

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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## Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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## Reasoning with God

The Book of Isaiah begins with a series of warnings to Judah because of their sins. For instance, they had “rebelled” against God; they had “provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger”. The result was that even the offering of incense was “an abomination” to Him. Was He casting them off completely? No, by no means, He was calling them to repentance; He told them: “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well”. Indeed He encouraged them: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (1:18). There was indeed a prospect, in God’s great mercy, of being truly forgiven. And He was encouraging them to reason with Him in their great need.

God had been reasoning with His people time and again throughout their generations. He had told them, through Moses, “Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord He is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else. Thou shalt keep therefore His statutes, and His commandments, which I command thee this day” (Deut 4:39,40). They were to apply their minds to what God was telling them, but they were to do so on the basis of what He had revealed. Thus, starting with this particular verse, they were to consider His greatness, His uniqueness, His authority over them as One who is ruling over everything that takes place on earth and everywhere else in the universe. They were to submit wholeheartedly to all that He had commanded them. Thus, whatever command they might consider, they were to say, God is speaking *to us*. So we should realise that it is our duty to obey Him in everything He commands us in Scripture, and we must do so willingly.

This is one example of how we should reason before God. We should be conscious of being in His presence always. We should be absolutely clear that the Bible must be the basis of all our reasoning, especially on religious matters. In the Bible we have God speaking to us; it is therefore entirely reliable from beginning to end. So the Psalmist acknowledged, “Thy word

is true from the beginning: and every one of Thy righteous judgements endureth for ever” (Ps 119:160). The Bible will never become outdated, and we are therefore safe when we follow its teachings.

But we are not safe if we set our reasoning against the Bible, and try to decide, for instance, what parts of it are authentic. To attempt to judge what passages are accurate, while feeling free to reject other parts as unreliable, is rationalism; it is the human mind taking to itself the authority to be the supreme judge of what God has spoken. It is what the so-called higher critics of the nineteenth century occupied themselves with, thereby seriously undermining the foundations of large swathes of the Christian Church; they gave free rein to their imaginations to develop unbelieving theories about how the Bible had been put together. This was not the kind of reasoning that God was encouraging in Isaiah 1:18.

In particular, such thinking undermined the scriptural foundations of the nineteenth-century Free Church of Scotland, and much of the responsibility for the widespread unbelief in Scotland today belongs to the professors in various theological schools in the country who propagated such theories to students for the ministry. When the authority of Scripture came under attack, Free Churchmen – as well as people in other Scottish denominations – weakened in their allegiance to other doctrines of Scripture. This led to the Free Church passing the Declaratory Act of 1892, which forced the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland the following year.

Yet in spite of the extent to which the authority of the Bible is rejected in society today, and in spite of the extent to which the Bible and its teachings are neglected in the professing Church today, the Bible remains authoritative. That is so because God has not lost any of His right to direct His creatures. He is ruling over everything; He retains full authority over every human being, whether they acknowledge Him or not. It illustrates the degree to which England has departed from submitting to the Bible when we find in his last will and testament a chancellor of the exchequer, Sir William Mildmay, in the time of Elizabeth I, speaking of God’s “most holy Scripture [as] the only way to know His good will and pleasure”.<sup>1</sup>

When God calls everyone to reason with Him, we must not ignore His call. We – in common with all other human beings – are duty bound to respond to Him. When, through the Apostle Paul, God declares that “all have sinned” (Rom 3:23), we are to go to Him and confess, *I have sinned*. This is a confession that all have sinned in Adam, and *we* have inherited his fallen, sinful nature. We must also take seriously the next part of the verse just quoted: “and come short of the glory of God”. We must confess, *I am*

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Patrick Collinson, *English Puritanism*, The Historical Association, 1983, p 34.

coming short of the glory of God; *I* am doing so continually. Adam and Eve, before their first sin, lived fully to the glory of God; they were completely obedient. But since the Fall, in Eden, no one apart from Christ has been consistently obedient; no one has lived fully to the glory of God.

Having confessed our sin, we are to reason further before God. Basing our thinking on the Word of God, we should acknowledge that we deserve to be punished because we do not give Him the glory that is due to Him. Yet God makes Himself known as One who is “merciful and gracious” (Ex 34:6), who is “ready to forgive” (Ps 86:5). How powerfully the publican reasoned with God when he prayed, “God be merciful to me a sinner” (Lk 18:13). To be sure, it was by divine grace that the publican prayed, sincerely confessing he was a sinner and that he needed God to show him mercy. He implied that he could not save himself; he needed God to do for him what he was utterly incapable of doing himself. He knew he could not save himself, but God could. His prayer to God was no long-drawn-out chain of reasoning, but he was using his mind to think out what he needed to bring before God, and looking to Him to supply his great, vital need of salvation. No doubt it was significant for the publican that he was at the temple, where sacrifices were offered for sinners. It gave him hope that he could be forgiven.

We, in this New Testament age, are to come before God with the same plea for mercy and salvation. The sacrifices at the temple could not actually take away sin, but they pointed to Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save sinners by the one sacrifice of Himself. So, when we find Christ calling on us to come to Him – that is, to believe on Him – we should ask the Lord to make us able and willing to believe. No matter how strong our unbelief may be, we should, in our reasoning before God, bring before Him the fact, “Nothing is too hard for Thee” (Jer 32:17).

Sinners may also mention the infinite value of the redemption purchased by Christ in their reasoning. Sinners concerned about the seriousness of particular sins are not to hold back from Christ; they may take encouragement from His words, “*All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men*” (Mt 12:31). Whatever their sins may be, they cannot be cast away if they will only believe in the Saviour (those who have any concern for their souls have never committed the sin “against the Holy Ghost” which, the verse just quoted says, “shall not be forgiven”). Remember that Christ “is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb 7:25). Sinners are to go on reasoning with God, reverently basing all their arguments on Scripture, which remains totally reliable in spite of all that atheists may say, and even some professing Christians. “Let God be true but every man a liar” (Rom 3:4).

## Justification by Faith (2)<sup>1</sup>

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.*

2. Having learned what this righteousness is, the remaining question is, How does it become ours? It does not avail for all, for some are never justified. The explanation is that this righteousness is made over to those who believe, and as soon as they believe. Hence it is called “the righteousness of faith”, the “righteousness which is of faith”, the “righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ”; and we are repeatedly said to be “justified by faith”. These declarations are too numerous and too explicit to leave room for doubt, except as to the place which faith occupies in justification.

Here arises a class of theologians who teach that the very act of faith is reckoned to our account, instead of the righteousness of our works. They conceive that they find some basis for this statement in such texts as these: “To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness”; “Faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness”. But if we carefully examine Paul’s reasoning in these places, we shall find he means that justification is a matter not of working but of believing; in other words, that it is not earned. In his argument, to say that justification is “by faith” is the same as to say that it is a matter of grace; and as his object is to prove that Abraham was justified without works, he cites the declaration that he was justified by faith.

Nothing short of perfection can justify anyone. To suppose a reduction in the demands of the law so that God could receive the act of believing, in place of other acts of obedience, is to annul Paul’s argument. The whole method of grace is then simply the substitution of one work in place of all the rest. And, strange to say, it is assumed that it gets rid of the substitution of Christ for His people. The act of believing is of course a work, and as such it is demanded by the law; but as a work it is excluded by the gospel. The very freeness of the salvation is lost by considering faith as the ground of acceptance. Faith has indeed a value, which shall be pointed out, but it renders unnecessary the supposition that the act of faith is reckoned to us.

All Paul’s convincing reasoning against justification by works bears in full force against justification by faith considered as a work. He most carefully

<sup>1</sup>The remainder of the sermon, continued from last month. The preacher emphasised in the first section that *to justify* does not mean to make holy but *to declare a sinner righteous*. This section follows on from one which explained what the righteousness is which is the basis of a sinner’s justification – Christ’s righteousness.

distinguishes faith from the righteousness which is received by it. That which justifies must be a perfect satisfaction to the law, which faith is not. If faith is the ground of our acceptance, we are justified without the law being satisfied – unless we say that it is satisfied by the obedience of Christ. This is indeed most true; but then the imputation of the act of faith is more than needless. It is highly absurd to suppose that Paul, in the very discourses in which he is reasoning against all righteousness of our own, represents the act of faith as set to the sinner's account instead of obedience.

These reasons go far to set aside the related error – that we are justified by faith because it is considered as the root and principle of all obedience. Faith is here regarded as incomplete obedience. This is justification by works under the name of faith. The idea destroys at once the freeness of salvation. It is only a refined righteousness of works. It is as much our own righteousness as works are our own righteousness. It is a payment of the debt by a different kind of works. Every declaration that we are justified by faith involves denying that we are justified by anything that comes from ourselves; nothing can be plainer. Does Paul say that “boasting is excluded”? “By what law?” “By the law of faith.” Does he say that Abraham was justified by faith? He adds: “Now to him that worketh not . . . but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned”. Such is the irreconcilable opposition between faith and works, as justifying, that Paul assumes it as a maxim: “The law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them”.

It is undoubtedly true that faith works by love and that love is the fulfilling of the law, and consequently that faith is the principle of all obedience. It is also true that only justifying faith produces works, but it does not derive its power to justify from its fruitfulness. Indeed the assumption is a covert method of bringing in a holy nature as the basis for justification.

When the Scripture speaks of justification, it passes very lightly over the act of believing, as if not to ascribe to it a substantive part in the work. Scripture always introduces it as a sign and proof of the freeness of the benefit, and always as the channel for communicating something higher. We should accustom ourselves to take this view. Faith is simply an instrument that receives. It is the hand stretched forth to receive an infinite bounty – the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Its whole activity is to bring the sinner into connection with that righteousness – to which he would otherwise have no claim. Faith is a persuasion of God's mercy, acquiescing in God's plan; it involves despairing of our own strength and acknowledging free grace; it is above all other exercises fitted to exclude the pretence of merit and to exalt the riches of Christ.

The moment a sinner believes, he is justified. It is of all things the furthest from any thought that this act constitutes any claim; he scarcely makes it an object of attention; his soul is absorbed in the infinite object which it grasps. Yet at this point of time the righteousness of Christ becomes his, and it becomes so because faith unites him to the Surety. This is the secret of its power. It establishes communication with the source of merit. He is thenceforth in Christ, and the righteousness of God is in him. Being one with Christ, he possesses the acts and merits of his Head, in the eye of the law. These are no longer the righteousness of another infinitely removed from him, but are the righteousness of one with whom he has become indissolubly connected. The oneness is so complete that it is likened to the unity of the Father and the Son.

In God's solemn account are written all the enormous debts of His people; but God's own hand has written opposite them, in letters of blood, the payment of His Son. God is pleased to regard the righteousness of the Head as the righteousness of the members. Nor is there error or deception in such a reckoning. This righteousness, though not rendered by believers, is rendered for us by one who is their Surety; and they "are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." Turretine, the Genevan theologian, states, "We are not declared righteous in ourselves, which would be false, but in Christ, which is most true". And Witsius, a Dutch writer, says, "God does not judge that we in our own persons have rendered this righteousness, which is false; but that Christ has so fulfilled it for us that we may justly be invested with His merit, which is so true that it is the sum of the whole gospel".

Christ's righteousness was rendered for no other purpose. The law did not demand it, except for this purpose. The Son of God became incarnate to render it. He was under no obligation, except the obligation of His people. When He bowed under the law, it was the world of elect sinners which bowed. "If one died for all, then were all dead" (or, all died). The infinite Judge does not merely accept it; He devised it. It was the very thing which He contemplated from all eternity as the most glorious satisfaction to the law; it would be the height of presumptuous scruple for us to find fault with it. And all heaven rejoices in beholding a glorious body of saints, so united to the Messiah that every act of His redounds to their salvation.

It is a view of the subject which avoids many difficulties and anticipates many objections. The union of believers with Christ is the ground on which they receive His righteousness. It is set to their account; it has become theirs by this gracious connection. This, and no more, is what we mean by the imputation of Christ's righteousness. Instead of arbitrarily ascribing to believers something contrary to fact, as our adversaries allege, God beholds them as



intimately connected with the great Surety. The obedience which He rendered He rendered in their nature, in their name, and as their covenant head. It was His very intention that it should be regarded as theirs. It had no other intention. Faith completes the union long contemplated in the covenant and, from then on, God regards the believer no longer in himself, but in Christ, and the Church of elect saints as the body of Christ invested with His righteousness.

From what has been said, it is apparent that justification is instantaneous. The notion of progressive justification is inseparable from the teaching of righteousness on the basis of a holy nature. At every moment the soul is either condemned or absolved, either unrighteous or righteous. It is equally apparent that the notion of eternal justification is unscriptural. The covenant counsels of the Godhead, and the purpose to justify, were indeed from eternity, but the act of justification takes place in time.

Neither can we say that actual justification ensued immediately when the Lord Jesus satisfied divine justice. Although the righteousness was complete at that instant, it was not yet applied to those for whom it was intended because, as we have seen, this application is founded on the union of believers to Christ, which had not yet taken place in regard to all. The moment of justification is the moment of believing; in the order of time, it is therefore identical with the moment of effectual calling. This appears from all those expressions which speak of believers as having been under condemnation and wrath, as passing from darkness to light, from enmity to friendship, from death to life. But holy men who lived under the Old Testament were united by faith to a Redeemer not yet incarnate and were justified by a righteousness yet to come.

At this blessed moment of justification, the sinner is at once admitted to the favour of God. He is accepted as righteous. The law is as fully satisfied with regard to him as if he had never sinned. The righteousness of Christ is now his righteousness. He can no more come into condemnation than Christ can come into condemnation. He is delivered from the guilt and penalty of all his sins. As to sins which he may hereafter commit, he is indeed not pardoned, because it would be incongruous to say that sins are pardoned before they are committed; but God has graciously accepted the righteousness of Christ, even in respect to these sins, and in process of time pardon is dispensed. The effect of this grace is to remove all condemnation and all punishment.

That sin which has been visited on the Surety, will not be visited on believers. The afflictions of this life are not legal pains, but fatherly trials and corrections. And death itself, being deprived of sin, which is its sting, and the law, which is its strength, is despoiled of all its punitive force. Here is a

change of state so great that it is amazing even to him who experiences it. The absolving act is not in every case pronounced to the soul of the believer; it is, however, sooner or later, sealed to every one of them by the Holy Spirit. But the vastness of its meaning will not be appreciated by anyone until the time of the general judgment, when the Judge shall acquit His people, as a body, before the assembled universe, and welcome them to the joy of their Lord.

Such is the doctrine of the Bible on this important subject; and if my endeavour has been successful, I have shown these points: justification is a legal term, expressing an act of God by which He accepts a sinner as righteous in the sight of the law; the best obedience of the sinner, even in his renewed state, is insufficient for this end; we are justified without works, and the works thus excluded are not merely ceremonial works, nor works wrought in unbelief, but all works whatever; the righteousness which justifies us is that of the Divine Mediator, consisting in what He did and what He suffered; this righteousness becomes ours when we believe; the efficacy of faith does not arise from the act of believing being imputed instead of obedience, nor from faith viewed as the source of all obedience, but from its uniting us with the Lord Jesus Christ; in consequence of this union, the acts of the Redeemer are considered as the acts of His people, which is otherwise called the imputation of His righteousness; and hence the believing sinner receives the absolute remission of all his sins and has a right to eternal salvation.

Two reflections will sum up our discussion of the subject and will at the same time be a reply to objections which some think formidable.

1. *Justification by faith is free justification.* From beginning to end, the work of salvation is of grace. And it is futile to object that this grace is impaired by the satisfaction rendered to the law. The debt which we owed is indeed paid, but not paid by us. The means of paying it is freely given us by God. He who places in the hands of an insolvent debtor the amount which shall discharge all his liabilities, does not thereby lessen the obligation of the person relieved. Our own part in justification is merely to receive. It is not our own works or even our own faith that is the ground of our acceptance. And though the law is fully satisfied and the debt cancelled, it is a gracious gift to us; a gift from the hand of Almighty God.

The offended Judge is He by whom the propitiation is devised, applied, accepted and perfected. This is deeply impressed on the heart of the rejoicing believer. The more clearly he views the righteousness of the Surety as the basis of all his hope, the more humbly does he acknowledge that his salvation is all of grace. The doctrine abases human pride and exalts the riches of Divine favour. And we may confidently appeal to experience to show that

none have been more constant in praising free grace than those who behold it manifested in the imputation of perfect righteousness.

2. *The belief of justification by faith tends to personal holiness.* In answer to the objection of adversaries, we maintain that the obligations to obedience are not weakened but confirmed. He who expects justification to be, not by works, but by faith, expects it in this way because his conviction of the eternal obligation of the law is so strong; the law could not relax one jot or tittle of its claim, without satisfaction. He connects with this such a sense of the evil of sin as can be produced only by seeing it visited on the holy Son of God. He sees, as no others see, the dreadful nature of its punishment. He sees, as no others can see, the infinite purity of God's character. But he especially feels the obligation of gratitude, for the free compassion and infinite love of God; so he has the strongest possible motive to obedience. Every view which he takes of Christ's mediatorial work and suffering is a fresh inducement for him to live no longer unto himself but unto Him who loved him and gave Himself for him.

Consequently the history of the Church shows that gospel morality has flourished best where this doctrine has been preached. To which side shall we look for strictness in observing the law of God – to the Romish body, where human merit was triumphant, or to the churches of the Reformation? Where shall we go to find strong convictions of sin – to the assemblies where human merit is exalted, or to those where free salvation is proclaimed? What charge was ever brought more violently against our forefathers than the charge of being unduly scrupulous and pharisaical? To what class of preachers do worldly people attach themselves – to those who make everything of morals, or to those who preach the righteousness of Christ? By whose labours are great reformatations wrought and extensive awakenings produced, if not the defenders of a gracious justification?

Are any disposed to say that a doctrine cannot be true which is open to the objection that it encourages sin? We answer, This misrepresentation is as old as Paul's time; the truth was understood wrongly even in the age of the apostles. "What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid." We may reply, as Paul replied, "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

We may go further and say that of all the means for promoting personal holiness, none is more effective than to contemplate, steadily and affectionately, the very truth which has now been presented. It is when believers behold the blessed Saviour suffering for them, and obeying for them, that their self-devotion rises to its height. Draw your motives, beloved brethren, from the cross of Christ. Your obedience will then have a continual spring.

Instead of being a cold observance, it will be the outgoing of a melted, broken heart. The more free you feel yourself from the law as a covenant of works, the more will you feel it to be a delightful yoke as a rule of life. The more you feel freed from the bondage of sin, the hardest of all masters, the more you will exult in the service of a gracious Lord.

And if the insidious adversary should ever abuse your minds by Antinomian suggestions, you will answer his seductive argument, as Paul answered it: "What then; shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants . . . his servants ye are? . . . But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but . . . being made free from sin, and became servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

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## Jesus and the Woman of Samaria (11)<sup>1</sup>

*George Hutcheson*

John 4:23. *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.*

1. The reformation of the worship of God was reserved for the days of the gospel and to be brought about by Christ. Therefore He says, "The hour cometh, and now is," when this change shall be. He says, "now is", either because it was instantly approaching at His death, or because He was even now beginning this reformation by His ministry.

2. They who profess to be worshippers of the true God ought to worship with humble and affectionate reverence, and with subjection and submission to Him, considering His majesty and their own vileness. For the word rendered "worshippers" implies so much, being a similitude taken from dogs fawning and casting themselves down at their master's feet.

3. Albeit all who profess the true God, and are not avowed atheists, will have some sort of worship, yet all of them will not be found true and approved worshippers, either for matter or manner. Therefore some are called "true worshippers" by way of distinction from others.

4. The true worship of God under the gospel does not consist in the external pomp of ceremonies and observances, but is spiritual, simple and substantial; for they shall "worship the Father in spirit and in truth", not in

<sup>1</sup>These are the "doctrines", or lessons, as edited, that Hutcheson (1626-74) draws from this verse, in his *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

carnal shadows. Even if they were God's own ordinances, yet they did so take up the attention of worshippers (through their own weakness) that often they did not mind this spiritual worship. How much more may it be expected that, the more external pomp there is of men's devising, the less spiritual truth there will be?

5. It is not sufficient to make one an approved worshipper that they do not multiply rites and ceremonies, but their worship must be chiefly inward, flowing from grace engaging the heart in God's service, and from the breathing and influence of the Spirit; not resting on an external form of lawful worship, or any bodily exercise about it. So much also are we taught from this that worship must be "spirit", or spiritual, for the manner of performance as well as for its nature in itself.

6. God also requires in a worshipper not only to avoid formality – which is but a deceitful, hypocritical show of worship – but to study sincerity and straightness of heart, not dealing negligently, or for personal advantage in God's service; for worship must be "in truth".

7. It is the Lord's will and appointment alone that can give a being to true worship, and to this must all our reasonings about this matter be subject. And therefore his enjoining of spiritual, substantial and sincere worship should commend it to his people. So much does the subjoining of this reason teach, "for the Father seeketh such to worship Him".

8. All the true worship that God gets is of His own seeking and procuring, and having wrought it He takes pleasure in it. So much also may His seeking such to worship Him imply, that He sent Christ to make a conquest of spiritual worshippers and seeks them as those He delights in.

9. God in His nature is a most pure and simple substance, free of all mixture and composition, and infinite in perfections; and He is to be conceived of spiritually, avoiding all carnal and gross conceptions. For so much are we taught: "God is a Spirit", infinite above angels or spirits of men, who yet are the most simple, pure and perfect of creatures.

10. The right way of worshipping God is when men study to do what is most agreeable to His nature, which is most pleasing to Him. And men who know Him cannot but see that it is not carnal and outward performances that please Him, but what is performed in inward sincerity and real substance. So much this second point, confirming the former, teaches: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth".

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When we bring anything to God, we are apt to carry away something of the glory that belongs to Him; but faith brings nothing to commend the soul to God, and the poorer any come to God the more they glorify Him.

*Ralph Erskine*

# Preaching Christ<sup>1</sup>

## 3. Humbly and Wisely

*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.*

[3.] Ministers must preach Christ *humbly* as well as faithfully: “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor 4:5). Paul does not deal in compliments, but he spoke as it was, for there are no greater servants than those that are servants to the souls of men for Jesus’ sake. So John the Baptist was very humble in the exercise of his ministry: “He must increase, but I must decrease. . .” (Jn 3:30,31).

Luther used to say that “a minister must take heed of bringing three dogs into the pulpit: pride, covetousness and envy”. The friends of the bridegroom must not woo for themselves but for the bridegroom. Dispensers of the gospel are the Bridegroom’s friends, and they must not speak one word for the Bridegroom and two for themselves, as has been the trade of many weak and worthless men. It is the greatest glory of a minister in this world to be high in spiritual work and humble in heart. Vain glory is a pleasant thief; it is the sweet spoiler of spiritual excellences. Paul was very humble in exercising his ministry; none were so high in worth as he was, and none so low or humble in heart. Though he was the greatest among the apostles, he accounted himself less than the least of all saints. Yes, he counted it not only his duty, but his glory, to be a servant to the weakest saints: “To the weak became I as weak” (1 Cor 9:22); “Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not” (2 Cor 11:29).

[4.] As they are to preach the Lord Jesus Christ humbly, so they are to preach Him *wisely*. “He that winneth souls is wise” (Prov 11:30); and indeed the greatest wisdom in the world is necessary for winning souls to Christ. He is wise that wins souls, or he that catches souls, as a fowler catches birds, or a fishermen catches fish. There is a holy and heavenly craft required in winning souls to Christ: “Nevertheless, being crafty,” says the Apostle, “I caught you with guile” (2 Cor 12:16). He speaks of a holy and heavenly craftiness.<sup>2</sup>

It is written of the fox that, when he is very hungry and can find no prey,

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Brooks’ *Works*, vol 3. Last month’s article spoke of preaching Christ plainly and faithfully.

<sup>2</sup>If one soul is more worth than a world, as Christ has told us, they must be wise who win souls to Him.

he lies down and feigns himself dead; and so the fowls light upon him and then he catches them. Paul, hungering after the welfare of the Corinthians' souls, makes use of his heavenly craft to catch them. There is a great deal of wisdom required to hold out Christ unto the people, not only as something good, but as the greatest good, as the choicest good, as the chiefest good, as the most suitable good, as an unchangeable good, as an independent good, as a total good, and as an eternal good. Christ must thus be held forth to draw souls to fall in love with Him, and to work their hearts to run out after Him.

Wisdom is required to answer all the cavils and objections that keep Christ and poor souls apart. Wisdom is required to take souls off from all false foundations that they are apt to build on; wisdom is required to present Christ freely to souls, in opposition to all unrighteousness and to all unworthiness in man; wisdom is required to suit things to the capacities and conditions of poor souls, to make dark things plain and hard things easy. Ministers must not be like the one who gave straw to the dog and a bone to the ass, but they must suit all their discourses to the conditions and capacities of poor creatures, or else all will be lost: time lost, effort lost, God lost, heaven lost and souls lost for ever.

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## Union with Christ<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Formation and Nature of Spiritual Union

*Rev I D MacDonald*

**4.** **Spiritual union.** This phase of the union may be considered as Christ the Bridegroom coming to espouse His bride to Himself, forming the marriage union between them and securing her consent to that union, thus making it mutual. This aspect of union is bound up directly with the application of redemption. God appointed the means of sinners coming to possess the benefits of the redemption purchased by Christ; it was to be through the formation of a spiritual union between them and Christ. *The Shorter Catechism* teaches this in clear terms: "The Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling". It is only through union with Christ's Person that His benefits can be possessed and enjoyed.

Boston points out that sinners are not to think that they will partake of the benefits of Christ's death without coming to be united to Christ Himself.

<sup>1</sup>The previous part, last month, of this Theological Conference paper dealt with the third phase of union with Christ – that formed when He assumed human nature and worked out a righteousness in that nature.

His benefits cannot be separated from Himself. Thus the sinner comes to partake of the redemption purchased by Christ “as the poor widow drowned in debt, by marrying the rich man, is interested in his substance. It is with Christ Himself that all saving benefits are given (Rom 8:32).”

Since this aspect of spiritual union with Christ is the “crowning aspect” of union with Christ, more detail will be entered into as to its formation, nature, and necessity.

**1. *The formation of spiritual union.*** If we take a closer look at the spiritual union itself, it is a mutual union formed by the Holy Spirit on Christ’s side and saving faith on the sinner’s side. Thus the Saviour speaks of it as “ye in Me, and I in you” (Jn 14:20), and speaking of its formation in the soul of a sinner Christ says, “I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with Me”.

(1.) *It is formed in regeneration by their effectual calling.* Christ is first in the union, “I in you”. In answer to His intercession for one of His elect, the Holy Spirit is sent forth to begin the union between Christ and the sinner. This is like Christ stretching out His hand to take a grip of the sinner, apprehending him. The Spirit does this by calling the sinner effectually so that he comes to be regenerated. The same Spirit that dwells in the exalted Redeemer without measure comes to dwell in a measure in the now-regenerated sinner, joining him to Christ so that he becomes one spirit with Him; as we read in 1 Corinthians 6:17, “He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit”.

In the moment of regeneration, Christ Himself can be said to have come into the soul by His Holy Spirit, by virtue of the unity of the Three Persons in the Godhead. And because the Spirit proceeds from, and is sent by, the Son, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit amounts to the same thing as Christ dwelling in the heart of the believer.

The Holy Spirit is therefore the bond of the spiritual union between Christ and His people. This aspect of union with Christ is symbolised in the sacrament of baptism, where the sprinkling of water signifies not only the cleansing away of the filth of sin in regeneration, by the Holy Spirit, but its effect in uniting the sinner to Christ: “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death” (Rom 6:3,4). Some divines, such as James Fisher, call this aspect of the formation of spiritual union “union”.

(2.) *Saving faith completes the union and makes it mutual.* When Christ takes hold of the sinner by the Holy Spirit to initiate the union, the regenerated sinner is then persuaded and enabled to complete the union by stretching out the hand of saving faith to embrace Him. The sinner, first apprehended by Christ, now apprehends Him and His righteousness, and the spiritual union is complete. Scripture describes this aspect of the union in Ephesians 3:17



as Christ dwelling in the heart by faith. Thus saving faith is the second bond of spiritual union between Christ and His people.

(3.) *The external call of the gospel is necessary to the formation of this union.* It is only where the external call of the gospel reaches the sinner that effectual calling takes place and spiritual union is formed. In the gospel offer, Christ is held forth as the Bridegroom, to whom sinners must be united if they are to have the blessings of salvation. “Wilt thou go with this man?” is the question pressed upon sinners under the gospel. Wilt thou consent to be in spiritual union with Him?

Where effectual calling takes place under the external call, sinners are brought to say, “I will go”, and are now found asking “the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten” (Jer 50:5). Sinners are not only given an “offer” of Christ, but they are invited, exhorted, and even commanded, to close in with Him in that offer, as we find it for example in Psalm 45: “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him” (vv 10,11). It is under the power of such offers and invitations that the sinner is persuaded and enabled to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered in the gospel. This term “embracing”, used in *The Shorter Catechism*, is most suitable to describe the sinner’s act of faith as a closing in with Christ to form a spiritual union with Him.

(4.) *On the formation of spiritual union, the union with Adam in the covenant of works is broken.* In the formation of spiritual union with Christ, the sinner is, to quote Boston, “cut off from the natural stock, the first Adam, and grafted into the true vine, the Lord Jesus Christ”. This is the same thing as to say that he is taken out from under the covenant of works and placed under the covenant of grace. Boston says that the preaching of the law is the knife which is used by the Holy Spirit to cut off the sinner from his cleaving to the covenant of works.

**2. The nature of spiritual union.** This spiritual union is, to begin with, to be distinguished from federal union and the union formed when Christ assumed human nature. The same Holy Spirit which dwells in the humanity of Christ comes to reside in them, so that “he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit” (1 Cor 6:17). The gracious dispositions formed in the soul of the believer through this union are a reflection of those which are in the heart of the Saviour Himself. All the grace they receive resides originally and radically in Him.

It is also a mystical union because it is formed and maintained by the Holy Spirit in a mysterious and supernatural way and because it is full of

mysteries such as Christ dwelling, living and walking in the believer, and the believer dwelling in Him (Jn 17:23, Gal 2:20, 2 Cor 6:16); and the believer dwelling in God, eating Christ's flesh, and drinking His blood (1 Jn 4:16, Jn 6:56). Though mystical, it is also a real union. Believers are as really united to Christ, as the members of the body to the head: "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph 5:30). The vast physical distance between Christ in heaven and His people on earth does not hinder this union. The Spirit, who is the bond of the union, is omnipresent, so that believers on earth are as really united to Christ as the saints in glory.

It is also an intimate union. Christ and believers, says Thomas Boston, "are joined as those things that are glued together . . . they are united as the meat with the body, which is incorporated into it". The intimacy is so great that it is even compared to that highest of all unions, even the union of the persons of the Godhead in the Trinity. Believers are said to be one in the Father and the Son, as the Father is in Christ and Christ in the Father: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us" (Jn 17:21). The union is indissoluble; death cannot break it; all the devils in hell cannot break it; God has purposed not to break it, and even the sins of believers cannot break it (Rom 8:38-39). Both soul and body are united to Christ, and even when the soul and body separate at death, neither are separated from Christ. Finally, the union is vital, or living, like that of the branch in the vine. The spiritual life of believers is sustained by the life of Christ, as a well of living water within them springing up to everlasting life.

There are numerous Scriptural illustrations of spiritual union. It is comparable to the marriage union between husband and wife, as it involves mutual love and delight. It is comparable to the union of a building with its foundation or corner stone since all the support and strength of the whole invisible Church is dependent upon Christ, and since individual believers have a union with one another. It is comparable to the union of a tree and its branches (Jn 15:1, Rom 11:16,17), bringing out the living aspect of the union whereby believers continually draw by faith upon the fullness of grace in Christ. Finally, it is comparable to the union between our head and other members of our body (Eph 4:15,16) inasmuch as all who are united to Christ receive their spiritual growth and increase of grace from Christ their Head for their respective spheres of usefulness.

It is worth quoting John Owen on this particular illustration: "If a man could be imagined so big and tall as that his feet should stand upon the earth, and his head reach the starry heavens, yet, having but one soul, he is still but one man. As, then, one living soul makes the natural head and members to

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be one, one body; so one quickening Spirit, dwelling in Christ and His members, gives them their union, and makes them one Christ, one body.”

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# Luther and the Reformation<sup>1</sup>

## 20. “I Will not Yield”

*J H Merle d’Aubigné*

Immediately after arriving in Augsburg, Luther asked his friend Wenceslaus Linck to tell the Cardinal that Luther was ready to appear before him. The legate was delighted that he had this impetuous heretic within his reach, and promised himself that the Reformer should not quit the walls of Augsburg as he had entered them. At the same time a monk went to inform Staupitz of Luther’s arrival. The vicar-general had promised Luther that he would come to see him as soon as he knew he had reached Augsburg.

The Diet of Augsburg<sup>2</sup> was over. The Emperor and the electors had already separated. The Emperor, it is true, had not yet left, but was hunting in the neighbourhood. The ambassador of Rome alone remained in Augsburg. If Luther had gone there during the diet, he would have met powerful supporters, but everything now seemed likely to bend beneath the weight of papal authority. The name of the judge before whom Luther was to appear was not calculated to encourage him. He was Thomas de Vio, better known as Cajetan, from the Kingdom of Naples, where he was born in 1469. At 16, he had entered the Dominican order, contrary to the express will of his parents, and afterwards became general of his order. But what was worse for Luther, this learned doctor was one of the most zealous defenders of that scholastic theology which the Reformer had always treated so unmercifully. Cajetan had zealously defended the prerogatives of the papacy and the doctrines of the mediaeval scholar Thomas Aquinas, whom he looked upon as the pearl of theologians.

The legate’s learning, his austerity and the purity of his morals ensured him an influence and authority in Germany that other Roman courtiers would not easily have obtained. No doubt he owed this mission to Augsburg to his reputation for sanctity. Rome perceived that it would admirably forward her plans. Even Cajetan’s good qualities rendered him still more formidable.

<sup>1</sup>This 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 Luther arriving in Augsburg, on 7 October 1518, to be examined by a cardinal because, as a friend put it, he had attacked “the abuses of those who sell Jesus Christ”.

<sup>2</sup>A meeting of the council of the Holy Roman Empire in 1518.

Besides, the affair entrusted to him was by no means complicated. Luther had already been declared a heretic. If he would not retract, the legate must send him to prison; and if he escaped, whoever should give him asylum was to be excommunicated. This was what this dignitary of the Church, before whom Luther was summoned, had to perform on behalf of Rome.

The morning after he arrived, Luther was already reinvigorated after his journey. He began to consider his strange position. He awaited the manifestation of God's will in the course of events. He did not have long to wait. An Italian courtier named Urban of Serra Longa sent Luther a message to say (as if acting entirely in the Reformer's interests) that he was about to visit him, and that he should avoid appearing before the legate until after this interview. He presented a most striking contrast to Luther's noble frankness and generous integrity.

He soon arrived at the Augustine monastery. The Cardinal had sent him to sound Luther out and prepare him to recant as was expected from him. Serra Longa imagined that his sojourn in Germany had given him a great advantage over the legate's other courtiers; he hoped to make short work with this German monk. He professed to have come of his own accord, because of his friendship towards a favourite of the Elector of Saxony and his attachment to the holy Church. After saluting Luther most cordially, he added, "I am come to offer you good advice. Be wise and become reconciled with the Church. Submit to the Cardinal without reserve. Retract your offensive language." Then Luther spoke of justifying what he had done.

*Serra Longa.* "Beware of that! . . . Would you enter the lists against the legate of his holiness?"

*Luther.* "If they convince me of having taught anything contrary to the Roman Church, I shall be my own judge and immediately retract. The essential point will be to know whether the legate relies on the authority of St Thomas [Aquinas] more than the faith will sanction. If he does so, I will not yield."

*Serra Longa.* "You intend to break a lance then!"

The Italian then began to use language which Luther styles horrible. He argued that one might maintain false propositions, provided they brought in money and filled the Church's treasury; that all discussion in the universities against the pope's authority must be avoided; that, on the contrary, it should be asserted that the pope could change or suppress articles of faith; and so he ran on. But the wily Italian soon perceived that he was forgetting himself; and returning to his mild language, he tried to persuade Luther to submit to the legate in all things, and to retract his doctrine, his oaths and his theses.

Luther was at first disposed to credit Serra Longa's fair professions, but

he was now convinced that they were of little worth and that he was much more on the legate's side than on his. He consequently spoke less and was content to say that he was disposed to show all humility, to give proofs of his obedience, and render satisfaction in those things in which he might have erred. At these words Serra Longa exclaimed joyfully: "I shall hasten to the legate; you will soon follow me. Everything will go well, and all will soon be settled." He then went away.

Luther was in suspense between hope and fear; yet hope prevailed. The visit and the professions of Serra Longa, whom he afterwards called a bungling mediator, revived his courage. The councillors and other inhabitants of Augsburg, to whom the Elector of Saxony had recommended Luther, were all eager to see the monk whose name already resounded throughout Germany. Some of them cordially saluted this extraordinary man who had undertaken so long a journey to place himself in the hands of the Roman agents. "Have you a safe conduct?" they asked. "No," he replied. "What boldness!" they all exclaimed. "It was a polite expression," says Luther, "to designate my rashness and folly." All entreated him not to visit the legate before obtaining a safe-conduct from the Emperor himself.

"But," replied Luther, "I set out for Augsburg without a safe-conduct, and have arrived safely." One of them answered affectionately but firmly: "The Elector has recommended you to us; you ought therefore to obey us, and do all that we tell you". Another added, "We know that, at the bottom of his heart, the Cardinal is exceedingly irritated against you". His friends undertook to obtain the requisite safe-conduct from the Emperor. They then told Luther how many persons, even in elevated rank, had a leaning in his favour. Several of the most respected citizens in one of the first cities of the Empire were already gained over to the Reformation.

The conversation had reached this point when Serra Longa returned. "Come," he said to Luther, "the Cardinal is waiting for you. I will myself conduct you to him. But you must first learn how to appear in his presence: when you enter the room in which he is, you will prostrate yourself with your face to the ground; when he tells you to rise, you will kneel before him; and you will wait his further orders before you stand up. Remember you are about to appear before a prince of the Church. As for the rest, fear nothing. All will speedily be settled without difficulty."

Luther, who had promised to follow the Italian as soon as he was invited, found himself in a dilemma. However, he did not hesitate to inform him of the advice of his Augsburg friends and spoke of a safe-conduct. "Beware of asking for anything of the kind," Serra Longa replied immediately; "you do not require one. The legate is kindly disposed towards you and ready to end

this business in a friendly manner. If you ask for a safe-conduct, you will ruin everything.”

“My gracious lord, the Elector of Saxony,” Luther replied, “recommended me to several honourable men in this city. They advise me to undertake nothing without a safe-conduct; I ought to follow their advice. For if I did not, and anything should happen, they will write to the Elector, my master, that I would not listen to them.”

Luther persisted in his decision, and Serra Longa was compelled to return to his chief and announce the difficulty, at the very moment when he flattered himself with success. Another invitation was sent to Luther, but with a very different view. John Frosch, prior of the Carmelites, was an old friend. He came to see Luther and begged him earnestly to come and stay with him. He claimed the honour of entertaining the German scholar as his guest. Luther accepted the invitation. Serra Longa’s eagerness and the fears of the councillors both pointed out the difficulties of Luther’s position. Yet he had God in heaven for his protector. Guarded by Him, he could sleep without fear.

The people wished to see Luther, but they had a still greater wish to *hear* him. He was requested on all sides to preach. He had no greater joy than to proclaim the gospel. It would have delighted him to preach Jesus Christ in this large city, even in the solemn circumstances in which he was placed. But he showed on this occasion, as on many others, a proper feeling of propriety and of respect for his superiors. He refused to preach, for fear the legate should think he did it to annoy and to defy him.

The Cardinal’s people, however, did not permit him to remain quiet. They renewed their persuasions. “The Cardinal,” they said, “gives you assurances of his grace and favour: what are you afraid of?” They employed a thousand reasons to persuade him to appear before De Vio. “He is a very merciful father”, said one of these envoys. But another approached and whispered in Luther’s ear: “Do not believe what they tell you. He never keeps his word.” Luther persisted in his resolution.

On Monday morning (October 10), Serra Longa again returned to the charge. The courtier had made it a point of honour to succeed in his negotiation. He had scarcely arrived when he said in Latin: “Why do you not wait upon the Cardinal? He is expecting you most indulgently . . . Retract. Come; you have nothing to fear.” Luther replied, “I will appear as soon as I have a safe-conduct.” Serra Longa lost his temper. He insisted, but Luther was immovable.

Serra Longa asked, “When all forsake you, where will you take refuge?” Luther, looking to heaven with an eye of faith, answered, “Under heaven”.

Serra Longa was silent for a moment, struck with the sublimity of this unexpected answer. He then asked, "What would you do if you held the legate, pope, and cardinals in your hands, as they have you now in theirs?" Luther told him: "I would show them all possible honour and respect. But with me the Word of God is before everything." Serra Longa smiled and said, "I do not believe a word of it". He then went out, sprang onto his saddle and disappeared. Serra Longa did not return to Luther, but he long remembered the resistance he met with from the Reformer, and what his master was soon after to experience in person. We shall find him at a later period loudly calling for Luther's blood.

Serra Longa had not long left when the safe-conduct arrived. Luther's friends had obtained it from the imperial councillors. It is probable that they had consulted the Emperor on the subject, as he was not far from Augsburg. Perhaps this was why Serra Longa was set to work upon Luther, for open opposition to granting a safe-conduct would have disclosed intentions that it was desirable to keep secret. But they soon found out that Luther was not a man to give way. In demanding a safe-conduct, he did not lean on an arm of flesh, for he was fully aware that an imperial safe-conduct had not preserved John Hus from the stake. He only wished to do his duty by submitting to the advice of the Elector's friends. The Lord would decide his fate. If God should require his life, he was ready joyfully to resign it. At this solemn moment, he felt the need of communicating once again with his friends, above all with Melancthon, who was so dear to his heart, and he took advantage of a few moments of leisure to write to him.

"Show yourself a man," said he, "as you do at all times. Teach our beloved youths what is upright and acceptable to God. As for me, I am going to be sacrificed for you and for them, if that is the Lord's will. I would rather die, and even . . . be for ever deprived of your sweet society, than retract what I felt it my duty to teach. Italy, like Egypt in times of old, is plunged in darkness so thick that it may be felt. No one in that country knows anything of Christ, or of what belongs to Him; and yet they are our lords and our masters in faith and in morals. Thus the wrath of God is fulfilled among us, as the prophet says, 'I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them'. Do your duty to God, my dear Philip, and avert His anger by pure and fervent prayer."

The legate was informed that Luther would appear before him the next day. He assembled the Italians and Germans in whom he had the greatest confidence, to discuss how he should deal with Luther. Their opinions were divided. We must compel him to retract, said one; we must seize him and put him in prison, said another; it would be better to put him out of the

way, thought a third; we should try to win him over by gentleness and mildness, was the opinion of a fourth. The Cardinal seems to have resolved on beginning with the last method.

## Travelling to Zion<sup>1</sup>

*John Macfarlane*

Jeremiah 50:5. *They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.*

Life is a journey. It is a journey which must be finished. Of all men it is **L**equally true they are passing along the way – it may be smoothly and imperceptibly, but it is rapid. It is not whether they advance with a reluctant or a cheerful pace; they have no control over the rapidity of their progress. Other travellers may pause in their journey, may recline in inviting shade, or loiter among the enchanting scenes which lie along their road, and resume their path at the point where they had abandoned it. Life is a journey in which no one can stand still. In whatever way we employ ourselves upon the road, we are steadily hastening to its end.

And, what is an infinitely more solemn truth, life is a journey to a permanent home. We are sojourners through this world to another, in which we must dwell for ever. Death finishes our pilgrimage, not our existence. It is the threshold over which we pass to an everlasting habitation, a habitation differing in its character, according to the difference in the spiritual condition of the inhabitant. It is a holy and happy home for the pure in heart; or a home which, if it may be so called, is only entitled to the name because it must be the doleful and everlasting dwelling-place of the impenitent, where they shall for ever be the prey of the most evil passions and the victims of the blackest despair.

Think then, O my soul, where your course during your earthly pilgrimage is likely to conduct you. Have you made your entrance by faith into the strait gate, and are you walking in the narrow way that leads to life? If you are not treading with fearless footsteps the broad road to destruction, see that you are not pursuing one or other of those numerous by-paths which less obviously, but as surely, conduct to the chambers of everlasting death.

It may serve to guide us in this important inquiry, if we look at the group of travellers to Zion here presented to our view. They are a company of cap-

<sup>1</sup>Taken with editing from *The Christian's Daily Companion*. Macfarlane (1798-1875) was at this time parish minister of Colessie, in Fife.



tive Jews, who, when the power and pride of their Babylonian oppressors had been broken and subdued, were returning to their own land to rebuild their city, restore their temple, and renew their covenant. But they are examples to us; they show the dispositions and state of mind with which Christian pilgrims, freed from the captivity of sin, should seek the heavenly Zion.

They are *weeping travellers*. In the previous verse they are represented as “going and weeping”. The foundation of their spiritual character is laid in the exercises of repentance. Hence we read of “repentance unto salvation”. It is at once a part of salvation and a preparation for all the rest. The conflict, the enlargement of heart, the longing after holiness, the feeling of unspeakable obligation to redeeming mercy – all the experiences, in short, of the Christian heart – imply a sense of sin and a hope of forgiveness, flowing through the channel of Christ’s mediation. It has been asked whether the tears of the sojourners to Zion were those of sorrow or of joy. They may have been both. The memory of their sins and of their captivity may have mingled in their bosoms with the prospect of their deliverance and their return to their native land. Certain it is that the Christian feels that the tears of repentance are not wholly bitter. He would not exchange the tender relentings of a contrite and broken spirit for all that the world calls good. And his deepest sorrow prepares him for his holiest joy. His most heart-affecting consciousness of sin becomes the pledge and the prelude of his purest consolations.

They are *inquiring travellers*. Intent upon reaching Zion, they ask the way. Although they have heard of it and are not wholly ignorant of it, their fear of missing the road induces them to seek direction from those who know it better, because they have walked on it before. So it ever has been with the travellers to the heavenly Zion. While the formalist and the one who merely professes faith are content to pursue the beaten path which opinion or custom prescribes, the pilgrims to the Jerusalem that is above cannot be satisfied unless they know that they are really on the road that leads to it. They consult the records that have been left by previous pilgrims, who have travelled the same way; they look at the finger-posts which are to be found at the turnings of the road, for the guidance of anxious passers-by.

They apply for divine light and direction. This is their prayer, “Show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths. Lead me in Thy truth and teach me”. And this is His answer, “I will instruct thee and teach thee the way in which thou shalt go”. Hence they are travellers on the right road. They ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.

How often men fail to reach heaven, not so much for lack of effort as that their energies have got into a wrong channel. They are off the way; and with every step they take they only recede from the point which they profess they

are anxious to reach. God has expressly told us in His Word that the only way in which His favour is to be obtained is by faith in the Saviour whom He has sent. And He has no less distinctly informed us of the nature of the obedience He requires – an obedience that is at once the evidence and the effect of the faith of the gospel. While God has revealed these things, sinners bend the straight rule of duty to their own crooked inclinations, by a fatal ingenuity.

They have found out, it seems, that opinions and principles are of no great value in religion, provided external duties are attended to. And substituting something like the effect for the real cause – the good works themselves for the principle that gives them all their value in the estimation of God – they may imagine that they are travelling to heaven, but their faces are not thitherward. Not having entered by the strait gate, they are not walking in the narrow way. Of those, on the other hand, whose case is represented by the returning Israelites, their eyes have been turned away from every vain confidence. And they act in conformity, or at least they ever desire to act in conformity, with the direction of Christ when He says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me”.

*They are travellers who encourage one another in the way.* Delivered from the same captivity, going to the same land, they stimulate each other to encounter the hardships amid the loneliness of the way, and they cheer each other. Christian pilgrims in the wilderness of this world require all the aids that mutual sympathy and stimulation can supply, to withstand the causes of weariness and fainting to which they are liable in pursuing their heavenward journey. Let us seek to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, that we may contribute our share to realise the attractive picture of the group of travellers portrayed by the pen of inspiration: “they go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.”

And finally, *they are resolute travellers.* They are determined to persevere in their journey, to reach their destination; to devote themselves wholly to the Lord. They propose to enter into a perpetual covenant never to be forgotten. It is perseverance that proves sincerity. “He that endureth to the end”, and he only, “shall be saved.”

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If I am redeemed from misery by the blood of Jesus, and if He is now preparing me a mansion near Himself, that I may drink of the rivers of pleasure at His right hand for evermore, the question is not (at least ought not to be), How may I pass through life with the least inconvenience? but, How may my little span of life be made most subservient to the praise and glory of Him who loved me, and gave Himself for me?

*John Newton*

# Sin and Grace<sup>1</sup>

*John Bunyan*

**D**avid says he opened his mouth and panted, for he longed for God's commandments. This was his sickness. The spouse also cried out that she was "sick of love" (Song 2:5). Such sickness would do us good, for in it the pulse beats strongly and well.

*Objection.* But it may be objected, I am yet in doubt of the goodness of my desires; both because my desires run both ways, and because those desires that run toward sin and the world seem more and stronger than those that run after God and Christ and grace.

*Answer.* There is not a Christian under heaven but has desires that run both ways. Flesh will be flesh, grace shall not make it otherwise. By flesh I mean that body of sin and death that dwells in the godly. As grace will act according to its nature, so sin will act according to the nature of sin. Now the flesh has desires, and the desires of the flesh and of the mind are both one in the ungodly; thank God it is not so in you.

The flesh, I say, has its desires in the godly; hence it is said to lust enviously; it lusts against the Spirit: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit". And if it is so audacious as to fly in the face of the Holy Ghost, you should wonder that you are not wholly carried away with it.

*Objection.* But those desires that run into the world and sin seem most and strongest in me.

*Answer.* The works of the flesh are manifest; that is, more plainly discovered, even in the godly, than are the works of the Holy Ghost. And this their manifestation arises from these following particulars:

1. We know the least appearance of a sin better by its natural hue than we know the grace of the Spirit.

2. Sin is sooner felt in its bitterness to and upon a sanctified soul than is the grace of God. A little aloes will be sooner tasted than will much that is sweet, though mixed with it.

3. Sin is dreadful and murderous in the sight of a sanctified soul; wherefore noticing it makes us often forget, and even question, whether we have any grace or not.

4. Grace lies deep in the hidden part, but sin lies high and floats about in the flesh; wherefore it is often more easily seen than the grace of God. The little fish swim on the top of the water, but the biggest and best keep down below and so are more seldom seen.

<sup>1</sup>An edited extract from Bunyan's *The Desire of the Righteous Granted*.

5. Grace, as to quantity, seems less than sin. What is leaven or a grain of mustard seed to the bulky lump of the body of death?

6. Sin is seen by its own darkness and also in the light of the Spirit; but the Spirit itself neither reveals itself, nor yet its graces, by every glance of its own light.

7. A man may have the Spirit busy at work in him; he may also have many of his graces in their vigorous acts, and yet may be greatly ignorant of either. Wherefore we are not competent judges in this case. A thousand acts of grace may pass through your soul and yet you may be conscious of few, if any, of them.

8. Do you think that he who repents, believes, loves, fears or humbles himself before God, and acts in other graces too, does always know what he does? No, no. Grace many times, even in a man, is acted by him unawares to him. Did Gideon, think you, believe that he was so strong in grace as he was? No, was he not ready to think that the angel lied when he told him that God was with him? Or what do you think of David, when he said he was cast off from God's eyes? Or of Heman when he said he was free among them whom God remembered no more? Do these then see their graces so clear as they saw themselves by their sins to be unworthy?

9. I tell you it is a rare thing for some Christians to see their graces, but a very common thing for them to see their sins; yes, and to feel them too in their lusts and desires, to the shaking of their souls.

*Question.* But since I have lusts and desires both ways, how shall I know to which my soul adheres?

*Answer.* This may be known thus:

1. Which would you have to prevail, the desires of the flesh or those of the Spirit? Whose side are you on? Does your soul not now inwardly say, and with strong indignation against sin, O let God, let grace, let my desires that are good prevail against the flesh, for Jesus Christ's sake?

2. What kind of secret wishes have you in your soul when you feel the lusts of your flesh to rage? Do you not inwardly, and with indignation, again say, O that I might never, never feel one more such inclination! Or that my soul would be so full of grace that there might be no longer room for even the least lust to come into my thoughts!

3. What kind of thoughts do you have of yourself, now you see that these desires of yours that are good are so briskly opposed by those that are bad? Do you not say, O I am the basest of creatures; I could even spue at myself? There is no man in all the world, in my eyes, so loathsome as I am. I abhor myself; a toad is not so vile as I am. O Lord, let me be anything but a sinner – anything, if Thou wilt subdue my iniquities for me.

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4. How do you like the discovery of what you think is grace in other men? Do you not cry out, O I bless them in my heart! O methinks grace is the greatest beauty in the world! Yes, I could be content to live and die with those people that have the grace of God in their souls. A hundred times, and a hundred more, when I have been on my knees before God, I have desired, if it was the will of God, that I may be in their condition.

5. How are you when you think that you yourself have grace? O then, says the soul, I am as if I could leap out of myself. Joy, joy, joy then is with my heart. It is, methinks, the greatest mercy under heaven to be made a gracious man.

And is it thus with your soul? Happy man! It is grace that has your soul, though sin at present works in your flesh; yes, all these breathings are the very actings of grace, even of the grace of desire, of love, of humility, and of the fear of God within you. Be of good courage, you are on the right side. Your desires are only good, for you have desired that against your sin, your sinful self, which indeed is not yourself but sin that dwells in you.

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## Book Review

*Human Rights and the Christian, A Historical Perspective*, by Gerard Charmley, published by Gospel Standard Trust Publications, paperback, 267 pages, £6.00; may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Human rights are much more strongly and more widely asserted today than has ever previously been the case. A former secretary general of the United Nations has, for instance, stated that “human rights are the foundation of human existence and co-existence” (p 7). This, obviously, is an unsatisfactory statement, for it ignores God and His revelation. To speak of human rights may not necessarily leave the idea of human duties out of account, but it very certainly tends to overshadow a sense of our *duty* to our fellow human beings and, especially, our *duty* to the great God who created us. A scriptural perspective would help us to place much greater emphasis on these duties.

As its subtitle suggests, this book gives a great deal of attention to the history of human rights, from ancient times to the present age. The author is a Strict Baptist minister with an appropriate academic background for such a study as this; he has a doctorate in political history. Besides examining the history of human rights, his intention in writing includes: “to set forth why this idea matters in our present age, and to suggest some pointers regarding the interaction of Christianity and human rights at present and in the future”

(p 16). But the author never loses sight of the overriding authority of Scripture in the area of human rights.

Dr Charmley concludes that, “if the right claimed by another, or the right which we intend to claim, is opposed to the holy law of God, in that case it is necessary . . . to conclude that this right is no such thing. Additionally, in the case of our own rights, we must ask whether any claim which we might make would be for the good of the Church or society as a whole” (p 264). He further states, “Whilst there are Christian, unChristian and even anti-Christian notions of the rights of man, the Church must not lose sight of the fact that the message which has been entrusted to her is not that of the rights of man, but of ‘the grace of God that bringeth salvation’ (Titus 2:11)” (p 266-7).

The history which takes up most of this book is certainly helpful, placing in perspective today’s emphasis on human rights, but many readers might find more useful a briefer publication which focused more exclusively on the principles lying behind this issue. Having said that, one can recommend the book as giving the biblical principles which we should apply to this area of contemporary thinking.

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## Notes and Comments

### The Platinum Jubilee

The Queen’s “Platinum Jubilee” (70 years on the throne) was marked with extended festivities, many of them, sad to say, taking place on the Sabbath. We are grateful to the Most High for the stability that the Queen has given to the nation over this long period of time, although it has been a most fearful period of spiritual and moral decline.

The idea of a jubilee is a biblical one (Lev 25:8-13) and the name derives from the Hebrew “yobel” meaning “jubilee” and “ram’s horn”. The fiftieth year, which was the year of the jubilee in Israel, was marked by the blowing of the ram’s horn. There was a proclamation of liberty to poor Israelites who had sold themselves as servants or slaves to their fellow Israelites, and there was a restoration of land.

This pointed to the liberty for sinners that Christ came to proclaim: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Is 61:1). Those that are in bondage to Satan, which is everyone by nature, are invited by the gospel to go free, with the freedom that Christ has purchased for sinners. The proclamation of this spiritual jubilee

is a “joyful sound”, and those that “know” or understand this sound in their souls are blessed: “Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance” (Ps 89:15).

The jubilee was also the culmination of the Sabbath. Every seventh year there was to be a sabbatical year, when the ground lay fallow, and the Lord would provide an abundant harvest the year before to tide them over, as He had done in the wilderness with the manna on the sixth day, before the Sabbath. The jubilee marked the passage of seven sabbatical years, or a Sabbath of Sabbaths. The Sabbath principle is partly one of restoration – the body being restored by outward rest and the soul by finding, or returning to, its rest in Christ – but also one of spiritual-mindedness. The restoration of wealth to the poor at the jubilee taught men that they had to seek their purpose in something higher than in accumulating the things of this world. They could not pride themselves on their wealth as lifting them above others. When Christ proclaims the gospel jubilee to the soul, He gives it a place of rest, and sets it free from the pursuit of this world, with its pride and vanities, to seek after heavenly things.

The great need of the United Kingdom is to hear and to “know” the joyful sound of the spiritual jubilee proclaimed by Jesus Christ. But along with that must come the knowledge of sin. “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins” (Is 58:1).

DWBS

### **Homosexual Marriage and the Church of Scotland**

On May 23 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland approved the proposal to conduct same-sex marriages by 274 votes to 136. Ministers who wish to perform such ceremonies must apply to the Principal Clerk’s office, who will then apply on their behalf to the Registrar General for Scotland. This legislation states that no minister will be compelled to perform a same-sex “wedding” or be involved against their will in the arrangements for one. One wonders, however, how long it will be before ministers who refuse to perform such ceremonies are put under pressure, or even vilified, for not following this unscriptural practice.

Proponents of the change argue that the change shows a compassionate and loving care towards those who are homosexual. But there is an infinite, eternal and unchangeable God who is perfect in *wisdom*, power, holiness, justice, *goodness* and truth; He knows what is best for His creatures and He has decreed that marriage should be between a man and a woman.

Rev Scott Rennie, formerly of Aberdeen and now minister of Crown Court Church of Scotland, London, is himself in a same-sex “marriage” and was

in favour of the change. He said in a radio discussion, "People's understanding of human sexuality has developed; we've grown better; we know more; and so we read the Scriptures in that light". Mr Rennie, and those who voted for the measure, seem to have lost sight of the truth that God is the same yesterday, today and for ever, and His Word does not change with the times for man's convenience.

Rev Phil Gunn, minister of Rosskeen Parish Church in Alness, Ross and Cromarty, told the Assembly that the Kirk was "stating loud and clear that the Bible, God's Word, is no longer our authority, that it's OK for us to pick and choose what we like and ignore the rest, that it is OK for us to rewrite Scripture so that it looks good in the eyes of a society that already thinks we are hypocrites". The Covenant Fellowship Scotland, a group of Evangelicals within the Church of Scotland, has issued a statement accusing the Church of making a "serious mistake".

Truly it can be said: They "plot against the Lord, and His / Anointed, saying thus, / Let us asunder break their bands, / and cast their cords from us."

*FRD*

### **An Unbiblical Observance**

Thirty years ago or more, the Free Church in the Isle of Lewis gave at least the outward impression of being more conservative than Free Church congregations elsewhere. In those days it would scarcely have seemed credible that people in the Free Church congregation in Carloway could participate in a "Palm Sunday" procession in conjunction with others, from the local Church of Scotland and the Stornoway congregation of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

According to a local information website, this ecumenical event took place on Sabbath, April 10, and involved people from the various congregations, with palm leaves, joining in a procession following locally-owned donkeys to the respective church buildings in the centre of the village, in a supposed reminder of the manner of Christ's entry to Jerusalem before His crucifixion. Of course, there is no warrant for the observance of such festivals in the Christian Church and for processions of this kind, especially not on the holy Sabbath. They are essentially popish in nature and it is no surprise that the Episcopal Church was involved in introducing this particular practice to Lewis.

Presbyterians ought to have nothing to do with such unbiblical observances. But the introduction of such a custom illustrates a profound spiritual departure from the regulative principle of worship and the old paths of godliness on the part of the current Free Church. In the time of Balaam, the dumb ass rebuked the madness of the prophet, but now in Carloway the donkey



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procession stands as a rebuke to the spiritual ignorance of all who were involved in this event.

We fear that this sad and ridiculous spectacle may well grieve the Holy Spirit further away, tend to bring down the Church in the estimation of the community, and contribute to hardening the hearts of the worldly in Lewis against religion. Furthermore, it is an object lesson in how quickly modernising and liberalising tendencies can set in to corrupt the witness and practice of Churches which once held to Biblical purity of worship. It should serve as a warning to us all, for “let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor 10:12). AWM

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## Church Information

### **Synod Resolution on the Church of Scotland’s *Declaration of Friendship with the Roman Catholic Church***

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met in Inverness on Wednesday, 18 May 2022 desires to place on record its protest against the proposed *Declaration of Friendship* between the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church.

The Synod records its deep sorrow, regret and protest at the recent statement issued by the Church of Scotland on unity with the Roman Catholic Church. This *Declaration of Friendship* marks a new low point in unfaithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ by a professed branch of the Christian Church in Protestant Scotland. For those who profess love to Christ to enter into friendship with His greatest enemies demonstrates the deepest spiritual ignorance, folly and insincerity. For the national church of a land previously liberated from the tyranny of the Papacy at the cost of the martyrdom of many of Christ’s dear saints now to claim friendship with the system which shed their blood is an outrageous betrayal of the Saviour Himself and His slain saints.

The Synod recalls now, as previously in its *Resolution on Reformation Attainments and the Church’s Relation Thereto* in 1910, that “Scotland had been for centuries sunk in ignorance, superstition, physical degradation, and spiritual slavery (a state of things which always obtains in nations under the baneful yoke of the Papacy), till set free from that galling bondage by the First Reformation. Efforts were made from time to time by one person or another who had become more enlightened than his neighbours, to spread rays of Gospel light among the people, but the Papists, who had supreme

power in civil and religious matters, cut off, by the most cruel death, everyone who had the courage to speak a word against the idolatrous faith and worship of the Church of Rome. This absolute power which she possessed was used with a vengeance to keep the light of God's truth from the people."

The Synod also reasserts its position that the system of the Roman Catholic Church is the greatest embodiment of the antichrist, and that the office of papacy is that man of sin and son of perdition, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4). It also reasserts its Biblical opposition to the doctrines and system of antichrist (so grossly injurious to the honour of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and man) including the worship of Mary, the blasphemous sacrifice of the mass, and the claimed headship and infallibility of the Pope.

The Synod calls upon all who profess to love and serve Christ to honour Him by obeying His own command to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness such as the antichristian system of Roman Catholicism, but rather to reprove them (Ephesians 5:11), and to heed the call to "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (Revelation 18:4,5).

The Synod also urges the Church of Scotland to refuse this *Declaration of Friendship* due to be presented at the forthcoming meeting of the General Assembly, and to consider that the very proposal of such a declaration is itself a loud call to repentance since it demonstrates how far the Church of Scotland has departed from the Protestant faith, Reformation attainments, and faithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ and His truth.

### **Deposition of Mr Edward A Rayner**

At its meeting on 23 July 2021, the Asia Pacific Presbytery deposed Mr Edward A Rayner from the ministry. (Rev) *K M Watkins*, Clerk of Synod

### **Acknowledgement of Donations**

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

*Eastern Europe Fund*: Anon, £1000; Anon, for the church in Ukraine, £200.

*Home Mission Fund*: A Reynolds, £70.

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

**Duirinish**: Anon, for Glendale Church, "In memory of my dearest uncle Captain Donald M Grant & my dearest cousin Hamish B Grant", £200 per RAC. *Eastern Europe Fund*: Anon, £10.

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How quickly, how easily did [God] change Saul from a persecutor to an apostle.

The ship was safe when Christ was in her, though He was really asleep. *John Newton*

## 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. 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:graffton@internode.on.net.

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

#### New Zealand

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

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

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

**Tauranga**: 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 Levyskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevyskyi@gmail.com; or contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua.

#### Zimbabwe

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

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

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

**New Canaan**: Church. Rev T Mwedzi.

**Zenka**: Church.

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