

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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**Issued by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland  
Reformed in Doctrine, Worship and Practice**

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*“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, Kinlochberrie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fifth:** Chiedza.

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

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

**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.

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

**December: Third Sabbath:** Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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## The Solemnity of Life

To have one's existence in this fallen world is solemn. Let us consider four reasons for this.

**1. *Because we are all sinners.*** We were all born sinful. Adam represented all mankind and so we fell in him. He sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, from "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil", which God had warned him not to do; he had been told: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen 2:17). Adam did eat the fruit; so he had to suffer the consequences; these were not only for himself, but for all his natural descendants. We can sum up the consequences as: being under the curse of God, for "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal 3:10). God demands perfection from His creatures; so the most insignificant sin, as we might term it, brings us under that curse, and it does so because every sin is tremendously serious; it is committed against an infinitely-holy God. To be under the curse of a perfectly-holy, infinitely-powerful God is a very solemn position to be in.

The curse of the law includes death. There is (1) natural death, the solemn separation that comes between the soul and the body, which results in the soul being carried away to either heaven or hell. Then there is (2) spiritual death, the absence of spiritual life – the total inability of the soul to carry out any spiritual duty. It is solemn to be a soul that is unable to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that is unable to love God, or to keep any part of God's law. Finally, there is (3) eternal death, never-ending separation from God and from all possibility of blessing. In hell, the full force of divine punishment will fall on sinners; as Jesus Christ solemnly warned, "there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Mt 13:50).

**2. *Because God sees each of us always.*** "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov 15:3). No matter where we may be, we can never hide from God's presence; we can never go where He cannot see us. So Adam and Eve discovered when, with guilty consciences, they sought concealment among the trees of the Garden of Eden. They were trying to do the impossible. David asked, "Whither shall I flee from Thy

presence?” (Ps 139:7). He knew he could not do so; he knew that at every moment God could see all he did and said and thought.

It is solemn that even the righteous are not free from sin. God sees the guilt of their sin but, for the sake of the saving work of Christ, He does not lay their guilt to their account; all their sins are forgiven. What is more, sin is no longer on the throne of their hearts. Yet sin is still powerful, and believers are subject to the wiles of a tempting devil, who has had thousands of years of experience in that evil activity, though God will prevent them being swept off the Rock, Jesus Christ. Many of them are weak in faith and much less prayerful than they ought to be, and God sees it all. Yet He will preserve grace in their souls. And, what is more, He will bring His work in each believer to completion, so that, when death comes, they will be brought as perfect souls into the perfection of heaven.

While it is solemn that believers continue to sin in this life, yet God continues to care for them, as He watches over them and sees all the dangers that surround them and delivers them from everything that would harm them. He has given them a multitude of precious promises, including, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb 13:5).

But the Lord also has His eyes on those who are evil, and that is very solemn; He sees all their sins. They have no respect for the full implications of any of the commandments. While they may have some outward acceptance of some of these commands, they do not submit to God’s authority over their thoughts. Psalm 12 speaks of those who say, “Our lips are our own: who is lord over us?” And no doubt they think, Our thoughts are our own: who is lord over us? Not least, the Lord sees their rebellion as they go on in unbelief, refusing to acknowledge Him as their God.

The prospect of a lost eternity adds solemnity to their rebellion. Ours is a generation whose philosophy very largely is: Let us “eat, drink, and be merry” (Lk 12:19)– with emphasis on being merry. This generation may not be unique in craving entertainment, but it certainly is unique in the possibilities for accessing entertainment from almost every part of the world. What need then they have to stop and take seriously their situation on their way to eternity and to say, almost as Moses did, but with application to themselves: O that I were wise, that I understood this, that I would consider my latter end! (See Deut 32:29). And taking their solemn position seriously, they ought to go on to ask the Lord to make them wise *now*.

**3. *Because death is not the end of our existence.*** Since we are sinners, we cannot continue indefinitely in this life. Soul and body must be parted from each other and must remain apart until the resurrection, when body and soul will be reunited. But, solemnly, there will be “the resurrection of life” *and*

“the resurrection of damnation” (Jn 5:29); those “that have done good” will go to heaven and “those that have done evil” will go to hell.

The point just now is that no one may assume that death is the end of human existence; nor may anyone assume that to go to heaven is inevitable – for Scripture teaches otherwise. God is setting before us in His revelation the realities of our existence in this world: that eternal consequences follow from the way we live our lives here. If we do good – if by God’s grace we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ – then at death we will enter the blessedness of heaven. But, solemnly, if we do evil and nothing but evil – continuing in unbelief, the most serious sin of all – we must exist, not for a limited period but for ever, in the awfulness of hell.

**4. *Because we must all appear before God in judgement.*** Proverbially in human affairs, justice must not only be done, it must be seen to be done. And God will show, when He will bring this world to an end, that He has acted in perfect justice to everyone by either bringing their souls to heaven or sending them to hell. God has seen all that individual sinners have done in this world and has understood the motives behind everything. Accordingly that evidence will be brought forward to show God’s justice in the way that He is dealing with everyone. There will be no possibility of anyone having any ground whatever for claiming that they are being dealt with unjustly.

How solemn it will be for any sinner to hear these words addressed to himself, in perfect justice: “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Mt 25:41). How solemn for an ungodly individual to know that the gracious words, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Mt 25:34), are addressed to others but not to himself. How especially solemn this will be for those who once heard the gospel and rejected it, who heard that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world to save sinners and who, guilty though they were, would not come to Him although Christ’s ambassadors called them to do so.

Yes, there is a solemnity to life. Yet the righteous, those who have come to Christ by faith, are called to rejoice. Paul is insistent when he writes: “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice” (Phil 4:4). What reason they have to do so! Their sins have been forgiven; a new nature has been created within them; they are on their way to heaven; and God has promised that He will always care for them. Yet let them continue to examine themselves as to whether they have indeed believed. But let those who have no right to assume they are among the righteous not despise the opportunity they still have to seek salvation. Let them seek the Lord while He may be found but let them not rely on their own endeavours.

# Christ's Invitation to the Labouring (2)<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by *Thomas Boston*

Matthew 11:28. *Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

**D***octrine.* Sinners are engaged in a wearisome labour while out of Christ. If you were condemned to row in the galleys, chained to the oars, or to dig in mines and never see the light of the sun – until you forsake your lusts – it is not to be compared to this wearisome labour while out of Christ. If sinners do not feel it, it is because they are not at all themselves. It is a truth, though a sad one (Is 55:2), that they “labour for that which satisfieth not”; they labour to weariness. “The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them; because he knoweth not how to go to the city” (Ecc 10:15).

In discoursing on this point, we may consider: (1.) What sinners out of Christ are labouring for. (2.) Why men out of Christ labour for happiness and satisfaction. (3.) What sort of labour they have in these things. (4.) Why sinners labour in these things for satisfaction and do not come to Christ. (5.) Some practical application.

**1. What sinners out of Christ are labouring for.** No man engages in labour but for some end that he proposes to himself. Though the devil is the foreman of these labourers, he does not make them go like clocks, without some purpose. Every one that labours proposes some profit to himself by his work, and so do these men; there is always something, either really or seemingly good, that men seek in all their labours. It is happiness and satisfaction that they, as well as the godly, are labouring for.

Consider: (1.) The desire for happiness and satisfaction is natural to man. It is not the desire for what may satisfy that makes the difference between the godly and the wicked, but the different ways they take: “There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased” (Ps 4:6,7). Whatever situation a man is in on earth, in heaven or hell, this is his desire; and he must cease to be a man before he can cease desiring to be happy. This desire is good in itself. The Lord supposes this in the text and therefore He promises to them what they are seeking – rest – if they will come to Him.

(2.) This desire is the chief of all: all other things are desired for it. All

<sup>1</sup>A second sermon on this text. It is reprinted, with editing, from Boston's *Works*, vol 9. The first one appeared in the March issue, where he expanded the thought, “As the fullness lodged in the Mediator has a free vent in His heart, so it seeks to diffuse itself into the souls of needy sinners”. The last three points are considered in a further sermon.

men's desires, however different, meet here, as all the rivers meet in the sea though their courses may be quite different. The devil has some labourers at his coarse work, others at what is more fine, but they all meet in their end.

(3.) Defects and needs are interwoven with the very nature of the creature; and the rational creature finds that he cannot be self-sufficient. Hence he seeks his happiness from outside himself, to satisfy these natural desires.

(4.) Seeing man's happiness is from outside himself, it must be brought in – which cannot be done without labour. It is proper to God to be happy in Himself; but every creature must needs go out of himself to find happiness; rest cannot be found but in the way of action and labour, and it is wearisome labour because sinners are not in the right way.

**2. How men out of Christ labour for happiness and satisfaction.** Here it is impossible for us to reckon up particulars, because,

(1.) There are varied opinions about what may make a man happy. It is true that Christianity has fixed this point in principle, but only overcoming grace can fix it in practice. The whole body of Christless sinners are like the Sodomites at Lot's door; all were for reaching the door, but they grasped one part or another of the wall instead, but not one of them found it. The world is as the air on a summer day, full of insects; and natural men are like a company of children, each one running to catch one or another, while none of the insects is worth the effort.

(2.) Men still alter their opinions about it, as they meet new disappointments. Like a man in a mist seeking a house in a wilderness, when every bush and tree deceives him till, by coming near, he is undeceived. The man thinks, If I had such and such a thing, I would be well. Then he begins to labour for it; maybe he never gets it, but he ever pursues it. If he gets it, he finds it will not do, for big as it seemed afar off, it will not fill his hand when he grips it. But it must be filled or he will have no rest; hence new labour only brings forth a new disappointment: "We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind" (Is 26:18).

(3.) They cannot tell what they wish for. Their starving souls are like the hungry infant that weeps and sucks every thing that comes near its mouth, but cannot tell what it wants, but is still restless till the mother sets it to the breast. It is regenerating grace that does this to the soul. The Hebrew word for *believing* comes from a root that signifies to nurse, as if faith was only laying the soul on the breasts of Christ, in whom "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead". Scripture speaks of Him as the mother that bore them; hence His people are called the fruit of "the travail of His soul" (Is 53:11). He also nourishes them; He says, "I have nourished and brought up children" (Is 1:2). The breasts of the Church (Is 66:11), at which they are to suck and

be satisfied, are no other than Christ. But where do men out of Christ go to draw out their happiness. Observe two things:

(1) It is not to God; go to as many doors as they will, they never go to the right door. Hence it follows that they labour to draw their satisfaction out of created things: Having “forsaken . . . the fountain of living waters”, they hew out to themselves “cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water”.

(2) They are seeking to find good things in these cisterns, though for the most part they call evil good, and good evil. All good is either profitable, pleasurable, or honest; these are all that they are seeking – not from God, but from themselves or other created things. The former two, profit and pleasure, relate to men’s desires, the latter to the law. Seeing it is not in God that they seek their happiness and satisfaction, I infer that all outside Christ are labouring for their happiness and satisfaction in one or both of these ways, either from their lusts or from the law. I take this to be the labour meant in the text. For which consider these three things:

*First.* All natural men have two principles in them: (1) corruption, (2) conscience. Both crave satisfaction: “Which show the work of the law, written in their heart, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another” (Rom 2:15). Hence, because those labouring do not mortify their lusts, these principles must be fed or they will give no rest; therefore they labour to satisfy their lusts. Then, because they do not flee to Christ to satisfy their conscience, they go to the law. *Second.* Most natural men in the world – Jews, Pagans and Christians – have been of two sorts: (1) profane; (2) formal – the former labouring most in lusts, the latter in the law. *Third.* Adam left us with two yokes on our necks: (1) of lusts, (2) of the law. God placed the latter, but He gave strength to bear it; Adam took away the strength, but God left on this yoke and also put on a yoke of lusts. In opposition to these yokes, Christ bids us come and take on His yoke, which is easy, and His burden, which is light (Mt 11:29).

As to the labour these men have in their lusts, they run after them. The infernal devils in the heart drive the swine of this world into the sea of perdition; indeed they turn the soul itself into a very sea that cannot rest: “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt” (Is 57:20). They labour like madmen to satisfy their lusts and have no calm, no rest, till the soul comes to Christ.

1. They labour hard in the lusts of profit: “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” (1 Jn 2:16). The profits from the world are the cisterns they squeeze for satisfaction; these profits bewitch the hearts of those that have them and those that lack them; they fly after them with the pains and labour



with which the ravenous bird goes after its prey: "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Prov 23:5). The strength of men's desires and the cream of their affections are spent on them; their happiness depends on its smiles, their misery on its frowns; if gone, their god is gone. Hence "the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity" (Hab 2:13), like a poor fool running to catch a shadow. They have hard labour in how to get them and to keep them but, hardest of all, how to squeeze satisfaction out of them; they labour in the very fire.

They labour also in things that profit unlawfully. The soul is empty; lusts do not guide aright; conscience must be stretched now and then to satisfy lusts; and the man will leap over the hedge, though the serpent will bite him: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Tim 6:9,10). Like a blind mole, the carnal man's constant labour is in the earth, and he never opens his eyes till he is dying. He has his load of thick clay on his back (Hab 2:6), the result of labouring in the fire. There is thus a labouring and heavy-laden party. Others take the world in their hand as a staff; they tread on it as the dirt and get it as a burden on their back. And guilt – many times contracted in getting it, whether by oppression, cheating, or neglecting the soul for it – is like a sore back, under the load, that makes them ready to throw it away in despair, but they do not know how to exist without it.

2. They labour in lusts of pleasure; they go about as the bee, extracting sweetness out of created things for their own satisfaction. Profits and pleasures usually go together; they are the world's two great baits, toward which all natural men are constantly leaping till they are caught by the hook and flung out into the fire of wrath: "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell" (Prov 9:17,18). Pleasure is a necessary ingredient in happiness, and man cannot but seek it; hence God proposes it to men in Himself, who is the fountain of all sweetness: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence there is fullness of joy, at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps 16:11).

But blind man makes enjoyment of created things his idol, and puts it in the place of God; for they are "lovers of pleasures [in this sense] more than lovers of God" (2 Tim 3:4). It is no fault to seek profit; for we are to have "respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Heb 11:26). Nor is it a fault to seek what may be pleasant to the soul, for we may wish our souls to be "satisfied as with marrow and fatness" (Ps 63:5). But the natural man's misery

and sin is that he forsakes God and fastens on the breasts of created things for what he wants.

Now, there are two breasts of the created things which men may suck:

(1.) Lawful comforts. Natural men fall on these, not the breasts of God's consolations, and labour in vain to squeeze out happiness and satisfaction, with the greatest eagerness. They are lawful in themselves, but they often press so hard that they draw out blood instead of milk. They are like men working at a flinty rock to bring out water, but instead fire flashes in their face.

(2.) Unlawful comforts. "Stolen waters are sweet" (Prov 9:17). Many seek satisfaction in things which they should not even desire, and fill themselves with what God forbids them even to taste. O the misery of Christless sinners, to whom both lawful and unlawful comforts are effectual snares for ruin. Like mad beasts, if they stay within the hedge, they tear up everything, which does not satisfy them. But they most usually break out over all the hedges, because created things can never fully answer their desires. Yet, after all, they will not come to Christ that they may have rest.

These breasts of created things have many springs – divers lusts and pleasures (Tts 3:3). These are served; men must labour in them as a servant at his master's work. I shall reduce them to these two points, mentioned in Ephesians 2:3: "the desires of the flesh and of the mind".

1. They labour for satisfaction and happiness in the pleasures of *the flesh*.

(1) In sensuality. This was the door man first went to, after he had left God. Since the world was turned upside down by that means, the soul has lain lowest and the flesh uppermost, so they are all sensual that have not the Spirit, as Jude says (v 19), and the soul is made a drudge of the body. The belly is a god, and the pleasures of the flesh are squeezed for satisfaction; all the senses are set working for it and yet can never do enough: "All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled" (Ecc 6:7). Many arts and trades are found out to bring this to perfection, though all in vain; and there is no end of these things, which are only of use to please the flesh, which, like the grave, never says it has enough.

(2) In ease, sloth and quiet – a negative kind of sensuality. The rich man said, "Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years; take thine ease" (Lk 12:19), all to please the flesh. This often costs the soul hard labour; conscience gets many a throw for liking this idol – by neglect of duties, by rejecting light, as if men's happiness consisted in quietly enjoying themselves.

2. In the desires of the *mind and its pleasures*. If these went out to right objects and were sought in a right manner, it would be well, for our true happiness consists in the soul's enjoyment of God, but in the natural man all is confusion.

(1.) There is much labour in seeking happiness in the pleasures of the intellect. This is the snare of thinking, graceless men; this was among the first doors men went to when they turned from God: "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen 3:5). There is hard labour to punish that: "I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven; this sore travail God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith" (Ecc 1:13). And what does it come to at length? To no rest, "for in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (Ecc 1:18).

Here is fulfilled: "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city" (Ecc 10:15). Whereas, if they would go to Christ, they would be in a fair way to get what they are seeking; for "this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (Jn 17:3). "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:3).

2. There is labour in pleasures of the imagination. What are the lusts of the eye, all the abundance of riches for which men labour so much? "When goods increase, they are increased that eat them; and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?" (Ecc 5:11). All they can think or say is, These are mine. What is honour and the like but a tickling of our imagination with the imagination of others about us, adding nothing to real worth? How busy the soul often is in that, but "better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: This is also vanity and vexation of spirit" (Ecc 6:9). What satisfaction is sought in imagination, sins, lust, revenge and the like! What restlessness is there! "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin" (2 Pet 2:14). How often the soul is busy imagining wealth and the like, as if, when it had tried all other means in vain, it would try to dream itself happy while awake! "My purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart," says Job (17:11).

3. The other thing in which natural men labour for rest is the "law"; compare the text (Mt 11:28) with verses 29 and 30. That labour is emphatically described: "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness" (Rom 10:3). To "go about" signifies seeking, like an academic debater, or a tormenter of someone on the rack, to establish, or to make it stand itself alone – as men that will have a stone to stand on end which is ever coming down on them again. Why all this? Because it is their own: they "have not submitted". Christ offers a righteousness; but to take it is to them submission, against which they labour, as the bullock against the yoke. They will never let it be put on till God will break the iron sinew of their neck (Is 48:4).

To confirm this, consider: (1.) All men desire to be happy, and no man can get his conscience quite silenced any more than he can get the idea of God quite erased from his mind: they “are a law unto themselves . . . their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another” (Rom 2:14,15). Peace of mind is a natural desire, which none can get rid of. Hence men cannot but seek inward peace; and though they may set themselves to murder conscience to obtain peace, they cannot totally succeed; so they must take some other way. There always were but two ways, either Christ or the law. The former they reject, therefore they follow the latter. Let us view this in three sorts of natural men:

[1.] In the profane person, who has not even a form of godliness; it is hardest to find it in them. But none is so profane but one will readily find they have some good thing or other about them, and sometimes they will compliment their consciences by refusing to satisfy their lusts, which is so much harder a labour for them, as they are under the greater power of lusts. They do not do this to make themselves miserable, but happy that their consciences may excuse them (Rom 2:15) – excusing even those that are most at the devil’s will, taken captive as hunters take their prey alive (2 Tim 2:26). This still implies a conscience labouring in the law; though lusts, being stronger, prevail for the most part.

[2.] In the formal, natural man. Some of them labour in the duties of morality, others in those of religion; they are at no small travail in the law, but it is all for nothing. Like the Pharisee (Lk 18:11) they do not take the gospel way, yet they labour in the law. Lusts remain in them in their life and vigour. It surely costs labour so far to restrain them.

[3.] In the awakened sinner. I am not for excluding those from the text, but only that it be not restricted to them: “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). These often labour so to keep the law that they are both by themselves and by others taken for saints of the first magnitude; yet it is still but labouring in the law, till converting grace will come and cut them off from the old root.

(2.) It is natural for men to labour in the law for happiness, and therefore men will not stop doing so till nature is overcome by grace. The law was Adam’s covenant; he, with his children, were to work and to win heaven by their works. Though they have lost their father’s strength, yet they want to keep their father’s trade; though their stock is small, yet they will keep trading for heaven, seeking to give God good works for good wages. See nature speaking out of the rich young ruler: “Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” (Mt 19:16). And it often happens

that they who have fewest good works lay the greatest stress on them.

(3.) This practice has been formed into principles, in the face of the sun of the gospel. Never was an error expressed in principle but it complied with some corruption of the heart; therefore it is given as a characteristic of true doctrine that it is "according to godliness" (1 Tim 6:3). No sooner was the gospel preached than Cain set up works in opposition to faith. "And the Lord had respect to Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect" (Gen 4:4,5). Paul gives the reason: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain" (Heb 11:4). When Israel were in Egypt, most of them knew nothing else. They had so curtailed the law, as all that labour in it do, that they thought they kept it all very well: "Until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom 5:13). So God gave them the law, as in Exodus 20. The law "was added because of transgressions" (Gal 3:19).

(4.) They turn the gospel into law, as unclean vessels sour the sweetest liquor that is put in them. The ceremonial law was a real gospel to the Jews, holding up blood, death, and transfer of guilt to the substitute, every day before their eyes in their sacrifices. But their very table – that is, their altar, as it is called in Malachi 1:12 – became a snare (see Rom 9:11) and they went about these things as if by them they would have made up what was lacking in observing the moral law. Thus it has been in Romanism – and, alas, among Protestants – to whom the gospel is the law; and faith, repentance and new obedience are the fulfilling of the law. But would to God that it stood in principles only; but as surely as every unrenewed man is out of Christ, so surely in these natural men, whose heads are right on this point, the very gospel is turned into law in their hearts and their practice, and their obedience, faith and repentance, such as it is, are put in place of Christ. For practice, when traced back, will show the principles from which it proceeds.

(5.) Though all would be saved, natural men are enemies to the gospel way of salvation: it is "unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor 1:23). Adam's sons must then be in love with the law; indeed, they so cleave to it that nothing but death can part them from it, even a violent death in a day of God's power (Ps 110:3): "Ye also are become dead [or deadened, killed, put to death] to the law" (Rom 7:4). As long as a soul sees how to get on without Christ, it will never come to Him; further, the godly find the remains of this principle in them to struggle against. Self-denial is the first lesson Christ gives, but they are learning it all their days. If it is thus in the green tree, what shall it be in the dry?

# The Spirit as Comforter<sup>1</sup>

## 3. Degrees of Comfort

James Buchanan

The comfort of which we have spoken – arising from our views of God’s truth, the sanctification of our nature, and the inward witness of the Spirit – may exist in various degrees, according to the greater or lesser extent of our spiritual attainments. This is intimated to us, as well as the duty of seeking for a large measure of gospel comfort, in Paul’s prayer, “The God of hope *fill* you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost”.

From the manner in which this prayer is expressed, we may learn that there is an intimate and mutual relation between the constituent elements of which the Christian’s comfort is composed. There must first be present joy and peace in believing, before we can experience a lively hope for our future prospects; as it will invariably be found that there is no real hope of eternal life *hereafter*, until we are enabled so to believe the gospel as to enjoy some measure of peace *now*. Those therefore who complain of the lack of confidence should be directed in the first instance to those simple elements of gospel truth which are fitted to give immediate relief and comfort to the sinner. And those who have experienced some small measure of peace, and have been enabled occasionally to look forward with something like hope to the future, should be encouraged to seek after larger measures of these blissful feelings, so that, “being filled with all joy and peace in believing, [they] may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost”.

This is alike their duty and their privilege. It is their duty, since God Himself requires them to “give diligence to make their calling and election sure”; and it is their privilege, for this abundant consolation and this good hope through grace are declared to be attainable, and every believer will acknowledge that they are most desirable. And He who is revealed as “the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort,” is willing to give the Spirit to them that ask Him; and the Spirit is willing to impart His consolations, for He is “the good Spirit”, “the Spirit of grace”, who is grieved when His consolations are slighted and is ever ready “to bind up the broken-hearted . . . to comfort all that mourn”.

But while believers are encouraged by these considerations to expect and seek for a larger measure of joy and peace and hope than they have yet ex-

<sup>1</sup>A final extract from a chapter entitled, “The Work of the Spirit as the Comforter”, in Buchanan’s book, *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*. Last month’s article dealt with the method of comforting.

perienced, they must ever remember that these blessings are to be sought for in the way of duty and in the use of the ordinary means of grace. It is, first, by faith, by believing the testimony of God in the gospel; and, second, by "diligence in duty", giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure; and, third, by prayer for ourselves and for others – it is by these and similar means that we may expect to obtain what Paul prayed for on behalf of his converts: "The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing; that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost".

Now, taking a calm and comprehensive review of all that has been said on the work of the Holy Spirit, both in the conversion of sinners and in the edification of His people, how appropriate to the case of every reader, whatever his character, are these prayers of David: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit." "Teach me to do Thy will; for Thou art my God: Thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness."

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## The Law's Weakness, God's Power<sup>1</sup>

*W S Plumer*

Romans 8:3,4. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

**V**erse 3. Here *the law* no doubt means the moral law. It was impotent for justification and for sanctification also. It condemned; it could not justify. It gave the knowledge of sin but not its cure. It is said to have been weak, lacking strength and power. This was no inherent fault of the law; in fact it worked wrath because of its very perfection, which brought a knowledge of the heinous nature of sin, revealed its power, and unmistakably threatened righteous and awful retribution on the transgressor. Nor could it give any strength to the believer or the unbeliever to resist the seductions of fallen human nature. To each and all of these ends it was impotent.

In this sad state, the Lord undertook for sinners and sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. God's own Son was He who counted it not robbery to be equal with God. He was with God and He was God. The likeness of sinful flesh is not sinful flesh, but the likeness of that flesh which was sinful, elsewhere expressed by that phrase, "in the likeness of men" (Phil 2:7). He

<sup>1</sup>Taken from Plumer's *Commentary on Romans*, with editing.

was in all things made “like unto His brethren” (Heb 2:16-18), having a true body and a reasonable soul. But He was not born in sin, nor did He ever offend against God, but was “holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners” (Heb 7:26). His Father, His friends, His judge, His betrayer all pronounced Him faultless.

It is said that God sent His Son *for sin*. From Augustine down, many have explained these words as meaning a sin-offering. So Melancthon, Calvin and many others. In Hebrews 10:6 this is undoubtedly the meaning. The margin in this place has “a sacrifice for sin”. But some contend that Paul is still speaking of sanctification, not of justification. Nor can it be denied that in many parts of Scripture, the sanctification of believers is stated in close connection with the sacrifice and sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> And by a figure of speech often only one thing in salvation is named, when the whole is intended to be included.

And Fraser<sup>3</sup> is quite confident that, in this verse, Paul is still showing how men must be sanctified. He says, “The general point is clear, that the Scripture connects making men free from the dominion of sin with Christ’s sufferings and sacrifice”. He also cites Galatians 3:13,14 in confirmation of the truth that the Spirit is received through the faith which lays hold of the redemption of Christ. We may and we must distinguish, but we may never separate, between justification and sanctification; and either of these words, or their synonyms, may be chosen to represent to us all the benefits obtained by believers in Christ Jesus.

The prominent idea in *condemned* is that of sentencing to death, or of putting to death in execution of a sentence. The doubt among interpreters is whether Paul is speaking of justification or sanctification, of the removal of the guilt of sin or of the destruction of its power. On this point they are much divided. Many admit that in this verse sin is personified. If it is, we know how it fared in the sacrifice of Calvary. It was punished, condemned and overcome. By that one offering it was made certain that sin should be put down or, as Calvin says, “cast down from its power, so that it does not now hold us subject to itself”. The chains of its guilt are knocked off; the sceptre of its power is broken; it is no longer lord over anyone who is in Christ Jesus.

The more these verses are considered, the more it looks as if Paul was not making a fine distinction between the guilt and the power of sin, but was speaking of its utter destruction in every sense; so that it shall neither condemn those who are in Christ or hold them in bondage. They are not condemned in any sense but sin is condemned in every sense. The sentence has

<sup>2</sup>For example Jn 17:19, Eph 5:25,26, Tts 2:14, 1 Pet 1:18,19.

<sup>3</sup>James Fraser of Alness, who wrote *A Treatise on Sanctification*.



gone forth; the death on Calvary was decisive, and the application of redemption by the Spirit is giving the victory more and more, till there shall be left neither spot nor wrinkle in any who are in Christ. In other words, complete deliverance from sin itself and from all its effects seems to be spoken of in these verses, by a figure of speech, a part being often put for the whole.

This mode of explanation seems to have been in the mind of Evans: "By the appearance of Christ, sin was *condemned*; that is, God did therein more than ever manifest His hatred of sin; and not only so but, for all that are Christ's, both the damning and the domineering power of sin is broken and taken out of the way. He that is *condemned* can neither *accuse* nor *rule*; his testimony is null and his authority null. Thus by Christ is sin condemned, though it live and remain, its life in the saints is still but that of a condemned malefactor. It was by the condemning of sin that death was disarmed, and the devil, who had the power of death, destroyed. The condemning of sin saved the sinner from condemnation." This mode of explanation, taking a part for the whole and personifying sin, allows us to see how, by the union of the legal and moral effects of Christ's death, believers have full salvation.

It is said that God condemned sin *in the flesh*. Two explanations are offered, but it is best to unite the two and say that God condemned sin in human nature, of which Christ is a partaker. All this was done.

**Verse 4.** The righteousness of the law is the righteousness which the law demands; by living union with Jesus Christ, sinners receive His perfect active and passive obedience to the law in their stead as their justifying righteousness. The law demands no more. This robe has no rent, and so the righteousness of the law is perfectly fulfilled in their justification. Some contend that this is all. But if the view taken of verse 3 is correct, we may in the same way add that this verse embraces the sanctification of believers; and that the righteousness of the law through Jesus Christ and by His Spirit is fulfilled in them just so far and so fast as their sanctification progresses. The great objection urged to this view is that the law calls for perfect conformity to its demands, and that the best of mere men freely confess they come far short of perfection.

In answer it may be said: (1.) Whatever may be the imperfection of good men in this life, it shall not be so always. At last they shall have in their hearts and characters all that holiness which the law requires. If the gospel should fail in producing this effect, it would fail utterly in bringing glory to God or good to men. (2.) Although the holiness of a believer is not in degree what the law requires, yet to a pleasing extent it is, in kind, much what the commandments call for.

[1.] This obedience is personal. [2.] It is to the law as coming from God,

having His authority and expressing His will. [3.] It is from the heart. [4.] It flows from love to God. [5.] It flows from godly fear. [6.] It springs from true and lively faith. [7.] It is humble and accompanied by a just and deep sense of sin. [8.] It is universal, extending without partiality to all the commands of God. [9.] It is habitual and not by fits and starts. [10.] It is according to the gospel, drawing its strongest motives from the love of God manifested in the cross of Christ. Colquhoun<sup>4</sup> says, “True holiness is spiritual and sincere obedience to the law as a *rule of life*, in the hand of the blessed Mediator, and is commonly styled evangelical holiness or true godliness”.

If this obedience was as perfect as it is sincere, as spotless as it is accepted and rewarded by God, without defect as soon it shall be, it would in every respect be the very righteousness of the law – that is, the very holiness of the spirits of just men made perfect. Even now regenerate men walk not *after the flesh*. They are often carnal to an extent that is very mortifying to themselves, but the tenor of their lives and the aim of their hearts even now are towards holiness, not sin; after the Spirit, not after the flesh. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. A professed reliance on the merits of Christ, not followed by conformity to the preceptive will of God, is utterly vain and unprofitable.

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## The Nazarite<sup>1</sup>

*Henry Law*

Numbers 6:21. *This is the law of the Nazarite.*

**H**ere a new ordinance appears. It seems a special flower set by God’s hand within the garden of the Jewish law. Therefore let special fragrance now be sought by faith, for surely special fragrance may be found.

Israel’s whole race was severed from the world. But the wide circumference was girdle to a narrower circle. Where all were separate, the Nazarites were specially separated. These stood apart, as a special dedication to the Lord. Amid surrounding columns they rose the highest pyramids. Among God’s servants they wore distinguished livery. Where all were nationally holy, they showed the holiest badge.

They bound themselves by voluntary vows. Some mighty motive must have urged their hearts. But it is not revealed. Conjecture may suppose, but cannot be assured. The vow might be the act of men weighed down by consciousness of sin – appalled by sight of inborn evil, or penitent through grievous falls. It might be gratitude for signal mercies; it might be zeal to

<sup>4</sup>John Colquhoun of Leith.

<sup>1</sup>Taken with editing from Law’s *Christ Is All: Numbers and Deuteronomy*.

arouse others to think more of God. But the real cause is veiled. This only is declared: that Nazarites, obeying a strong impulse, gave themselves specially to God.

My soul, the Nazarite here speaks with warning voice to you. Your days, are they days of devoted service? Your public walk, is it resplendent with godliness? Are all observers led to mark that you are wholly God's? But surely, above all, you should be pre-eminently His.

Believer, think of His dealings with you – His tender love and smiles of never-failing care. Think of your Jesus, His cross, His blood, His wounds, His agonies. Think of the mercy seat, the interceding prayer, the coming glory, the eternity of bliss. Think of hell merited, and heaven your free-grace home. Surely each morning should see you self-bound by stricter vow and dedicated to greater piety.

The Nazarite's motives are unknown. But Nazarite-rules are rigidly prescribed. They are threefold. Let them now be viewed.

*1. No juice of grape, no produce of the vine, from kernel unto husk, may touch the consecrated lips.* Not only is the intoxicating cup banished far, but all which grows on the intoxicating tree. Enticement's total troop, from first to last, must be expelled. Like Achan and his little ones – all must die (Num 6:3,4).

Believer, this principle is broad and deep. You openly avow that you are not your own. Your body, spirit, mind and soul are purchased by redeeming blood. They are all bound a living sacrifice to the one altar – Christ. Hence you must keep them pure, clean, bright, strong, vigorous for His work. They should stand as servants, with loins girt, ready at all times to discharge His will.

Then untiringly flee whatever, like the juice of grape, may tend to weaken firm energy, or to stir up the sleeping brood of sensual and ungodly lusts. Alas, what evil lingers still in every saintly heart! A sudden spark may cause a fearful blaze. Keep far from the beguiling cup.

Touch not the kernel or the husk. Flee not strong potions only, but all that may insidiously corrupt the taste. More than gross vice is branded here. Evils may enter in the smallest form. At first they may seem harmless, as the gentle dove. Avoid them. They are the weed's first seed. Rapidly they grow. Fatally they spread. Mightily they strengthen. Soon they pervade the enervated soul.

*2. No razor approaches the Nazarite's hair.* His flowing locks openly announce his separate state. His head pre-eminently bears the signal of his service. The dedication must not be a secret act, known only to his conscience and the Lord. The front must witness that the man is God's (Num 6:5).

Believer, here is another lesson for your life. Religion is not for the closet

or the knees alone. It is not a lily, growing only in the shade. It is to be the one attire in which you move abroad – the holy crown which sparkles on your brow. It must be conspicuous, as locks hanging from the head. It is not to be cut short or hidden. It must arrest attention. Like the flag, it must proclaim the country to which the ship belongs.

Christian meekness and the Spirit's wisdom never conceal one's faith. Truth scorns all pitiful reserve. Bold honesty rejects such timid shame. Pure religion shines as the sun, without one cloud. Thus others profit by its rays. Thus, like a magnet, it draws souls to God.

3. *He must avoid all contact with the dead.* He must not close the eyes of his expiring friends or catch their parting breath or bear their corpses to the grave. Among the living he must live. Where life is absent, he must be absent too (Num 6:6,7).

Wherefore is death to be thus shunned? Reasons are obvious. It is the penalty of sin – the sign of God's most righteous wrath. It is a proof of innocence destroyed, of evil touched, of vengeance merited. It is abomination's colleague. Therefore it is an emblem of what holy men should holily abhor. Life too is God's inseparable essence. He cannot die. Therefore to intermix with death denotes a separation from their God.

Here is again a rule for Christian walk. He who is Christ's must flee the touch of everything allied to sin. The holy garments may not be defiled. The blood-washed feet must shun polluted paths. The vessels for the Master's use may have no stain. The Spirit's temple must be pure. Corruption in no form may soil it.

Believer, rigidly apply this maxim. It drives you from the contagion of ungodly scenes. How many crowds are nothing but a place crowded with dead bodies! The bodies breathe, but hold no breathing soul. The words, the works, are strong-smelling as an open grave. Arise; depart. The living dwell not amid tombs. The atmosphere pollutes. Depart; touch not the dead.

How many books are full of death! They may appear fascinating. But they only look good, as corpses decked with flowers. Their taint destroys. Their chilly touch corrupts.

This rule brands many a pulpit as a plague-spot. A lifeless teacher often guides in paths of death. No spark from heaven has vivified his soul. What then but putrefaction issues from his lips? On earth there is not a more pitiable sight than death in a preacher's form, digging the grave of souls.

Here too we see the misery of those who by dead works expect to buy soul-life. All works are dead which do not grow on the stem of faith. Such are but rotten berries. They do not live to God. How can they purchase life?

But no precautionary care can always keep men from the dying scene.

Death has an unrestricted range. It moves among the busy haunts. Its icy hand is everywhere. In every spot it seizes victims. Thus the most watchful Nazarite might most unwillingly stand by the dead.

If so, corruption has been by his side; pollution has polluted him; his vow is broken. Therefore atonement must be made. The ordinance now commands him, as guilty, to seek God. He is required to place a whole burnt offering on the blazing altar. He must then add a sacrifice for sin. Moreover, as a debtor, he must buy remission by a trespass offering. Thus the chief types, which shadowed out Christ's blood, must all be brought.

This is not all. The former period as a Nazarite is cancelled. The previous days are counted as lost time. He must cut short the locks which hitherto had proved his separate state. He must commence afresh his dedicated walk (Num 6:9-12).

Hark! What a voice cries here: Beware of sudden evil. Satan is a lurking foe. He shoots his darts from hidden ambushes. When all seems safe, a wound is given. There is a pitfall in the firmest paths. Where least suspected, nets are spread. David arose, unconscious of the slippery ground. A few brief moments rolled him in the mire. But there is hope for suddenly-contracted guilt. This type attests this blessed truth. It bids the failing Nazarite to recover his lost state by offerings of blood. Reader, at all times there is open access to a forgiving God. There is a Saviour waiting to obliterate. Come, plead His merits: present His expiating death. There is no stain which He removes not.

The type moreover shows that pardon found must be the starting-post of new devotedness. The washed feet ascend anew the holy hill. The cleansed hands fight with more vigour. The Nazarite, passing the appointed gate, enters again upon his sacred course.

These reconciling rites were ordered, if the offence were sudden, unintended and abhorred. But what if deliberate transgression be indulged? The ordinance is silent here and thus warns solemnly. Where shall he turn who turns presumptuously from God? Where is his hope who boldly touches sin? Reader, never burst the bounds of conscience. Grieve not the Spirit's gentle mind. Drive not the holy inmate from your breast. Some who ran well have wantonly cast off the gracious yoke. The after-course has been fall upon fall, without a check or turn.

The Nazarite continued only for a fixed time. The days expired. The vow was then discharged. The badge of consecration was laid down.

But grand solemnities attested the completion of this hallowed state. The Nazarite enters the tabernacle's gate. He stands beside the sacrificing altar. He brings each victim, which symbolises sin's desert. No rite is absent which

confesses the need of remission and trust in reconciling blood. A lamb, as a burnt offering, dies. A lamb again, as a sin offering, is wholly consumed. A perfect ram, as a peace offering, solicits peace. Meat offerings in every form are piled. Drink offerings in abundance flow. Voluntary gifts profusely follow. All hair is next shorn off. The fire receives it. It ascends in the ascending flame of the peace offering (Num 6:13-21).

But wherefore is there this expenditure of blood? What is the purpose of this multitude of rites? They all seek expiation. They all look onward to the cross, and thus they graphically show that the holiest deeds of holiest men can only find acceptance through the dying Jesus. For surely this full train of pardon-suing sacrifice distinctly states that the Nazarite's devoted course still needed to be cleansed.

Believer, is this not the conscious feeling of your humbled soul? You are the Lord's. You strive to serve Him wholly, unreservedly for ever. You would bring to Him your every moment, faculty and power. You would present the offering of your thoughts, your words, your works. But what failures! You would do good; evil is present. In public acts, what inconsistency! In private duties, what outbreakings of corruption! In the closet, evil thoughts assail. On the knees, the tempter haunts. Some base imagination stains ascending praise. Your self-denial is too often self-indulgence. The badge of Nazarite too often hides a worldling's heart.

What then shall be done? Behold the cross. There is your only help. Thence only is your peace. Only in that most precious blood can you obliterate your guilt. Come, wash therein your every duty, service, prayer, thanksgiving. Cleanse there the stains of your most holy hours. Live under vows as a strict Nazarite. But wrestle for forgiveness as a sad short-comer.

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## Obituary

### Rev Donald Macdonald

Mr Macdonald was born on 23 February 1952 to godly parents who lived in Sutherland. At his birth, both he and his mother were not expected to live, but as he later said, "'To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose'. In the mercy of God our lives were spared for a purpose." His father was said to be well read in theology, especially the works of John Owen, and was a missionary of the Church, initially in Scourie and Kinlochbervie and later in Assynt. Mr Macdonald was thus brought up not only in a homely and hard-working crofting community, but also under gospel admonitions in church and home.

After leaving school he entered upon employment as a fisherman. On one occasion the boat on which Mr Macdonald was working had called at Stornoway. The decision was made to set out to sea on a Sabbath, placing him in the position of having to join their Sabbath-breaking activities or to leave the boat immediately. It seems that he did not hesitate as to his duty, so that he left the boat and made his way to the Stornoway Free Presbyterian Manse, where the Sabbath could be kept in congenial surrounds.

After a while he entered upon employment as a lighthouse keeper on the rugged coasts of western Scotland, which necessitated a more permanent move away from the family home. It is at this stage in life that so many young people in the Church take a fatal step for eternity in forsaking the means of grace, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation. Mr Macdonald was not permitted to take this step and continued the habit of attending the services of the house of God. In the absence of the Free Presbyterian Church he attended the Kilchoan Free Church under the ministry of Rev John Nicholls, while working on Ardnamurchan lighthouse.

He described the first step in the life of grace as coming while alone reading the words of Christ in the Gospel of Luke 2:49, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" when he obtained a sight of the glory of Christ as the incarnate Redeemer. The impression he gave in describing this experience was that it was a case of, "I am sought of them that asked not for Me; I am found of them that sought Me not: I said, Behold Me, behold Me, unto a nation that was not called by My name" (Is 65:1). It is likely, however, that he had come under conviction of sin during the time of his residence in Ardnamurchan. At home in Stoer and Lochinver he had the privilege of being under the ministry of Rev Alexander Macaskill, and in October 1976 he was led to take the step of making a public profession of Christ for the first time.

After a spell working for the Blythswood Tract Society in Lochcarron, he was appointed as a missionary of the Church and assisted Rev Duncan MacLean in the South Harris congregation. He was elected to the eldership in the congregation and remained there for 17 years, diligently serving in that office. In those early days this entailed his supplying many outstations and taking numerous services each week, including frequent supply of the North Harris congregation when it was vacant.

He was then directed by the Outer Isles Presbytery to serve as missionary in the North Uist congregation, which had become vacant on the death of their minister, Rev Alex Morrison, and which was also without a resident elder. By now married and with a family, he soon settled in his new field of labour, which was ground well-tilled and much watered with prayer by his

predecessor. He applied himself to his work with enthusiasm and was well regarded and received by the people in his labours among them in preaching and visiting. He established a Sabbath School, which at one stage seemed to flourish, though he was disappointed with the eventual outcome, when so many of the children who passed through it ceased to attend the means of grace. Speaking in connection with this experience afterwards, he noted that, ordinarily, unless what is given in the pulpit or Sabbath school is backed up by instruction in the home, the preacher “is fighting a losing battle”.

The congregation grew in their appreciation of his labours among them, so much so that they took the unusual step of petitioning their Presbytery to set him over them as their minister. This was done without his involvement. However, when it became known to him, he viewed it as an open door set before him whereby his conviction that he was called to the ministry would now be fulfilled. Previous steps in that direction had not been successful due to various circumstances. The petition was accepted by the Presbytery and then in due course by the Synod. A divinity studies course, briefer than normal, was prescribed, upon completion of which he was ordained to the ministry and inducted to the North Uist congregation on Monday, 14 February 2005.

There he laboured in the diligent discharge of his duties as a minister of the gospel until, after ten or so years, the time came that he began to feel his work in North Uist was coming to an end. At this period an approach was received from the Staffin congregation in the Isle of Skye expressing their desire to have him settled over them as their pastor. He felt clearly guided to encourage this call, though shortly after accepting it he became seriously ill. He remained persuaded that his path of duty was to proceed with the move to Staffin, “assuredly gathering that the Lord had called him for to preach the gospel unto them” (Acts 16:10). He was inducted to his new charge towards the end of 2017. Here he laboured in face of increasing illness with commendable fortitude and characteristic humility. He was frequent in his pastoral visitations, and even when his illness weakened him greatly, he persevered to make visits to some who were unwell in his congregation. Despite his serious illness he seemed to enjoy a time of spiritual contentment in Staffin, and enjoyed a close bond with his congregation, who greatly appreciated his labours among them.

He was a keen student of the Word and theological works, and was much in his study. Many noted and commented on how much his preaching seemed to flourish since his illness began, with renewed vigour and life complementing his well-prepared matter. His preaching and conversation revealed that he had a clear grasp of the way of salvation by free grace alone through the



merits of Christ, and that he understood well that creature merit had no place in the plan of salvation but that through Christ's finished work "all things are now ready". It was a remarkable testimony to his faithfulness to his charge that until a few weeks towards the end of his life, he missed only one or two Sabbaths during this period of ill-health. Even when his body was beginning to give way under the strain, he persevered, requiring to be assisted in and out of the pulpit to preach his last sermons to his beloved Staffin congregation, as a dying man to dying sinners. He passed away on 31 October 2019, resting on the same foundation to which he was first led – the Person and work of the divine Redeemer.

His labours across the wider Church were valued and he is missed at communion seasons, at which he was most willing to assist. Mr Macdonald also served on a number on Synod Committees, including as Convener of the Leverburgh Care Home Committee, Convener of the Welfare of Youth Committee, and a member of the Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee. He was Moderator of Synod once, in 2014.

To his mourning widow, children and brother we extend our sympathy, feeling also the loss to the cause of Christ among us at the removal of another labourer in the harvest. The "fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever?"

(Rev) I D MacDonald

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## Famous Books and their Authors<sup>1</sup>

### 4. John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*

*Rev Donald Beaton*

It would betray an inexcusable lack of knowledge of the true position of things to make no reference to any of the writings of John Bunyan in this series. In this article it is intended to prevent such an omission by speaking of *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. It has by no means obtained such a worldwide reputation as Bunyan's immortal allegory, *The Pilgrim's Progress*; nevertheless in it one of the finest writers in our literature relates in graphic and eloquent language the long and, at times, terrible experiences of a soul fleeing from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City.

In the introduction to the work, he warns against all expectation of fine literary finish in language characteristic enough. "I could also have stepped," he says, "into a style much higher than this in which I have here discoursed, and could have adorned all things more than here I have seemed to do; but

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from the December 1902 issue of this *Magazine*. This is the last article in the series. Two editions of this book are available from the F P Bookroom.

I dare not. God did not play in convincing of me; the devil did not play in tempting me; neither did I play when I sank as it were into a bottomless pit, when the pangs of hell caught hold on me; wherefore, I may not play in my relating of them, but be plain and simple, and lay down the thing as it was.” This is Bunyan’s own estimate of *Grace Abounding*, but it may be no exaggeration to say that no one with any sense of the power of language can have any other feeling than that it is written in a graphic style and that, while it may be lacking in the beautiful literary grace and masterly analysis of Christian experience which give such charm to *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, it has passages which can equal any in the great allegory.

It is the story of Bunyan awakening to some sense of the great realities of eternity, and he was to understand that these matters were certainly not empty shadows. He struggled on if by any means he might get into the Celestial City, and this book is the narrative of these struggles. “The Philistines understand me not,” he says. “It is something of a relation of the work of God upon my soul, even from the very first, till now; wherein you may perceive my castings down and risings up, for He wounded, and His hands made whole. It is written, ‘The father to the children shall make known’ the truth of God. Yea, it was for this reason I lay so long at Sinai, to see the fire and the cloud and the darkness that I might fear the Lord all the days of my life upon the earth, and tell of His wondrous works to my children.” The work was written for the benefit of those who acknowledged Him as their spiritual father.

The life story of the author is known to many. It is a life of strange vicissitudes and wonderful providences. He first saw the light at Elstow, in the month of November 1628. His father’s home, he tells us, was of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all the families in the land; so he could make no boast of a high-born state according to the flesh; nevertheless, in considering all things, he expresses gratitude to God that He brought him to partake of the grace and life that is in Christ by the gospel. In old documents, his father is described as a brazier, which is practically equivalent to our blacksmith. His mother died before he reached the age of 16 and, after his father married again, he left home. He enlisted in the Parliamentary army and, though under arms for only a few months, he had some very narrow escapes. After a short experience of soldiering he returned to Elstow, where he laboured at his father’s trade.

The first serious thoughts about eternity were awakened by reading two books belonging to his wife: Dent’s *Plain Man’s Pathway to Heaven* and Bayly’s *Practice of Piety*. He now set about reforming himself so that he might be more acceptable in the sight of God. He attended church regularly, adoring with great devotion the priest, the clerk and the vestments. He tells

us that, under the spell of this delusion, he could have lain down at the clergymen's feet and been trampled upon by them, so much was he bewitched by their name, garb and work. But the thought that he was a sinner had not as yet crossed his mind. The day, however, that was to him the beginning of days was near at hand.

On the Sabbath, the minister preached a sermon on the duty of observing the Lord's Day and keeping it holy. After hearing the sermon Bunyan, according to his usual custom, proceeded to Elstow Green to have a game of cat. He was just beginning the game when, with all the suddenness of a flash of lightning, he heard a voice, as it were, speaking to his soul. "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" was the startling question. Bunyan stood awed before the solemn question, and felt that it demanded an answer. Around him were his companions, utterly oblivious of the mighty problems that had all of a sudden presented themselves to his mind. They played their game with the lightheartedness of those who had never faced these momentous truths that were stirring the soul of John Bunyan to its depths. He felt as if the heavens had opened, and the angry face of Jesus was all he could see. There came immediately after this a temptation that tried him severely: Christ would not pardon him his transgressions as he had sinned so greatly and grievously against Him.

He now determined to allow himself to drift with the stream, as there appeared no more hope for him. The recollection of these things in after years drew from him the grateful and touching acknowledgment to the God who showed him mercy: "The good Lord, whose mercy is unsearchable, forgive me my transgressions". It was after he had gone after sin with great greediness of mind that there occurred the well-known incident of his swearing and the rebuke administered to him by a woman whom he describes as a wicked and ungodly wretch.

Here is his own account of the matter: "One day, as I was standing at a neighbour's shop window and there cursing and swearing and playing the madman, after my wonted manner, there sat within, the woman of the house, who heard me; who, though she was a very loose and ungodly wretch, yet protested that I swore and cursed at that most fearful rate, that she was made to tremble to hear me, and told me further that I was the ungodliest fellow for swearing that ever she heard in all her life; and that I, by thus doing, was able to spoil all the youth in the whole town if they came but in my company". "By this reproof," he says, "I was put to secret shame, and that too, as I thought, before the God of heaven." This rebuke, so sharply administered and coming from such an unexpected quarter, cured him effectually of the vice of swearing.

He now fell in with a man who made a profession of religion, and being influenced by him, he took to reading his Bible, especially the historical parts, for as yet he could not understand the writings of Paul and the other Scriptures, being still ignorant of the corruptions of his nature. There was now a great reformation in his life, and his neighbours took him to be a very godly man. This pleased him immensely for, as he tells us, he was proud of his godliness. He now left off dancing and other practices, and by this time he had become such a slave to his own self-righteousness that he thought no man in England could please God better than he.

Some time after this, Bunyan was called to Bedford to work at his calling and, in passing through the streets, he came across three or four poor women sitting at a door and conversing on their experiences. "I drew near," he says, "to hear what they said, for I was now a brisk talker myself in the matters of religion. But I may say I heard but I understood not, for they were far above me, out of my reach. Their talk was about a new birth, the work of God on their hearts, also how they were convinced of their miserable state by nature." This conversation, though very disconcerting to his self-righteous ideas, had a most beneficial effect. He could not get rid of their words and he was irresistibly drawn to frequent their company every opportunity he could get. The Holy Spirit in this mysterious way was carrying on His gracious work, and Bunyan leaves it as his testimony that at this time it was as difficult to take his mind from heaven to earth as it afterwards was to get it again from earth to heaven.

A great questioning now arose in his soul as to whether he had faith or not. Without faith he knew he would perish, and so pressing had the matter become to him that he determined to put an end to his questioning by attempting to work a miracle. Fortunately, however, he was kept back from this temptation. About this time, the state and happiness of the women whose conversation had been so beneficial to him were presented to him in a kind of vision.

He saw them set on the sunny side of some high mountain, refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while he was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with the frost, snow and dark clouds. Between him and them, there was a wall and, through this wall, his soul greatly desired to pass, for he concluded that, if he could obtain his desire, he would be in the very midst of them and there be comforted with their Sun. He searched the wall diligently for an opening but was unsuccessful for a time, but at last he saw a narrow gap. He attempted to get through but it was too narrow. After repeated attempts he managed to get his head through and, after a struggle, his whole body. "Then was I exceeding glad", he says, "and

went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted by the light and the heat of their Sun.”

The interpretation of this beautiful and striking vision, as given by Bunyan himself, is as follows: “The Mountain signifies the Church of the living God; the Sun, the comfortable shining of His merciful face on them that were therein; the Wall was the Word of God, that made a separation between the Christians and the world; the Gap in the Wall was the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father. But forasmuch as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow that I could not, but with great difficulty, enter in thereat, it showed me that none could enter into life but those who were in downright earnest and unless also they left this wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin.”

The question of being elected to eternal life now agitated his distressed soul. The words, “It is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that showeth mercy,” ever came up before the mind of this earnest seeker in every attempt he made to take a forward step. “Neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth,” Satan kept repeating to him, until at last Bunyan almost sank in despair. While in this condition of mind, a certain passage in the Apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus “fell with weight upon his spirit”: “Look at the generations of old and see; did ever any trust in God and were confounded?” He searched the Scripture diligently for this passage, but could not find it. At length he came across it in the Apocrypha. This at first somewhat daunted him; but he blessed God that though it was not in the canonical books, yet inasmuch as it contains the sum and substance of many of the promises, he considered it his duty to take comfort from it.

Some reference must now be made to what may be called the greatest temptation which harassed his soul, and to the description of which he has devoted so many pages of *Grace Abounding*. There came a time in his life when his love to Christ was so great that he speaks of it as hot as fire; but the great Tempter, ill at ease at the progress Bunyan was making, came to him saying, “Sell Christ! Sell Christ!” He was troubled with this temptation for about a year, and it followed him so persistently that he was not rid of it for a day, nor even an hour for many days together, unless when he was asleep. He could neither eat his food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, or cast his eye on anything, but he would be met with the temptation, “Sell Christ for this, or sell Christ for that; sell Him, sell Him”. And under this stress of deep emotion, all his body in motion, he would cry out, “I will not, I will not, I will not; no, not for thousands, thousands, thousands of worlds!”

At last the awful moment came when in desperation he cried out, “Let Him go if He will”. “Now was the battle won,” is his own melancholy com-

ment, “and down I fell, as a bird that is shot from the top of a tree, into great guilt and fearful despair. Thus, getting out of my bed, I went moping into the field, but, God knows, with as heavy a heart as mortal man, I think, could bear; where, for the space of two hours, I was like a man bereft of life, and as now past all recovery and bound over to eternal punishment.” The case of Esau was for ever coming up before his mind – the repentance that had been sought with tears but had not been obtained. He thought of Manasseh, of David and of Peter; they had committed great sins, but none of them were like him: he had parted with Jesus, he had sold his Saviour. He prayed earnestly, but at every prayer Esau rose up before him to ban, as it were, his earnest pleading.

At last, through certain passages of Scripture coming to his mind, he began to think that his sin was not unpardonable after all, and he prayed as a soul seeing a faint glimmer of light in the awful gloom. This was his prayer: “O Lord, I beseech Thee, show me that Thou hast loved me with an everlasting love”. He had no sooner said this than the words came with sweetness: “I have loved thee with an everlasting love”. Though the Tempter did not leave him, he drew comfort from the message he had received, as he mused on the gracious promise: “I loved thee whilst thou wast committing this sin; I loved thee before; I love thee still; and I will love thee for ever”. This was by no means the end of the dreadful struggle, but he had a comfortable outgate at last, as the old divines would put it. It is this wrestling with the principalities and powers, in severe and protracted conflict, that makes *Grace Abounding* such a treasure to other pilgrims passing on to the Celestial City.

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## Jehovah our Righteousness<sup>1</sup>

*W K Tweedie*

Jeremiah 23:6. *The Lord our Righteousness.*

**T**o this name of the Lord, faith rejoices to cling as the ivy clings to the wall, or the vine tree to the prop which sustains it. Wherewith shall we appear before God? is the question which the soul begins to ask as soon as the Spirit makes it alive to eternal realities. And in agitating that question, it finds no solid resting place until it can present something perfect to the eye of the Judge.

But where shall that be found? The earth says, It is not in me; the deep proclaims, It is not in me. It cannot be gotten for silver, nor purchased for gold. But when all else fails, or when “miserable comforters are ye all” is

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Tweedie’s volume, *Glad Tidings of the Gospel of Peace.*

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found written on all that is mortal, The Lord Our Righteousness is revealed; and to Him faith clings, as those who are drowning cling to the cable which is thrown to save them. We are made the righteousness of God in Him, while He is made sin for us. And by that blessed exchange, the sinner is restored to the favour of God. For justification, he is complete in Christ – he is accepted in the Beloved and proceeds in the path of personal holiness, to prepare to be presented to God without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

But why are we debarred from pleading our own righteousness? Because it is polluted. And why are we invited to make mention of Christ's righteousness, even of it only? Because only it is perfect and complete. God cannot refuse to justify us through it, because it is His own; and therefore, clothed in that, the believer stands in the presence of the Heart-searcher, rejoicing in Christ Jesus and praising God for a complete salvation.

Is it the case then, O my soul, that you can plead the righteousness of Christ? Is that the rock of your salvation, the foundation of your hope, in the prospect of meeting God? Then the Spirit, the glorifier of Jesus, is your Teacher, and your language may humbly be, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again". He "died for our sins" "and was raised again for our justification".

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## Book Review

*Haggai, A Time to Build*, by George Hutcheson, published by Reformation Press in their Scottish Heritage series, paperback, 67 pages, £5.70, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

George Hutcheson (1626-74) was a noted minister of Covenanting times, in both Ayrshire and Edinburgh. This slim book is a section of a commentary he wrote on the Minor Prophets (Hosea to Malachi). His commentary on the Gospel of John was republished, by the Banner of Truth Trust, in 1972. Both these works were originally contributions to a series of popular expositions of Scripture, which had David Dickson as the driving force. Among them was Alexander Nisbet on Ecclesiastes, the last chapter of which was reprinted by Reformation Press as *Preparing for Eternity* (reviewed in the December 2019 issue of this *Magazine*).

Haggai's prophecies were addressed to the Jews after the return from captivity. In common with other commentaries in this series, Hutcheson gives a brief explanation of a verse or group of verses, followed by a number of "observations", giving profitable applications of the scriptures he has explained.

Here are two examples of these observations: “The Church is to confirm her own faith in the truth of promises by considering, not what she is in herself or what her condition can promise, but by looking to what God’s power and providence can make her and do for her”; “The foundation of the Church’s happiness stands on Christ’s having been obedient to His Father as her surety, on His interest in the Father’s affection, and that He is the only chosen way of safety which the Father has found out and wherein He acquiesces”. Words and expressions which have fallen out of use since Hutcheson’s day are explained in brackets.

In his *Commenting and Commentaries*, Spurgeon says about Hutcheson’s work on the Minor Prophets: “Get it. Hutcheson is always rich. He resembles Dickson.” It is good to see further examples of the rich spiritual treasures of Scotland’s past being made available again.

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## Protestant View

### The Prime Minister’s Marriage

The UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, has married for the third time, this time in a Roman Catholic ceremony in Westminster Cathedral. His new wife is a practising Romanist. Mr Johnson’s own position on religion seems to be highly ambivalent. Yet the fact that his latest marriage has been performed by a Roman Catholic priest further demonstrates both the easy tolerance of false religion which characterises the current generation and the lack of understanding at all levels of society of the political and spiritual dangers which Romanism ever poses to national life.

Furthermore, the fact that a divorced person was permitted to marry in the Roman Catholic Church is acknowledged, even by some Romanist sources, to represent apparent double standards, since Rome does not permit those married under its auspices to remarry after a civil divorce. According to its official position, the Roman Church theoretically acknowledges the validity of marriages between its own adherents and Protestants when a bishop’s consent has been given. Yet, in practice, Rome does not normally recognise marriages as valid except those performed by a priest. If this is followed out to its logical conclusion – as it seems to have been in this instance – Protestant marriages might be dispensed with, or conveniently ignored, in favour of Romanist marriages. Hence the Prime Minister’s latest marriage could be performed by a Romanist priest. Once more, the age-old claim of Popery to exclusive dominion over Church, family and society can be detected lying unchanged under the surface.

AWM



# Notes and Comments

## Church of Scotland General Assembly 2021

The Church of Scotland General Assembly was held online from May 22 to May 27 with 700 commissioners. The Assembly took a step nearer to permitting her ministers and deacons to perform same-sex marriages. Draft legislation was approved, by 319 to 217 votes, which has now been sent down to the Presbyteries for consideration under the Barrier Act. We are glad that two-fifths of the office-bearers who voted were against this great evil, and there must also have been a large number of abstentions. The proposed legislation came with the usual assurances that it was only permissive and would not require anyone to participate in the solemnisation of sodomite marriage, but experience has shown how little confidence can be placed in such assurances.

The General Assembly also approved a proposal to reduce the number of “full-time equivalent ministry posts” from around 800 to 600. There are currently 693 ministers and “Ministries Development Staff” in post, and 151 locums. There are 299 vacant charges (representing 402 congregations) and a further 36 congregations in “guardianship” (that is, vacant, but not permitted to call a minister), thus requiring 335 interim moderators. Apparently 40% of all current full-time ministers are over the age of 60, with significant numbers, perhaps as many as 60%, expected to retire during the next 10 years.

It is sad to see the national Church brought so low, both morally and numerically, but a matter of surprise and thankfulness that there is still substantial opposition to sodomite marriage, in spite of all Satan’s efforts to promote it. We look to the promised day when God will turn back the captivity of Zion and all this evil legislation – toleration of homosexuality, ordination of women, toleration of doctrine contrary to *The Westminster Confession of Faith* – will be swept out of the Church. DWBS

## Ideological Indoctrination by Lego

Lego, the Danish children’s toy maker, has released a new set of models in honour of the LGBTQIA+ community. (The acronym gets ever longer, now standing for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual and other non-heterosexual people.)

Six colours are used in a bow (in opposition to God’s rainbow, which has seven) and they tell us, “It is a waterfall of colour with eleven brand new minifigures striding purposefully towards an imagined brighter future”. The set is entitled, “Everyone is Awesome”. We are told that no specific gender has been assigned to the figures apart from one. The exception, sporting a large beehive hairstyle, “is a clear nod to all the fabulous drag queens out

there”, said the designer Matthew Ashton. The set went on sale on June 1, the start of “Pride month”.

The education system, the world of children’s entertainment and now a manufacturer of children’s toys are conspiring to confuse and subvert the minds of young people. Our youngsters are being indoctrinated and coerced into absorbing what is a God-dishonouring deceit. No doubt the plan is that, if little ones can be made familiar with these things, they will be more likely to accept these travesties as the acceptable norm. The struggle of Christian parents to raise their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord gets ever more difficult in this adulterous and sinful generation.

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them” (Gen1:27). FRD

## Church Information

### Redesigned – Free Presbyterian Bookroom Website

A redesigned Church Bookroom website has been launched in June of this year. It is now possible to buy and pay for books directly online. The website address is: [www.fpbookroom.org](http://www.fpbookroom.org).

There is also a link to the Bookroom website from the main Church website. You are encouraged to register on the website your email address. By doing this you will be able to take advantage of discounts that are only available to online customers by email. The Bookroom website like the main Church website cannot be accessed on the Sabbath from any part of the world. Those without internet access can still buy books by contacting the Bookroom either in writing or by telephone; contact details are on the cover of this *Magazine*.

### Acknowledgement of Donations

**The General Treasurer** acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

*Eastern Europe Fund:* Mr N Pearce, Cymru, for the Lord’s work in the Ukraine, £140.

**Congregational Treasurers** acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

**Dingwall & Beauly:** The family of late Mr A Dalgetty, Muir of Ord, £105.

**Duirinish & Bracadale-Strath:** Anon, £290.

**Ness:** Friend of the Cause, £50.

**North Tolsta:** Anon, for church painting, £1000. *Door Collection:* Anon, £20, £250, £100, £80, £60, £40, £35, £60, £50, £100, £80, £100, £40, £80. *Overseas Fund:* Anon, £20.

**North Uist:** Estate of late Miss Mina MacDougall, £1000.

**Perth:** Anon, £50 per WC.

**Portree:** Anon, for new Church bus, £100; Anon, for provision of recorded sermons, £20, £20.

*Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £100. *TBS:* Anon, £100.

**Raasay:** *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £250.

## FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

### Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D WB Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Glendale** and **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thursday 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street, IV15 9JP: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **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. Manse tel: 01445 712247. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- 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.
- 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. 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. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.

### 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:graffton@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.byo@gmail.com.

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

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

**New Canaan**: Church.

**Zenka**: Church.

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