

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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## Communions

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

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

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

**April: First Sabbath:** Laide; **Second:** Chesley, Gisborne; Maware, Staffin; **Fourth:** Glasgow. **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, Applecross, Fort William; **Fourth:** Struan. **Fifth:** Cameron.

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

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

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

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

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

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## God's Wonderful Works

David sings in Psalm 40 of God's wonderful works. He says in the spirit of praise: "Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered" (v 5).

We begin with God's wonderful work of *creation*. The whole universe is immense, and so much of it is beyond our knowledge. If we think of our own solar system, with all the planets revolving around the sun in fixed orbits, should we not marvel at God's wisdom and power in setting it up and keeping it in operation? Should we not further marvel at the position of the earth – not too close to the sun, where it would be too hot for life; and not too far from the sun, where it would be too cold? God speaks of Himself as "the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else" (Is 45:18). We are to consider God's greatness as we look around us and see His wonderful works in many and various aspects of His creation. And we are to worship Him.

Immediately after the creation, God pronounced it all to be "very good" (Gen 1:31). But it did not continue in that condition; sin entered. Not only did mankind now have a fallen, sinful nature – he was spiritually dead – but his life was to come to an end and he was under the fearful sentence of eternal death. Besides, the whole creation was under God's curse; so "thorns and thistles" were to grow where man would wish for nothing to spring up except, say, a complete field of grain. So his work involved "the sweat of [his] face" (Gen 3:18,19). Apart from sin, the whole human race would have continued in perfect blessedness, but this could not be the case any longer.

But there is an even more wonderful work than creation: *redemption* – God delivering a large part of mankind from sin and its consequences. He did so in perfect conformity to His absolute justice. If sin was to be forgiven, the punishment justly due because of it could not be avoided; a substitute must endure the punishment instead. This was illustrated throughout the Old

Testament age: whenever a sacrifice was offered, an animal died instead of the person for whom the sacrifice was made. The animal died as a substitute for the sinner. Yet no such substitute could actually take away sin (see Heb 10:4), but the sacrifice removed some of sin's temporal consequences. The people of these times were being taught that a substitute would yet be found who could really take away sin and its consequences.

But who could that substitute be? First, the substitute must be perfectly holy, as was illustrated in the animal sacrifices being "without blemish". Further, the substitute must be able to endure the full punishment of all the sins of all those whose place he was to take before God, who *must* punish the guilty. So we should admire the wonderful provision that God has made of a sinless substitute who could endure the terrible punishment due to all that were to be saved. The substitute, as the Bible clearly teaches, is the eternal Son of God, who took to Himself a true human nature, in which He could suffer. God cannot suffer; suffering cannot enter the divine nature. Yet God the Son could suffer, but only in His human nature; neither suffering nor death could penetrate beyond the human nature. As we notice the wonderful provision God has made, in the Person of Christ, for sinners, let us seek to worship both God the Father, who made the provision, and the One whom He sent "to be the Saviour of the world" (1 Jn 4:14).

The wonderful work of bringing the divine Saviour into the world was revealed by the angel to His mother Mary in these words: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Lk 1:35). As holy, He was fit to carry out the wonderful work that had been assigned to Him from eternity. Yet He had to say to His Father: "My sins are not hid from Thee" (Ps 69:5). Yes, the Holy One speaks of *His* sins; but they were the sins of His people, and the Father laid them upon Him. God made His Son responsible for bearing their guilt – for bearing the punishment due to them because of these sins. And how wonderful is the willingness of Christ to do the whole work that the Father laid upon Him: "I delight to do Thy will, O My God" (Ps 40:8).

How wonderful that the One who was crucified in weakness was still in control of everything! He continued to reign as King even in the depths of His sufferings. It was the King of all the earth that cried, "It is finished" (Jn 19:30). He knew that He had satisfied divine justice by His sufferings, on behalf of His people, and that all that now remained for Him to do was – still acting as King – to lay down His life. These sufferings lasted for a relatively short time, but they were the sufferings of an infinite Person, and therefore they had infinite merit; so they could take away the infinite guilt of sin. God

the Father was perfectly satisfied with the work of Christ, and so He raised the Saviour from the dead on the third day. Christ Himself was equally satisfied, as we read, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied" (Is 53:11). We too should be satisfied with the saving work of Christ; we ought to trust in Him at once, for His work perfectly suits the needs of sinners of every kind. How gratefully the people of God should say with Paul: "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Cor 9:15).

Having finished His work on earth, Christ "entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb 9:12). He has entered heaven, from where He is *applying redemption* to those for whom He died. It is another wonderful work, for needy sinners. He takes them, guilty and polluted as they are, and brings them into His kingdom. He gives the Holy Spirit to apply the Word of truth to their souls and brings them to understand, in some degree, their need as sinners.

The Holy Spirit further applies the Scriptures to them, enabling them to look to Christ as the Saviour who died as the Substitute for sinners. Their looking to Christ, their believing in Him, is only possible because of the wonderful work of the Spirit in creating new life in their hearts, on the basis of Christ's redeeming work. Further, they are justified by faith – they are accepted as righteous in God's sight, for Christ's sake, because of what He did for them in suffering unto death for them, and also in keeping the law in their place. They could do none of this for themselves; Christ did all this for them as their Substitute. He will finish the work of salvation, so that He can bring them to heaven at last, for "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25).

"When we have said the most we can of the wonders of divine love to us," Matthew Henry comments, "we must conclude with an *etcetera*<sup>1</sup> – and such like – and adore the depth, despairing to find the bottom." It is impossible to number these wonderful works, or to understand any of them completely, but it is right to try to praise the Lord for what He has done. Micah's words of praise are suitable for today's believers to use: "Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (7:18,19). Such praise will be imperfect in this life but, when the wonderful work of sanctification has been completed, they will praise God – Father, Son and Holy Ghost – in heaven for ever, and will do so perfectly.

<sup>1</sup>Literally, *and the rest*.

## “Sinners Shall Be Converted” (4)<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by John Duncan

Psalm 51:13. *Sinners shall be converted unto Thee.*

Sinners need conversion. Unless sinners are converted they will perish everlastingly. Whatever changes take place in the sinner that fall short of conversion, these changes leave the sinner still under sentence of everlasting condemnation. Unconverted sinners are away from God. Sinners cannot be holy away from God; sinners cannot be happy away from God. Holiness is good; happiness is good; God is better – better than either, better than both – and it is having God that makes us have either the one or the other.

Sinners may be converted with a real, saving conversion. Sinners may undergo a real and not a saving change. He who stole may become honest, as far as unconverted men who have never stolen are honest. The habitual liar may become truthful, as far as unconverted men of high principle who would scorn a lie are truthful. It is one fruit of the gospel, with some outward influence of the Holy Spirit accompanying it, that many are thus converted – converted not unto God but from the dominion of some sin. They receive another spirit, and are turned from some sins.

But “sinners shall be converted *unto Thee*”. It is therefore not sufficient that a conversion is really a conversion; it must be a conversion *unto God*. I am not going to inquire at the present moment what conversion is internally: outwardly it is unto God. God made man in His own image, after His own likeness. He was in the image of God, in favour with God, in communion with God – he was a godly man. Adam was not a justified man, for he was on his trial, but he was a godly man in his state of probation and trial; he was with God in a state of trial. But he left God, and so lost God’s image, lost God’s favour, lost communion with God.

Now the cause of our unholiness and misery is that we are godless. Not that all unconverted men – far from it – are atheists, in the sense of denying that there is a God. But they do not have this God for their God: friendly relations between God and them have been broken up. “The carnal mind is enmity against God . . . not subject to the law of God”; and “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men”. On man’s part it is hatred, and on God’s part it is wrath; on man’s part causeless hatred, on God’s part well-deserved wrath. Well, if these two things be between a man and God, a sinner is a miserable being in the hands

<sup>1</sup>The fourth of five sermons on this text; it was preached in Edinburgh in 1857 and is taken, with editing, from Duncan’s *Pulpit and Communion Table*. The previous two sermons appeared in the February 2023 issue of this *Magazine*.

of an angry God. And the thought of that God must be to man the most terrible of all thoughts. Sinners away from God are therefore not disposed to return to Him, and they never would be disposed to return if there were not such a thing as conversion.

You see clearly that conversion presupposes something. It presupposes that God’s dealings towards fallen men are not the same as His dealings towards fallen angels. It is the devil’s duty to love God; but, in a certain sense, repentance is not the devil’s duty. We are sinners, and the devil is a sinner; but the difference between us is this: he is a sinner of the angelic family, and we are sinners of the human family. Now, to repent and keep God’s law is ever a command to Satan; but he has no call to return, because there is no Saviour – no way of return is provided – for angelic sinners. But a Saviour, a way back to God, has been provided for mankind-sinners; God has devised a way by which His banished may be brought back again.

We fear to speak of the way of the sinner’s return, because, in so doing, “we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life”. And yet we must; we dare not shrink from it; it is God who places the responsibility upon us. Were it left to us to choose, we would not be a savour of death unto death to any. We would be thankful if we were a savour of life unto life to them that believe; and we would leave them that do not believe in their death as they were. But no, “we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish”. that is, faithful gospel ministers – which we would aim at being, and pray God that through grace we may be – “to the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life,” because we preach the new and living way opened into the holiest of all, because we preach that Jesus has made peace through the blood of His cross.

Well then, sinners *may* be converted unto God. Sinner, are you converted? It is to be feared that a worse thing is true of some here than that they are unconverted – they see and feel no need for conversion, and they have a real fear lest God should convert them. Is there anyone here that has a fear of conversion – that has a distaste to it? Consequently, when you hear of conversion, you hear of it as a thing you wish to avoid. When you hear of it as your duty, you will not do it; and when you hear of it as the work of God’s grace, you wish God not to do it. You do not want to turn to God; so you do not want God to turn you.

God has appointed means for the conversion of sinners. Means will not of themselves effect it, but God employs means. God deals with us, in saving us, as lost sinners needing divine power; as rational creatures that have a

mind, an understanding, a will, a heart, to be wrought upon. Now God and you, sinner – God and man – must have a meeting. Whether we are converted to God or remain unconverted, we must face God; God must and will deal with every one of us. He will deal with us about our individual sins, and specially about the spring of them – our carnal mind, which is enmity against God and not subject to His law. He will deal thus with all sinners of mankind who have heard of Christ, for preferring to remain in such a state rather than have Christ.

The sinner, when He turns to God in Christ, sees what? He sees a reconciled God. I do not say, at first, a God reconciled to *him*, but a reconciled God. He sees a God waiting to be gracious, and exalted to show mercy. He sees a God who is a just God and a Saviour. He sees a God who, in wonderful wisdom, has devised and provided a way of escape, even a plan of salvation, in which all His perfections – His holiness, justice, goodness, truth and mercy – meet harmoniously in the pardoning of the chief of sinners. Sinner, will you turn? Will you turn so far as to turn your face to look on a reconciled God? Do not say, I cannot call Him my God. Ah, do not confound faith with assurance; do not confound turning to God with what follows a return to God, and comes more and more after a return to God and close walking with Him. Will you seek to turn so as to behold the way into the holiest of all opened? Will you try to think where the dealing of God towards you, a sinner, distinguishes you from the devil, a sinner?

How is God's dealing with you – who have sinned like Satan – different from His dealing with Satan? With you it is not only a dealing in long-suffering, it is a dealing in extended grace. And will you turn so far as to look at that? "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God." Turn, turn, and behold a just God and a Saviour. You say, I cannot see Him. Do you believe His Word? He says He is a just God and a Saviour – that mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Do not call Him a liar, do not say, Mercy and truth have *not* met together; righteousness and peace have *not* kissed each other. Do not say, He is not a just God and a Saviour; if I were to look at Him, I should see a just God who is not a Saviour; if I were to look at Him, I should see no face but an angry face; I should not see – for it is not there – the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Let us endeavour now to look for a little at the covenant of grace. Is there a covenant of grace? What is the covenant of grace? Does it suit me? Does it contain all I need? Is it adapted to the like of me?

We shall look at the covenant of God's grace as it is set forth in Hebrews



10:16,17: “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more”; and in Jeremiah 31:31-34: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

First then, are you a covenant-breaker? Are you included in the guilt of Adam’s breach of the first covenant? Are you guilty of the breach of your baptismal, personal covenant? Are you guilty of the breach of many resolutions, vows and covenants which you have made with God? And are you now at a stand about covenanting with God, because you despair of ever keeping these covenants which you make? Well, this is a new covenant that is made with covenant-breakers; does that suit you? It is to be made with covenant-breakers; others must stand aloof. Not that they are excluded, but they exclude themselves; they will not come on these terms.

Then the covenant contains this, “I will write My law in their hearts”. It is implied that the law is not there, that it needs to be there, and that neither you can write it there, nor can any other creature write it there for you. Well, this is a covenant of grace with lost sinners who do not have God’s law in their heart. If such is your case, then this covenant suits you. Whether you think it suits you or not, God has made it suitable.

Then the covenant contains this, “They shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know Me”. This does not mean that God will put away these means of teaching. No, “despise not prophesyings”. But it means that the great fundamental lesson of knowing the Lord is what God Himself must teach. He may employ other instruments; but concerning this great first lesson, as John says, “Ye need not that any man teach you”. This is therefore a covenant with ignorant creatures who do not have the knowledge of God. And they cannot get the knowledge of God; they are so ignorant that human teaching will not suffice? It is written, “Despise not prophesyings”; but are you so ig-

norant that the knowledge which you get from men, even from God's Word, is not sufficient, but you have to say to God, Teach me Thyself?

Well, this covenant is for you. It is made with the ignorant; whether those who are without the knowledge of the truth externally, or a doctor of divinity in a carnal state who is outwardly well-informed. The Spirit of God convinces the sinner that he is so ignorant that he knows nothing. He knows words about it; he knows the form of it; but he does not know the things – as the Apostle says, “We have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God”. The *things* – the Holy Ghost alone can teach us *that*. The doctor of divinity needs to be taught that; and the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein, if he is taught. God says, “I will instruct thee and teach thee . . . I will guide thee with Mine eye”. And he shall be a wise man some day to whom the all-wise God promises this, to whom He promises it in the sense of giving strength to lay hold of the promise.

Then the covenant contains this: “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more”. Well, what stands between you and this covenant? Is it that your sins are more than can be comprehended in it? No, it is not that. Well, it is easy to *say*, No; it is another thing to be *persuaded* of that. Do you think now, if all you have done since you were born were set before you by God – as He says, “I will reprove thee, and set [thy sins] in order before thine eyes” – that you could believe that God could pardon them? What estimation have you of God's pardoning heart? Do you believe that God has a wide enough pardoning heart to blot out all your iniquities as a cloud? Look at the covenant containing this: “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more”. Will you then say, It cannot go so far as mine? What are you doing then? You are not simply excluding yourself; you are excluding yourself by limiting the mercy of God. It is downright unbelief to exclude your *case*, whatever God may do with your person.

Can you think so well of God's pardoning mercy as to say, Whatever God will do with my sins and iniquities, He can forgive them all if He pleases; He has mercies and compassions sufficient for it; whatever is His purpose towards me, He has infinite compassions. The sacrifice of Christ did not beget these in God; it has only opened up an honourable channel for the flowing out of these mercies. God's purpose to forgive is a definite purpose. His forgivingness belongs to His nature and is infinite.

Well, you say, this is a good covenant – that is, God's part in it; but what is our part? The blessedness of this covenant is this: it has no part on our side. Israel had a part in the Sinaitic covenant; they broke it, and God did not

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regard them. Such a covenant would not be a sure covenant. Faith is necessary, but faith is not a condition of the covenant. If God said, I will do it if they believe, it would be a covenant of works. No, faith is necessary, because the covenant can be grasped by faith alone; but this covenant of itself is a covenant of unmixed promise. There is a condition in the covenant of grace, and only one, a meritorious condition. It is this, "When [the Lord] shall make His soul an offering for sin". This is the condition on which pardon is extended to the guilty.

Therefore the covenant is in the hands of a Mediator, as the Holy Ghost says of Christ: "For this cause He is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance". We are called to exercise faith, but we are not called to look *in* on faith as a condition; we are called to exercise faith in looking *out* on the unmixed promise of God, which can be received only by believing.

Now, if these things be true, everyone that refuses to take hold of this covenant does so because he says God is a liar. He says, God will not write His law in my heart; God will not teach me; God will not be merciful to my unrighteousness, and remember my iniquities no more; He will remember them still. If you do not take hold of the covenant, you either say, It is all true, but I do not want it. That is rejection. Or you say, Though God has promised to do all this, I do not believe He will do it. That is unbelief. It takes either of these two forms: unwillingness to be saved by Christ, or disbelief that He will save you.

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## A Beautiful Rose

*Rev D W B Somerset*

Someone plants an obscure sprig in the ground. It grows unnoticed and, months or years later, yields a beautiful rich heavy coral rose. The reward is infinitely beyond the labour bestowed, and bears little relation to what it came from. The Lord has turned mud and broken roots into transcendent beauty.

So it is with the work of the gospel. The preacher proclaims Christ crucified, perhaps in a halting or monotonous way. The Lord takes the Word and implants it in the heart of a sinner; and at the Day of the resurrection a most glorious saint will appear, "conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom 8:29). The Lord uses human instruments to do small parts of the work, but He is the One who crowns their labour with glory and beauty.

# Prevailing Prayer<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Watson

What prayer is most likely to prevail with God? It is good medicine which has the right ingredients; and that prayer is good, and most likely to prevail with God, which has these seven ingredients:

[1] It must be *mixed with faith*. “Let him ask in faith” (Jas 1:6). Believe that God hears and will in due time grant an answer; believe His love and truth; believe that He is love and therefore will not deny you; believe that He is truth and therefore will not deny Himself. Faith sets prayer to work. Faith is to prayer what the feather is to the arrow; it feathers the arrow of prayer and makes it fly swifter and pierce the throne of grace. The prayer that is faithless is fruitless.

[2] It must be a *melting prayer*. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit” (Ps 51:17). The incense was to be beaten to typify the breaking of the heart in prayer. A Christian says, I cannot pray with such gifts as others; as Moses said, “I am not eloquent”. But can you weep? Does your heart melt in prayer? Weeping prayer prevails. Tears drop as pearls from the eye. Jacob “wept and made supplication” and “had power over the angel” (Hos 12:4).

[3] Prayer must be *fired with zeal and fervency*. “Effectual fervent prayer . . . availeth much” (Jas 5:16). Cold prayers, like cold suitors, never speed. Prayer without fervency is like a sacrifice without a fire. Prayer is called a pouring out of the soul, to signify vehemence (1 Sam 1:15). Formality starves prayer. Prayer is compared to incense: “Let my prayer be set forth . . . as incense” (Ps 141:2). Hot coals were to be put to the incense, to make it fragrant; so fervency of affection is like coals to the incense; it makes prayer ascend as a sweet perfume. Christ prayed with strong cries (Heb 5:7). Luther says, “Such a cry pierces the clouds”. Fervent prayer, like a gunpowder machine set against heaven’s gates, makes them fly open.

To cause holy fervour and ardour of soul in prayer, consider: (1.) *Prayer without fervency is no prayer*; it is speaking, not praying. Lifeless prayer is no more prayer than the picture of a man is a man. One may say as Pharaoh, “I have dreamed a dream” (Gen 41:15). It is dreaming, not praying. Life and fervency baptize a duty and give it a name. (2.) *The need in which we stand of those things that we ask in prayer*. We come to ask the favour of God; and if we do not have His love, all we enjoy is cursed to us. We pray that our souls may be washed in Christ’s blood; if He does not wash us, we have no part in Him (Jn 13:8). When will we be in earnest, if not when we are praying for the life of our souls? (3.) *Only fervent prayer has the promise of*

<sup>1</sup>An edited extract from Watson’s *The Ten Commandments*.

*mercy affixed to it.* “Ye shall . . . find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart” (Jer 29:13). Praying is dead without a promise, and the promise is made only to fervency. God’s heart is ever open to fervent prayer.

[4] *Prayer must be sincere.* Sincerity is the silver thread which must run through all the duties of religion. Sincerity in prayer is when we have gracious holy ends, when our prayer is not so much for temporal mercies as for spiritual. We send out prayer as a merchant ship, that we may have large returns of spiritual blessings. Our aim in it is that our hearts may be more holy, that we may have more communion with God, and that we may increase our stock of grace. The prayer which lacks a good aim, lacks a good outcome.

[5] *It must have fixedness of mind.* “My heart is fixed, O God” (Ps 57:7). Since the Fall, the mind is like mercury, which will not fix; it has a principle of restlessness, not of peace. The thoughts will be roving and dancing up and down in prayer, just as if a man who is travelling to a certain place should run off the road and wander he knows not where. In prayer we are travelling to the throne of grace, but how often, by vain thoughts, we turn out of the road! This is rather wandering than praying.

[6] *It must use arguments.* God loves to have us plead with Him and use arguments in prayer. See how many arguments Jacob used in prayer. He prayed, “Deliver me, I pray Thee, from the hand of my brother” (Gen 32:11). The arguments he used are from God’s command: Thou “saidst unto me, Return unto thy country” (v 9); as if he had said, I did not take this journey out of my own head, but by Thy direction; therefore in honour Thou canst not but protect me. And he uses another argument: “Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good” (v 12). Lord, wilt Thou go back from Thine own promise? Thus he argued in prayer; and he not only got a new blessing, but a new name: “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God . . . and hast prevailed” (v 28).

God loves to be overcome with strength of argument. Thus, when we come to God in prayer for grace, let us argue: Lord, Thou callest Thyself the God of all grace; and whither should we go with our vessel but to the fountain? Lord, Thy grace may be imparted, yet not impaired. Has not Christ purchased grace for poor, needy creatures? Every dram of grace costs a drop of blood. Shall Christ die to purchase grace for us, and shall we not have the fruit of His purchase? Lord, it is Thy delight to milk out the breast of mercy and grace, and wilt Thou Thyself abridge Thine own delight? Thou hast promised to give Thy Spirit to implant grace; can truth lie? Can faithfulness deceive? God loves thus to be overcome with arguments in prayer.

[7] *It must be joined with reformation.* “If thou stretch out thine hands

toward Him; if iniquity be in thy hand, put it far away” (Job 11:13,14). Sin, when lived in, makes the heart hard and God’s ear deaf. It is foolish to pray against sin, and then sin against prayer: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Ps 66:18). The loadstone loses its power when spread with garlic; so does prayer when polluted with sin. The incense of prayer must be offered upon the altar of a holy heart.

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## The Importance of Earnestness<sup>1</sup>

*Charles Bridges*

Ecclesiastes 9:10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.*

We are warranted to indulge affection within marriage, and among relations and friends more generally; but we should not be given up to them. We here have a rule, to stimulate the glow of vital energy. There are works to be done, difficulties to be overcome, talents to be traded with; the whole might is to be engaged. And, in truth, “man’s wisdom in this dying world consists in cheerfully using present comforts and diligently attending to present duties”.<sup>2</sup> Every moment brings its own responsibility. And the rule for the discharge of this responsibility is: “Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might”. Obviously some limitation is implied: it must be lawful. The thing to be done is what the occasion calls for (see Judg 9:33), in the path of duty and of providence. The active exercise of the hands, as the instrument of the work, will bring a fruitful result. This direction finds its place in the apostolical code: “Not slothful in business” (Rom 12:11).

“Do it with thy might.” Sir Matthew Hales’ advice is full of weight: “The crumbs and fragments of time should be furnished with their suitable employments. It is precious; and therefore let none of it be lost.” How ready this obedience is when the object is near the heart! What energy it gives to that effort which is so needful for success. Would Stephenson have accomplished his locomotive triumph, with a powerful opposition thwarting every step of his progress, if he had not done it with his might? Every man must have an object of pursuit to keep him in healthy exercise. The dreaming privilege of doing nothing will soon melt away into real misery. “Let others take the riches”, said Melancthon. “Give me the work.”

But the main sphere for this important and invaluable rule is the work for

<sup>1</sup>An edited extract from Bridges’ *Exposition of Ecclesiastes*.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Scott’ *Commentary* (on Ecc 9:10).

eternity – the working out of our own salvation (Phil 2:12). The purchase price binds us to the work under the most constraining obligation: “Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor 6:20). We cease to be our own, from the first moment that we are bound to Christ. And in His work, there is need of our might, all our might – might flowing from the fountain of might. There is no illusion of great things to be done at some distant time in the future. It is the present energy, this moment’s work, the instant sacrifice, the wholehearted service, the first part of the day, the first part all the day.

Whoever found Satan asleep in his work? “It is lawful”, the proverb reminds us, “to be taught even by an enemy.” His might is always put out to work. So let it be with me. Let my might be thrown into every prayer. Let every effort of faith, every exercise of perseverance, be at work. As a godly Puritan expresses his “good wish that, what my hand findeth to do, I may do it with all my might: that I may be of the number of those that spend themselves with labour, and not of those who waste in rust and laziness. Lord, let me rather wear out in the work than consume (like a garment laid by with moths) for want of use.”<sup>3</sup>

Ought this verse not to be our daily text – written in our inward parts? Should it not be before us in our first waking hour: What have I to do today? What duty, what work of love? What talent is to be employed? What service does the Lord call me to do for Him? “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:6). The more vigorous the exercise, the more strength. Every step supplies strength. “The way of the Lord is strength to the upright” (Prov 10:29). And how is it communicated? “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength” (Is 40:29-31).

But look at our great Example. How fine is the exhibition of determination for the work: “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day”. Here was doing with His might; the motive also was the same: “The night cometh, when no man can work” (Jn 9:4).

“There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” Here the highest glory of earth concludes. You are travelling to the end. Every moment brings you nearer. And when you have come to the grave, there is no work there. We cannot do our undone duties there. All power has withered and gone. There is no device there. All scheming is gone. No way of escape can be planned. No knowledge is there of any means of help. No wisdom – spiritual or intellectual – nothing that distinguishes man made in the image of God from “the beasts that perish”.

A melancholy picture of man: arrived at “the house appointed for all

<sup>3</sup>George Swinnoek, in his *Christian Man’s Calling*.

living” (Job 30:23). What if he has trifled away his twelve hours of the day (Jn 11:9), if his light has gone out, if his work has been found undone, if the night has overtaken him, while amusing himself with the fool’s word, *tomorrow*? If religion is no business now, what will it be in the dying hour? One day may be worth years. Wasted hours will find us out at last. A little neglect will be an eternal loss. O the dreadful gain of winning the world by the loss of heaven! There will be but one wail throughout eternity – condemning self, justifying God – My soul, thou hast destroyed thyself (Hos 13:9). For our great work we have only one little life which, with all its precious privileges and solemn responsibilities, is passing – how quickly – away!

## The Covenant of Works<sup>1</sup>

### 2. Some Conclusions

*Archibald Hall*

These principles<sup>2</sup> show that: (1.) *The law of God can never lose its authority* and obligation over reasonable creatures. It is as absurd to imagine that His law can ever cease to prescribe the duty of mankind, as to suppose that God, with whom there is no shadow of turning, can divest Himself of the glorious perfections of His own nature.

(2.) *The lack of conformity to the law of God is criminal*, as well as open disobedience. Since the law exhibits the faithful portrait of Jehovah’s likeness, any lack of conformity to it must be a lack of conformity to the image of God. Hence the lack of original righteousness and the defects of the Christian’s obedience are to be considered as sins against God. Every lack of perfection in the understanding, will, affections, or conduct is a dishonour both to God and His law, or rather to God revealing His nature and sovereign authority in the law. Therefore every such lack of perfection is really a sin in the sight of God.

(3.) *The law of God is spiritual*, and extends to the inmost thoughts, principles, and purposes of the soul. This “Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart”.

<sup>1</sup>Hall (1736-78) belonged to one of the Scottish Secession Churches and, for the last 13 years of his life, he ministered to their congregation in Wall Street, London. This is an edited extract from Hall’s *Treatise on the Faith and Influence of the Gospel*. Last month’s article (the first of two) spoke of the harmony of the perfections of God with His law.

<sup>2</sup>Hall is referring to what he said of the harmony of the perfections of God with His law.



(4.) *Every sinner is a child of wrath*, and under a sentence of condemnation. “The wages of sin is death”, and the Judge of all the earth will execute righteous judgement in rendering to sin its just recompense of reward. The punishment of sin is not the effect of something arbitrary in the divine law, but a necessary vindication of the holiness and righteousness of the sovereign Lawgiver. An offence in one point of commanded duty dishonours the whole law, and subjects the offender to the wrath and curse of God. If one link of a chain is broken, the whole chain is damaged; a violent assault on one part of a man’s body is an assault on the man himself; and every sin is a transgression of the law of God, an invasion on His royal authority, and rebellion against the Lord. Shall He not punish for such enormities? Shall not His soul be avenged on such criminals as these? Yes, the word has gone out of His mouth; it has been proclaimed from heaven and registered in everyone’s conscience: “The soul that sinneth it shall die”.

(5.) *Every sinner that lies under the curse of God is, at the same time, “a debtor to do the whole law”* by yielding perfect, unsinning obedience to all its holy and righteous precepts. The fact that he is under condemnation for having previously violated the law does not dissolve his obligation to continue “in all things which are written in the book of the law”, concerning his present and future conduct, “to do them.”

(6.) *Every sin deserves infinite punishment*, being committed against the law of the most high God. Accordingly, every sin receives such punishment, either in the everlasting misery of the sinner, or in the sufferings of the Son of God, his substituted Surety – through these sins being imputed to Him and the benefits of His redemption being received by faith.

(7.) *Every sinner is “without strength”*; he neither possesses anything amiable, nor has he the least ability to acquire it; he cannot please God by any of his performances, being dead in trespasses and sins, and lives in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. He is chargeable with horrid guilt, and incapable of expiating a single offence. “The carnal mind”, or unregenerate soul, “is not subject to the law of God” – indeed, is an enemy, or rather enmity itself. Against what? Against sin? That would be a noble antipathy. Against the world? That would be a laudable disaffection. No, but against God and His law. Amazing perverseness! To be enmity against God, who is boundless goodness; enmity against His law, which is the transcript of His perfections, and the faultless model of all virtue.

(8.) *The substitution of one person for others*, in order to establish a valid title to everlasting happiness for many, by the work of that one substitute, is perfectly consistent with the distinctive nature of the law of God. In the covenant of works, Adam was constituted the public representative of his

posterity. They are now in a state of condemnation by his first transgression but, if he had not fallen, they would have been confirmed in a state of happiness on the footing of his perfect obedience. Why then should it be reckoned unreasonable and unjust for God to make Christ, “who knew no sin”, become “sin for us”; and to make ungodly sinners “the righteousness of God in” Christ?

(9.) *Those who enjoy God’s favour are not released from the everlasting obligation of His law*, but their blessed state only enables them to see more clearly, and to perform more cheerfully, the reasonable service it prescribes. Had Adam and his posterity been confirmed in a state of holiness, he and they would have continued for ever to walk in the commandments of their God.

(10.) *The law of God demands perfect obedience* from every child of Adam, and insists on a full atonement being made for past transgressions. The righteousness of the law, in its largest extent, must be fulfilled in all those that inherit eternal life. They must be covered with a robe of righteousness, and their beauty must appear perfect. They must stand, in the eye of God’s law, invested with a holy nature, righteousness of life, and complete forgiveness of all their sins. “Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?”

If these doctrines were understood and believed by mankind, many would be ready to say with the disciples, “Who then can be saved?” All would agree to set their seal unto these truths: “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified” in the sight of God – every mouth is stopped, and the whole world is guilty before God. Many would adopt the prophet’s question, “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?”<sup>3</sup>

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## A Memorable Sermon<sup>1</sup>

*Rev Donald Beaton*

**I**n the best days of Scotland’s religious history, she was favoured with men who caught the ear of the people and whose discourses made a profound impression. One has only to think of John Knox; Alexander Henderson; Samuel Rutherford; Alexander Peden; John Livingstone; Richard Cameron; James Renwick; Andrew Gray; Hugh Binning; Thomas Boston; Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine; John Brown, of Haddington; Thomas Chalmers; John Duncan; Robert Murray M’Cheyne; William C Burns; George Smeaton; John Kennedy, Redcastle; Angus and Charles Mackintosh, Tain; John Mac-

<sup>3</sup>Hall answers his question in another section, on “the gospel of the grace of God”.

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with slight editing, from *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* for September 1939.

donald, Ferintosh; Alexander Stewart, Cromarty; John Kennedy, Dingwall, and a host of others – perhaps less renowned, but their words were used by the Lord to an extraordinary degree. As one reads this incomplete list of Scotland’s famous preachers, one begins to realise how goodly was the company of heralds of the cross with which Scotland was blessed.

Of these great preachers it may be said without hesitation that they preached not themselves but Christ crucified. There was no hesitating note in their message, and their hearers listened to it as glad tidings of their salvation. When one reads the effects produced by their preaching, a wistful longing is created for such days of power to return again to Scotland. Among Scotland’s famous preachers must be mentioned John MacLaurin, Glasgow, whose renowned sermon, “Glorying in the Cross of Christ”, has obtained an undisputed place as one of the great utterances not only of the Scottish Church but of the Church of Christ in general.

The sermon was preached on the text: “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal 6:14). It is almost impossible to convey anything like an adequate description of the hallowed eloquence, the felicitous language in which the thoughts of the preacher are clothed and the impressive majesty with which he presents his august theme. In reading the sermon, the tremendous nature of the requirements of eternal justice confronts the reader with overwhelming effect as the preacher lays bare what Calvary’s cross means. Perhaps the best thing one can do is to give extracts from the sermon itself, as many of our readers may never have read it.

In speaking of the Apostle glorying in the cross of Christ, he says, “There are not two things more opposite than glory and shame; here the Apostle joins them together. The cross in itself is an object full of shame; in this case it appears to the Apostle full of glory. It had been less remarkable had he only said that he gloried in his Redeemer’s exaltation after He left the world, or in the glory He had with the Father before He came to it, before the world was. But the object of the Apostle’s glorying is the Redeemer, not only considered in the highest state of honour and dignity, but even viewed in the lowest circumstances of disgrace and ignominy; not only as a powerful and exalted, but as a condemned and crucified, Saviour.

“Glorying signifies the highest degree of esteem; the cross of Christ was an object of which the Apostle had the most exalted sentiments and the most profound veneration. He took pleasure to avow this veneration before the world, and was ready to publish it on all occasions. This object so occupied his heart and engrossed his affections that it left no room for anything else; he gloried in nothing else; and, as he tells us in other places, he counted

everything else but loss and dung, and would know nothing else, and was determined about it (1 Cor 2:2).

“The manner of expressing his esteem of this object has a remarkable force and vehemence in it, ‘God forbid’, or, let it by no means happen. It was as if he had said, God forbid, whatever others do, that it should ever be said that Paul, the old persecutor, should glory in anything but in the crucified Redeemer; who plucked him as a brand from the burning – out of the fire, when he was running farther and farther into it – and who pursued him with mercy and kindness, when he was pursuing Him in His members with fierceness and cruelty. I did it through ignorance (and it is only through ignorance that any despise Him); He has now revealed Himself to me, and God forbid that the light that met me near Damascus should ever go out of my mind; it was a light full of glory; the object it disclosed was all-glorious, my all in all. And God forbid that I should glory in anything else.”

Here is another passage: “Thus Christ’s outward meanness, that disguised His real greatness, was in itself glorious, because of the disguise of it. Yet that meanness did not wholly becloud it; many beams of glory shone through it. His birth was mean on earth below. But it was celebrated with hallelujahs by the heavenly host in the air above; He had a poor lodging, but a star lighted visitors to it from distant countries. Never prince had such visitors conducted [to him]. He had not the magnificent equipage that other kings have, but He was attended with multitudes of patients, seeking and obtaining healing of soul and body; that was more true greatness than if He had been attended with crowds of princes. He made the dumb that attended Him sing His praises, and the lame to leap for joy, the deaf to hear His wonders, and the blind to see His glory. He had no guard of soldiers, nor a magnificent retinue of servants; but, as the centurion acknowledged – that had both – health and sickness, life and death, took orders from Him.

“Even the winds and storms, which no earthly power can control, obeyed Him; and death and the grave durst not refuse to deliver up their prey when He demanded it. He did not walk upon tapestry, but when He walked on the sea, the waters supported Him. All parts of the creation, excepting sinful men, honoured Him as their Creator. He kept no treasure but, when He had occasion for money, the sea sent it to Him in the mouth of a fish. He had no barns nor corn fields, but when he inclined to make a feast, a few loaves covered a sufficient table for many thousands. None of all the monarchs of the world ever gave such entertainments. By these and many such things, the Redeemer’s glory shone through His meanness, in the several parts of His life.

“Nor was it wholly clouded at His death; He had not, indeed, that fantastic equipage of sorrow that other great persons have on such occasions. But the

frame of nature solemnised the death of its Creator; heaven and earth were mourners. The sun was clad in black; and if the inhabitants of the earth were unmoved, the earth itself trembled under the awful load; there were few to pay the Jewish compliment of rending their garments, but the rocks were not so lacking in feeling; they tore their bowels. He had not a grave of His own, but other men's graves opened to Him. Death and the grave might be proud of such a tenant in their territories, but He came not there as a subject, but as an invader, a conqueror; it was then the King of terrors lost his sting, and on the third day the Prince of life triumphed over him, taking spoil from death and the grave. But the last particular belongs to Christ's exaltation; the other instances show a part of the glory of His humiliation, but it is a small part of it."

After reading the sermon and the extracts we have given, we feel that they do not convey an adequate idea of the impressiveness of the sermon and we would recommend that all of our readers who are interested in the subject of this article should read the sermon for themselves. It was printed in the volume entitled, *Precious Seed Discourses*.

But as there are spots in the sun, so in this noble sermon there are a few words which grate on one's feelings: for instance, some words referring to the Saviour's face . . . . We have always felt in reading this sermon that other words could have been used which would have expressed the preacher's thoughts without causing a feeling of revulsion in reverent minds.

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

### 3. Venice and Naples

*V*enice was the safest state in Italy for Protestants; the Senate there consistently resisted attempts to set up the Inquisition locally and was cautious in implementing the edicts put out by the Vatican. The city of Venice was the centre for printing Protestant books in Italy and for distributing books printed in Switzerland and Germany. True doctrine made considerable progress in Venice between 1530 and 1542, so much so that those who were meeting for worship in private were now considering setting up congregations and meeting in public. In this they had the support of some members of the Senate. Reformed teaching was also having an effect in some territories

<sup>1</sup>A further part of a paper given at last year's Theological Conference, somewhat enlarged. The previous part surveyed the progress of the Reformation in some of the Italian states. Page numbers in the text refer to Thomas M'Cric, *History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy in the Sixteenth Century*, Edinburgh and London, 1856.

controlled by Venice, including Padua and Verona. In 1545 the Pope was complaining to Venice that heresy was active in the city of Vicenza and that the local magistrates had repeatedly refused to intervene. And a letter to Luther, in a time of persecution, pointed out that “the harvest is truly great, but there are no labourers” (p 67).

As early as 1524, there were some followers of the Reformed faith in *Milan*. In 1536 Pope Paul III was instructing a bishop in Milan to investigate reports of “conventicles and heretics”, accusing them of “impure tenets of ancient heretics” and went on to direct the bishop to see that fitting “punishment was inflicted on the guilty” (p 68). But the accusation of heresy was inaccurate; it was the Pope’s way of describing Reformed teachings.

Celio Secundo Curione (also known as Curio) was born in Turin in 1503, the youngest of 23 children. While still young he began to read the Bible carefully and, when 19, he discovered the Reformers’ writings. As a result of reading them, he and two other young men set off for Germany; these two men later became “distinguished ministers of the the Reformed Church” (p 69). On their way, they became involved in a religious argument, were reported to the authorities and thrown into prison. Curio was released through the efforts of his family and, when he was in danger of being arrested again, he fled to Milan. This was about 1530.

One day Curio went to hear a Dominican monk from Turin preach. The monk railed against the Reformers and give inaccurate quotations from Luther’s *Commentary on Galatians*. Curio happened to have a copy of the volume with him; he spoke to the monk after the service and read out the actual quotations in the presence of members of the congregation. They were so indignant at the misrepresentations that they drove the preacher out of town. Curio, however, was reported to the Inquisition, arrested and taken to Turin. He succeeded in escaping from prison, having “vowed to devote myself and all I possess to the service of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and I prayed that I might not live according to my own desires, but be drawn by the Spirit towards Him and be used in His service as a chosen vessel for His glory”.<sup>2</sup> But Curio had to move around from place to place in order to stay at liberty. For some time he taught in the University of Pavia, but his work, especially in the various places where he settled for a time – particularly around Milan – resulted in many having their eyes opened to the false doctrines and practices of Rome.

He spent the last years of his life in Switzerland. In his will, he wrote, “I acknowledge and maintain that I am a Christian and that I live in the faith of God the Father, of His only begotten Son and of His Holy Spirit, and I

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in M Young, *The Life and Times of Aonio Paleario*, London, 1860, vol 1, p 401.

believe that God will receive my soul. Upon His grace alone I rest all my hopes present and future; and in order that neither man nor devil may have anything to say against me, I declare that I entirely and completely believe in the Holy Scriptures contained in the Old and New Testament, and that I take Jesus Christ, the very Son of God and very man, for my only Lord and Saviour, and mediator between God and man, and that I at the same time repudiate and reject, abhor and abjure all teaching and interpretation contrary to this most holy doctrine. And I pray God with my whole heart so to grant me His Holy Spirit that I may never be moved away from this divine faith.” He died in 1569.

The kingdom of *Naples* was at this time ruled by Spain. In 1536 King Charles V charged his Viceroy in Naples, Don Pedro de Toledo, to punish all infected with heresy, and even those inclined to it. Don Pedro’s secretary was Juan Valdés, a Spaniard and a Protestant. He did not preach but, in private, influenced many in favour of the truth. One of them found him “entirely taken up with the study of the Holy Scriptures”. Another attributed Valdés’ influence to “the sweetness of his teaching and the holiness of his life”.<sup>3</sup>

Valdés wrote some books which were placed on the Index of prohibited books. One publication, little more than a tract, was described as “one of the sweetest, gravest and most pious and useful books which can anywhere be found”. It speaks of pardon “through Christ, [God’s] beloved Son,” and states, “If we believe in this pardon, in His promises, and so trust in Him . . . He will restore us to His favour and receive us into the kingdom of eternal life”. A sympathetic contemporary commented on this piece of writing being placed on the Index: “I cannot imagine they have done this from any other reason but from the desire of concealing the very point on which our salvation turns – to extinguish . . . every light, whether it be small or great, by which men may see and understand the love of God shown forth in Christ”.

This comment sums up the motivation behind a great deal of the persecution of those who adopted scriptural views, especially that the way of salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone. The same contemporary continued with a contrast: “They condemn those who teach and preach Jesus Christ sincerely and prudently, and allow everyone to read . . . a certain little book called *Barletta*, which professes to teach how to preach, though it contains nothing but the greatest folly, ignorance and impiety that ever was written. It teaches when the preacher is to pull his cap over his eyes, when he is to look at the wooden crucifix with a gentle look, and when with a stern expression; it next teaches what fables are to be related at Easter.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup>McNair, *Peter Martyr in Italy*, Clarendon Press, 1967, p 28.

<sup>4</sup>Quoted in Young, *Life and Times of Aonio Paleario*, vol 1, p 237.

Among the others influenced by Valdés were Bernardino Ochino and Peter Martyr Vermigli. Ochino was born in 1487 in Tuscany. Later he wrote, “When I was a young man, I was under the dominion of the common error by which the minds of all who live under the yoke of the wicked Antichrist are enthralled; so that I believed that we were to be saved by our own works, fastings, prayers, abstinence, watchings and other things of the same kind, by which we were to make satisfaction for our sins and purchase heaven, through the concurring grace of God”.

So, “being anxious to be saved”, he considered what manner of life he should follow “and, believing that those modes of religion were holy which were approved by the Roman Church,” which he “regarded as infallible”, he became a Franciscan friar. He found it difficult to reconcile his views with what Scripture teaches “about salvation being the gift of God through the redemption wrought by Christ. But the authority of the Church silenced these scruples, and in proportion as concern for my soul became more intense, I applied myself with greater diligence and ardour to these bodily exercises and mortifications which were prescribed by the doctrine of the Church. Still, however, I remained a stranger to true peace of mind, which at last I found by searching the Scriptures, and such helps for understanding them as I had access to” (p 72). Ochino now became satisfied with these three truths:

- (1.) Christ, by His obedience and death, has merited salvation for the elect.
- (2.) Religious vows (by a monk, for example) are harmful and wicked.
- (3.) The Roman Church is unscriptural and abominable in the sight of God.

Ochino was a natural orator and his preaching was much admired. Even Charles V attended his preaching when he was in Naples and commented, “That man would make the stones weep” (pp 73-74). A cardinal wrote enthusiastically about Ochino’s preaching, but M’Crie comments, on the basis of his future conduct, that the cardinal “would have felt and spoken very differently had he been told that the doctrine to which he listened . . . was essentially Protestant” (p 75). Among the changes that took place in Ochino’s preaching were: he now appealed directly to Scripture in support of the doctrines he proclaimed; he exhorted the people to make the infallible authority of Scripture the basis of what they believed, and to build their hope of salvation on the obedience and death of Christ alone. Yet, for some time, Ochino did not preach against Roman Catholic errors and superstitions. He was afraid for his own safety and assumed his hearers were not yet ready to face up to the truth about their Church. When he came to Naples, Juan Valdés soon recognised the Protestant flavour of Ochino’s preaching, became his friend and brought him to the private meetings held by those who had adopted biblical doctrines.



## Captain Hedley Vicars (1)<sup>1</sup>

Amid the dark recitals of sufferings and privations which have attended the war in the Crimea, the Christian will turn to the biography of Captain Vicars as to a shining light in a dark wilderness.

Hedley Shafto Johnstone Vicars, was born in Mauritius, on 7 December 1826. His father, who was an officer in the Royal Engineers, died when this son was only 12. But in dying, he left him that precious legacy, a believing father's prayer, "that he might be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and so fight manfully under His banner, and glorify His holy name".

His mother – to whom Hedley Vicars owed an everlasting debt of gratitude, a debt which he always touchingly acknowledged – was obliged, when he was still young, to leave Mauritius and return to England, on account of ill health; hence the entire guardianship of her children fell to her for many years. Hedley Vicars' boyhood was characterised by that high-spirited and energetic nature which religion so beautifully modulated in later years; and by that extreme tenderness of disposition which always endeared him to his friends.

He early chose a military life, and he was from first to last an ardent lover of his profession and devoted to its duties. In the spring of 1844 he began his career by joining the 97th regiment in the Isle of Wight; in the autumn of the same year, he sailed with it to Corfu. At this period of his life he entered into all the amusements which offered themselves, and his then reckless disposition led him into excesses which were soon abandoned, by the grace of God, yet were afterwards a bitter and humiliating memory.

In reference to this he writes in 1854: "You will be spared poignant remorse in after years by remembering your Creator in the days of your youth. I speak from heart-felt experience. I would give worlds, if I had them, to undo what I have done."

The awakening of one whom God intended for a bright example to others was soon to come. In 1848, while the 97th was stationed at Jamaica, he incurred debts which, though not large, were enough, he knew, to be burdensome to his widowed mother. He writes this to her: "Ever since the receipt of your last letter I have been in a dreadful state of mind. I feel that I deserve God's severest punishment for my undutiful conduct toward the fondest of mothers; but the excruciating thought had never before occurred to me that He might think fit to remove her from me. O what agony I have endured! What sleepless nights I have passed since the perusal of that letter! The review

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted, with editing, from *The Christian Treasury* for 1857. This is the first of two articles, which provide a summary of *Memorials of Captain Hedley Vicars*.

of my past life, especially the retrospect of the last two years, has at last quite startled me, and at the same time disgusted me.”

Five months later he writes: “Mother, I ask your forgiveness for what has passed. You know not what real anguish some of your letters have caused me; and although I have tried to drown the voice of conscience, after reading them, a still small voice has always been whispering in my ear, and kept me from committing many a sin.”

A year later, his letters show a longing for something higher than he had yet reached – a sense of sin before God, “sin worthy of eternal punishment”, and a desire to “enter on a state of preparedness for death and eternity”. But pardon and peace had not yet been obtained, and he asks his mother to pray for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on him. While undergoing many struggles, his regiment was ordered to Canada. In the month of November 1851, while waiting in his room for another officer and idly turning over the leaves of his Bible, the following words caught his eye: “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin”. Closing the Book, he said, “If this be true for me, henceforth I will live, by the grace of God, as a man should live who has been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ”.

A sleepless but prayerful night passed. God answered those prayers, and in the morning he was enabled to believe that the message of peace was for him. From that time his Christian course was sealed. He writes, “The past now is blotted out. What I have to do is to go forward. I cannot return to the sins from which my Saviour has cleansed me with His own blood.”

That day he bought a large Bible and placed it open on the table in his sitting room. “It was”, he said, “to speak for me, before I was strong enough to speak for myself.” His former worldly friends drifted away, of course, and he had to encounter bitter opposition. There were, however, a few other officers who were walking with God, and from their company, and from that of Twining, the garrison chaplain at Halifax, he derived great benefit. He often referred to Twining as his spiritual father, and a letter from Twining himself attests the value he set on such a pupil. Vicars grew rapidly in grace and in knowledge, and his first labours were teaching in Sabbath schools, visiting the sick, and using every opportunity to read and pray with the soldiers of the regiment. Even at this early period he was the means of converting several of the officers and men; and, proving that the great spiritual change had not diminished his activity in performing his temporal duties, his colonel offered him the position of adjutant (administrative assistant) of the regiment, in these words: “Vicars, you are the man I can trust with responsibility”.

The following letter was written to his brother shortly after this period:

“Let us pray earnestly for the Holy Spirit and we shall not be sent empty away. Let us ask Him to show us the sinful state of our hearts. I have found comparatively little trouble in giving up external sins; but the innate sin of my heart, O how great it is! It is here the real battle must be fought; and the more humbling the sense of our vileness, the more we shall feel the need and value of a Saviour. We all have our temptations, and in scarcely any profession could they more beset the Christian beginner than in the army.

“But let us remember, whatever be our calling, God has promised that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear. Only let us feel that we are unable of ourselves to resist evil, or to do anything good; let us look to Christ and trust in Him alone and take up our cross and follow Him. We must give up the pleasures of this world, for they unfit us for spiritual meditation; and although they may be hard to part with, as a right eye or right hand, there is no alternative if we wish to grow in grace.

“You will, perhaps, be surprised, as you read this letter, at the change which has come over me. Yes, I believe and feel that I am a changed man; that have taken the important step of declaring on whose side I will be. O that I could persuade you to enrol yourself with me on the side of Jesus Christ!

“As John Newton says, ‘I know what the world can do and what it cannot do. It cannot give or take away that peace of God which passeth all understanding. It cannot soothe the wounded conscience, nor enable us to meet death with comfort. I have tried both services. For 24 years I have lived under the thralldom of sin, led by the devil. No one need despair of being welcomed by the Saviour, when He has pardoned and brought to repentance such a sinner as I have been. The retrospect of my past life is now miserable to me; yet before I was taught by the Spirit of God, I thought and called it a life of pleasure. The very name, when applied to sin, now makes my heart sicken. Even then I never could enjoy recalling the occupations of each day; and do you think my conscience was quiet? No, though again and again I stifled it, as too many do, bitter experience taught me that there is no peace to the wicked. Blessed be God, I know that I am now pardoned and reconciled to God, through the death of His Son. How happy is the Christian’s life when he has this assurance!’

“Do not think, dear Edward, that because I write thus, I wish you to think me very religious, or that I consider myself better than you. I do not. But I find more pleasure now in writing on these subjects than on any other; and I want to draw out your thoughts about them. If you have not turned entirely to God, take my advice; and if you want to find true happiness, do so at once.”

We wish we had space to transfer to our columns some of the diary which he kept with great regularity, and which breathes throughout the most ardent

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love to his Redeemer and devotion to His service; but we must content ourselves with giving the reader some rules which he drew up for his guidance while at Halifax: “Rise every morning at 7 o’clock. Meditate on a text while dressing. From 8 to 9, read a chapter in the Old Testament and pray. From 9 to 10, breakfast, and read newspaper or any light book, carefully avoiding novels. From 10 to 1, orderly-room work. From 1 to 2.30, a chapter in the Gospels, and prayer. From 2.30 to 4, orderly-room work. From 4 to 6, visiting sick people etc. Offer up a short prayer, before going to the mess, that God would keep me from temptation. After dinner, offer up a prayer to God first, then read books of general interest, and give an hour to my Bible and prayer before going to bed. And O, I beseech Thee, my heavenly Father, to enable me thus to devote the remainder of my days to Thee! May my motto be, ‘Not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord’.”

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## Book Review

*Gospel Life*, by John Owen, 256 pages, £6.50; *Gospel Ministry*, by John Owen, 208 pages, £6.25; both books £11.00; published by the Banner of Truth Trust in their Puritan Paperback series, obtainable from the F P Bookroom.

John Owen (1616-1683) led an exceptionally varied life, from being tutor of the nobility through to becoming chaplain to Oliver Cromwell at the time of the English Civil War. He accompanied Cromwell on his expeditions to Ireland and Scotland. Through Cromwell’s influence he became Vice Chancellor of Oxford University and, briefly, its Member of Parliament. From 1673 until his death, he was the pastor of the Independent congregation at Leadenhall Street, London. It was there that most of the sermons were preached which make up the books under review. The sermons are taken from *The Works of John Owen*, volume 9, but the Banner of Truth has reproduced them in two companion volumes, and have updated Owen’s language to make it more accessible to the modern reader. The books are attractively produced and well bound.

*Gospel Life* contains 13 sermons on the subject of spiritual graces: “The Strength of Faith” (two sermons), “Gospel Love” (one sermon), “Walking Humbly with God” (five sermons), “God, the Saint’s Rock” – on persevering faith (two sermons), and “The Christian’s Work of Dying Daily” – on hope (three sermons). Throughout these sermons, Owen shows that, in every aspect of gospel life, “the righteous shall live – and die – by faith”.

There are many lovely things one could quote from the sermons. For ex-

ample, on the subject of faith and the Lord's call to believe, Owen says, "He stoops down to plead with us that it may be so, that He may exercise pity, pardon, goodness, kindness, mercy towards us. He is so full that He is, as it were, in pain until He can get us to Himself so as to communicate His love to us. God says, 'O sons of men, why will you die? I beseech you, be friends with Me. Let us agree. Accept the atonement. . . . Take mercy, take pardon. Do not destroy your souls.'"

The sermons inevitably lead us to the death of the Christian. Owen tells us that it is the "last victorious act of faith in which it has its final conquest over all its adversaries . . . . But when we come to die, faith is left alone. Now faith is tested. The exercise of the other graces ceases. Only faith comes to this close conflict with the last adversary, in which the whole is to be tried. And, by this one act of resigning all into the hands of God, faith triumphs over death and cries, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' This is the victory by which we overcome all our spiritual enemies."

*Gospel Ministry* is made up of nine sermons: "The Divine Power of the Gospel" (two sermons), three ordination sermons on "The Ministry: the Gift of Christ", "Ministerial Gifts: the Work of the Spirit", and "The Duty of a Pastor". Also "The Nature and Beauty of Gospel Worship" (two sermons), "The Beauty and Strength of Zion", and "Christ's Pastoral Care". Apart from the ordination sermons, the sermons were preached by Owen to his congregation. He exhorts his people to pray for ministers: "Pray to God for a fresh communication of gifts to them. They are capable of receiving this. A renewed act of grace prepares and opens the soul for receiving new communications of God's grace in order to administer holy things to the congregation. Pray much for them to that purpose."

The text of his first sermon is Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek". Owen explains that "Christ is the captain of our salvation and the great example for our obedience and was not ashamed of all that He had to suffer for us. He was the great God in His own person and equal with the Father, and yet this honourable One submitted to everything shameful and reproachful in the world." Ministers (and believers) should go out into the world with this good news. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings" (Is 52:7). The reviewer found the sermons on "The Gift of Christ and the Work of the Spirit" particularly precious.

Scriptural quotations are taken from the English Standard Version, which this reader found jarring. For example, the text for the sermon on "The Duty of a Pastor" is Jeremiah 3:15: "And I will give you pastors according to Mine

heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding”. Owen refers to “pastors” throughout his sermon but, where the actual text is quoted, the ESV uses the word “shepherd” rather than “pastor”.

As one would expect from Owen, the sermons are instructive and edifying, and some of them the reviewer found particularly profitable. Apart from the reservation mentioned, these books of sermons are highly recommended.

*F R Daubney*

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## Protestant View

### Departure from the Truth

The Free Church of England (FCE) is an Episcopalian body which split from the Church of England in 1844 as a result of concern over the growth of Anglo-Catholic views within the English national Church. However, in April this year, an FCE congregation in Exeter left the denomination because “of its departure from the historic Christian faith upon which it was founded”.

That such a departure has taken place is clear from a statement by Rev Calvin Robinson, an FCE deacon (the first step on the ministerial ladder in Anglican Churches). As reported in the *Protestant Truth* magazine, he claims to be an Anglo-Catholic, stating, “I don’t subscribe to papal infallibility, but I do the rosary daily; I love the *Book of Common Prayer*, but I go to mass regularly”.

Obviously this man does not swallow the whole of Roman Catholic error, but he seems to believe some critical parts of it. To “do the rosary” involves the worship of Mary. She would have been horrified if worship was addressed to her. Even an angel objected when the Apostle John “fell at his feet to worship him”; he told John: “See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant” (Rev 19:10). And the mass is blasphemous: it involves a mere man claiming to transform a wafer and wine into the body and blood of the Saviour.

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## Notes and Comments

### The Scottish “Coronation”

The Scottish “coronation” of King Charles III took place on July 5. The service was sad and highly objectionable. To Episcopalian features and gimmicks (items in Gaelic and Scots) were added women ministers, Romanism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and humanism. The occasion does not bode well for the future of the United Kingdom, or of Scotland, or

of the monarchy. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal 6:7). DWBS

### **It is Written – Male and Female**

The opening chapter of Genesis declares, “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them” (v 27). These simple and meaningful words of Holy Scripture concisely convey the fact that God created man in His image, male and female.

It is true that Adam and Eve grievously rebelled against God in the Garden of Eden and came (together with their whole posterity) under His curse. They were all now fallen creatures, wholly estranged from God. Man has, since that day, wallowed in all that is sinful and contrary to the righteousness and purity of his Creator. Though the Fall was solemnly most radical and its influence very extensive, people’s gender did not change: people remained (in every generation) either male or female, as the Holy Scriptures and the histories of civilisation testify.

Indeed, the entirety of Adam and Eve’s posterity, in all generations, in every part of the world, has until very recently been consistent in how they classified themselves. People have always been male or female; their children, likewise, male or female.

In recent years, a small number of people, making up a most insignificant proportion of the world’s total population, have increasingly insisted on making a change, an outrageously enormous change. They wish to move from the divinely ordered male-and-female division of society and have people “self-identify” as belonging to one or more of a whole array of potentially fluctuating and increasingly extending “gender identities”.

The organisation, SexualDiversity.org, in their paper, “How Many Genders Are There? Gender Identity List”, not being content with the scriptural norm of two genders, states (and note their use of italics) that there are “107 gender identities *currently* listed for 2023” (<https://www.sexualdiversity.org/edu/1111.php>).

The influence of those advocating these changes, especially in the West, is very considerable, and most worrying. More and more governments, judicial courts, media groups, and educational institutions (including schools) are arrogantly demanding (or being forced by others to demand) mandatory acceptance of these changes by everyone. Should they be permitted to be implemented, these changes are bound to erode further the biblical foundation of society in our and other lands. May this serious matter drive us to prayer!

It is interesting to note that some developments in recent days indicate that the aggressive and worldly forces pushing their evil and unscriptural agenda are not consistently making headway and winning their battle. An interesting illustration is the following judgment concerning a Mrs Kristie Higgs. Mrs Higgs lost her employment as a teaching assistant for sharing two Facebook posts that raised concerns about how transgenderism and compulsory sex education were to be taught at her son's Church of England primary school, at which Mrs Higgs worked.

"The President of the Employment Appeal Tribunal, Dame Jennifer Eady, allowed Mrs Higgs's appeal against the decision of Bristol Employment Tribunal, and held: 'The freedom to manifest belief (religious or otherwise) and to express views relating to that belief are essential rights in any democracy, whether or not the belief in question is popular or mainstream and even if its expression may offend'.

"Mrs Justice Eady criticised the judges in Bristol for failing to assess, as they were required by law, whether the investigation and dismissal of Mrs Higgs 'were prescribed by law and were necessary for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others, recognising the essential nature of [Mrs Higgs's] rights to freedom of belief and freedom of expression'.

"The ruling sets a legal precedent [in England and Wales] which confirms that the Equality Act 2010 protects employees from discrimination not only for their beliefs, but also for expression or manifestation of their beliefs. It confirms that any limitation of freedom to manifest religion at a workplace must be prescribed by law and go no further than is necessary in a democratic society for the protection of rights, freedoms and reputation of others."

Further information on this interesting and ongoing case can be found at <https://christianconcern.com/news/teaching-assistant-wins-appeal-after-sacking-for-facebook-posts>. The previous three paragraphs are quoted from this source.

May the Lord hear the cries of His people as we continue to pray, for all the peoples of our lands, that the Word of God may once again be acknowledged and followed throughout society as the sole, supreme and infallible rule of faith and practice! *DPR*

### **Online Pornography**

Temptations to sin have harassed mankind since the Fall, but the avenues of temptations opened up by the internet and social media have increased the risks, especially to the young.

In 2017, the UK parliament passed an act requiring legal pornographic



websites to implement “robust” age-verification checks. However, it was never enacted, in part because it did not cover media platforms. Instead, the UK Government has published its “Online Harms White Paper”, which aims to protect children from online pornography, including what can be found via social media platforms. But a survey has shown that 46% of 16- and 17-year-olds had used a VPN (virtual private network), which encrypts and therefore protects users’ data and also allows them to bypass censorship; or Tor browser, which gives anonymous access to free internet. If these young people cannot be “seen” by the provider, the requirements of the Government for verification and age restrictions, for instance, will have no effect.

A survey of over 1000 young people in England showed that: 53% of 11- to 16-year-olds reported viewing online pornography (28% of 11- to 12-year-olds and 65% of 15- to 16-year-olds); 28% of those polled first encountered online pornography accidentally; 19% were shown it by someone else and 19% looked for it themselves; 36% of males and 26% of females said they were not ashamed of viewing pornography, which shows how society is becoming increasingly desensitised to this vile material.

Among the top ten health concerns for children, internet safety ranked fourth in a national poll on children’s health. An additional major concern is that children viewing pornography are targets for online sexual predators. In the USA, the Crimes Against Children Research Center estimates that one in five teenagers have been targeted by an online sexual predator.

Parents are advised to have open discussions with their children about their experiences online. While it is possible to set suitable limits with one’s own children, other youngsters can cause children to be exposed to pornographic material by accident or on purpose. Children are curious by nature and it is natural for them to probe and explore, but it is becoming increasingly important that we do everything we can to make sure our children are protected.

Young people who are brought up under the gospel and taught the fear of the Lord by their parents are surely less likely to be drawn into this evil morass than their companions who do not have the same privileges. But our hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and Satan will do his best to target the young and vulnerable. Teachers, parents and young people must all be on guard and seek that the Lord would be as “a covering of the eyes” to those at risk.

“Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report . . . think on these things.” *FRD*

# Church Information

## Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

**Southern:** At Glasgow, on Wednesday, August 23, at 2 pm.

**Asia Pacific:** At Sydney, on Tuesday, September 5, at 10.30 am.

**Outer Isles:** At Stornoway, on Tuesday, September 26, at 11 am.

**Zimbabwe:** At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, October 10, at 11 am.

**Western:** At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, October 24, at 11 am.

**Northern:** At Dingwall, on Tuesday, November 7, at 2 pm.

## Education Adviser

The Education Committee seeks to appoint an Adviser (part-time) to help those parents who desire to educate their children outwith the state system. Applicants are sought who have a background in education and a strong sympathy for Christian education consistent with Free Presbyterian principles and practice. The role entails engaging with parents to help them plan and implement their child's education. It will involve an assessment of available resources, working with the parents to identify those most suitable for the child; helping to facilitate links with other like-minded families to share resources and experience, and investigating possible financial assistance for outlays such as textbooks and paid-for courses. It is expected that a small grant pool will be available from the Committee, and the Adviser will assist the Committee with this and other financial and regulatory matters.

It is envisaged that the work will be for 20 hours per week for two years, after which the post will be reviewed. The salary will be up to £20 000 *per annum* depending on qualifications and experience. Applications (a CV with a covering letter), or requests for further information, should be sent to the Committee Convener, Mr Frank Daubney; email: f.daubney@ntlworld.com.

## Jewish and Foreign Missions Fund

By appointment of Synod, the second of the year's two special collections for the Jewish and Foreign Missions Fund is to be taken in congregations during August.

*W Campbell*, General Treasurer

## Acknowledgement of Donations

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

*General Fund:* Anon, £257.00. The estate of the late Mr R Corbett, Edinburgh, £15 000. The estate of the late Miss M Campbell, Inverness, £69 910.43.

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

**Dornoch:** Anon, £40.

**Glasgow:** Anon, Ps 60:4, £120. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £80, £50, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80. *Home Mission Fund:* Anon, £20. *Outreach Fund:* Anon, £20, £15.

*Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £10, £10, £20, £20.

**Perth:** *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £20.

## FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

### Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tues, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath: Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Glendale and Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thurs 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; Wed 7.30 pm. **Beaully (Balblair):** Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thurs 7.30 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wed 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Laigr:** Church and Manse; Sabbath 3.30 pm as intimated. 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; Thurs 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 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**, Thurs 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; Wed 7.30 pm. Rev R MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 4ND; 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; Thurs 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Duncan Street; Sabbath 3 pm; **Strathly:** 6 pm, first and third Sabbaths of month.
- Harris (North): Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Tarbert and Stockinish:** Wed 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; Wed 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; Wed 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, Tues 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; Wed 7.30 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wed 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 810228. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist:** Bayhead; Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thurs 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; Wed 7.30 pm. Rev A B MacLean, 5 Main Road, Luncarty, PH1 3EP; tel: 01738 828762.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wed 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 12 noon; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tues 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross, as intimated). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Tues 7.30 pm. Manse: Clachan, Staffin, IV51 9H. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tues 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; Wed 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 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; Wed 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); Wed 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; Tues 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: sydneyfpcchurch@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 Levyskiy; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevyskiy@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.

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

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

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

**Zenka**: Church.

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