

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, Mbuma.

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

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

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

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

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

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

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Among the Children?

The ten northern tribes of Israel had already been conquered by the Assyrians, and taken into captivity, before Jeremiah began to prophesy. It was God's judgement on Israel because of their sin. And the messages that the Lord gave Jeremiah for the people of Judah warned strongly of the serious consequences of their sin; they also had sinned very seriously against their God. Any apparent repentance, as there was during the reign of godly Josiah, was insincere; God accused them: "Judah hath not turned unto Me with her whole heart, but feignedly" (Jer 3:10) – it involved a lie; it was deceitful. King Josiah was sincere, but the vast majority of his people were not; their hearts were set on idolatry; they, like Israel, followed a false religion. So Judah too would be conquered and taken into captivity, for God's judgement was to come on them also.

Yet Jeremiah was commissioned to foretell the return of both Judah and Israel from captivity. But there was a question, a very significant question. God was asking them: "How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations?" (Jer 3:19). And God answered His own question; He told the people, "Thou shalt call me, My Father". John Calvin, commenting on this verse, emphasises that "to call Him Father" must be "not with the mouth, but really with the heart". There must be a fundamental change among the people, a change of heart. So the people would come before God as His children, and they would be sincere in doing so. They would have the heart of children.

We should then be clear that this change of heart would be the result of the work of God's Spirit, who works effectually in the hearts of sinners in the New Testament age, as He did in Old Testament times. So Peter writes of those who are "born again . . . by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet 1:23). Matthew Poole says that *the word* here "is the instrument in regeneration", and it "is said to be a living word, because it enliveneth the hearts" of those who receive it. Spiritually-dead souls are brought to life by God's Spirit, as He applies to them the word of the truth of the gospel; they thus believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; they are justified freely by God's

grace; they are adopted into His family and receive the care and protection that He gives to all His children. These blessings are a wonderful collection of glorious gifts, granted to unworthy sinners.

Another great blessing is that God's children have a new way of thinking. Consider how Jesus illustrated this in the parable of the prodigal son. This son was determined to make his own way in life; he wanted his share of the inheritance at once and he felt free to spend it – to squander it – in any way he pleased. And squander it he did; he “wasted his substance with riotous living” (Lk 15:13). And we can think of sinners squandering the religious inheritance they have been given in God's providence; they make no use, for instance, of the knowledge of the Bible and its teachings that they acquired when they were young; they waste their opportunities to find salvation and be received into God's family.

When the prodigal son came to an end of all his resources, he said to himself: “I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son”. This illustrates the change in the sinner's thinking when he finds that he has no spiritual resources of his own. He realises that he cannot earn forgiveness; he cannot make himself holy. But the Holy Spirit, applying the Word of God, teaches him that salvation is to be found in Christ – and in Him alone – and makes him able and willing to flee to this glorious Saviour for safety.

In the Garden of Eden, Satan, by his temptation, turned Adam's and Eve's thinking against God and against their own best interests. Not only was their thinking perverted; it was the beginning of the perversion of human thinking in every generation. This has continued universally, except when the Spirit operates graciously and powerfully on individual souls. The moment a sinner turns toward Christ is the beginning of right thinking for him, and it is something he will never lose. In this life, the thinking of God's children will always be imperfect, but the moment they enter eternal glory, their thinking will be purified from every stain of imperfection. What a difference that perfection in their thinking will make to their capacity to learn about the ways of God, and to worship Him, throughout eternity!

The returning prodigal thought it would be good to be a servant in the Father's home, but he was very warmly received as a *son*. God's thoughts are always greater than ours; so the returning sinner, drawn by almighty grace, is received into God's family, not as a servant but as a son. He has been justified, having believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; all his sins have been forgiven, and he is accepted as if he had kept the whole law of God – because of what his Substitute has done, both by way of keeping the law perfectly

and of suffering its penalty. And now that the believing sinner is brought into God's family, he is granted all the privileges of the children of God. The Most High will provide for him, both for body and soul, and the blessings of the covenant of grace are his, including the promises revealed in Scripture, which are now made to him personally as a child of God.

When a sinner is received into God's family, he is blessed with new attitudes. These may be summed up in the biblical expression, "the fear of the Lord", which is "to hate evil" (Prov 8:13). It is Wisdom, God the Son, who speaks here, and further says, "pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate". And if He says so, the child of God, who has now begun to fear God, will begin to hate pride, arrogance, the evil way and the froward – or perverse – mouth. Charles Bridges closes his remarks on this verse by exclaiming, "A proud disciple of the lowly Saviour! How offensive is this contradiction to our Master! What cause of stumbling to the world!" The child of God, in hating sin, will seek after holiness; he will have a real regard for God's commands as holy and just and good. It is evidence of the new way of thinking in the child of God that he recognises that God's law is not only holy, but also that it is good for him to obey that law.

The answer to the Lord's question about putting Israel and Judah again "among the children" also included giving them "a pleasant land", a land to be desired. This had its initial fulfilment when God brought Israel and Judah back to the promised land. But when the Lord puts a sinner among His children, He also gives them a right to a place in heaven, where all will be perfectly pleasant; heaven is indeed a land to be desired. There will be no sin there, and so there will be no curse, which is the result of sin. Everything will be pure and holy and, when God's children are brought there, all their needs will be supplied perfectly, for the sake of Christ. He died for them, so that He might have gifts to distribute to these children, not only in this life, but for ever and ever.

In the wilderness, many among the Israelites "despised the pleasant land" of Canaan, which had been promised to them. They did so because "they believed not His word" (Ps 106:24). And we ought to ask ourselves if we are despising the pleasant land of heaven through not believing what the Lord says; or do we so value heaven that we seek to walk in the narrow way of holiness, which leads there? Are we seeking salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, whom the Father sent "to be the Saviour of the world"? Has our thinking so been changed that we value, more than anything else, both God's favour and the One who, at immense cost, purchased that favour for sinners like ourselves? If there is any doubt about our answers to these questions, let us plead with the Lord, Put me among Thy children, for Jesus' sake.

God's Judgements in the Earth¹

A Sermon by Rev A W MacColl

Isaiah 26:9-11. *With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early: for when Thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Lord, when Thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of Thine enemies shall devour them.*

This chapter is about the Lord's goodness and favour to His Church and, correspondingly, His judgements upon the enemies of His Church. There are only two classes of people in this world – the righteous and the wicked. God deals with the righteous in one way and with the wicked in another. You are either righteous or wicked in God's sight; there is no middle ground.

We learn from the Word of God that, from the time of Noah and the Flood, every deliverance of the Church of God brings corresponding judgement on the wicked. This was seen also when the Children of Israel were brought out of Egypt through the Red Sea; what was salvation to them brought drowning, in God's judgement, on Pharaoh and his hosts. The Church of God may be brought very low, into great darkness and weakness in this world, but the Lord, time and again throughout history (and the Lord is in control of history) acts for the salvation of His Church and people. He is ordering all the events of your life and mine, and everything in this world. He works all things according to the purpose of His will.

We have here the various responses to the Lord's dealings with the righteous and the wicked. The righteous respond to His dealings in one way and the wicked in another. "When Thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness." We see different responses here to how the Lord deals with the inhabitants of the earth: with you, with me and with everyone around us. We need to learn, and the Lord is willing to teach us: "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way" (1 Cor 12:31).

Are you learning? That is a great question. If we will not learn, if we will not take to heart the Lord's dealings, whatever they may be, we will learn one day. There is no contradiction in verse 11: "Lord, when Thy hand is lifted up, they will not see" – that is talking about the wicked. And when the verse goes on to say, "But they shall see", the prophet is saying that this char-

¹Preached in Dingwall on 1 March 2020.

acterises the wicked – the ungodly, the unbeliever – they do not want to see what the Lord does, good or ill. But one day they “shall see and be ashamed”. Therefore, for you and me, the great matter is to learn when the Lord’s judgements are abroad in the earth.

We desire to consider: (1.) God’s judgements are in the earth in our day. (2.) Those who learn from God’s judgements, those of whom the text tells us: “the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness”. There are some who benefit from God’s solemn judgements. (3.) Those who will not learn when God’s judgements are in the earth. See that you are not among them. **1. God’s judgements are in the earth.** Verse 9 speaks of a time when judgement is apparent. The Lord is judging all the time; He tries the hearts and the reins; He is continually pronouncing sentence against sin. The Lord is Judge of all the earth; “justice and judgement are the habitation of Thy throne” (Ps 89:14), and “shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Gen 18:25). It is impossible for the infinitely righteous God to judge in a way that is not right. He has every right to judge us. We rebel against Him; we have gone astray speaking lies (Ps 58:3) and because judgement is not executed speedily upon men, their heart “is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecc 8:11). But a day is coming when God will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:31).

Remember when Belshazzar, that wicked king in Babylon, was feasting with the great people of Babylon, using the vessels from the temple in Jerusalem which were consecrated to the worship of God (Dan 5:1-2). All of a sudden the hand of the Judge appeared: “Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting”. Is God any different today? We will not see a hand on the wall of this church, but have you seen a hand in your conscience? Have you seen a hand writing on every deed, thought and word?

One of our ministers reprov'd a man for working in his garden on a Sabbath. The man retorted, “I don’t have a God!” The minister said to him, “Yes, but God has you!” God has you, friend, and even if we hide in the grave we cannot escape from the Judge of all the earth.

In the Book of Revelation, the whole destiny of the inhabitants of the world is symbolically and mysteriously portrayed, together with the future history of the conflicts and victories of God’s Church. In chapter 5, before the seals were opened, there is a book that no man or angel can open. Only Christ can open it and the seven seals were keeping the book locked. Christ opens the book and the whole of Revelation is unfolding what is in it.

In chapter 6, you have different horses going forth. The first is the white horse – Christ on it going forth conquering and to conquer. That is the gospel, which went forth after Christ’s resurrection. He went throughout the nations, bringing sinners into captivity to His love, to the obedience of faith, making

them new creatures, who are righteous with His righteousness – and following the Lamb whithersoever He went, even at the cost of their lives.

What happens when sinners, and nations, reject the gospel? “There went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth” (Rev 6:4). This has happened time and again; when nations turned their back on the Word of God, war has come in. What was the First World War but an immense judgement on Germany, Britain, France and other nations? Germany and Britain had the Word of God and the gospel with the Reformation, but they turned their backs on them. Think of the millions who perished in these conflicts. The Lord judges in history.

Then there is the black horse – that is poverty and famine. How many times in the history of the world that horse has gone forth to devastate! And there is the pale horse: “His name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth” (Rev 6:8). The Lord is executing judgements upon sinners of mankind in this world.

Now we must make a number of distinctions, so that we may be clear in these matters. Largely speaking, the Lord judges nations and groups of men in time, not on the Day of Judgement – but individuals in eternity. Yet the Lord does judge individuals at various periods in their lives. But the ultimate judgement will be at death and it will be ratified openly before the whole universe, at the great white throne on the last day. For “it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement” (Heb 9:27). There is nothing more for the ungodly but judgement, whether at death or the last day or for ever in eternity.

You may ask – and we have to make another distinction – Do the Lord’s people come under judgement? The answer is not straightforward. The visible Church may come under judgements; it may lose God’s blessing to a great degree. Remember the Church in Rome: it was a flourishing Church – the report of their godliness and faithfulness had gone throughout the earth, but it degenerated into a synagogue of Satan. The Church of Rome became the mother of harlots and a spiritual Babylon (Rev 17:5). Churches, visibly, can come under God’s judgement; and no Church, however faithful, is exempt from losing the blessing of God if it becomes unfaithful.

But God’s children may suffer in the judgements that come on the wicked. They may suffer very severely – and they will – but here is a wonderful distinction: there is not a drop of wrath in the troubles of the righteous. This should encourage you to seek to be among God’s people. Christ has taken the wrath of God for His people in His death on Calvary. He drank to the

very bottom the cup of wrath due to His people's sin. And "no weapon that is formed against [them] shall prosper" (Is 54:17) – all their sins are forgiven through the blood of Christ. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" for ever (Heb 8:12).

Child of grace, not a drop of wrath due to your sins – not a drop of penal justice – will ever come upon you, as the men experienced in the furnace at Babylon. Not a hair of their heads was singed, and no smell of the furnace was on their clothes. But when the Lord sends sorrows and trials, they are sent by a Father who chastises His beloved children. It is because He loves you that He afflicts you. "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth", and "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb 12:6,11). That accords with our text, does it not? "When Thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." The Lord's people will learn righteousness when His afflicting hand is upon them.

Our society is ripe for God's judgement. We have just said that His judgements will not come in wrath upon His people, for Christ took all that wrath. But if your sins are yet upon you, Christ has not taken away your sin. If you are not looking to Him to remove your sin, what a fearful, dangerous condition you are in! However good your providence may be, the wrath and curse of God is upon you. Now apply that to our society, to the nation, to Dingwall, to Ross-shire, to the Highlands, to Scotland, to Britain, to the nations of the world; apply it to every workplace, every school, every hospital, every institution. Wherever you look, we are ripe for judgement.

We have had the heritage of the gospel; we have had the Word of God. It is a fearful judgement if a nation has never had the Word of God. But how much more solemn is the accumulated guilt of a people, a family, an individual, a nation, a town, a village, who knew the gospel, had the godly among them, and the worship and day of God were honoured, if they turn their backs on it, and Christian morality is now despised or ignored. It is against God that people are fighting. How remarkably long-suffering the Lord is but, as we will try to show, great judgements are already upon us.

We will mention three kinds of the judgements of God in dealing with the inhabitants of the earth: physical, moral and spiritual judgements and He is using these in our day. Physical judgements naturally relate to physical things, including men's bodies. But moral and spiritual judgements refer more to men's souls.

Think of physical judgements. We hear of a fearful virus – we all have heard about it for weeks. One tiny microbe, passing from an animal in China

to one person; and all the science and technology, all the precautions, all the wealth of all the nations, can do nothing to prevent the spread of what is sweeping souls into eternity. Spanish influenza, at the end of the First World War swept many away into eternity. And who is to say it will not happen to us? It may not be this plague, it may not be the next plague, but one day something will be too much for our bodies and we will be taken into eternity.

We were thinking of the Fire of London, with Charles II newly on the throne and sweeping godly ministers out of the churches in England and Scotland; preceding this was the great Plague of London. The fire started with one spark from a baker's oven, and it razed the whole city. God has razed cities. We read in the chapter: "He bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, He layeth it low; He layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust" (Is 26:5). Is it any wonder that one germ can leave all the governments of the world powerless. One sin would sweep you away to a lost eternity. The one sin of Adam plunged the whole human race into a state of sin. One sin is enough to bring the judgement of God.

We hear of swarms of locusts in Africa, and people there seem wiser, more ready to acknowledge God's hand in this, than people in the Western world. But the Lord could break the staff of bread in Britain; the food in Britain would not last long. The Lord could bring us to great poverty and distress. He may; He may not. He may bring terrible physical judgements, but whether He does or does not, here is a terrible judgement – to be left to prosper in sin, to be left to material riches and not acknowledge God.

We are coming more to moral judgements. It is a fearful judgement on our society when people do not know they are under God's judgement; they are spiritually dead and their moral sense is darkened; their hearts are hardened and the fear of God is not before their eyes. They do not realise that God is angry with the wicked every day. For people to be left with comfortable lives in a godless condition is a great moral judgement. There are lots of judgements on our society; there is the judgement of uncleanness – even two generations ago this degree of immorality would have been unimaginable. No one thinks anything of the sin of Sodom, the sin of fornication, or people cohabiting in sin. Young friend, flee from the least inclination to these things. There is evil on the internet, on television, in the newspapers, evil everywhere, evil in your own heart. There are fearfully many temptations to drink and drugs; this is a dreadful judgement on our society. People dabble in them; before long they are hooked and their lives ruined. I warn you against these soul-ruining, life-destroying inventions of the devil.

Then there are spiritual judgements; people are left to atheism and Sabbath-breaking, and the Church of God abets that Sabbath breaking when office-

bearers sit on the boards of football teams that break the Sabbath. What a fearful condition the Church of God is in! Sinners are being swept away to a lost eternity; yet there is no desire to hear about Christ. What about you? How unspeakably awful is the position of a sinner under the gospel who hardens his heart from the fear of God; who had impressions, strivings of the Holy Spirit, whose conscience was touched, but now his heart is harder than the nether millstone. This is a spiritual judgement you should fear above all others. You may say, "I am gospel proof. I have heard so many sermons over the years – ministers pleading with me and warning me, and now I feel I cannot repent or believe". Well, you cannot repent or believe without grace, but the solemn matter is that you will not seek it.

2. Those who learn from the Lord's judgements. "For when Thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." They recognise the hand of the Lord in judgements and in providence. That is clearly true of the godly, yet we believe the verse is speaking of those who are ungodly but, because God afflicts them, brings great catastrophes on them and on society around them, these things are blessed to them. It has a humbling effect on them and their eyes are opened. We know a number who have been awakened to a sense of their need of Christ through very sore providences in their lives – bereavement, illness and other sore trials, in which they saw the hand of the Lord coming against them. They saw the misery of continuing in a godless state and were brought to a better mind.

Do you recognise the hand of the Lord in the sorrows of this life? The Lord hides His face; Hosea 5 tells us that He will withdraw Himself and "return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek My face: in their affliction they will seek Me early". What set them seeking Him? Verse 9 of our chapter: "With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early". They were awakened; God's judgements became a reality – "the hand of the Lord is gone out against me" (Ruth 1:13). They were brought very low: these are the souls for whom the balm of the gospel is welcome, who realise that God's anger is against them. Can you say that of yourself? "That when Thou speak'st Thou may'st be just, and clear in judging still" (Ps 51:4, metrical). "If the Lord would deal with me for my very best endeavours, as well as for my very worst sins and all that I am and all that I have ever done, said and thought, I would be under judgement to all eternity." Can you put your amen to that?

In Revelation 11, we read of a judgement that had a good effect: "The same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven". Judgement should make us

afraid to go on in sin, afraid of the reality of God's wrath; it should make us cry out to Him for mercy. He is glorified in the judgement of the wicked; His justice, holiness, truth and righteousness are seen there but – wonder of wonders – God is more glorified in saving sinners than in destroying them in a lost eternity. Take this as an encouragement. It brings more glory to God to save your soul than to damn you.

The love of God is displayed in the salvation of the sinner that looks to the blood of Jesus to cleanse from all sin – and is that you? Will you give glory to God in the salvation of your never-dying soul by a crucified Saviour who is able to save you to the uttermost degree of sin, hardness and impenitence. The blood of Christ is able to cleanse from all sin; the power of the Holy Spirit is able to turn the hardest heart to God. Nothing is impossible to the God of salvation. Therefore seek Him early, seek Him in the night of your affliction, seek Him when the judgements of God are abroad in the earth. “Come, My people, enter into thy chambers” – enter into Christ, into justifying grace, into adoption, into sanctification, into the covenant of grace.

The door of the gospel ark is open for poor refugees to enter. Flee from the wrath of God to come. “The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe” (Prov 18:10). Will you not join them? “Hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast” (Is 26:20). Hide in the wounds of a crucified Saviour. Hide in God's promises. Hide in the salvation purchased by Christ: “I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved” (Jn 10:9). *Any man* – that includes you! If you enter into Christ you will be saved. That is learning righteousness.

What if you get coronavirus? It is a very serious prospect, especially for older people. What if it lays you low and takes you to the gates of death, even over the threshold into eternity? Young, fit, strong and healthy people have succumbed to it. But whatever the case may be, what will you do when the overflowing flood reaches you at last and the cold waters of death sweep you away to eternity? Have you learned righteousness? Have you learned from the Lord's dealings?

3. Those who do not learn. “Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness”. Whether it is the Lord's solemn display of His anger against sin in judgement, or His goodness, the Lord is good unto all men (Ps 145:9), causing His rain to fall and His sun to shine upon the righteous and the wicked. He is giving fruitful seasons, food, health, your faculties, your families, a roof over your head, peace, prosperity, civil liberties, religious liberty – all these blessings, innumerable blessings from day to day, keeping you from evil, from evil people, from the evil that is in your own heart to a remarkable degree. If the Lord took away restraints we would make a hell

on earth. There is enough evil in your heart and mine to create the most fearful desolations in the earth.

The wicked do not see when the hand of the Lord is lifted up, nor His majesty as Judge or Saviour. Blinded by unbelief, they will not acknowledge Him. Sin has ruined the soul; Satan has darkened the mind; the heart is obstinate, harder than the nether millstone. Is that not how Pharaoh was? "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice?" Fearful judgements were coming upon him and yet his heart was hardened. Are you like Pharaoh, not obeying Christ and not submitting to the glorious overtures of mercy in the gospel? Are you wilfully determined to despise the grace of God? "Let favour be showed to the wicked" – the highest favour of the offer of mercy near you, though denied to countless millions of your fellow sinners – "yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly". No matter how many privileges and restraints, or how much morality they have, the wicked have a wicked nature and cannot turn from sin.

Nothing will turn us from the world and the ways of sin but the new birth and faith in Christ. Even if a wicked man could be in heaven for a moment, he could not exist there. In the land of pure holiness, he would have no desire for the things of God. There is nowhere for the wicked to go but eternal judgement; so verse 11: "They shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of Thine enemies shall devour them". "The simple pass on" – those ignorant of God – "and are punished" (Prov 22:3). The Lord will save His people in zeal and love, even when His judgements are abroad in the earth. But for the wicked He reserves a fire: "Ye have kindled a fire in Mine anger", which shall burn to the lowest hell. Lay it to heart, your sins kindle a "fire in Mine anger, which shall burn for ever" (Jer 17:4).

They "will not learn". Will you learn? Will you recognise the hand of God in His judgements? Will you admit that God would be just to bring great judgement on you? The Lord's people have every right to say, For Jesus' sake, "though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me" (Is 12:1). Do you recognise that we are ripe for destruction as a nation? You say, That is not difficult to agree to. But do you see your own fitness for everlasting burnings? "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek 18:20).

In the Scriptures of truth you have these words: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Is 55:7). Would it not be good for you – for us – to go to Christ now together for forgiveness of our sins? Today is the day of salvation; "today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb 4:7).

George Wishart¹

W M Hetherington

By 1543 Cardinal Beaton of St Andrews, had recovered his ascendancy in the government of Scotland. He renewed his efforts to suppress the Reformation, by means of the most merciless and exterminating persecution. He began his barbarous career at Perth, where five men and one woman were brought to him, accused of heresy. They were tried, condemned and had the sentence of death passed on them – the men to be hanged, the woman to be drowned.

The case of the poor woman, named Helen Stark, deserves to be more particularly recorded. She was the wife of one of the men also condemned to death and had recently given birth to a child. During the anguish of the birth, she had been urged by her female assistant to pray to the Virgin Mary and had answered that she would pray only to God, in the name of Jesus Christ. For this she was accused of heresy and condemned to die.

On the day of execution she earnestly requested that she might die along with her husband. Her appeal was harshly refused; but she accompanied him to the fatal spot, bearing her infant in her arms, and exhorting her husband to patience and constancy in the cause of Christ. He was murdered before her eyes; and as soon as life had left his quivering frame, she was dragged to a nearby pool of water, with her baby still clinging to her bosom. When she had taken her precious infant from its last enjoyment of nature's nourishment and consigned it to the charge of a pitying neighbour and to the care of Him who is the orphan's stay, she felt that for her the bitterness of death was past. She was cast into the waters and died without a struggle, full of the steady fortitude and the heavenly comfort of a Christian martyr.

Not satisfied with these victims, the Cardinal pursued his circuit through Angus, inflicting fines on some, imprisonment on others, and persecuting others to the death. He was soon to stain his soul with the blood of a more distinguished victim. This was the celebrated George Wishart, brother of the Laird of Pittarow. He had been banished at the instigation of the Bishop of Brechin, for teaching the Greek language in Montrose, and had resided for some years at the University of Cambridge. In 1544, he returned to his native country. Immediately after his arrival in Scotland, he began to preach the doctrines of evangelical truth with such warm and persuasive eloquence as at once to attract, soften and convince the crowding audiences, who wept and glowed and trembled as he preached.

¹Hetherington (1803-65) was latterly a professor in the Free Church College in Glasgow. This is an edited extract from his *History of the Church of Scotland*, vol 1.

In the accounts transmitted by contemporary writers of this eminent Christian martyr, we seem to trace the features of a character of surpassing loveliness, bearing a close resemblance to the beloved Apostle John – so mild, gentle, patient and unresisting, his lips touched with a live coal from off the altar, and his heart overflowing with holy love to God and compassionate affection to mankind. The citizens of Montrose, and especially of Dundee, felt and owned the power of his heavenly eloquence; and much of his time and labours were spent in the latter city.

The Cardinal was soon informed of Wishart's preaching and of the deep impression it was producing in Dundee. Instigated by Beaton, Robert Mill, a man of great authority in the town, openly commanded him to leave the place and trouble them no more with his sermons. Expressing his pity and regret that they were thus refusing to listen to the message of salvation, he departed to Ayrshire, along with some of his friends. There his preaching was attended with equal success and, of course, excited equal hostility in the breasts of the bishops and clergy. The Archbishop of Glasgow hastened to Ayr to prevent Wishart from preaching in the church, and the sheriff of the county prevented him from preaching in the church of Mauchline. But this was a small hindrance to the zealous martyr. He could preach in the market place, in the fields, or on the hillside with equal readiness, and with equal success in convincing his hearers.

Hearing that the plague had visited Dundee, he hastened to return, that he might bring the hopes and consolations of the gospel to perishing men in their hour of extreme need. There he braved the horrors of the plague, ministering comfort to the miserable sufferers, both speaking peace to their souls and supplying their temporal necessities. Even when engaged in this work of mercy, an attempt was made on his life by a priest; and he narrowly escaped from a plot laid to get him into the power of the Cardinal. Soon afterwards he proceeded to Edinburgh, and from there to Haddington, beset by enemies, yet for a time he was delivered from their snares. During his abode in that neighbourhood he was very constantly attended by John Knox, who was at that time residing as tutor in the family of Douglas of Longniddry. Knox had no scruples about wearing a sword for the defence of his beloved friend, the gentle and unresisting Wishart.

But the time of his martyrdom was at hand. After preaching at Haddington, he went to Ormiston, accompanied by the proprietor. John Knox wished to have accompanied him also, but Wishart refused to permit him, saying, "Go back to your pupils; one is sufficient for one sacrifice". During the night, the house was beset by armed horsemen, headed by the Earl of Bothwell; while the Regent and the Cardinal were but a short distance away with a larger force,

so that it was vain to resist. Ormiston, however, refused to yield up Wishart, till Bothwell pledged his honour to protect his life from the Cardinal's hatred; or, if he should find that to be impracticable, to restore him again to the protection of his friends. But the Cardinal and the Queen-dowager persuaded Bothwell to violate his pledge, and Wishart was carried to St Andrews and left there a prisoner in the power of his deadly foe.

While the Cardinal was summoning together his prelatial council, that he might with the utmost pomp proceed to the destruction of his victim, David Hamilton of Preston endeavoured to persuade the Regent not to consent to the death of so distinguished a servant of God. The Regent yielded so far as to write to the Cardinal not to precipitate the trial of Wishart till he should himself come to St Andrews. The Cardinal haughtily returned this answer: "He wrote not to the governor as though he depended in any measure upon his authority, but out of a desire he had that the heretic's condemnation might proceed with a show of public consent, which since he could not obtain, he would himself do that which he held most fitting".

He proceeded accordingly to give orders that Wishart should be summoned to trial and marched in state to the Abbey Church, accompanied by the Archbishop of Glasgow and a great number of bishops, abbots and other clerical dignitaries, and attended by a large body of retainers in military array. The sub-prior, John Winram, by the Cardinal's command, preached a sermon on the nature of heresy, but expressed in such guarded terms that it gave no countenance to the ruthless deed about to be perpetrated. Then John Lauder, a priest, rose up and, entering fully into the spirit of the Cardinal, began, in a strain of the coarsest and most ferocious invective, to list 18 articles of accusation against Wishart. He answered them all calmly and mildly, but with great strength of reasoning, giving full proof of all his opinions from the Scriptures. He was, nevertheless, condemned by the unanimous voice of the assembled Popish prelates and clergy. He was sentenced to be burned to death as a heretic on the following day.

Wishart passed the night in the room of the captain of the castle, occupying the greater part of it in prayer. Early next morning, 2 March 1546, after refusing to speak with two friars who had been sent to hear his confession, he requested to converse with Winram, the sub-prior. Winram came immediately and, after some private conversation, returned to the Cardinal to request that the sacrament might be given to the prisoner. This was refused; but being invited by the captain to breakfast with him, Wishart prayed, exhorted and distributed bread and wine to those who were present – thus commemorating, as fully as circumstances would permit, the dying love of Him for whose sake he was himself so soon to die. He then retired to his

private apartment, and remained in prayer till they came who were appointed to take him to the place of execution. They took off his usual attire, clothed him with a loose garment of black linen and fastened bags of gunpowder to various parts of his body. He was then conducted to an outer room near the gate of the castle, to wait there till the rest of the hideous preparations should be completed.

In the meantime, the Cardinal had commanded a stake to be fixed in the ground and combustible materials to be piled around it, in front of one of the castle gates, near the priory. And lest Wishart's friends should attempt a rescue, he had also given directions that all the cannons and other ordnance of the castle should be pointed at the place of execution. The battlements and windows of a tower of the castle were hung with tapestry and spread with rich cushions, that the Cardinal and the prelates might, in state and at their ease, feast their eyes on the torments of the martyred servant of the Lord.

All things being now prepared, Wishart was led to the stake, with his hands bound behind his back, a rope round his neck, and an iron chain about his waist. When he reached the spot, he kneeled down and prayed aloud, saying thrice, "O Thou Saviour of the world, have mercy on me! Father of heaven, I commend my spirit into Thy holy hands!" He then rose and addressed the people, exhorting them not to be offended with the Word of God, notwithstanding the torments which they saw prepared for him. He entreated them to accept, believe and obey the Word of God and expressed entire forgiveness of his enemies and persecutors. Then the executioner, casting himself upon his knees before the martyr, begged to be forgiven for the deed he was unwillingly about to do. Wishart desired him to come near him and kissed his cheek, saying, "Lo, here is a token that I forgive thee; my heart, do thine office!"

The sounding of a trumpet gave the signal; the martyr was tied to the stake, and the fire was kindled around him, exploding the gunpowder but not putting an end to his sufferings. The captain perceiving him still alive, drew near the pile, and bade him be of good courage. Wishart replied with an unflinching voice, "This fire torments my body, but no way abates my spirit". Then looking towards the Cardinal, he said, "He who in such state from that high place feedeth his eyes with my torments, within [a] few days shall be hanged out at the same window, to be seen with as much ignominy as he now leaneth here in pride". As he ended these words, the executioner tightened the rope that was about his neck; and the fire now blazing fiercely, he was speedily consumed to ashes. Thus died George Wishart, one of the most amiable, eloquent and truly pious men that ever endured the tortures of Christian martyrdom and obtained its crown.

Desires for Grace (2)¹

Thomas Brooks

It is the very essence of righteousness, says someone long ago, for a man to be willing to be righteous. It is natural for everyone to desire his own natural good, but to desire spiritual grace, holiness, sound sanctification, sincere faith, the true fear of God, serious repentance, and so on, is more than any natural man ever did or can do. No man did ever desire to eat who had not eaten before, and no man did ever desire to believe that did not believe before. All true desires after faith spring from faith as the root of them. Certainly wicked men do not, and cannot, so much as desire saving grace (Job 21:14, Is 53:2). That is so:

[1.] Because *grace is above the reach of nature*. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor 2:14). Water rises no higher than the springs from which it came; so natural men can ascend no higher than nature. Spiritual things can neither be discerned nor desired but by those that are anointed with the eye-salve of the Spirit. The natural man is dark and blind and he sees no such beauty nor excellence in grace that he should desire it or be in love with it. Man in his natural state is without . . . (Eph 2:12); there are five “withouts”: (1) without Christ, (2) without the Church, (3) without the promise, (4) without hope, (5) without God in the world.

Now, as every natural man is under these five “withouts”, how is it possible that he should have any serious desires after grace? Such is the corruption of our nature that, if you put forward any divine good as to our nature, it is entertained as fire by water, or wet wood – with hissing. Mention any evil, it is like fire to straw; it is like the foolish creature that made haste to kiss the fire. The contrariety and enmity that is in every natural man’s heart against God, Christ, grace and holiness may sufficiently satisfy us that the natural man is a stranger to serious, sincere desires after God or Christ or grace or the great things that belong to his everlasting peace (Rom 8:7).

Such sincere, serious desires as these, O that Christ was mine! O that I was married to Him! O that I was clothed with His righteousness! O that my soul was adorned with His grace! O that I was filled with His Spirit! O that He would be my king to rule me, and my prophet to instruct me, and my priest to make an atonement for me! O that I might enjoy choice and high communion with Him! O that I might sin no more against Him! O that I may

¹Taken, with editing, from *A Cabinet of Jewels*, in Brooks’ *Works*, vol 3. The first part of this extract appeared last month; this is the final part.

do nothing unworthy of Him! O that after death I might live for ever in the enjoyment of Him! I say such serious and sincere desires are not to be found in the natural man's breast.

[2.] Because *grace is contrary to nature*. The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God (Rom 8:7). Fire cannot desire water, nor water fire, because they are contrary, one expelling the other; for either the water will quench the fire, or else the fire will lick up the water. So here, nature would have a man love himself and seek himself and exalt himself; but grace will have a man love God and seek God and exalt God. Take nature when it is most adorned, enriched, raised, elevated; yet then you shall find it at enmity with God and grace. The conclusion is obvious.

[3.] Because *grace is not only above nature and contrary to nature, it is even a hell to nature*. Grace and holiness are a hell to a natural man. Some one long ago said that heaven is another hell to the damned. As a glorified state would be a hell to every wicked person, so would a gracious state also. Grace makes a man keep up the cross of Christ, deny his natural self, his sinful self, his religious self, and give up a man's self to the strictest and most exact ways of God, crucify his lusts, pull out his right eye, and cut off his right hand. And what hard work is this; yes, what a hell this is to nature!

[4.] Wicked men do not and cannot truly and seriously desire saving grace. *Witness how they daily resist and slight the offers of grace*. Compare these scriptures: Proverbs 1:20-25, 8:1-12; Ezekiel 24:13; Matthew 23:37; Luke 19:41,42.

[5.] Wicked men do not and cannot so much as truly and seriously desire saving grace; *witness their common, ordinary, habitual provoking, vexing, quenching, resisting and grieving of the Spirit of grace*. Turn to these scriptures, Genesis 6:3; Isaiah 63:10; Acts 7:55-58; Ephesians 4:30.

[6.] Wicked men do not and cannot truly and seriously desire saving grace: *witness that enmity, hatred, rage and madness that is in them against the saints, whose hearts and lives are enamelled with grace* (Gen 3:15; Ps 34:21, 44:10; Job 31:29; Amos 5:10). I have read of a desperate wretch that, when he came to die, gave good portions to all his children but one, and to him he would give but 12 pence. Being asked the reason of it, he answered that he was a Puritan. I have heard him say, said his wretched father, that he had a promise to live on; let us now see whether a promise will maintain him or no. Certainly, wherever there are true serious desires after grace, there is a dear love to those upon whose hearts there has been a work of grace.

Now by these short hints, it is evident enough that wicked men do not and cannot sincerely, seriously desire grace. Certainly those who are "poor in spirit" mourn for their spiritual defects and hunger and thirst after grace and

holiness – after a righteousness imparted and a righteousness imputed. They must confess they are in a blessed state, and consequently in a state of grace, for what true happiness is there out of it? Or else they must contradict the Saviour and charge truth itself with untruth, for He has pronounced them blessed that are so qualified, so affected. If this was well weighed and seriously considered, how it would comfort, refresh, support and stay up many a troubled soul; and what a well-spring of life would this be to many a wounded spirit! Doubtless the greatest part of a saint's perfection in this life consisteth rather in will than in work, and in desire and endeavour more than in deed (Rom 7:15,18,19,21,22). Witness Paul's ingenuous confession in these verses, after 14 years' conversion, as some say; and who ever went beyond him? And how exceedingly do most fall short of Him!

There is so much good in good desires that it is the main matter that the godly have to speak of and to reckon of. Make an inventory of a Christian's state and search every room; if you do not find these desires, you find nothing; and if you set these down in the inventory, you set down all he is worth for another world. Daniel is called a man of desires (Dan 10:11, margin), and so every gracious man is a man wholly made up of gracious desires. Mark, God judges the sons of men according as their desires stand: he that desires to steal is a thief in God's account; he that desires to commit adultery is an adulterer in God's account; he that desires to oppress is an oppressor in God's account; he that desires to deceive is a deceiver in God's account; he that desires to persecute is a persecutor in God's account; and he that desires to profane God's Sabbaths is a profaner of God's Sabbaths in His account.

Look, as every wicked man is as bad in God's account as his desires are bad, so every godly man is as good in God's account as his desires are good; he that sincerely desires to believe does believe in God's account. "The desire to believe, in the want of faith", says Perkins,² "is faith; though as yet there want firm and lively grace, yet art thou not altogether void of grace; if thou canst desire it, thy desire is the seed, conception, or bud of what thou wantest." Now is the springtime of the engrafted word or immortal seed cast into the furrows of your heart; wait but a while, using the means, and you shall see that leaves, blossoms and fruits will shortly follow.

Ursinus³ says that faith in the Most Holy One is not perfect; nevertheless, whosoever feels in his heart an earnest desire to believe and a striving against his doubts, he both may and must assure himself that he is endued with true

²William Perkins, noted Puritan preacher(1558-1602), in his book, *Grain of Mustard-Seed*. In this quotation, by "in the want of faith", he means: in the (felt) absence of faith.

³Zacharias Ursinus (1534-1583) was a Reformed theologian in Germany and was the main author of the *Heidelberg Catechism*.

faith. And he that sincerely desires to repent, he does repent in the account of God. Holy Bradford,⁴ writing to John Careless, says, “Thy sins are undoubtedly pardoned . . . for God hath given thee a penitent and believing heart, that is, a heart which desireth to repent and believe; for such a one is taken of Him, He accepteth the will for the deed, for a penitent and believing heart indeed”.

He that sincerely desires to mortify sin, he does mortify sin in the account of God; he that sincerely desires to walk with God, he does walk with God in the account of God; he that sincerely desires to honour God, he does honour God in the account of God; he that sincerely desires to deny himself; he does deny himself in the account of God; he that sincerely desires to be weaned from the world, he is weaned from the world in the account of God; he that sincerely desires to be conformable to God, he is conformable to God in the account of God; he that desires to grow in grace, he does grow in grace in the account of God; he that sincerely desires to make a good use of mercies, he does make a good use of mercies in the account of God; and he that sincerely desires to glorify God in the hour of his visitation, he does glorify God in the hour of his visitation in the account of God.⁵ A gracious man may make a better judgement of his state by his sincere desires than he can by his duties; and so a wicked man may make a better judgement of his state by his desires than he can by his words or works.

Reasons for Blessing God¹

Robert Traill

There are four things, for which we should both have cause to bless the Lord, who teaches His people to profit, if they were the fruit of my speaking and of your hearing so often from this text (Is 48:17):

1. *If you learn to pray better and to ply prayer more.* David gave himself to prayer (Ps 109:4). The apostles, these extraordinary officers of the primitive Church, gave themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4). There are times in which private Christians should give themselves to fasting and prayer (1 Cor 8:5). If you belong to God, He will make you pray, and teach you with briers and thorns if you will not yield to more gentle methods. How sad is the reflection that rises in the heart

⁴Bradford (c1510-1555) was an English Reformation martyr.

⁵Let thy desires be before God, and He “which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly”; thy desire is thy prayer, and if thy desire is continual, thy prayer is continual.

¹An edited extract from Traill’s *Works*, vol 1. It is the conclusion to the last of his sermons on “the throne of grace” (Heb 4:16). See review on page 122.

under some heavy trial: "This is brought on me for my indulged distance and estrangement from God"!

2. *If you learn to remember Christ more and make more use of Him in your praying.* He is the King on this throne of grace. As much as Christ is out of your minds in praying, so much are you out in your praying and your praying is out from what it ought to be. What we beg is from Christ's store. In whose name do we beg it but in His? For whose sake but for His? Out of whose hand do we receive what we ask and get but out of His? It is marvellous that people should pretend to prayer, and think they pray, who yet forget Jesus Christ, who is all in all, in all right prayer.

3. *If, in your praying, you learn to remember more God's free grace in Jesus Christ and to plead it more.* Free grace is the sensible humble man's plea. He is a proud ignorant person that seeks or uses any other plea at God's throne of grace. Free grace is the only thing that faith can first lay hold on. It is a plea that any man may use; it is the constant and powerful plea of a wise believer. It answers every case and suits every prayer, and best suits the lowest case and the highest prayer.

4. *If you learn never to leave off making use of Christ, and pleading for grace at this throne of grace, till you have no more need of grace.* And that will never be as long as you live. If any man fall into such a dream, that he has got beyond the need of grace, and so of praying, he is one that never rightly knew himself, nor grace, nor Christ, nor praying. The believer knows he stands in need of Christ and grace and therefore prays as long as he lives, as David resolved (Ps 116:2). And when he comes to die and has prayed his last prayer, with Stephen: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59), and gets it answered, then praying, believing and the throne of grace itself, are for him at an end. And everlasting praises begin before the throne of glory, of God and of the Lamb, never to have an end.

"Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Finish Thy work; fulfil all Thy promises; answer fully all the prayers of all Thy people; put an end to sin and time and trouble and temptation; and hasten the marriage day, that Thy people may 'be glad and rejoice, and give honour' to Thee (Rev 19:7). Let the bride be made ready, and let the Bridegroom appear in His wedding garments of glory. O how blessed will the meeting and the marriage be! He married His bride when on earth, in garments dyed in His own precious blood; and the bride receives Him as glorious, even in His bloody raiment. This most precious blood was shed in love to His bride, and for her salvation; and therefore He is amiable to her in that dress. Believers in Christ are contracted to a slain husband, but she shall be married to Him in a far other manifestation of Himself.

“How great is the difference between our dearest Lord Jesus, under His cross and under His crown! And yet, under His cross, He is infinitely amiable to a believer’s heart and eye. Unless the light of that glorious day of His appearance will prevent all mistakes, the nations of them which are saved (as they are called, because they are such a multitude out of all nations (Rev 21:24)) might doubt. But they cannot doubt; but wonder they will, both at Him and at themselves (2 Th 1:10) and say, Is this that blessed Saviour I believed on so feebly; whom I trusted with my soul and its salvation, with so much fainting and with so many fears? Is this He whom I loved so little and so coldly? Is this He whom – all the time I lived on earth, after He had revealed Himself to me – I depended on and lived on by faith, and with so much staggering through unbelief, because I did not know as well the One whom I then believed as now I do?

“And until this blessed day come – and come it will, for it is promised and sworn by Him who cannot lie. It is not far off; for it is above 1600 years since He testified, ‘Surely I come quickly’ (Rev 22:20); it is His last promise to His bride. Let His most excellent name be poured out as ointments and let the savour of His knowledge be made manifest in every place. Let His saving blessed death be remembered, gloried in and fed upon, by all believers: it is the greatest token of His love to them, the only price of their redemption (1 Pet 1:19) and the only food for their souls. Let His justifying righteousness be the only righteousness mentioned before God on earth by believing sinners, as it will be the only righteousness mentioned by glorified praising saints in heaven. Let the throne of grace, reared up by the Father in His Son, and consecrated by the blood of His Son, God manifest in the flesh, be revealed to the darkened world and set up among the blinded nations; and let grace from thence be dispensed to many thousands of perishing sinners.

“Let the glory of God’s free, most free – in every way free – grace in Jesus Christ so shine in the nations, that it may (and when that glory shines, it will) darken, confound and put to shame all the Antichristian darkness (and dreams of false Christs of men’s making, and of works, hire, and merit, under all their names and pretences) and make it all hateful in sinners’ eyes, as it is hurtful to their souls, and as it is hateful in God’s sight. Let the praises of ‘my Lord and my God’, as recovered Thomas calls Him (Jn 20:28) fill heaven and earth and fill the hearts and fill the mouths, and shine in the lives, of all believers on His name; and let His praise fill all the gospel worship in all the churches till the day of the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (Tts 2:13). And unto these wishes let every believer on, and sincere lover of, Jesus Christ say – and everyone that is such will say – Amen. So let it be; so will it be.”

Effectual Calling¹

6. It is Not According to Works but of God's Purpose (1)

James Foote

We now come to consider another property of effectual calling: it is *not according to works, but of God's sovereign, gracious and eternal purpose*. To consider it is necessary to obtain a full, scriptural view of the subject; to receive it rightly is at once most humbling and most encouraging. The ideas expressed in this property are so intimately connected that they will be best understood, and most readily established, by viewing them in connection with each other, or at least in immediate succession.

First of all, observe how explicitly this property, as thus fully stated, is taught in such passages of Scripture as the following: God "hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began"; "called according to His purpose . . . whom He did predestinate, them He also called"; "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth"; "it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me" (2 Tim 1:9; Rom 8:28,30, 9:11; Gal 1:15,16).

You see then how expressly and fully this doctrine is taught in the Word of God, in immediate connection with effectual calling – not to speak of many other passages, some of which are brief and some long sustained reasonings, where the same doctrine is taught in a more general way. Indeed, the thorough-going doctrine of salvation by grace, or as the result of God's sovereign, unmerited, eternal, electing love, is just as plainly taught in Scripture as any doctrine whatever. It must be some entire misunderstanding of it, or some unfounded prejudice against it, that can lead anyone who has anything like a due regard to the authority of Scripture to hesitate to embrace it. Passages so direct and so positive ought to satisfy the mind.

Looking more narrowly into the question, anyone who will reflect calmly, and without prejudice, will see that the opposite doctrine involves ideas that contradict the Word of God and each other. If it is true, for example, that before men are effectually called – while they are "in the flesh", in their natural state – there is "no good thing" in them, how is it possible that they can be called either on account of, or according to, any good works of their

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

own? How can that come into consideration, either as a meritorious cause or as a means, in reference to a time when it does not exist? It is true that men will be judged at the last day according to their works, but that is quite a different matter: the good works of believers will then be fixed on, not as the ground, or means, of their being taken into a state of favour with God, but as a proof that they are already in a state of favour, and as a necessary and divinely-imparted qualification for heaven.

This is one of the many reasons for distinguishing the two leading senses of the word *salvation*. If by salvation we understand admission into heaven, there must be holiness before that; but if by salvation we understand a state of salvation, or acceptance with God, on earth, holiness is not before that, and it cannot be.

God saves and calls His people, not according to their works, but “according to His own purpose and grace”, or gracious purpose. A purpose is an intention, a resolution. It would virtually amount to atheism to hold that God has no purposes; and it would be blasphemy to say that His purposes, whatever they may relate to, can ever be frustrated. “The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand”. And then, as to the extent of His purposes, we are told He “worketh all things after the counsel of His own will”. Everything therefore relating to that very important matter, the salvation of sinners, must be included in that counsel, unless anything is specially excepted.

So far, however, from anything connected with this part of the divine economy being excepted, everything is expressly said, in the passages just quoted, to be arranged. God’s purpose to save is what is called sovereign. This does not mean that God determines anything blindly, without any reason at all but that, while all His purposes are the wisest and best, He is not moved to save, or to resolve to save, any sinners on account of any goodness foreseen in them. His purpose to save, you will also observe, is not conditional but positive. It is not that He has resolved to save sinners provided they obey the gospel call, but that He has resolved that certain sinners shall obey it and, of course, be saved. It is His purpose that they shall be saved in the way of being called. His purpose too includes all circumstances – the means as well as the end.

This purpose, like all God’s purposes, is from everlasting; for, unless something could occur in time which He did not foresee, and which could not be provided for by God from eternity, there could be no reason for Him forming any new purpose in time. But any such occurrence would argue imperfection in God, which cannot be; therefore all His purposes are eternal.

Moreover, this purpose to save includes the work of Christ, as well as the work of the Holy Spirit. It is according to God's glorious purpose, "which was given us" (says Paul, in the name of all God's people) "in Christ Jesus before the world began". The purpose was "given" to the elect – that is, formed and engaged in their favour – "in Christ Jesus". This is true in two respects: (1) as He, by way of eminence, is called God's "Elect", who was chosen as representing His people; and also (2) as He is the great Covenant-Head, by whom the purpose was to be accomplished in them. Or, in other words still, the purpose includes, in reference to all who shall ever be saved, and in reference to them alone, the purchase as well as the application of redemption (Eph 1:3-12).

Such is the doctrine which the plain and positive language of Scripture teaches: and we have additional confirmation that this is the doctrine really taught there because some at the present day object to it, just as some objected to it in the days of the Apostle Paul. He meets their objections at great length in Romans 9.

Rest assured that the difficulties connected with this doctrine – supposing the inquirer is free from prejudice and the pride of self-righteousness and self-dependence – are only such as unavoidably arise from the limited range of the human faculties. They occur in almost every subject, when its investigation is pushed beyond a certain length; and the difficulties connected with the opposite doctrine, which would set aside the plain meaning of the scriptural language in question are far greater and more numerous, and present themselves at a much earlier stage of the inquiry. There is indeed no just reason for disliking the sound doctrine but quite the reverse. How can there be solid satisfaction in any other way? If you are to be "saved" and "called", it must be either by God's grace, or by your own merit; it cannot be by a combination of the two.

You may be inclined to say, I think the safest way for me will be to seek salvation partly by both, and to trust, not to either of them alone, but to both together; for if one is useful, both united will be better. But you would do well to remember that, while two different ways of salvation are described in Scripture – the one by works and the other by grace – it is impossible for you to proceed on these two different ways at the same time. You must have a perfect righteousness either in yourself or in Christ. If you begin in grace and seek to be perfected by your own merit, or imagine that, where you are deficient, He will supply – you mar the whole. Christ will not divide the honour with you. The song of the redeemed is not addressed to Christ as having assisted them, but to Christ as having saved them. The language of the Saviour to all His true disciples is, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have

chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain”.

Christ Meeting Mary Magdalene¹

J C Ryle

The interview between the Lord Jesus and Mary Magdalene immediately after His resurrection, described in these verses, is a narrative unique to John’s Gospel. No other Gospel-writer has been inspired to record it. Of all the accounts of the appearances of our Lord, after He rose from the dead, none perhaps is so touching as this. He that can read this simple story, without a deep interest, must have a very cold and unfeeling heart.

We see, firstly, in these verses, that *those who love Christ most diligently and perseveringly are those who receive most privileges from Him*. It is a touching fact, and one to be carefully noted, that Mary Magdalene would not leave the sepulchre, when Peter and John went away to their own home. Love to her gracious Master would not let her leave the place where He had been laid. Where He was now she could not tell. What had become of Him she did not know.

But love made her linger about the empty tomb, where Joseph and Nicodemus had recently laid Him. Love made her honour the last place where His precious body had been seen by mortal eyes. And her love reaped a rich reward. She saw the angels whom Peter and John had never observed. She actually heard them speak and had soothing words addressed to her. She was the first to see the Lord after He rose from the dead, the first to hear His voice, the first to hold conversation with Him. Can anyone doubt that this was written for our learning? Wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, this little incident testifies that those who honour Christ will be honoured by Christ.

As it was in that morning, so will it be as long as the Church stands. The great principle contained in the passage before us will hold good until the Lord comes again. All believers have not the same degree of faith or hope or knowledge or courage or wisdom, and it is vain to expect it. But it is a certain fact that those who love Christ most fervently, and cleave to Him most closely, will always enjoy most communion with Him and feel most of the witness of the Spirit in their hearts. It is precisely those who wait on the Lord, in the spirit of Mary Magdalene, to whom the Lord will reveal Himself

¹Taken, with editing, from *Expository Thoughts on John*, vol 3. Here are some of Ryle’s general comments on John 20:11-18.

most fully and make them know and feel more than others. To know Christ is good; but to know that we know Him is far better.

We see, secondly, in these verses, that *the fears and sorrows of believers are often quite needless*. We are told that Mary stood at the sepulchre weeping and wept as if nothing could comfort her. She wept when the angels spoke to her: "Woman, why weepest thou?" She was still weeping when the Lord spoke to her: "Woman, why weepest thou?" And the burden of her complaint was always the same: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him". Yet all this time her risen Master was close to her, with "body, flesh, and bones, and all things pertaining to the perfection of man's nature".² Her tears were needless. Her anxiety was unnecessary. Like Hagar in the wilderness, she had a well of water by her side, but she did not have eyes to see it.

What thoughtful Christian can fail to see that we have here a faithful picture of many a believer's experience? How often we are anxious when there is no just cause for anxiety! How often we mourn over the absence of things which in reality are within our grasp, and even at our right hand! Two-thirds of the things we fear in life never happen at all, and two-thirds of the tears we shed are thrown away, shed in vain. Let us pray for more faith and patience and allow more time for the full development of God's purposes. Let us believe that things are often working together for our peace and joy which seem at one time to contain nothing but bitterness and sorrow.

Old Jacob said at one time in his life: "All these things are against me" (Gen 42:36); yet he lived to see Joseph again, rich and prosperous, and to thank God for all that had happened. If Mary had found the seal of the tomb unbroken, and her Master's body lying cold within, she might well have wept. The very absence of the body which made her weep was a token for good and a cause of joy for herself and for mankind.

Book Reviews¹

The Works of Robert Traill, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hard-back, 2 volumes, 1168 pages, £38.00.

The republication of the works of Robert Traill (1642-1716) will be welcomed by those who love the rich biblical expositions of the Puritan and Covenanting divines. Traill was a Scottish Covenanter, partly trained in the Netherlands and, as a result of persecution under the Stuart kings, largely

²Article 4 of the Thirty-Nine Articles.

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

exercised his ministry in Presbyterian congregations in Kent and London. These two fine volumes have been entirely re-typeset. Volume 1 contains Traill's best known writings, including 12 excellent and helpful sermons on Hebrews 4:16, on the Throne of Grace. Also included in the first volume are 16 precious sermons on what he calls "the Lord's Prayer", by which he means Christ's high-priestly prayer in John 17; these sermons are based on the words of verse 24.

His sermon on the work of how ministers may best win souls may be read profitably time and again by ministers and others concerned in the great business of delivering souls out of the kingdom of darkness and bringing them into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Traill's highly-regarded *Vindication of the Protestant Doctrine of Justification, and of Its Preachers and Professors, from the Unjust Charge of Antinomianism* is a brief, vigorous and comprehensive piece of polemical and practical divinity, brimming with the gospel of the grace of God in its fullness and freeness. It was written at the time when the influence of Richard Baxter's legalistic interpretation of the gospel (known as *Neonomianism*) was wreaking much havoc in the Churches and its proponents were casting false aspersions on the true doctrine of justification. Traill makes abundantly plain how faith is the instrument and not the ground of that justification.

The freeness of Divine grace in justification is very evident in the following extracts from the *Vindication*. Traill emphasises that the gospel is to be preached to sinners without exception, however bad their condition may be: "We call men to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, in that case the first Adam brought them to, and left them in; in that case that the law finds them and leaves them in, guilty, filthy, condemned: out of which case they can only be delivered by Christ, and by believing on Him". He goes on to encourage sinners to come to Christ as they are: "We tell sinners, that Jesus Christ will surely welcome all that come to Him; and as He will not cast them out for their sinfulness, in their nature and by-past life, so neither for their misery, in the want of such qualifications and graces that He only can give". And then he points out the wonderful remedy proposed to them in the gospel: "We do hold forth the propitiation in Christ's blood, as the only thing to be in the eye of a man that would believe on Christ unto justification of life; and that by this faith alone a sinner is justified, and God is justified in doing so" (vol 1, p 254).

The second volume consists almost entirely of sermons, along with a few letters which make for edifying reading. It is good that ten sermons published in a nineteenth-century edition of Traill's *Works*, but not included in the previous Banner of Truth edition, are republished here. The sermons in both

volumes are largely prolonged studies of doctrinal points arising from various texts and dealing with important spiritual themes. They skilfully deal with the various cases of hearers and exalt Christ in all His offices as the only Saviour of sinners.

The extended series of sermons was, of course, the usual method employed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by Reformed pastors. Preachers like Traill were intent on teaching doctrine to their flocks in an extensive fashion and then to draw out the practical and experimental lessons from the doctrines they expounded. They succeeded in achieving this by painstakingly working their way through many sermons on related subjects, often basing their discourses on the same text. Though these particular sermons are full of good matter, nevertheless they bring it forth in a style that is clear and in terms that are not technical or overly-complicated.

Among the divines of his own day, Traill's writings stand out for their plainness. It scarcely needs stating that we highly recommend these volumes.

(Rev) *A W MacColl*

Messages from Captivity, Sermons from Ezekiel 1-24, by Allan W MacColl, published by Ettrick Press, paperback, 176 pages, £8.50.

In this volume we have 12 sermons taken from the first 24 chapters of Ezekiel, eight of which were never preached but sent out by Dr MacColl to be read by his congregation during the first lockdown, during the Spring of 2020. The introduction by Matthew and Catherine Hyde points out that, "although the parallel is not exact, this aspect of lockdown reflects to some extent the context in which Ezekiel prophesied". Dr MacColl makes several references to this as he expounds and sheds light on the strange and solemn messages and visions which the Lord gave to Ezekiel.

Very suitable titles are given to each of the sermons, such as, "The Likeness of the Lord's Glory" (Ezek 1:28), "The Silent Prophet" (Ezek 3:24) and "The City Under Siege" (Ezek 4:1). We are taken through the unfolding crisis in Jerusalem, which those already in captivity were being kept abreast of.

In all those sermons, Dr MacColl draws out very appropriate lessons for our own day. In the first of these, "The Likeness of the Lord's Glory", we read – under the head, "What it means to see the Lord's glory" – "Faith purifies the heart (Acts 15:9). We must strictly examine ourselves as to what effect the belief of the truth has upon us. We may believe it with our heads, but unless it is received also into hearts, it will not affect our hands and our feet to go on the highway that is called holiness. That is the only road where we are to journey, if we are to see Christ in glory at the end of our days, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. It is along that road that the ransomed of

the Lord will be conveyed to heaven, and the further along that road they progress, the nearer they are to seeing the Lord with open vision” (p 20).

Another example of application of a most searching nature is to be found in the fifth message, “The Ruined Wall”. Under the title, “We need a well-grounded hope”, we are asked, “Do we have this hope? Every person has some kind of hope for the future, except those who are in a lost eternity. The great question is whether our hope is a right hope or is it a delusion? What are you hoping in, dear friend? Are you surrounding yourself with a tottering fence and building a wall that will soon collapse? To whom do you go with your fears for the future? Where do you take your sins? Do you seriously think there can be peace with God despite not repenting of those sins? Would it not be far better to be really searched, humbled and brought to genuine evangelical repentance? ‘Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death’ (2 Cor 7:10)” (p 68).

Such applications continue throughout, and so do calls to the unsaved to come to the Lord. In “The Humbled Raised up”, we read; “Will you have this glorious One, who became a meek, lowly and afflicted man in this world, to reign over you? Will you take the crucified Saviour to be your Lord and master? Will you join with the dying thief, who took Christ to be his king when all the world had despised and rejected Him? (p 111).

The reviewer’s one area of reserve is in the third message, “The City Under Siege”. In his comments on whether or not Ezekiel actually lay physically on his side for over 400 days, Dr MacColl, following Calvin and Fairbairn, takes the view that this “most likely took place at the spiritual level in his own self-consciousness” (p 40) – that is, this took place in a vision. The reviewer prefers the view of Matthew Henry: “Now we are not to think that the prophet lay constantly night and day upon his side, but every day, when he received visits, and company came in, he was found lying 390 days on his left side, and 40 days on his right side, before his portraiture of Jerusalem, which all that saw might easily understand to mean the close besieging of that city, and people would be flocking in daily, some for curiosity, and some for conscience, at the hour appointed, to see it, and to make their different remarks upon it”.

Also to say that dung was to be used “in the actual mixture being baked” and that, once again, very likely this took place “at the spiritual level under the prophetic influence of God’s Spirit on Ezekiel’s mind” (p 41) is something that the reviewer cannot accept. Otherwise these messages are an excellent introduction into this fascinating book of Ezekiel and are highly recommended.

(Rev) *W A Weale*

Protestant View

Free Church and Ecumenical “Prayer”

The inroads of ecumenism into the Evangelical Churches in Scotland continue apace. Leading Evangelical ministers, including the Moderator of the Free Church, Rev Donnie G MacDonald, and Rev Fred Drummond, the Director of the Evangelical Alliance in Scotland, have appended their names to a “prayer” in connection with the nationwide “call to prayer”, a movement which was initiated by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

This particular “prayer” is more reminiscent of a poem or a piece from some vague modern liturgy. It contains no confession of sin at a time of evident judgement in the land, which is a serious yet sadly unsurprising omission. It is also a serious matter that a Free Church minister can endorse a piece of liturgical literature purporting to be a prayer that is also signed by the Romanist Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, the foremost representative of the spiritual Babylon in Scotland. How this nation, the whole of the visible Church and our own branch of the Church need the true spirit of grace and of supplications at this time. *AWM*

Notes and Comments

Hypocrisy in the Human Race

Hypocrisy is sufficiently prevalent in the human heart that the Apostle Paul can say generally, whether to Jew or Gentile: “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things” (Rom 2:1). Perhaps the earliest hypocritical act was Adam’s attempt to transfer the blame to Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:12). Thomas Watson mentions “the cloven hoof of hypocrisy” as part of the image of Satan borne by ungodly men.

Satan’s minions delight to abuse the people of God with language that more aptly describes themselves. “Art thou he that troublest Israel?” was the question asked by the chief troubler of Israel (1 Ki 18:17-18). The “hatred” underlying the “hate-crime” legislation is principally in the hearts of the legislators against the law of God. Those most vehement in denouncing “discrimination” often freely practise it against males, whites, Christians, and so on; and those advocating “diversity” invariably exclude biblical Christians from the groups that can be tolerated. None are more bigoted than those who readily use the word “bigotry”. African slavery is condemned as an appalling

affront to human dignity, as indeed it was, and yet how many of those taking the lead in denouncing it are the friends of abortion, which if anything is even worse.

There will be many at the Day of Judgment to whom Christ can say: “Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant” (Lk 19:22). Hypocrisy is not far from every one of us. “Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth” (Rom 14:22). *DWBS*

“Men, Brethren, and Fathers”

“Men, brethren, and fathers” was the salutation with which Stephen began his speech to the Council of the Jews (Acts 7:2), and Paul used the same words in opening his defence before the Jews at the temple many years later (Acts 22:1). Presumably it is from these words that the custom arose in Scottish Presbyterian Church courts of starting speeches with “Fathers and brethren”.

In a sermon on the text, “The father to the children shall make known Thy truth” (Is 38:19), Thomas Boston observes that God has ordained that teaching and learning are to be essential parts of human life, with those who teach being “fathers” and those taught being “children”. Furthermore, “as there is no perfect and absolute equality among men, but some who are inferior in one respect to others may be superior to them in another respect”, so men must retain a readiness to learn as well as to teach. Moses, the ruler of Israel, was willing to learn from his father-in-law Jethro (Ex 18:24) and Apollos, who was “mighty in the scriptures”, from Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:24-26). In addressing their Jewish brethren in the terms that they used, Stephen and Paul showed that they were not usurping a position over them, but were speaking in a humble spirit, and were ready to be instructed, if anyone was able to do that. If Stephen and Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost as they undoubtedly were, had such a spirit, then how much more should we.

DWBS

Neanderthal Man

Following last month’s comment on the teeth of the Neanderthal man found in Jersey, research by Dr Robert McCarthy, Florida Atlantic University, on a piece of bone discovered in France and claimed to be 50 000 years old, has suggested that Neanderthals had a high-pitched voice with severely limited range. This is in line with the common perception that people from this supposed era were grunting “cavemen” with a limited vocal range.

This, however, contrasts with research done by Professor Stephen Wroe, University of New England, on a hyoid bone found in Israel which was subjected to 3D x-ray imaging technology. (The hyoid bone is a small U-shaped bone situated centrally in the upper part of the neck which provides an

anchor point for the muscles of the tongue and those in the upper part of the front of the neck. This bone is not connected to any other and is the foundation of speech and found only in humans and Neanderthals.) The results of Wroe's research showed that the Neanderthal hyoid was basically indistinguishable from our own and was used in exactly the same way. Furthermore, genetic analysis of the Neanderthal genome has shown that the form of FOXP2 gene associated with language learning in modern humans matches the Neanderthal gene.

Having a dominant hand is uniquely human, and evidence shows that Neanderthals were predominantly right-handed. Moreover, skeletons have been discovered which showed crippling injuries which had healed, showing the person had been cared for during their incapacity. The burial of their children was done with particular care; they even planted flowers round graves. This was an organised and caring society of people.

As more evidence is unearthed, the image of a shambling grunting brute of limited intelligence and emotional ignorance is gradually being shown for the evolutionary myth that it is. All humans, including Neanderthals, are descended from Adam and Eve. Instead of archaeologists and palaeontologists trying to force everything into their evolutionary hypothesis, they would be wise to look to the Word of God. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom 15:4). FRD

Church Information

General Building Fund

By appointment of Synod, this year's special collection on behalf of the General Building Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during April.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Eastern Europe Fund: Anon, for the Lord's work in the Ukraine, £100.

General Fund: Anon, where most needed, £1000; Anon, £200.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: Friends in Australia, for the work of the Presbytery in Zimbabwe, £300; N Pearce, for diaconal aid for Zimbabwe, £140; Anon, for Mbumba famine relief, £500; Anon, £100; Anon, for Zimbabwe Mission Famine Relief, £100.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Inverness: *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund*: Anon, for Zimbabwe Mission, where most needed, £300.

Laide: Anon, contribution for audio services, £90 per Rev DAR. *Door Collection*: Friend, Mellon Charles, £100. *Eastern Europe Fund*: Anon Friend, Aultbea, £100. *Magazine Fund*: Anon Friend, Aultbea, for magazine distribution, £36, £30. *Sustentation Fund*: Anon Friend, Aultbea, £30.

North Tolsta: *Door Collection*: Anon, £8, £150, £210, £80, £40, £100, £60. *TBS*: Anon, £100.

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath: Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Glendale and Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thursday 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street, IV15 9JP: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achary Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; 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 W A Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Duncan Street; Sabbath 5 pm. **Strathy:** Sabbath: 6 pm (first and third Sabbaths of month).
- Harris (North): Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Tarbert and Stockinish:** Tuesday 7.30 pm alternately. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South): Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. **Sheilebost:** as intimated. Rev K M Watkins BA, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, IV1 1NA; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 6 pm; **Scourie:** Sabbath 11:30 am, Tuesday 7 pm (as intimated). Contact 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.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.

England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Contact Mr R Middleton, 2 Emerald Drive, Sandbach, CW11 4ND; tel: 01270 761673.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1 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 (once a month 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.by@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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