

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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## Communions

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

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

**March: First Sabbath:** Sydney, Tarbert; **Second:** Ness, Portree; **Third:** Halkirk; **Fourth:** Barnoldswick, Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

**April: First Sabbath:** Laide; **Second:** Chesley, Gisborne; Maware, Staffin; **Fourth:** Glasgow, Mbuma.

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

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

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

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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## Christ's Continuing Presence

Among the last recorded words that the Lord Jesus Christ spoke before He ascended to heaven were these: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Mt 28:20). They were addressed to His disciples; yet not only to those who were with Him at that time, who before long were to be His representatives in establishing the Christian Church. This was a promise addressed to the Christian Church in every generation, even "unto the end of the world". When the Saviour had suffered and died, He was no longer with them in His human nature, until on the third day He rose again. Then they could again recognise His presence with them.

Not only that, but He was promising to be with them always; He would never forsake them. When He would ascend to heaven, they would not be able to see Him in His human nature, but He was God as well as man. As God, He was present everywhere after His ascension; so He would always be with the 11 disciples, wherever they might be and whatever their difficulties. And He will be with His Church everywhere throughout the ages, until the end of the world, no matter the troubles she may have to face. He is with His Church today, and He is with all His individual disciples – and will be with them until time will be no longer.

Whatever the troubles believers may meet, the divine Saviour will be with them. Matthew Henry thinks of Him as saying, "I will be with you on Sabbath days and weekdays, fair days and foul days, winter days and summer days". Henry speaks of God's people: "Wherever we are, the word of Christ is nigh us, even in our mouths, and the Spirit of Christ nigh us, even in our hearts. The God of Israel, the Saviour, is sometimes a God that hideth Himself (Is 45:15), but never a God that absenteth Himself; sometimes in the dark, but never at a distance." Let us notice some of the troubles God's children experience and the help that the Lord Jesus is able to give, for He is always with them.

**1. Guilt.** Every believer is a sinner, albeit a saved sinner. They have been forgiven all their sins, for the sake of Christ and because of what He has done for them. Sin is no longer on the throne of their hearts, yet sin is still there.

Believers deserve to be punished for every sin that they commit. Guilt is to be associated with every sin – a liability to punishment. Peter, for instance, was guilty when he denied his Master, but he was also guilty whenever, in any degree, he came short of God’s glory – not loving Him with all his heart. It is so with all God’s children: nothing that they do is free from sin. Accordingly, they always incur guilt, for they continually come short by not loving God with all their heart, and wholehearted obedience is the standard that He has set for them.

What then can believers do when they are conscious of sin? They are to go to Christ, remembering His promise never to leave them, His promise that He will always be with them. Christ is the great Prophet of His people; He is always near them to teach them by His Word and Spirit in relation to all kinds of spiritual matters, not least in connection with their guilt. He comes where they are in their need to teach them that His blood goes on cleansing them from all sin (1 Jn 1:7). So, because of His death in their place, their guilt is continually being removed. He teaches them also that God does not impute iniquity to them (Ps 32:2); their guilt is not put to their account.

**2. *Sinfulness.*** God’s people want to be pure, but they know that they are not. Paul, eminently godly though he was, had to confess, “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not”. And he asked, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Yet he knew something of the answer to his own question, for he added, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom 7:18,24,25). It was for the sake of Christ, who would always remain near to him – who would never forsake him – that Paul could be made perfect, as he now is.

The Lord would continue that good work of sanctification which the Holy Spirit had already begun, at the moment of Paul’s regeneration, on his way to Damascus, full of enmity against the Lord Jesus and His followers. Christ made intercession for Paul before the Father, expressing His will that the Holy Spirit would work in his soul. And Christ went on making intercession for Paul that the Spirit would continue His work of subduing sin in his heart and stimulating more and more every grace that had been planted in his soul. That work has long since been completed.

Other believers may feel that they are very far behind what Paul was in this world. But the same Christ is always with them; the same Holy Spirit continues the work of sanctification in their hearts and lives; and they will be brought to the same haven of rest, in God’s time, just as Paul and all the other Christians of the past have been brought to their heavenly home.

**3. *Satan and temptation.*** Satan is far stronger than the most steadfast of

believers and, if left to themselves, they could very easily be overwhelmed by temptation. But Christ is with them; He is their King. He comes where they are to defend them. If Satan is the “strong man armed”, Christ is the “stronger than he” (Lk 11:21,22); Christ has overcome him. If He sees it to be necessary, the Lord may leave His children to the extent that He allows them to succumb to temptation, so that they may recognise their weakness and vulnerability more than before, as happened with Peter, for instance. But Christ was near him to give him a look of rebuke, through which He delivered him from Satan’s snare. And although today’s believers do not have Christ physically near them, they have His spiritual presence, and He will most certainly protect them from the wiles of the evil one.

**4. Ignorance.** God’s children know that they are slow to learn. There is so much that they do not know, after all that they have read and heard of God’s Word. But, as we have noticed, Christ is near them as their Prophet. They need not only to know the facts revealed in Scripture, but also to make a practical use of what is revealed, so that they may trust in Christ more continuously and more readily than they have yet done.

The Psalmist prayed, “Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end” (Ps 119:33). He realised his need of divine teaching and he went in prayer to the One who was able to teach him. Only through that teaching could he walk more consistently in the paths of new obedience, the ways of God’s statutes. Let God’s children today, however ignorant they may feel, be thankful for the Prophet who is not only able to teach them the truths of Scripture, but also to apply these truths to their souls so that they grow in grace. He, remaining with them, will bring them, in spite of their ignorance, safely through this world and into a world where ignorance will no longer trouble them.

**5. Troubles in providence.** Christ warns His people – it is part of His teaching – that “in the world ye shall have tribulation”. They will have troubles of various kinds, such as ill-health, concern for relatives and friends, and difficulties in personal relationships. But their Saviour is always with them, and He goes on to encourage them: “Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (Jn 16:33). Because they do not have the strength to bear these troubles themselves, they are directed: “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee” (Ps 55:22). If the Lord will not remove the trouble, He is undertaking to draw near to His child and support him or her. Accordingly His children will never be totally overwhelmed by their circumstances. Therefore, as Christ, the sympathetic High Priest, is so near to His children always, let them “come boldly unto the throne of grace, [where He sits], that [they] may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16).

# Sin and God's Woe<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by *David Dickson*

*Zephaniah 3:1,2. Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God.*

To bring Jerusalem to repentance, the prophet is sent forth to denounce woe and wrath against it. He charges Jerusalem with seven iniquities: three of them against the law, four against the gospel or the offer of mercy.

Gluttony is the first sin against the law that he charges the city with, for he says, Woe to thee, filthy city; or rather (as the original has it) the gluttonous city; for the word that is here used is borrowed from the crop of a fowl, or the stomach of a fish. Thus he reproveth all sorts of pleasure, including pampering the body with meat, drink, gorgeous apparel, unlawful lusts and intemperance. The next sin against the law is their profaning and abusing of religion, the handling of holy things with unhallowed hands; and therefore he calls them a polluted or profane city. The third sin he lays to their charge, is oppression – deceiving one another, greedy extorting, and taking advantage of one another; therefore he calls them the oppressing city.

Their sins against the gospel or the offer of mercy were these: First, not obeying the Lord's voice, for they did not obey when the Lord sent His messengers to them, rising up early and sending His servants the prophets to them, and to tell them their faults. Their next sin was the not receiving correction, not amending their life by the Lord's fatherly rods. Their third sin was that, when the Lord made gracious promises and they did not trust Him, they did not care for His promises. Their fourth sin was that, when the Lord drew near to them, they refused to have communion with Him; they would not draw near to Him. When such sins against the law and the offer of mercy are joined together, they are laid forth here as just reasons for the denouncing woe – a woe for gluttony, a woe for profaning God's ordinances, a woe for injury to their neighbour, a woe for not obeying God's voice, a woe for not amending their lives because of His corrections, a woe for not trusting in Him, and a woe for not drawing near Him.

Against what place or people is this woe denounced? It is against Jerusalem, the holy city, the joy of the whole earth, the place of God on earth, the place of His habitation, of which He said, "This is [the place of] My rest for ever" – the place where His laws and holy ordinances were taught and ad-

<sup>1</sup>Taken with editing from *The Select Practical Writings of David Dickson*. The sermon was preached "at a humiliation before the communion" – on, presumably, the Thursday of a communion season in Irvine, Ayrshire, where Dickson (1583-1663) was minister.

ministered, the place where God was most glorified, where the most holy people were, and the means to make men holy. Yet this city is charged with these seven faults:

1. *Gluttony*, for the prophet says, They drank their wine in bowls; they stretched themselves upon their beds of ivory; they sang unto viol and harp and did not remember the affliction of Joseph; they neighed after their neighbours' wives as fed horses; their eyes were full of adultery; their eyes were as windows to draw in whorish objects, they did not deny themselves any unclean pleasures.

2. Their *regard to God's holy ordinances*. They gathered daily to the temple, offered their sacrifices, feasted before the Lord, and came to all the solemnities of the Lords worship; they cried out, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!" Yet here they are called polluted: their prayers, praises, sacrifices, hearing of the law, feasts, fasts, Sabbaths – whatever they meddled with was defiled.

3. *Oppression* in over-reaching their neighbours, either by scant measure, false weight, unrighteous dealing, or everyone seeking to take unfair advantage of his neighbour. Therefore the prophet says, "Trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant". They wronged one another either in body, goods, or good name, and he who might have most power over his neighbour overthrew him.

Then these former sins are aggravated by adding four other sins:

1. *Disobeying the admonitions of God's Word*, as if the Lord had said, I am not to blame for their faults – neither I nor My servants – for I told them their faults, directed them what they should do, and enjoined them to cease from wickedness.

2. And besides giving directions, I have not spared sufficient rods to make them know that I was angry at their faults; but *for all My rods, they are never a whit the better*. To what purpose then should I strike them any more? They will still revolt; even if I make them sick with smiting them, yet they will not return to Me.

3. Yet farther to allure them to repent and turn in, I have made them many a fair promise; but *they have neither believed Me, nor judged Me faithful*, but counted Me one who had said more than I was minded to perform.

4. And when I yet desired to cultivate their kindness, and warmly drew near to them, fluttered over them, and gathered them in, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, yet *they would not*. Therefore woe unto them! It is not like man's woe, for when a man says, "Woe", to himself, he acknowledges what he deserves, accepts his fault and the punishment that is due to him, that he may flee from it. But this is God's woe, even the broad, terrify-

ing curse of God, that Christ denounced against the scribes and Pharisees. This woe is the full vial of God's wrath, the great curse of God, that cleaves to them because of their pollution, wickedness, oppression, and disobeying God's voice. Let us make use of this.

**Doctrine 1.** This woe is denounced against Jerusalem, who thought no such thing was due to her, neither did she know herself to be in so miserable a case or accept it; therefore the prophet Zephaniah must be sent to them with this message, to tell them of their sin and misery and to charge them with it. They thought they used created things as they had liberty; as for God's ordinances, they were diligent enough in the use of them; and as for their neighbours, they thought they only used them according to the law. From this we learn that they who profess to be the people of God may be lying in many gross sins and yet pleasing themselves with their own state; not afraid of woe, nor aware of it, when it lies very near to them.

The churches of Asia did not know their state till Christ caused epistles to be written to their ministers, to tell Ephesus that she had fallen from her first love; Sardis that she was a dead church although she had a name that she was living; Laodicea that she was lukewarm, while she thought she was rich, increased in all spiritual graces and had need of nothing – when she was poor, miserable, blind and naked. Thus the prophet was told to lift up his voice like a trumpet and tell Israel their transgression and Jacob their sins.

Since people may lie under a sevenfold curse and not know it, beware of thinking yourselves secure as if all is well, when the curse and judgement of God is at hand. "Agree with thine adversary quickly . . . lest he deliver thee to the judge . . . and thou be cast into prison", there to lie till thou pay the uttermost farthing. Examine matters well, because the heart of man "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" If men say their prayers morning and evening, attend church and solemn meetings, and can abide the inspection of their neighbours, they think all is well.

We may be very like such people; therefore search yourselves, O nation not worthy to be beloved, lest you be deceived and carried on into a fool's paradise, believing all is right, when God shall throw you over the stair of presumption. See that you are not hoodwinked and led blindly on to hell. Know what your case is, for it is a sore matter to lie under wrath and be in a feud with God and not know it; to be dogged at the heels with heavy judgements and not be aware of it; and to have the flood of the Lord's fury coming over a high hill, running towards that road you are walking in, to sweep you away before you perceive it. Examine yourself in time and be wise.

**Doctrine 2.** We see it is God who knows Jerusalem's works, who censures them. This lets us see that it is not the estimation of others, or the opinion



that men have of themselves, that is the rule whereby God will have men tried. But He Himself will judge men according to their works. Therefore He says to Laodicea, "I know thy works;" and in all these epistles, He shows that His censure is according to the truth, He is the "Amen", and the "Faithful Witness"; His eyes "are as flaming fire". Therefore He sends out His reproofs as men's dispositions require.

Seeing men's state is not to be judged by their own estimation or by others', but according to the Lord's, let all try their way of life by what He says of them in His Word, and all the exercises of His worship. Ask about your prayer, What devotion is in you? And it will say that your prayers are so lacking in earnestness that they cannot pierce up to heaven. Ask about your way of life among men, what is your state? And it will tell you it is cold, stubborn, unyielding, peevish, unmerciful, and you have a heart that cannot repent. Ask what love you have to God, and it will be told you that you can bear His name to be dishonoured and care little for it, and you do not care much how your children and servants grow in knowledge or the fear of God. If your deeds speak thus, why are you so secure? Why do you bless yourself, when your conduct says that the world is more in your mind than heaven, when your account book is more perused than the Bible, when the debts that are owed to you are more in your mind than the debts that you owe to God!

Why can you accept this state of affairs. It is because Satan does not wish the bankrupt to read over his account book, or the sinner to examine his deeds. Men do not wish their deeds to be brought to the light; they hate the light because it reproves them. Or if the minister points out their faults, they say, Someone has told him about me. But learn to examine yourselves as you shall answer to God, and as you would be set free on that day when He shall judge the secrets of all hearts. Let not the Lord complain of you, "I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done?" (Jer 8:6). Therefore let each of you ask yourself, On what is my fear, love, care, grief and pleasure most set? And if it is not on God, you have reason to suspect yourself.

**Doctrine 3.** We see it is Jerusalem, the holy city, that is threatened, even the city which the Lord had raised out from among all the nations under heaven, to place His name there, and give them privileges, above all others. It lets us see that no profession or external privilege will save a people from woe if they lie in any known sin. Do not say, "We have Abraham to our father; for God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham". Do not say, "The temple of the Lord are we". Do not say, We have the Bible, God's oracles, the truth truly preached, for all these privileges are nought, unless you amend your manners. What is it worth that Christ has a church

here, a candlestick erected, a table daily covered with bread, a laver to wash in, if no use is made of them! Doubtless they shall draw deeper curses on you, unless you study to approve your hearts to God in secret, and order your life among men.

If you do not do this, God shall draw you out among hypocrites; He shall strip the mask off your faces and show your rottenness to man and angel. Are you dearer to God than Ephesus, Corinth, Laodicea, Jerusalem, whom He overthrew for the abuse of their privileges? If He has done so to the green tree, what will He do to the withered? If such fair towns and countries have been thrown down, let not the sandy hillock of Irvine think it will be spared; but that your frequent communions, preachings and solemn meetings shall draw on hotter wrath, unless you mend your conduct. Your fair profession, coming to hear, and all your outward discharge of the parts of God's worship, will not save you from the judgements threatened from this place of Scripture, unless you labour to be inwardly what you make a show of openly. If you believed this, you would take no rest till you seek a new course.

Let us come to particulars in the text:

(1.) "*Woe to the filthy city.*" This challenge for gluttony lets us see that God requires sobriety and restraint from His people – that they would study to be masters over their lusts, obtain victory over their appetites, and that the love of their belly would not make them misbehave. "Take heed . . . lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life," lest Christ come on you like a thief in the night. Never give your appetites the reins; do not drink so much that your mental powers are made to totter, and even to be beastly; study to be sober. If you had to speak to some great man, you would be loath to drink much for fear of spoiling your powers. Far more, seeing you are called to be temples of the Holy Ghost, should you not possess your bodies in holiness and be moderate in meat, drink and clothing? As pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, for the Lord allows enough that is lawful. Why then should unlawful things be spared? Therefore be moderate, and more given to feed and clothe the soul than the body, to seek to do God's will more than your own.

We see that sin in man may so prevail as to make him unclean, intemperate and immoderate; and where this uncleanness and intemperance is, *woe* is attached to it. *Woe* to the gluttonous person who greedily swallows everything! *Woe* to him who pleases himself and fulfills his lusts, whose appetites make him sin! The poor man will say, Where do I get an opportunity to waste or use things intemperately? I answer, You are not moderate in anything if you may get it; it is lack of money that makes you spare, and what you have, you use intemperately. You are immoderate who are discontented

with your state and would have more than God allows, and take in more than enough when you may spare it. Therefore woe unto you; woe to these appetites that draw the curse of God on soul and body! Woe to the unclean person, the fornicator and adulterer! Woe to you who are given to pampering your belly! Woe to the drunkard and tippler! Woe to you who are given to fleshly ease of body, to the hurt of the soul! Woe to you who are given to fleshly delights, contenting yourself with the sow's happiness while despising the pearl hidden in the field!

(2.) "*To the polluted.*" This woe against those who misuse religion, and the exercises of God's worship, lets us see that religion should be kept pure and clean, both for the matter and manner of it. It should be handled in a holy way, the heart within being as holy as the external conduct. This people thought that to take part in religious activities frequently was enough to mend all their faults, that the offering of incense and sacrifices appointed under the law cleansed all their faults – as those men who now glut themselves in all sorts of sin, and come to the communion thinking that it provides a reprieve for all that has been done in the past. But God calls such people profaners of religion.

So when men lead an evil life and do not amend their conduct; even if they meddle with the most holy of ordinances, they profane all. The unchaste, intemperate, malicious, greedy, or the man that is given to any known sin, whatever point of religion he puts his hand to, he pollutes it (Hag 2:14). He asks, What if the unholy touch a holy thing, will the holy make the unholy clean? No, the unholy defiles the holy. And so they who are lying in sin and come to preaching, prayers, fasts, or communions, they defile all; for everything is unclean to the unbelieving man; even his mind and his conscience are defiled. And a woe is pronounced against you who pollute all God's ordinances: woe to you for coming to preaching, prayers, communions! If then your coming to God's ordinances does not make you better, they make you worse. Therefore study to be cleansed from every known sin, lest you profane holy duties. And if you have profaned them, ask mercy; run to the fountain, lest you be cast out as an unclean thing.

(3.) "*Woe to the oppressing city.*" This denouncing of woe against oppression shows that God requires people to deal equitably and righteously with their neighbours; that they should not injure one another, but that men should live blamelessly and holy, under a holy Lawgiver. Here is forbidden not only open oppression, but all sorts of injury, even that which is done under a pretence of laws. And a woe is annexed where sin and temptation so prevail that mutual injuries are done. Therefore do not covet what belongs to your neighbour; do not deceive him in weight, measure, price, or bargain; do not

take any unrighteous advantage; and do not wrong your neighbour in any way. Or else woe to you!

(4.) Now the sins against the mercies of God follow: “*She obeyed not the voice*” (v 2). This challenge for not obeying the Lord’s voice lets us see that God does not usually condemn a people or pronounce a woe against them, till He has first dealt with them by His Word, in the mouths of His ministers. He usually warns those outside the Church by the voice of His creation: the sun, the moon, summer, winter, fruitful seasons, and the works of creation; and if they are not made wise by these, He cuts them off. But when His Church fails, He warns them by servants; He will do nothing till He reveals it to His servants the prophets. God does not strike His people till He threatens them by His ministers and denounces woe against them, before He will bring on the judgement. Take heed when you hear your faults rebuked by the Word, for the Lord will next debate the matter with rods. Wrath has been denounced from this place against all your sins; therefore repent, read out the charge against yourself; indict yourselves before God; and reckon what you have done secretly and openly. Challenge yourselves in time, lest the threatened wrath overtake you.

We see here, although it is God’s practice to warn before He strikes, yet when His warning is refused, the sin is greater, and the woe is heavier. He that hears his sin reprov’d and does not hearken to the voice of the Lord to change his behaviour, his sin is greater and the woe is heavier. His sin and woe are bound on him by a double hand: once because he sinned, and again because he was warned and went on – therefore a double woe.

(5.) “*Received not correction.*” God usually joins His rod with His Word. Before He brings His great judgements, he uses His fatherly rod. But when rods and corrections are ignored, the sin is greater, and the woe is doubled.

*Application to Irvine*, which was visited with many rods. If, when you have been corrected in body, name, goods, souls, and have not obeyed, know that your sin is double, and your woe is double. As for you who are corrected and the tingling of the rod is yet in the flesh, and you are seeking to change, I will not say that woe abides thee. But if you have been corrected and are not likely to change, you have to fear that the axe is laid to the root of the tree and you will be cut down and cast into the fire. It is a sore matter for a sinner to be corrected, and yet to go on under it with levity. Let God strike as He pleases, He will have His pleasure! Woe to that sinner!

(6.) “*She trusted not in the Lord.*” This lets us see that God uses to try His people by fair means, promises, offers of mercy, goodness and bounty, so that they may put their trust in Him. But when promises of grace to the soul and benefits to the body do not prevail, the sin is greater, and the woe doubled.

How many promises have you heard, and yet are not drawn to trust in God and love Him? Know therefore that refused promises multiply woes.

(7.) "*She drew not near to her God.*" This lets us see that the Lord usually – besides sending His Word, rods and promises – offers Himself and His goodness, to handle them warmly by His benefits, comforts and good deeds of all sorts. But when people refuse this communion with God, and do not give him a welcome, their sin is doubled and so is the woe. God has drawn near you by His benefits and comforts of all sorts; look if you have drawn near to Him and sought His kindness or not, or if you have despised seeking fellowship with Him. If this is so, your sin and woe are doubled. Compare the two verses in the text; we see that the last four challenges are for the abuse of mercy, and only three challenges for breach of the law. This lets us see that the abuse of mercy deserves woe and heavier challenges than breach of the law. Filthiness, profanity, oppression, blasphemy are great sins; but not obeying the Lord, not receiving correction, not trusting, and not drawing near to God are greater sins, because the former are only breaches of the law, when the latter involve contempt of the remedy for breach of the law.

When God challenges for both the breach of the law and the abuse of mercy, we see these always go together. If a professing Christian sins against the one, he must also be sinning against the other. When your conscience challenges, it will challenge you for both. But especially it will challenge you for abuse of the gospel. It is said that God shall come in flaming fire, and take vengeance on them that do not obey the gospel (2 Th 1:8). The gospel commands us to believe and repent. When this is disobeyed, God is distrusted and His offer of mercy despised; therefore the sin of professing Christians is greater than the sin of Sodom.

Finally, if these seven sins are causes of woe, then to do the contrary is to flee from the woe. If woe abides the unrestrained glutton, there will be no woe to those who exercise restraint. If there is woe to the one who pollutes God's worship, the reverent use of the Lord's ordinances delivers from woe. If there is woe to the oppressor, there is no woe to the one who deals meekly, courteously and equitably. If there is woe to the one who does not obey God's voice, then hearing the Lord's voice, receiving correction, trusting in God and drawing near to Him deliver both from the sin and the woe.

To flee from this woe, listen to the voice of the preacher; hear the sound of the rod and Him that appointed it. Believe God's goodness, receive His offers of mercy, and say with David, It is good for me to draw near to Thee. I will seek fellowship with Thee; I will seek that joy, peace and refreshment which are to be found in Thee; I will draw near Thee in the use of all the means, that I may be free of this woe.

# Words of Warning<sup>1</sup>

John Newton

I suppose you will receive many letters of congratulations on your recovery from your recent dangerous illness. Most of them may perhaps be more lively and better written than mine, but none, I persuade myself, more sincere and affectionate. I beg you to prepare yourself, by this good opinion of me, before you read further; and let the reality of my regard for you excuse what you may dislike in my manner of expressing it.

When a person has returned from a dangerous, distant voyage, we are naturally led to inquire into the incidents he has met, and the discoveries he has made. Indulge me in curiosity of this kind, especially as my affection gives me an interest and concern in the event. You have been, my friend, on the brink, the very edge, of an eternal state; but God has restored you to the world again. Did you meet with, or have you brought back, nothing new? Did nothing occur to stop or turn your usual train of thought?

Were your apprehensions of invisible things exactly the same in the height of your disorder, when you were cut off from the world and all its activities, as when you were in perfect health and in the highest enjoyment of your own inclinations? If you answer me, Yes, all things are just the same as formerly apart from the difference between sickness and health, I am at a loss how to reply. I can only sigh and wonder – *sigh* that it should be thus with anyone, that it should be thus with you whom I dearly love; and *wonder*, since this unhappy case, strange as it seems in one view, is yet so common. Why, was it not always thus with myself? Long and often it was just so.

Many a time, when sickness had brought me, as we say, to death's door, I was as much at ease as the sailor who, in the height of a storm, should presume to sleep upon the top of the mast, quite regardless of the possibility that the next tossing wave might plunge him into the raging ocean, beyond all possibility of being rescued. But at length a day came which, though the most terrible day I ever saw, I can now look back on it with thankfulness and pleasure. I say, the time came when, in such a helpless extremity and under the expectation of immediate death, it pleased God to remove the veil from my eyes, and I saw things in some measure as they really were. Imagine a person trembling on the edge of a dreadful precipice, a powerful and inexorable enemy eager to push him down onto a pile of horrible materials at the bottom. Even this will give you only a faint representation of the state of my mind at that time.

<sup>1</sup>A letter taken with editing from Newton's *Works*, vol 1. It was sent to a pleasure-loving friend who had recovered from an illness.

Believe me, it was not a whim or a dream which changed my sentiments and conduct, but a powerful conviction, which will not admit the least doubt. It was evidence, like that I have of my own existence, which I cannot call in question without contradicting all my senses. And though my case was in some respects uncommon, yet something like it is known by one and another every day. I have myself conversed with many who spent several years defending Deistical<sup>2</sup> principles, or indulging immoral practices, when they have thought themselves confirmed in their schemes by the cool assent of what they then deemed impartial reason. Yet they have been, like me, brought to glory in the cross of Christ and to live by that faith which they had before slighted and opposed.

By these instances, I know that nothing is too hard for the Almighty. The same power which humbled me can undoubtedly bring down the most haughty rejecter of the Bible on earth. I likewise knew that He is often pleased to make use of weak instruments to show His power. And I am encouraged, notwithstanding the apparent difficulty of succeeding, to warn those, over whom friendship or affection gives me any influence, of the evil and the danger of a course of life formed upon the prevailing principles of the world. So far as I neglect this, I am unfaithful in my professions both to God and man.

I shall not at present trouble you in an argumentative way. If by dint of reasoning I could bring about some change in your ideas, my arguments would still leave your heart unchanged and untouched, unless they were applied by a superior power. A man may give his assent to the gospel and be able to defend it against others, and yet not have his own spirit truly influenced by it. This thought I shall leave with you, that if your scheme cannot be demonstrated to be true, it must necessarily be false; the issue is too important to make a doubt on the dangerous side tolerable. If the Christian could possibly be mistaken, he is still on equal terms with those who pronounce him to be wrong; but if the Deist is wrong (that is, if we are in the right), the consequence to him must be unavoidable and intolerable. This, you will say, is a trite argument: I accept that; but, often used as it has been, it will never be worn out or answered.

Permit me to remind you that the points in debate between us have already been settled in themselves, and that our talking cannot alter the nature of things; for they will be as they are, whatever we may think of them. Remember likewise that we must all, each one for himself, experience on which side the truth lies. I used a wrong word when I spoke of your recovery; my dear friend, look upon it only as a reprieve, for you carry the sentence of death

<sup>2</sup>Deism is the idea, common in Newton's time, that God created the world, but thereafter left it to itself.

about with you still. Unless you should be cut off (may God in His mercy forbid it) by a sudden stroke, you will as surely lie on a deathbed as you have now been raised from a bed of sickness. Remember likewise (how can I bear to write it?) that, should you neglect my admonitions, they will have an effect upon you, though not such an effect as I could wish: they will leave you more inexcusable.

I have delivered my own soul by faithfully warning you, but if you will not examine the matter with that seriousness it calls for ; if you will not look up to God, the former of your body, and the preserver of your spirit, for direction and assistance how to please Him; if you will have your reading and conversation only on one side of the question; if you decide to let afflictions and dangers, mercies and deliverances, all pass without reflecting on them and applying them; if you will spend your life as though you thought you were sent into the world only to eat, sleep and play and, after a number of years, be extinguished as a candle is snuffed; then you must endure the consequences. But assuredly, sooner or later, God will meet you. My hearty daily prayer is that it may be in a way of mercy, and that you may be added to the number of the trophies of His unconquerable grace.

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

### 23. Standing up to the Cardinal

*J H Merle d'Aubigné*

On Friday, October 14, Luther returned to the Cardinal, accompanied by the Elector's counsellors, and presented his protest to the Cardinal. His courtiers regarded this paper with astonishment – a paper so presumptuous in their eyes. This is what Luther declared to their master:

“You attack me on two points. First, you oppose to me the constitution of Pope Clement VI, in which it is said that the treasure of indulgences is the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the saints – which I deny in my theses. Panormitanus<sup>2</sup> declares in his first book that, in whatever concerns the holy faith, not only a general council but . . . each believer is above the pope if he can bring forward the declarations of Scripture and allege better reasons than

<sup>1</sup>This is a further abridged extract from d'Aubigné's *The History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*, vol 1, continued from last month. That article told of Luther in Augsburg in 1518, where he had come to be examined by Cardinal Cajetan – a legate, or representative, of the Pope. Appearing before Cajetan, Luther refused to retract his scriptural opinions. It should be noted, however, that he had not yet broken with Rome.

<sup>2</sup>Author of a famous collection of ecclesiastical laws, a bishop of the eleventh century.



the pope. The voice of our Lord Jesus Christ is far above the voice of all men, whatever names they bear.

“My greatest cause of grief and of serious reflection is that this constitution contains doctrines entirely at variance with the truth. It declares that the merits of the saints are a treasure, while the whole of Scripture bears witness that God rewards us far more richly than we deserve. The prophet exclaims, ‘Enter not into judgement with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified’ (Ps 143:2). ‘Woe to men, however honourable and however praiseworthy their lives may have been,’ says Augustine, ‘if a judgement from which mercy was excluded should be pronounced on them!’

“Thus the saints are not saved by their merits, but solely by God’s mercy, as I have declared. I maintain this, and in it I stand fast. The words of Holy Scripture, which declare that the saints have not merit enough, must be set above the words of men, which affirm that they have an excess. For the pope is not above the Word of God, but below it.”

Luther did not stop here; he showed that, if indulgences cannot be the merits of the saints, they certainly cannot be the merits of Christ. He proved that indulgences are barren and fruitless, since their only effect was to exempt men from performing good works, such as prayer and almsgiving. “No,” he exclaimed, “the merits of Jesus Christ are not a treasure of indulgence exempting man from [performing] good works, but a treasure of grace which gives life. The merits of Christ are applied to the believer without indulgences, without the keys, by the Holy Ghost alone, and not by the pope. If anyone has an opinion better founded than mine,” he added, bringing to an end what referred to this first point, “let him make it known to me, and then I will retract.”

Coming to the second article, Luther said, “I affirm that no man can be justified before God if he does not have faith”. Luther proves his proposition by a multitude of declarations from Scripture. “Condescend, therefore, to intercede for me with our most holy father the Pope,” he added, “in order that he may not treat me with such harshness. My soul is seeking for the light of truth. I am not so proud or so vainglorious as to be ashamed of retracting if I have taught false doctrines. My greatest joy will be to witness the triumph of what is according to God’s Word. Only do not let men force me to do anything against the voice of my conscience.”

The legate took the declaration from Luther’s hands. After glancing over it, he said coldly: “You have indulged in useless verbiage; you have penned many idle words; you have replied in a foolish manner to the two articles, and have blackened your paper with a great number of passages from Scripture that have no connection with the subject”. Then, with an air of contempt, he flung Luther’s protest aside as if it was of no value, and began again in the

tone which had been so successful in the previous interview. He exclaimed with all his might that Luther ought to retract.

Luther was immovable. "Brother, brother," Cajetan cried in Italian, "on the last occasion you were very tractable, but now you are very obstinate." The Cardinal then began a long speech extracted from the writings of Thomas Aquinas; he again extolled the constitution of Clement VI, maintaining that this constitution showed that the very merits of Jesus Christ are dispensed to the believer by means of indulgences. He thought he had reduced Luther to silence, yet he sometimes interrupted; but Cajetan, without stopping, claimed the sole right of speaking as on the previous day.

This method had partially succeeded the first time, but Luther was not a man to submit to it again. His indignation burst out; it was his turn to astonish the spectators, who believed he had already been conquered by the prelate's ready speech. He raised his voice, seized on the Cardinal's favourite objection, and made him pay dearly for his rashness in venturing to enter into discussion with him. "Retract, retract!" repeated Cajetan, pointing to the papal constitution. "Well, if it can be proved by this constitution," said Luther, "that the treasure of indulgences is the very merits of Jesus Christ, I consent to retract, according to your Eminence's good will and pleasure."

The Italians, who had expected nothing of the kind, opened their eyes in astonishment, and could not contain their joy at seeing their adversary caught in the net. As for the Cardinal, he was beside himself; he laughed aloud, but with an angry laugh he sprang forward, seized the book which contained this famous constitution, looked for it, found it and eagerly read the passage aloud, exulting in the victory he thought certain.

The Italians were elated; the Elector's councillors were uneasy; Luther was waiting for his adversary. At last, when the Cardinal came to these words: "The Lord Jesus Christ has acquired this treasure by His sufferings", Luther stopped him, saying, "Most worthy father, pray, meditate, and weigh these words carefully: 'He has acquired'. Christ has acquired a treasure by His merits; the merits therefore are not the treasure; for, to speak philosophically, the cause and effect are very different matters. The merits of Jesus Christ have acquired for the pope the power of giving certain indulgences to the people; but it is not the very merits of our Lord that the hand of the pontiff distributes. Thus then my conclusion is the true one, and this constitution, which you invoke with so much noise, testifies with me to the truth I proclaim."

Cajetan still held the book in his hands, his eyes resting on the fatal passage; he could make no reply. He was caught in the very snare he had laid, and Luther held him there with a strong hand, to the inexpressible astonish-

ment of the Italian courtiers around him. The legate would have eluded the difficulty, but did not have the means. He had long abandoned the testimony of Scripture and of the Fathers; he had taken refuge in this work of Clement VI and he was caught. Yet he was too cunning to betray his confusion. Trying to conceal his disgrace, he suddenly moved on from this subject and violently attacked other points. Luther perceived this skilful manoeuvre and did not let him escape; he tightened the net in which he had taken the Cardinal and made all escape impossible. "Most reverend Father," he said, with an ironical, yet very respectful tone, "your eminence cannot, however, imagine that we Germans are ignorant of grammar: to be a treasure, and to acquire a treasure, are two very different things."

"Retract, retract!" said Cajetan; "Or if you do not, I shall send you to Rome to appear before judges commissioned to take notice of your affair. I shall excommunicate you with all your supporters, with all who are or who may be favourable to you, and reject them from the Church. All power has been given me in this respect by the holy apostolic see. Do you think that your protectors will stop me? Do you imagine that the Pope cares anything for Germany? The Pope's little finger is stronger than all the German princes put together."

"Condescend," replied Luther, "to forward to Pope Leo X . . . the answer which I have sent to you in writing." At these words, the legate, highly pleased at finding a moment's release, again assumed an air of dignity, and said to Luther with pride and anger: "Retract, or return no more". These words struck Luther. This time he replied in another way than by speeches: he bowed and left the hall, followed by the Elector's counsellors. The Cardinal and the Italians, remaining alone, looked at one another in confusion at such a result.

Thus the Dominican system had haughtily dismissed its humble adversary. But Luther was conscious that there was a power – Christian doctrine, the truth – that no secular or spiritual authority could ever subdue. Of the two combatants, he who withdrew remained master of the field of battle. This was the first step by which the Church separated from the papacy.

Luther and Cajetan did not meet again, but the Reformer had made a deep impression on the legate, which was never effaced. What Luther had said about faith and what Cajetan read in Luther's subsequent writings greatly modified his opinions. The theologians of Rome beheld with surprise and discontent the sentiments he advanced on justification in his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. The Reformer did not recede, did not retract; but his judge, who had not ceased from crying, "Retract, retract," changed his views and indirectly retracted his errors, in the face of the unshaken fidelity of the Reformer.

Luther returned to the monastery where he had been entertained. He had stood fast; he had given testimony to the truth; he had done his duty. God would perform the rest! His heart overflowed with peace and joy.

## Preaching Christ<sup>1</sup>

### 6. Feelingly and Rightly

*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.*

[8.] Ministers must preach *feelingly*, from experience as well as by example. They must speak from the heart to the heart; they must feel the worth, the weight, the sweetness of those things upon their own souls that they give out to others: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for 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 which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 Jn 1:1-3). The highest mystery, in preaching, is to feel what a man speaks and then speak what a man feels.

Ministers must so speak to the people as if they lived in their very hearts, as if they had been told all their needs and all their ways, all their sins and all their doubts. No preaching compares to this, no preachers to those who are in this position.

Ministers should not be like Caesar’s soldier who dug a fountain for Caesar and himself perished for lack of water. Yet there are many such in these days that dig and draw water out of the wells of salvation for others, and yet perish eternally themselves, by not drinking the waters of life. If they are monsters, not to be named among men, that feed and feast their servants but starve their wives, then what monsters are they that feed and feast other men’s souls with the dainties and delicacies of heaven but starve their own! No misery, no hell to this!

[9.] As ministers must preach the word feelingly and experimentally, so they must preach the word *rightly*. They must divide and distribute the

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

word according to every one's spiritual state and condition. They must give comfort to those who need comfort, counsel to those who need counsel, reproof to those who need reproof, and terror to those who need terror: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15); or word for word, rightly cutting into parts the word of truth (Is 40:1,2, 50:4; 2 Cor 5:10-12).

Some say the metaphor, "rightly dividing", is taken from the priests of the Old Testament, who having slain the beasts that were to be sacrificed, divided them accurately. Others say that it is a metaphor taken from a man cutting leather, who cuts off what is superfluous, when he cuts out reins and thongs. So in handling the Word, questions that are superfluous and unprofitable ought to be cut off, and only what makes for the hearer's instruction, edification and consolation is to be held forth. Others say the metaphor is taken from the cutting out and squaring streets and highways, and setting out the bounds of men's lands and possessions. Others understand cutting the Word of truth aright as raising right instructions, by following the rule of the Word, as a ploughman that draws or cuts a right furrow in the ground.

To divide the word aright, say Calvin and others, is to cut out to everyone his portion, as a parent cuts out bread to his children, or a cook meat to his guests. A general doctrine not applied is as a sword without an edge, not in itself, but to the people, who because of their own singular senselessness and weakness, are not able to apply it to their own states; or as a whole loaf set before children, which will do them no good. A garment fit for all bodies is fit for nobody; and that which is spoken to all is taken as spoken to none. Doctrine is but the drawing of the bow; application is the hitting of the mark. How many are wise in general things, but vain in their practical inferences. Such preachers are more fit for Rome than England. Souls may go sleeping and dreaming to hell before such preaching, before such preachers will awaken them and show them their danger.

O that the people were therefore so wise that, when sin is reproved, judgments are threatened, miseries promised, and Christ freely and fully offered, they would apply all to their own souls! This is the misery of many in our days, who come to sermons as beggars come to banquets, carrying nothing but the scraps away with them.

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Proper faith is a sinner's dealing with the Saviour of sinners for salvation from sin. Till we obtain perfect salvation from sin, we must act faith for it, and while we act that faith, sin is mixed with that very believing, so as that we must pray as [the father] did, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief".

*Robert Traill*

# What Christ Came to Do<sup>1</sup>

*C H Spurgeon*

What does Paul mean really when he says that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”? He means, first, that Jesus came *to save them from the punishment of their sin*. Their sin shall not be laid to their charge, so that they shall be condemned for it, if they do but trust in Him who was punished in the place of those who were really guilty. That is one thing that Christ Jesus came into the world to do for sinners.

He came also *to save them from the pollution of their sin*, so that, though their mind has been debased and their taste degraded and their conscience deadened by sin, He came to take that evil away and to give them a tender heart and a hatred of sin and a love for holiness and a desire for purity. That is a great work for Him to accomplish; yet Jesus came to do even more than that.

He came also *to take away our tendencies to sin*, those tendencies which are born in us and grow up with us. He came by His Spirit to eradicate them, to pluck them up by the roots, and to put within us another principle, which shall fight with the old principle of sin and overcome it, till Christ alone shall reign and every thought shall be brought into captivity to Him.

Further, Jesus came *to save His people from apostasy*. He “came into the world to save sinners”, in the fullest possible sense, by keeping them faithful to the end, so that they shall not go back unto perdition. This is a very important part of the work of divine grace. To start a man right is but little, but to keep that man holding on even to the end is a triumph of almighty grace, and this is what Christ has come to do.

Christ Jesus came into the world, not to half-save you, not to save you in this direction or that, and in this light or that, but to save you from your sin, to save you from an angry temper, to save you from pride, to save you from strong drink, to save you from covetousness, to save you from every evil thing, “and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy”.

This is a glorious truth: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”. He came to Bethlehem’s manger and afterwards to Calvary’s cross, with this as His one business: that He might save sinners. Is He not able to save? Is He not just the Saviour that we need? God and yet man in one adorable Person, He is able to sympathise because He is man, and He is able to save because He is God. Blessed God-man, Jesus Christ.

<sup>1</sup>Taken from Spurgeon’s “Good Tidings of Great Joy”: Christ’s Incarnation the Foundation of Christianity.

## “Let Israel Hope in the Lord” (1)<sup>1</sup>

John Bunyan

Come now to show more distinctly who, and what particular persons, they are that are concerned in this exhortation to hope. They are put, as you see, under this general term, “Israel”. “Let *Israel* hope in the Lord”, and, “He shall redeem *Israel* from all his iniquities”.

“Israel” is to be taken three ways in the Scriptures: (1) for such as are Israel after the flesh; (2) for such as are Israel neither after the flesh nor the Spirit; (3) for such as are Israel after God, or after the Spirit.

1. Israel is to be taken for *those that are so after the flesh*; that is, for those that sprang from the loins of Jacob and are called, “Israel after the flesh”, “the children of the flesh”. Now these, as such, are not those who have an interest in this exhortation, for no true spiritual and eternal grace comes by the flesh. Men are not within the bounds of the promise of eternal life, as they are the children of the flesh, either in the more gross or the more refined sense. Jacob was as spiritual a father as any, I suppose, that now professes the gospel; but this spiritualness could not convey, to his children that were such only after the flesh, the spirit and grace that causes sound conversion and salvation by Jesus Christ. Hence Paul counts it a carnal thing to glory in this and tells us plainly, if he had heretofore known Christ thus – that is, to have been His brother or kinsman according to the flesh – he would henceforth know Him thus no more. For though the children of Israel are as the sand of the sea, yet not that multitude, but the remnant that the Lord has chosen and shall call, shall be saved.

This therefore is an arrow against the face of that false doctrine that the Jews leant upon: that is, that they were in the state of God’s grace and everlasting favour, because they were the children and offspring of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

2. Israel may be taken for such as are neither so after the flesh, nor after the spirit, but only *in their own imagination*. Such I take to be all those that you read of in Revelation 2:9, who said they were Jews and were not, but did lie. These I take to be those carnal gospellers, from among the Gentiles, that pretended to be Jews inwardly, which circumcision is that of the heart in the Spirit; when they were such only in their own fancies and conceits, and made out their profession as a lie.

There is an abundance of these at this day in the world, men who know

<sup>1</sup>An edited extract from Bunyan’s *Israel’s Hope Encouraged*, in which he expounds Psalm 130:7: “Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption”.

neither the Father or the Son, nor anything of the way of the Spirit in the work of regeneration, and yet presume to say that they are Jews – that is, truly and spiritually the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

And although it may please someone to say, as was of old said to them of the captivity: “We seek your God as ye do”; it will be found at last that such “have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem”. And I will from hence caution all to take heed of presuming to count themselves Jews, unless they have a substantial ground to do so. For to do this without a good foundation makes all our profession a lie; not only so but it hinders us from obtaining a sight of our lack of an interest in Jesus Christ – without which we cannot be saved. Yes, such a person is a great self-deceiver, and so the worst deceiver of all; he that deceives his own self, his own heart, is a deceiver in the worst sense. Nor can any disappointment be like that which casts away soul and body at once. O slender thread, that a man should think that, because he fancies he is an Israelite indeed, he shall be taken for one on the day of judgement, or that he shall be able to cheat God with a pitiful say-so!

3. But the Israel under consideration in the text is *Israel after God, or after the Spirit*. Hence they are called “the Israel of God”, because He has made them so, not by generation or by fancy, but by divine power.

Thus the first who had this name was made so. “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel.” This is the man concerned in the text, “Let Israel hope in the Lord”, namely, Israel that is made so by God, and whom God has allowed to be so. For men are not debarred from calling themselves after this most godly name, provided they are so indeed. What is dangerous is when men think this privilege comes by carnal generation, or that their fancying themselves to be such will bear them out in the Day of judgement. Otherwise, if men become the true servants of God by Christ, they have, as I said, authority so to subscribe themselves. “One shall say, I am the Lord’s; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.”

But, to describe such people further, they must be men of circumcised and tender hearts; they must be such as worship God in the spirit, that rejoice in Christ Jesus and that have no confidence in the flesh. For these are the Nathaniels, the Israelites “indeed in whom there is no guile”; and these are the ones intended in the exhortation, when He says, “Let Israel hope in the Lord”. (1.) For these are formed for that very end, that they might hope in



the Lord. Yes, the word and testament is given to them for that very purpose. (2.) These are prisoners of hope (Zec 9:12) all the time they are in the state of nature, even as the whole creation is subjected under hope all the time of its bondage, by the sin and villainy of man. And unto them it shall be said, in the dispensation of the fullness of time, “Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope”, as certainly as that which is called “the creature itself” (Rom 8:21) shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Only here, as I said before, let all men have a care in this. This is the point: he that is right here is right in all that is necessary to salvation, but he that misses here can by no means be right anywhere to his soul’s advantage in the other world.

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## The Hope of a Dying Believer<sup>1</sup>

*Rev Walter Scott*

When the writer visited an aged member of Brushgrove Congregation (New South Wales), then nearing the close of his earthly pilgrimage, the conversation turned to the preparation needed for eternity. He was a widower and, in his loneliness, he felt the frailty of his condition and a greater isolation from the world. He brightened up, however, in speaking of spiritual things. When able, he had been a regular attender on the means of grace, along with his wife and her sisters (Skye ladies), whom for many years he was accustomed to drive some miles to the place of worship at Woodford Dale.

Now, in comparison, he felt that, for him, the years had no pleasure in them. He therefore longed all the more for private fellowship, and he always had the Bible ready when we entered. He himself dwelt much on the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and he loved to speak of the Christian warfare. On the occasion referred to he was much affected. He evidently felt that his time was short; and whilst recognising the solemnity of death and eternity – reference to which would bring tears to his eyes – yet he had that hope within him by which he was manifestly enabled to stay himself on God as his trust. As we conversed together alone on the nature of that hope, he was led, in his own simple, unaffected way, briefly to recount the manner of

<sup>1</sup>Taken with editing from *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* for April 1910. Rev Walter Scott was then minister of the Brushgrove Congregation, now the Free Presbyterian congregation in Grafton. After being received into the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, he became the minister of its Chesley congregation, in Canada.

his conversion, and the changed life which had been the result for him in subsequent years. He did so to this effect:

“I came from Bury St Edmunds, in the County of Suffolk, England. My surroundings there would do me no good. The preaching in the Church of England was dead. It was not a sermon therefore that first impressed me. God cried to me in His providence. A neighbouring man, returning from market with his cart, suddenly fell dead. I had known the man well, and the question came to my mind: Had it been myself, where would I have gone? Seeing, as the Bible tells us, God turns the wicked into hell and all the nations that forget God, I became greatly concerned. The commandment came to me wherein it is said, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind’. But I felt that I did not love God at all.

“I tried to improve myself in every way I could, by a more careful and serious life. But all was in vain. The law of God condemned me as a transgressor. It stung me to the quick. It continued thus with me for some time. I was then in great darkness and misery and cried to God for help. At last I was led to come to Jesus, and to look to the fountain opened in His blood for the cleansing away of my sin. And I rejoiced, believing in God.

“I now thought that I was done with sin. But I soon found out my mistake. The corruptions of my heart showed themselves, and I began to think that I was still lost and had never really come to Christ. This greatly exercised me, until I was driven to look away from myself to Christ for righteousness as well as pardon. I was made to see that I had no righteousness of my own – that it was not by works of righteousness of mine, but according to His mercy, that He saved me. And thus I was brought to look to Christ’s righteousness as a perfect and spotless righteousness, provided for me in Him. That has been my hope since then.”

He spoke with great feeling. After a pause he referred to Christ as “the same yesterday, and today, and for ever”; and added, “therefore He is a suitable Saviour for me, who am so changeful and inconstant. In my times of darkness I am enabled to hope in His Word. It is a lamp to my feet.” “Thy word hath quickened me” (Ps 119:50). The only book which he specially mentioned on this occasion as helpful to him was M’Cheyne’s *Memoir*.

Such was the testimony of Josiah Carter, spontaneously given when tottering on the border of the grave. His wife, Margaret Matheson, who had sat under Rev Roderick MacLeod of Snizort, Skye, in early life, had been a true helpmeet for him; and they were both loyal and devoted communicants in the Free Presbyterian Church<sup>2</sup> on the Clarence River. For some time Josiah

<sup>2</sup>This would have been an Australian denomination.

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Carter presided over Lower Southgate Mission Sabbath School in connection with the congregation, and the simplicity and earnestness of his opening and closing prayers were remarked upon at the time. He was latterly elected an elder, but age and failing health stood in the way of him accepting the office. However, he took time prayerfully to consider his duty, and communicated his decision in a kindly note to his pastor.

The above interview took place on 27 September 1902. Josiah Carter died soon afterwards. After his burial in the Grafton cemetery, it was found that, amongst many other bequests, he had left a small property for the benefit of Woodford Dale church, where he had so often worshipped.

A man of comparatively few words, Josiah Carter spoke deliberately, with an earnest gaze on the person addressed. This added to the impressiveness of his dying testimony. We took it as illustrative of that lively oracle: "The righteous hath hope in his death" (Prov 14:32). Clarence River readers will be interested in remembering one who so long went in and out amongst them. May it appeal to surviving relatives and others yet unawakened!

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## Book Review

*How Do You Read the Bible?* by J C Ryle, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 59 pages, £3.50, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom. The material in this book is a chapter from the author's *Practical Religion*; it has been "lightly edited with archaisms modernised and footnotes added". Ryle heads what he writes with two quotations from the Bible: "Search the Scriptures", and, "How readest thou?" Ryle's writing is almost always practical, and that is certainly the case here.

He gives the reader eight main points, and his comments on each of them end with the same three practical questions: "What are you doing with the Bible? Do you read it? How do you read it?" Ryle's points include: "There is no book in existence written in such a manner as the Bible" (it "was 'given by inspiration of God' (2 Tim 3:16)"); "There is no knowledge absolutely needful to a man's salvation except a knowledge of the things which are to be found in the Bible"; and, "The Bible is the only book that can bring comfort in death".

The author concludes by giving "points of application addressed to the conscience" of various groups of people. Among the advice he gives to those who are ready to begin reading the Bible is: "Begin reading your Bible this very day", and, "Read the Bible with an earnest desire to understand it". He also addresses the individual who "loves and believes the Bible, and yet reads

it but little". He warns that such a person is "likely to get little comfort from the Bible in time of need", and "likely never to be established in the truth" but "to be carried away by some specious false teacher for a season". He ends by addressing those who "really love the Bible, live upon the Bible, and read it much". He encourages them to "read the Bible more and more", "meditate more on the Bible", and "live by the Bible more and more". When expanding a little on the point just quoted, Ryle counsels, "Let us measure all by the Bible, and resolve, by God's help to conform to it. O that we may learn increasingly to cleanse our ways by the Word! (Ps 119:9)."

The final paragraph of the book begins thus: "I commend all these things to the serious and prayerful attention of everyone" who takes it up. May the book, with God's blessing, send them to the Bible to give it serious and prayerful attention, and to give it such attention increasingly!

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## Protestant View

### "Just Human Bones"

The mortal remains of the young woman who claimed to have seen visions of Mary at Lourdes, in France, in the 1850s are being taken to more than 50 locations throughout Britain during September and October. It is expected that the relics of Bernadette Soubirous will attract great public interest and will be the largest-ever exhibition of its kind in this country. A tour of the relics of another Romanist "saint" in 2009 attracted over 500 000 people.

Those who come to "venerate" the relics will observe "bone and tissue fragments . . . in a golden reliquary within a hermetically sealed glass case" and many of them will then "pray, light candles and leave petitions". The remains will also be accompanied by 1000 litres of spring water from Lourdes for washing and drinking. The intention is that the alleged healing power that those who attend the shrine at Lourdes enjoy will be extended to the UK. A priest in London remarked that "the relics are just human bones, but they are bones that belonged to an individual touched by the power of God".

What poor, deluded people they must be who think that "dead men's bones" can have any influence on their physical health. Indeed, one of the greatest sources of superstition lies in attributing spiritual power to physical things. The whole delusion of Lourdes is a gross example of Romanist superstition and also of imposing on people when many of them are in a most vulnerable and needy condition. It is sad that such an exhibition is taking place in once-Protestant Britain and it merely emphasises the reigning spiritual darkness that envelops our land.

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May the Lord send forth His light with His truth so that multitudes who today sit in darkness would come to know the true light of the gospel of Christ. When that will take place, it is not to human remains, nor to the mother of Christ's human nature that people will look for spiritual and physical health, but to the Sun of righteousness who arises with healing in His wings (Mal 4:2). AWM

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## Notes and Comments

### Some Thoughts Following the Death of the Queen

On September 8, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II passed from time into eternity, after her exceptionally long reign of 70 years. Much has been said and done throughout the United Kingdom, by way of expressing sympathy to the Royal family. The message of sympathy sent by the Moderator and Clerk of Synod (see page 319) pays tribute to “the gracious manner in which Her Majesty the Queen conducted herself for the well-being of our nation” and of other parts of the world.

One would question the appropriateness of the abundance of funny anecdotes told by way of tribute to the late Queen in the House of Commons. Death is serious and, while the selection of comments by the media may have been biased in favour of what was humorous, it reflects the attitudes of a generation that ignores the solemn reality of sinners passing into eternity.

We may also note the new Prime Minister Liz Truss's remarks that the Queen was the “rock on which modern Britain was built”. One does not want to be overly critical of this statement, but one would much prefer if she had pointed to the King of kings as the Rock on which modern Britain ought to have been built.

The Queen's eldest son has now become King Charles III. Some will be more than disappointed that he did not choose another name as monarch, given especially the record of Charles I and Charles II as persecutors of those who strove to follow the Scriptures in every sphere of life, especially those who desired a fully reformed Church.

Yet it was good to hear the new King acknowledge God in these very early days of his reign. Much of what he said was no doubt conventional, according to the forms of previous generations. We should be thankful that he has moved away from wishing to be known as “Defender of Faith”, whatever that might mean in this multi-faith age. Instead he used the traditional expression, “Defender of *the* Faith”, which can be understood as being at least Protestant in its intention, although the title was originally awarded by

the Pope of the time to Henry VIII after the latter had written against Luther.

King Charles further stated, "I . . . do faithfully promise and swear that I shall inviolably maintain and preserve the Settlement of the true Protestant Religion as established by the Laws made in Scotland in prosecution of the Claim of Right and particularly by an Act intituled 'An Act for securing the Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Church Government' and by the Acts passed in the Parliament of both Kingdoms for Union of the two Kingdoms, together with the Government, Worship, Discipline, Rights and Privileges of the Church of Scotland. So help me God."

Again, he gave the undertaking, "In carrying out the heavy task that has been laid upon me, and to which I now dedicate what remains to me of my life, I pray for the guidance and help of almighty God". And he acknowledged, as he pledged himself to "uphold the constitutional principles at the heart of our nation" for the rest of his life, that such a period of time was what "God grants me". We welcome such forms of words, but what we really long for is to see these sentiments put into practice in the whole life of the King and all his ministers, in all their activities in government, especially in the legislation that is passed.

Unusually the new reign coincided with a new government, under a new prime minister. Paul exhorted Timothy that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men"; in particular "for kings, and for all that are in authority". It is altogether appropriate that we should pray for King Charles and for all members of government and members of the various UK parliaments, and others in positions of responsibility throughout the country. Paul mentions, in the same passage, one particular reason for interceding for those who are in authority: that "we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Timothy 2:1,2). We should ask that we might always be able to practice the true religion without interference and we should be very thankful for the degree to which we can live free from violence. We should pray that the Lord in His kindness would permit this to continue.

We should ask too that our rulers would come to realise that it is their duty to maintain the true religion. But we should also pray that God would grant spiritual blessings to people in various positions of authority, and indeed to desire spiritual blessings to be poured on people of every kind throughout the UK and beyond.

One final thought. It has been announced that the day of the Queen's funeral is to be a bank holiday. Supermarkets and various other employers have decided to close on that day, although supermarkets in particular are almost universally open on the Lord's day, on the day over which the King

of kings has sovereign authority. Supermarkets are to be shut out of respect for the late Queen, but they refuse to show respect for the Lord Jesus Christ in closing on His day. How incongruous!

### **Family Life in Britain**

A review by Dame Rachel de Souza, the Children's Commissioner for England, was commissioned by the UK Government and published on 1 September 2022. The review investigated all aspects of family life and included a survey of children in England (which received over half a million responses) and many interviews with married couples and single parents, to get an in-depth picture of family life today.

Shockingly, the review states that almost a quarter of families in the UK are headed by a lone parent (90% of whom are women) rather than in the traditional and scriptural two-parent family. Of children born after 2000, 44% spent some of their childhood up to the age of 17 outside of a two-parent family. This compares with 21% of children born in 1970.

Researchers used the Annual Population Survey of the Office of National Statistics to produce breakdowns of family composition by ethnicity, religion and socio-economic status:

- “Families of Asian descent, including those with Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, or Bangladeshi heritage, are far more likely to be headed by a married couple (approximately 85%, compared with 60% white British).
- “44% and 57% respectively of Black African and Caribbean families, and 22% of white British families, are headed by a lone parent.
- “49% of children in lone-parent families were in relative poverty compared with 25% living in married or cohabiting families.”

The Commissioner noted, “Family structure has gradually changed over the last 20 years. There are fewer married couples. There are more couples cohabiting. There are fewer traditional nuclear-family units. Family is always changing. It is dynamic and we need to find new ways to stay up to date with how it is changing so we can support it effectively. This review has shown for the first time ever that family has a protective effect. These core protective elements of family are love, strong and enduring relationships, the ability to depend on one another for emotional and practical support, and shared experiences.”

She called on the Government to put families at the heart of policy: “The research shows for the first time that family provides a shield from life's challenges. . . . That is why the Government needs to prioritise how they can put families at the heart of all policy decisions.”

Mr Harry Benson, research director at the Marriage Foundation, said, “It

shouldn't come as a surprise that marriage rates have fallen. Hostile policy-makers have tried to pretend that marriage doesn't matter, while current social policy massively penalises low-income couples who marry or even live together, through the couple penalty in the benefit system. Our research shows that most young adults still want to marry, and all the evidence supports this as a good choice, especially for raising children."

Secular reasons can explain in part the breakdown of marriage, including the fact that women now have more freedom to escape abusive marriages. However, it is clear that this once-Christian nation which has turned its back on God and His laws has also departed from the creation ordinance of marriage and the God-given ordinance for the raising of children. The Apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 5 that Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it and compares this to marriage. He goes on to say that "men ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. . . . For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." One flesh is a loving life-long relationship, the casting aside of which results in the findings of the national survey outlined above. In its neglect of this ordinance, the UK has sown the wind and, we fear, is reaping the whirlwind in terms of moral degradation and the breakdown of society. *FRD*

### **Apologising to Scottish Witches**

In recent years, it has become popular for governments and other organisations to make apologies for the conduct of people connected with them in the past, and even to issue pardons to people convicted of crimes many decades and even centuries ago. Sometimes the apologies are accompanied by gifts of money to those claiming to represent the victims of historic "injustice". One such group of "victims" is those who were executed, or even accused, under the Scottish law against witchcraft which was in force from 1563 until 1736. Edinburgh University has a database of such people, listing nearly 4000 (84% female) of whom perhaps two-thirds were put to death.

In March of this year, the First Minister Nicola Sturgeon issued an "apology" to these people, especially the women among them. The purpose of the apology was partly to send the message that there is nothing wrong with witchcraft (or no such thing as witchcraft, according to the atheists); and partly to show how much superior the present occupants of Scotland are to previous generations. In both respects, it was intended as a snub to Scotland's former Christianity.

It cannot be denied that superstition was rife in Scotland before the



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scientific era. Thomas M’Crie gives a rather extraordinary example from the articles of attainder for high treason brought against the Marquis of Argyll in the Scottish Parliament in 1661. One of these articles concerned a “miraculous” tree, on which some men had been hanged, which promptly died and issued a stream of blood from its roots. In such a superstitious atmosphere, it is little wonder that people engaged in witchcraft, and that they were severely punished for it. Doubtless some of the accusations of witchcraft had a malicious origin, while others were a response to eccentricity or madness, but some of the instances must have involved people who were deliberately using “black arts” to try to injure others. The penalty may have been excessively severe, but they knew what it was, and they chose to continue in their evil – witchcraft is an evil for which there is no possible justification (Ex 22:18) – and they suffered the consequences.

The work of our generation is not to sit in judgement on former generations but to prepare ourselves, and our fellow men, for the great Day of Judgement. Many presumptuous condemnations of people in the past will themselves be brought into judgement in that day. *DWBS*

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## Church Information

### Message of Sympathy on the Death of Her Majesty the Queen

When King George VI passed away in February 1952, the then Moderator and Clerk of Synod sent a Message of Sympathy to the Royal Family. The present Moderator and Clerk have followed this precedent on the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and on 9 September 2022 sent the following Message to His Majesty King Charles III:

On behalf of the members of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, we wish to put on record our deep sorrow on the passing away of our beloved Monarch Queen Elizabeth II.

It is with great thankfulness that we recall the gracious manner in which Her Majesty the Queen conducted Herself for the well-being of our nation and the many parts of the world where Her Majesty represented the Commonwealth and the United Kingdom.

We deeply appreciated Her Majesty’s professed attachment to the Christian faith and reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ for her duties as Queen.

We offer our sincere and prayerful sympathy to Your Majesty and the Royal Family in the great loss that You have sustained, a loss shared by the whole nation. Our desire is that together we would take the God of

Truth, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as our stay; and take His Word alone, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, for all spiritual and moral direction and guidance.

We, Your loyal Subjects, wish Your Majesty God's blessing, comfort and upholding in all the duties now upon Your shoulders as our Monarch.

*Rev Donald A Ross, Moderator*

*Rev Keith M Watkins, Clerk*

### Theological Conference

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

#### Justification and Preaching

*Rev D Campbell*

Tuesday 2.30 pm

#### Thomas Boston

*Mr F R Daubney*

Tuesday 7.00 pm

#### Theology of the Apostle Peter

*Rev W A Weale*

Wednesday 10.00 am

#### The Reformation in Italy

*Rev K D Macleod*

Wednesday 2.30 pm

#### Adoption

*Rev Roderick Macleod*

Wednesday 7.00 pm

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

### Home Mission Fund

By appointment of Synod, the second of this year's special collection for the Home Mission Fund is due to be taken in congregations during October.

*W Campbell, General Treasurer*

### Acknowledgement of Donations

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

*Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, in support of the church in Ukraine, £50.

*Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for Mbuma Mission Hospital, £16 000; Anon, for Mbuma Mission Hospital, In memory of the late Jessie A Coote, £5000.

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

**Dornoch:** Anon, £1000.

**Inverness:** *Bus Fund:* Anon, £20, £20, £20. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, for Ukraine, £320.

**North Harris:** *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon £80, £30, £50. *Where Most Needed:* Anon, £30 per Rev JBJ.

**North Tolsta:** Anon, In memory of a beloved brother, £500. *Door Collection:* Anon, £100, £20, £50, £80, £20.

**North Uist:** *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, for supply expenses, £100.

**Portree:** *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10. *Where Most Needed:* Anon, £100.

**South Harris:** Anon, In memory of the Rosses of Geocrab, £10 000.

## 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 Barton 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 often 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. **Sheilebost:** as intimated. Rev K M Watkins BA, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, IV1 1NA; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 6 pm; **Scourie:** Sabbath 11:30 am, Tuesday 7 pm (as intimated). Contact Dr A Ross; tel 01971 502099.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 810228. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 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.
- Raasa:** 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 7.30 pm. Rev J Campbell, Clachan, Staffin, IV51 9HY; tel: 07485 008414; e-mail: johntwin20@btinternet.com.
- 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 Upper Room (second floor), 11 Wilmslow Road, Cheadle SK8 1DW; (entrance is from the car park at the back of the 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**: For services, contact Rev J D Smith; tel: 09 282 4195.

### Singapore

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

### Ukraine

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

### Zimbabwe

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

**Ingwanya**: 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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