

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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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: Chesley, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Munaka, Portree; **Third:** 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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The Continuing Call to Look

Last month we considered the call that goes out to all who hear the gospel: “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else” (Is 45:22). No one can be sure that, if they disobey this call to believe in Christ, they will ever hear it again; accordingly, everyone should make the most of their present opportunity. Yet the person who does obey – who looks to Christ for salvation, who believes in Him as the One whom God the Father sent to be the Saviour of the world – is called again and again to look to Him, while the believer is left in this world.

The solemn fact is that believers continue to sin; they keep coming short of the glory of God. Perfection is not for this life, but every believer is guaranteed perfection in the world to come. The promise to them is: “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” – the Day of Judgement at the end of the world. That is when the body of the believer will be raised from the grave, and the whole person will be “made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity” (*Shorter Catechism*, Ans 38).

What is the believer to do who is conscious of sin? It may be a serious, outward sin such as David was guilty of; or it may be a foolish, sinful thought, or it may be a sense of coming short continually, in his attitudes, of God’s glory. The answer is the same in every case: it is to look to Christ and, in the exercise of faith, to seek forgiveness for His sake; to ask for that sin, whether outward or inward, to be subdued; and to plead to be made increasingly holy. Thus David, following his great sin with Bathsheba and his subsequent sins against Uriah, prays for forgiveness using various forms of words, such as: “Hide Thy face from my sins”, and, “Blot out all mine iniquities” (Ps 51:9). He also prays for the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, expressing his desire for the power of sin to be subdued: “Create in me a clean heart, O God,” and, “Renew a right spirit within me” (Ps 51:10).

All the petitions in this Psalm are based on David’s deep sense, expressed at the beginning, that what he fundamentally needs is mercy: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness”. He knows that he

deserves nothing except the fearful punishment that is due to him, in divine justice, for every sin. But he knows that God is a God of mercy, and that this mercy was possible because of what God had revealed concerning the Messiah – initially made known in the Garden of Eden, as “the seed of the woman” (Gen 3:15) – who was to come in due time. The Son of God was to become man, to suffer and die in the place of sinners; but it was possible for David, and for all the people of God in every generation before the coming of Christ, to look forward by faith to Him and His saving work. And David Dickson, commenting on Psalm 51:1, states, “The consideration of the Lord’s loving-kindness and readiness to forgive the sinner that cometh unto Him, should keep the sinner (how grievous soever his offence hath been) from running away from Him, yea should give him hope to meet with mercy, whatsoever be his demerits”.

As a further example, we may notice Jonah and his sin of disobedience when God had directed him to go to Nineveh to warn the people of the city’s imminent destruction. We read that “the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah” and that “Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish’s belly”. Jonah did not despair, even in the awful situation in which he found himself; he told the Most High: “I will look again toward Thy holy temple” (Jnh 2:4).

There was, of course, no way that Jonah could, with the eyes of his body, see the temple from any position in the depths of the sea. But his was a look that took in the most significant activity at the temple: the offering of sacrifice for sin. While there was no forgiveness through any of the sacrifices, each of them taught the people of Israel that God had provided forgiveness through a substitute, for each sacrifice was a substitute for the sinner – the sacrificial animal suffering in the place of the sinner. Surely Jonah’s “look” was a look by faith, a look that went beyond the lamb or the bullock, for instance, that might be offered at the temple; it was a look by faith to the Messiah, who had not yet come but who, Jonah was assured, would come in the fullness of time, as appointed by God.

Whatever circumstances believers may find themselves in, they are to look to Christ. He can help them even when it is obvious that “vain is the help of man”. In particular, believers may become specially conscious that they are vulnerable to temptation. And if we properly realise how powerful Satan is, and that Adam and Eve were overcome by temptation when they were in a state of perfect innocence, we should be conscious of how vulnerable *we* really are in the face of the wiles of the devil. But there is no weakness with Christ, and He has already conquered Satan. Whatever the believer’s weakness, Christ is calling to him: “Look unto Me”. He is “able

to save to the uttermost”, and that includes offering protection to even the weakest of His people. Even if that child of God has been overcome many times previously, Christ is still ready, able and willing to protect that weak soul from being overwhelmed by some further temptation, in response to the look of faith. And we ought to remember that this new exercise of faith is itself the gift of God.

Again, the believer may very much feel his weakness – whether in the face of duty, for example, or because of difficult relationships, or as a result of poor health. Whatever the cause may be, and there may be a multitude of other factors, the call again comes from Christ Himself: “Look unto Me”. If the Lord has laid a duty on anyone, especially if it is in connection with His Church, let believers remember the question, “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?” (1 Cor 9:7). The army in which a soldier has enlisted will provide for the needs of that soldier; the soldier should not have to provide food or clothing for himself. So Christ, the great Captain of salvation, will provide for the needs of those who have enlisted in His army. They are all to look to Christ for the grace that will enable them to carry out every duty that He lays upon them.

Paul felt the need to be rid of what he calls “a thorn in the flesh” and “besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from” him. The Lord did not grant him that request but gave him something better: the promise, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness”. Ever afterwards, this Apostle could look to Christ and plead the promise of sufficient grace and perfect strength – no matter how weak he might feel. So may all the people of Christ look to Christ with this promise in view, and all the other promises. All the promises are clauses of the covenant of grace – the “everlasting covenant” which the Lord made with them when they were made willing and able to incline their ear and come to Him (Is 55:3).

Finally, the believer may be afraid that he will never make it to heaven. But with every fear, whatever it is, let him again incline his ear to hear the call, “Look unto Me”. Let him receive by faith that other promise, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb 13:5). Christ will never forget His promises; He will always be faithful to them, even although the believer may not recognise that the Saviour is with him and, in all his circumstances, is causing all things to “work together for good to them that love God” (Rom 8:28). Yet that *is* how the Saviour is working, and how He always will. Yes, Christ will continue His work in and for all the household of faith until each of them has been brought into the glorious blessedness of heaven. He goes on calling to them: “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else” (Is 45:22).

Christ's Invitation to the Labouring (5)¹

A Sermon by *Thomas Boston*

Matthew 11:28. *Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Doctrine 2. All who are out of Christ are under a heavy burden which, by all their labour, they cannot shake off. In illustrating this I shall only: (1.) Offer a few observations; (2.) Make some practical application.

1. A few observations. 1. *Satan* has a load on all who are out of Christ; it is a load of sin: "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity" (Is 1:4). This load is twofold:

(1.) *A load of guilt.* "Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear" (Gen 4:13). Guilt is the heaviest load that ever was on the shoulders of men or angels. The Scriptures hold it forth: (1) *As debt.* He that is in debt is under a burden. Guilt is the worst of debts; we cannot pay it, nor escape the hands of our creditor. Indeed we deny the debt; we do not care for any reckoning of it; we avoid our creditor as much as we can; so the debt is not cancelled. But it must be paid: "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Th 1:9). They shall pay what justice demands.

(2) *As a yoke tied firmly on the sinner's neck;* hence pardon is called a loosing of that yoke, guilt being, as it were, cords of wrath, whereby the sinner is bound over to God's wrath. Pardon is also called remission or relaxation: "To declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom 3:25).

(3) *As a burden:* "Take away all iniquity" (Hos 14:2) – *take away*, as a burden off a man's back. Hence Christ is said to have borne our sins, the burden of the elect's guilt being laid on His back. What a heavy load it is! [1] Guilt makes the whole creation groan (Rom 8:22). It caused them to suffer since 5000 years, and they are not yet delivered from their burden. All the groans that men ever made on earth and in hell were under this burden; it sank the whole world into ruin: Christ "took" (Greek, caught hold of) our nature, to prevent sinners from going down to the pit. He took hold as of a drowning man, yet not of the whole seed of Adam – for a great part of it fell to the ground – but of the seed of Abraham, the elect. [2] This load sank the

¹A further sermon on this text and reprinted, with editing, from Boston's *Works*, vol 9. The previous discourse appeared in the April 2023 issue. The preacher has spoken of the sort of labour sinners have, under the law and in their sins – with a view to establishing that such sinners are among those who are called to come to Christ. Boston went on to warn those who have not come of their danger in refusing to come.

fallen angels, made them fall as stars from heaven to the bottomless pit. And what a load it was to Christ that made Him sweat as it were great drops of blood, that made Him groan and die!

(2.) *A load of servitude to lusts*, which of themselves are heavy burdens; the very remainder of which made the apostle groan, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom 7:24). What greater burden can a man have than a swarm of unmortified corruptions hanging about him, whose cravings he is still obliged to answer. This is what creates that weary labour of which we have already spoken; it is better for a man to be burdened with serpents sticking in his flesh than with these.

2. *The law* is a load on Christless sinners. (1.) A load of *duties* as great and numerous as the commandment, which is exceeding broad, can lie on them. Though they do not perform them, yet the duties are bound upon them by the commandment, and the duties shall sooner dissolve the whole fabric of the world than make void this commandment. This is a heavy load. True, those who are in Christ have a yoke of duties laid on them – not by the law, but by Christ. The difference is great: the law demands perfect obedience, but gives no strength; Christ, when claiming obedience to His law, gives strength to perform it, which makes it easy obedience.

(2.) A load of *curses*. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal 3:10). every commandment of the law is bound up with a curse, which is denounced against those who break it. How great then must be the load where every action is a sin and every sin brings a curse! This is a heavy load, that makes the earth reel to and fro like a drunkard, under its weight.

3. *God* lays a load on Christless sinners – that is, of wrath. They "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph 2:3); this is an abiding load. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn 3:36). This load is far heavier than mountains of brass; it is heavier than can be expressed.

2. Some practical application. From what I have said I infer that:

1. *Everyone must bear his own burden.* If people will not take up the burden that Christ lays on them, they will bear a heavier one; if they will not be Christ's servants, they must be slaves to their lusts; if they will not take on the yoke of holiness, they shall bear a load of wrath; if people will still slip out of the yoke of Christ, God will so place the yoke of their transgressions about their neck that they cannot shake it off. We have given a poor welcome to Christ's burden; it is too likely that we may get one of another sort. The welcome we have given to Christ's burden is likely to place a threefold yoke about our necks. For,

(1.) We have had little taste for preaching on Christ, on the great mysteries of the gospel. The preaching of sin and duty, as they call it, has been more desired than the preaching on living religion. I fear it is the plague of this generation to get such preaching of sin and duty that the doctrine of Christ and free grace falls between the two, and the gospel is turned into a system of morality with us.

(2.) We have little valued pure worship; it has been a burden to us, and we have reason to fear a burden of another sort, the trash of men's inventions in God's worship. An attempt has already been made to set up Dagon by the ark of God, and God knows where it may stop.² If the ceremonies appointed by God Himself were such, the apostles said, as "neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" (Acts 15:10), what must they be that are laid on by men?

(3.) God took the yoke of the enemy's oppression off our necks, for which we have been very unthankful.³ It is very likely that God intends to lay it on again, that we may know the worth of our despised mercy: "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love, and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them. He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return" (Hos 11:4,5).

2. We may hence lament the case of the generation *living without Christ* – heavy laden but not conscious of their burden (Is 1:3,4). Sin sits lightly on people; they reign as kings without Christ; the law's authority does not draw them away to Christ; and though wrath lies heavy, they do not feel it. What is the matter? They never feel the weight of it, nor do they once seriously put the question to themselves, "What must I do to be saved?" They are taken up with so many things that their soul's condition cannot come into their minds. Again, they have a dead soul and a dull conscience, they do not complain. Men's spiritual senses are tied up, and a hardened conscience – got by sinning in spite of daily warnings – is the plague of the generation. But when conscience is awakened, people will find that, when drops of wrath fall on the conscience, it will make a fearful hissing: "The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Is 33:14).

²This appears to be a reference to the case of James Greenshields, an Episcopalian minister, whom the Presbytery of Edinburgh prohibited from conducting public worship and, when he continued doing so, handed him over to the magistrates. Greenshields appealed to the House of Lords, who decided that there was no law prohibiting Episcopal services. The attempt "to set up Dagon" would be the allowing of Episcopal worship alongside Presbyterian.

³This reference is presumably to the deliverance of 1689 from Episcopacy and persecution.

3. I exhort you to labour to *be aware of your burden and to be concerned to get rid of it*. Is there not a burden of sin on your backs? Remember that you are responsible for it. Consider that heaven's gate is strait and will not let in a man with a burden of unpardoned, unmortified sin on his back. Only the wide gate will afford room for such people. Off the burden must come, or they will never see heaven. Consider again that all they can do will not shake it off; the bonds of iniquity are stronger than can be broken with their weak arms; all the moisture of their bodies, dissolved into tears, will not wash it off. Consider finally that the burden will never fall off of its own accord. Age coming on may wear off the violence of some lusts, but the guilt and root of sin will remain. Death itself will not put it off, for it will lie down, and also rise with you and cleave to you through eternity.

What shall we do then? What more proper than to come to Christ? He, and only He, can ease you of your burden. This brings us to the invitation itself: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden".

Doctrine 3. Whatever sinful and vain labours sinners are engaged in, whatever loads are lying on them, they are *welcome to Christ*; He calls them to come to Him and, in coming, they shall obtain rest. Or, more briefly, The devil's drudges and burden-bearers, even the worst of them, are welcome to come to Christ and shall find rest in Him. In opening this, I shall show: (1.) What is meant by coming to Christ. (2.) The meaning of the invitation, in several points deduced from the text. (3.) The rest which Christ promises and will give to those who come to Him. (4.) Some practical application.

1. What is meant by coming to Christ. To come to Christ is to believe on Him. "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that *cometh* to Me shall never hunger, and he that *believeth* on Me shall never thirst" (Jn 6:35). Unbelief is the soul departing, not from a living law, but from the living God (Heb 3:12). Christ is the Lord; God is in Him; He calls sinners to come to Him. Faith answers the call, and so brings back the soul to God in Christ. Now Scripture holds Christ forth in many ways corresponding to this idea of coming to Him by faith. And so that you may see your privilege and call, I shall hold forth some of these ways to you.

1. The devil's drudges and burden-bearers are welcome to Christ, *as the great gift of the Father to sinners*, to come and take it: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn 3:16). The world was broken by Adam; God sends Christ as a reconciling gift, and the worst of you are welcome to Him; indeed He urges Himself upon you. Come to Him then, broken impoverished souls, who have nothing left to you but poverty, needs and debt.

2. Such people are to come to Him *as the great Physician of souls*: “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick” (Mt 9:12). Christ in the gospel comes into the world as to a hospital of sin-sick souls, ready to administer a cure to those that will come to Him for it. Our diseases are many, all of them deadly, but He is willing and able to cure them all. He is lifted up on the pole of the gospel and says, “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else” (Is 45:22).

3. Such people should come to Him *as satisfying food for the soul*, “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto Me; hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David” (Is 55:1-3). The soul is an empty thing and has hungry and thirsty desires to be satisfied. Created things cannot satisfy it; Christ can. “My flesh”, says He, “is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed” (Jn 6:55). God has made a feast of fat things in Christ; in Him all the cravings of the soul may be satisfied; there are no angels to guard the tree of life; no seal on this fountain: “In that day, there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness” (Zec 13:1). There is no enclosure around this flower of glory (Song 2:1). Here is the carcase, where are the eagles that should gather together?

4. Such people come to Christ *as one on whom they may rest*: “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?” (Song 8:5). We are not able to go in our own strength, but we should rely on Him. “Because thou didst rely on the Lord, He delivered [thine enemies] into thine hand” (2 Chr 16:8). Guilt puts the mind in a fluctuating condition. By coming to Jesus we are kept still, as a ship at anchor is. In or from ourselves we have nothing for justification and sanctification. God has laid help upon One that is mighty; the weary soul is welcome to rest in Him.

5. Such people come to Christ, *as One on whom they may cast their burdens*: “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee” (Ps 55:22). The soul is heavy laden while out of Christ; Jesus holds out His everlasting arms, and faith settles down on them, casting the soul’s burden upon them. Come (says He) with all your misery, debts, beggary and needs; I have shoulders to bear them all; I will take on the burden; you shall get rest (Deut 33:27). He is content to marry the poor widow.

6. Such people come to Christ *as One in whom they may find refuge*: they

“have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us” (Heb 6:18). The law, as the avenger of blood, pursues the soul. Christ is that city of refuge, where none can have power against them. The gates are never shut; here is a refuge from the law, from justice and from the revenging wrath of God. Here is shelter under the wings of Christ: how willing He is to gather His people, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings!

7. Such people come to Christ *as One in whom the soul may at length find rest*: “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him” (Ps 37:7). The soul out of Christ is in a restless state, still shifting from one created thing to another, not finding contentment in any of them. But, by coming to Christ, the soul takes up eternal rest in Him, and He becomes a covering of the eyes to the soul. We are like men in a fever, still changing beds [looking for a bed to cool them]. Like the dove out of the ark, we have no rest till we come to Christ.

8. Such people come to Christ *as a husband*: “All things are ready; come unto the marriage” (Mt 22:4). Your Maker is content to be your husband (Ps 45:10). Ministers are sent, as Abraham’s servant, to seek a spouse for Christ. He is willing to marry the worst, the meanest of you; He seeks no dowry; He is the richest, the most honourable, the most tender and loving husband.

9. Such people come to Christ *as a powerful deliverer*. Christ stands at our prison doors, to “proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Is 61:1). All who come to Him give “their own selves to the Lord” first (2 Cor 8:5). Whosoever will come to Jesus must give themselves up to Him. It is the work of faith to give up the soul to Christ, that He may save it, that He may open the prison doors, take the prey from the mighty, and deliver the lawful captive.

The Reformation in Italy¹

6. Severer Persecution Looms

In *Lucca*, near the coast of Italy west of Florence, it is likely that there were more followers of the Reformed faith than in any other Italian city. This was due to the labours of Peter Martyr. He had been given a supervisory position in the Augustinian order, but his attempts at reform led to him being transferred to Lucca. He preached publicly on the Gospels and on the Epistles;

¹A further part of a Theological Conference paper, somewhat enlarged. The previous part, last month, focused on Pietro Carnesecchi, who was one of the martyrs of the Italian Reformation. Page numbers in the text refer to Thomas M’Crie, *History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy in the Sixteenth Century*, Edinburgh and London, 1856.

this led to the formation of a new church, of which Martyr became the pastor. Preachers came from Lucca to the city of *Pisa*, where some of the inhabitants received Reformed doctrine. In 1543, the Protestants in Pisa formed themselves into a church and the Lord's Supper was observed among them.

Ochino was a native of *Sienna* and often preached there, and many accepted the Reformed faith. This was largely due to the efforts of Aonio Paleario, who was a philosopher and a writer, but held no position in the Church. After he had laughed at a rich priest who knelt every morning at the shrine of a priest but would not pay his debts, it was claimed that, if Paleario remained alive, nothing would remain of religion – Roman Catholic religion – in a particular city. This was said because Paleario had insisted that Christ is “the first ground on which men should rest their salvation”, but also the second ground and the third ground of salvation (p 82).

More serious was his writing of a little book called, *The Benefit of the Death of Christ*.² Let us note two quotations from the book. First, Paleario is speaking of people's good works as the result of their salvation rather than the cause of salvation. He states, “If they have not Christ's Spirit are none of Christ's and, consequently, no Christians at all. But, if they have the Spirit of Jesus Christ to rule and govern them, we must not doubt but that, although they know well that they be made righteous through faith only, yet, for all that, they will become never the more slothful to do good works. For Christ's Spirit is the Spirit of love; and love cannot be idle, nor cease from the doing of good works. But, if we will say the truth, a man can do no good works except he first know himself to be become righteous by faith; for, before he knoweth that, his doing of good works is rather to make himself righteous than for the love and glory of God; and so he defileth all his works with self-love, for the love of himself and for his own profit. But he that knoweth himself to . . . become righteous by the merits and righteousness of Christ (which he maketh his own by faith) laboureth happily, and doth good works, all only for the love and glory of Christ, and not from love of himself, nor to make himself righteous.”³

Our second quotation is: “As Jesus Christ hath endured all the persecutions and spites of the world for the glory of God, so must we with all patientness

²Paleario's authorship of this book has been disputed. For a discussion of the question, see M Young, *The Life and Times of Aonio Paleario*, vol 1, London, 1860, pp 323-8. On page 285 of this volume, Young indicates her strong confidence that Paleario was indeed the author.

³Paleario, *The Benefit of Christ's Death, or, The Glorious Riches of God's Free Grace, Which Every Believer Receives by Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified*, London, pp 59-60. This edition was printed by 1848, and the title page states, “Now reprinted from an ancient English translation”.

cheerfully bear the persecutions and reproaches that are done by false Christians to all such as will live faithfully in Jesus Christ; who gave His life for His enemies, and prayed for them upon the cross; and so must we also pray always for our enemies, and willingly spend our lives for their welfare".⁴

Paleario was brought before the Senate of Sienna, and defended himself effectively. He did not recant, but stated, "I am not only willing to be accused, to be dragged to prison, to be scourged, to be hung up by the neck, to be sewn up in a sack, to be exposed to wild beasts. Let me be roasted before a fire, provided only that the truth is brought to light by such a death" (p 83). He was acquitted, but shortly afterwards he had to leave Sienna to escape further persecution. He escaped with his life on this occasion, but later he suffered at the stake for his faith.

Sadly controversy arose in Italy over the Lord's Supper, especially in the territories belonging to Venice. Some followed the teaching of Zwingli, who may have leaned too much in the direction of viewing the Supper as no more than a memorial of Christ's death, while others followed Luther, who maintained that the Saviour's body and blood were present in, with and under the bread and wine in the Supper. Luther was ever inclined to use exaggerated language and inflamed the situation in Italy by claiming outrageously, in a letter to the Protestants in Venice, that "the Popish tenet of transubstantiation is more tolerable than that of Zwingli". No wonder M'Crie exclaims, "Alas, what is man?" (p 93).

One of the most serious heresies in Christianity had its roots in Italy. This was Socinianism, named after Lelius and Faustus Socinus, uncle and nephew. The former dealt more in raising questions about the doctrine of the Trinity than in actual opposition to it. The younger Socinus, however, was much more explicit in opposing that doctrine, and also the teachings of Scripture about the person of Christ and His atonement. He was to cause tremendous damage to the Reformation in Poland, where he later settled. Prospects for the Reformation, in its early stages in that country, seemed very hopeful, and by 1544 Calvinism became the most influential form of Protestantism in the country. The year 1565 brought about a split in the Reformation movement there over the doctrine of the Trinity and, through being thus weakened, the Protestants were ultimately not able to resist a resurgent Roman Catholicism which was to become absolutely dominant in the country.

M'Crie described Lavinia della Rovere as "one of the greatest female ornaments of the Reformed Church in Italy". He says that, even while living in Rome itself, she "not only kept her conscience unspotted by idolatry", but also persuaded her father to use his considerable influence with the Pope and

⁴Paleario, *The Benefit of Christ's Death*, p 76-77.

other important figures, on behalf of Protestants who were in the hands of the Inquisition. M'Crie goes on to point out that "a cup of cold water, or even a kind message sent to a prisoner in the cells of the Inquisition, a word spoken on behalf of the truth, or a modest refusal to be present at a superstitious festival, afford . . . a stronger and more unequivocal proof of a devoted soul than the most flaming professions, or a fortune expended for religious purposes, by one who lives in a free country and is surrounded by persons who are friendly to the gospel" (p 100).

Young sums up the operations of the Roman Inquisition: "The increasing demands of the Protestants for liberty of conscience accelerated the papal desire to erect an impassable barrier which might stem the flood of spiritual light, fast threatening to engulf the authority of Rome. For this purpose nothing could be more suitable than the Inquisition. Its machinery was formed for deeds of darkness; in silence, secrecy, and solitude it fulfilled its office, and laid its destructive hand on every dissident from the Romish creed. False principles must inevitably produce erroneous actions. Men who ignored the spirit of the Christian religion so far as to pin their faith on traditional legends of human origin, who extolled Mary the mother of Christ above the divine Saviour, and who worshipped a material wafer instead of [the] invisible Lord, who had laid down His life for His people, were naturally ready to impose their tyrannical creed on a world just awakening to a sense of its religious responsibilities. Believe or die, was the watchword of Rome while brandishing the sword of extermination.

"Never had those consoling words of [the] merciful Saviour reached their hearts, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'. Their zeal for the Church was harsh and unholy, and their instruments cruel and perfidious. Unhappy victims were tortured to make them reveal the names of places and persons where prayer was wont to be made; in the agony of suffering, the tenderest ties of humanity were snapped asunder, and a moment of weakness gave to the flames the dearest objects of affection. Conscience was forsworn, and the wretched culprit abandoned to the torments of a remorse so overwhelming as to destroy the empire of reason."⁵

There were learned men who continued Roman Catholics although they were more or less favourable to Reformed thinking. M'Crie divides them into three groups. First, some of them were convinced of the great corruptions in the Church and, although they did not believe Reformed truth, they hoped that the division which had arisen would force Rome to put its house in order morally. Second, others believed the leading teachings of the gospel but wished to hold on to Roman Catholic forms of worship, while

⁵M Young, *The Life and Times of Aonio Paleario*, vol 1, London, 1860, pp 496-7.

desiring to have them purified from their grosser superstitions. Third, there was a further group who held the same opinions as the Reformers, who, because of a lack of full commitment, fear of persecution, or despair of success, kept back from becoming out-and-out Protestants (pp 102-3).

Cardinal Caraffa, who was to become Pope Paul IV, admitted that “the whole of Italy was infected with [what he called] the Lutheran heresy, which had been extensively embraced both by statesmen and ecclesiastics” (p 112). One friend of the Reformation exclaimed, “See how the gospel advances, even in Italy, where it is so much borne down, and exults in the near prospect of bursting forth, like the sun from a cloud, in spite of all opposition”. That optimism was to be short-lived. It took till 1542 for the Vatican to become concerned about the progress of the Reformation in Italy, but in that year, local clergy throughout the country poured out complaints about the dangers to which the faith of the Church was exposed and the increase of what they described as conventicles. Leading these protests was Caraffa.

It was decided to proceed first against churchmen, such as Ochino and Martyr, who held Reformed views. These two men were very popular and still held office in the Church, but they were put under surveillance and their past was investigated, to provide evidence of heresy. Ochino’s preaching had been very popular in Venice and the citizens petitioned the Pope for a further opportunity to hear him. This was granted in 1542 and the people flocked to hear him. But the Pope directed that he be watched, and a hostile report came back indicating that Ochino was preaching “false doctrines”, particularly on justification. He defended himself successfully before the Pope’s representative.

Ochino realised that he was being spied on and became more careful about what he said. But when he heard that a Protestant whom he knew well in Naples had been imprisoned, he cast away all restraint. He was at once forbidden to preach, but after three days, following protests from the people of Venice, he was again permitted to preach. Before long, he was summoned to Rome to answer charges related to lectures he was giving, in Verona, on Paul’s Epistles. He set off for Rome but heard in Florence that the intention was to put him to death in Rome. He quickly fled from Italy and reached Geneva safely. John Calvin believed him to be “a pious and holy man” (p 227) and, after examining him carefully as to his doctrine, found him to be orthodox. Yet, sadly, some published works of his latter years indicate that he was no longer sound on vital doctrines of the faith.

The less that an unbeliever fears hell, the more securely does he sin. The more that a believer hopes for heaven, the more does he practise holiness. *James Stewart*

The New Covenant¹

1. What Kind of Covenant?

William Bridge

Thirdly, what kind of covenant is this? What are its properties? To name but three:

(1) It is a *covenant of grace* in opposition to works, or to all our own worth or worthiness. It is a covenant of grace, for it is made with sinners. The covenant that was made with Adam in the state of innocence was made with a saint, having the image of God upon him, and therefore a covenant of friendship. The covenant that God makes now, he makes with sinners, and it is a covenant of reconciliation, and therefore a covenant of grace. Then by the covenant of works, that God made with Adam, there was no room for repentance, or for remission for sin, now there is room for both.

For *repentance*, “I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh”, says God.

For *remission*, “Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more”, says the covenant; indeed, the covenant of grace so deeply promises remission of sins that, whereas the covenant of works would own no such things, the covenant of grace so deeply undertakes to forgive sins that it is made the chief, and the reason of all the others. He promises to write His law in their hearts, and they will all know Him. Why? “For . . . their sins. . . will I remember no more” (Heb 8:12). By the first covenant, if we had sinned, we should have provoked God thereby to damn us and to destroy us. By this covenant, when a man that is in covenant sins, he provokes God by it to pity him and to have compassion on him. In the covenant of works the Lord gave a man strength to stand and left him to himself. But now the Lord has promised in this covenant to cause him to walk in His ways.

When the Israelites had to do with the Egyptians, the Egyptians required from them their tally of brick, but gave them no straw. Now we have to deal with so good a Lord, in this covenant, that we have straw and strength, and not only strength but God Himself s a co-worker with us. Indeed, what grace is there that you lack, or complain for the lack of it, but it is promised in this covenant?

¹The first of four points taken (numbers 3-6), with editing, from a sermon entitled, “Christ and the Covenant” in *The Works of William Bridge*, vol 3. His text was, “And to Jesus the mediator of *the new covenant*, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Heb 12:24). The *first* point explained what this covenant is, and the *second* why it is called a new covenant (these first two points are not being printed here). Bridge was a Puritan minister in Yarmouth.

Do you complain that you are not converted? “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts”, says God now.

Do you complain that you are ignorant? “They shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them,” says the covenant.

Do you complain that your heart is hard? God says, “I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh”. Grace, grace. This covenant then is a covenant of grace; it is a gracious covenant.

(2) As it is a gracious covenant, so it is a *free and unconditional covenant*. It is free in opposition to all conditions to be performed by us. Do not mistake me, I do not say there is no condition in the new covenant, but the condition is performed by Christ, our second Adam. Nor do I say that faith, obedience and repentance are not required. But I say that faith, obedience and repentance are required in the new covenant as *duties*, but not as conditions.

This I say then: it is a free covenant, in opposition to all conditions to be performed by man; for when the covenant of grace is mentioned in Scripture, where do you find any condition annexed to anything that is there promised.

The Lord says, “Their sins. . . will I remember no more”. Upon what condition? None is mentioned.

He says, “I will put my law in their inward parts”. Upon what condition? None is mentioned.

He says, “They shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them”. Upon what condition? None is mentioned. Where do you ever find the covenant mentioned with a condition?

Plainly, if there was a condition, the condition must be distinct from the thing promised. If I promise to go on a journey with a man on condition that he shall bear my charges, his bearing my charges and my going on the journey are distinct things. Now what condition can there be? Faith, repentance or obedience? But these are all promised in the covenant; therefore they cannot be the condition, for the thing promised in the covenant and the condition that we are to perform must be distinct. I say, if there is a condition, it must be distinct from the thing promised; yet there is nothing that we can perform but is promised in the covenant. Therefore there can be no condition.

The prophet Isaiah tells us that this covenant is after the nature of the covenant that God made with Noah – that the world will be drowned no more. And that is absolute, it depends upon no condition. Junius² thinks that, on this account, this covenant of grace is called a testament, for, he says, a testament has no condition. A man makes his last will and testament; and

²Franciscus Junius (the Latinised form of his French name, François du Jon) (1545-1602). Born in France, he became a minister in Antwerp and later taught theology in Heidelberg in Germany, and Leiden in the Netherlands.

though now and then a man may hang a condition on a rebellious child, yet ordinarily a man then gives, and gives freely, without any condition; and so this covenant is called a *testament*. Why? Because no condition is to be performed by us. This is the second thing, it is a free covenant in opposition to all conditions to be performed by ourselves.

(3) As it is a free covenant, in opposition to all conditions to be performed by us, so it is an *everlasting covenant*, a covenant of salt that cannot be broken. “Which my covenant they brake”, says God, speaking of the former covenant. He says, in Zechariah, “I took My staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break My covenant which I had made with all the people”. God broke it; that is, the former covenant. But now this covenant of grace is an everlasting covenant, “ordered in all things and sure”, an everlasting covenant that cannot be broken. Thus you see what kind of covenant it is; it is a covenant of grace, in opposition to all works and worth in us; a free covenant in opposition to all conditions to be performed by us; and an everlasting covenant. This is the covenant that is made with the children of men.

Forgiveness – Divine and Human¹

3. Further Answers to the Objection

Hugh Martin

3. It is an objection which, without cause, takes for granted that in mutual forgiveness, as enjoined in Scripture, believers have no regard to the atonement of Christ. It supposes that I can adequately discharge this scriptural duty before I have any true knowledge of the atonement, and before my heart has been influenced by it. For it supposes that I have so discharged this duty that I am thereafter free to consider whether there is any atonement. Indeed, it supposes that my discharge of this duty is so utterly apart from, and uninfluenced by, the truth and nature of Christ’s atonement that by discharging it I am the more free and qualified to consider, as an open question, whether there is any true and proper atonement by Christ at all.

But this is the reverse of the fact. Christian mutual forgiveness is directly

¹Taken with editing from *The British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, vol 30 (1881). Last month’s article addressed an objection to scriptural teaching on the atonement which ignores “God’s supremacy and office as the Judge of all the earth”. The objection is: If God requires us freely to forgive an offending brother – without demanding any atonement – should He not forgive without an atonement? This final article continues to refute that unscriptural idea.

influenced and prompted by the truth of Christ's true and proper satisfaction for believers' sins. I do not, as a Christian, first forgive an offending brother without demanding satisfaction; and then feel my mind and heart free to consider whether the Judge of all the earth should, in like manner, abstain from demanding a satisfaction to His justice for sin. On the contrary, it is the fact that He forgives all my sin, and all my brother's sin also, freely through the blood of Jesus, which truly prompts in me a free and generous forgiveness towards my brother. For,

1. It is the love of God alike towards me and my brother that prompts me and prevails with me to forgive him. But, whatever others think or say concerning the mercy and compassion of God, as for me, if I have believed on Jesus Christ and Him crucified, I know of no love of God save that which reaches me through the cross and death of His dear Son – that love which comes through the full, righteous and holy expiation of all my sin on the cross. Herein is love, not that we have loved God, but that He has loved us and given His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Hereby we have known and believed the love that God has towards us.

All other fancied love is indeed with God the idle dream of merest fancy. Conscience in its righteousness and rising power puts the dream to flight, and awakes the dreamer to a sense of the infinite unrighteousness of sin and the righteousness of death as its wages. But conscience sees these wages and death in the cross of Christ and is at peace; and the heart, set free from the fear of condemnation, is satisfied, overwhelmed and melted with evidence of holy love by an atonement. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us." It is under the warming beams and melting power and holy sanctifying influence of this love – and just in so far as I yield to its generous, gracious promptings – that I find it impossible to avoid forgiving my brother also.

2. While the love of God in forgiving my sin through an atonement prompts me to forgive my brother, the righteousness of God in expiating his sin calls on me also to forgive him. For if my brother is a believer – and I am to deal with him in charity on the supposition that he either is or may yet become a member of Christ – then Christ bore his sins as well as mine in His own body on the tree and satisfied Divine justice for all his iniquity. In particular, Christ bore in His own body all the guilt of this particular offence against me. For while it is an offence against me, its infinitely chiefest offensiveness is its being a sin against God. For God is the Lawgiver and Judge, not only in all that pertains to my duty and my brother's duty directly towards God, but in our mutual duty towards each other. When therefore we fail in our duties towards each other, we sin against that God who has enjoined them.

And in everything in which we need forbearance and forgiveness from each other, we need infinitely more from God.

My brother's offence against me is simultaneously an infinitely greater offence against God; greater as far as God is greater than I am. Yes, so true is this that both I and my brother, even when we have offended each other and are alive to our sin against each other, therein may turn aside to God and say with truth, each of us to Him, and without doing injustice to the other, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned". Great and terrible, as against his brother, was the criminality of him who first uttered these memorable words.

But if, when I see my brother's sin and criminality against God so infinitely greater than against me, I see also that the justice of God is satisfied for all its guilt in the expiation of the cross, shall I disparage and disallow the glory of that atonement by refusing on my part to forgive, by insisting on a satisfaction for myself? May not the Lord well hold this as a proof on my part that I am setting aside that atonement for my own soul; that I do not see its infinite power and preciousness; that I am casting such contempt upon it as is inconsistent with my own personal faith in it? And may not this fully explain why, if I cannot forgive man, I cannot have forgiveness with God, seeing I do such dishonour and injustice to the only sacrifice and satisfaction through which the Judge of all the earth can forgive me? May not this well justify the Lord Jesus in saying, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses"? And does this not bring out the force of the injunction, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"?

The objection is: the fact that our mutual forgiveness takes place without an atonement affords a proof that, similarly, God requires no atonement. But it is just because there is forgiveness with God through an atonement that we are to demand none in our forgiveness of each other.

4. In one view, this objection to the atonement arises from pressing the analogy between our mutual forgiveness of each other and God's forgiveness of us too far. In fact, it can arise in reality only by not attending to that analogy sufficiently. The argument is to this effect: we are required to forgive our brother without demanding satisfaction; but if God demands a satisfaction, is the analogy between His forgiveness and ours not destroyed, and ours made the more gracious and handsome of the two? I reply, It is not the introduction of the atonement of Christ which would destroy this analogy. It is this very objection that destroys it. This objection itself attempts to introduce a dissimilarity or failure of analogy between the cases, which does not exist.

We are to demand no reparation, no satisfaction, from an offending brother when we forgive his trespass. And if God forgave us only in consideration

of a satisfaction demanded by Him and obtained from us, then indeed the analogy would be at an end. But this is not the doctrine of the atonement, as the objection must take for granted if it is to have even the appearance of validity. If such were the doctrine of the atonement, we admit that it would set forth our commanded forgiveness of a brother in a light of higher graciousness, handsomeness and generosity than the forgiveness which God extends to us. But forgiveness through the propitiation of the cross – through the true and proper satisfaction to Divine justice in the death of Jesus, through the full and perfect expiation of sin in the blood-shedding of the Lamb of God – forgiveness so bestowed, bestowed on this righteous, holy, valid ground, brings against us no demand for satisfaction any more than we are to bring against an offending brother.

No, it is this very provision, freeing us from all the demands of justice, which renders complete the analogy between God's forgiveness of me and my forgiveness of my brother. For really, at first, it would seem that there could be no analogy at all. God is my Judge; I am not my brother's judge. Hence it would seem as if God's forgiveness of me and my forgiveness of my brother must from first to last be altogether incomparable. God, as Judge, has claims against me, such as I cannot have against my brother. He has claims, not only infinitely greater in degree, but different – incomparable in kind as well as incomparably greater in degree. It would appear that there can be no analogy at all.

It is really the atonement which alone renders them analogous. The atonement answers those claims of God as a Judge which threatened to make the cases eternally incomparable. The great Judge and Sovereign of the universe introduces the atonement in satisfaction of those very claims. He abstains from pressing those claims on me; He makes no demand on me; He requires no atonement, no satisfaction *from* me. On the contrary, He provides an atonement *for* me. He Himself provides a Lamb for a burnt offering. He freely, in His love, gives me a substituted surety. He so loves me that He does not spare His own Son, but freely gives Him up unto death, making Him to be sin for me. Then without money and without price He gives me a free and full remission of sin, a forgiveness infinitely handsome, a forgiveness which so secures and exalts me as to make me a son of God in Christ. It is a forgiveness which it is profanity to fancy can ever be excelled in its grace and handsomeness, and which I can only imitate at an infinite distance.

Now it must be manifest that my procedure in forgiving my brother, without atonement from him, is not more handsome than God's forgiveness of me. Instead it is God's unparalleled grace in providing an atonement for me and my brother both which must inspire both him and me with that mutual

love in which we shall be found “forbearing one another and forgiving one another” in some faint reflection of that infinitely handsome, generous, sovereign grace in which God “for Christ’s sake hath forgiven” us.

Let a brief *application* close the subject:

1. Be very sure that it is the sacrifice of the cross, provided for us by the infinite love of God, and satisfactory to His unbending justice, which will either fill our consciences with true peace towards God or our hearts with true love to man. Peace of conscience with God derived from any other source than the cross of Christ will treacherously vanish in actual face-to-face dealings with God as He is in His awful majesty and inviolable holiness. And tenderness of heart towards man learned in any other school than that of Calvary will vanish too in actual dealings with men, as they are full of infirmities and manifold weaknesses and perversities of temper. If your gentle amiabilities are not sanctified and strengthened by the stern realities of righteousness as it is vindicated in the cross, and not warmed by the matchless love of the atonement beyond earth’s power to cool them, they may live in the hothouse air of refined sentimentalism, but they will never rough it in the tear and wear of actual weary human life.

2. Let your attempt to forgive a brother find all its success from a fresh contemplation of the incalculable expense to Christ, and the free love to you implied in God’s forgiveness – “forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as God for Christ’s sake forgave you”. It is the fresh, sweet, humbling sense of being afresh and anew forgiven by God that will banish every angry and vindictive feeling. And realising your union with Christ, and having a fresh sense of your right to say, “I am crucified with Christ”, your feelings towards your enemies will coincide with those of Christ in His crucifixion hour: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”.

3. Nor need you be afraid of any unevangelical, legal tendency in embracing heartily the declaration, “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you”. If from the heart you can forgive, be encouraged thereby to expect forgiveness from God: seeing that it is the truth of His forgiving love and the work of His Spirit that have wrought this grace within you. Our Father who art in heaven; forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

The man of an unforgiving spirit is governed too much by a regard to himself, and too little by a regard to the happiness of others, to be a Christian man. He attaches no importance to that course of conduct which tends to make the world in which he lives the holier and the happier.

Gardiner Spring

The Only Salvation¹

C H Spurgeon

What a great word *salvation* is! It includes the cleansing of our conscience from all past guilt, the delivery of our soul from all those propensities to evil which now so strongly predominate in us. It takes in, in fact, the undoing of all that Adam did; salvation is the total restoration of man from his fallen state. Yet it is something more than that, for God's salvation fixes our standing more secure than it was before we fell. It finds us broken in pieces by the sin of our first parent – defiled, stained, accursed. It first heals our wounds, it removes our diseases, it takes away our curse, it puts our feet upon the rock Christ Jesus; and having done this, at last it lifts our heads far above all principalities and powers, to be crowned for ever with Jesus Christ, the king of heaven.

Some people, when they use the word *salvation*, understand nothing more by it than deliverance from hell and admission into heaven. Now that is not salvation: those two things are the *effects* of salvation. Sinners are redeemed from hell because they are saved, and they enter heaven because they have been saved beforehand. Their everlasting state is the effect of salvation in this life. Salvation, it is true, includes all that, because salvation is the mother of it; but still it is wrong for us to imagine that this is all the meaning of the word. Salvation begins with wandering sheep; it follows them through all their mazy wanderings; it puts them on the shoulders of the shepherd; it carries them into the fold; it calls together the friends and the neighbours; it rejoices over them; it preserves them in that fold through life; and then at last it brings them to the green pastures of heaven, beside the still waters of bliss, where they lie down for ever in the presence of the Chief Shepherd, never more to be disturbed.

“Neither is there salvation in any other.” In olden times the heathen, who had different gods, all of them respected the gods of their neighbours. For instance, the king of Egypt would confess that the gods of Nineveh were real gods, and the prince of Babylon would acknowledge that the gods of the Philistines were real gods. But Jehovah, the God of Israel, put this as His first commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me”; and He would not allow them to pay the slightest possible respect to the gods of any other nation: “Ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves”.

One part of the Jew's religion was, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is

¹An edited extract from Spurgeon's *Words of Warning for Daily Life*.

one God”); and as a consequence of his belief that there was but one God, and that that one God was Jehovah, he felt it his bounden duty to reject all pretended gods. Now the Christian religion, you observe, also rejects other religions. If you apply to a Hindu priest to know the way of salvation, he will very likely tell you, at once, that all persons who follow out their sincere religious convictions will undoubtedly be saved. This priest turns round to the Christian missionary and says, What is the use of you bringing your Christianity here to disturb us? I tell you our religion is quite capable of carrying us to heaven, if we are faithful to it.

Now just hear what the Christian religion says, “Neither is there salvation in any other”. The Hindu priest may admit that there is salvation in 50 religions besides his own, but we admit no such thing. There is no true salvation out of Jesus Christ. The gods of the heathens may approach us with their mock charity, and tell us that every man may follow out his own conscientious conviction and be saved. We reply, No such thing; there is no salvation in any other, “for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved”.

Now, what do you suppose is the reason for this? I believe it is just because the Christian has the truth. A thousand errors may live in peace with one another, but truth is the hammer that breaks them all in pieces. A hundred lying religions may sleep peaceably in one bed, but wherever the Christian religion goes as the truth, it is like a firebrand, and nothing can abide it unless it is more substantial than the wood, the hay, and the stubble of error. All the gods of the heathen, and all other religions, are born of hell, and therefore, being children of the same father, it would seem amiss that they should fall out and chide and fight. But the religion of Christ is from God; its pedigree is from on high and, therefore, when once it is thrust into the midst of an ungodly and gainsaying generation, it has neither peace nor treaty with them, for it is truth, and cannot afford to be yoked with error. It stands upon its own rights and declares that salvation is to be found in the truth, and in the truth alone.

Once I thought there was salvation in good works, and I laboured hard and diligently to preserve a character for integrity and uprightness. But when the Spirit of God came into my heart, “sin revived and I died”. What I thought was good proved to be evil; when I thought I had been holy I found myself to be unholy. I discovered that my very best actions were sinful, that my tears needed to be wept over, and that my very prayers needed God’s forgiveness. I discovered that I was seeking after salvation by the works of the law, that I was doing all my good works from a selfish motive, namely, to save myself, and therefore they could not be acceptable to God. I found out that

there were two very good reasons why I could not be saved by good works: first, I had not got any; and second, if I had any, they could not save me.

After that I thought that surely salvation might be obtained partly by reformation and partly by trusting in Christ; so I laboured hard again and thought that, if I added a few prayers here and there, a few tears of penitence and a few vows of improvement, all would be well. But after fagging on for many a weary day, like a poor blind horse toiling round the mill, I found I had got no farther, for there was still the curse of God hanging over me: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them". And there was still an aching void in my heart that the world could never fill – a void of distress and care, for I was sorely troubled because I could not attain to the rest which my soul desired.

Have you tried those two ways of getting to heaven? If you have, I trust the Lord, the Holy Spirit, has made you heartily sick of them, for you shall never enter the kingdom of heaven by the right door until you have first of all been led to confess that all the other doors are barred in your teeth. No man ever did come to God through the strait and narrow way until he had tried all the other ways. And when we find ourselves beaten and foiled and defeated, then it is that, pressed by sore necessity, we betake ourselves to the one open fountain and wash ourselves there and are made clean.

I could turn to you myself and tell you that surely it must be possible for you to be saved, since I have found salvation in Christ for myself. I will never doubt the salvation of anyone as long as I can but know that Christ has accepted me. How dark was my despair when I first sought His mercy seat. I thought then that if He had mercy on all the world, yet He would never have mercy on me. The sins of my childhood and my youth haunted me; I sought to get rid of them one by one, but I was caught as in an iron net of evil habits, and I could not overthrow them. Even when I could renounce my sin, the guilt still clung to my garments. I could not wash myself clean. I prayed for three long years; I bent my knees in vain and sought, but found no mercy. But at last, blessed be His name, when I had given up all hope and thought that His swift anger would destroy me, and that the pit would open its mouth and swallow me up, then in the hour of my extremity He manifested Himself to me and taught me to cast myself simply and solely upon Him. So shall it be with you: only trust Him, for there is salvation in Him. Rest assured of that.

If you do not find salvation in Christ, you will never find it elsewhere. How dreadful it will be for you if you miss the salvation provided by Christ! For how shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation? Whether we are gross sinners or not, how fearful it will be for us to die without first having

found an interest in the Saviour! O sinner, this should quicken you in going to the mercy seat – this thought that, if you find no mercy at the feet of Jesus, you can never find it anywhere else. If the gates of heaven shall never open to you, remember there is no other gate that can ever be opened for your salvation. If Christ will refuse you, you are refused; if His blood is not sprinkled on you, you are lost indeed. If He keeps you waiting a little while, still continue in prayer; it is worth waiting for, especially when you have this thought to keep you waiting: namely, that there is no other way, no other hope, no other ground of trust, no other refuge.

There I see the gate of heaven. If I must enter it, I must creep on my hands and knees, for it is a low gate. There I see it; it is strait and narrow; I must leave my sins behind me, and my proud righteousness, and I must creep in through it. Come sinner, what do you say? Will you go through this strait and narrow gate, or will you despise eternal life and risk losing eternal bliss? Will you go through it humbly, hoping that He who gave Himself for sinners will accept you in Himself and save you now, and save you everlastingly?

The Hiding Place¹

W K Tweedie

Isaiah 32:2. *And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*

How mysterious that announcement must have seemed to the carnal Jew, who neither understood nor cared for understanding his own religion! That a man should shelter him from troubles, sudden and severe like the sweep of the tempest – what so incredible? That a man should refresh and gladden him like rivers of water in eastern lands – what so impossible? Or that a man should be a source of safety and of joy, like the shadow of great rock in countries where trees are rare – that must have seemed as strange and unintelligible as speech in an unknown tongue.

But to us who live in “the last times”, all is transparently plain. A man, the Man Christ Jesus, is now our hiding place and shelter. When the floods come and the storms beat, His people are as safe under His shadow as in a stronghold of rocks: He is their Rock, their fortress and their high tower. “Immanuel, God with us,” solves that and a hundred difficulties besides. He who has seen the Son has seen the Father also; and glory to God is thus beheld in closest combination with peace and safety to the sons of men.

¹Taken, with editing, from Tweedie’s volume, *Glad Tidings of the Gospel of Peace*.

Stand in awe then, O my soul, and contemplate what God has wrought. You are exposed to the tempest of wrath – here is your screen. You dwell in a dry, parched land – here is the river which gladdens it. The sun which scorches others need inflict no damage on you. No, like a tree planted by the rivers of water, fruit unto holiness may be gathered from you; like willows by the water-courses, you should prosper. The early and the latter rain is made sure by the promise of Him who hung the bow in the clouds as a pledge of His faithfulness for ever, and who undertakes to be the hiding place and shield of those who trust in His word. Trust then in Him, for “in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength”. The very word which commanded the universe to come into existence is the foundation of the believer’s hope. The truth of Him who is the same yesterday, today and for ever, is his guide. Who then is he that can injure such a soul?

Book Review

The Christian Sabbath, by Terry L Johnson, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, booklet, 60 pages, £3.00, obtainable from the F P Bookroom.

Sabbath observance has fallen on dark days, and the author of this booklet comments at some length on its near-disappearance. In his childhood, the United States “largely was Sabbath-keeping”. The shops “were closed, youth sports didn’t hold practices or games. . . . However, by the late 1960s” Sabbath observance “had collapsed”. A wealth of useful quotations from writers of the past includes one from Robert L Dabney which points emphatically to the importance of keeping holy the first day of the week: “The vitality and holiness of the Church are usually in proportion to its reverence for the Sabbath”.

Three Puritan writers are quoted in succession. First, John Owen denying that the Christian religion “can be maintained without a due observation of a stated day of sacred rest”. Then Thomas Case, who argues that holiness is “the great end for which God has ordained a Sabbath”. Finally, Thomas Brooks: “The ends for which the Lord’s day was appointed are all spiritual, namely, the glory of God, the illumination, conversion and salvation of sinners, and the edification, confirmation, consolation of saints”.

James Durham is quoted emphasising strongly God’s example of resting on the first Sabbath Day. Durham further stresses that the Sabbath was made “for man” – for all of humanity. Mr Johnson says that the Sabbath was given for mankind’s physical well-being, as a day of rest, but that there is “a higher purpose”, mankind’s spiritual well-being. A quotation from Matthew Henry

expresses it well: the Sabbath is a “day of holy rest in order to do holy work”. In addressing the question of the Sabbath continuing into the New Testament age, Mr Johnson asks, “Were the Old Testament saints the beneficiaries of the institution of the Sabbath [of] which the New Testament believers are now deprived?” The answer, of course, is obvious: New Testament believers *do* have the benefits of a Sabbath. Dabney puts it like this: “As there remains to believers under the Christian dispensation a hope of an eternal rest, so there remains to us an earthly Sabbath to foreshadow it”.

The author discusses works of necessity and mercy, which may legitimately be carried out on a Sabbath, but he helpfully warns that “we should be careful not to interpret the category of ‘necessity’ too broadly”. And he quotes Matthew Henry insisting that it “ought not to be a self-created necessity”. Interestingly he mentions that “the United States has been without a President for a full day twice in our history”, when Zachary Taylor, in 1849, and Rutherford B Hayes, in 1877, refused to be installed because the day appointed for doing so fell on a Sabbath.

There is a great deal of useful teaching and information in this booklet, yet Mr Johnson speaks too loosely about leisure activities on a Sabbath. We would wish that he had used the Authorised Version for Scripture quotations and that he had not used *Sunday* for the Lord’s Day.

Protestant View

The Roman Catholic Church and Homosexual Unions

In October, the Roman Catholic Church held a three-week synod at the Vatican. On the agenda was “LGBTQ+ Catholics and their place in the Church”. Five conservative cardinals had previously challenged the Pope to explain comments he had made about the possibility of blessing same-sex couples. They wanted him to affirm that the Church cannot bless same-sex marriages. The Pope wrote to them and, finding his answer unsatisfactory, they rephrased five questions that they had put to him and asked him to answer yes or no. When he did not do so, the cardinals decided to make the correspondence public and issue a “notification” warning to the “faithful” under their care. A warning of this nature, in opposition to the Pope, is considered a very serious step.

In the published correspondence, the Pope is recorded as reiterating that matrimony is a union between a man and a woman but states that homosexual unions require patience and pastoral charity, and that priests cannot become judges “who only deny, reject and exclude For this reason, pastoral

prudence must adequately discern whether there are forms of benedictions, requested by one or more persons, that do not transmit a mistaken conception of marriage.” He claims that, “when a benediction is requested, it is expressing a request for help from God, a plea to be able to live better, a trust in a father who can help us to live better”.

Francis DeBernardo, Executive Director of New Ways Ministry (which campaigns for “justice, education and reconciliation” for LGBTQ+ Roman Catholics), welcomed the Pope’s “openness”. He said, “The allowance for pastoral ministers to bless same-gender couples implies that the Church does indeed recognise that love can exist between same-gender couples”.

The Roman *Catholic Encyclopaedia* states that “blessing may be described as a rite, consisting of ceremony and prayer, performed in the name and with the authority of the Church, by a duly qualified minister, by which persons or things are sanctified or dedicated to Divine service, or by which certain marks of Divine favour are invoked upon them”. The Pope is now advocating this type of blessing of same-sex couples in church and in the name of God. Since the Fall, man thinks of himself as a god, knowing good and evil, and is always ready to think that he knows better than God Himself. This would seem to be especially true of the Pope, “who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” (2 Th 2:4). FRD

The Pope and Homosexual Unions

The Pope continues to make evasive and equivocal statements about the “blessing” of homosexual unions. In response to a written question from some cardinals, he replied that marriage is an “exclusive, stable and indissoluble union between a man and a woman, naturally open to conceiving children. . . . For this reason, the Church avoids all kinds of rites or sacramentals that could contradict this conviction and imply that it is recognising as a marriage something that is not.” But he states that, on the other hand, pastoral charity is also necessary, and “defence of the objective truth is not the only expression of that charity, which is also made up of kindness, patience, understanding, tenderness, encouragement. . . . For that reason, pastoral prudence must adequately discern if there are forms of blessing, solicited by one or various persons, that do not transmit a mistaken concept of marriage.” So it would seem that there may be a possibility of Roman Catholic blessings on homosexual unions. Such blessings are, apparently, already taking place in parts of the Roman Church, but the question is whether they have ecclesiastical approval. The Pope’s answer is as given above.

This “yea and nay” has been a feature of Romanism – whenever it is under

pressure – at least since the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century. How different it is from the clarity of Protestantism and the Word of God: “But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in Him was yea. For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us” (2 Cor 1:18-20). There is no blessing on sodomy: “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor 6:9-10). *DWBS*

Notes and Comments

It Is Written

“Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By Me kings reign, and princes decree justice” (Prov 8:14,15). The Bible unequivocally teaches that all men need God. This is true of ourselves, and it is true of all our fellow men. It is true of all the rulers and governors of the world. Man, however, is not honest with himself. He knows in the depths of his being that he needs God; but like Adam in the Garden of Eden, Adam’s children in each generation flee from the one good, true and living God, saying in their hearts, “There is no God” (Ps 14:1). This is effectively what we all do and say by nature.

Our rulers and governors each need God, as do all who serve under them. Like ourselves, they need God for themselves and in every area of their lives. They need God to fulfill their solemn responsibilities of ruling and governing the United Kingdom. They face many perplexing difficulties every day and hence need much wisdom. If they were honest with themselves, they would each acknowledge this to be true. Although all political parties have their proposals for how to deal with the enormous social, political and economic difficulties (national and international) they face, no one (either in government or opposition) truly knows how best to tackle them. The Bible is clear: God alone is infinite in His wisdom, understanding and strength. Therefore all rulers and governors need God; without God, not only will they never overcome the significant problems they face but will prove ultimately that all attempts undertaken without reliance upon God will be unsuccessful.

Rulers may take some pride and satisfaction in referring to a country such as the United Kingdom as a liberal, multicultural, multi-ethnic, or anti-racial

society. The reality, however, is quite different. We have become a very anti-Christian land and are in rebellion against God. It is no longer true that our previously treasured Christian distinctions are being *weakened*: they are today scornfully dismissed (except on tourist-attracting ceremonial occasions) and replaced with worldviews that are distinctively anti-Christian, humanistic and atheistic.

Whilst the swift pace of this solemn declension is most disturbing, we ought not to be unduly alarmed. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1). Our confidence and trust must be in the Almighty God, who is ever advancing His cause and kingdom even in the darkest of hours: even when His providences appear so strange and mysterious. May we imitate the people of God in Psalm 83, who wrestled in prayer with God in times of similar conflict.

Notwithstanding all that man, individually or corporately, may think, say, or do, Almighty God has spoken: His Word is His Law; it is the divine Creator's mandate to mankind. As such, it demands the subjection of all peoples to God's righteous claims. His Word alone is good and has been given for our good.

The law of God is not to be culturally interpreted, nor are its contents to be the theme of debate or negotiation. It is not to be altered, added to, or subtracted from. There is no room for any compromise or pragmatic re-interpretation. All sophisticated and devious philosophical argumentation is abhorrent that might be used to twist its meaning in an attempt to prove white is black and error is truth. God gave His Word to man, to all men, using the natural definition of words. The result is that man, even in the use of his fallen reason, may read and be aware of his Creator's righteous claims and the unbounded obligations that he, man, has to God, His Creator.

The Shorter Catechism reminds us, "The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man". Whilst the duties specify our obligations to God, our rebellious unwillingness and inability to fulfil them do but stress man's indispensable need to seek grace to believe in God's provision of a Saviour.

The rebellious and unspiritual state of our land can be partially assessed by considering the divine claims of the Holy Scriptures against the diverse religious affiliations of those governing our people, which is a partial reflection of the spiritually adulterous population of the United Kingdom. His Majesty King Charles III indeed professes to be a Christian, but the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom is a practising Hindu; the First Minister of Scotland identifies himself as a Muslim, and the First Minister of Wales declares himself an "atheist". (Northern Ireland is currently without a First

Minister.) Sadly, there are but few in any of our parliaments who profess biblical Christianity.

Our King, the Prime Minister and the First Ministers of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have, under God, the solemn responsibility to reign and govern the nations of the United Kingdom by the wholly distinctive principles of the Holy Scriptures. But this they are both unable and unwilling to do. The Bible tolerates no false religion or perverse forms of Christianity. Therefore they stand solemnly at war with Almighty God.

How then is the United Kingdom to be ruled and governed? Is it to be by the Bible's comprehensive claims of truth, or are we to accept quietly the imposition of a medley of man-centred, anti-Christian theories? There is no middle way. Either man seeks the glory of God, or he does not!

To remain in office, party leaders may aim at the lowest common denominator to achieve something palatable to the pressure groups with vested interests that are today so dominant. But sadly it will not be righteous governance according to the Word of God. Solemnly, it will be a gross offence to God which will lead to continued judgements hanging over our land.

Our nations, and especially our rulers, need our prayers. We are commanded to pray for them so that "we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim 2: 2). May they be made subjects of the convicting and converting work of God! Then, and only then, when humbled in repentance and faith before the King of kings and Lord of lords at the throne of grace, will they be able to rejoice in God their Saviour, and in His fear, lovingly, and for His glory, attend to their solemn responsibilities. May it please the Lord to hasten such a day, when "men may know that Thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth" (Ps 83:18)? *DPR*

Church Information

Removed by Death

Sadly, we have to report the passing away of Rev Alasdair B MacLean on October 9 after a long illness. Most of his ministry was spent in Ingwenya, Zimbabwe, but he had to return to the UK because of ill health. Latterly he was able to become pastor of the Perth congregation. We are again reminded of the need to pray that the Lord would send out other men to go as ambassadors for Christ, to labour in various parts of the world.

The next day, Mr Alick John Morrison, long an elder in the South Harris congregation, died. We need also to pray that God would raise up others to serve Him as elders. We express our sympathy to these men's families.

Day of Humiliation and Prayer

On the motion of Rev D A Ross, the Synod in May 2023 appointed a Day of Humiliation and Prayer to be observed throughout the Church on Wednesday, 6 December 2023, as follows:

We as a Church have always recognised the need to appoint a Day of Humiliation and Prayer. But at this particular time in our history as nations, with the ongoing wickedness of the people in rejecting Christ the King of kings, righteous judgements keep multiplying. One essential response on our part to such dreadful national rejection of God and consequent judgements is to pray more earnestly. We believe this to be the most important and urgent response. Of course, we are to continue using all Biblical means to spread the Word of God; and we are to contend more earnestly for the faith. Indeed, with regard to every other gospel activity, there is no place for indifference, but let our leading activity be prayer. There is always a danger that the Lord's people may be less prayerful than they once were. May the Lord enable us to resist that; prayer is to be the beginning to all our gospel activities.

The Saviour directed the Church to engage in prayer ceaselessly, and reminds us that prayer is one of the distinguishing marks of His Church when He calls His house, "My house of prayer" (Is 56:7). He repeats this in the Gospels; "My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer" (Mk 11:17), and deplores the Church being used for some carnal worldly pursuit: "But ye have made it a den of thieves."

This is woefully true in our day. Indeed, such is the low state of true religion and the rise of false, that unimaginable vile practices have free rein. There is an ever-growing flood of forms of uncleanness and murder of babes in the womb who are not permitted to see the light of day. Such outrageous acts of wickedness, in some cases condoned by the professing Church, leave us afraid that more severe judgements will come upon us. For Israel, in Jeremiah's day, a time of fearful judgement was on the wing, hence the solemn directive to him, "Pray not for this people for their good" (Jer 14:11). Fearful judgements did indeed come upon Israel. We need as a nation to be greatly afraid of worse judgements than that of two world wars. Therefore there is all the more need for a day of humiliation and prayer to be observed throughout the Church. The sinful king of Nineveh, an exceedingly wicked city ripe for judgement, directed his people to "cry mightily unto God", and to turn from their evil ways, with the hope of staying predicted judgement. Though the king feared the worst, yet he told his people: "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?" (Jnh 3:9).

Let us likewise humble ourselves before God and cry mightily to Him. "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (Ps 103:8). (Rev) *Keith M Watkins*, Clerk of Synod

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Southern: At Glasgow, on Tuesday, December 12, at 3 pm.

Asia Pacific: At Auckland, on Tuesday, December 19, at 10.30 am.

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.

Outreach Fund

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

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Eastern Europe Fund: Pilgrims Covenant Church, for Odessa F P Mission Station, £226.21.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Glasgow: Anon, Ps 60:4, £100, £270; Anon, £30. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £100. *Outreach Fund:* Anon, £15, £10, £10, £10.

Halkirk: N Pearce, £140.

North Harris: I Westland, USA, £20.

North Tolsta: Anon, "In memory of my family, late of Lochside", £100; Anon, £100. *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £100. *Door Collection:* Anon, £80, £50, £20, £40, £3.60. *TBS:* Anon, £200.

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). **Lairg:** 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; **Strathy:** 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:sydneyfchurch@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.

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

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

New Canaan: Church. Rev T Mwedzi.

Zenka: Church.

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