

# 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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**June 2023**

**Vol 128 • No 6**

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## The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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

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

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**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. **Fifth:** Aberdeen, London, Mbuma.

**May: First Sabbath:** Donsa, Grafton, Leverburgh; **Second:** Achmore, Scourie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fourth:** Chiedza.

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

**July: First Sabbath:** Beauly; **Second:** Bonar Bridge, Uig; **Third:** Auckland, Shildaig, Fort William; **Fifth:** Cameron.

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

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

Volume 128

June 2023

Number 6

## True Religion

It should be obvious to everyone that they need a religion, though so many today profess to have none. It should also be obvious that the religion one follows needs to be true, not false – in spite of the contemporary assumption that all religions are equally true, that they all point in basically the same direction. Yet large numbers of people in the Western world assume, at least in practice, that all religions are false and that life will turn out best if they reject all ideas of God and live as atheists, or at least as agnostics. Let us examine the idea of true religion in a series of steps:

1. *Christianity* is the true religion. The followers of Jesus Christ were first called “Christians” in Antioch (Acts 11:26). But the term has been used much more widely over the centuries to describe anyone who, in some sense, claims a degree of allegiance to Christ – to be a follower of Christ, no matter how tenuous that person’s connection with Him might be. Only followers of false religions, along with atheists and agnostics, are excluded from this definition. This sense of the word has its uses, but we need to come closer to what those disciples understood was being conveyed when they were first called “Christians”.

2. True religion involves *taking the Bible seriously*. The Bible is a revelation from God; it tells us what we should believe and how we should live. Many people think they are taking the Bible seriously although their ideas of doctrine and practice are very different from what the Bible actually teaches. One main reason for rejecting Roman Catholicism is that, while it claims to respect the authority of Scripture, it effectively denies that authority by giving at least an equal place to “unwritten tradition”. Their tradition includes, for instance, the immaculate conception of Mary: the false idea that she was free from original sin. This is contradicted by her reference, recorded in Scripture, to “God my Saviour” (Lk 1:47), and only a sinner needs a saviour. If Mary “rejoiced in God [her] Saviour”, as she did, it was true of her, as of every other merely human being, that her mother conceived her “in sin” (Ps 51:5).

3. True religion seeks to be *faithful to the Reformation understanding of*

*the Bible* in doctrine, worship and practice. Much of present-day religion is seriously flawed because it rejects the infallibility of Scripture and readily accepts that it contains errors. But true religion includes the “full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority” of Scripture (*Westminster Confession of Faith* 1:7). This Confession is the best summary of how Scripture should be understood; it is the subordinate standard of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, which was obliged to separate from the nineteenth-century Free Church of Scotland when that body became unsound on the doctrine of Scripture, as well as on other teachings. When a denomination gives up a firm grasp of the perfection and authority of Scripture, it is likely to slide further and further from the doctrines, and even the morality, that God has revealed. Of this there are many examples today.

If we are to be safe for eternity, we must retain clear scriptural teaching about sin – that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23) – and also about the consequences of sin. We must also hold fast the scriptural teaching about the one remedy for both the guilt and the power of sin and we must not depart in any degree from the Reformation insistence on the absolute necessity of justification by faith *alone* in Christ *alone*, if sinners are to be accepted by God and delivered from a lost eternity.

4. The focus of this article, however, is intended to be on *heart religion*. People may adhere to all that has been said in the previous paragraphs about true religion, without obeying the gospel or living godly lives. But “this is [God’s] commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment” (1 Jn 3:23). It is perfectly possible to profess warm attachment to the truths of God’s Word while continuing in heart rebellion against the authority of God. Such people have never been born again; they do not have the fear of God in their hearts – that is, their way of life is not based on a holy respect for God and for His commandments.

Yet this fear is what Solomon, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, considered “the conclusion of the whole matter” that he had written about in the Book of Ecclesiastes: “Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (12:13). Matthew Henry comments, “The root of [true] religion is the fear of God reigning in the heart, a reverence of His majesty, a deference to His authority, and a dread of His wrath”. He goes on to state that the call, “Fear God”, also implies, “Worship God, give Him the honour due to His name, in all the instances of true devotion, inward and outward”. Henry further emphasises, “The rule of religion is the law of God revealed in the Scriptures. Our fear towards God must be taught by His commandments (Is 29:13), and those we must keep and cheerfully observe.

Wherever the fear of God is uppermost in the heart, there will be a respect to all His commandments and care to keep them. In vain do we claim to fear God if we do not make conscience of our duty to Him.”

Those who have true religion in their hearts are learning to be dependent on the Lord. The Apostle Paul realised that even God’s people, himself included, are not “sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves”. Paul’s sufficiency was not from himself, even as to his thinking, and that was also true of what he did and what he said. But to know his insufficiency did not leave him helpless and hopeless; the source of his help and hope was the Most High; Paul wrote further: “Our sufficiency is of God” (2 Cor 3:5). No doubt he was learning this increasingly as life went on and as, by the work of the Holy Spirit in his soul, he grew in grace; yet there was no need to despair. So it is with all God’s children, though some have become more dependent on the Lord than others; they have all been learning to commit themselves, and what they do, to the One who is able to strengthen them for duty and to keep them from sin.

This dependence is expressed in prayer. David’s desires found expression at the throne of grace. For instance, from a consciousness of ignorance, he cried out to the Lord, the one safe source of help: “Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me” (Ps 25:5). He could not presume that he would proceed safely through life if he looked to himself for direction; only God could lead him on safely, in the light of revealed truth, and it was God alone who could apply that truth to David’s understanding. It is the same with all God’s children today; it is God who must apply to them the truth that is relevant to a particular situation. They must be dependent on His teaching if they are to escape being influenced by the false ideas that have become so influential in contemporary society and bear down on them from so many directions.

It is surely important then that each of us should follow the religion that is true – the religion whose teachings reflect the reality of what really exists and not what is false. But it is not sufficient to believe the facts revealed in Scripture – in particular, that God exists; that He is holy; that by nature we are all in rebellion against Him; that Christ Jesus, the Son of God, came into the world to save sinners; and that all who believe in Him will not perish in a lost eternity but will enjoy eternal blessedness in heaven. It *is* tremendously important to believe these facts, but we must also be born again, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of our souls, and live by God’s grace according to the precepts of true Christianity as made known in Scripture. We desperately need true religion, in every sense of the term. Let us seek it earnestly, and urgently, from the Lord Jesus, who is able and willing to save lost sinners, and to save them “to the uttermost” (Heb 7:25).

## A Coronation Sermon (1)<sup>1</sup>

*John Flavel*

Song of Solomon 3:11. *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.*

A crown is the top of earthly glory. No one aspires to be above it, unless the man of sin, who affects to sit in the very throne of God, and exalts “himself above all that is called God” (2 Th 2:4). When God puts a crown upon the head and a sceptre into the hand of a man, He engraves upon that man (in a qualified sense) the living letters of His Majesty and authority: “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are the children of the Most High” (Ps 82:6). Yet there is always a reservation to the divine prerogative, to set the crown on whatever head He shall please: “Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown . . . exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high”.

Though dominion is not founded in grace, grace embellishes and secures the dominion of men. The princes of the earth owe homage to Jesus Christ (Ps 2:10-12), and had some of them been more subject to His laws, their kingdoms would have flourished. The coronation day of a king is, in a sense, the marriage day between him and his people, and is accordingly solemnised with demonstrations of joy and gladness. Thus when the crown of Israel was set on Solomon’s head, Scripture represents their exuberant joy: “All the people came up after him; and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them” (1 Ki 1:40).

Carnal men rejoice carnally, and spiritual men should rejoice spiritually. The most glorious part of the solemnity of such a day consists in: (1) praises and prayers for those that wear the crown; (2) a spiritual application of the action to ourselves.

(1.) *Praises and prayers for the king* whom God has set over us. Your prayers and praises reflect more glory on the crown than all the jewels and sparkling stones with which it shines. So I am persuaded our king will account it, according to Zechariah 12:5: “The governors of Judah shall say in their hearts, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the Lord of hosts their God”. Praise thy God, O England, for setting thy crown this day upon the head of a Protestant prince, who did not account his treasures or blood dear to him, to redeem the interest of Christ out of the dangers that were ready to swallow it up. Pray fervently for your king this day, for the concerns of

<sup>1</sup>Preached at Dartmouth when William and Mary were crowned in 1689. Taken with editing from Flavel’s *Works*, vol 6.

the people of God are so great in relation to him that they call for the uttermost importunity in prayer from all the saints:

[1] That God would cleanse the crown of England from all that guilt and pollution it contracted under former governments [in particular, of Charles II and James II], so that the sins of the crown may not descend with it. [2] That the royal head on which it shall be set this day may be filled with the wisdom of God, and matched with a holy heart, inflamed with love to God and zeal for His glory. [3] That as soon as men have set the crown upon his head, he may cheerfully take it off again and cast it at the feet of Jesus Christ, as the 24 elders did (Rev 4:10). [4] That God would make the crown sit easy and long upon his head – easy, because crowns are usually lined with thorny cares; and long, for the Church’s peace and tranquillity.

(2.) A *spiritual application* to our own instruction and spiritual advantage, and this will be much more glorious than all the triumphant arches, royal robes, thundering guns, and loud acclamations of the people. To this purpose, I have chosen this text for spiritualising the duties of the day.

The parts of this Song of Solomon are sung by the heavenly Bridegroom and the bride. The matter of it is most spiritual and weighty, the style of it rapturous and lofty, the intimate union and communion of Christ and the Church are elegantly illustrated in an allegory of marriage; but nothing here is light or obscene. It is a crystal stream of pure spiritual love sliding sweetly between two pleasant banks, Christ and the Church.

In verses 9 and 10, you have the description of a triumphant chariot prepared by King Solomon for the daughters of Jerusalem: “The pillars thereof of silver, the bottom of gold, the covering of purple, and the midst thereof paved with love”. A chariot is designed for easy, safe and honourable conveyance. This chariot is the covenant of grace, fitted by Christ to transport His bride, the Church, safely and honourably through this world to her glorious mansion in the highest heavens.

But however stately and magnificent this royal chariot may be, He that designed it is much more glorious to behold. Therefore in the next words, which are my text, believers are summoned to behold and contemplate Christ, who designed it. In its words we have: (1.) The *spectators* summoned; (2.) The *spectacle* they are invited to see.

(1.) The *spectators* invited: the daughters of Zion. By *Zion*, understand the Church; and by *the daughters of Zion*, the members of the Church, or every particular believer. These are here invited to go forth, from their entangling, diverting temptations, and to behold – by the eye of faith – this most glorious and heart-delighting object.

(2.) The *spectacle* they are invited to behold and contemplate: King

Solomon with his crown – the most illustrious, glorious and delightful sight that ever the eyes of men did, or shall, behold. By *King Solomon*, understand Christ; of whom Solomon, in this Book, is the figure or shadow; yet He is One to whom Solomon, in all his glory, was but a painted sun on a signpost, when compared to the sun in the heavens at midday, shining in all its glory.

And by His crown, do not understand a material crown, as Solomon's was, but the glory and honour that is put upon Christ, the king of Zion – of which glory a crown is an emblem. Interpreters are not all agreed about what crown is meant here; some would have it understood of our human nature, with which His mother Mary, from whom He took it, crowned Him. But though this assumption of our nature put such a crown of glory upon it as it never had before, it was rather an obscuring of Christ's glory than any addition of glory to it. Others interpret it of the crown of thorns with which His mother (the Jewish church or synagogue) crowned Him in the day of His passion at Jerusalem; but this seems to be as difficult a sense as the first.

The most judicious expositors are agreed on a third sense: by the crown on Christ's head, we are to understand that glory and honour which believers put upon Christ, when in the day of their espousals to Him by faith, they renounce Satan, sin and all that had exercised dominion over them before. They then reject all dependence on any righteousness of their own, and give their deliberate, full and hearty consent to Christ alone reigning over them for ever. They say, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king"; Christ is "the Lord our righteousness", and in all things we will obey Him. Christ esteems this as a crown of glory put on His head, in the day of His espousals, and in the day of the gladness of His heart. There is no such honour, no such pleasure a poor sinner can give to Christ, as to believe in Him; this is as the putting of a crown of glory upon His head. It is true, it adds no glory to Him, but it is the greatest manifestation of His glory that we are capable of making.

*Objection.* In what sense can believers be tolerably styled Christ's mother? For the text tells us that it was the crown His mother put upon Him.

*Answer.* They may be so styled in two ways: (1) Because Christ is formed in every believer; He is (in a spiritual sense) conceived and formed in their souls, as the child is formed in its mother's womb. So the Apostle speaks, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you" (Gal 4:19). (2) Because of the dear affection Christ bears to every soul that believes in Him. No man loves his brother, sister, or mother, as Christ loves believers. When He was told that His mother and brethren were seeking Him, He said, "Behold My mother and My brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother"

(Mk 3:34). The day when a sinner consents to come under Christ's government is the day of his espousals (2 Cor 11:2). And the day of a sinner's espousals to Christ is the day of the gladness of his heart (Lk 15:32).

**Doctrine.** *The day of a believer's espousals to Christ by faith is to Christ as the day of a king's coronation is to him, the day of the gladness of his heart.*

What we find in Luke 10:21 is very remarkable; there the Spirit has carefully recorded one hour of joy in the life of Christ, for He did not have many, being a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. "In that hour, Jesus rejoiced in spirit." What hour was that? It was when the seventy returned with these joyful tidings to Him: "Lord, even the devils are subject to us through Thy name", when Christ saw Satan falling as lightning from heaven (vv 17,18), his kingdom tottering, his forces routed by the gospel, his subjects running away to Christ from his cruel bondage, and made willing to come under His government. This was joyful news to Christ; it was the day of the gladness of His heart. He now had a new throne in the souls of poor sinners, over whom the devil and sin had reigned; this was a crown of glory to Christ.

I shall discourse on these three things: (1.) In what respects a sinner's espousals to Christ resemble the day of a king's coronation. (2) How these two days differ from each other. (3.) Why it is the day of the gladness of Christ's heart. And then I shall apply it.

**1. The resemblances between the day of a king's coronation and the day of a sinner's espousals to Christ by faith.** This will appear in six respects:

(1.) A king that is duly crowned over his subjects has a *lawful right to govern* them. Solomon had his title to the kingdom by descent from his royal father David, who appointed him to be his immediate successor upon the throne of Israel (1 Ki 1:35). But David had his title by the voluntary election of the people (2 Sam 5:1-5). The Roman Caesar's title to the kingdom of Judah was by conquest. Christ recognised it, when He said, "Render . . . unto Caesar the things that be Caesar's" (Lk 20:25). But Christ has a right to reign on the throne of our souls by His Father's decree, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion" (Ps 2:6); by conquest, for He wins it by the sword of His Spirit before He possesses it (2 Cor 10:4,5). He casts down by spiritual weapons all that oppose Him and brings every thought into obedience to Him. And He has a right also by consent: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power" (Ps 110:3).

(2.) On the coronation day, kings appear in all their royal robes, glittering jewels, and all the lustre that can be put upon them; they shine in the eyes of the people more gloriously than all that are about them. Much more does Christ excel all others in beauty and glory, in the eyes of those that choose

Him for their Lord and King: “Unto you . . . which believe, He is precious” (1 Pet 2:7); He is honour itself: “He is before all things” (Col 1:17), not only in time, or in order, but real dignity, solid glory and excellency. So His spouse pronounces, “Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into Thy lips” (Ps 45:2), and, “My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand” (Song 5:10). Examine and mark all the creatures in both worlds, angels and men; they bear no more proportion to Christ in glory than a glowworm to the sun.

(3.) On the coronation day, the consent of the people is demanded, and given. So, when Christ is crowned King over the soul, His right is asserted and their consent demanded by His ambassadors. The believer gives his hearty consent. “Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power” (Ps 110:3). He reigns over all that are made truly willing to receive Him and invests them with all the privileges of His kingdom (Jn 1:12). The unbeliever is not willing to come under Christ’s government: “Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life” (Jn 5:40). And the result of their unwillingness is their eternal ruin: “Those Mine enemies, that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before Me” (Lk 19:27).

Now to make a soul truly willing to accept Christ’s government and give consent to Him, four things must be done upon such a soul, by Him: (1) He must be convinced of his sin and misery; no man will be willing to change his lord, while he finds no matter of complaint. (2) He must know, and deliberate on, the terms of Christ, for an ignorant person cannot be said to consent. Christ will have all the world to know His terms, whether they like them or not. No one shall say afterwards, I was surprised, or imposed upon; had I known this, I would never have consented to be a Christian. The hardest terms of Christianity are plainly propounded, to cut off all pretences for resiling from Christ. (3) On deliberation, there must appear, to the soul that consents to Christ’s government, a preponderating good – that Christ, with all His reproaches and sufferings, is better than sin, with all its honours and pleasures: No man will change for no advantage, much less to his loss. Thus Moses saw more glory and excellence in the very reproaches of Christ than in all the treasures of Egypt, or pleasures of sin (Heb 11:25,26). The soul says, Though there are hard and bitter sufferings in the way of godliness, it is infinitely better for me to endure them for Christ than to be damned. And on balancing the gains and losses of Christianity, its conveniences and inconveniences, the soul pronounces they are not worthy to be compared (Rom 8:18). (4) Men will never heartily consent to Christ’s terms unless there is a divine, almighty influence on the will. “No man”, says Christ, “can come to Me, except the Father, which hath sent Me draw him” (Jn 6:44). God

influences the will in a way suitable to its nature (Hos 11:4), and produces consent without co-action. If the Lord shows anyone the infinite advantages that come to his soul by Christ, this very discovery does *compel*, as it were, that man to come in to Christ, as that word is used in Luke 14:23, a scripture vilely abused in our times. Christ compels no one to come into His kingdom, as the Spaniards did force poor Indians [in South America] to be baptized, or as others have been compelled to go to the Lord's table. He will reign over a willing people, or not at all.

(4.) On the coronation day, a champion appears, on the king's behalf, to challenge any that shall deny His right, or attempt to draw his subjects from their duty and allegiance: He defies the proudest enemy of the king. So when Christ is crowned King over the souls of His people, a public, formal challenge is made to all the enemies of Christ and His people: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? . . . Who is he that condemneth? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom 8:33-35). Devils and men are defied to do their worst. Christ must reign till all His enemies are put under His feet; sin shall not have dominion over His people, for they are not under the law, but under grace. Let Satan, and all his infernal powers come; they are all defied in the name of Christ. Believers are His subjects, and none shall pluck them out of His hand.

(5.) At, or about, the coronation day, an act is passed and published, pardoning the offences the subjects had committed unto that day. Thus it is at the day of Christ's coronation over the believer's soul, and its espousals to Him by faith; all his sins are pardoned, new and old, great and small. And of this, proclamation is openly made in the gospel. "To Him gave all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sin" (Acts 10:43). O glorious pardon, free without purchase, full without exception, and final without revocation! Now there is deliverance from prison, the doors are open, liberty is proclaimed to the captives (Is 61:1,2). The King of Sion is a merciful King, and His subjects shall find Him so; they have gladdened His heart by accepting His government, and He will gladden theirs by His pardons. The Son has made them free, and they are free indeed.

(6.) A coronation day is a day of gladness, a day of joy and triumph; joy displays itself in the faces of all loyal subjects; only those that had rather be under another government hang their head and bite their lip. So all Jesus Christ's loyal subjects rejoice exceedingly in His government; and it must be so, because His kingdom consists in joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom 14:17). When Zaccheus came under this King, he came down joyfully (Lk 19:6,9). When the eunuch received Christ for his Lord and King, he went home

rejoicing (Acts 8:39). When Samaria submitted to His sceptre, there was great joy in that city (Acts 8:5-7). Let the joy be what it will, the causes of joy are greater than the joy itself. But the only malcontents are those who belong to Satan's kingdom, who love to be under the dominion of sin and hate the strictness of true religion; they fret to see Christ's kingdom enlarged, and secretly plot to destroy it.

**2. How the two days differ** – no difference to the believer's disadvantage.

(1.) It is not the privilege of every subject – nor of one among many thousands – to see the king who is crowned over them, to hear his voice, or give their explicit consent in his presence. But *every subject in Christ's kingdom sees Christ by the eye of faith*: he “seeth the Son, and believeth on Him” (Jn 6:40). Seeing and believing are interchangeable terms; they all hear His voice, and give their explicit consent to have Him for their King. Union with Christ is not to be done by a proxy, or a representative, but is the result of a solemn debate between Christ and the soul.

(2.) Kings are crowned over many that do not love them but are filled with prejudice against their persons and government. But it cannot be so in the kingdom of Christ; *to them that believe He is precious* (1 Pet 2:7). All Christ's subjects love Him above father or mother, wife or children, even above their own lives; otherwise they cannot be His subjects (Lk 14:27). They also delight in His governing; nothing would be more pleasant to their souls than to find every thought of their heart brought into subjection to Him (2 Cor 10:5). They dare not ally themselves with His enemies, but will choose to die rather than forsake Him.

(3.) The relation between a king and his subjects must be dissolved by death. But *our King, Christ, lives for ever*; death has no dominion over Him: His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion shall have no end (Dan 7:13,14). Death is so far from separating Christ and His subjects that it brings them nearer together than ever; it brings them into His immediate presence (1 Cor 13:12) and fixes them there for ever (1 Th 4:17).

(4.) Kings may degenerate into tyrants, and subjects into rebels; they may undermine the laws, liberties and religion of their people. The world is too full of such instances and examples, but *Christ can never oppress His subjects*. “The sceptre of [His] kingdom is a right sceptre” (Ps 45:6). His “yoke is easy, and [His] burden is light” (Mt 11:30). And His true subjects can never shake off their allegiance to Him; they shall rather die than do so.

(5.) Kings will not permit their greatest favourites to sit on their thrones; it is their special honour, not communicable to any. But *Christ appoints all His subjects to sit with Him upon His throne* (Rev 3:21). The glory which God gave Him, He has given to them (John 17:22). What king is like Christ?

(6.) The joy and triumph at the king's coronation is only among men, in this lower world, *but the joy and triumph at Christ's coronation, is among angels in heaven* (Lk 15:7). The city of God holds a solemn triumph at the conversion of a particular sinner; what are the shouts of men to the rejoicing of angels?

### **3. Why Christ's coronation over believers is the day of His gladness.**

(1) It is His *marriage* day, at least the day of His espousals. Christ now has a new spouse, a soul in which He never dwelt before; as a bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so does Christ over believers (Is 62:5). Here is a new relation, with the King of kings; the angels of God rejoice exceedingly in it, but much more Christ, the blessed Bridegroom.

(2) It is Christ's day of *victory over Satan*, when He has deposed him from his throne (Mt 12:29), delivered out of the power of darkness a soul of invaluable worth in His eyes, and translated it into His own kingdom (Col 1:13). The day of conquest is a day of extraordinary joy and triumph (Is 9:3).

(3) It is the day in which Christ *receives the fruit and reward* of His bloody travail and bitter agonies: a son, or daughter, has now been born to God, an heir born to the heavenly inheritance. It is most pleasant and joyful to Jesus Christ to see of the travail of His soul (Is 53:11). No satisfaction in this world is comparable to it. When a young heir is born to the kingdom and crown of heaven, it deserves a triumph.

(4) It is the day when Christ *finds a soul* that was lost. What joy it was to the father of the prodigal when he had found his lost son! (Lk 15:20). There was mirth and music, feasting and rejoicing: "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found". Poor sinners are lost creatures by nature; they have lost their God, and themselves too. The devil has found every unregenerate sinner. But the errand for which Christ came into the world was to seek and to save that which was lost (Mt 18:11). When the lost sinner comes home to Him by repentance and faith, He attains the purpose of His incarnation, life and death, for that soul, which must be the day of the gladness of His heart.

The day of a king's espousals is a day of gladness to his soul, a day of conquest and dividing the spoils, after a sharp fight. It is a joy to a mother, after long and sore travail, to embrace in her arms the child for whom she endured so much. It is a joy to a father to find and recover a child that was lost and was dead to him. In a word, there is high delight and satisfaction in seeing a great purpose, on which the heart is intently set, brought at last, by orderly conduct, to the desired happy issue. If these things are so, let us allow that the day when a sinner comes to Christ by conversion is as a king's coronation day, the day of his espousals, and the gladness of his heart.

# Unbelief and Its Dangers<sup>1</sup>

*Macintosh Mackay*

Hebrews 3:12. *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

“**T**he heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (Jer 17:9,10). No man had a deeper experience of the human heart than the Apostle Paul. He was a chosen vessel to the Lord; the Lord tried him and proved him and made him jealous over himself with a godly jealousy. It is he, we have every reason to believe, who here, by inspiration of the Spirit is addressing the “brethren”, and giving them this salutary caution and warning from God.

It is strange and unaccountable that, while we may be convinced of our own natural unbelief, feel the evil and guilt of it, and cry to God for deliverance from it, we may cherish unbelief at the same time. The human heart is as the chambers of imagery in the vision the prophet speaks of. After he had seen many evils, his omniscient Guide leads him onward, saying, “Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do” (Ezek 8:13). When God’s gracious command reaches the soul, offering Himself, in Christ, to be our God and Redeemer; and when the soul, acknowledging its own guilt and its need of an Almighty Saviour, turns to the Lord Jesus, then the heart feels its unbelief and its inability to trust in Christ. It seeks deliverance from the power of this unbelief, and grace to overcome it – the enlightening power of faith, showing to the soul the glory and all-sufficiency of the Saviour.

Every believer has cause to bless God that this revelation is given in such a measure as to keep the soul waiting on Him. But while God is so gracious, how unworthy are the returns made, even by believers, to His tender mercies – not to speak of the numerous backslidings which they have to lament and which hinder the growth of their souls in spiritual life and holiness. Even in their best state, and in their best frames of soul, how much remains with them of a self-righteous tendency!

The object of faith is Christ; and it is surely unbelief which causes the mind to take its comfort from any other source. But there is such unbelief in them that it will break out when they are scarcely aware of its existence. They cherish it unknown to themselves, and if God was not indeed the God

<sup>1</sup>Taken with editing from *The Christian’s Daily Companion*. Mackay (1793-1873). When he wrote this piece, he was Free Church minister in Dunoon.

of infinite compassion and long-suffering – if He was not their Surety in covenant, their Intercessor in heaven, their merciful High Priest – the deceitfulness of their own heart would consume them and bear down the life of godliness in their souls and reduce them, while outwardly professing the faith of Christ, to a dead formality, to an unworthy and base hypocrisy of spirit. While they complain, with good cause, of the weakness of their faith, the dimness of their views, there is a tendency in their hearts to find merit in their complaints and longings.

If that tendency to depart from the living God, as He is revealed in Christ, is permitted to have the ascendancy, and if they are permitted to build on any other foundation than that which is already laid, their souls would be lost, the waters would cover them, and they would sink beneath the stream, or be carried away by this evil current of their own unbelief and their natural pride of heart.

The soul must be continually aware of its own evil tendency, must watch unto prayer against it, must wait on the Lord for increase of grace, and for the enlightening power by the Spirit of truth, the Teacher and Comforter, to abide upon the soul. The soul needs the Spirit to show it more and more clearly and largely the glory of the Saviour; to reveal to them His covenant, to bring them within its bonds in the experience of their souls, as the only place where there is liberty, and where their souls can really prosper in the knowledge and experience of faith and hope. This tendency of the heart, as the power of evil still existing in them, ever and unweariedly seeks opportunities to operate; indeed to exercise its own unholy dominion. How great is their need to be on their watchtower and be jealous of their hearts with a godly jealousy.

But though unbelief takes this special shape with those who are made alive and follow after God, how many other shapes does it also appear in! It is so deeply rooted in the soul that, however often it is rebuked by manifestations of God's goodness, it will spring up again and trouble them. In the times of the believer's prosperity, whether temporal or spiritual, it will seek to turn him aside. The world will come in and claim dominion again in his affections. This will deaden the soul and darken the understanding. In times of adversity and trial, it will seek to overwhelm the soul with suspicions, doubts and fears. In the hour of temptation it will seek to divert the mind entirely from God and from every believing view of Him that the soul has ever received. Its shapes are so many, its places in the heart so hidden, its power so subtle that we may be sure that it is exercising its power whenever we are not aware of its presence and not watching against its movements and wiles. It is that principle on which the author of evil lays

hold, claims as his own, and knows to be his own in the believer's spirit.

But the blessed, omnipotent Saviour has a stronger claim, and He has full dominion to assert His claim to the soul which He has redeemed by His own blood, and He will shortly bruise Satan under His people's feet. This spiritual blight has destroyed many promising appearances. True, it cannot destroy the "incorruptible seed" of the kingdom, when that is sown by the great Husbandman's hand.

Yet how are we to know whether that seed is really in us? It must be proved by the seed growing up; by our being drawn nearer and nearer to Christ, as our all and in all. "Faith which worketh by love" is the principle of spiritual life in the soul. It draws the soul to Christ; it quickens it into the obedience of sons. It makes the soul quick-sighted in detecting in itself what is contrary to Christ's honour and glory – what dishonours Him. How great is the soul's need to have this principle strengthened, watered, refreshed, invigorated every hour, by the Spirit's influence and power, through the truth being applied to the heart. How near Christ brings Himself to the soul! And how necessary that He should come in and take up His abode in the heart; that being continually present there He might be honoured, and His blessed name truly known by us; that we might be devoted to His service and glory. Nothing but the Spirit's testifying power can make the heart desire this. And when the heart does not desire it, surely it is the evil heart of unbelief that prevails in departing from the living God.

O my soul, what have you been seeking and desiring most this day? What have you chiefly been engaged in? Have I not cause to dread the power of this powerful and destructive enemy? Has it not been assailing my spirit? Have I not been ensnared by it? "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!" Destroy the evil heart; renew it by Thy gracious power. Draw me, that I may run after Thee. "Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned." Let not this sin rule over me; but let grace reign through righteousness, abounding toward me and setting my soul free.

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## The Grace of Adoption (2)<sup>1</sup>

*Rev Donald MacLean*

***T***he relationship between God and Adam in innocence. We now come to the question of the relation of Adam to God in the state of innocence. Was he only a son? Or was he a servant and a son at the same time? In the light of the distinctions already drawn, the question becomes, Did the race

<sup>1</sup>A further section of a Theological Conference paper given in 1999.

of mankind, which began in Adam, begin its career under rectoral government<sup>2</sup> or under paternal government or under both?

Creation would seem to require rule and government. Adam was created the servant of God, subject to His authority under His moral law, and liable to punishment in the case of disobedience. This relationship is universally accepted by theists, those who believe in a personal God. The real debate respects the filial relationship. Was Adam in Eden a son as well as a servant?

In the debate which took place in the nineteenth century, R S Candlish held very strongly to the view that Adam was not the created son of God in his holy state, but Thomas Crawford, who opposed him, maintained that he was both a son and a servant by creation. On this particular controversy, John Macleod in his *Scottish Theology*, makes the following comment: "It might be said that the leaders on the two sides disagreed at bottom in regard to their definitions and that their conflict was in the main a verbal one". In the view of Candlish, the gospel did more than make good the loss brought upon the human race by sin. Sadly, he went on to maintain that there is virtually only one thing that can be called sonship and, as the salvation of the believer is in the Son of God, he becomes, in union with his Saviour, a sharer in the Sonship of the everlasting Son, which is a serious error.

J H Thornwell held that Adam was created a servant of God by creation, with the promise of adoption into the family on condition of his keeping the covenant of works. J L Girardeau held that Adam was created the son of God.

**Father and son.** When we think of the filial relationship, we must note that such a relationship must be between persons; it can never exist between things. It is also characteristic of this relationship that the second person is derived from the first. They must stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect. The person called the son must draw his life from the first. The fact of derivation is the vital point.

Crawford defines *fatherhood* as the origination by one intelligent person of another intelligent person in like nature to himself, and the continued support, protection and nourishment of the person originated by him, to whom he owes his being. When this definition of the paternal relation is applied to God and Adam, it can be clearly seen: (a) that God is a Person and (b) that Adam is a person. God is the originator; Adam was created in God's image; God was his preserver and benefactor. These conditions decide the paternal relation. Therefore Adam was a son of God by creation.

The objection has been made that, if creaturehood implies in this way the fatherhood of God, trees and animals must be held to be the sons of God, seeing their being is also derived. This argument fails because trees and

<sup>2</sup>Where the master is the head and rules over those who should obey him as his servants.

animals are not persons. The argument set forth above does not proceed from creaturehood in general to sonship, but from a particular sort of creaturehood to sonship as outlined. The final authority to determine this matter lies in the Word of God.

In both Testaments, over and over again, God is spoken of as a father, and a people is spoken of as the children of God. A distinction, however, must be made between the special sonship of believers and the general sonship of men. Believers are the children of God by adoption and all that this involves. This point will be dealt with later in the paper. What I am now concerned with is the question whether Scripture teaches that God is in any sense the father of all men.

***Scripture evidence.*** In Luke 3 we have a list of sonships and fatherhoods in an ascending line from Jesus to Adam. In using the precise formula which he had used in all other cases, Luke speaks of "Adam, who was the son of God". This record shows that the same relation which Seth sustained to Adam, Adam sustained to God. If it is maintained that Adam was the father of Seth, it must be affirmed on precisely the same grounds that God was the father of Adam. The fact that Adam had his derivation from God by creation, while Seth had his derivation from Adam by generation, does not affect the argument for one moment, unless it can be shown that a creature cannot be constituted the son of God by creation. It has already been shown that this is not only possible but it is a fact.

Further light is given on this particular point by the fact that the sonship of believers is constituted by regeneration, which is called a new creation. Another proof of man's sonship by creation is in Paul's address at Mars' hill, where Paul taught that man is "the offspring of God" (Acts 17:28-29). Webb well says, "A brute ancestry was denied and a Divine paternity was affirmed".

A further argument for man's special sonship, as distinguished from the special sonship of believers, is founded on the family likeness between God and man. "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." This conclusion is strengthened by the doctrine of regeneration. The features of the regenerate sonship are knowledge, righteousness and holiness (Col 3:10, Eph 4:24). But Adam was first created with these very features. Since they evidence the sonship of the new creation, should they not just as certainly show the sonship of the first creation? While the two passages of Scripture already mentioned provide convincing evidence of the sonship of Adam and the consequent fact that it is the same God who is the Father of the human family, there are other passages of Scripture which point in the same direction. I adduce one or two of them to demonstrate that the Word of God recognises a sonship by creation:

(1.) “Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us?” (Mal 2:10) “A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is Mine honour? And if I be a master, where is My fear?” (Mal 1:6). (2.) “Doubtless Thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: Thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer” (Is 63:16). (3.) “But now, O Lord, Thou art our father; we are the clay, and Thou our potter; and we all are the work of Thy hand” (Is 64:8). “Wilt thou not from this time cry unto Me, My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth?” (Jer 3:4). (4.) In Heb 12:9 we read of a distinction drawn between the fathers of our flesh and the “Father of spirits”. John Owen’s comment on this is very suggestive: “Whereas the Apostle here distributes our nature into its two essential parts, the flesh and the spirit, it is evident that, by the spirit, the rational soul is intended. For though the flesh also be a creation of God, yet [what is] natural is used as a means of its production, but the soul is immediately created and infused, having no other father but God Himself.”

In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the Saviour brings before us a father and two sons. One of these sons leaves home and becomes a moral wreck. Eventually he repents and returns home to receive a paternal reception and welcome. These two sons are generally taken to be representative of the publicans and Pharisees. Webb is of the opinion that the main point and pathos of the parable is the fact that the two sons were in the house of their father. The dogmatic import of the parable is in part at least the original and created sonship of man. “It is”, he says, “the picture of the fall and rise of a son of God.” Although this parable is misused by those who favour a false view of the fatherhood of God, this should not prevent us making a proper use of it.

In the light of these texts and the views set forth in connection with them, we are entitled to conclude that Adam, and the human race in him, sustained primarily two relations to God – the servile and the filial. Being the creature of God, he was set under God’s moral government as a servant to be dealt with according to the principles of retributive justice; at the same time, he was placed under the moral discipline of the house of God as a Father, to be dealt with according to the dictates of fatherly affection. Both relations were probationary and changeable.

Failing in the tests which were imposed, man was doomed to fall as a servant under God’s magisterial displeasure, and as a son under God’s fatherly displeasure. Establishment as a servant on the one hand, and in his sonship on the other, were held out to him as a reward for fidelity to his engagements. But by his sin, all was lost.

## Persevering in Weakness<sup>1</sup>

*David Brainerd*

*Tuesday, 30 April 1744.* Was scarcely able to walk about and was obliged to betake myself to bed much of the day. I spent the time in a very solitary manner, being neither able to read, meditate, nor pray, and had none to converse with in that wilderness. O how heavily does time pass away, when I can do nothing to any good purpose, but seem obliged to trifle away precious time! But of late I have seen it my duty to divert myself by all lawful means, that I may be fit, at least some small part of my time, to labour for God. And here is the difference between my present diversions and those I once pursued when in a natural state. I then delighted in them to the neglect of God, and drew my highest satisfaction from them; now I use them as means to help me in living to God, fixedly delighting in Him and not in them, drawing my highest satisfaction from Him. Then they were my all; now they are only means leading to my All. And those things that are the greatest diversion, when pursued with this view, do not tend to hinder but promote my spirituality; and I see now, more than ever, that they are absolutely necessary.

*Wednesday, May 1.* Was not able to sit up more than half the day, and yet had such renewals of strength sometimes that I was able to write a little on a divine subject. Was grieved that I could no more live to God. In the evening, had some nearness and intenseness in secret prayer.

*Thursday, May 2.* In the evening, being a little better in health, I walked into the woods, and enjoyed a season of meditation and prayer. My thoughts ran upon Psalm 17:15, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness". It was indeed a precious text to me, and I longed to preach to the whole world; my thoughts were exceeding clear, and my soul was refreshed. Blessed be the Lord that in my recent and present weakness, now for many days together, my mind is not gloomy as at some other times.

*Friday, May 3.* Felt a little vigour of body and mind in the morning; had some freedom and fervency in prayer. Visited and spent some time with my Indians. In the evening, again retiring into the woods, I enjoyed some sweet meditations on Isaiah 53:10, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him".

*Tuesday, May 7.* Spent the day chiefly in making preparation for a journey into the wilderness. Was still weak, and concerned how I should perform so difficult a journey. Engaged in prayer for the divine blessing, direction and

<sup>1</sup>An extract from *The Diary of David Brainerd*. Brainerd (1718-47) was the godly missionary to the Native Americans who suffered much from tuberculosis but persevered in his work until it became impossible for him to continue.

protection in my intended journey; but lacked bodily strength to spend the day in fasting and supplication.

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## *The Doctrine of Election*<sup>1</sup>

A Review Article by *Rev W A Weale*

In his introduction, Robert White, the translator of this volume from the original French, states: “In essence, Calvin’s understanding of election may be said to be fully formed and comprehensively stated in the *Institutes* of 1539/41. Whatever further refinements the doctrine was to receive over the next two decades, up to and including the final editions of 1559 (Latin) and 1560 (French), little new was added. Generally speaking, the author was content either to buttress his arguments by fresh appeals to Scripture and to recognised authorities, or to answer yet again objections raised by his opponents” (p xv).

Following the Introduction, we come to the first of four Sections: “Election: A Summary Statement”, an address given in the church of Geneva. Then in Section 2, “Election and Reprobation”, we have four sermons on Genesis 25. Section 3, “Election in Christ”, includes four sermons on Ephesians 1. Section 4, “Election in Context”, contains one sermon, “From First Creation to Second”, on Ephesians 3:9-12. All these sermons on Ephesians are also to be found in Calvin’s volume, *Sermons on Ephesians*.

The summary statement on eternal election lays, in many ways, the foundation for what Calvin consolidates in the other sermons, as suggested by the several sub-headings in this address: “Election in Christ, the source of saving faith” (Eph 1:3-5); “The elect called according to God’s purpose”; “Election not based on foreseen merit, but wholly on grace”; “Election is not universal, but is secure”; “Paul’s understanding of election” (Rom 9); “Recapitulation: glory to the God of grace”; “Objections answered: we cannot be wiser than God”; “Reprobation: God’s hidden counsel”; “Contested scriptural passages” (1 Tim 2:4; Ezek 18:23; Mt 28:19,20), and finally, “God’s will is sovereign, and His purposes just”.

In the first of the four sermons in Section 2, on Genesis 25:12-21, “God’s Promise Fulfilled”, Calvin begins, “Here we must reflect upon the distinction which Moses draws between Abraham’s children. We have already noted that all the offspring whom he had from Keturah lived in a distant land (Gen 25:1,2). As for Ishmael, he lived apart, but fairly close to the land of Canaan.

<sup>1</sup>*The Doctrine of Election*, by John Calvin, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 262 pages, £15.00; available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Nevertheless he had been cast off (Gen 21:14), for it was necessary for Isaac to retain the inheritance appointed for him” (pp 37,38). Calvin goes on to show that, while Ishmael was blessed in many ways, and while Rebecca remained barren for many years, yet Isaac believed the promise and continued in prayer for his elect son Jacob.

The second sermon, on Genesis 25:21-23 is entitled “God’s Unfathomable Secret” and deals with Jacob and Esau while they were still in their mother’s womb. After making the point that “God did not distinguish one from the other, since He could find and foresee no good in either of them”, Calvin goes on, “Thus we find in Jacob only what God put in him; but He left Esau just as birth had made him. For this reason too, Scripture says elsewhere that God chose us so that we would be holy and blameless before Him (Eph 1:4). It does not say that we were chosen because God foresaw that we would be holy. On the contrary, it attributes all our holiness, righteousness and whatever good there is in us to one sole source – God’s election – to the end that we might walk in fear and live uprightly, being in some way keen and well-disposed to do good. If that is true, it follows that God cannot have foreseen anything in us.

“Take away election, and what is left? As we have shown, we all remain lost and cursed, and rightly so, for God sees only corruption in us. He must disown us. As Scripture says, ‘He repented that He had made man’ (Gen 6:6). That is all that we, for our part, can bring.” Calvin goes on: “It is thus arrant nonsense to say that God elects His own according to what they will later be. It is because He has chosen them that He must put His good in them” (pp 66,67).

Sermon 3, on the same text and entitled, “The Greater and the Lesser”, speaks of the faith given to the elect. Calvin refers to Acts 13:48: “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed”. He goes on to ask the questions: “What was the reason? Was it a matter of hard work? Were some better prepared? God, it is true, prepares people, but it is not their doing, as Luke shows when he puts an end to all human illusions. ‘Those’, he says, ‘who were appointed to salvation, believed.’ This also is why our Lord Jesus Christ declares that all whom the heavenly Father has given Him will not perish, but He will keep them to the end (Jn 6:39). Now when He speaks about those whom His Father has given Him, He points us to eternal election. . . . Why, then, do some belong to God and others not? It is not that some are mortal men: our nature is the same for all. We were all made by the one Father, but some belong to God and others had been rejected by Him, for such was His good pleasure. God acknowledges and reckons some to be His own, and others, while they are His creatures, have no relationship with Him. He does

not count them as His servants because He has excluded them from His election” (p 82).

Sermon 4, “The Day of Small Things”, is based on Genesis 25:24-28 and shows how, while “God’s election is in itself secret, it must manifest itself in time, for God knows when to fulfil His works”. Calvin goes on to show that this was the case with Jacob, although he emphasises again that Jacob was not chosen because of anything good in him. “When God chooses us, He does not do so, as we say, for our good looks. And if the world despises us, we should not lose heart. As we stressed before, it should be enough for us that we are pleasing to God, however much the world may deride us. For we see how it was with Jacob. He lives at home – a lazybones, as it were. True, he is a decent man, but is his simplicity valued? Does he draw attention to himself? Is he esteemed? Not at all! Esau, on the other hand, has been streets ahead of him ever since birth. He is a grown man, full of energy, he is hard-working and seems set to perform miracles!

“We are taught here that it is God who does everything. If our election were all our doing, we would all doubtless give Esau our vote. Yet God prefers Jacob. Why? It is the very opposite of what we would expect. What, then, we need to understand, is that God so dispensed His grace as to show that His goodness alone moved Him to love Jacob. This is a message we should certainly ponder all the days of our life. It is designed, as I said, to overthrow our arrogance and to allow God’s pure mercy to shine forth” (p 94).

The four sermons from Ephesians 1 in section 3 are: “A Choice Made in Heaven” (vv 3,4), “Loved in the Beloved” (vv 4-6), “Christ our Surety” (vv 7-10) and, “The Holy Spirit’s Seal” (vv 13,14). In all of these, Calvin argues powerfully for the doctrine of election. The final section takes us from the first creation to the second and continues to press home the doctrine of election to any doubters.

It is clear from those sermons that there were many, not just in the Roman Church but also in the Lutheran Church, and even the trusted Melancthon among his Protestant colleagues, who were unhappy with Calvin’s teaching on election. So we have three very helpful appendices; the first is entitled, “Election: Doctrinal Formulations”, which contains a number of statements on the subject taken from confessions of faith. The second appendix tells of “Critics of Calvin’s Doctrine”, and the third of “Calvin and the Preaching of Election”. In this appendix, Robert White says, “A first question to be asked concerns the place which Calvin accords to the theme of election in his preaching. How often, and how deeply, does the doctrine occupy him?

“The answer has everything to do with the way in which the Reformer organised his pulpit ministry. Except for the special occasions listed above,

topical preaching on isolated texts was abandoned in favour of *lectio continua*, that is, the systematic exposition of a whole book from beginning to end, as was also the practice in the Strasbourg and Zurich churches. The preacher's task was to allow doctrine to emerge from the text in which it was embedded, verse by verse, chapter by chapter. The biblical text determined the doctrine, not the other way round. If therefore the doctrine of election is front and centre of the passage which lies before him, Calvin will comment on it as fully as his text – and time – allow. If, on the other hand, election is only incidental to his text, if, so to speak, it merely hovers around the margins, he will be suitably brief, and may even omit it altogether" (p 213-214).

It is clear from all that Calvin says that the doctrine of election is clearly taught in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and that it is a precious doctrine to the assured believer. It is a doctrine, however, that needs to be preached with great care and not over-frequently lest it lead to despondency on the part of the non-assured and to fatalism on the part of the non-believer.

The reviewer felt it a pity that more modern language, such as the Most High being addressed as "You" rather than "Thou", is used throughout. Yet this book is very much recommended for anyone desiring clarity on the very important subject of election.

## The Reformation in Italy<sup>1</sup>

### 1. An Introductory Survey

“When the sixteenth century began,” one historian has asserted, “there was no intelligent man alive in Europe who doubted that some degree of reformation of the [Roman] Catholic Church was an urgent necessity. The difference of opinion concerned the degree.”<sup>2</sup> The question was: would the reformation merely be of immorality among the clergy and matters of that nature, or would it be a complete revolution, on the basis of the Bible, in doctrine, worship and practice? In Scotland, for instance, there was such a revolution; in Italy, on the other hand, the degree of reformation was very limited, and before long it was violently snuffed out, particularly by the efforts of the Inquisition.

It is important to note that, during the Reformation period – and indeed until the nineteenth century – Italy was not a single country. It was made up of a number of separate states, some of them under the direct rule of the Papacy even in civil affairs.

<sup>1</sup>The first part of a paper given at last year's Theological Conference, somewhat enlarged.

<sup>2</sup>Philip McNair, *Peter Martyr in Italy*, Clarendon Press, 1967, p 2.

From the twelfth century, the Waldensians had maintained a witness for scriptural truth in the far north of Italy, and in 1231 Pope Gregory IX issued what Thomas M'Crie calls "a furious bull"<sup>3</sup> against them, ordering them to be sought out and given over to the civil authorities to be punished. But in this paper we will largely confine ourselves to what happened in the sixteenth century.

By 1500, the Roman Catholic Church was seriously astray from scriptural standards. In particular, M'Crie points to "the vices of the clergy, their neglect of religious instruction, the consequent ignorance of the people, the sale of ecclesiastical offices". He adds that Roman Catholic writers admitted that "the court of Rome had become more corrupt than any of the secular courts of Europe. . . . The individuals who filled the papal chair for some time before the Reformation openly indulged in vices, over which the increasing knowledge of the age should have told them, in point of prudence, to throw a veil" (p 20). An Italian writer of the time noted: "Having raised themselves to earthly power, the popes gradually lost sight of the salvation of souls and divine precepts. . . . Their concern was no longer to maintain sanctity of life, to promote religion, or to show charity to mankind; but to accumulate treasures, to raise armies, to wage wars against Christians" (p 21). Not surprisingly, the passage containing these sentences was struck out by the Roman censor before the book could be published.

The popes' behaviour made Italians careless about religion, while continuing to practise the outward forms of the Roman Church. One might think that such people would be easily detached from their nominal religion but, in fact, as M'Crie notes, the indifferent who follow the outward forms of religion are least open to conviction of the truth. He says, "The spiritual and humbling doctrines of the gospel, as brought forward, simply and without disguise, by the first Reformers, are offensive to the pride of the human heart" (p 23).

Luther had posted his 95 theses on a church door in Wittenberg in 1517; within two years some of this Reformer's books were being sold in Italy. In 1520, 10 copies of Luther's books were brought to Venice, but before long the Pope prohibited the sale of the Reformer's books. A search for them resulted in just one copy being found and it was defective. Yet in spite of the efforts to suppress Protestant literature in Italy, not only were Luther's books being circulated and read, but also those of Reformers such as Melancthon, Zwingli and Bucer. There were many who could recognise the errors of the

<sup>3</sup>M'Crie, *History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy in the Sixteenth Century*, Edinburgh and London, 1856, p 2. The preface to the original edition is dated 1827. Further references to this volume are given in brackets in the body of the article. A papal *bull* is an edict issued by a pope.

Church of Rome, yet had no spiritual understanding of the truth. But some, by the grace of God, did possess that understanding.

One of them was Egidio di Porta. He wrote to Zwingli, the Zurich Reformer, in 1525: "It is now 14 years since I, under the impulse of a certain pious feeling, but not according to knowledge, withdrew from my parents and put on the black cowl [that is, he became a monk]. If I did not become learned and devout, I at least appeared to be so, and for seven years discharged the office of a preacher of God's Word – alas, in deep ignorance. I savoured not the things of Christ; I ascribed nothing to faith, all to works. But God would not permit [me] to perish for ever. He brought me to the dust. I was made to cry out, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?'" (p 30). Di Porta decided that he ought to read Zwingli's writings, in the expectation that he would find an answer to his questions. He was not disappointed. Indeed he went on to teach the truth to some of the other monks. They were clearly not very receptive, for he complains to Zwingli that "they are full of pride and self-conceit" (p 30).

The Scriptures were published in Italy in the original languages, and a Benedictine abbot caused a stir when he published a revision of the Latin Vulgate version<sup>4</sup> and in the preface revealed that he had corrected that translation from the original languages. But some of those who were engaged in the work of translating the Scriptures continued to be very much in agreement with Roman Catholic errors. Yet M'Crie comments, "In surveying this portion of history, it is impossible not to admire the arrangements of providence, when we perceive monks and bishops, and cardinals and popes, active in forging and polishing those weapons which were soon to be turned against themselves and which they afterwards would fain have blunted and laboured to decry as unlawful and empoisoned" (p 38).

An Italian version of the Scriptures was printed in Venice in 1471 and was repeatedly reprinted, but it was translated from the Vulgate. Other translations were made in the sixteenth century, including some by Roman Catholics in opposition to translations made by men with Protestant views. The practice of Italian students spending some time studying in German universities, and vice versa, had some effect on spreading Reformed religion in Italy.

It is amazing to read a Roman Catholic bishop's explanation of the situation after the Emperor, King Charles V of Spain, had attacked Rome with an army, causing the Pope to flee the city, and had taken possession of it for some time. The bishop asked, "Why have such calamities befallen us?" He answers

<sup>4</sup>The Vulgate translation was favoured by Rome and was used as a basis for rendering the Bible into other languages, including English – though generally Rome was opposed to ordinary people reading the Scriptures in their own language.

his own question: “Because we are citizens, not of the holy city Rome, but of Babylon the wicked city. . . . Formerly it was inhabited by a holy nation, a peculiar people, but now by the people of Gomorrah, a depraved seed, wicked children, unfaithful priests, the companions of thieves” (quoted, p 43). Although the Pope was among those who heard the bishop’s speech, these words, it seems, had no significant effect on the Vatican. And the bishop had considerably more to say in developing his charges against Rome; he quoted Isaiah 1:21: “How is the faithful city become an harlot! It was full of judgement; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.” And he referred to the Book of Revelation to justify identifying Babylon as Rome.

McNair stresses that the doctrine of justification by faith exerted a crucial influence on the outlook of those whose desire for reformation went beyond a hope for a major improvement in the outward morality of its clergy. Yet many of them went on to conform to Roman Catholic doctrine, while “many more were martyred [and] a distinguished few were compelled by crisis of conscience and the logic of events” to recognise that further reformation was indeed necessary.<sup>5</sup>

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## Book Reviews<sup>1</sup>

*Esther*, by Thomas M’Crie, published by the Reformation Press, paperback, 221 pages, £11.90.

This study on the Book of Esther comprises a series of lectures by Thomas M’Crie, first published posthumously in 1838. He was born in 1772 and began his successful ministry in Edinburgh in 1796. He was regarded as the leading minister of the Secession churches; his “long and fruitful ministry” lasted until his death, aged 62, in 1835.

In *Commenting and Commentaries*, CH Spurgeon approvingly quoted a later commentator on Esther: “There is an ancient fable of a king who was gifted with the power of turning everything he touched into gold; and this eminent divine and historian [M’Crie] possessed remarkably the gift of rendering every subject he handled so precious, as at least to discourage anyone from attempting to follow in his track. In his lectures upon the book of Esther, he has certainly left little for any to say who may come after him.”

M’Crie answers the often-raised objection that the name of God is not to be found in the book. “This book is only a part of sacred Scripture, and borrows light from others. The Spirit, who searches all things, is the best

<sup>5</sup>McNair, *Peter Martyr in Italy*, p 9.

<sup>1</sup>The books reviewed here may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

judge when and where and how often to mention ‘the dreadful’ [awe-inspiring] name of the Lord our God. And what though the name of God is suppressed, provided His works, and wonders, and benefits are announced and celebrated?” He quotes Matthew Henry, “Though the name of God be not in it, His finger is”. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16).

The book is easily understood and very readable. Its 18 chapters give practical and spiritual guidance based on the events of the Book of Esther. M’Crie traces the narrative from the fall of Vashti to the raising of Mordecai, relating all to the foreknowledge and providence of God. Many appropriate biblical comparisons and Scriptures are quoted.

M’Crie concludes, “In general, we have here a golden leaf in the book of providence, teaching us that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and that His government extends over the whole earth. We see the hand of God directing, controlling, overruling, and managing the events of time and the hearts of men. . . . For nothing can befall a people, a family, or an individual, without the divine appointment or permission. God rules among the nations. . . . We learn from this portion of Scripture the peculiar care with which God watches over His Church and His people. The Church has been like a lily among thorns – like a spark in the ocean – like a besieged city. But no weapon formed against her will prosper. . . . The way in which Esther and Mordecai were raised up for this purpose was very remarkable, and recalls many other instances of a similar kind recorded in Scripture. What could Mordecai and Esther have done for their people if God had not placed them in situations of influence in which their voice might be heard and their patriotism find scope for its exercise?”

This new edition of *Esther* by M’Crie is well produced with clear print. Helpful modern equivalents of obscure words and phrases have been inserted in square brackets. It is an excellent and edifying book and can be thoroughly recommended.

*F R Daubney*

***None Other Name***, compiled by L J van Valen, published by Reformation Press, paperback, 390 pages, £16.95.

This book of daily readings is compiled from the works of 12 well-known Scottish ministers of the nineteenth century, such as Robert Murray M’Cheyne, John Duncan, Jonathan Ranken Anderson, John Kennedy and Hugh Martin. The “twelve” are, on the whole, well selected from the galaxy of eminent preachers then occupying the pulpits of Scotland. A month of daily readings is allocated to each of these ministers. In the preface to the

book, attention is drawn to how these men were instrumental in promoting vital godliness throughout our land. The only slight anomaly is the inclusion of Horatius Bonar, who sadly went astray in supporting the Moody and Sankey revivalism, which came into the land in the late nineteenth century.

The quality of the content chosen for each daily reading throughout the book is first class. The passages are well chosen and very readable. In them the reader will find a satisfactory combination of rich theological and deep experimental preaching. There are very few exceptions to this rule. One is found in the entry for January 16, where there is a rather loose theological statement from M'Cheyne, great though he was, on the humiliation of the Divine Redeemer, including the statements that "He left glory" and left "the love of the Father". Another is found in the entry for May 12, where the passage selected from Andrew Bonar is too prescriptive in describing the way liberty in preaching will be expressed in the speaker's voice being uniformly quiet. While raucous shouting must be undesirable, Bonar seems to forget that the Saviour Himself at times "stood and cried" when preaching to multitudes of perishing sinners.

These isolated instances aside, *None Other Name* is as good a book of daily readings as can be found. Part of its effectiveness may be due to the fact that most of the passages were not written as mere devotional exercises, but are the utterances of men while preaching the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from above. As a result, profound and beautiful insights into the truth are found throughout the book.

A reviewer is spoilt for choice in selecting striking and precious quotes. John Kennedy, speaking on how those that passed by the Saviour's cross reviled Him, applies the truth to his hearers in the following way, "So do many still pass on to death, treating with contempt the Christ and the call of God in the gospel. You, sinner, can act the same part with those revilers of old, for Christ is as surely near to you in the gospel as He was to them in the flesh. He is lifted up before you in the gospel quite beside you, as surely as He was lifted on the cross quite beside them. You can pass Him by as surely as they did. And passing Him by you are, careless sinner, while the Lord is calling to arrest you. He speaks to you from heaven, to bring you to a stand that you may cease rushing heedless hellwards" (September 11).

Thomas Chalmers describes the mediatorial work of Christ in the following language, "He alone, in the whole range of universal being, is able to lay His hand upon you and shield you from the justice of the Almighty, and to lay His hand upon God and stay the fury of the avenger" (August 4).

Finally Andrew Bonar, in stressing the importance of a public profession of Christ, makes a beautiful use of the example of Joseph of Arimathaea,

“On that day the Lord will call forth Joseph by name, and present him to the Father: ‘Father, this is the man who, in that dark hour, when there was not a disciple to own Me at the cross, or give Me the last rites of sepulture, risked name and wealth, and honour and life, that he might show love to Me, who had not a place where to lay My head.’ On that day the Father will bring out one of the brightest of His crowns, and put it upon the head of Joseph, who confessed Christ in the hour of danger and reproach. Young men, you may well covet that great reward” (May 5).

We give this book our wholehearted recommendation.

(Rev) *ID MacDonald*

*Times of Refreshing, The life and work of Alexander Macleod, Minister of Uig and Rogart*, published by Reformation Press, paperback, 132 pages, £8.70.

This book includes:

- a biography, derived from *Disruption Worthies of the Highlands*
- excerpts from Macleod’s diary from the time of his settlement in Uig in June 1824 until January 1829
- the only four surviving sermons of Macleod
- an appendix giving a description of the parish of Uig that Macleod wrote in 1833.

The editor informs us that “Alexander Macleod (1786-1869) was born in Sutherland and became a minister in 1818. After two short ministries in Dundee and Cromarty, he served God for 19 years on the Isle of Lewis. He then returned to the mainland, where he served two further Highland congregations, at Lochalsh and Rogart.”

When Macleod arrived in Uig in 1824 there were no Evangelical ministers and only a few true Christians on the island of Lewis. Although there were between 800 and 900 communicants in the parish of Uig, ignorance and ungodliness were so widespread that Macleod thought it inappropriate to hold the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. He began an intensive process of teaching and home visits to press home the instruction delivered from the pulpit.

A religious awakening took place and in 1827 Macleod reinstated the communion season. John Macdonald of Ferintosh (the Apostle of the North) assisted on that occasion. Seven thousand gathered in the open air and a number of true believers sat at the Lord’s table. The awakening affected other parishes, and pulpits which had long been occupied by “Moderates” were taken by godly ministers such as Finlay Cook, John Macrae and Robert Finlayson.

Macleod came out of the Church of Scotland at the Disruption in 1843

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but was translated from Uig to Lochalsh in December of that year and to Rogart in May 1846, where he remained until his death in 1869. His ministry in Rogart was blessed, though not to the extent that it had been in Uig. The obituary of Angus Murray, Dornoch, records that he regarded Macleod as equal to John Kennedy, Dingwall, although not so gifted. He said, "If Mr Macleod had not liberty he was very poor. I once heard him, and I believe he took out his watch ten times in a quarter of an hour. But, boy, all at once, as if you turned the tap of a full barrel, he could not pour out all that came from the Lord into his soul. Before, he longed to stop, but now when the Lord came, he did not know how to stop." It is sad that only four of Alexander Macleod's sermons exist but those we have are full of spiritually profitable material.

As is usual with the publications of Reformation Press, the book is attractively presented with clear print and well-laid-out pages. The footnotes are very helpful. This little book is interesting and uplifting and is highly recommended.

*F R Daubney*

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## Notes and Comments

### The Coronation of Charles III

The coronation service of the new king Charles III had many objectionable features, some longstanding (as the vow to maintain Episcopacy in England), others new (as the involvement of a Roman cardinal and representatives of other "faith communities"). In the midst of all this, it was a matter of thankfulness to find a solemn vow to maintain Protestantism in Britain: "Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law?" Probably many in high places were far from happy with this vow, but that was the promise that the King was constrained to make, in the providence of God. What such a vow will mean in the midst of all the surrounding superstition and false religion is another matter.

As had happened at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, so at the coronation another unlikely person was constrained to declare the truth of the Word of God before millions of people. The Prime Minister, who is a Hindu, read the precious words of Colossians 1:9-17, in the Authorised Version:

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in

all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.”

He concluded by saying, “This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.” Satan makes every effort to bury the truth under piles of religious rubbish, but the Most High will not be deprived of His glory, even on such an occasion as this. *DWBS*

## **Protestant View**

### **The Cross of Wales**

Those who watched the coronation of King Charles III will have seen a silver cross leading the procession into Westminster Abbey. This cross was made at the behest of the King as a gift to the Church in Wales and is to be shared between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches. It is made of recycled bullion from the Royal Mint, set up on a staff of wood from a blown-down tree and fixed to a plinth of Welsh slate.

While crosses have never been part of Reformed, biblical worship, what makes this cross particularly repugnant is that two splinters of wood, said to have been taken from the cross on which Jesus was crucified, have been embedded, in the shape of a cross, within it. These relics, which are approximately 5mm and 10mm long, are claimed by the Vatican to be authentic pieces of the “true cross” and are a personal coronation gift from the Pope to King Charles.

It is incredible that the Vatican is still peddling this nonsense; it has been said that there are enough “authentic” splinters of the cross in circulation to rebuild the Ark. Nearly 500 years ago Luther said, “What lies there are about relics! One claims to have a feather from the wing of the angel Gabriel, and the Bishop of Mainz has a flame from Moses’ burning bush. And how does

it happen that eighteen apostles are buried in Germany when Christ had only twelve?"

We know that the Church of Rome venerates relics but what is extraordinary is that the Church of England, in the coronation of a Protestant king, was prepared to embrace such an artifact as part of the religious ceremony. To venerate these pieces of wood, which presumably is the intention, is a clear breach of the Second Commandment. The king has a responsibility to reign even-handedly over a disparate nation of many backgrounds and religions, but he should not give credence to superstitious popish nonsense during the coronation. The Archbishop of Canterbury should know better but clearly does not.

By way of a gift, the Pope of Rome inveigled his idolatrous system into the vanguard of the procession for the coronation of a Protestant king. *FRD*

### **Rome and Scripture**

For many centuries one of the greatest spiritual crimes of which the Church of Rome has been guilty has been to withhold the Word of God from the body of her people. For many dark generations, the people under her thrall were denied access to the Scriptures in their own language and, had it not been for the Protestant Reformation, Rome would have been only too content to keep them in such a state of soul-destroying ignorance. The Lord alone knows how many of His dear children suffered extremes of cruelty and even martyrdom at the hands of the papal Church simply for possessing and reading the Word of God.

As William Cunningham remarked, "There can be no doubt that the Roman Church would exclude her subjects, in this country, from all access to the Word of God, if she could, or dared, just as she does in Italy or Spain; and the whole history of her procedure upon this point affords abundant evidence that she hates the light, because her deeds are evil, and that she is very willing to be the agent of the god of this world, in doing all she can to prevent the light of the glorious gospel of divine grace from shining into men's hearts."<sup>2</sup> Cunningham's words were written almost 180 years ago but were written by one who had a scholarly and spiritual knowledge of the history of the Christian Church and of the Roman apostasy almost unrivalled in any generation. His testimony therefore is not to be set aside despite the passage of time. If Rome remains, as she claims, ever the same, then her real position on the Word of God must remain the same also. The papal see which denounced the Protestant Bible as "deadly pastures" and "the Gospel of the devil", in the early nineteenth century, is the same papal see still.

<sup>2</sup>In E Stillingfleet, *The Doctrines and Practices of the Church of Rome*, Edinburgh, 1845 reprint, p.167.

Rome's view of Scripture is the same in respect of both its sufficiency and authority. Rome today still grounds the Bible's authority in that of the Church instead of on the testimony of Scripture itself. Furthermore, she still regards Scripture as not sufficiently clear in its witness to Divine truth and so she still puts the authority of the written Word on the same level as unwritten Church "tradition".

Since the Second Vatican Council in 1962, Rome has sought to portray a more positive approach to allowing its people to possess and read the Scriptures. In an age of widespread literacy and instant information, the old policy of, as much as possible, withholding the Scriptures from the laity is simply untenable. But how is it with the average Romanist? If they regularly attend chapel they will hear a Roman Catholic translation of Scripture (including the uninspired Apocrypha) read aloud. But this is not the same thing as the searching of the Scriptures commended by Christ in John 5:39. And though Roman Catholics may possess a copy of the Bible if they wish, yet the emphasis in Romanist religion clearly is far removed from the attitude and practice of the men of Berea who "received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11).

What Satan knows very well is that when multitudes of Rome's devotees will be stirred up to begin to read the Scriptures for themselves and when the "words of eternal life" come to be blessed to their souls through the irresistible grace of the Holy Spirit, his dominion over them will be broken irreparably. This he currently labours to prevent but he cannot ultimately prevail against the purpose of omnipotent grace! May we ever pray, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth" (Ps 43:3). AWM

## Church Information

### College and Library Fund

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

### Acknowledgement of Donations

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

**Dingwall:** *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for Zimbabwe Mission, £20.

**Gisborne:** Friend in Melbourne, \$1313.52; Grafton congregation, \$4979; Friend in Rotorua, \$1700; Friend in Gisborne, \$1500 for manse relocation expenses; Anonymous Friend, \$2500 to purchase books for Congregation's Bookroom.

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

**North Tolsta:** Anon, £300. Door Collections: Anon, £60, £50, £80, £40, £80, £150, £360.

*Communion Collections:* Anon, £100, £50, £50, £40.

**Perth:** Anon, £2000; D Fergus, £1848 per ABM.

# FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

## Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhl, 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). **Laig:** Church and Manse; no F P services. Rev J A Morrison BA, 2 Cherry Grove, Bonar Bridge, IV24 3ER. Tel: 01863 766157.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, EH3 9NU, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227, e-mail: dcampbell1560@gmail.com.
- Farr** (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm, as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01445 712118. 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:** Bridge Street; Sabbath 11.30 am, 5.30 pm, second, fourth and fifth Sabbaths of month; Thursday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Duncan Street; 3 pm; **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.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J Campbell, F P Manse, Clachan, Staffin, IV51 9HY; tel: 01470 562754.
- 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 10.30 am, 5.30 pm; Wednesday 7.15 pm. Manse. Contact Mr Hugh Campbell; tel: 01923 442497.

#### Canada

**Chesley**, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 11 am, 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm. Contact: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

#### 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@protonmail.com.

#### 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 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, 5 Goldsmith St, Elgin, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140; mobile: 022 409 1336.

**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: dlevytskyi@gmail.com; or contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua.

#### Zimbabwe

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

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

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

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

**Zenka**: Church.

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