

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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Communions

January: First Sabbath: Nkayi; **Fifth:** Auckland, Inverness, New Canaan.

February: Second Sabbath: Dingwall; **Third:** Stornoway; **Carterton;** **Fourth:** Zenka.

March: First Sabbath: Sydney, Tarbert; **Second:** Ness, Portree; **Third:** Halkirk; **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; **Second:** Nkayi, North Uist, Santa Fe; **Fourth:** Bulawayo, Gairloch, Inverness.

July: First Sabbath: Beaulay; **Second:** Bonar Bridge, Staffin, Uig; **Third:** Shieldaig, Fort William; **Fourth:** Auckland, Cameron, Struan. **Fifth:** Cameron,

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

September: First Sabbath: Chesley, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Munaka, Portree; **Third:** Tarbert; **Fourth:** Aberdeen, Barnoldswick, Ingwenya.

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

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

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

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A Rest for God's People

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we are warned against hardening our hearts against the gospel. Resisting the call to believe in Christ, who came into the world to save sinners, results in further hardening one's heart, with the consequence that such a person will be even more resistant to the gospel in the future. To resist the gospel call is dangerous. The example of Israel in the wilderness is used as a warning, not only for the original readers of the Epistle, but for us: "Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness" (3:8).

It was when the people had no water and they "murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" (Ex 17:3). They were provoking God to punish them for their unbelief, and He did. He swore in His wrath: "They shall not enter into My rest" (Heb 3:11). This was God solemnly promising that judgement would fall on them because of their sin, the sin of unbelief.

The Children of Israel had lost sight of the greatness of God's power, which He had shown in bringing them out of Egypt, in spite of Pharaoh's determination to hold on to them. He who had delivered them from Egypt was surely able to bring them into the promised land, into Canaan, no matter how strong the people were who lived there. Canaan would have been a place of rest for the Israelites after the struggles of that first long year of wandering in the wilderness. But instead of trusting in God to bring them into Canaan, they disbelieved Him and His promises. And the punishment they had to suffer was that the whole generation, with very few exceptions, perished in the wilderness, during the much longer period of 39 years.

There were lessons for those to whom the Epistle the Hebrews was first sent. And the same lessons apply to us who live almost 2000 years later: "Take heed . . . lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb 3:12). David Dickson speaks of unbelief as "the main root of apostasy". As belief draws us to a union with God, Dickson says, so unbelief makes a separation between sinners and God. It

“is a subtle and deceitful sin . . . and must be watched over, lest it deceive and, getting strength, overcome.”¹ It should be obvious that we, especially in such an unbelieving, sceptical age as this, should watch against this sin which is so natural to our fallen nature. Unbelief kept that generation of Israelites out of the rest God set before them, and it will keep unbelievers today out of the rest of heaven that God sets before all who hear the gospel.

In Hebrews, Paul speaks of God resting on “the seventh day from all His works” (4:4), for He had finished these works of creation during the previous six days. That, of course, does not mean that God was idle on the seventh day of the week; it was a day filled with holy activity. The seventh day in each week was given to mankind, in Old Testament times, as a day of rest – a rest from ordinary, secular activity, a rest which freed up time for “the public and private exercises of God’s worship” (*Shorter Catechism*, Answer 60), although His command allowed for works of necessity and mercy. The Sabbath originally marked the completion of creation; the New Testament Sabbath commemorates Christ’s resurrection and is therefore to be observed on the first day of the week, on which Christ arose.

Paul further refers to God speaking through David (in Ps 95) of a certain day on which there would be an entering into rest: “Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts”. But Paul immediately rules out the possibility that this “rest” was the one into which Joshua brought the Children of Israel. The conclusion is then drawn: “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God” (Heb 4:7-9) – in heaven. Significantly, the word translated rest in the last quotation is, more literally, the keeping of a Sabbath.

Let us notice that this rest is for “the people of God”. It is for those whom the Lord has brought out of Satan’s kingdom, which is indeed a state of bondage, where they were not free to serve God; where they could not keep His commandments with their whole heart. But God has set them free, making them able and willing to obey the call, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28). They were drawn by divine power from bondage under Satan and set free to serve the living and true God. When Saul of Tarsus was delivered from that continual labour of trying to work out a righteousness of his own – when he wholeheartedly embraced the righteousness of Christ – he was at once numbered among the people of God. The evidence, as revealed to Ananias, that Saul was now one of God’s people was that this former Pharisee now prayed. In one sense, of course, Saul had always prayed, but he had no idea of his need of a mediator between him and God. But now he was presenting his petitions

¹Dickson, *The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews* (bound with James Fergusson on *The Epistles of Paul*), Banner of Truth reprint, 1978, p 18.

for the sake of Christ, whom he recognised as the “one Mediator between God and men” (1 Tim 2:5).

“In the world ye shall have tribulation”, Jesus warned His disciples. That tribulation would include temptations and struggles against indwelling sin, besides the difficulties to be experienced in the ordinary course of events in this world. But the disciples were not to despair; the Saviour encouraged them: “Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Matthew Poole comments: “By *world* is to be understood all temptations from it, whether from the flatteries or from the frowns and troubles of it. We [believers] are said to overcome the world, but we overcome it as soldiers, fighting under Christ, who is the Captain of our salvation, and His victory is our victory. Christ overcame the prince of the world and cast him out . . . and He hath overcome sin; and we in Him, in the midst of all tribulations, are made ‘more than conquerors through Him that loved us’ (Rom 8:37).”

Jesus’ warning and encouragement in John 16:33 are for His followers in every generation. The promise of a heavenly rest is also for them; God’s people today will yet rest from their temptations and struggles. The promised land was to be a place of rest for the Israelites after the difficulties and hardships of the wilderness; so heaven will be a place of rest for the people of God. There they will rest from all the labours of their wilderness journey through this world, but it will not be a rest of idleness. The rest in heaven will be full of holy activity in serving and worshipping God. The eternal Sabbath will be kept perfectly.

So we read of the voice from heaven that the Apostle John heard: “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Rev 14:13). In one way or another, God’s people labour for Him in this world. Some are called to labour in the gospel, as preachers of the Word, but all of them are called to strive with God in prayer and to live godly lives in the face of temptations to be careless about the commandments of God. When death comes, they will rest from all these labours and, as Poole explains, “their good deeds and patient sufferings shall follow them, as witnesses for them before the Judge of the quick and the dead”.

We have already noted the call, “Harden not your hearts”. If we go on resisting God’s Word and hardening our hearts, we will never enter the rest of heaven. Let us heed the further warning, “Let us labour . . . to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Heb 4:11). That will be a fearful fall, into a lost eternity. How earnestly we should seek the Lord! And how blessed their rest will be who seek the Lord and find Him, and seek to live to His glory in this world of sin and difficulty!

Justification by Faith (1)¹

A Sermon by *J W Alexander*

Romans 3:28. *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

The labours of the early Reformers were specially directed to interpreting the term *justification*. Among the errors of Romanism, which had been accumulating for ages, one of the most fatal was on this point. It served the popish defences of human merit to teach that justification signified a change of character. Hence they taught that to justify was to *make* just, in the sense of making holy; and they introduced the false idea of a first and second justification. By the first, the unrighteous man was made righteous; by the second he was continued righteous. So justification was confounded with sanctification. These opinions were almost universal among the Romanists and were authoritatively established by the Council of Trent; they have been revived, and earnestly maintained, by the Romanising party in the Church of England. It is therefore of the utmost importance to attain a clear notion of justification, in its Scriptural sense.

To justify, then, is not to *make* just, in the sense of making holy, but to *declare* just. It is derived from courts of law, where everyone who is on trial is either justified or condemned. It is for this reason called a forensic, or judicial, term. To condemn and to justify are exact opposites. When the judge condemns a man, he does not by that act render him any worse than he was before; he simply *declares* him to be guilty. When the judge justifies a man, he does not by that act render him any better than he was before; he simply *declares* him to be innocent. In this sense, the term is used in the Scriptures: "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgement, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous and condemn the wicked" (Deut 25:1). "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord" (Prov 17:15). It is obviously only in this declarative sense that God can be said to be justified by men, and wisdom to be justified by her children.

We further observe that where this term is used in a religious sense, an allusion to judicial practice runs through the whole statement. Thus Job says, "How should man be just with God? If he will contend with Him, he cannot answer Him one of a thousand" (9:2,3). And David: "Enter not into judgement with Thy servant: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Ps 143:2). The scriptural language seems to introduce us to a court: there are a law, a sanction, a tribunal, a judge, an accusation, a condemnation, an advocate, a

¹Taken with editing from Alexander's volume of sermons entitled, *Faith*.

surety, an acquittal. But there is not a syllable about changing the character; it is only a change of state, standing, or relation to law. A misunderstanding here darkens the whole system of grace and ensures an unsound theology. This, as Calvin says, is the very hinge on which the whole work of redemption turns. And error in this point is easier because the word sometimes has another meaning; it has been extensively used for sanctification; and because, in point of fact, justification and sanctification are inseparably connected. Justification therefore is an act of God, whereby He pardons our sins and accepts us as righteous.

Having settled the meaning of the term, we proceed to consider the *act* itself. All will agree that the moving cause of justification is the eternal goodness of God; apart from this, no offender could ever have been received to favour. But people are so ignorant of God's true character that they sometimes ask in their hearts, if not with their lips, Why this circuitous method? Why might God not accept the sinner by a sovereign declaration, irrespective of any acts on his behalf? Such inquiries arise from exceedingly low thoughts of the most high God.

But let us present ourselves in thought before His awesome tribunal. Let us meditate on the Judge whose brightness eclipses the stars, and whose holiness sheds condemnation on the heavens, whose anger shakes the earth, and whose power melts the mountains, whose justice brings dread into the hearts of the angels, who does not acquit the guilty and whose wrath has ordained Tophet of old, and we shall be ready to exclaim, "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"

The law of God involves a solemn degree of the majesty of that character of which it is the transcript. It is holy, just and unchangeable. Everything which made a law right in the beginning remains in full force, demanding obedience. Every reason in God's mind for annexing a penalty remains in full force, to exact the execution of that penalty. All the wisdom and justice which made it necessary for creatures to be threatened with punishment, in case of disobedience, make it necessary that the sinner's acceptance should not take place without some amends being made to the violated law. It is indeed a sovereign act of God which justifies the sinner – an act of sovereign mercy, but one in which justice no less than mercy appears.

Seeing something is necessary to manifest the glorious justice of God in accepting sinners, the question remains, What is this? In other words, What is the meritorious cause, for the sake of which the sinner is justified in the sight of God? All answers to this question reduce themselves to these two: The ground of justification is something in the sinner, or something outside him; something done by him, or something done for him by another. He is

justified either by works, or without works. And the doctrine which prevails in the Romish Church is that the sinner is justified, in some way or other, by works. The doctrine of Scripture is that he is justified without works. Indeed, so explicit is the language of Scripture on this point, and so distinctly is it sounded by the trumpet of Paul – as not merely his doctrine, but his capital doctrine – that few have the effrontery to declare in plain terms that their own works are the proper ground of their justification. In order therefore to guard against the finesse of errorists, we must examine a little their mode of evading the truth.

All agree that spirits who have never sinned, and man in a state of innocence, were justified by works; that is, by perfect obedience to the law under which they were created. In this case we have the simplest form of justification: when God pronounces him just who is properly and in every sense righteous. But the problem becomes less easy when justification refers to those who have broken the law, as it is agreed that all on earth have done.

A further concession is to be made, in order to clear the question and stop the mouths of adversaries. We fully admit that everyone who is justified is made holy, and if the term had not been abused, this might be called inherent righteousness. Our opponents, including Rome, reproach evangelical teachers with rejecting inherent righteousness, both name and thing. We indignantly resist the charge and affirm that, in every case of true justification, the Holy Spirit infuses a principle of holiness, which manifests itself in good works. But we firmly deny that these good works constitute, in whole or in part, that righteousness whereby we are accepted in the sight of God. And this is the great position on which we make our first stand. Let it be observed that we deny this, both of the principle and of the fruits; both of works wrought after regeneration and of works wrought before it; both of works wrought in faith and of works wrought in unbelief; both of works wrought with a spiritual influence and of works wrought without one. Works have no part in our justification.

The opponents of this doctrine, in order to give some place to the work of the Redeemer, teach that Christ has merited, by His obedience, that internal righteousness should be communicated to us; but also that the righteousness thus infused is our justifying righteousness. The Council of Trent states that the righteousness by which God justifies us is that which He gives us when He renews us in the spirit of our minds, so that we are not merely accounted righteous, but are really so. This is known in theology as justification by infused or inherent righteousness. It is strange that even when the subject is first presented, it should be at all tolerated in a soul which has ever been truly convinced of sin, or in a conscience which has ever been brought before

the bar of an infinitely holy and heart-searching God; or that it should ever be maintained in the face of New Testament declarations that we are justified freely, without works of law.

The Scriptures teach and the most experienced Christians admit that, even after regeneration, their obedience is unspeakably deficient in kind and degree; that in many things they all offend; that they are unprofitable servants, even after all their performances; that their highest affections fall short of supreme love; and that there is no command whose spirit they have not broken, nor any hour of their lives, or single act, on which they could rest their hope of justification in the sight of a holy God. Gratefully owning the influences of God's Spirit, in renewing and gradually sanctifying their souls, they nevertheless find no inherent righteousness on which God could look with complacency for an instant.

On opening the New Testament, we are immediately struck with such passages as this: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight". To an unsophisticated mind, this would seem to settle the question; but such is the ingenuity of unbelief that we are constrained to spend some time in removing the ideas which have obscured the text.

When we are said to be justified without works, the works meant, say some, are those of the ceremonial law. This is not the most tenable position of our adversaries, so it is not their favourite one at present. The New Testament writers do not much refer to our modern distinction of ceremonial and moral law; but apart from this, the idea cannot be sustained. The Apostle Paul, who oftenest treats this doctrine, does not merely assert that salvation is without works, but in more than one instance proceeds to prove it. In every such case, his argument shows that he is not speaking of ritual or ceremonial works. Thus in Romans 3, when he concludes, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight," the whole preceding argument is a series of charges against transgressors of *moral* precepts. There is not one word concerning the emptiness of rites, or even concerning their being fulfilled in Christ – points which would have been unavoidable if these only had been intended. If it had been his object to show that we are justified by moral works, not by ceremonial, he would necessarily have contrasted the moral and the ceremonial law.

On the contrary, the opposition which he establishes is between works and faith, between law and promise, between debt and grace. And his principal instance of justification without works is that of Abraham, which occurred long before the institution of the Levitical service. Indeed the presumption is so violent that it has long since been abandoned by the most able controversialists even on the Romish side.

A candid examination of Paul's argument will show that, under the name of law and of works, he excludes moral as well as ceremonial requirements and obedience of every sort. This is apparent from the universal nature of the expressions, that we are justified "without the deeds of the law", that "a man is not justified by the works of the law", that "no man is justified by the law, in the sight of God".

It has therefore been pretended that the works here excluded are works before regeneration, or without faith. So important a distinction could not have been left unexpressed. The opposition is not between one sort of works and another, but between debt and grace, between law and promise, between our own righteousness and the righteousness of God, between working and not working. The very tenor of his argument shows that it is the moral law which Paul excludes, for it is that law (Rom 3) which condemns both Jews and Gentiles: "There is none righteous, no, not one". It is that law by which "is the knowledge of sin". It is "the law of works" as opposed, not to ceremonies or imperfect obedience, but to "the law of faith". It is that law which worketh wrath, and without which "there is no transgression". It is that law which says, "Thou shalt not covet", and those precepts by which "the man that doeth them shall live in them". This can be no other than the moral law, in all its extent.

It is evident from the case of Abraham that Paul does not mean only to exclude such works as are done without faith and before regeneration. He argues that if Abraham was justified by works, he had whereof to glory. But he was justified as one who "worketh not". Surely he of whom these things are spoken was not unregenerate or unbelieving. Calvin says, "Though the life of the patriarch was spiritual and almost angelical, yet his works did not possess sufficient merit to justify him before God". Equally pertinent is the instance of David, who is adduced as describing "the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works".

Here and elsewhere Paul opposes works to faith, and justification by works to justification by faith. By works he must therefore mean obedience of every kind. And when he excludes such works as might be matter of boasting, he manifestly excludes all works. The same thing is proved by the declarations: that we are justified freely, that we are justified by Christ, and that we are justified by faith. The conclusion seems unavoidable that we are justified by something outside ourselves, and that the matter of our justification is not something that we can render to the demands of the law. The ground of our acceptance must therefore be sought where the text places it: in the righteousness of another. But how can this be?

All the acts and declarations of God are according to truth. As the God of

infinite justice, He sees and declares all things just as they are; He cannot pronounce him righteous who is unrighteous. As we have no righteousness of our own, it would for ever be impossible for us to be justified if God were not to look on us in another, rather than in ourselves. This is the great and precious mystery which deserves special consideration. God looks on His people as the body of Christ, as united to Him – as one with Him. Here we see the infinite importance of union with Christ. He not only represented His people but acted as their head. From the moment of union, His acts are accounted theirs.

We now ask, What is the Scripture method of justification? Here the reply of Scripture is perfectly intelligible. What justifies us is not the righteousness of law, the righteousness of works, or our own righteousness; but “the righteousness of God without the law”, “righteousness without works”, or “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Christ”, the “righteousness of faith”. It is the righteousness of Christ, for we are made “the righteousness of God in Him”. The two most important questions concerning this righteousness are: (1.) What it is. (2.) How it becomes ours.

(1.) It requires little consideration to perceive that it is not the essential righteousness of the Divine nature in Christ, but His perfect satisfaction of the law in this world. The righteousness of Christ is His obedience, His obedience rendered for sinners. The whole of His subjection to the law was as mediator and representative. Except in the covenant of grace, the law made no demand that the Son of God should come under its yoke. In infinite mercy He took our nature, to render to the law every satisfaction which was necessary to our salvation. This satisfaction is called His righteousness. It is called the “righteousness of God” because He devised it and because He accepts it. The debt which sinful man owes consists of two parts – penalty and performance. The righteousness of Christ, to be available, must provide both. Accordingly He exhausted the penalty and fulfilled the precept. By the one, He provided for the remission of sins; by the other, He procured a right to salvation and reward. Justification is something more than the remission of sins: it includes both remission of sin and the right to eternal life. Both are procured by the righteousness of Christ.

That both are necessary may be seen in the case of Adam in Eden. At the very moment of his creation, he was perfectly innocent, and therefore in the state in which remission of sin places a sinner. But something more was necessary to give a right to the rewards of life: he needed obedience to a prescribed law. By remission of sins, the believer would at best be no further advanced than Adam was at the moment of his creation. By a title to the rewards of life, he attained that place in the sight of God which Adam would have

reached at the close of his probationary obedience. Forgiveness was purchased for sinners by Christ their Surety enduring the penalty of the law; a title to the rewards by His performing all its requirements. Both are included under the term *obedience*. But while the righteousness of Christ is a resplendent whole, these parts may be considered separately, which we may now profitably contemplate.

(a) The Lord Jesus Christ, for the sake of His people, *endured the penalty of the law*. This includes the whole of His mysterious suffering. "Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." This expresses all. The law demanded the death of the sinner; it is satisfied by the death of an infinite Substitute. The all-wise Jehovah, who best understands the claims of His own glory, is pleased to recognise the suffering of His Son as a more full satisfaction to the law than the eternal pains of His people. It is the infinite dignity of the Substitute which gives a value to temporal sufferings, making these more than equivalent, in the eye of the law, to the sufferings of creatures through all eternity. The crowning event of these sufferings was the death of Christ on the cross, and pardon is therefore ascribed to them above all the rest. This obedience of Christ to the penalty of the law was propitiatory or expiatory, washing away the guilt of sin. It was a proper sacrifice, which gave significance to all the sacrifices of the Levitical law.

For ages God had been educating His ancient Church in the persuasion that, without shedding of blood, there was no remission. Substitution was inscribed on every altar of the tabernacle and temple. The bloody services of the priesthood were, for ages, but a preparing of the way for the entrance of the great High Priest. And every unblemished animal which panted and bled in the Levitical courts foreshadowed the Lamb of God "slain from the foundation of the world". The sinner, as he laid his hand on the head of the victim, typically transferred his guilt to it. The priest, as he sprinkled the blood on the sinner, typically absolved him. It was one being suffering for another. It was the death of the sacrifice for the death of the sinner.

All these shadows were accomplished in the death of Christ, who was both sacrifice and priest; and thus a glorious satisfaction was made to the law, in regard to its penalty. We are redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"; "who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree . . . by whose stripes ye were healed". He was made sin for His people, a curse for them, that they might be the righteousness of God in Him. By His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for them. This obedience of Christ unto death, whereby He made a full satisfaction to the law,

as to its penalty, is known in theology as His *passive* obedience; and to this we owe the remission of our sins.

(b) The Lord Jesus Christ, for their sakes, *fully obeyed the precept of the law*. This is what the law demanded of the creature, to constitute a title to the rewards of life. The infinite dignity of the Mediator made His obedience, though rendered in time, a more glorious and acceptable satisfaction to the law than the perfect obedience of all His people could have been. And it is quite as just and reasonable as what we have been considering. Yet, while all who admit a proper atonement agree that the sufferings and death of Christ were in order to the remission of our sins, there are many who deny that the personal holiness of Christ, and His subjection to the precept, had any similar intention. This is truly surprising, when we consider that it was no less necessary that the precept should be fulfilled in order to life, than that the penalty should be endured in order to pardon. Indeed, if the law demands one thing more than another, it is obedience.

If any reparation is to be made, we might expect it to be the reparation of due performance. The acts of the Surety, in what he did, are as available for us as His pains in what He suffered. Even His sufferings are included under the name of obedience – He was “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”. It was to be expected that the Surety should fulfill for sinners all the demands of the law, precept as well as punishment. It is undeniable that the Lord Jesus Christ was made under the law, that He subjected Himself to it, and actually fulfilled it. It is reasonable to conclude that acts so important, in His mediatorial life, were a part of His suretyship and were rendered on their behalf. And unless these acts are the ground of our acceptance, we must resort to our own acts for this end.

But the Scriptures are too plain on this point to be mistaken. The obedience of Christ is expressly declared to be the ground of our acceptance, and the sufferings of Christ are but a part of that obedience, and receive this name only in a secondary sense. He is the Lord our Righteousness. He is made of God unto His people “righteousness”. And in terms which baffle all the ingenuity of opposers, we are told that, “as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous”. It is this which is called the *active* obedience of Christ; and these two taken together, the active and passive obedience, constitute that one righteousness which is the sole meritorious ground of the acceptance of a sinner. What He did, and what He suffered, are but one object in the sight of the law – a glorious righteousness with which believers are graciously invested, wrought out by their Head, in their nature, but deriving infinite value from the hidden fountain of the Godhead.

Luther and the Reformation¹

19. Ready to Face the Pope's Representative

J H Merle d'Aubigné

No doubt, in the midst of the biblical labours to which he devoted himself with fresh zeal, Luther sometimes forgot Rome and the ecclesiastical court before which he was to appear. Yet his thoughts always returned to that formidable tribunal before which his implacable enemies had summoned him. With what terror would such thoughts have filled a soul whose object had been anything else than the truth! But Luther did not tremble; confident in the faithfulness and power of God, he remained firm and was ready to expose himself alone to the anger of enemies more terrible than those who had kindled John Hus's² pile.

A few days after Melancthon arrived, and before the decision of the Pope to transfer Luther's place of trial from Rome to Augsburg could be known, Luther wrote thus to Spalatin: "I do not require that our sovereign should do the least thing in defence of my theses; I am willing to be given up and thrown into the hands of my adversaries. Let him permit all the storm to burst upon me. What I have undertaken to defend, I hope to be able to maintain, with the help of Christ. As for violence, we must yield to that, but without abandoning the truth."

Luther's courage was infectious: the mildest and most timid men beheld the danger that threatened this witness to the truth, and found language full of energy and indignation. The peace-loving Staupitz wrote to Spalatin in September 1518: "Do not cease to exhort the prince, your master and mine, not to allow himself to be frightened by the roaring of the lions. Let him defend the truth, without anxiety either about Luther, Staupitz, or the order. Let there be one place at least where men may speak freely and without fear. I know that the plague of Babylon, I was nearly saying, of Rome, is let loose against whoever attacks the abuses of those who sell Jesus Christ. I have myself seen a preacher thrown from the pulpit for teaching the truth; I saw him, although it was a festival, bound and dragged to prison. Others have witnessed still more cruel sights."

At last the order to appear before the cardinal-legate at Augsburg arrived. Luther now had to deal with one of the princes of the Roman Church. All his

¹This is a further abridged extract from d'Aubigné's *The History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*, vol 1, continued from last month. That article told of Philip Melancthon's background and him joining Luther in Wittenberg.

²Hus was a reformer from before the Reformation, who had great influence for good in Prague and was sent to be burnt at the stake by the Council of Constance in 1415.

friends entreated him not to set out. They feared that even during the journey snares might be laid for his life. Some busied themselves in finding a place of refuge for him. Staupitz was moved at the thought of the dangers to which Luther would be exposed. He would do everything in his power to save him. Accordingly he wrote from Salzburg: "It appears to me that the whole world is enraged and combined against the truth. The crucified Jesus was hated in like manner. I do not see that you have anything else to expect but persecution. Before long no one will be able, without the pope's permission, to search the Scriptures and look there for Jesus Christ, which Jesus Christ commands. You have but few friends; I would to God that fear of your adversaries did not prevent those few from declaring themselves in your favour! The wisest course is for you to abandon Wittenberg for a time and come to me. Then we shall live and die together."

From different quarters Luther received the most alarming news. Count Albert of Mansfeld bade him beware of undertaking the journey, for several powerful lords had sworn to seize him and strangle him or drown him. But nothing could frighten Luther. He had no intention of profiting by Staupitz's offer; he would not go and conceal himself in the obscurity of a monastery at Salzburg; he would remain on that stormy scene where God had placed him. It is by persevering in despite of his adversaries, by proclaiming the truth aloud in the midst of the world, that the truth advances. Why then should he flee? This expression of the Master, whom he desires to serve and whom he loves more than life, re-echoes incessantly in his heart: "Whosoever . . . shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven".

We always find in Luther and in the Reformation this intrepid courage, this exalted morality, this infinite charity, which the first advent of Christianity had already made known to the world. "I am like Jeremiah," says Luther at this time, "a man of strife and contention; but the more their threats increase, the more my joy is multiplied. My wife and my children are well provided for; my fields, my houses and my goods are in order. They have already destroyed my honour and my reputation. One single thing remains; it is my wretched body; let them take it; they will thus shorten my life by a few hours. But as for my soul, they cannot take that. He who desires to proclaim the Word of Christ to the world must expect death at every moment."

The Elector was then at Augsburg. Shortly before quitting the diet in that city, he had paid the legate a visit. The cardinal, highly flattered with this visit promised Frederick that, if Luther appeared before him, he would listen to him in a fatherly manner and dismiss him kindly. The prince ordered a friend to tell Luther that the Pope had appointed a commission to hear him

in Germany, that the Elector would not permit Luther to be dragged to Rome, and that he must travel to Augsburg. Luther resolved to obey.

What must have been his feelings as he left Wittenberg for Augsburg, where the Pope's legate awaited him? Perhaps he was going to his death. But his faith was not a mere outward show; it was a reality. Hence it gave him peace and he could advance without fear, in the name of the Lord of hosts, to bear his testimony to the gospel. He arrived at Weimar on September 28, and lodged in a monastery. One of the monks could not take his eyes off him; it was Myconius.³ He then saw Luther for the first time; he wished to approach him, to say that he was indebted to him for peace of mind, and that his whole desire was to labour with him. But Myconius was too strictly watched by his superiors; he was not allowed to speak to Luther.

The Elector of Saxony was then holding his court at Weimar, which is probably why the monks gave Luther a welcome. He was invited to preach in the palace chapel the next day, the festival of St Michael. This was a mark of favour from his prince. He took his text (Matthew 18:1-11) from the gospel of the day. He spoke forcibly against hypocrites, and those who boast of their own righteousness. But he said not a word about angels, although this was the custom on St Michael's day.

Luther's courage, as he was going quietly on foot to answer a summons which had terminated in death to so many of his predecessors, astonished all who saw him. Interest, admiration and sympathy prevailed by turns in their hearts. One monk, John Kestner, struck with apprehension at the thought of the dangers which awaited his guest, said to him: "Brother, in Augsburg you will meet with Italians, who are learned men and subtle antagonists and who will give you enough to do. I fear you will not be able to defend your cause against them. They will cast you into the fire, and their flames will consume you." Luther solemnly replied: "Pray to our Lord God who is in heaven . . . for [the sake of] His dear Son Jesus, whose cause is mine If He maintain His cause, mine is maintained; but if He will not maintain it, of a truth it is not I who can maintain it."

Luther continued his journey on foot and arrived at Nuremberg. As he was about to present himself before a prince of the Church, he wished to appear in suitable clothes. His own were old and the worse for the journey. He therefore borrowed a garment from his faithful friend Wenceslas Link, preacher at Nuremberg. The letters he wrote from this city show the spirit which then animated him: "I have met with timid men who wish to persuade me not to go to Augsburg; but I am resolved to proceed. The Lord's will be

³Friedrich Myconius was later a leading Protestant Reformer in central Germany and an intimate friend of Luther.

done! Even at Augsburg, even in the midst of His enemies, Christ reigns. Let Christ live; let Luther die and every sinner, according as it is written! May the God of my salvation be exalted! Farewell! Persevere, stand fast, for it is necessary to be rejected either by God or by man. But God is true, and man is a liar.”

Link and an Augustine monk named Leonard would not permit Luther to go alone to face the dangers that threatened him. They knew his disposition and were aware that, abounding as he did in determination and courage, he would probably be lacking in prudence. They therefore accompanied him. When they were about 15 miles from Augsburg, Luther, probably exhausted as a result of the journey, was seized with violent pains in the stomach. He thought he would die. His two friends in great alarm hired a wagon in which they placed him. On the evening of October 7 they reached Augsburg, and alighted at the Augustine monastery. Luther was very tired but soon recovered.

Preaching Christ¹

2. Plainly and Faithfully

Thomas Brooks

Ephesians 3:8. *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

Many weak spirits in these days think that it is as easy to preach as to play, and so they hop from one thing to another. There are those that are not fit for the lowest employment, yet judge themselves fit enough for the greatest and weightiest employment in the world. However, this work would certainly break the backs, not only of the best and strongest men, but even of the angels, if God will not put His “everlasting arms” under them. There is no labour to that of the mind, no travail to that of the soul; and those that are faithful in the Lord’s vineyard find it so. Luther was wont to say that if he were again to choose his calling, he would dig or do anything, rather than take upon him the office of a minister. And many other eminent lights have been of the same opinion with him.²

But what rules is every preacher to observe in preaching Christ to the people? I answer, These eleven:

¹Taken, with editing, from Brooks’ *Works*, vol 3. Last month’s article explained “why it is the great duty of ministers to preach Christ to the people”.

²“Who is sufficient for these things?” (2 Cor 2:16). Almost every upstart in these days thinks himself sufficient. “Who am I?” says Moses.

[1.] Jesus Christ must be preached *plainly and clearly*, so that the one with the lowest capacity may understand what is said concerning Christ. They must preach Christ for edification, and not to work admiration as too many do in these days. Paul was excellent at this kind of preaching (1 Cor 14:18,19). He had rather speak five words to edification than 10 000 words to work admiration in ignorant people. So Paul: “My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (1 Cor 2:4,5);³ as if he should say, They preach with little power who come with excellency of speech, or with the enticing words of man’s wisdom. Many there are – I speak it with grief and to their shame – that delight to soar aloft in obscure discourses and to express themselves in new-minted words and phrases and to show high strains and flashes of wit, and all to work admiration in the ignorant.

Such preachers are as clouds and painted-glass windows, that hinder the light from shining in upon souls, that hinder the Sun of righteousness from breaking forth in His beauty and glory upon the spirits of poor creatures. Woe unto these men in the day when such souls shall plead against them, when they shall say, Lord, here are the persons whose office and work was to make dark things plain, and they have made plain things dark and obscure, that we might rather wonder at them than any way profit by them.⁴ Aaron’s bells were of pure gold. Our whole preaching must have Scripture proof, or we and our works must burn together.

The profoundest prophets accommodated themselves to their hearers’ capacities. Holy Moses covers his glittering face with a veil when he was to speak to the people. It is most noticeable that when God the Father, the great Master of speech, speaks from heaven, He makes use of three texts of Scripture in one breath: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear Him” (Mt 17:5). “This is My beloved Son”; you have that scripture in Psalm 2:7; “In whom I am well pleased”; you have this in Isaiah 42:1; “Hear Him”; you have this in Deuteronomy 18:15.

All of these may direct them to blush who, through a strange wisdom, disdain the stately plainness of the Scripture! How unlike to God are the preachers that think they may correct God’s wisdom and eloquence with their own childishness, vanity, novelty and sophistry! Indeed Jesus Christ Himself, the great Teacher of the Church, teaches this lesson: “With many

³Preaching is not a matter of parts, words, or wit; it is Scripture demonstration that works upon the conscience and that God owns and crowns.

⁴It was a saying of Luther: “From a vain-glorious scholar, from a contentious pastor, and from unprofitable questions, good Lord deliver His Church!”

such parables spake He the word unto them, as they were able to hear it” (Mk 4:33) – not as *He* was able to have spoken. He could have expressed Himself at a higher rate than all mortals can! He could have been in the clouds. He knew how to tie such knots that they could never untie, but He would not. He delights to speak to His hearers’ shallow capacities. So: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now” (Jn 16:12). He that does not speak to the hearers’ capacities is as a barbarian to them, and they to him.

“He is the best teacher,” says Luther, “that preaches in ordinary language, that preaches most plainly.” He is not the best preacher that tickles the ear, or that works upon the fancy, but he that breaks the heart and awakens the conscience. It is sad to consider how many preachers in these days are like Heraclitus, who was called “the dark doctor” because he spoke in a difficult way. How many in these days use unusual phrases, making plain truths difficult and easy truths hard! They darken “counsel by words without knowledge” (Job 38:2). But I will leave you to judge how unlike these dark teachers are to Christ, the prophets and the apostles. Nor would I have their accounts to make up for all the world; I will leave them to stand or fall to their own Master. God loves, owns and crowns plain preaching. Though some account it foolishness, yet to them “which are saved, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:18). I have stayed the longer upon this first direction, because of its great usefulness in these deluding days.

[2.] As they must preach Christ plainly, so they must preach Christ *faithfully* (Prov 13:17, 25:13, Job 33:23). Ministers are stewards (1 Cor 4:2); and you know it is the duty of a steward to be faithful in his stewardship, to give to every man the portion that is due to him, cheering up those hearts that God wants to be cheered, and weakening those wicked hands that God wants to be weakened, and strengthening those feeble knees that God wants to be strengthened.

Ministers are ambassadors; and you know it is the great responsibility of ambassadors to be very faithful in their master’s messages. God looks more to a minister’s faithfulness than to anything else, and is affected more with it. A great voice, an affected tone, studied ideas and silken expressions may affect poor, weak souls; but it is only the faithfulness of a minister in his ministerial work that God notices: “Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Mt 25:21-23) – a joy too big to enter into thee, and therefore thou must enter into it. This was Paul’s glory, that he had not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). Neither fear nor favour swayed him one way or another, but he was faithful in his Master’s work. And God usually crowns him and his labours most,

and sends most fish into his net, that is most faithful, though he is less skillful – that has more of the heart in the work, though he has less of the brain.⁵

Plutarch⁶ writes about a maid that was to be sold in the market: a trader asked her, “Will you be faithful if I buy you?” “Ay,” said she, “that I will even if you do not buy me.” So ministers must be faithful (Is 52:7), though God should not buy them, though he should not in particular ways encourage them in their work. Their very feet are beautiful who are faithful, and their message most comforting to those that sigh and mourn, that labour and languish under the sense of sin and fear of wrath.

Farming Spiritualised¹

John Flavel

1. *Reflections for a worldly person.* How hard I have laboured for the meat that perishes! I have been up before the dawning of the day and laboured as in the very fire, and yet the Christian’s work is harder than mine! Surely then I never yet understood the work of Christianity. Alas, my sleepy prayers and formal duties, even all that I ever performed in my life, never cost me the pains that one hour at the plough has done. I have either wholly neglected religious duties, or at best performed them so lazily that I may truly say, I offer to God what cost me nothing. Woe is me, poor wretch! How is the judgement of Korah spiritually executed upon me? The earth opened its mouth and swallowed up his body, but it has opened its mouth and swallowed up my heart, my time and all my affections. How far I am from the kingdom of God!

2. *Reflections for someone with a formal religion.* How little better is my case, who have indeed professed religion but never made it my business! Will an empty (though splendid) profession save me? How many excellent ships have perished in storms, notwithstanding their fine names: *The Prosperous, The Success, The Happy Return*? A fine name could not protect them from the rocks, nor will it save me from hell. I have used religion, as I should have used the world: I have prayed, as if I did not pray; and heard, as if I did not hear. I have given to God but the shadow of duty and can never expect from Him a real reward.

⁵The office of a minister is the highest office; and if his office be the highest, his faithfulness must correspond, or he will be doubly miserable.

⁶A Greek writer and philosopher of the late first century and early second century AD.

¹Taken, with editing, from Flavel’s *Husbandry Spiritualized, The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things*, in volume 5 of his *Works*. He has been making a spiritual application of the industriousness of the farmer and now provides some reflections suited to various classes of people.

3. *Reflections for a slothful Christian.* How unlike a Christian, my soul, do you also go about your work, though upright in the main; yet how little zeal and activity do you express in your duties! Awake, love and zeal, do you not see the toil and pains men take for the world? How they get up before the dawning of the day and labour as in the very fire till night – and all this for a trifle! Should not every drop of sweat which I see trickle from their brows fetch, as it were, a drop of blood from my heart, who am thus convinced and reprov'd of shameful laziness by their indefatigable diligence? Do they pant after the dust of the earth (Am 2:7), and shall I not pant after God? (Ps 42:1).

Ah my soul, it was not wont to be so with you in the days of my first profession. Should I have had no more communion with God in duties then, it would have broken my heart; I should have been weary of my life. Is this a time for one to stand idle, who stands at the door of eternity? What, now slack-handed, when so near to my everlasting rest (Rom 13:11), or have you found the work of God so unpleasant to you? (Prov 3:17), or the trade of godliness so unprofitable? (Ps 19:12). Or do you not know that millions, now in hell, perished for want of serious diligence in religion? (Luke 13:34). Nor does my diligence for God answer to what Christ has done and suffered to purchase my happiness, or to the preparations He has made in heaven for me? Or do you forget that your Master's eye is always upon you, whilst you are lazying and loitering? Or would the damned live at this rate as I do, if their day of grace might be recalled? For shame, my soul, for shame, rouse up yourself and fall to your work, with a diligence answerable to its weight; for it is no vain work for you; it is your life.

Jesus and the Woman of Samaria (10)¹

George Hutcheson

John 4:22. *Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.*

1 No good intentions, no zeal or pretence whatsoever, can justify anything in God's worship which does not have sure warrant from the Word, and is not gone about in the knowledge and faith of it. So much is included in this reproof of the Samaritans and commendation of the Jews: "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship". To transgress this rule and to take anything devised by men, into God's worship, so far makes the true

¹These are the "Doctrines", or lessons, as edited, that Hutcheson (1626-74) draws from these verses, in his *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

God an idol as to imagine Him to be one that will accept such false worship.

2. Christ, as He took on the form of a servant, is content to rank Himself with the true Church as a member, to teach all to esteem such a society highly: “We (He says) know what we worship”.

3. Not only is worship devised by men not warrantable, but it is not the way to heaven, seeing there can be no salvation but in God’s instituted way; and the case of those who follow devised worship is so much more dangerous if they also lack the doctrine of salvation in matters of faith and life. Both these are included in this reason, “for salvation is of the Jews;” that salvation was to be found in that Church, their way of worship being appointed and approved by God, and the saving doctrine and oracles of God concerning faith, worship and way of life being also committed to them and among them.

4. It was the special privilege of the Jews, and a testimony that God approved of them as His Church, that the Saviour of sinners was to come of them, and the doctrine of salvation, pointing Him out, was to sound from among them in all the earth. So much also does this reasoning imply, as has been explained.

Union with Christ¹

2. A Union of Nature

Rev I D MacDonald

3. Natural-union: union in the incarnation. The third phase of union with Christ is that formed when He assumed human nature, and worked out a righteousness in that nature. This phase of the union may be considered as the Son of God taking the nature of His bride, and in that nature purchasing His bride from divine Justice by paying all her debts. This aspect is brought to prominence in Hebrews 2:11-14, where we read: “For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one [there is the union]: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare Thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee. And again, I will put my trust in Him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given Me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same”.

Here Christ the Sanctifier, and His people the sanctified, are said to be “all of one”, and the context shows that a union of nature – of the same flesh and blood – is the most prominent aspect of the “oneness”. Therefore the for-

¹The first part of this Theological Conference paper was printed last month. Following an introduction, it focused on union in the decree of election and the covenant of grace.

mation of the “hypostatical union” between the Son of God and the human nature which He assumed into union with His Divine Person, also brought about a further phase of union between Christ and His people. By His incarnation He came to be a partaker of our nature, whereby He became our brother, our Kinsman Redeemer, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone.

It is important to note that He only assumed human nature as it was the nature of the elect. When Hebrews 2 teaches that Christ took not on Him the nature of angels, it does not then make the contrast to be His taking on Him the nature of “man” as such, but the “seed of Abraham”. By the “seed of Abraham” as distinct from “mankind” we are to understand the “many sons” whom Christ is to bring to glory, or the elect in a federal union with Him. A clear difference is seen here with the way that holy angels participate in the blessings of eternal life, for Christ never came to be in union to their nature.

(1) *The necessity of this union to purchase redemption.* It is also true that this union of Christ to the nature of the elect was essential in order to His fulfilling the covenant obligations He had come under in order to purchase redemption. With regard to its necessity, Hugh Martin says, “That a union should subsist between Christ and His people, such as is implied in their possession of a common nature, is of vital moment”.²

For example, it may be considered as a further ground for the imputation of the elect’s sin to Him. Sin could only be imputed finally to the Son of God as Surety when He came to possess the nature of the debtors. As soon as the Mediator assumed the human nature, the Justice of God demanded the payment of the debt due.

Additionally, Christ must take the nature of His people in order to render obedience to the precept of the law in their room and on their behalf. Apart from anything else, the divine nature cannot render obedience. But more specifically, the obedience upon which the promise of eternal life was originally conditioned in the covenant of works was human obedience. There could have been no imputation of Christ’s vicarious obedience to His people in order to their possessing a title to eternal life, had He not worked out that aspect of His righteousness in the nature of man.

Stephen Charnock brings this out in his work on 1 John 1:7: “The ground of this imputation [of righteousness to the sinner] is community of nature. Because He ‘took not the nature of angels’, it is not reckoned to them, Heb 2:16,17. If He had taken the nature of angels, it could not have been reckoned to us, because He had not been akin to us.”³

The same is true with regard to His passive obedience in His sufferings

²Martin, *The Atonement*, Edinburgh, 1877, p 40.

³Charnock, *Works*, Edinburgh, 1865, vol 3, p 520.

unto death. The nature which sinned had to suffer if Justice was to be satisfied, and since it was human nature which sinned, the Surety must possess human nature in order to suffer on behalf of the elect. The price of the sinner's redemption was blood and so, because they were "partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same". He must have blood to shed. The Surety paid the ransom price in the currency of His own precious blood, and Divine Justice accepted it as paid on behalf of the debtors whose guilt was imputed to Him. Here light is shed on those terms in Scripture which describe believers as being "crucified with Christ" (Rom 6:6, Gal 2:20). By virtue of their federal union, and His union to their nature, when Christ was crucified, they were representatively crucified with Him in the eyes of Justice. John Murray says, "We may never think of redemption in abstraction from the mysterious arrangements of God's love and wisdom and grace by which Christ was united to His people and His people were united to Him when He died upon the accursed tree and rose again from the dead".⁴

(2) *The significance of Christ's resurrection and ascension to heaven.* Christ's people were not only crucified and dead with Him in the eye of Justice when He was crucified and died, but they were also viewed as having risen with Him in His resurrection and ascended up to heaven in His ascension. To quote but one Scripture which teaches this: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:4-6). In His resurrection from the dead, it was declared that the Surety's atonement had been accepted as fully satisfying all the demands of law and justice with regard to His people. He was at that time Himself "justified" in the sense of being freed from all imputed guilt (Rom 4:25, Is 50:8). The elect were virtually or representatively justified at that point, for He was "raised for our justification".

The same is true with regard to His ascension to heaven. When Christ entered into heaven He did so as the Forerunner and Head of His people as Thomas Goodwin brings out in the following beautiful quote about His ascension: "Christ said (as it were) again to God: I come not alone, I have much company, many of My brethren and followers to come after (for it was the declared and avowed end of His coming to prepare a place for them), I prayed when I was on earth, that where I am they might be also (Jn 17:24); and now I come hither, My train must come in too, I am not complete without them". And so Goodwin argues that, if the Father receives Christ, He must receive them also, for He has "come to take up lodgings for them".

⁴Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, Banner of Truth, 1979, p 161.

The Raven¹

Henry Law

Genesis 8:7. *He sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.*

Blessed are they who find their constant pleasure ground in the riches of the Bible! They commune with the mind of God. They listen to a heavenly voice. They bask in rays of purest light. They feed in wholesome pastures of refreshment. They fear no poison from the weeds of error. No devious path can lead their steps astray. Wisdom from above guides sweetly. The Spirit, as high Teacher of the Church, instructs the students. They advance safely, happily, from grace to grace. The lessons are vast, as the mine from which they spring. They are pure as the realms to which they call. They warn of sin – its filth, its misery, its end. They unfold Jesus in all the glories of redeeming love. They exhibit holiness, as the road to holy heaven.

Reader, heed a salutary admonition. Study the Bible, as holding treasure for your soul. Study with earnest prayer. Study with eternity spread out before you. Study with the lowliness of a poor sinner before a speaking God. Study with faith devoutly grasping every word. Close not the volume without enquiring, Is sin more hateful, the world more worthless, the flesh more treacherous in my sight? Is Jesus brought nearer to my adoring soul? Is my heart won to more entire devotedness? Am I more resolute to live for Him who died for me? The living Word should thus give life.

But this teaching is more than mighty in its matter. It is attractive in its varied mode. It charms by inexhaustible diversity. It summons all creation to its service. It traverses the universe of things alive and lifeless. It uses all their stores, as handmaids to profounder truth.

A few flowers, culled from this spacious garden, will illustrate this. It looks above, and from the wonders of the firmament brings testimony to redemption's nobler work. The sun in the heavens proclaims the Sun of Righteousness. The glory of the lovely light typifies "the true light". He said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn 8:12). The glittering star has a gospel voice: "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star" (Rev 22:16). It looks to the earth, and Christ is seen everywhere. The stately tree, the fragrant flower, the flowing stream, the living stone, the riches of the mine, and all the length and breadth of its immensities call us to adore "the chiefest among ten thousand".

So too the world of animated life inculcates thoughts of highest signifi-

¹Taken, with editing, from Law's *Beacons of the Bible*..

cance. The lion ruling the forest in his might; the ox, not ignorant of its owner; the ass, quick to discern its master's crib; the washed swine returning to the mire; the gentle flocks reposing in the meadows; the goats cast out from the fold, and other species, warn by their particular behaviour. Each seems to say, Immortal souls may have deep profit by observing me.

Among them the birds occupy their places. To each of this class some specialty belongs. These differing behaviours are not given in vain. The mind which framed the diverse instincts writes on each some admonition. Sometimes the moral is distinctly drawn. Sometimes nothing but the habit of the winged one is stated. The reader is left to ponder it in meditative prayer.

Such is the case of the first bird named in Scripture. Its notice is brief. It appears when the waters of the deluge had partially abated. Noah had been told by God what God alone could tell. The coming of this ruin had been distinctly fore-announced. No human means could ascertain when thus the floodgates of heaven would open and all the fountains of the great deep be broken up. This then was taught by a revealing voice. But God had not revealed the moment of departure from the ark. He instructs sufficiently, but not superfluously. What reasoning powers can discover, no inspiration will unfold. When ordinary means suffice, no miracle will interfere. Noah by natural resource must learn when earth again shall be dry ground.

He seeks help from the birds of the ark. He selects the raven. He sends it forth. "Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made, and he sent forth a raven" (Gen 8:6,7). In vain he waited. There was no return. It brought no tidings. Its wings beat not again against the window of the ark. It sought no more admission into its former shelter. "It went forth to and fro." It wandered up and down. It found some resting-places, perhaps on the loftiest crags of the re-appearing mountains. It was content to perch on any height. It was well pleased to feed on any floating carrion. It cared not where it perched, or where it gained support, so long as it had no restraint. It left the ark, pleased to escape. It left the ark, never to re-enter.

My soul, mark well this wandering raven. It gives a warning; it speaks of disappointment. Noah expected its return with a tale of earth's revival. But it came not back. It cheered him not with an assurance that the destroying waters were assuaged and desolation's reign was past. It never said, Go forth; walk up and down in peace; peril has ceased; earth is again a dry abode.

From all the streams of teaching flowing from this spring, let that be heard which is most vitally instructive. Let us then first observe an emblem of the moral law. Doubtless no such lesson is primarily designed. But profit may be incidentally deduced, when not originally meant. The soul intent on holy growth may gather flowers in a field tilled for another crop.

It is sadly true that many turn to the law for life, for peace, for righteousness. But can its voice proclaim these blessings? It is indeed a code: godlike in majesty, sublimity and truth. It is seated on a glorious throne. It is a picture of Jehovah's mind. It shows the features of His eternal essence. It is wondrous in brevity, infinite in extent. Love is the substance of all its requirements. Love shines, as the dazzling crown, upon the brow of the law. Love is the one channel of its course. But still it is so boundlessly expansive that its wide arms embrace each thought, each word, each work of all who ever trod, or shall tread, earth.

It announces that deviation from pure love is utter abomination in God's sight. It points to heaven and cries, Love is the one atmosphere of that bright home. Nothing breathes there but love. It stands as a guard before the shining gates. It drives back all transgressors of its grand enactment.

View now the sinner's breast, when penetrated by the Spirit's light. Conscience instantly accuses of transgressions, many as the moments of existence, towering high as mountains piled on mountains – extending in multitude, as all the sands of the ocean's shore – embodied in each act, sounding in each word, staining each thought. Will the law draw softly near, wipe away all tears and silence fears? Will it bid gloom to disappear? Will it diffuse the calm of heavenly peace? Will it show wrath appeased, vengeance satisfied and deathful weapons laid aside? Far otherwise.

The raven brought no happy tidings. The law can tell no tale of comfort. It leaves the soul in deepest cells of uttermost despair. It pays no soothing visits. It has no cheering note. It has no messages of reconciliation. It raises not from terror's agonising depths. It only affrights with its inexorable threats. It thunders, Give me my due; pay the full debt contracted by offence. But the insolvent cannot pay. Therefore the curse must fall. Thus it inflicts banishment from God, exclusion from the realms of blessedness, consignment to the prison of hell. Thus it piles anguish upon anguish, which never can relax until the ages of eternity shall cease.

Reader, study the law profoundly. Ponder its breadth, its length, its depth, its height. Gaze with open eye upon its perfect purity. Mark well its large and just requirements. Realise your own infinite shortcoming. See your whole life as one mass of violation. Mark how it fastens condemnation on you. View its high barrier, excluding you from heaven. Weigh its strong chain, dragging you to hell. Receive the inevitable truth. It has no word of peace. It never pardons. It gives not life. It surely dooms to death. Expect not help from it; rather flee far from it. If you escape not, it will surely slay you. The raven cheered not the inmates of the ark. The law brings no relief.

Noah, disappointed, sends forth another messenger. The dove speeds her

gentle way. She tarries not. She soon relieves the anxious fears. Her welcome wings are heard again. Joy brightens at her glad return. For in her mouth she shows an olive leaf plucked off (Gen 8:11).

This leaf relates a happy story. The waters have abated. The destroying element has subsided. Peril has fled away. Security again smiles. The detaining doors may now be opened. Earth is again green. Solid ground invites returning steps. Let thanksgivings now rise. Let praise ascend. Let man re-occupy his renovated home.

Here is a lovely emblem of the gospel. What the law announces not, is sweetly published by glad tidings from above. Thrice welcome news resound from heaven. Floods upon floods of joy unspeakable issue from Zion's heights. Full salvation is revealed. On earth peace, good will toward men, are gloriously proclaimed.

Hearken, children of men. Give ear, my soul. Would that all earth's sons, from east, from west, from north, from south, could be the audience! Would that all might hear the faithful sayings of the blessed gospel! Christ is the first and last, the sum and substance of this noble word. Christ chosen, sent, anointed, accepted of God. Christ – wondrous in His person, the mighty God – is therefore infinitely glorious to save. Christ, very man, is therefore entirely qualified to represent the family of Adam. Christ, loving from everlasting to everlasting, with love knowing no origin, no end, no intermission, no degrees – with love always unchangeably the same, perfect, pure, intense, enduring.

Christ, hanging on the accursed tree, laying down His life a sufficient ransom price, by His blood closing the gates of hell, quenching God's fiery wrath, paying all demands, satisfying every claim, glorifying every attribute, washing out each crimson stain of all His ransomed flock. Christ, gloriously fulfilling every tittle of the glorious law, saying to each command, I fully have obeyed; and then transferring the vicarious obedience, as divine righteousness, to His bride the Church – her robe for heaven, her lustre in the courts above. Christ, purchasing the Holy Ghost and sending Him to bless the Church with all His powers to teach – to sanctify, to comfort, to adorn, to beautify.

Christ rising from the grave is a proof that God is satisfied and all redemption fully earned, an earnest that the ransomed in their turn shall put on the beauties of a resurrection body, worthy of a resurrection state. Christ ascending to the right hand of the majesty on high, representing all His people in Himself, bearing their names upon His shoulders and His heart, receiving all gifts for them, pouring down all blessings on them. Christ, coming to change the living and to raise the dead, to execute eternal judgement, to fill all heaven with glory, to awaken the eternal song of never-ending hallelujahs.

O my soul, what a flood of tidings of great joy! Spring forth to welcome

them. Stretch forth your arms to clasp them. The law frowns condemnation. The gospel thus smiles salvation. The wrath is gone. Destruction's billows are no more seen. Dismiss all fears. Annihilate your shivering doubts. Tremble no more. Open the gates of liberty. Go forth, as Noah, upon the renovated earth. Walk up and down in the green pastures of delight. See all around you redolent of peace. Enjoy. Give thanks. Lift up the voice. Sing praises. All things are yours: the world, things present, things to come – all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's (1 Cor 3:21-23).

Following the gospel voice, we dwell as lords of a wide universe of peace. We lie down in green pastures; we feed beside still waters. The hand of love makes full provision. Goodness and mercy follow our steps, as the attending shadow. This gospel flies from heaven, assuring us that God, even our own God, shall bless us. Thus, like Noah's dove, it calls us forth to liberty and joy. All glory to the gospel of free grace! All glory to the gospel of eternal life!

But mark again the raven. We may learn much from its departing flight. Without unduly giving wings to fancy, we may here trace silly worldlings in their silly ways. To such, the gospel ark is not a welcome home. Its holy boundaries are uncongenial. They flee its pious inmates. They shun its righteous shelter. The easy yoke chafes as an enfettering chain. The light burden is as heavy bondage. They give the wing to their unbridled passions. They are carried away by wild desires, craving appetites and raging lusts. Their feet speed hastily from spots where Christ is the one testimony, where God is lovingly adored, where eternity in vivid colours is brought near.

O my soul, take warning. Make the gospel ark your constant dwelling place, your much-loved home, your safe retreat, your all-protecting shelter. Dwell in Christ and Christ in you. Abide in Him and He in you. Nestle sweetly, rest securely, in the screening refuge of His wounds. Stray not away from Him.

There is a beacon too in the raven's restlessness. It wanders to and fro and never settles. Worldlings wandering from Christ find no repose. Tossed up and down, they lead a weary life. Hurried hither and thither, they are strangers to all peace. Some vain allurements offer rest. They seek it only to take early flight. Another spot invites. It promises much, and disappoints the more. Behold the fretting waters of the troubled sea. They represent the constant motion of the unfixed mind. Thus always craving, never satisfied, the weary votaries of earth drag out their uncalm days.

O my soul, have you found Christ? The true believer sweetly sings, "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste" (Song 2:3). Shall God say of Zion, "This is My rest for ever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it"? (Ps 132:14). And will you not respond, Christ

is indeed my rest for ever? Nothing shall tempt me from my home of joy.

The raven's food is another beacon. What nurture could it find in the drowned waste? What but the putrid remnants of the floating carcasses? Thus worldlings starve their souls amid the husks and carrion of their pleasures. Their maxims are false, and therefore poisonous. No wholesome nutriment is there. Their cup of joy at best is insipidity. Contrast the banquet-house of faith. The Word luxuriantly contains supplies to cheer, to strengthen, to refresh. The promises, what animating cordials! The truths of the cross, what a well-stored table! Jesus is the bread of life. The soul partakes and lives. The prospect of the heavenly rest, what a rich feast! "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." The love of Christ, how invigorating! "Thy love is better than wine." Reader, be always a guest at this table and "eat . . . that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

If any worldling should peruse this page, may his eye not turn again to that poor cheat, the world. May it look to Christ and never look away! He is a sure rest. He is a safe refuge. He is a treasury of all delights. He satisfies, till the full soul can hold no more.

Book Review

Fighting the Good Fight of Faith, by Hugh M Cartwright, published by Ettrick Press, hardback, 275 pages, £15.00, obtainable from the F P Bookroom.

This book follows the same pattern as Mr Cartwright's *Walking in the Light*, published in 2020, and contains 30 prayer meeting addresses. It was prepared by Mrs Catherine Hyde from the notes she took as she listened to the addresses. It consists of five parts: first, a series on "The Whole Armour of God", from Ephesians 6; then a shorter series on "Union with Christ"; followed by another on the Beatitudes; a further series on "Our Reasonable Service", from Romans 12:1-2; and finally five addresses on a variety of Scripture texts. As anyone who heard Mr Cartwright should expect, all these addresses are structured in an orderly way, providing an abundance of scriptural teaching which is very clearly expressed.

By way of example, here are some extracts from these addresses. First, in speaking on the blessedness of "the poor in spirit", the preacher says of them: "The Lord is speaking of the attitude someone has to himself in the presence of God which is a result of being born again. Being poor in spirit includes a realisation of our spiritual poverty. It is the opposite of being proud, self-sufficient, self-righteous, self-confident. Instead the person comes to recognise their spiritual poverty in relation to God. He has nothing, he is

nothing, he can do nothing, in the face of the requirements God is making of him.”

In his conclusion to this address, after quoting Christ’s counsel to the Church in Laodicea to buy from Him to supply their spiritual needs, Mr Cartwright states, “Someone may ask, ‘How can I buy, when my great problem is my poverty?’ Well, it’s without money and without price! How can you buy without money? Only by going into debt! That is the gospel way. That is what the poor in spirit are prepared to do – to go into debt to the grace of God. This blessedness is available in the gospel, if the Lord by His grace will bring us to an end of ourselves and to cast ourselves on His resources. O to be beggars at God’s door!”

Here is the conclusion to the address on the verse, “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy”: “We have great incentives to be merciful – to be, by God’s grace, the kind of people He wants us to be. The most appropriate prayer all our days is that of the publican: ‘God be merciful to me a sinner’. It’s mercy from beginning to end. The gospel is the gospel of God’s grace, and it’s for sinners. His mercy does not forsake His people despite their sins and shortcomings.”

In an address entitled, “A Holy Life is Distinct from the World”, the preacher comments, “Some people think they can mingle with the heathen and not be polluted. They think they can engage in activities that are characterised by denial of God and of God’s authority, and not be tainted. But as far as the Lord’s people are concerned, there are things they cannot do, there are places they cannot go to, there are ways of life they cannot take part in. They cannot, because these things are not consistent with the will of God, and they cannot, because these things are contrary to the instincts of their new nature.”

The last of these addresses is on Psalm 89:15 and is entitled, “The Joyful Sound” – which Mr Cartwright expounds as, in particular, the gospel. Here is the last part of the conclusion to this address: “The way to get this blessing [of the people that know the joyful sound], if we don’t have it, is through the joyful sound. We have to listen. Listen to the sound of the gospel! It is calling sinners into this blessedness. It is calling sinners into the enjoyment of the favour of the Lord. All who are within reach of that sound are being called by it – to come, to sacrifice, to come to God, to come to this place of liberty. Hearken to the gospel! And respond believingly. There is no other way into the light of His countenance.

“It’s the same for the believer who is desiring a greater consciousness of this favour. The same gospel, the same sound, revives the soul of the believer, restores the joy of God’s salvation, and renews strength in the soul for the

way. Therefore, if there is someone here, and they're feeling rather like the psalmist, wondering what has happened – well, the way of recovery is to go back to the beginning of the psalm. Consider God, consider His greatness and His majesty, consider His covenant faithfulness and His promises.”

Like *Walking in the Light*, this book is recommended reading.

Protestant View

Church of Scotland's Protestantism at All-Time Low

The decline of Protestantism within the Church of Scotland has continued over many years but has now reached an all-time low with the announcement of a “Declaration of Friendship” with Rome which, at the time of writing, is to come before the General Assembly for approval. It has already received recognition from the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference in Scotland. Reading behind the inevitable ecumenical platitudes, the document represents – at the spiritual level – another advance by antichristian religion in its war against the truth of the gospel.

The outgoing Moderator of the General Assembly, Lord Wallace, is an elder who was well-known as the former leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party. He spoke of Roman Catholics as “witnesses to the gospel message in this land of Scotland”.

The document also speaks of the “hurt and the harm that our forebears did to each other in times past”, and there would be nothing objectionable in such a statement if it solely referred to the martyrdom and persecution of Protestants by Rome in previous centuries. But of course that is not what is intended; rather, it is written in a spirit directly opposed to the faithful witness of our godly Protestant forebears who contended earnestly for the faith. They recognised the Church of Rome for what it truly is and were not afraid to denounce it as antichristian, the very Babylonian harlot predicted in the Word of God. They did this, not because they hated the souls of Roman Catholics, but because they loved the truth as it is in Jesus and therefore hated iniquity and falsehood. And let it ever be remembered that no one was condemned to death in Scotland since the Reformation for being a Roman Catholic. (John Ogilvie, the Jesuit who was executed in 1615, was not put to death for being an emissary of Rome but because he refused to acknowledge King James VI as his lawful sovereign.)

Those who desire to maintain the principles of the Word of God consistently can have no fellowship either with Rome or with the Church of Scotland in its virtually-apostate condition. “What communion hath light with dark-

ness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? . . . Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing” (2 Cor 6:15-17). *AWM*

Notes and Comments

Homosexual Marriage and the Church of Scotland (1)

The Presbyteries of the Church of Scotland have voted 29 to 12 in favour of the “Solemnisation of Same Sex Marriage Overture”, which would allow Church of Scotland ministers and deacons to apply to become “authorised celebrants” for homosexual marriages (so called). The General Assembly (forthcoming at the time of writing) is due to vote on this overture.

A report to the Assembly is said to make it clear “that no person would be required to participate in the solemnisation of, or be involved in the arrangements for, a same-sex marriage unless they explicitly wished to do so”. Only a parish minister who became a celebrant would be permitted the use of a church building in the charge for the solemnisation of homosexual marriages, but consent could also be granted to other celebrants to use the buildings for that purpose.

As everyone knows, however, these limitations would only be of a temporary nature, until the pro-sodomite party felt strong enough to abolish them. The whole tendency of the sodomite movement, as Genesis 19:9 shows, is to demand that everyone endorse their sin. They can never rest until this is accomplished. And so they can never rest, because the Word of God is as a thorn ever pricking their conscience: “If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination” (Lev 20:13). *DWBS*

Homosexual Marriage and the Church of Scotland (2)

Members of the 2021 Church of Scotland General Assembly voted to allow presbyteries to express their views on draft legislation regarding the celebration of same-sex marriages. Ministers and deacons will have to apply to become a celebrant and the Church will make the application on their behalf to the Registrar General for Scotland.

Rev Shuna Dicks, from the Presbytery of Aberdeen and Shetland, voted in favour and said, “Personally, this is something I feel has been a long time coming and we’ve maybe waited too long, to be honest. But I’m just delighted that I will be able to apply to become an official celebrant for same-sex marriages. There will be people from the LGBT community who will

rejoice because finally the church that they belong to will be able to celebrate their love that they have found in each other in a Christian ceremony and that, I think, is good news.”

Rev Mike Goss, from Angus, who voted against this “permissive” approach, believes that the divisions will continue and impact on other areas of church life. He said, “There’s still a continued struggle within the Church of Scotland. The group of folk who are called “traditionalist”, folk who stand for the Bible, we’re not going away. We are still there.”

It is a sad day for the Church of Scotland when there are office-bearers within it who are going headlong in the direction of Sodom in direct opposition to the Bible, and who regard those who believe it to be the Word of God, “traditionalists” and behind the times. One would think that the two groupings within the Church of Scotland cannot be reconciled; that those who believe the Word of God will not be able to tolerate a laissez-faire, live-and-let-live, worldly attitude to God’s law and His worship.

People like to speak of inclusivity, but when that embraces unscriptural and God-dishonouring church legislation, no blessing can be expected. God is not mocked. FRD

Church Information

College and Library Fund

By appointment of Synod, the first of two special collections for the College and Library Fund is due to be taken in congregations during June.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donation:

Eastern Europe Fund: N Pearce, Cymru, for the church in Ukraine, £140; Anon, for the church in Ukraine, £200; Anon, £50.

General Fund: Anon, £257, £2000.

Home Mission Fund: Anon, £30.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Dingwall: Where Most Needed: Anon, £100.

Glasgow: Anon, £25. *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10, £10. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, for work of gospel in Ukraine, £2000; Anon, for the Lord’s work in Odessa, £150; Anon, £100, £35, £80, £35, £35, £35, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £35, £80, £35, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £40. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £100; Anon, for Zimbabwe Mission, £50; Anon, where most needed, £100. *TBS:* Anon, £90.

Ness: Where Most Needed: Friend of the Cause, £50.

North Tolsta: Anon, £50, £1000; Anon, In memory of beloved parents, £20; Anon, for church heating and hall lighting, £250. *Door Collection:* Anon, £7, £80, £100, £40, £120. *TBS:* Anon, £200.

Stornoway: Angus Fraser and family, In memory of the late Mary P Fraser, £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. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; no F P services. Rev J A Morrison BA, 2 Cherry Grove, Bonar Bridge, IV24 3ER. Tel: 01863 766157.
- 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). 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 12 noon, 6 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, 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. Contact Rev R MacLeod; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am, 5.30 pm, second, third and fifth Sabbaths of month; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Duncan Street no services meantime; **Strathy:** 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.
- Kinlochervie:** 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 7.30 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 Main Road, Luncarty, PH1 3EP; tel: 01738 828762.
- 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; Wednesday 7.30 pm.; **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building); Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. 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. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

Vancouver: Burnaby Community Room, 3605 Gilmore Way, Burnaby, BC, V5G 4X5. No services at present. Contact: Mr Hector Ross, tel: 1-647-355-0844; e-mail: hector.ross@outlook.com, or Mr David Kuiper; tel: 1-519 -363- 0367; e-mail: info@fpchurchvancouver.ca.

USA

Santa Fe, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 5 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith; tel: 409 927 1564.

Australia

Grafton, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA PhD, 3 Martin Crescent, Junction Hill, NSW 2460; tel: (02) 6644 6174; e-mail:grafton@internode.on.net.

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel. (02) 9627 3408; e-mail:sydneyfpchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

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

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

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

Tauranga: Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 7.15 pm, at Senior Citizens Hall, 33 Maitland street, Greerton, every third week, as intimated). For Sabbath services, contact Rev J D Smith; tel: 09 282 4195.

Singapore

Singapore: 33 Ubi Avenue 3, Vertex Tower A, #05-60, Singapore 408868: Sabbath: 9.30 am and 5.30 pm; Wednesday: 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, tel: (65) 9639 3040, 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: dlevytsky@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.

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

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

New Canaan: Church.

Zenka: Church.

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The Plain Mr Knox by Elizabeth Whitley Christian Focus, 2001, pbk, 238 pp	£7.99	£6.39
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