

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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September 2022

Vol 127 • No 9

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

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Published by The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (Scottish Charity Number SC003545). Subscriptions and changes of address to be sent to the General Treasurer, Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283. The subscription year begins in January. Prices are on back cover. One month's notice is required for change of address. Queries about delivery of the magazines should be sent to the General Treasurer, not the printer.

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Editorial Board: The Editor, Mr F R Daubney, Rev A W MacColl, Rev D W B Somerset.

Deadline for sending material to the Editor: The beginning of the month previous to publication.

The Gaelic Supplement (quarterly): Editor: Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546. Available free on request.

Youth Magazine: *The Young People's Magazine*. Editor: Rev K D Macleod BSc.

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. **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, Vatten.

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

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Volume 127

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The Safety of Christ's Sheep

Some Jews came to Jesus and asked Him: “How long dost Thou make us to doubt?” (Jn 10:24), or (as in the AV margin) “leave us in suspense”. The matter they claimed to be in doubt was Christ’s Messiahship. They asked further: “If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly”. But, as David Brown comments, “When the plainest evidence of it was resisted, what weight could a mere assertion of it have?” They had seen so many miracles, each of which demonstrated Jesus’ supernatural power, that any further statement of the fact that He was indeed the Messiah could exert no influence on their thinking, unless it was accompanied by divine power. But that divine power was withheld in the face of their willful rejection of the evidence set before them in each of the many miracles that Jesus performed.

Why did they not believe in Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ? His own answer was: “Ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep”. But who are the sheep of Christ? He told them: “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me”. The sheep – people like Peter and John, Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene – listened to what Christ said; they trusted in Him as the Messiah; they looked to Him for the salvation of their souls. And they followed Him; they sought to follow His example; they were conscious of His authority.

None of these things were true of the Jews who asked Him to confirm that He was the Messiah. They would not take Him as their Prophet to teach them the way of salvation; they would not take Him as their Priest to offer up a sacrifice that could really take away sin; nor would they take Him as their King to rule over them and to defend them – especially from the devil who was tempting them to stay on the broad way although it leads to eternal destruction. And what about us? Have we taken Christ to be our Prophet, our Priest and our King? He still calls us as the Good Shepherd: “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else” (Is 45:22).

All who look to Him – that is, who believe in Him – have been brought among the sheep. They are now under the care of the Good Shepherd (Jn

10:11), who gave His life for them, the just One taking the place of unjust sinners, that He might bring them to God (1 Pet 3:18). In being made Christ's sheep, they have been given the nature of the sheep, and so they will follow Christ for the rest of their lives. Being under the Good Shepherd's care, they will always be safe; they will be brought to everlasting glory; they will never perish in a lost eternity.

So He promises, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (Jn 10:28). No man has the power to do so; no more can any devil pluck a sheep out of Christ's hand; His grip of them is too strong. The divine Saviour has infinite power; even Satan has only limited power. He may tempt them and, to some extent, succeed – as he did with David and Peter, for example. But none of the sheep will ever perish; they can never lose the eternal life which they have for the sake of Christ; they will always be safe because of the great work that He has accomplished on earth, on their behalf. Even when they stray, He will in His own time give them repentance. He always brings back to Himself the sheep who stray. But let us notice three further reasons why the sheep of Christ are perfectly safe:

1. They are justified. God justifies all who believe in Jesus; they are no longer under a sentence of condemnation because of sin; they are now under a sentence of acceptance – God accepting sinners as if they had never sinned. And He is just in doing so, because Jesus was condemned instead of those who believe in Him. He suffered unto death; He suffered the cursed death of the cross. What is more, believers are accepted as if they themselves had kept the law of God perfectly. Again Jesus was their Substitute; He kept the law in their place. God the Father sees the perfection of both these aspects of the work of Christ as the believer's Substitute; the Father sees that the Saviour fully satisfied His holy law in both these aspects. And therefore He is completely just when He makes the pronouncement that the believer is fully accepted as righteous for the sake of Christ.

Accordingly Paul asks, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" The Apostle has a simple answer: "It is God that justifieth" – not a creature. Not even an angel could have the necessary authority. No angel, though possessing a far better intellect than human beings, can fully understand the extent of the righteousness of Christ in satisfying divine justice, both in meeting the perfect standard of obedience required by the law and in fully satisfying the penalty it demanded for His people's sin. But God understood perfectly the completeness of Christ's satisfaction to the law and He was altogether well pleased with it. He understands also the reality of faith in every believer's heart. So no mistake is possible when God pronounces

a sinner justified; it is an irreversible pronouncement; there can never be any need to reverse it. The sheep have believed on Christ; God has justified them; and so they will always be safe.

2. Christ's intercession. The sheep cannot keep themselves safe, but the Good Shepherd can. In His intercessory prayer, He said, "I pray for . . . them which Thou hast given Me" (Jn 17:9). And now that He, the God-man Mediator, is exalted to heaven, He continues to make intercession for them. Just as He could say in this world, "Thou hearest Me always" (Jn 11:42), so His intercession in heaven is all-prevailing. When, on the basis of His redeeming work on earth, He makes intercession for His sheep to be kept, their safety is assured. They cannot perish; not even Satan can pluck them out of the hand of the One who makes intercession for them.

The sheep must look to Christ to keep them safe. But they must not become complacent; they must use the means that the Lord has appointed, including prayer. They must use, for instance, David's petition, "Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not" (Ps 17:5). David was not resting on his prayers; nor are Christ's sheep today; they look away from themselves to the gracious power of the Good Shepherd to protect them – especially in spiritual things. And they look to Him, as the great Intercessor, to present their petitions to the Father. It is thus they can be heard and kept safe

3. The covenant of grace. It is only possible to know that the Lord had an eternal purpose of mercy towards a sinner when that sinner has been called effectually, and is now among Christ's sheep. That eternal purpose, within the covenant of grace, is another aspect of the safety of the sheep. At the end of his days, David rejoiced in the "everlasting covenant . . . ordered in all things and sure" (2 Sam 23:5) that God had made with him. In that covenant, David was represented by the Son of God, and flowing from that covenant were all "the sure mercies of David" (Acts 13:34, for example) – all the saving mercies that he enjoyed on earth and was sure to enjoy to all eternity. By faith, David saw that these mercies were sure to him; and among these mercies was the leading of the Lord, his Shepherd (see Ps 23:1).

Under the terms of this covenant, God the Son undertook to take a human nature and, in that nature, to keep the law and undergo its penalty on behalf of all those – the sheep – whom the Father gave to Him. The Father likewise undertook to bless, especially with spiritual blessings, all those for whom Christ became a substitute in keeping God's law and undergoing its penalty. Christ has fulfilled entirely what He undertook to do, and the Father is sure to fulfill all that He has promised. All the sheep of Christ are therefore perfectly secure. His promise is totally reliable: "They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand".

Receiving from Christ's Fullness¹

A Sermon by Rev Donald Beaton

John 1:16. *And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.*

In the opening of this Gospel, our attention is directed to the most glorious and wonderful person that ever appeared in this world – none other than the Eternal Life which was with the Father – the Eternal One who was God Himself. In the account the Apostle has given, we have the inspired record of the most wonderful life that was ever lived in time and the most wonderful work that was done in time, the issue of which spread far beyond time, into an endless eternity.

Although, as far as the words are concerned, I believe there is not a book in the whole Bible where the language is as simple as in John; yet we have in it some of the greatest and profoundest truths in revelation, and we may think that, because the language is so simple, it is easy for us to grasp. But the more we ponder over these truths, the more we will find – if taught by the Spirit – that there is a great depth in it, deeper than you ever imagined, for it is only by the Spirit we can understand these things.

You have perhaps seen very calm water; because of the clearness you could see the sand at the bottom and think there is not much depth there, but you find out that there is a far greater depth there than you ever imagined. So with the Gospel of John: by its clearness and simplicity we are apt to think that we are not really face to face with such great truths and depth as we find in the Epistle to the Romans. But it is entirely owing to the clearness with which these matters are presented to us that we deceive ourselves into imagining that they are not so deep as they really are.

If we try to get at some explanation of the title that is given to the Lord here, “the Word of God”, we might arrive at it in this way: were it not for sin in his heart, you could say that the words of a man are the expression of the thoughts of his heart – the words of his heart. Yet, through sin, it is not so now; if it were not for sin you could say, when a man speaks, that is what is in his heart. But when we come to speak about God we must get rid of this idea of sin altogether, for the Lord Jesus Christ is the Word of God, all the words of the heart of God from before the foundation of the world. I mean that the very giving and coming of Jesus Christ into the world was an expression of the thought that was in God's heart in order that sinners would be saved. His thoughts are expressed in His sufferings and His coming.

¹This sermon was preached on 15 May 1936, the Saturday of a communion season in Edinburgh. Mr Beaton (1872-1953) was then the minister of the Oban congregation. The sermon was taken down, probably in shorthand, by Mrs Margaret Tallach of Glasgow.

When the Apostle John says here, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God", he is setting before us, in language simple enough to understand, but conveying to us a great and mysterious truth – that the Lord Jesus was making known the thoughts that were in God's heart – the great secret that was kept until He revealed it.

John speaks about Christ as the Light that was shining. This was the greatest light that ever shone in time; there was no light comparable to this Light. But it was not every eye that saw this Light shining; "the darkness comprehended it not". Yet some were so enlightened that they never could take their eyes from it again; others did not understand the purpose for which this light was shining. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

As John goes on speaking about Him, he gives utterance to this great, comforting truth: "Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace". This is a great theme, and we would seek to keep to a few points that are clearly brought before us in Scripture: (1.) Those to whom these words apply: "Of His fullness have *all we* received". Who are this all? (2.) The fullness out of which they are receiving. (3.) The never-failing Fountain that is continually being drawn on and will never be exhausted: "grace for grace". It will never end.

1. To whom do these words apply: "Of His fullness have *all we* received"? Does it mean that all mankind have received out of His fullness? Is it true that all the human race have received? No, that is not at all what the Apostle is saying here; he is speaking to a certain class of people and these are clearly pointed out in verse 12: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." The first point concerning them is that they are drawing out of the fullness of Christ Jesus; they have received Him. Those to whom Christ has been presented in the preaching of the gospel or, in this particular case, those to whom He was giving Himself – preaching to them, and offering Himself to them as the Saviour of the lost. Many heard Him speak but never felt their need of Him; yet others had to say, "Never man spake like this man". No message ever fell on the disciples' ears like the words of the Son of God; they were so solemnised by the words of the Messiah that they left everything and followed Him. Their hearts were opened that He might enter in.

They were a people who received the Lord Jesus; but now, in order that we might not deceive ourselves, we are told very distinctly here that "to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name". The receiving was a believing on His name, and it was not at all by

any natural effort on their part or on account of any qualification of their own or because they had a clearer understanding, but He gave them power. They were not the sons of God by nature; they were the children of the devil. There is no such thing here as a universal sonship of God; they had to receive power to be brought into that relationship.

The doctrine of the sonship of believers is one of the precious doctrines of God's Word – it is the adoption that is set before us in Scripture. When a child has been adopted, no matter what kindness or affection has been bestowed on that child, those who have adopted it cannot give it their own nature no matter how much they may love it; that is the difference between a natural child and a child that has been adopted. But in God's adoption, all the members of His family are made partakers of His divine nature, as we see it set forth very clearly in *The Shorter Catechism*, for the Westminster Divines were not only deep theologians; they were men taught by God. It is beautiful to see theology and experimental knowledge going hand in hand; that is how *The Shorter Catechism* was so useful to the Church of God in Scotland. There was theology of the heart as well as the head – what a beautiful combination!

Sonship implies being made partakers of the divine nature; every son in the family is made a partaker of that nature – not naturally but by grace. They are partakers of a new nature, and they certainly cannot take any credit to themselves for it. There is not one child in the family of God that can say, It is due to myself that I have this new nature. That is impossible in view of the fact that it is all from God Himself. It is a work from heaven, and no one shall receive out of this fullness who is not a son of God. John says therefore: “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”.

This brings us to the great subject that this relationship came about by the new birth, which is not the work of man but of the Holy Spirit and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has the keys of His own kingdom and who “openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth”. It is a great statement He made: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”; he cannot even see the kingdom unless he is born again.

This great truth is so clearly stated that no child can read his Bible but would know that there is no getting into the kingdom of God unless there is this new birth; yet you find men standing in a pulpit who have spent years taking theological courses in university, and you would never think, from what they say, there was such a sentence as this in the Bible. But the Lord Jesus has made it very clear to us that “except a man be born again, he can-

not see the kingdom of God". It is impossible for anyone to enter unless he is converted and becomes like a little child.

Professor B B Warfield² once put the question, What is it to become like a little child? Is it that children are tractable and teachable? Well, that is not true of every child; they are not all easily led. If we are to get at the true meaning, we must find something that is true of them the world over – that is true of every infant. The first thing that is true of them all is that they are unable to do anything for themselves: the infant is unable to clothe itself, unable to feed itself. The only thing it can do is cry; and Warfield said that this is true of every infant; it would certainly die unless it was looked after.

He said, That is what the Lord Jesus meant by becoming little children, for as long as we can do anything for ourselves – as long as we can clothe ourselves and feed ourselves, we are not fit for the kingdom of heaven. It was meant for those who were utterly helpless and who could do nothing at all. "Except ye be converted and become as little children" – all your own strength taken from you and all your own righteousness taken from you. And when you are brought to recognise that you have nothing with which you can clothe yourself and are unable to feed yourself, then you are fit for the kingdom of heaven. The door is open for such people, and that is a true mark of those who are born again: they are receiving all out of Christ's fullness.

"Out of His fulness have all we received." I believe some are saying, That will do very well for the Apostle Paul, but it is something I have no right to. But this is a verse for those who have nothing at all of their own – all their hope and confidence is in the righteousness of Christ; they will say, I have nothing to cover myself with, but I feel as confident as can be that, if I have the righteousness of Christ, I can face everything without being dismayed, but without Him I cannot. If I have His righteousness, all is well; if I have Him, all is well. God's provision in Christ is a perfect provision.

2. The fullness out of which they are receiving. You will remember that when the Apostle John himself got wonderful views of the Person of Christ – for most wonderful views were given to him – he wished to declare them to others, that they also might have that fellowship with Christ. In his First Epistle he says, "The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us". That is a point I wish to direct your attention to: "That eternal life". Quite simple to understand, you say. Yes, as far as the words are concerned, but there are depths here which it will not be possible to fathom throughout eternity.

What do you mean? you ask. Well, it was given to John to see before him

²Warfield (1851-1921) was Professor of Theology in Princeton Theological Seminary.

the life that never came into existence and which will never go out of existence. God's people shall experience a life that shall never end, but who can say that their life never had a beginning? But here is a life – one who never came into existence and shall never pass out of existence. John was so overwhelmed that he wished others would enter into that same fellowship with Christ.

Now I mention that it is out of this inexhaustible fountain of life that they draw a life that is never to end – a blessing that God Himself has given to them. It is not two or three that are drawing out of the pure fountain that remains with God alone, but all the redeemed. The life that is never to end depends entirely on God. What a great mystery!

I remember reading in John Love's writings a statement which much impressed me and I think it was: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked". How solemn these words are! And it is a very solemn thing when a man appears in a court of law and says, "I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth". The use that Love made of: "As I live, I live, saith Jehovah," is to say that the proceedings would be more solemn if an angel were to appear and swear by the Lord, because his character is superior to us; but when the great God of heaven Himself arises and appeals to men, swearing by His life as He alone can understand it, O how unspeakably solemn is the appeal, "As I live". How we ought to remember that we are all going to meet this God, who appealed to the mystery of His own being and said that He has no pleasure in those who are to be found at the left hand at last, but He would have us to be eternally with the fountain of life that remains with God alone. And He tells us to come to the water of life to drink.

The life you are leading now must come to an end; your days are numbered. You do not know their number, yet it is well known to Him, and beyond that you cannot pass. But the life He has given to His own people is a life that shall never end – a life that is to go on for ever and ever. The life that is brought to light in the gospel is incorruptible; the word that is translated *immortal* is also translated *incorruptible* in 1 Corinthians, meaning that the life that Christ brought in the gospel is a life that death can have no power over. This is the encouragement that was held out to the Apostle John: "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore". This was an assurance to John that the life which He had given him was incorruptible.

What a depth is in this: "Your life is hid with Christ in God – dwelling in the midst of life that cannot be approached. This is a life worth having; it is in safe keeping; no one can touch it. All God's children receive out of the same ocean, and back to that ocean it must go again. In Christ Jesus there is

treasured up the infinite blessing of love, and they are receiving out of the eternal love of Christ Jesus. O His love to them, unspeakable love, they have seen and felt a little, and how that has warmed them and made them feel what a wonderful place heaven must be! What must it be when the heart is under the constraining power of His love?

It is out of that ocean that they have drawn the little love they have in this world. If you go down to the sea and take a little of it in a pitcher, you could honestly say you had tasted the Atlantic Ocean. It is not necessary to take in the whole Atlantic, but that certainly does not mean that you have drunk the whole ocean. At the same time, you have tasted it, and the water right on to America has just the same taste; so it is with the taste of the love of Christ which the Lord's people get. It may only be a little, as you have seen children going to the sea with their pails and coming back with water in them, and they think such a lot of it themselves; at the same time, their taking pails of water from the sea makes no impression on it. The vessels with which we go down to this spiritual ocean are very small, but it is something if we can say that we have tasted this love of God; and there is no love in the heart unless it came from God first of all. No one in the human race loved God from his own desire. "We love Him, because He first loved us."

Now to use this illustration again, all the water that goes down to the ocean came from the ocean first, for it is taken up by the rays of the sun to the clouds. It then falls as rain, which comes from the mountains in streams and runs down to the sea again. It is a sure mark that you have the love of God in your heart, if it is not leaving you content in this world, if it is wanting back to the shore it came from. That is why it is continually going to heaven: it is only a stranger here; it has only a very cold home in this world, and there are, alas, sins in our hearts. The love of God is drawing the heart to the place from whence it came, and it will not be long until all that have tasted of the love of God will go to that ocean from whence this love came. It may have been only a very little some of them had; still it was there they got it, and they depend on Him alone.

There is also the fullness of the pardoning mercy of Christ. At the question meeting last night we heard marks of repentance and forgiveness. All the fullness of forgiveness is to be seen in Christ Jesus, and all that are His have drawn out of that fullness. Peter asked the Lord how often he had to forgive his brother: "till seven times"? You know yourselves that, by the time you have got to the third time, you will be tired of it. And there are some people of this stamp: they say they are sorry, but immediately they go away, they do exactly the same thing again; you will just say to yourself, There is no use paying any attention to them. It is certainly not easy to get to the seventh

time, but the Lord Jesus set a far higher standard than that before Peter: "Until seventy times seven". But you will be very near heaven before you can forgive seventy times seven. And there are multitudes in heaven now who would never have been there if Christ had not forgiven them more than seventy times seven.

Every one of them depends on the pardoning mercy of Christ Jesus, and what a wonderful way to heaven – a guilty, wretched sinner brought in before God and pardoned! I once heard of a minister who was very downcast in his mind, and friends used to come and speak to him of the abundance of mercy in God, but it was giving him no hope. Yet one day a friend was speaking of the mercy of pardon and of how poor guilty sinners are forgiven by the grace – the free grace – of Christ, and suddenly he lifted up his hands and said, "Blessed be God's great name. He will take His people in through the front gate of heaven in the full blaze of eternal justice, and there shall not be a stain on His name." After that, the poor man was able to go out and preach, and very likely his first sermon would have been good for himself and for others.

3. "Grace for grace." Many interpretations are given, but I am only going to take one view. The idea suggested by this view is that you have here an inexhaustible fountain which is continually being drawn on, and yet it is always the same grace that is coming from the fountain. God's people are receiving this continually; it is never to come to an end.

The people of Glasgow have a continual supply of water from Loch Katrine. It is continually flowing, and they can say they are drinking the water of Loch Katrine although they are not there. And the people of God can say they are receiving from the infinite ocean of God, and it will never cease until they enter into heaven. The more they draw, the more it will continue to flow, and there is no fear of it going dry, as might conceivably happen to Loch Katrine. Then Glasgow would be left without water, but this is not the case with the Fountain of believers; it is an endless supply.

I am just going to leave this one matter with you: God has given His people this assurance: there is an inexhaustible fullness in Christ Jesus and they will be receiving from it until they enter into glory. Although sometimes they will be thinking that they are not getting anything, they are being sustained and helped by it. Is it not a very rich provision that the heavenly Father has made for His children – the riches that He has prepared for His own inheritance? So the Apostle can say, "Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace".

[Christ's] cross is the highest expression of holiness, as well as the highest commendation of love.

John Kennedy

Preaching Christ¹

5. As Examples

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.*

[7.] As they are to preach Christ painfully, so they are to preach Christ as examples, “being enamples to the flock” (1 Pet 5:3). They must preach Christ in their lives as well as in doctrine. Ministers must not be like the drugs that physicians say are hot in the mouth and cold in operation, hot in the pulpit and cold and careless in their lives and conversations. They must say, as Gideon said to his soldiers: “Look on me and do likewise” (Jdg 7:17). “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Mt 5:16). They are called “angels” and “stars” because they should shine in righteousness and holiness.

What Caesar once said of his wife, that it was not enough for her to be without fault, but she should be without all suspicion of fault, may well be applied to ministers. Of all men in the world, they should be most free from the very appearance of evil. The lives of ministers often convince more strongly than their words; their tongues may persuade, but their lives command.

“Do not talk of a good life,” said the heathen, “but let your life speak.” God appointed that both the weights and measures of the sanctuary should be twice as large as those of the commonwealth of Israel, to show that He expects much more of those that wait on Him in the sanctuary than He does of others. Ministers should be like musk among linen, which casts a fragrant smell; or like that box of spikenard which, being broken open, filled the house with its odour.

Gregory says of Athanasius² that his life was a continual sermon, wooing men to Christ. Aristotle requires this in an orator, that he must be a good man; how much more then should God’s orators be good and gracious? When Eli’s sons were wicked, the people abhorred the offering of the Lord (1 Sam 2:17); and what renders the things of God so contemptuous and odious in the eyes of many people in this nation as the ignorance, looseness, profaneness and baseness of those that dispense them? Unholy ministers pull

¹Taken, with editing, from Brooks’ *Works*, vol 3. Last month’s article spoke of preaching Christ zealously and boldly, painstakingly and frequently.

²Two leading figures in the Church of the early Christian centuries.

down instead of building up. O the souls that their lives destroy! By their loose lives, they lead their flocks to hell, where they themselves must lie lowest.

A painter, who was blamed by a cardinal for putting too much red on the faces of Peter and Paul, tartly replied that he painted them so, as blushing at the lives of those men who styled themselves their successors. Ah how do the lewd and wicked lives of many who are called ministers make others blush!

Salvian³ relates how the heathen reproached some Christians who, by their ungodly lives, made the gospel of Christ a reproach. “Where”, said they, “is that good law which they believe? Where are those rules of godliness which they learn? They read the holy Gospel, and yet are unclean; they hear the apostles’ writings and yet are drunk; they follow Christ and yet disobey Christ; they possess a holy law, and yet lead impure lives.” As this is very applicable to many professing Christians in those days, so it is applicable to many preachers also.

I have read of a scandalous minister that was struck at the heart, and converted in reading those words: Thou . . . which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?” (Rom 2:21). If this treatise should fall into any such hand, O that it might have the same effect! Wicked ministers do more hurt by their lives than they do good by their doctrine.

Luther and the Reformation¹

22. Refusing to Retract

J H Merle d’Aubigné

The next day both parties prepared for a second interview, which it seemed would be decisive. Luther’s friends were resolved to accompany him to the legate’s palace. Two counsellors of the Elector of Saxony had reached Augsburg the previous evening; their master had ordered them to be present at the conferences and to protect Luther’s liberty. They were to keep close to him. Luther moreover took a lawyer and, accompanied by his friends, he went to the legate’s palace.

At this moment Staupitz approached him: he fully understood Luther’s position; he knew that unless his eyes were fixed on the Lord, who is the

³A writer of the fifth century AD.

¹This is a further abridged extract from d’Aubigné’s *The History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*, vol 1, continued from last month. That article told of Luther in Augsburg, where he had come in 1518 to be examined by Cardinal Cajetan – a legate, or representative, of the Pope – because, as a friend put it, the Reformer had attacked “the abuses of those who sell Jesus Christ”. At his first interview, Luther demanded Scripture proof that the charges against him were valid. It should be noted that he had not yet broken with Rome.

deliverer of His people, he must fall. "My dear brother," he said seriously, "bear constantly in mind that you have begun these things in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Thus did God surround His humble servant with consolation and encouragement.

When Luther arrived at the Cardinal's, he found a new adversary: this was the prior of the Dominicans of Augsburg, who sat beside his chief. After the usual salutations, Luther read the following declaration with a loud voice:

"I declare that I honour the holy Roman Church, and that I shall continue to honour her. I have sought after truth in my public disputations, and everything that I have said I still consider as right, true and Christian. Yet I am but a man and may be deceived. I am therefore willing to receive instruction and correction in those things wherein I may have erred. I declare that I am ready to reply orally or in writing to all the objections and charges that the lord legate may bring against me. I declare myself ready to submit my theses to the four universities of Basle, Friburg in Brisgau, Louvain and Paris, and to retract whatever they shall declare erroneous. In a word, I am ready to do all that can be required of a Christian. But I solemnly protest against the method that has been pursued in this affair and against the strange pretension of compelling me to retract without having refuted me."

Undoubtedly nothing could be more reasonable than these statements, and they must have greatly embarrassed a judge who had been tutored beforehand as to the judgement he should pronounce. The legate, who had not expected this protest, endeavoured to hide his confusion by affecting an appearance of mildness. He told Luther, with a smile, "This protest is unnecessary; I have no desire to dispute with you either privately or publicly; but I propose arranging this matter with the kindness of a parent." The Cardinal's policy was to lay aside the stricter forms of justice, which protect the accused, and to treat the whole affair as one of mere administration between a superior and an inferior: a convenient method that opens a wider field for arbitrary proceedings.

Continuing with the most affectionate air, Cajetan said, "My dear friend, abandon, I beseech you, so useless an undertaking: consider, acknowledge the truth, and I am prepared to reconcile you with the Church and the sovereign bishop. Retract, my friend, retract; such is the Pope's wish. Whether you will or whether you will not is of little consequence. It would be a hard matter for you to kick against the pricks."

Luther, who saw himself treated as if he was already a rebellious child and an outcast from the Church, exclaimed: "I cannot retract! But I offer to reply . . . in writing. We had debating enough yesterday." Cajetan was irritated at this expression, which reminded him that he had not acted with sufficient

prudence; but he recovered himself and said with a smile: "Debated, my dear son, I have not debated with you. Besides, I have no wish to debate; but, to please the most serene Elector Frederick, I am ready to listen to you and to exhort you in a friendly and fatherly manner." Luther could not understand why the legate was so offended at the term he had used, for he thought, If I had not wished to speak with politeness, I ought to have said, not *debated*, but *disputed* and *wrangled*, for that is what we really did yesterday.

Cajetan felt that in the presence of the respectable witnesses who attended this conference, he must at least appear anxious to convince Luther. He reverted to the two propositions which he had pointed out as fundamental errors, being firmly resolved to permit the Reformer to speak as little as possible. Availing himself of his fluency, he overwhelmed the doctor with objections, without waiting for a reply. At one time he jeered, at another he scolded; he declaimed with passionate warmth; mingled together the most varied matters; quoted Thomas Aquinas and Aristotle; stormed against all who thought differently from himself; and addressed Luther.

The Reformer tried to speak more than ten times, but the legate immediately interrupted him and overwhelmed him with threats. "Retract, retract!" This was all that was required of him. Cajetan raved, he domineered, he alone was permitted to speak. Staupitz took upon himself to check the legate: "Please allow brother Martin time to reply to you". But Cajetan began again; he quoted the opinions of Thomas Aquinas; he had resolved to do all the talking himself during this interview. If he could not convince and if he dared not strike, he would do his best to stun by his violence.

Luther and Staupitz saw very clearly that they must renounce all hope, not only of enlightening Cajetan by discussion, but still more of making any useful confession of faith. Luther therefore reverted to the request he had made at the beginning of the sitting, and which the Cardinal had then eluded. Since he was not permitted to speak, he begged to be permitted at least to send a written reply to the legate. Staupitz backed this request and several others supported him. Cajetan at length consented, and the meeting broke up. The hopes of seeing the matter arranged at this interview were disappointed; they must wait for the next conference.

Luther left the Cardinal, delighted that his request had been granted. On his way to Cajetan, and on his return, he was the object of public attention. It was felt that the cause of the gospel, of justice and of liberty, was then being pleaded at Augsburg.

It became more evident every day that the legate would hear nothing from Luther except: "I retract", and Luther was resolved not to pronounce these words. What will be the issue of so unequal a struggle? How can the power

of Rome fail to crush a man when it is all matched against him? Luther sees this; he feels the weight of that terrible hand under which he has voluntarily placed himself; he loses all hope of returning to Wittenberg, of seeing his friend Philip again, of mingling once more with the youths in whose hearts he so delighted to scatter the seeds of life. He sees the sentence of excommunication suspended over his head, and doubts not that it will soon fall on him. But he is not cast down. His trust in God is not shaken. God can break the instrument; He has been pleased to use him until now; but He will uphold the truth. Happen what may, Luther must defend it to the last. He therefore begins to prepare the protest that he intends presenting to the legate. It would appear that he devoted part of October 13 to this task.

Jesus and the Woman of Samaria (13)¹

George Hutcheson

John 4:27-30. *And upon this came His disciples, and marvelled that He talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest Thou? or, Why talkest Thou with her? The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him.*

1. Poor sinners may meet with so sweet a time in Christ's company that even the company of disciples would be an interruption to it; for she had so sweet a time with Christ that the disciples' coming puts an end to it. They had been sent "to buy meat" (v 8), and when they return, the conference breaks up, or at least does so shortly afterwards.

2. Providence wisely and graciously orders dispensations towards Christ's people, so that they do not lose by them, but they tend to good; therefore the disciples do not come till she knew Him to be the Messiah, and till the breaking up of the conference tended to a greater good in sending her to bring in more people to Christ.

3. Christ will humble Himself and stoop so low to a poor sinner, as is marvellous to flesh and blood. There is more kindness, meekness and humility in Him alone than in all His followers; for "His disciples marvelled that He talked with the woman", or that He should take notice of such a person; and it seems He was about to finish his conversation, but had not yet ended it when they came. He is so compassionate that he needs no intercessors.

4. It is no strange thing to see Christ's followers soon forget themselves

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

and, although advanced by grace, to become so proud as to despise others; for they who were even now chosen out of the dust “marvelled that He talked with the woman”.

5. Such reverence is due to Christ in His working that, even when we can see no reason for what He does, we are bound not to quarrel with Him, but to suppress our own thoughts. So did the disciples: “yet no man said, What seekest Thou? or, Why talkest Thou with her?”

6. When a soul has tasted of Christ and His excellence, other things will be little regarded which before were in great esteem. So it was with this woman; she came to draw water for her thirst, and thought much of that water, but now she forgot her errand and “left her waterpot, and went her way”.

7. True grace communicates itself, and knowledge of Christ will make a person diligent to spread His name, particularly to those they have the greatest interest in; for “she goeth to the city,” where she dwelt, “and saith to the men, Come . . .”.

8. Such as kindly invite others to Christ, from any saving knowledge of Him, will not be content that men rest on their report, but would have them taste and see themselves. Nor will they be content to send others, but will go to share in it themselves: “Come (not go), see a man,” says she.

9. As Christ knows all that men do, so His searching and discovering word is a special means of conversion; and a sanctified sight of one sin, discovered by Christ, will open men’s eyes to see more; therefore, although Christ spoke many good words to her, this was the hook that caught her: He “told me all things that ever I did”. She says, “all things”, either because in one instance He gave proof of His ability so to do, or because that discovery represented other things to her as seen by Him.

10. Christ’s doctrine is then effectual and prevails, when Himself is seen in and by it; therefore she adds, “Is not this the Christ?” – not as doubting of it herself, seeing He had told her, but as pointing it home to them, that they may consider such an opportunity.

11. Weak instruments, and such as have but small knowledge and weak faith, yea, even women in their stations, labouring in the gospel, shall not be without their own success, but may have powerful effects; for upon this weak woman’s invitation, “they went out of the city, and came unto Him”.

Repentance and faith are the gifts of God, and gifts that He often withholds when they have been long offered in vain. I grant you true repentance is never too late. But I warn you, at the same time, late repentance is seldom true. I grant you, one penitent thief was converted in his last hours, that no man might despair; but I warn you, only one was converted, that no man might presume.

J C Ryle

Ploughing Spiritualised¹

John Flavel

1. Reflections for a true convert. O grace, for ever to be admired: that God should send forth His Word and Spirit to plough up my hard and stony heart, yes mine, when He has left so many of more tender, intelligent, sweet and melting tempers without any means of grace. O blessed gospel, heart-dissolving voice! I have felt thine efficacy, I have experienced thy divine and irresistible power; thou art indeed sharper than any two-edged sword, and woundest to the heart; but thy wounds are the wounds of a friend. All the wounds thou hast made in my soul were so many doors opened to let in Christ; all the blows thou gavest my conscience were only to beat off my soul from sin, which I embraced and had retained to my everlasting ruin, if thou hadst not separated me from them.

O wise and merciful Physician, Thou didst indeed bind me with cords of conviction and sorrow, but it was only to cut out that stone in my heart, which would have killed me if it had continued there. How I struggled and opposed Thee, as if Thou hadst come with the sword of an enemy, rather than the lance and probe of a skillful and tender-hearted physician? Blessed be the day when my sin was discovered and made bitter to me! O happy sorrows which prepared for such matchless joys! O blessed hand, which turned my salt waters into pleasant wine and, after many pangs and sorrows of soul, at last brought forth deliverance and peace!

2. Reflections for a stubborn heart. O what a rock of adamant is this heart of mine, that never was wounded yet or savingly pierced for sin by the terrors of the law, or the melting voice of the gospel! Long have I sat under the Word, but when did I feel a relenting pang? O my soul, my stupified soul, you have an antidote against repentance, but have you any antidote against hell? You can keep out the sense of sin now but are you able to keep out the terrors of the Lord hereafter? If you could turn a deaf ear to the sentence of Christ on the day of judgement as easily as you do to the entreaties of Christ on the day of grace, it would be something, but surely there is no defence against that sentence. Ah, fool that I am to quench these convictions, unless I knew how to quench those flames they warn me of.

3. Reflections for someone who has misused opportunities. May I not challenge for the first place among all the mourners in the world, who have all lost those convictions which several times came upon me under the Word?

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

I have been often awakened by it and filled with terrors and tremblings under it, but those troubles have soon worn off again, and my heart (like water in a pan removed from the fire) has returned to its natural coldness. Lord, what a dismal case I am in! I have choked and strangled many convictions which, it may be, shall never more be revived until Thou revive them against me in judgement. I have been in pangs, and brought forth nothing but wind; my troubles have wrought no deliverance, neither have my lusts fallen before them? My conscience has indeed been sometimes sick with sins – yes, so sick as to vomit them up by an external, partial reformation? But then, like the dog, I have turned again to my vomit and now I fear that I am given over to a heart that cannot repent.

O that these pangs could be brought to life again! But alas, they have ceased. I am like a prisoner escaped and arrested again, whom the jailer loads with double chains. Surely, my soul, if your spiritual troubles do not return again, they are but gone back to bring eternal troubles. It is with you, O my soul, as with a man whose bones have been broken and not well set; who must – however terrible it may appear to him – endure the pain of breaking and setting them again, if he will ever be made a sound man. O that I might rather choose to be the object of Thy wounding mercy! If Thou wilt not plough up my heart powerfully by conviction, I know it must be rent in pieces at last by desperation.

The Threefold Blessing¹

Henry Law

Numbers 6:24-26. *The Lord bless thee and keep thee: the Lord make His face shine spot thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

How gracious is our God in Christ! His mercy overtops the heaven of heavens. Throughout the Bible page, it beams forth in fresh rays. Behold a significant instance. He speaks in these verses, and blessings drop from Him, sparkling as the morning dew – large as Jehovah’s heart.

The tribes are now prepared to move. The guiding pillar will soon conduct them into desert paths. They go encircled with all pledges of support. Their cup of favour fills to the brim. But God still multiplies new stores of comfort. He adds, He superadds vast bounties. He tells that all which heaven contains shall fall in showers upon their heads.

With this loving mind He thus instructs the priests: “On this wise ye shall

¹Taken, with editing, from *Christ Is All: Numbers and Deuteronomy*.

bless the children of Israel". The act is ordered: "Ye shall bless". The distinct form of blessing is supplied: "On this wise ye shall bless". He wills to give. Is this not grace? He wills that the vast amplitude of His gifts should be evidently seen. Is not this grace on grace?

Mark the broad channel of their course: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace". The bounteous God thus opens wide the treasures of His bounty-house and tells the people: All these riches are for you.

Believer, come now and listen to these sounds. You see it is the office of the priest to bless. This introduces Jesus to the eye of faith. He is the Church's blessing Priest. The only Priesthood is wrapped up in Him. The earthly office, ministered by men, has long since expired. When His own hands brought His own life a victim to the cross, all typical functions were fulfilled. But now on heaven's throne He ministers. There He presents the ever-fragrant incense of His blood. There He sues out the covenanted mercies. Thence freely He pours them out. He came; He lived; He worked; He died, that He might bless. He gave Himself, the price of blessings. He rose; He took His seat on high, that He might reign a Priest – for ever blessed and for ever blessing.

Is there a child of Adam's needy race who covets blessings from the courts of heaven? Let Him approach. There is an open way. No fiery sword drives any away from it. No, a gracious hand ever beckons sinners, and gracious invitations call. Hasten to Christ. He is the home of blessings.

Do any ask, When did Aaron's sons thus bless the people? On what occasion were these sounds proclaimed? The Spirit does not give a distinct reply. It is conjectured that, when the morning lamb was offered, the happy worshippers were thus dismissed. If so, when they drew near to gaze on emblems of the dying Lord, these notes spoke peace round their departing steps. It is ever true that no poor sinner can look up to Christ without receiving harvests of delight. Who can approach and not retire with overflowing cup?

If the foregoing thought be right, the sons of Israel rejoiced in this blessing only once in each day. It only fell as morning manna. But now, around the gospel camp, the sound is heard unceasingly. There is no moment when the believer may not be thus cheered. Christ, his Priest, is always near. In every place, in every work, he may recognise His voice and hear the constant music of the mighty blessing: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace". The heavenly voice is never mute. The heavenly sun knows no eclipse.

Next, the terms are aptly chosen to comfort individual hearts. Observe: these blessings are not given as a general store. They are not cast, as handfuls to a crowd, where some may gather much and some return with none. Far otherwise. They single out each separate child of faith. They call each one alone and say, Here is a boon for your own bosom-need. Each one, apart from all his fellows, takes for himself a full supply.

These thoughts pervade our gospel. It proclaims special grace. It brings home direct comfort to each soul. The true believer comes apart from men; he may leave the maze of general mercies and feel, Christ “loved me, and gave Himself for me” – as if redemption centred all in me. He lives in heaven and prays at God’s right hand and prepares a bright throne, for me, as if I were His only care. I see my own name foremost on His breast. To me the words come especially, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”

But if there is this special mercy in God speaking to the individual, is there not threefold mercy in the triple voice? With tender love Jehovah is thrice named. Blessings are multiplied again and again and again. Faith quickly grasps the intention. Three glorious Persons form the glorious Godhead. They are one in undivided essence, one in co-equal majesty, one in Their eternity, one in the singleness of unchangeable decree, one in the boundlessness of love, one in the exercise of might, one in accomplishment of plan. But there is Trinity in this mystic Unity: one God in three Persons.

But the whole heart of the Triune Jehovah yearns over the redeemed. The three Persons all concur to save. They all combine to help. They all unite to bless. Surely the Threefold Blessing sounds this truth.

Heed again the heaven-sent form: “The Lord”, Jehovah the Father, “bless thee and keep thee”. Again: “The Lord”, Jehovah the Son, “make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee”. Again: “The Lord”, Jehovah the Holy Spirit, “lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace”.

Our souls are now prepared to press the juice of these rich clusters.

1. Open the hand wide. *The Father comes to fill it.* “The Lord bless thee, and keep thee.” The first word is large, as God is large, It gives so much that it leaves nought ungiven. It floods the cup, so that no other drop can enter. It shows a prospect in which there is no emptiness. “The Lord bless thee.” May He, who speaks and it is done; who wills and it must be; who holds all power in His hands; who sits on the high throne of universal rule – may He bless thee!

When? Now and ever, throughout the moments which are and shall be; when you go out, come in, sit down, rise up, through all your living

space, and when the last breath flutters on your lips. “The Lord bless thee.”

Where? In every place in which you tarry, or to which you move; in your bedroom, at the family table, at home, outside, in the still retreat and in the busiest haunts, at work in public and in the sanctity of the holiest spots. “The Lord bless thee.”

How? By causing all things to minister to your true good, by crowning your lot with all real happiness. “The Lord bless thee. Perhaps the soul, conscious of weakness, finding self to be a broken reed and seeing many perils all around, sighs especially for protection. Be it so. Protection here is stretched out as a shield; help is extended as a sustaining arm. It is added, “and keep thee”. From what? From every foe’s injurious assault, from every secret dart, from every direct attack, from self, from men, from the multitude of evils, from the world’s smile and frown. How? By the shelter of His shadowing wings. For how long? Until all need is past and danger’s region is completely left behind and heaven’s safe haven is attained. Happy believer, thus blest, thus kept of God!

2. *Jesus comes next.* “The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.” The greatest change on nature’s brow is when light dawns. Gloom dwells beneath the pall of night. When clouds cast their thick shade, dark chilliness prevails. But, with returning beams, the landscape sparkles, the groves are melody, the fields are joy. It is so with the soul. Sad are the hours which are not bright with Jesus. Then sins affright and wrath dismays and all the future is despair. There is no misery like the absence of His look. But when His face again is seen, the heart is happiness, the lips are praise. This blessing promises the shining of His face – not a brief ray, but the full blaze of concentrated love. Heaven’s fullness is to see Him face to face. Heaven’s foretaste is to catch His smile: “The Lord make His face shine upon thee”.

Here too a precious pearl is added. It is grace. The words proceed: “and be gracious unto thee. What wonders are wrapped up in grace! Its birth is in the heavens, its fruit upon the earth. It looks on those in whom no merit dwells. It sees them lost. But still it loves and pities and relieves. It drew salvation’s scheme. It named salvation’s sons. It reared the cross and led the Saviour to it. Apart from Christ, it has no being and no admission-door to its beloved work. But now, through Christ, its visits come on sanctifying wing. The graceless become gracious, because grace works. The gracious become glorious, because grace triumphs.

3. *The blessing voice still speaks.* “The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” Can they who have received so much need more? But more is wondrously given. The truly blessed have all the blessings of the

Triune Jehovah. Hence the Spirit's favour is moreover pledged. Some covet earthly honours and applause. Some seek the bursting coffer and the large estate. But what is earth and all its contents compared to this possession? The Spirit's countenance converts the soul from death to life and raises it from hell to glory. He shows its utter need and its recovery in Christ. He teaches the vile loathsomeness of sin and the just punishment of hell. He then reveals the God-man slain, the shelter of His wounds, the mantle of His righteousness.

He points to welcoming arms. He testifies that none can perish at the cross. When He lifts up His countenance, the mists of ignorance, the clouds of unbelief, melt off. And self is seen, that it may be abhorred. And Christ is seen, that He may be embraced and loved. Then peace will surely follow. There is no peace in soul-blindness, in distance from Christ, in unsubdued iniquity, in wallowing in nature's mire. But when the Spirit joins the soul to Christ, when He renews the nature and sows seeds of godliness, then peace – abundant peace, peace always, by all means – establishes glad sway.

Reader, seek Christ; adhere to Him; abide in Him; make Him your all. Then this threefold blessing will be your crown. Hear it once more. "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace".

It is the gift of gifts, the prize of prizes, the Father's full protection, the Saviour's smiling grace, the Spirit's countenance and peace. Do you ask, Can such transcendent property be mine? Pause; think. Why is it thus revealed? God speaks these blessings, not to mock but to fulfill. Can they be mine? Cast yourself, without one fear, on Christ and you will quickly know.

The Last Days of John Russell¹

On Monday night, February 17, I found my father in a most happy frame of mind. He said more than once, "I had much need of this. It is exactly suited to me and necessary to prepare me for heaven's glory. O the wisdom of God and His power and His mercy and His faithfulness!" He referred to that expression of Peter, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you . . . but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings". "The sufferings of the redeemed", he said, "are Christ's suffer-

¹Taken with editing from *The Christian Treasury* for 1846. Russell was minister of Muthil in Perthshire and died in 1817. This piece was written by his son as a letter for private circulation and was printed in 1834.

ings, because they suffer in a state of vital union with Him. How precious is the least grain of that divine faith which unites the soul to the divine Saviour. O for more supplies of it!"

On another occasion he said, "I have had my trials in this life, but the Lord has carried me through them, and I hope He will still carry me through and bring me to the haven of eternal rest. I wished to have realised in [my] experience these words of Jacob, 'God Almighty, who appeared to me at Luz, and blessed me there'. I have often had sweet Mondays at Muthil. One time, at family worship, that expression was peculiarly sweet to me, 'That I might finish my course with joy, and . . . testify the gospel of the grace of God.'" He spoke, too, of having had some spiritual refreshment in writing a comment on that text, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better" (Phil 1:23): "It is as if the Apostle had expressed himself thus: If the purposes of God are served by me in this world, I am ready to weigh anchor and, quitting these mortal shores, to set sail for the haven of eternal rest". On another occasion he remarked that "it seemed to be the design of God, in every age, to try His people, to try their faith, their hope, their self-denial and their heavenly-mindedness".

He asked repeatedly, "Are there any appearances of the work of God among the people at Muthil?" When I expressed my regret that there was so little of vital religion among us, he said, "Well, the great Redeemer will, in the day of judgement, call together all that belong to His fold, and then we may see some blessed fruits of our poor labours".

At another time he said, "I have had a great manifestation of God in these words, 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for, when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him,' and what pleases the Lord, 'that He doeth'". He prayed often in our hearing that the Lord would send a gospel minister to His poor people, and that his own death might be blessed by leaving a sweet savour of Christ among them. When his distress was very great, he used to use such expressions as these: "Make no tarrying, O my God; I am willing, by Thy grace strengthening me, to abide in this furnace, until all Thy purposes are fulfilled, and Thou art glorified in me".

When someone spoke of the three young men in Babylon, he said, "They were noble heroes indeed; they suffered no injury while in the midst of a burning fiery furnace, because the Son of God was there". He often repeated Isaiah 43:2: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee". And Isaiah 40:27-31: "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My

way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." And he commented on the words as he used to do in the pulpit.

One time, while suffering under excruciating pain, he cried out, "If it be Thy will, dear Lord, send relief. O give grace to glorify Thee to the end." And again, "Why should I dwell so much upon my little sufferings which I now feel? How much did my loving Lord suffer! What are my sufferings compared with His! And how soon they will be over! The heavier the redeemed groan on earth, the louder will they sing in heaven." He appeared deeply impressed at times with a view of God's holiness, exclaiming, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord; O to behold an unveiled three-one God!" On that passage, "In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength" (Is 26:4), he said, "O astonishing! What a powerful support in a time of trouble! Surely He will; yes, He is engaged to preserve me from fainting." He spoke much on that passage, "I will strengthen them . . . and they shall walk up and down in His name" (Zec 10:12), adding, "What a pleasant walk is that, whether in health or sickness!"

On the day he died, he turned toward my mother and, embracing her, said, "We have been long united together and enjoyed happiness and sweet Christian fellowship. We are now to part for a little, but shall soon meet in a better world, where there is no parting. I commit you to my faithful covenant-keeping God; He will care for you. We can take no carnal attachment to the heavenly world. O no, we must leave all and follow Christ. Sweet Jesus, entreat me not to leave Thee; for whither Thou goest I shall go; where thou dwellest I shall dwell. I am persuaded that neither things present, however pleasant; nor things to come, however painful; neither the height of prosperity, nor the depths of adversity, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my Lord. It was in Christ that this love began to flow forth to the redeemed from eternity, and through the same channel it will continue to flow through everlasting ages."

A little before his departure he addressed us all, while we were standing round his bed, in the following manner: "I am hastening to my eternal rest. Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. O that we may all meet in Christ, and be for ever with the Lord." He then thanked the doctor for all his kind attention, also all his friends. After this he fell into a

sound sleep and continued in that state for about an hour, when he fell asleep in Jesus, without a sigh or groan. Thus my dear father died as he had lived – glorifying God and committing his eternal all into the hands of his loving Saviour.

Book Reviews¹

Scattered and Kept, *Twenty-eight Lost Sermons*, by Thomas Boston, published by Ettrick Press, hardback, 461 pages, £24.00.

The *Collected Works* of Thomas Boston have been read and prized throughout our land and beyond for many generations, and in better days in Scotland there were many homes where such volumes as *Human Nature in its Four-fold State* and *The Crook in the Lot*, as well as *Memoirs of Thomas Boston*, would have been found. This makes these rediscovered sermons a precious gift to the Church today.

Thomas Boston (1676-1732) was, as described in the Preface, “one of the most remarkable and godly ministers to adorn the Church of Christ since the days of the apostles”. His ministry of 33 years was spent in two remote parishes in the Scottish Borders. The first was Simprin, from 1699 to 1707, and the second Ettrick, from 1707 until his death in 1732. It would seem that his ministry bore little fruit for quite a number of years. At length, however, much blessing attended Boston’s faithful and diligent labours, following his providential discovery of the book, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*. This book clarified for him the sinner’s warrant to believe, the believer’s relationship to the law and the nature of faith.

The Preface explains: “Although Boston’s sermons in this book were preached at different times and on different occasions, when collected together they seem to provide an extended commentary on the Church’s timeless confession about our Saviour: ‘He that *scattered* Israel will *gather* him, and *keep* him, as a shepherd doth his flock’ (Jer 31:10). These sermons clearly expose the reasons for God scattering His people, and the solemnity of experiencing God’s displeasure. They also preach the means of God gathering his scattered people – the glorious message of the gospel. And they proclaim the faithfulness of God, who keeps His once straying and now recovered sheep. Such preaching is very much needed in the Church today.”

Again, as explained in the Preface, following an explanation of where those sermons were discovered, we learn that this book gathers the sermons

¹Both titles reviewed here, and the other books referred to in these reviews are available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom, apart from Boston’s *Memoirs*.

from four sources. The first two are: *A collection of sermons showing the grounds of the Lord's controversy with the church and land* (1772); *The straying state and condition of mankind sinners* (1761). (This source includes a sermon by Henry Davidson, Boston's friend and ministerial colleague at Galashiels.) The third source is, *Several sermons on the recovery from the ruins of the fall by Jesus Christ and the difference between the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace*; it is an appendix to the first edition of Boston's *View of the Covenant of Works* (1772). Finally there is, *A collection of sermons on the following important subjects* (1772); the largest part of this collection of eight sermons was preached at Maxton and Morebattle communion seasons in 1715 and 1725.

All of these sermons, like those in his *Collected Works*, are relatively brief. (We learn from a footnote in his *Commentary on the Shorter Catechism* (vol 2, p 374) that Boston "was generally a short preacher, seldom, on ordinary occasions, exceeding half an hour, and that his delivery was somewhat slow".) The sermons are, however, most profound and, as seen in this volume, tend to follow the same order. After stating his text and giving a brief introduction, he would state the doctrine or doctrines arising from the text. There may be one or several doctrines, which would usually determine the number of sermons he would preach from the text. Generally there would be a sermon on each of the doctrines.

An example of Boston's preaching – on the text, "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pet 2:25) – is seen in his introduction: "Adam's sons, as inheritors of their father's folly, are born wanderers; and ever since he broke over the hedge of God's covenant into the devil's common,² they are wandering from mountain to mountain, having forgotten their resting place. And because a wandering disposition is natural unto them, therefore they cannot return until they be returned, as in my text, *But are now returned* The fallen angels are left to be miserable wanderers. So the Scripture represents them, *walking about, going to and fro*. They are straying wretches, but the great Shepherd has no commission to gather them. They stray and will stray, until they be shut up in the pit, they stray without any[one] seeking after them. But Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of *Adam's* sons, some of whom are returned to Him already" (p 183).

Later, in speaking of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, purchasing the life and return of the strays, Boston goes on: "The Good Shepherd laid down His life for the sheep, according to the eternal compact. The word was given, 'Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My

²Literally, a grassy area that everyone can use.

fellow' (Zec 13:7); and then Justice pursued Him from the cradle to the grave, and did not leave Him, till it brought Him to the dust of death. The Shepherd stood in the gap the strays had made in the first enclosure, namely the covenant of works. For the making it up, two things were demanded, and He answered in both, [namely] obedience and suffering, both which were necessary to making up of the hedge the strays had broken down. The waters of the curse, a flood of wrath, which would have swept all the strays away before it for evermore, brake out at the gap. It overflowed Him, sunk into His very soul, even to the very last drop; but they were all swallowed up in Him, because of the excellency of Him that stood in the gap, to make up the breach" (p 190).

Many more quotations from that and other sermons in this book could be given, but we conclude with one from Boston's sermon on: "And on earth peace" (Lk 2:14): "It is owing to the slighting of Christ that there is so little peace on earth, where the gospel is preached. That there is little peace in the pagan world, where the way to get peace with God is not known, is no wonder. But that there is so little peace among those called by the name of the great peace-maker, and who enjoy the gospel of peace, is strange indeed. But if we narrowly consider the matter, and trace it to the spring-head, why there is so little peace in the kingdom, in the church, in families, and in the breasts of particular persons, we will find it to arise from the departure from God the centre of unity, and refusing to return to Him by Jesus Christ, the great peace-maker, without which we will never recover solid peace within, or among ourselves For peace built on the ruins of truth and holiness is none of that peace on earth that was purchased by Christ."

Boston goes on: "They that are interested in Jesus Christ may be easy, though they have little of the world's peace (Jn 16:33). Though a Christian's external peace be broken, while he has internal peace in his own conscience, and a prospect of eternal peace with God through Jesus Christ, he has no reason to be discouraged. Amidst all the tossings one meets with on earth, it is full comfort that the soul has peace with God. Josiah died in peace, though he died of wounds received in battle (2 Chr 34:28 compared with 35:23-24)" (pp 294-5).

Anything by Thomas Boston that is in print is most refreshing to read, and this volume is no exception. Highly recommended. (Rev) *W A Weale*

Why Were Our Reformers Burned? by J C Ryle, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, booklet, 42 pages, £2.00.

Ryle writes here in his usual clear, forthright way; no one can fail to understand what he means. We should note that, when he speaks of "our Reform-

ers”, he means the leaders of the English Reformation who were burned to death in the time of Queen Mary in a cruel campaign that led to this fanatical Romanist becoming known as “Bloody Mary”. *Why Were Our Reformers Burned?* is also available as one of the chapters in the paperback, *Five English Reformers*, and also in the larger volume, *Light from Old Times*, both by Ryle.

The first main point in this booklet deals with the “broad facts” of the period, when at least 288 people were burned at the stake during the years 1555 to 1558, because they would not recant their Protestant beliefs. Ryle gives the historical background: Edward VI, a genuine Protestant, died young and was replaced by Mary, while English Protestantism was still in its infancy.

A second main section describes the martyrdom of nine leading Reformers, beginning with John Rogers, a London minister, “a bold, thorough Protestant, who had fully made up his mind on all points of the Romish controversy, and was able to give a reason for his opinions”. He had played an important part in the translation of the Bible into English. The French ambassador noted that Rogers went to his death “as if he was walking to his wedding”.

Ryle’s third point is to emphasise “the special reason why our Reformers were burned”. He is in no doubt that it was their refusal, “in almost every case”, to accept the Roman Catholic doctrine of “the real presence of the body and blood of Christ” in the mass. The crucial question was: “Did they or did they not believe that the body and blood of Christ were really, that is, corporally, literally, locally and materially, present under the forms of bread and wine after the words of consecration were pronounced?” Ryle adds, “If they did not believe and admit it, they were burned”. Then follow a series of quotations to show that each of the nine Reformers described was burned because he rejected the false teaching of “the real presence”. It is such a significant error, Ryle points out, that it spoils “the blessed doctrine of *Christ’s finished work* when He died on the cross” and His “*priestly office*”.

In the fourth and final section, Ryle seeks to apply what he had written in the previous pages. He was writing in the second half of the nineteenth century, when he could see that “a conspiracy has been long at work for unprotestantising the Church of England”. What he describes as “Ritualism” – or Anglo-Catholicism – was, he says, growing and spreading, and he was anxious to preserve his denomination from drifting further towards Rome; he produced *Why Were Our Reformers Burned?* to oppose this trend. Yet he argued that her people “ought not lightly to forsake the Church of England”, especially when the 39 Articles “remain unaltered”. That policy has proved unsuccessful; though the Church still has its 39 Articles, subscription to them is now very loose indeed. In practice, it seems that one can believe almost

anything and still be an Anglican minister. Apart from some of the comments in the last section, this booklet is very useful.

Notes and Comments

Cremation and Annihilation

Cremation was reintroduced in Europe in the late nineteenth century and has become popular for various reasons. It is now cheaper than burial, it uses less space, and there is usually no headstone to be maintained. Others do not like to think of their bodies rotting in the grave and prefer to have them burnt. For relatives, it may be a convenient way of evading the ongoing reality of death: there is no dead body and no grave, and the deceased is almost reduced to being an idea of the past. In this way cremation fits well with atheistical notions of annihilation and of people going out of existence at death.

With burial, on the other hand, there is a body – or whatever remains of it – lying in the ground, in a particular place; and in looking at graves, the Christian's thoughts will never be far from the resurrection. Christ will return to this world on an appointed day and will raise all these bodies out of their graves (and those that have been cremated too, and those eaten by animals, and so on). To some it will be a resurrection to everlasting life (Dan 12:2) and to others to shame and everlasting contempt. Christ lay in the grave, and the believer is happy to sleep there as well when his turn comes. He does not fear or recoil from the corruption of the grave because it is only for a little while, and that which is sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption and glory and power (1 Cor 15:42-3).

The burial of the righteous in the ground is the sowing of a seed for eternity, but the furnace in which a corpse is cremated gives us a picture of the fate of the unrighteous. In that day, however, it will not be a body without feeling that slides into the flames but a body and soul united and susceptible to eternal torment. Burial for the believer is a mark of hope; cremation for the unbeliever is an evidence of despair. DWBS

Päivi Räsänen

In 2004, a member of the Finnish parliament, Mrs Päivi Räsänen, wrote a booklet entitled *Male and Female He Created Them – Homosexual Relationships Challenge the Christian Concept of Humanity*. A Lutheran bishop, Rev Dr Juhana Pohjola was responsible for its publication. In 2019, 15 years later, both were investigated, and now, in 2022, they have been prosecuted on hate crime charges; Dr Pohjola for publishing the booklet and Mrs

Räsänen for writing it, and for things she has said when defending the Christian position.

Dr Pohjola said that “people are responsible before God for their way of life or moral choices. The homosexual lifestyle is contrary to God’s order of creation and a transgression against His will. If we are not allowed to teach this publicly, the message of sin and grace will be left without foundation, and freedom of religion will decline.”

Mrs Räsänen further offended the prosecutors by tweeting a protest against a Pride event in Helsinki in June 2019. She included a quotation from Romans 1:24-27: “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts . . .”. “The Pride event’s ideological goal is to take pride in the type of relations that are described as being against God’s will”, she wrote. “Homosexual relationships, like those relationships outside of marriage are described in the Bible as sinful and shameful.” It would seem the prosecution’s case involves twisting and distorting the meaning of a number of Scripture texts and statements by the defendants, in an attempt to make the words hateful towards homosexuals rather than the sin of homosexuality.

The case was heard in March of this year, and the court unanimously dismissed all the charges against the accused, saying that “it is not for the District Court to interpret biblical concepts”. Sad to say, the prosecutors are not prepared to let the matter drop and have taken the matter to the Helsinki Court of Appeals. The appeal has been permitted to go ahead and is expected to be heard in the Autumn of this year or early 2023. It is to be hoped that the Court of Appeals will not uphold the appeal and if sent to a higher court that it too will throw out the case. Failure at a Supreme Court or the Court of Human Rights should prove a great discouragement to those who would pursue vexatious and wicked prosecutions. On the other hand, success would give momentum to those who would persecute the cause of Christ.

Hate crime already gives concern to us in the UK and to our friends overseas. We have already seen attempts in the British courts to prosecute Christians for refusing to conform to the LGBT and gender-identity norms of current times. Christians must keep a careful watch on all these new forms of persecution and be prepared to protest vigorously and defend our Christian freedoms. “If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you” (Jn 15:20). *FRD*

No matter how learned or simple the instructions of the pulpit may be, no matter how rich and varied or how well adapted and spiritual . . . it would be powerless without the superadded power of God. *Gardiner Spring*

Protestant View

The Pope and Tradition

The Pope has recently visited Canada, where his aim was to assuage public anger for the wrongs perpetrated at Roman Catholic schools upon the children of indigenous peoples. There has been a widespread outcry in Canada, not only at the extent of the abuse and suffering which was inflicted in these institutions, but also on the failure of the Roman Catholic Church to compensate victims adequately. Conditions at these schools were often appalling with widespread hunger, disease, and abuse at the hands of priests or laity taking their toll. At schools for Indian children, 1300 unmarked mass graves have been located and around 80% of these schools were run by the Roman Catholic Church.

During his Canadian trip, comment has been made about the Pope's overall health, prompting speculation that he might be contemplating the option of retirement after the example of his predecessor Benedict XVI. Such a move would appeal to many Romanist traditionalists. Talking to journalists on his private jet, the Pope criticised his more conservative opponents as those "who call themselves traditionalists; they are not; they just go backward. That is a sin." He added, "Tradition is the living faith of the dead; instead their attitude is the dead faith of the living".

Roman Catholic "tradition" is an anti-Scriptural addition to the Word of God and, whatever sharp differences there are between the current Pope and his critics within the papal Church as to how to interpret and apply their traditions and dogmas, at the wider level both sides remain entirely committed to the falsehoods and superstitions of the great mystery of iniquity which is Popery. Individual popes come and go, but Rome remains ever the great enemy of Jesus Christ and His Church. The Lord's people are to pray that the downfall of the whole evil system of Romanism would be hastened according to the sure Word of prophecy (2 Th 2:8). AWM

Church Information

Theological Conference

This year's Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in Inverness, on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 25-26, with Rev D W B Somerset as chairman. It is expected that the following papers will be read, all in public:

Justification

Rev David Campbell

Thomas Boston

Mr F R Daubney

**Theology of the Apostle Peter
The Reformation in Italy
Adoption**

*Rev W A Weale
Rev K D Macleod
Rev Roderick Macleod*

(Rev) D W B Somerset, Convener, Training of the Ministry Committee

Synod Committee Meetings

Synod committees will meet, DV, as follows:

Tuesday, October 4:

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

Wednesday, October 5

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

Online Education Project

The Church's Education Committee has been developing a web-based, pre-school to Primary seven, Bible Knowledge course for some years. Much of the work to date has been on pre-school to Primary 3, and on Primary 7. Progress has depended on the time available to the current team, who are all volunteers. To move the project forward at a faster pace, we wish to recruit additional volunteers (not specific to parents) with education and / or information technology (IT) skills and experience, to assist with the development of our online teaching and learning resources. If you think you may be able to help the project team, or would like more information, please contact the Committee Convener, Mr Frank Daubney; e-mail: f.daubney@ntlworld.com.

Overseas Fund

By appointment of Synod, the special collection on behalf of the Overseas Fund is due to be taken in congregations during September.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Fort William: *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £100, £50.

Glasgow: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £50, £80, £80, £80, £50, £60; Anon, Ps 60:4, £50. *Home Mission Fund:* Anon, £5, £20. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £30. *Where Most Needed:* Anon, Ps 60:4, £50, £50.

North Tolsta: Anon, £40. *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £30, £50. *Door Collection:* Anon, £30, £80, £40, £80, £20, £50, £100, £30, £300, £30, £40, £80, £1.

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: **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Glendale and Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thursday 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.

Dingwall: Church, Hill Street, IV15 9JP: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achary Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.

Dornoch: Sabbath 11.30 am. **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, 5 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:** Wednesday 7 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. **Shielebost:** 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. 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:grafton@internode.on.net.

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

New Zealand

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

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

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

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

Singapore

Singapore: 33 Ubi Avenue 3, Vertex Tower A, #05-60, Singapore 408868: Sabbath: 9.30 am and 5.30 pm; Wednesday: 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, tel: (65) 9639 3040, e-mail: byong1@singnet.com.sg.

Ukraine

Odessa: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 6 pm. Rev D Levytskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytskyi@gmail.com; or contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua.

Zimbabwe

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

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

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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Scottish Reformation Society, 2009, hbk, 280 pp	£15.00	£11.99
With Mercy and with Judgment: Strict Baptists and the First World War		
by Matthew J. Hyde, Gospel Standard Trust Publications, 2016, hbk, 552 pp	£13.00	£10.39
Institutes of the Christian Religion [Edition of 1541]		
by John Calvin, Banner of Truth, 2016 [1541], hbk, 918 pp	£19.00	£15.19
The Chief End of Man: Exposition of First Answer of the Shorter Catechism		
by John Hall, Solid Ground Christian Books, 2005 [1841], pbk, 105 pp	£5.99	£4.79

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