He would make me an example

of His vengeance and vindicate His injured goodness by making me, on the Judgement Day, a spectacle of horror, shame and dismay. To express the inward gnawing anguish which uniformly succeeded those dismal apprehensions is beyond the power of a human pen. I rejoice I now relate it as a past event.

Fierce as my chastisement was, it was short and slight compared with what I justly merited. Three months was about the length of time when it was sharpest, and even during that period I had often intervals of quiet throughout the day. But in general I trembled when darkness overspread the heavens; the return of the evening, sweet to the husbandman, was like the shock of an earthquake to me. A person who never waded these deep waters can have no more conception of them than of the glory of the third heaven. No wonder that the multitude of the heavenly hosts made the air resound with their songs at the incarnation of the Great Deliverer of sinners from all this wrath. They felt for man, but the natural man does not pity himself. Saints are mourning for him when he is laughing at them. May I ever recoil from offending such a God – such a Saviour! May I ever possess such a deep sense of the magnitude of God’s mercy!

The Forgotten Bunyan¹

4. Conclusion

Matthew Vogan

The very last sermon Bunyan preached is the only sermon we have from him that was not expanded into a treatise. It was preached just before his death in 1688. In it he develops the comparison of children and their father in preaching on the theme of children of God from John 1:13. The infant craves warmth and food; “it is natural to them to depend upon their Father for what they want; if they want a pair of shoes, go and tell him; if they want bread, go and tell him”.

“A child when it is in its mother’s lap, the mother takes great delight to have that which will be for its comfort; so it is with God’s children, they shall be kept in His lap, and dandled upon His knee . . . There is a similitude in these things that nobody knows of but those that are born again.” “If you be born again you cannot live without the milk of God’s Word . . . [the mother’s milk is the child’s] comfort night and day, there is its succour night and day. O how loth are they it should be taken from them.”

If we are to apply personally all that we have considered from Bunyan we

¹This series discusses aspects of Bunyan’s life and work that have been forgotten. Last month’s article spoke of his controversies. This is the last in the series.

might first of all be exhorted to give ourselves as entirely to Scripture as Bunyan did. We ought to experience its power and meditate deeply on its glorious realities. We ought to delight in the way that the Holy Spirit has chosen to speak to us – in such rich metaphorical language designed to be attractive to us and to encourage us to meditate deeply on it and turn it over and over in our minds drawing out its sweetness. And do we? If you read John Bunyan's writings, you will get great benefit from them and one of the best benefits is if they give you a renewed love for and delight in the Scriptures.

The other personal application we might make is to read *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Perhaps you read it once some time ago and you wonder why you would need to read it again. But what we need is a different kind of reading: read it experientially; find your own experience in it. How far have you come along the journey? Where are you now? What experiences can you identify with? Is it not encouraging and strengthening to have it set out in such an attractive way?

Bunyan declares that the allegory will not only engage, but also transform, the reader.

This book will make a traveller of thee
If by its counsel thou wilt ruled be;
It will direct thee to the Holy Land,
If thou wilt its directions understand.

Come back to it and re-read it. You will find more and more in it. Some of it takes a little thinking about and that is why you need to re-read it. Read it slowly and seek to discover new insights from it in relation to your own heart and your own progress in the way to heaven. Do not think of it as a book that is helpful mainly to children; it is useful to us always. Perhaps it has not appealed to you before, but now when you think of it as drawing so deeply out of Scripture and following the same purpose and approach as a sermon, you can read it with new eyes and appreciation.

Wouldst read thyself, and read thou knowest not what,
And yet know whether thou art blest or not,
By reading the same lines? O then come hither,
And lay my book, thy head and heart together.

When Christ spake to Paul and struck him to the ground, if he had not a light within as well as without he had not been humbled; nor the jailor, if there had not been an earthquake in his heart as well as in the earth. Jeroboam had as great a miracle wrought before him as Paul; you may well think the drying up of his hand amazed him, yet it did not make him give over his sin. And what was the reason? There was a miracle in both, but not the Spirit.

John Preston

Brownlow North¹

A Review Article by *Rev W A Weale*

Many, perhaps most of us, are familiar with some of Brownlow North's writings, such as his published sermons, *The Rich Man and Lazarus*, or on the words addressed to Rebekah, *Wilt Thou Go with this Man?* Fewer perhaps may have read this account of his life and work by K Moody Stuart. The first edition of this was published in 1878, just three years after Brownlow North's death. There followed several editions before the present, very much welcomed, retypeset hardback edition.

Brownlow North was born on 6 January 1810. He was the only son of Augustus North, Rector of Alverstoke, Hampshire. His grandfather, also Brownlow North, was successively Bishop of Lichfield, Worcester and Winchester. Brownlow North was a grand-nephew of Lord North, prime minister during the reign of George III.

At the early age of nine he went to Eton, but did not distinguish himself there, being more interested in sport than in study. Although blessed with a godly mother, the prayers she offered up and the pious training he received bore no fruit in her son at that stage. He became increasingly wayward and, when his father died in 1825, young Brownlow was removed from Eton and went out to Corfu with his cousin Lord Guilford. His behaviour there, however, was so unruly that he was soon sent home – being beyond his cousin's control. Afterwards he was sent abroad again with a tutor, but again with no success, for he appears to have passed the greater part of his time in Paris and Rome in gaming saloons. On returning to England he continued to pursue the ways of this world, spending his time riding and dancing. While still in his teens he visited Ireland and met his wife to be, Grace Ann, a daughter of a minister in Galway. They married on 12 December 1828 when Brownlow was still only 18. Three sons were born to Brownlow North and his wife.

About this time an event took place that was to have repercussions for the future. His cousin died and, as a result North lost all hope of being appointed minister of a comfortable city charge. He did, however, have some income as registrar of the diocese of Winchester and Surrey, to which he had been appointed early in life, and after paying two solicitors to do his work, he was left with about £300 a year. In an attempt to augment this amount of money, much too little for his lifestyle, he began to gamble and soon ran into debt.

The outcome was that, after leaving his family with his mother, he went

¹The article reviews *Brownlow North: His Life and Work*, by K Moody Stuart, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 328 pages, £13.00; available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

off to Portugal as a volunteer in Don Pedro's army. After a few months there he returned and set off for Abergeldie Castle in Scotland with his family and brother-in-law. It was now 1836 and, from that time on, Scotland was to be his home. For several years he lived in Aberdeenshire hunting and fishing, but he took a lease of the Dallas moors, in Morayshire, and made his home there. Of this time, a friend recalled "the Sabbath mornings when, at the same hour as the worshippers were flocking to the house of God, he had seen [North] drive in his dog-cart through the streets, with rod and basket behind him, going to spend the day in fishing on the River Findhorn" (p 16).

Yet it cannot be said that Brownlow North was without serious thoughts from time to time. He had a godly relative who frequently spoke to him about his life and where it was leading, and her words seem to have made some impression upon him. On one occasion, having heard an impressive sermon on the words, "Let me die the death of the righteous", she thought of him and later she spoke to him about it, hoping it might be of some good to him. After listening to her he said, "To die the death of the righteous we must live the life of the righteous, dear Auntie, and I am not prepared for that yet" (p 17).

This careless course of life continued until the autumn of 1854, when Brownlow North was nearly 45. God's time for favour had now come and the narrative goes on to give an account of his conversion as he told it to the students of Edinburgh University in March 1862.

"It pleased God", he said, "in the month of November 1854, one night when I was sitting playing at cards, to make me concerned about my soul. The instrument used was a sensation of sudden illness, which led me to think that I was going to die. I said to my son, 'I am a dead man; take me upstairs'. As soon as this was done, I threw myself down on the bed. My first thought was now, What will my 44 years of following the devices of my own heart profit me? In a few minutes I shall be in hell, and what good will all these things do me, for which I have sold my soul? At that moment I felt constrained to pray, but it was merely the prayer of a coward, a cry for mercy. I was not sorry for what I had done, but I was afraid of the punishment of my sin.

"And yet still there was something trying to prevent me putting myself on my knees to call for mercy, and that was the presence of the maidservant in the room, lighting my fire. Though I did not believe at that time that I had ten minutes to live, and knew that there was no possible hope for me but in the mercy of God, and that if I did not seek that mercy I could not be expected to have it, yet such was the nature of my heart, and of my spirit within me, that it was a balance with me – a thing to turn this way or that, I could not tell how – whether I should wait till that woman left the room, or whether I should fall on my knees and cry for mercy in her presence.

“By the grace of God I did put myself on my knees before that girl, and I believe it was the turning point with me. I believe that if I had at that time resisted the Holy Ghost – of course, I cannot say, for who shall limit the Holy Ghost? – but my belief is that it would have been once too often. By God’s grace I was not prevented. I did pray, and though I am not what I should be, yet I am this day what I am, which at least is not what I was. I mentioned this because I believe that every man has in his life his turning-point. I believe that the sin against the Holy Ghost is grieving the Spirit once too often.” The following day he announced publicly to all about him that he was a changed man.

The account goes on to relate how Brownlow North made known, to all his former friends and acquaintances, the great change that God had wrought in his life. This was a great joy to those who were the Lord’s people and not least his mother, but some doubted the sincerity of his conversion. This comes out in the chapter on his “First Private Efforts to Win Souls”, which was largely by way of handing out tracts and speaking “a word in season” as he had opportunity. He also visited the sick and addressed not only the person that was ill but the rest of the people in the home. The news of those addresses and prayers and reading of God’s Word very quickly went round, and before long he was asked to help out in addressing meetings. The great gifts of God bestowed on Brownlow North soon became apparent, and large numbers were attracted whenever he preached.

In the chapter entitled, “Early Evangelic Labours”, we are given an insight into his manner of preaching: “His speech on first rising to address an audience was diffident and laboured, but gradually he became more fluent, except towards the climax of his appeals, when words seemed sometimes wholly to fail him. His language was always simple, natural, scriptural, and was always for the sole purpose of conveying his meaning in the clearest manner to his hearers, without any thought of either rules or flowers of rhetoric, although he was a natural orator, a gift which he probably inherited. He always threw his whole soul unto the subject he was treating of, and was so evidently interested, impressed, and moved by it that he could not but communicate some of the impression on his own spirit to his hearers. Having read his text, or the passage he was about to lecture² from, several times very slowly and solemnly, emphasising almost every word, he entered at once into his subject, gaining the attention of his audience at the outset, and retaining it in an ever-intensified degree to the close” (pp 86,87).

In the chapters that follow, we are told of his work in Edinburgh, and then Glasgow, which began in the early spring of 1857 and which from the begin-

²In the sense of an expository address.

ning attracted large congregations, so much so that, unless people arrived half an hour before the time, no seats would be available. The outcome of this was that, in May 1859, when the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland met in Edinburgh, an overture was submitted to it desiring to have North recognised as an evangelist. This overture was signed by 68 ministers and 38 elders and was unanimously accepted, resulting in a most eloquent address to North by the moderator, Principal Cunningham, and an equally eloquent and earnest response by North.

The chapters that follow give us an insight, first into “Brownlow North’s Postbag”, with several examples of the many letters he received from those who benefited from his ministry, and then some of his own letters of reply. These reveal the insight he was given into the work of God in the souls of people young and old.

After a chapter on “Brownlow North’s Theology and Preaching”, which highlights not only his gifts as a preacher but also his grasp of theology, we have a chapter on his “Work in Ireland and London”. These were days of revival, when the Spirit of God was poured forth upon the Western nations; and when we read of the many thousands that packed buildings to hear North as well as others, we realise how low things are in our day and generation. Later we are told of “Harvest Work in Various Fields”, in places as far apart as Thurso and Rothesay, before being told of “Remarkable Cases of Impression and Conversion” and “Later Evangelistic Work in Large Towns in England”.

After such widespread and successful labours, and with North still only in his mid-sixties, we are scarcely prepared for the chapter, “Last Year of Earthly Labour”. We are, however, told in earlier chapters of his declining health, owing not a little to his incessant labours. The doctors who attended to him as he struggled with rheumatism and gout, but even more seriously, with a heart problem, warned him that his condition was such that he could die at any time in the pulpit.

In October 1875 he went to Alexandria, Dunbartonshire, for a series of meetings, and on a Sabbath he preached to around 1200 people. Later that week, on Wednesday and Friday, he preached again. On the Saturday, however, he was taken ill and on November 9, just about ten days after preaching his final sermon, he passed from this earthly scene to be with his Lord, whom he so faithfully and devotedly served.

The life and work of Brownlow North bear testimony to the grace of God in transforming one who spent the greater part of his life in the service of Satan, into a mighty instrument for the good of Britain, in the hand of God. We warmly commend this book.

Christ's Gracious Words¹

J C Ryle

We see in these verses *how kindly and graciously the Lord speaks of His disciples*. He bids Mary Magdalene carry a message to them as “His brethren”. He bids her tell them that His Father was their Father, and His God their God. It was but three days before that they had all forsaken Him shamefully and fled. Yet this merciful Master speaks as if all was forgiven and forgotten. His first thought is to bring back the wanderers, to bind up the wounds of their consciences, to reanimate their courage, to restore them to their former place. This was indeed a love that passeth knowledge. To trust deserters, and to show confidence in backsliders, was a compassion which man can hardly understand. So true is that word of David: “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust” (Ps 103:13,14).

Let us leave the passage with the comforting reflection that Jesus Christ never changes. He is the same yesterday, today and for ever. As He dealt with His erring disciples on the morning of His resurrection, so will He deal with all who believe and love Him, until He comes again. When they wander out of the way He will bring them back. When they fall He will raise them again. But He will never break His royal word: “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (Jn 6:37). The saints in glory will have one anthem, in which every voice and heart will join: “He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities” (Ps 103:10).

Christian Experience

Rev Caleb Hembd

This article attempts to answer the question, “What do all true Christians have in common?” The point is often made that the experiences of Christians vary – including their experience of conversion. This, of course, is true in certain respects. The experience of a Christian brought up in the world, or in an unsound Church, may differ from someone brought up in a sound Church. The variety of experience must be emphasised. If it is not, true believers may be troubled to hear other Christians speaking about experiences which they have never had and be ready to conclude that they are not born again.

However, this point may be overemphasised. The Scriptures make clear that all true Christians have several things in common. Whenever the Church

¹Comments on John 20:11-18, from *Expository Thoughts on John*, vol 3, with editing.

forgets this, the results are disastrous. Vague or confused ideas about conversion abound, and the Church loses her ability to discern between the precious and the vile (Jer 15:19). A generation arises that does not know the Lord, nor yet the works which He has done for Israel (Judges 2:10). During such a time, true converts – sincere but poorly taught – struggle to obtain assurance that they are truly born again. At the same time, false conversions begin to multiply.

In an introductory essay to the book, *Advice to a Young Christian* by Jared Waterbury,² Archibald Alexander identifies several experiences and characteristics that all true Christians have. His observations build upon the explanation of effectual calling in *The Shorter Catechism*: “Effectual calling is the work of God’s Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel”.

The following is a summary of the experiences and characteristics that Alexander mentions. Scripture references have been added to show that each experience is essential to the true Christian. In addition, quotes by two esteemed Scottish theologians are included in footnotes. All the points provide matter for self-examination and meditation.

1. All have, by the knowledge of the law, been convinced of sin; have been made to feel sorrow, shame and compunction [remorse], upon recollection of their transgressions, and to submit to the justice of the sentence of condemnation, which the law denounces against them (Neh 9:33).³

2. All have been made sensible of their own inability to save themselves. While under the influence of these humbling feelings, they have been led to seek refuge in Jesus Christ as the only hope of their souls (Jn 6:68). They are not only delighted with this way of salvation but would have no other way, even if they could.⁴

²Most of the introductory essay in J B Waterbury’s book, *Advice to a Young Christian*, appeared in this *Magazine*, in two instalments, in August and September 2000. This book, without the essay, was printed about the same time in *The Young People’s Magazine* in edited form; it has more recently been reprinted by Free Presbyterian Publications and is still available (115 pages, £6.75).

³This submission to divine justice, while not in itself saving, is nonetheless found in every believer. John Colquhoun refers to divine justice as “that glorious attribute which is so dreadful and hateful to every impenitent and unpardoned sinner.” *The Covenant of Works*, chapter 2 (soon to be published, DV, by Scottish Highlands Reformed Book Trust).

⁴To paraphrase John Love: the believer, at least in his best frames, does not want anything about God to change. He does not secretly wish that His attributes were different, or that His commandments were different, or that His gospel was different. He only desires that he himself was different – entirely conformed to the image of His dear Son.

3. All, after receiving Christ as a complete Saviour, have some experience of joy and peace, although the Lord is sovereign as to when and how He bestows these blessings which accompany justification (Rom 5:1,2).

4. All approve of the law of God as holy, just and good, even though it condemns all their feelings and works as imperfect (Rom 7:22). By contrast, the unrenewed heart never is, nor ever can be, reconciled to the law. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be (Rom 8:7).

5. All are brought to a deliberate purpose to be on the Lord's side, though often in much felt weakness. They are enabled to comply with Christ's terms of discipleship; that is, to deny themselves, take up the cross, and follow Him. They are made willing, if necessary, to forsake father, mother, wife and children, houses and lands, for Christ's sake (Lk 14:26).

6. All hunger and thirst after righteousness, and have a desire to know more of God, and to be admitted into closer and more intimate communion with Him (Mt 5:6, Job 23:3). These desires are expressed in prayer, and lead to a patient and earnest waiting upon God in all the ordinances and means of His appointment (Ps 62:5), as enabled by grace.

7. All seek to glorify God by action. The earnest question of every believing soul is, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

8. All desire to observe all things whatsoever God has commanded (Mt 28:19) and to hate and avoid all sin (Ps 119:104).

Alexander then describes some of the reasons for variety in Christian experience:

1. The different degrees of grace that Christians have received in the beginning of the Christian life.

2. The extent to which they have run in sin before conversion.

3. The suddenness or gradual nature of their change.

4. The amount of religious knowledge they have at their conversion.

5. The various constitutional temperaments of different Christians.

6. The kind of instruction they have received.

The reader will notice that the *variety* in Christian experience arises from varying backgrounds, knowledge, personalities and degrees of grace. The *harmony* of Christian experience arises from the same Spirit applying the same truth to each and every elect sinner. May we each seek to be satisfied with nothing less than such a Spirit-wrought conversion.

If we walk by faith, then we may be sure that we shall die in faith. Joshua never leads the chosen to Jordan, with its swollen and turbulent waters, and then deserts them, telling them they may cross as best they can. The hope of the hypocrite will perish; but no disease, no pain can extinguish the faith of the true child of God. *W S Plumer*

Book Reviews

Harriet, A Highland Christian and Her Circle, by Rev Donald A Macfarlane and others, published by Reformation Press, paperback, 103 pages, £6.40.

Harriet MacDonald was a godly woman in Dingwall, who lived from 1858 to 1940. Her minister during the final part of her life, Rev Donald A Macfarlane, described her as “one of the cream of the godly”. It was he who, shortly after her death, published a booklet giving an account of her life, together with an account of her father Alexander, who is described as “one of Dr Kennedy’s most intimate friends” – referring to the noted minister of Dingwall Free Church who died in 1884. These accounts are reproduced in this new publication, as is “an appreciation of Harriet”, which was published in *The North Star*, a local newspaper, after her death. One wonders if the writer of this “appreciation”, whose name was not given, might have been Samuel Fraser, an elder in the Dingwall Free Presbyterian congregation and father of Rev James Fraser.

That writer quoted from one of Harriet’s letters, in which she tells of her then minister, Rev Donald Macfarlane, predecessor of the minister referred to above, inviting souls to believe: “Come to the Father, taking the price in your hand (the Beloved Son), making Him your only place of access. And you will not be refused, for the Father will not refuse anything to the Son. He is the delight of the Father, for He fills the Father’s heart. O to have Him! For His favour is better than life.” And no doubt Harriet, as she heard these words and perhaps also as she recorded them, felt encouraged to come again to God the Father, trusting in the finished work of Christ.

Harriet seems to have been converted while she was still young. She and her parents joined the Free Presbyterian Church after it was formed, following the passing in 1892 of the Declaratory Act by the Free Church. In speaking of her life, Rev D A Macfarlane notes, “There is not much . . . which we can relate of Miss MacDonald’s experiences throughout her life”. But he adds, “It is well that so many of her letters are preserved, as we have in them her expressions of breathings, longings, pantings of soul after conformity to her Lord and Saviour”. Extracts from these letters were published in the original booklet; they have been reprinted in the book reviewed here, along with extracts from others which have more recently become available. Even in 1941, Mr Macfarlane was writing, “What a blessing it would be if such letters – and the frame of soul which they manifest – were common among the children of men rather than being so rare!”

Another section of the book is taken up with profitable obituaries of some

of Harriet's friends; all of these women were also obviously godly. These obituaries appeared originally in *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*.

The book is recommended as giving some insight into the godliness of "a Highland Christian and her circle" at a time when true godliness was somewhat commoner than it is now. It should make us long and pray for times when godliness would no longer be seldom seen.

Spiritual Rest During Trials, by Hugh MacKail, published by Reformation Press, paperback, 62 pages, £6.50.

This little book consists of a historical overview of Rev Hugh MacKail, a sermon preached by him on Song of Solomon 1:7 in 1662, and his last speech and testimony. The well-written foreword, containing the historical overview, provides helpful context, and highlights the historical significance of the sermon. The faithful and clear denunciation, in this particular sermon, of the sins of the age in which he lived contributed to the martyrdom of this noble preacher of the gospel.

These men lived, preached, and wrote in the furnace of affliction, and there is a sweet, heavenly savour in this sermon. It is clear that MacKail was preaching from his own experience when he directed his hearers to the "spiritual rest during trials" found in the beautiful words of the text, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" (Song 1:7).

He begins by making the striking and theologically astute point that "misery is not only inescapably linked to sin, but is actually involved in it, sin being a separation of the soul from God, the fountain of all happiness and excellence". The condition of the bride of Christ he takes to be that "of a chaste virgin, standing outside in a desolate and forlorn condition, in the scorching beams of the sun shining in its strength". The scorching sun is identified as the tribulations and persecutions of the Church from without. In MacKail's day, the state sought to interfere with the worship of the Church, and in the sermon we see the principles which lay behind their resolute defence of Christ's right to rule in His own Church. For example, MacKail states, "If therefore any created power shall command anything not commanded by God, there cannot be any obligation on the conscience on that account, unless we say divine authority in one thing should contradict itself in another" (which, of course, it cannot do).

The temptations to turn aside in a time of trial and tribulation are well articulated, as is the only true and lawful rest in communion with Christ Himself. Of that rest, he says in reference to the dying thief: "The sound of

that salutation, ‘Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise’, made the cross of the penitent thief preferable to all the crowns of the world”.

His last speech and testimony are instructive to future generations such as our own. It is from a broken and contrite heart that we hear him confessing it was his own timidity in withdrawing from those who were making a public stand for the Covenant that was the occasion of his falling into the hands of the enemy when he was captured. His understanding of the continued and aggravated afflictions of the Church was that “God’s design is to make many hearts contrite that have been formerly too whole, and have not lamented sufficiently the removal of his ordinances and ministry, and the reproach rubbed upon the work of reformation”. He soon died a martyr’s death, and won the martyr’s crown, clinging to the merits of the Church’s great Redeemer who alone can give rest to the guilty and weary soul. Taking to himself shame and confusion of face, he fled “to the propitiation offered to all sinners in Jesus Christ”.

The publication of such a sermon is most valuable, and it is to be desired that we would be stirred up ourselves by the divine blessing to cleave to Christ, going our way forth by the footsteps of the flock to feed our desires and graces in the public means of grace (Song 1:8). (Rev) *ID MacDonald*

Protestant View

New US President

The confirming of the Democratic candidate Joe Biden as the next President of the United States has been surrounded by a great deal of controversy. Leaving aside the political aspects of his election, it is a matter of no little concern that the new President is a practising Roman Catholic. The position of President is one of tremendous power and influence throughout the world as well as in America itself, and the incumbency of a Romanist in the White House is something which Bible-believing Protestants everywhere strongly deprecate. Mr Biden is only the second Roman Catholic in American history to become President, the first being John F Kennedy, who was elected 60 years ago.

Although the Church of Rome is the largest religious body in the USA, the influence of Protestantism has been historically very strong, with nearly all of the Presidents being nominal Protestants, mostly Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Whether Biden is a faithful adherent of Rome is a moot point but, even where there has been much outward divergence from Rome’s official teaching on public questions, the potential influence of a Roman

Catholic President to forward the interests and agenda of the Vatican is formidable and can only be seen as a further judgement upon the USA and upon the Western world more generally.

Throughout his long political and legal career, he has occupied many important positions and has consistently been inclined to take a liberal stance on moral issues. Even although he had voted in the past against same-sex unions or allowing sodomites to serve in the armed forces, in recent years Biden has increasingly supported legislation of an anti-biblical and immoral character, for example in calling for wider government funding for abortion. Indeed, it is mostly for his consistent support for abortion that Biden's liberal social stance has placed him at odds with the Roman Church's official position. The Democratic Party, having shed its socially-conservative wing in recent decades, has become more and more militantly pro-abortion and Biden's popularity with liberal Democrats has been gained, in part at least, through continuing to uphold the legalised slaughter of multitudes of unborn children in the USA. There are reports that, for his views on abortion, he was refused communion in a Roman Catholic church in South Carolina as late as last year.

Throughout his long and influential career, Mr Biden has not spoken up for those ready to perish, and the words of Proverbs 24:11,12 seem very applicable in his case: "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn to death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not, doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? And He that keepeth thy soul, doth He not know it? And shall He not render to every man according to His works?"

AWM

Notes and Comments

Brexit

At the end of December 2020, Britain finally disengaged from the European Union and recovered much of her national sovereignty. When she joined the European Economic Community (EEC), as it was then called, on 1 January 1973, the fears were that Britain would be unequally yoked with predominantly Roman Catholic nations; that the EEC was already proving its inefficiency by the quantities of food being stockpiled ("the butter mountain") or destroyed; and that the EEC was an opaque organisation, not answerable to any electorate, and issuing a plethora of meddlesome "directives" having the force of law.

During the 48 years of British membership of the EU, the Roman

Catholic influence dwindled in the face of secularism, but a host of new evils emerged. As was mentioned in the May *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Britain cannot blame the EU and associated bodies for many of these evils because Britain imposed them upon herself, but those promoting them generally found that the various European institutions strengthened their hands. In more recent years, the menace of Islamic immigration has radically changed the face of Europe and threatens the continued existence of almost all the European nations in their present form. The old EU confidence is greatly muted.

Through to the end of the twentieth century, the prospects of Britain leaving the European Union were remote. In the 1970s, Marie Endean's "Newbury Anti-Common Market Campaign" represented the whole of West Berkshire, and comprised about 30 old folk, mainly eccentric and surprisingly many of them Roman Catholic. The 1975 referendum was 67% in favour of remaining in the EEC, and in the 1997 General Election the anti-EU "Referendum Party" received only 2.6% of the vote after an extensive campaign. In 2004, Tony Blair and Jack Straw, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, signed the EU Constitution Treaty that was popularly supposed to lock Britain permanently into the EU. The mere holding of a referendum on the EU in 2016 was a victory, and the outcome a matter of astonishment. This was followed by a prolonged political campaign to obstruct Brexit, which collapsed with the conclusive General Election of December 2019.

Does the Lord have a purpose of mercy towards Britain in all this? We do not know. Britain has unexpectedly and undeservedly received back much of her freedom, but she is in a fearful moral state, has irreligious leaders and a rising Islamic population, has annihilated nine million of her children through abortion, and has now lost much of her wealth through Covid. The Lord has granted us an opportunity to take stock of our national situation, and to repent of our departure from Him. If we do so, He will have mercy. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them" (Jer 18:7-8). DWBS

Creationism Better Than Evolutionism

The paradigm, or idea, behind Evolutionism is that everything in animal and plant life is explicable in terms of survival or dominance, and that anything not explicable in this way is a freak of chance. The paradigm behind Creationism is that everything in life serves to illustrate some aspect of the glory of

God. Thus human beings have faces, voices, ears, eyes, hands, and feet, not merely for survival, but because these help us to think about and understand aspects of God's Being and procedure. God has no feet but He lifts up His "feet to the perpetual desolations" (Ps 74:3) when He revisits and revives a spiritual work that He has long allowed to languish. Whatever other purposes human and animal feet may serve in this world, ultimately they were created to give us a language for thinking about God. Thus food gives us the idea of living in the closest dependence upon Christ, while waste gives an idea of sin as hateful and abhorrent to God (Gehenna or the Valley of Hinnom was the place for rubbish).

Apart from its truth, Creationism explains far more than Evolutionism. Evolutionism has no real explanation for basic things in human life such as love, religion, morality and beauty. Feeble and contrived attempts are often made to account for them in evolutionary terms, but consistent Evolutionism dismisses them as freaks with no coherent place in the ruthless struggle for survival. Little wonder that human societies which swallow the evolutionary dogma have little place for these things either. Creationism, on the other hand, seeks, and often finds, satisfying and edifying explanations for everything in existence. Why did God create snow, for example? Why did God create dogs? Why did God create children? For a Creationist, these are interesting questions, but the Evolutionist gets nothing from them. "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches" (Ps 104:24). *DWBS*

The Ozanne Foundation

Jayne Ozanne, a member of the General Synod of the Church of England who campaigns for homosexual equality within the Church and the wider Evangelical community, has attacked those who say that homosexual lifestyles are sinful. In an article for the website Gay News, she compared Christians who uphold biblical principles on sexual ethics to "Holocaust deniers" and "rapists". In November 2020 the Church of England published a document, "Living in Love and Faith", in which people of differing views are advised to "listen and learn" from "conservative communities of faith". It was in response to this that Ozanne directed her inflammatory statement. On another occasion she was reported as saying, "Churches and individuals that engage in prayer, private conversation and teaching which does not affirm homosexual or transgender lifestyles should be held to account and face the full force of the law".

Ozanne is the founder of the Ozanne Foundation, an organisation which affirms and celebrates LGBT practice and includes a call to ban "all at-

tempts to change, suppress or erase a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression". The chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation is Rev Paul Bayes, Bishop of Liverpool. One of the first theological books the writer bought was *Practical Religion*, by the first Bishop of Liverpool, J C Ryle. One can only imagine what his response would have been to the behaviour of some of the bishops, clergy and laity in the current General Synod. He would, no doubt, have felt sympathy for those treated without Christian love and compassion, but he would never have countenanced the subversion and overthrow of the Word of God shown by those who accept and promote behaviour which is specifically condemned by it.

The members of this Foundation are amongst those who carefully select the parts of the Word of God of which they disapprove, and they would wish to have them expunged. They change the truth of God into a lie, and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator. We are to love our fellow men, but to advocate approval of a lifestyle condemned by Scripture is not the love that we are required to show to our neighbour. *FRD*

Church Information

Synod Committee Meetings

In view of the continued uncertainties caused by Covid-19, Synod committees will meet, DV, by teleconference as follows:

Tuesday, March 16:

- 09.10 - 09.40 Church Interests Committee
- 09.50 - 11.20 Training of the Ministry Committee
- 11.30 - 12.30 Sabbath Observance Committee
- 12.40 - 13.40 Overseas Committee
- 13.50 - 14.50 Outreach Committee
- 15.00 - 17.00 Religion and Morals Committee
- 18.00 - 19.30 Publications and Bookroom Committee
- 19.40 - 20.40 Welfare of Youth Committee

Wednesday, March 17

- 10.00 - 13.00 Finance Committee (Rev) *K M Watkins*, Clerk of Synod

Bookroom Fund

By appointment of Synod, the Special Collection on behalf of the Bookroom Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during February.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath:** 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. 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 2AW. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.15 pm. Manse: 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623. Contact Mr Hugh Campbell; tel: 01923 442497.

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: Metropolitan YMCA Singapore, 60 Stevens Road, Singapore 257854: Sabbath: 9.30 am and 5.30 pm at Palm Room; Wednesday: 7.30 pm, at Cypress Room. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, 4 Chuan Place, Singapore 554822; tel: (65) 6383 4466, 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. Postal Address: Mbuma Mission Hospital, Private Bag T5406, Bulawayo.

New Canaan: Church.

Zenka: Church.

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Banner of Truth, 2010 [1674], pbk, 282 pp	£5.75	£4.49
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Free Presbyterian Publications, 2020 [1870], pbk, 242 pp	£12.00	£9.59
Pleading for a Reformation Vision: Life and Selected Writings of William Childs Robinson by David B Calhoun, Banner of Truth, 2013, hbk, 331 pp	£15.50	£11.99
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