

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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## The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

**Moderator of Synod:** Rev S Khumalo, F P Manse, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, P O Magwegwe, Bulawayo.

**Clerk of Synod:** Rev K M Watkins BA, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271; e-mail: kmwatkins@fpchurch.org.uk.

**Assistant Clerk:** Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.

**General Treasurer:** Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283, e-mail: william.campbell@fpcoffice.org.

**Law Agents:** Brodies LLP, 58 Morrison Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8BP; tel: 0131 228 3777.

### Clerks to Presbyteries:

**Asia Pacific:** Rev C Hembd, 5 Goldsmith St, Elgin, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140.

**Northern:** Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.

**Outer Isles:** Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253.

**Southern:** Rev D Campbell MA, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227.

**Western:** Rev I D MacDonald BA, F P Manse, Achachork, Portree, IV51 9HT; tel: 01478 612110.

**Zimbabwe:** Rev S Khumalo, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo; tel: 00263 9407131.

**Zimbabwe Mission Office:** 9 Robertson Street, Parkview, Bulawayo; tel: 002639 62636, fax: 002639 61902, e-mail: fpchurchheadoffice@gmail.com.

### Residential Care Homes:

Ballifeary House, 14 Ness Walk, Inverness, IV3 5SQ; tel: 01463 234679.

Leverburgh Residential Care Home, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520296.

**Website of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland:** www.fpchurch.org.uk.

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**Editor:** Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ. Tel: 01463 712872; e-mail: kdmacleod@gmail.com. Unsigned articles are by the Editor.

**Editorial Board:** The Editor, Mr F R Daubney, Mr D P Rowland, Rev D W B Somerset.

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## Communions

**January: First Sabbath:** Nkayi; **Fourth:** 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. **Fifth:** Gisborne, Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

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

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

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

**July: First Sabbath:** Beauly; **Second:** Bonar Bridge; **Third:** Applecross, Auckland, Fort William; **Fourth:** Cameron, Vatten.

**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; **Fifth:** Ingwenya.

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

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

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

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## God's Greatness (1)

Moses and the rest of the Children of Israel were near the end of their journey from Egypt. He could not enter the promised land because of his sin in smiting the rock rather than speaking to it, when the people murmured because there was no water. Yet, without question, he would enter heaven at the end of his journey through this world. And the Children of Israel would have the River Jordan opened up for them to enter the promised land. But before he left them, Moses was to speak to Israel the words of the “song” which was recorded in Deuteronomy 32. He was, he says, to “publish the name of the Lord” (v 3) – in other words, to proclaim what the Lord had revealed about Himself.

How has He revealed Himself? First of all, in creation. If we look around us, it should be very difficult to conclude that the sun, moon and stars, and the earth we live on, all came into existence in some random way, apart from a Creator. It should be just as difficult, if not more so, to believe that all the living creatures – including the stately trees that wave in the breeze not far from the windows inside of which this article is being written – are the result of some form of evolution which just happened to run in a generally positive direction over vast periods of time. Especially it should be impossible to believe that human beings came into existence in this way. The fact is, as Paul expressed it to the believers in Rome, we human beings are to recognise the Lord's “eternal power and Godhead” through the things that He has made (Rom 1:20).

But God has revealed Himself through the Bible in a way that has even more authority than what we see in creation. We should recognise that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable” (2 Tim 3:16f). It is because this song of Moses was inspired by God the Holy Spirit that it is recorded in Scripture, and it is therefore profitable. And we should pray that the Lord who, by His Holy Spirit, inspired Moses would apply his song to our souls by the same Holy Spirit.

Moses went on to call on his hearers, “Ascribe ye greatness unto our God” (v 3). So, when we speak of God, we are to declare His greatness. And

when we think of Him, we are to consider Him as infinitely great, beyond anything that we can imagine. Moses reprov'd Israel for their carelessness about Him: "Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful" (v18). We are to be conscious of God continually, but how far short of this even the people of God come! And how very forgetful of God most people are! They do not want ever to think seriously about Him, unless in some dire emergency, when they need His help – urgently. They may try to convince themselves that there is no God, and the idea of evolution provides them with a convenient excuse to dismiss God from their thinking.

But God most certainly exists, and He has revealed Himself. He warn'd the Israelites: "See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with Me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand. For I lift up My hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet My glittering sword, and Mine hand take hold on judgement; I will render vengeance to Mine enemies, and will reward them that hate Me" (vv 39-41). And He warn's the people of this generation, by these same words, that He, the only God, does punish those who reject His authority. How fearful the meeting with God that sinners will have, at the end of their lives, who have spent their days in a settled determination to forget God!

Let us notice just a few aspects of the greatness of God:

1. God is infinitely great in His *power*. So He was well able to create the whole universe and everything in it. Besides, He is in total control of all that He has made. In particular, He is in total control of all that mankind has done, is doing and will do in the future. Nothing is too hard for Him, as Jeremiah acknowledged (Jer 32:17). He showed His greatness in bringing Israel out of Egypt, and that demonstration of His power was very much in the mind of Moses when he gave Israel the song that has been referred to. But the conquest of the devil by the Son of God in our nature, and the working out of redemption for rebellious sinners, especially on the cross at Calvary in the weakness of His humanity, was an even greater exercise of divine power. And the deliverance of individual souls from Satan's power, and the saving work of the Holy Spirit in them is a further series of demonstrations of God's limitless power.

2. God is infinitely great in His *justice*. So Habakkuk address'd the Most High: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab 1:13). Matthew Poole comments, "His omniscience doth behold all things . . . but He doth not, will not, cannot," see evil "with delight, with approbation". Accordingly, God must punish individuals for their sin, even eternally, when there is no repentance in this life. But the greatest display of God's justice occurred when His own Son, having come into this world

as the substitute for sinners, had to endure the full punishment due to all those whom He came to save – He “spared not His own Son” (Rom 8:32). Believers are spared punishment, but Christ endured it in their place, and perfect justice is maintained.

We should also note that perfect justice will be administered at the end of the world, when “we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ [who is entirely righteous]; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor 5:10). The evidence led in favour of true Christians will be perfectly accurate and righteous; it will make absolutely clear that they trusted in Christ and were declared perfectly righteous, because of what He did on their behalf when in this world. At the same time, the evidence on the basis of which unbelievers will be condemned will be equally reliable, and these sinners will therefore be condemned in perfect righteousness.

3. God is infinitely great in His *mercy*. This is His kindness to rebellious sinners in their great need on their way to punishment of infinite duration. The punishment of sin will last for ever because sin is an infinite evil, as it is committed against the infinite God. We may also note that all in a lost eternity continue to sin against God, but now without the restraint which God applies to them in this life. But, to those who will escape that punishment and go to heaven instead, infinite mercy has been shown: Christ took their place and suffered their infinite guilt. So David sang, “Great is Thy mercy toward me: and Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell” (Ps 86:13). He was thinking of God’s infinite mercy, in applying to himself personally the wonderful salvation that was to be provided by the Messiah in the fullness of time.

Mercy continues to be shown to believers in all God’s further kindness to them, and especially in not imputing to them the guilt of their continuing sins. A perfect salvation has been provided, and we should all value it and seek it earnestly. How sad if we are continuing in unbelief and rejecting that glorious salvation, which is freely offered to us all in the words: “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).

We may, God willing, consider some other aspects of His greatness on another occasion, but meantime let us briefly notice the implications of Moses’ call to ascribe greatness to God. As we have noticed, He is the great God who created all things, and created each of us in particular. This implies that we should take Him as our God and should worship and serve Him continually, praising Him as One who has infinite power, justice and mercy, and trusting Him in the light of all His attributes as they are revealed in Scripture.

# God Commending His Love (2)<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by John Macdonald

Romans 5:8. *God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

**2.** The important result of the fact<sup>2</sup> is that *God commends His love to us.* We have examined the foundation of fact; let us now contemplate the superstructure of inference. As was the glory of the former in depth, so will be the glory of the latter in height. But here let us premise three points which are of importance in guiding our steps.

(1.) The death of Christ for sinners was *not the cause* of God's love to them, but the love of God was the source of Christ's death. For "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son". Whatever mercy is in the cross of the Son was also in the bosom of the Father. The death of Christ and the love of God are as much one as the Father and the Son are one in the blessed Trinity.

(2.) The death of Christ *did not merely demonstrate* divine love, but communicated it to us in a specific form. Jesus laid down His life not only to show that God did love, but also and chiefly to convey to us that love itself in a suitable and consistent manner. As we have already seen, Christ actually became a substitute for the sinner, and actually made atonement by sacrifice, for the guilt of transgression, in His death. The practical, personal benefit conferred commends the special love which bestowed the sacrifice.

(3.) *Whatever love is manifested* in the death of Christ is the love of God – of the God with whom we have to do. It was the love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit alike, although manifested in the Mediator. We are to contemplate God as clothed in the glory of the Father, or the Mediator, or the Comforter; we are to view them alike, through the medium of Christ.

God then means to commend, or display, to the utmost extent, His love, in the death of Christ for the ungodly. He would in all His works show that He is God – infinitely exalted above all His creatures – that His ways are not as our ways, neither His thoughts as our thoughts. He has displayed the holiness of His character in the immediate, final and everlasting damnation of the angels that fell – and He will yet commend His infinite righteousness

<sup>1</sup>The final part of a sermon taken with editing from a small volume of sermons by Macdonald (1807-47), *A Pastor's Memorial*. A son of his namesake, the "Apostle of the North", he was a Church of Scotland minister in London before he left to minister in Calcutta. It should be noted that, when using the words of the text, the preacher is, with very few exceptions, speaking particularly to believers.

<sup>2</sup>The first head dealt with the great *fact* of the Christian faith, that Christ died for sinners.

in the eternal perdition of all impenitent sinners of this world of ours. But He has also displayed the glory of His love in the death of His Son for sinners; and He is continually commending it in reconciling His enemies to Himself, by Christ's sacrifice, so that we may glorify Him as God, in His love, and be ourselves blessed in this gracious exercise.

(1.) God thus commends His love to the faith of sinners – that is, to their trustful acceptance. This is the first class with which the gospel has to do, and this is the class to which we all belong originally. The message of love is sent to the enemies of God, and the greatness of that love is commended to the guilty, so that they may desist from their enmity, be delivered from their guilt, and live. The careless sinner is to be awakened by the terrors of the law and character of God, as seen on Sinai or Calvary, that he may be driven to consider his own condition as a rebel and his prospects as a condemned criminal – and that he may be brought to seek reconciliation to God as his sovereign, and justification by God as his Judge. Then the commendation of God's love in the death of Christ will become precious to him.

When the sinner has been convinced of sin by the divine law being applied to his conscience through the inward operation of the Spirit of truth; when he is brought to see his inseparable connection with those perfections of Jehovah which make Him a consuming fire to the workers of iniquity, and to hear for himself the Lawgiver pronouncing the sentence of death on every transgressor, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them”, then he is filled with secret dread, and despair begins to lay iron hands upon his soul. He can only see God through the medium of His law, or contemplate his judge through the medium of His righteous sentence. There seems to him therefore no way of escape. Sin meets him at every avenue, and the law challenges him at every gateway of flight. Sparks of hell are falling thickly into his conscience, and the heavings of perdition are beginning to swell in his soul.

He hears that God is gracious, but “will He be gracious to *me*?” He is assured that God pardons, but “will He pardon *me*?” He looks around; he sees that those whom he deems unpardoned are wicked – that those whom he deems pardoned are holy. He connects pardon with holiness, as cause and effect, and says in the darkness of legal bondage, If I was as good as they, then hope might be mine, and their Saviour mine too. To such we are sent to say, Behold the love of God. While these saints were yet sinners, while these friends were yet enemies, God gave His Son to die for them! You have seen God in the awfulness of His wrath against sin; behold Him now in the grandeur of His love to sinners! He whom you so justly dread “so loved the

world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”.

He did this for a world of ungodly enemies, and do you not belong to them? Behold the freeness and the fullness of God’s love! Are you “without strength” – unable to do what is good? When “we were without strength, Christ died” for sinners. Do you feel that you are “ungodly” – that your heart is without the fear or love of God, and that you have hitherto been leading a godless life? Yet know this, that Christ died for the ungodly. Are you pre-eminently a sinner, the chief of sinners, in your own esteem? Yet remember that Christ died for sinners, and that you are still but a sinner. Have you been the “enemy” of God, “a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious”. Yet hear this: Christ died for His enemies. Yes, He died for some who spat upon Him and murdered Him, for His sacrificial death was a human murder.

On the cross of Christ, human enmity in its highest form came into conflict with divine love in its full glory; and love triumphed, gloriously triumphed. Christ’s last prayer for His enemies was, “Father, forgive them”. And shall man not listen to that prayer, and shall God not answer? Sinner, did not Jesus command that the gospel of salvation should first be preached in the city of His enemies, His murderers? And were not the first believers among them? O then accept the offer of mercy and the gift of love in Christ Jesus! Come as a sinner, as only a sinner, and put full trust for salvation in God’s love to such people. Magnify His love to sinners by coming as a sinner and venturing all upon it, for it is indeed “a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners”.

(2.) God also commends His love, as illustrated in our text, to the continued hope of the believer. We have already seen that this is the principal object of the context, in its doctrinal connection – to show how Christian hope “maketh not ashamed”, or cannot disappoint. The true believer habitually entertains hope of the glory of God, and is often enabled to rejoice in it with “joy unspeakable, and full of glory”.

Yet there are many cloudy skies and dark days in his spiritual life. Often when he would take a distant view of the object of his hope and attempt to be glad in it, he is cast down on beholding the space that intervenes between him and it, the innumerable evils springing from his own corruption that must beset him by the way, and he is ready to exclaim, I shall one day fall by sin, as by the hand of Saul. He remembers that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord” – and he feels that in himself, that is in his flesh, there dwells no good thing – and the warfare between the former truth believed and the latter truth experienced becomes too heavy for him to endure, his knees become feeble and his hands hang down. The clouds of satanic temp-



tation thicken around him, and the consciousness of indwelling sin, as the darkness of night, descends on the vista of heavenly hope that stretched out before his view.

But fear not, believer. Remember the word on which your beloved Lord first caused you to hope. You believe in Jesus Christ. You rely on Him for justification. You have peace before God, and you love to be reconciled to Him through the death of His Son. You enjoy freedom of access to the throne of His grace. You can in some measure rejoice in your tribulation. You can feel that tribulation is working patience in your soul, and that by patience your experience is increased. And as you have known that past experience increased your hope, you have been enabled to “rejoice in hope of the glory of God”.

But now your hope fails in its exercise, and you are afraid that you will come short of its object, because of conscious sin. Is it not so? Then let me ask what was the source of all the blessings which you have enjoyed and which even now you feel? The love of God, you will reply. True. Then tell me, was that love exercised towards you as you now are, or as you formerly were, when dead in sin? In the latter condition, you will say. Certainly. Then what follows? God now commends His love to you, in that while you were yet a sinner, He yet loved you and gave His Son to die for you. Sin was no obstacle to God’s love, when He first loved you, though an enemy; and shall it prevent His pitying love, now that you are His friend?

Mark the reasoning in the sequel of our text (v 9). If the love of God was such that His Son died in your stead when you were ungodly, an enemy and a sinner, unconverted and unpardoned; much more now after you have been reconciled and justified through His blood, may you not be assured that such love will never suffer you to fall under wrath or come short of glory? If when you were accursed, Christ became a curse for you, much more when you are now blessed of God, will He not continue to bless you? And if the love of Christ was so great that He laid down His life on the cross for you, will He forget you and suffer you to be plucked out of His hand, now that He has taken up His life again? If He died for our sins, did He not rise again for our justification?

Was it not the self-same Jesus who was humbled first that was afterwards exalted? Is the crucified One not the glorified One? Is the object of His cross and of His throne not the same? If His love was victorious against all evil, shall it not be triumphant amidst all good? If He loved you when sin was the law of your heart and the practice of your life, will He not love you when sin has become the exception in your heart and the greatest burden of your life?

You may be groaning under the loathsome pressure of a body of sin and

death; and you may at times be trembling for the consequences of the “evil heart of unbelief” that works deceitfully within you; your hands may hang down and your knees become feeble, but arise and behold this love for sinners. Come and feed on this sacrifice for sin. It is the first food of faith; it must be the constant food of hope. The more simply and entirely you live on the love of Christ to sinners, the more joyful and vigorous will you be in your course to glory. Flee from the sense of sin in yourself, to the faith of love divine in the cross; and then your hope will abide joyful, under the shadow of the grace of God spread out for you in these words, He “commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”.

(3.) God also commends the love set forth in our text to our admiration. “Behold,” says a venerable apostle, “what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us.” In this love of God, there is a vastness, a majesty, a glory that can fill the faith of sinners and the hope of believers, and then deluge their souls with an overwhelming flood of admiration. In this treasury of divine love, there is more than enough for all human salvation: a surplus, that cannot be counted, remains to manifest the immense riches of the Sovereign Himself.

In this river of life, the trembling penitent drinks peace and joy, and the tried believer is refreshed with the waters of hope and glory, but there still remains an unfathomable depth in which the matured saint may bathe his soul, exercising fully all the energies and faculties of a divine nature. Here he may be lost to self, but not to God, in a love that has no length or breadth, no depth or height; that passes the comprehension of all beings, save of Him whose love it was. Here is the keynote of infinite and eternal harmony; here is the everlasting music of innumerable harps – here is the universe of sanctified hearts, the infinite space of redeemed affections.

Speak of the Lover, and you are abashed; speak of the one loved, and you are confounded. So it is now – but hereafter we shall have strength corresponding to our desire, and desire corresponding to our duty; and then shall the intense silence of immeasurable prostration, or the fixed gaze of irresistible attraction, or the loud voice of universal praise, or the instantaneous act of devoted obedience, or the everlasting reiteration of every possible method of admiration, testify somewhat to the glory of that love concerning which it is written, “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”.

Some of you have been affected by a sense of this love of God. It has been “shed abroad in [your] hearts”; and on it your faith, hope and love are supported amid the cold selfishness of this world. But it may be that you sorrow under the deadness of your souls to such love as this. You mourn over your lack of feeling. You mentally exclaim, Lord, “who shall deliver

me from the body of this death?” Fear not. Christ did not so die in vain. He has by ransom redeemed you from the dominion of sin, and He will by His Spirit’s power communicate His purchase. But He first causes you to feel your need of the gift that is to be given. Ask for what you need. Seek what you desire. The Spirit of God will give you that which is lacking, for Christ’s glory; for it is His special office to glorify Christ.

Pray much for the inward work of this Spirit of God. Do not grieve Him, neither quench His grace by sin or fleshly lust. Worldliness, in a gracious soul, is as ice heaped on the fire. Sit much at the gospel telescope and, through it, behold afar off “the King in His beauty”. Read much and meditate much on the love of Christ, as revealed in the gospel. Let the writers of the Gospels and the Epistles be your constant companions. Learn from them how to love the Lord Jesus and how to esteem the grace of God. Hold much communion with the loving Jesus at the throne of grace. He is ever to be found there; He abides, as intercessor, in its neighbourhood. Speak to Him, as one man to another, although you do not see Him. Charge Him with His love to sinners. Remind Him of Gethsemane; remind Him of Calvary. He loves such reminders; He delights in such remembrancers; He desires to have them around His sacred Person. Say to Him: Art Thou the God-man that died for Thine enemies? O Thou Lamb of God, teach me how to love, that I may love Thee as Thou lovedst me – even guilty, sinful me.

Rejoice that there are those, even now, who can and who do praise as you cannot do. Remember these words, “I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing”. Soon, believer, we shall join that blessed multitude, if we abide in Christ’s love – we shall see Jesus Himself, who died for us when enemies. Say, Is this now not hope and heaven? And what will the reality be hereafter? Hold on then and let this be your staff through many a weary step: When I was an enemy Christ died for me; and now, when I am a friend, He lives for me!

But, O ungodly sinner, what shall I say to you before parting? You have heard all that has been said about the love of God in Christ Jesus; yet are you unmoved? You remain unaffected, as a blind man under the full blaze of the sun at noon; but, with this difference, he would see the sun if he could; but you, even if you could, have no will to do so. There is one short sentence in the Word of God, that settles your doom for ever: “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha!” – accursed at the coming

of Christ! Awful words! Fearful end of a sinful life! O man or woman, will you not arise and shake yourself from this state? Do you not see that the love of God aggravates your sin; and that the cross rejected is hell kindled, the furnace heated? If Christ died for His enemies, what excuse can you ever have for not being saved, or reconciled to God through Him? There is no plea of justification for you in your own sinfulness, nor in the deficiency of God's love. He died for the ungodly.

You are naked, homeless and defenceless in your impenitence; and this one text damns you beyond all remedy for ever, if you will not turn from your sin and be reconciled to your God. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Behold the seal of this oath in the cross of Christ, God's Son, dying for His enemies! Can you doubt for a moment the sincerity of such a God – the love of such a Saviour? We beseech you to desist from your rebellion against Him who laid down His life for His enemies. In His death there is a perfect sacrifice for sin. If you will but turn and believe in Him, you need not die; your life – eternal life – will be given you. He has suffered the pains of hell; therefore, if you now believe on Him, His sufferings will become yours, and you shall not be called upon to repeat them for yourself.

The gospel is the declaration and message of the love of Christ to sinners. Faith is the reception of that gospel into the heart as true and good. Is it not true? Believe it. Is it not good? Receive it. This is the whole mystery of a sinner's interest in Christ. Lay aside that proud, self-righteous, calculating spirit – as a little child, hear God speaking from heaven. Meditate on that love which we have preached to you. Compel your mind to this blessed work. Go with the stream of this love. Do not resist its divine current. It will carry you into faith and repentance. Call upon the Spirit of God in Christ's name to make you alive.

Go home then, O sinner, saying within yourself: O love, infinite and incomprehensible, unheard of in this world before, that the Son of God should have died for sinners, His enemies. Can I, dare I sin any more against this God, this Christ? No, I will return and say, In my sinful ignorance I sinned against Thee: in the light of Thy gospel I now return to Thee. I did not believe that Thou hadst such love as this. Have mercy upon me; cleanse me from my sin; fill me with Thy love by Thy Holy Spirit; make me a new creature in Christ Jesus! This will be the meditation, the prayer of faith; and, according to your faith, it shall be unto you. Your sins, which are many, shall be forgiven; and your guilt, like a cloud, shall be rolled away before the wondering gaze of your trembling conscience. The book of death shall be

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shut; the book of life shall be opened. You shall live as the friend of Christ on earth, and hereafter you shall be with Him, to behold His glory for evermore. May the Lord the Spirit bring you all to this, my dear hearers.

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# Synod of Dordt & Arminian Controversy<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Developments in the Controversy, and the Synod

*Jan Freeke*

**3. Developments in the controversy.** In 1602, two of the three theological professors at the University of Leiden died as a result of the plague. One of these, Junius, had intimated to Professor Gomarus, who survived the plague, that he did not wish Arminius to take his place. He warned that serious trouble would result in Church and in state, if that was to happen. Yet the name of Arminius came up as a possible successor. Initially, Gomarus resisted the appointment, but he gave in after a meeting with Arminius at the house of a member of the University board. Arminius was appointed professor of theology at Leiden University in 1603.

This position involved giving lectures and the organisation of debates among students on theological subjects. In 1604 a debate was held on predestination and, as a result, Arminius' views became a public issue. Concerns were raised, not only at the University, but also in the Church. The Church called Arminius to account for his views. Arminius refused this, as he was not accountable to the Church, but to the board of the University.

In 1608 Arminius lodged a petition with the Regional Council of Holland, because of the opposition that he met with. The Council ordered the Supreme Court to organise a meeting between Arminius and Gomarus and a few of their colleagues, in order to resolve the differences. The official verdict after the meeting was that there were no substantial differences between their views. Gomarus disagreed with the verdict, however, and commented that he would not wish to appear before God's judgement seat with the views of his colleague. Gomarus was concerned that more was at stake than a different view on predestination. Particularly: are we justified only by the imputed righteousness of Christ, or is there also a meritorious role for faith in the justification of a sinner?

Arminius submitted an exposition of his views to the Regional Council of Holland. He also asked for a revision of the confession of faith and the

<sup>1</sup>Based on a lecture given at the Theological Conference in October 2019. Last month's article dealt with the background to the controversy and summarised the life of Arminius and his views.

catechism to be put on the agenda of a forthcoming Synod. The above developments led to tensions in the relationship between Church and state in Holland. The Government ordered another conference to take place. This conference came to an abrupt end, because of Arminius' illness and subsequent death in 1609.

The year 1609 is also important in the political sphere. In that year a cease-fire agreement was concluded with the King of Spain for a period of 12 years: 1609 to 1621. This led to severe tensions between Johan van Oldenbarnevelt and Prince Maurice. Van Oldenbarnevelt arranged this truce against the will of Prince Maurice, who wanted the war to continue.

In the meantime, the attitude of the Church toward Arminians became generally more suspicious and hostile. In response a number of Arminian ministers, with Johannes Uytenbogaert as their leader, submitted a Remonstrance to the Regional Council of Holland in 1610. This contained a statement of their views and a request for protection. The Council then wrote to all the Church presbyteries in the region and ordered them to tolerate Arminian views.

In response to the Remonstrance and the Council's instructions, delegates of the Church met and petitioned the Council not to impose Arminian doctrine on the Church. The Council ordered another conference to take place between theologians of the two sides. This conference took place in The Hague in March 1611. During that conference, the Church delegates submitted a Counter-Remonstrance to the Council. This contained their views on the issues at stake and a request to the Council to call a Synod to resolve the controversy. Because of these documents, Arminians have often been called "Remonstranten" and Calvinists "Contra-Remonstranten".

In 1613 another conference was held between the two parties in Delft. Its purpose was to find a way to restore peace in the Church and to come up with a proposal which could be put to the Church for its approval. This conference ended without result.

In 1614 the Regional Council of Holland issued a "Resolution for peace in the Churches". It was an instruction to the Church not to raise issues of controversy and to promote charity and peace in the Church. This measure encouraged many local councils to interfere in church matters such as the calling and suspension of ministers. This led to serious unrest in the Church. People of Calvinist persuasion started to attend separate services, often in a house, or in a church in a neighbouring place, rather than worshipping under an Arminian minister in the local church. Many local councils tried to suppress these meetings, through fines and other punishments.

In 1617 the Regional Council of Holland issued a "Severe Resolution",

which authorised local councils to raise local armies to help them suppress any rebellion. These armies were under local council control and were not accountable to the States-General. The country was in danger of walking into a civil war.

Then came a turn of events: Prince Maurice, the chief commander of the States-General Army, openly sided with the Calvinists. He started to worship with the Calvinist minister Rosaeus in the Monastery Chapel (or Kloosterkerk) in The Hague, instead of worshipping under Johannes Uytenbogaert, the Court Chaplain.

Prince Maurice took action to enforce the authority of the States-General. He visited several places and ordered local armies to put down their weapons. This happened almost without resistance. In a number of local councils, existing councillors were replaced by others. Johan van Oldenbarnevelt and several of his companions were imprisoned. The Court Chaplain, Johannes Uytenbogaert, fled the country.

On 4 October 1617 the States-General decided that a national Synod was to be held. A committee was appointed to make preparations for this Synod. **4. Synod of Dordt.** The Synod was held in Dordrecht from 13 November 1618 till 29 May 1619. Johannes Bogerman, a minister in Leeuwarden (Friesland) was chosen as the Moderator. There were representatives from:

(1) The Dutch Church. Among the delegates sent by the Church from each of the Regions in the Dutch Republic there were about twice as many ministers as elders. This may have been because of the necessity to hold the proceedings in Latin, given the international composition of the Synod.

(2) The Universities. There were a total of five theological professors from the four Dutch universities. One of them was Franciscus Gomarus, then professor at Groningen University.

(3) The States-General. The States-General had taken the decision to call the Synod and they had no fewer than 18 representatives at the Synod. This created the ironic situation that the Arminians, who always favoured the influence of the civil government in the Church, were now faced with a civil government opposed to them. On the other hand, the Calvinists, who always favoured the Church's independence from the state, were now faced with a Synod, held under the auspices of the civil government.

(4) Churches from abroad. The issues, which divided the Church in the Netherlands, were issues not confined within national boundaries. In view of this, it was decided to invite representatives from other European Protestant Churches. Representatives were sent from most of these Churches: from England, from several German cities and regions (Bremen, Emden, the Palatinate (with Heidelberg), Hesse and Nassau) and from Switzerland

(Zurich, Basel, Bern and Geneva). Only the Church in France was not represented, because the King of France did not give the Huguenots permission to leave the country. The 27 foreign delegates present had a considerable input to the proceedings at the Synod and the final Canons adopted. At the same time, their participation gave the Canons greater significance in the development of Reformed Protestantism in Europe.

The Arminians chosen to appear before the Synod held a pre-meeting in Rotterdam. At that meeting they chose their main spokesman. This was Episcopius, who had succeeded Arminius as professor of divinity at Leiden University. They also agreed that the Synod should be treated as a conference and not as a church court, authorised to take binding decisions on the doctrinal issues involved.

Although the Synod began on 14 November 1618, the Arminians did not arrive until December 6. From then on, the Synod proceedings were very difficult and cumbersome. One of the first actions of Episcopius was to make a long address in which he accused the Calvinists of being the real separatists and in which he advocated liberty of opinion with regard to deep and complicated theological issues. Shortly after this, his colleague gave an address in which he pleaded for a revision of the Church's confessional standards. On December 11 they submitted a protest, stating that the Synod was not a lawful assembly. These actions made an unfavourable impression on the foreign delegates at the Synod.

When the Synod asked the Arminians to state their views clearly, they tended to evade the issue. In their answers they focused on a criticism of their perception of Calvinism, with great emphasis on the doctrine of reprobation and the difficult issues related to this. By doing this they hoped to divide the members of Synod, some of whom had stronger views on the doctrine of election than others – that is, supralapsarian or infralapsarian. On December 21 they submitted 113 objections to *The Belgic Confession*, to be followed on December 27 by even more objections to *The Heidelberg Catechism*. These objections were generally framed in the form of questions: Are confessions of faith infallible? What about the unity of the Church, given the differences between confessions of faith? Do confessions of faith not contain both essential and non-essential doctrines? Should the latter not be taken out? This way of dealing by the Arminians exhausted the patience of the Synod and on 14 January 1619 the Moderator of Synod, Johannes Bogerman, sent them away, after an emotional speech. Rather than question them, the Synod agreed instead to judge the Arminians from their writings.

It was arranged that the various groups of representatives in the Synod (for example, regional delegates, the Dutch professors of divinity, the rep-



representatives from Geneva) would examine these opinions separately. Their findings and judgements were read to the full meetings of Synod from 7 to 21 March 1619. Following this, the meetings of Synod were suspended for three weeks. During that period, a Synod committee prepared a set of Canons in draft. These were debated by the full Synod, which finalised and approved the Canons on 25 April 1619. The Synod also ruled that Arminians would be suspended from holding office in the Church, until they repented of their errors.

The Canons were publicly read during a service in the main church of Dordrecht on 6 May 1619. Shortly after that, the foreign delegates left the city. During the remaining part of May, the Synod reconvened as a Dutch Synod to deal with national issues: the relation between Church and state, and the organisation of the Church. The main business of the Synod had been finished, as the Synod had now ruled on the Arminian controversy.

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## The New Covenant<sup>1</sup>

### 4. Application

*William Bridge*

Sixthly, if I am not in covenant with God, what shall I do to get into covenant with Him? And if I am in covenant with God, how shall I walk in a way that is suited to one who is in covenant with the great God? Here are two questions: Do you ask what you shall do to get into covenant? Are any of you afraid that you are not yet in covenant with the Lord, and do you wish to be in covenant with the Lord? I shall speak briefly to them.

Then be sure that, on a right understanding of the nature of this covenant, you go to God and make choice of this covenant of grace, to stand and fall by it. Some think that the Hebrew word for covenant comes from a root that signifies to choose; a man is in the covenant that he chooses, and every man is indeed as his choice is.

But then go and renounce the other covenant, that of works. As the way to have a part in Christ's righteousness is to renounce all your own righteousness; so the way to have a share in this covenant of grace is to renounce the covenant of works. Then go to Christ as the Mediator of the covenant, and desire Him to put you into this covenant. He struck the covenant with God

<sup>1</sup>Taken with editing from a sermon entitled, "Christ and the Covenant", on: "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). It comes from *The Works of William Bridge*, vol 3. Last month's article was on "the importance of the covenant". This is the final article.

the Father at the first, and *He* must put you into this covenant, for He is the Mediator of the covenant. Go then to Him, as the Mediator of the covenant, to put you into covenant. Then leave the weight and stress of your guilty soul upon this covenant of grace; bear upon this stream of grace; here lay the weight of all, for the promise is made ours by resting on it. And what is this covenant but an absolute promise? Rest there and leave there the weight of your souls.

To say no more but this: Go to the Lord and give your hand to God and give yourself up to God as one willing to be led by Him into all the things that the covenant shall require. In Old Testament times, when they made a covenant, they struck hands together. In Ezra 10:19, it is said they “gave their hands” to put away their wives; and in verse 3, they spoke of making a covenant to do it: “Let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives”. And we find in 1 Chronicles that, when David was dead, all the people came together “and all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of King David, submitted themselves unto Solomon the king” (29:24). In the Hebrew it is, “They gave the hand under King Solomon”; they gave their hand by way of covenant, and they gave their hand under King Solomon in a way of submission. So when we enter into covenant with the Lord, we give our hand under God, and therefore if you desire to get into covenant, do these things.

But suppose I am in covenant with God, as I hope I am, what should I do that I may walk as is appropriate for someone that is in covenant with the great God? I answer, If you are in covenant indeed with the Lord, then God has exalted you and honoured you greatly; and if God has honoured you, why should you not honour God?

Now the more you fall down at the feet of the fullness of Christ, in a sense of your own unworthiness, inability and insufficiency, the more you honour God. John the Baptist says, “One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose”.

The more you cry up those ordinances and ways of God that are decried by the world, the more you honour God. The more you keep close to God in declining times, the more you honour God. The more you trust God at a dead lift, when all means fail, and when the sentence of death is on all the means, the more you honour God. The more you serve God, contrary to your own disposition, and reach the services of God over the head of your own dispositions, the more you honour God. And the more that you prefer the things of God above other things in time of competition with them, the more you honour God.

And the more you part with your much for God’s lesser things, the more

you honour God. What is honour? Honour is a testimony to another's excellence. Now when I can part with my much for God's little, His little truths and things, I do testify to excellence in God. I say, the more you can part with your much for God's little, the more you honour God. And the more you keep close to the name and faith of God in Christ, even where Satan's throne is, the more you honour God. Now then, has the Lord honoured you and taken you into covenant with Himself? Then surely it is your duty to honour God, and by these several particulars you may honour God.

If the Lord has made a covenant with you, give me leave to say to you, Why should you be solicitous for your own things? If you are in covenant with the Lord, and God in covenant with you, He will take care of your things; therefore why should you be solicitous about your own things? God is in covenant with you; He will take care of yours.

Thus, if there is any loss upon the things of God, why should you not be as much affected for that loss as for your own losses? For if you are in covenant with God, and God with you, God's things are yours, and your things are God's. God's things are yours; why then should you not be as much touched with the loss of anything that concerns God, as with anything that concerns yourselves?

Indeed, why should God not have the use of all that is yours? God is in covenant with you and you have the use of God's things: His wisdom, His power, His mercy. Why? Because He is in covenant with you, and you are in covenant with Him. Why then should God not have the use of your things also, your name and your estate and your body and your time? If you are in covenant with God, and God is in covenant with you, your things are God's and God's are yours; why should God not have the use of your things, as you think to have the use of God's.

If God is in covenant with you, and you are in covenant with God, why should you not live at a higher rate than the best of the Jews did in Old Testament times? You are in a better covenant than the Jews were, though for substance the same, as you heard, yet you are in a better covenant, and shall your lives not be better? You have a better Mediator, and shall your lives not be better? You have better promises, and shall your lives not be better?

Your state now is called *grace*. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Christ" (Jn 1:17). Look therefore on the Jews; look into the Old Testament and look at the best of them. Think with yourselves, Am I in a better covenant? Then how I am engaged to live better! O that our lives were more exalted on this account! Why should our lives not be better? Why should we not live at a higher rate?

# Keeping the Heart (1)<sup>1</sup>

*John Flavel*

**1.** *What it means to keep the heart.* To keep the heart is the constant diligence of a renewed man to preserve his soul in that holy frame to which grace has brought it and daily strives to hold it there. Though grace has, in a great measure, rectified the soul and given it a habitual, heavenly temper, yet sin often unsettles it again. Even a gracious heart is like a musical instrument which, even if it is never so exactly tuned, a small matter puts it out of tune again; indeed if you put it aside for only a little time, it will need retuning before you can play it again. So it is with gracious hearts; if they are in a frame for one duty, yet how dull, dead and disordered when they come to another?

Therefore every duty needs a particular preparation of the heart: “If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards Him” (Job 11:13). Well then, to keep the heart is to preserve it carefully from sin, which disorders it, and to maintain that spiritual and gracious frame which fits it for a life of communion with God. And this includes these six acts:

(1.) *Frequent observation of the frame of the heart*, looking in and examining how it stands. This is one part of the work. Carnal and formal people take no heed to this; they cannot be brought to confer with their own hearts. Some men and women have lived 40 or 50 years in the world and have scarcely had one hour’s conversation with their own hearts all that while. It is hard to bring a man and himself together on such an account, but saints know those soliloquies and self-conferences are of excellent use and advantage. The heathen could say that the soul is made wise by sitting still in quietness. Though bankrupts do not wish to look into their books of account, upright hearts will know whether they go backward or forward. “I commune with mine own heart” (Ps 77:6). The heart can never be kept until its state is examined and understood.

(2.) *Deep humiliation for heart evils and disorders.* Thus Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart (2 Chr 32:26). And thus the people were directed to spread forth their hands to God in prayer, in a sense of the plague of their own hearts (1 Ki 8:38). Upon this account many an upright heart has been laid low before God, saying, O what a heart have I? They have in their confessions pointed at the heart, the pained place: Lord, here is the wound; here is the plague-sore. It is with the well-kept heart as it is with the eye –

<sup>1</sup>An edited extract from Flavel’s little work, *A Saint Indeed*, which can be found in *The Works of John Flavel*, vol 5, and is based on the verse, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov 4:23).

which is a fit emblem of it – if a speck of dust gets into the eye, it will never stop watering till it has been wept out: so the upright heart cannot be at rest till it has wept out its troubles and poured out its complaints before the Lord.

(3.) *Earnest supplications and instant prayer for heart-purifying and rectifying grace*, when sin has defiled and disordered the heart; so Psalm 19:12: “Cleanse Thou me from secret faults”; and Psalm 86:11: “Unite my heart to fear Thy name”. Saints have always many such petitions pending before the throne of God’s grace; this is the thing they most plead for with God. When they are praying for outward mercies, perhaps their spirits may be more remiss, but when it comes to the state of their heart, they extend their spirits to the utmost, fill their mouths with arguments, weep and make supplication: O for a better heart! O for a heart to love God more.

They pray that they may hate sin more and walk more evenly with God: Lord, deny me not such a heart; whatever Thou deny me; give me a heart to fear Thee, to love and delight in Thee, even if I beg my bread in desolate places. It is observed of holy John Bradford that, when he was confessing sin, he would never give up confessing until he had felt some brokenness of heart for that sin. And when praying for any spiritual mercy, he would never give up these petitions, until he had got some relish of that mercy.

(4.) Imposing strong undertakings and bonds on ourselves to walk more accurately with God and avoid what may induce the heart to sin. Well-composed, advised and deliberate vows are, in some cases, of excellent use to guard the heart against some special sin; so: “I made a covenant with mine eyes” (Job 31:1). By this means, holy ones have overawed their souls and preserved themselves from defilement by some special heart-corruptions.

(5.) *A constant holy jealousy over our hearts*; quick-sighted self-jealousy is an excellent preservative from sin; he that will keep his heart must have the eyes of his soul awake and open to all the disorderly and tumultuous stirrings of his affections. If the affections break loose and the passions be stirred, the soul must discover and suppress them before they get to a height: O my soul, do you do well in this? My tumultuous thoughts and passions, where is your commission?

Happy is the man that thus fears always (Prov 28:14). It is by this fear of the Lord that men depart from evil, shake off complacency and preserve themselves from iniquity. He that will keep his heart must eat with the fear of God, rejoice with that fear, and pass the whole time of his sojourning here in that fear – and all little enough to keep the heart from sin.

(6.) *Realising God’s presence with us and setting the Lord always before us*. The people of God have found this an appropriate way to keep their hearts upright, and to awe them away from sin; when the eye of our faith is

fixed upon the eye of God's omniscience, we dare not let out our thoughts and affections to vanity. Holy Job dared not suffer his heart to yield to an impure, vain thought; and what moved him to be so circumspect? He tells you: "Doth He not see my ways, and count all my steps? (Job 31:4). "Walk before Me," God said to Abraham, "and be thou perfect" (Gen 17:1). Even as parents place their children in front of them in the congregation, knowing that otherwise they will be playing; so would the heart of the best man be too, were it not for the eye of God.

In these and such like particulars, gracious souls express the care they have of their hearts. They are as careful to prevent corruptions breaking loose in times of temptation, as seamen are to bind fast the guns so that they will not break loose in a storm. They are as careful to preserve the sweetness and comfort they have got from God in any duty, as one that comes out of a hot bath, or a great sweat, is of taking cold by going forth into the chill air. To keep the heart is *the* work; of all works in religion it is the most difficult, constant and important work.

(1.) It is the *most difficult* work; heart-work is hard work indeed. To shuffle over religious duties with a loose, heedless spirit will cost no great pains, but to set yourself before the Lord and tie up your loose, vain thoughts to a constant, serious attendance on Him; this will cost you something. To attain a facility and dexterity of language in prayer, and put your meaning into apt and decent expressions, is easy; but to get your heart broken for sin whilst you are confessing it – melted with free grace while you are blessing God for it – to be really ashamed and humbled through apprehensions of God's infinite holiness, and to keep your heart in this frame, not only in duty, but after it, will surely cost you some groans and travailing pain of soul. To repress the outward acts of sin, and compose the external part of your life in a laudable and comely manner, is no great matter; even carnal persons can do this by the force of common principles; but to kill the root of corruption within, to set up and keep up a holy government over your thoughts, to have all things straight and orderly in the heart, this is not easy.

(2.) It is a *constant* work. To keep the heart is a work that is never finished till life is done; this labour and our life end together. It is with a Christian in this business as it is with seamen that have sprung a leak at sea: if they do not tug constantly at the pump, the water increases on them and will quickly sink them. It is in vain for them to say the work is hard and we are weary; there is no time or condition in the life of a Christian which will allow this work to be interrupted. To keep watch over our hearts is like keeping up Moses' hand while Israel and Amalek were fighting below (Ex 17:12). No sooner did Moses' hands grow heavy and sink down but Amalek prevailed.

You know it cost David and Peter many a sad day and night for interrupting their watch over their hearts for only a few minutes.

(3.) It is the *most important* business of a Christian's life. Without this we are but formal in religion; all our professions, gifts and duties signify nothing: "My son, give Me thine heart" (Prov 23:26). God is pleased to call that a gift which is indeed a debt; He will put this honour on the creature: to receive it from Him in the way of a gift. But if this is not given to Him, He does not regard whatever else you bring to Him. There is only as much value in what we do as there is of heart in it. Concerning the heart, God seems to say, as Joseph of Benjamin, "Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you". Among the heathens, when a beast was cut up for sacrifice, the first thing the priest looked on was the heart, and if that was unsound, the sacrifice was rejected. God rejects all duties (however glorious in other respects) that are offered Him without a heart. He that performs a duty without a heart (that is, heedlessly) is no more accepted with God than he that performs it with a double heart (that is, hypocritically) (Is 66:3).

Thus I have briefly opened the nature of the duty that is implied in this phrase, "Keep thy heart".

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## A Treasure from Fiji<sup>1</sup>

*Rev John Tallach*

As there is a special delight in finding grace in out-of-the-way corners, and as this delight is heightened when we find that same grace duplicated in our own experience, the very remoteness of this part of the world may well give an added lustre to the treasures there. Earthly treasures are valuable just as they are uncommon, but often our treasures are valuable just because they are common. The incident which we are about to record is reproduced in the experience of thousands of Christians. It is therefore common. But it is reproduced by the Almighty alone; therefore it is precious.

The island we refer to is one of the Fiji group, and the treasure we desire to direct your notice to is the conversion of one of the islanders: Joel Bulu. He himself records it as follows:

"I was born in Vavan in the heathen days, nor was it till I was a big lad that the gospel came to our land. When I heard the report of it I was full of anger, and my soul burned with hatred against it. 'And shall our gods be

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* for September 1927, with only slight editing apart from the omission of a few sentences at the beginning. Mr Tallach was then a missionary in what is now Zimbabwe.

forsaken?" I cried in great wrath. 'As for me, I will never forsake them.' One day I heard a man telling of the gospel, who said it promised a land of the dead different from the place of which our fathers spoke – even a home in the sky for the good, while evil men were cast into a dreadful place whose fire no one could quench. On that very night I went forth with the lads of the town. It was a fine night, and looking up to the heavens, where the stars were shining, this thought suddenly smote me: 'O the beautiful land! If the words be true which were told us today, then indeed these gospel people are happy, and my soul longed with a great longing to reach that beautiful land. I could not rest, so I went to a town where dwelt a Christian chief, to tell him that I wished to be a Christian.

"'Good is your coming', cried the Chief, for great was his joy. 'But why do you want to be a Christian?' 'I have heard,' was my reply, 'of the good land whither you go after death; wherefore I wish to repent, that I also may be a dweller in the sky.' So they prayed with me, and thus I was turned to Christianity, but of its meaning I knew nothing. Then came the missionary to Vavan, and standing under a tree in the public square, he preached to us of the tares among the wheat. It was a sermon that pierced my soul, for I had thought that I was one of the wheat, but now I found that I was among the tares. As I heard I wept and trembled, for I thought, 'I shall never see the good land'.

"When the sermon was over and the people rose to go, I sat in my place quaking for fear and weeping in great anguish, for all the strength had gone out of my body. 'What is the matter with you?' they asked. I replied, 'Pray for me, pray for me, I beseech you!' So they knelt down and prayed for me, first one and then the other, till they were tired. But I found no comfort; so I rose and, going into an empty outhouse, I knelt down there by myself, weeping and praying before the Lord, for now I felt I was a very great sinner. The wrath of God lay heavy on me, and I hated myself because of my evil ways. 'O what is that repentance of which the preacher told us?' I cried. 'Lord, let me find it that I may live.' For so dark was my mind that I did not know that this sorrow and fear of mine were marks of repentance. Thus I continued a long time, seeking the Lord in prayer with many others.

"At last there came a day in 1834, when the missionaries assembled us to communion. The missionary in preaching told of the work of God in his own soul. My heart burned within me as I listened to his words, for in speaking of himself he told me all I felt, and I said to myself, 'We are like two canoes sailing bow and bow, neither being swifter than the other'. Thus it was with me when he told of repentance, but when he began to speak of his faith in Christ, the forgiveness of sins, and the peace and joy which lift the spirit that



he found in believing, then I said, ‘My mast is broken, my sail is blown away, he has gone clean out of my sight, and I am here drifting helplessly over the waves.’ But as I eagerly listened to his words, telling of the love of Christ, my eyes were opened, I saw the way, and I, even I, also believed and lived.

“I was like a man fleeing for his life from an enemy behind him, and groping along the wall of a house in the dark to find a door that he may enter in and escape, when, lo, a door is suddenly opened before his face, and at once, with one bound, he leaps inside. Tears streamed down my cheeks. Often had I wept before, but the tears which I now shed were not like my former weeping. Then I wept out of sorrow and fear, but now for joy and gladness, and because my heart was full of love to Him who had loved me and given Himself for me. The people called on me and asked how it was with me. I tried to stand, but it seemed to me as if my soul was parted from its body, and I remembered nothing more until I found myself on a mat, and the missionaries anxiously gathered round me. ‘What is the matter?’ they said. ‘I live, I live!’ I cried, ‘Let me rise that I may declare the mercies of God. O what a day! I can never forget it. The prayers! The praises! The tears of joy!’”

Joel lived for nearly 40 years after this incident and was instrumental in bringing many others to experience both his sorrow and his joy. Three steps, three awakenings: one issued in self-righteousness, the next in true sorrow for sin, and the last in joy in the Redeemer. Hearing them from some fellow-Christian, a dejected believer may recognise them in his own experience and rejoice. A treasure has been dug up and put into his hand. Here in Joel is a treasure. We dig up some in Highland churches, and others of the same kind in the Fiji Islands. The names of many speakers in our Friday meetings<sup>2</sup> may well be exchanged for Joel Bulu.

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## Weak Faith, Yet Sincere<sup>1</sup>

*Archibald Hall*

**S**ince there are various degrees of faith, it must be false and dangerous reasoning for people to conclude that they are not believers, because they

<sup>2</sup>The reference is to the fellowship meetings often held on the Friday of a communion season, and sometimes in the past at other times.

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

are not strong in faith. But “if the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?” If a child should say, Because I have not the strength or stature of a grown person, I am not of the human race; is it therefore not of the human race? Similarly, if a weak believer should say, Because I am not strong in faith, I have no part in Christ; is he therefore without any part in Christ?

This sort of reasoning is false, because there are many members of the body and yet but one body. There are different degrees of strength and stature in different stages of human life, and there are both strong and weak believers in the body of Christ. It is true that the foot is not the hand, the ear is not the eye, a child has neither the stature nor strength of a grown person, and a Christian of little faith is not strong in faith. But as the foot and the hand, the ear and the eye, belong to one body, as childhood and manhood are different stages of the same life and nature of man, so the strength and weakness of faith are characteristics of the same faith of the operation of God. Therefore it must be unreasonable to allow that there are different degrees in the faith of believers, and yet to suppose that there is no real faith unless it is great. Our Lord speaks of having faith as a grain of mustard seed, which implies that it may be little where it is real and sincere.

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## Chorazin and Bethsaida<sup>1</sup>

*J Julius Wood*

Luke 10:13. *Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.*

**T**yre and Sidon were two famous towns, situated at the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. They were in that portion of Canaan which fell to the tribe of Asher, but the ancient inhabitants, the Phoenicians, were never dispossessed by the Israelites. They became exceedingly rich and powerful, and at the same time exceedingly proud, luxurious and corrupt. They never recovered their ancient glory after they were destroyed by Alexander the Great and, in the Saviour’s time, they were poor, miserable, little towns.

Chorazin and Bethsaida were towns of Galilee, visited by Jesus Christ and the scenes of many of His miracles, but the men and women of these towns seem to have been unmoved by the words they heard from Him who spoke

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from *The Christian’s Daily Companion*. Wood (1800-1877) was, at the time when he wrote this piece, minister of New Greyfriars’ church in Edinburgh.

as never man spoke. And they seem to have gazed with wonder on His miracles, and then gone away to sin as before. The wondrous works that Christ did in them, though accompanied by His divine teaching, produced no general reformation of their lives. He found them wicked; He called them earnestly, affectionately, powerfully to repentance, by His teaching and His miracles and, notwithstanding all, He left them as wicked as He found them.

Then he uttered against them the solemn woe that we have read. When He spoke these words, Chorazin and Bethsaida were fair and flourishing towns, and the hum of a busy population was heard in their streets. But a woe denounced by the lips of the compassionate Saviour is a fearful thing. It falls where it is thoroughly deserved, and it blasts, like the lightning, the things, the places, the persons on whom it falls. For where is Chorazin now? Where Bethsaida? Utterly perished. No one can even tell where they stood. Travellers dispute which of the ruins that they visit were once Chorazin and Bethsaida.

The heathen towns of Tyre and Sidon, and the Jewish towns of Chorazin and Bethsaida have all been visited with destruction. They have been so visited for the sinfulness of their inhabitants. But Chorazin and Bethsaida enjoyed advantages which Tyre and Sidon did not have. The latter towns indeed, were near the land of Israel, and their idolatry might have been rebuked by the worship which the Israelites paid to the living and true God. But in the streets of Chorazin and Bethsaida, the Son of God often taught; and in testimony that He was a teacher sent by God, He wrought many wonderful works before their eyes. There was not such a display of hardened and daring wickedness in Tyre and Sidon, when they resisted the influence of their intercourse with the Israelites, as there was in Chorazin and Bethsaida when they resisted the divine teaching of the Son of God and the many striking miracles of mercy which He wrought among them.

Had matters been reversed, or had Tyre and Sidon enjoyed the teaching and beheld the miracles of Christ, as did Chorazin and Bethsaida, He declares that these heathen towns would have repented a long while before. That they did not enjoy such advantages was the will of God. They had means, but did not make use of them, and therefore they perished in their sins. But deeper was the guilt, and heavier the condemnation of Chorazin and Bethsaida, who despised and resisted means and privileges so exceedingly great as those which these Jewish towns enjoyed, and which would have prevailed to bring to repentance the luxurious and corrupt heathen towns of Tyre and Sidon.

We do not profess to explain how these means would have been effectual to produce repentance in the one case, when they were not so in the other. We believe Christ that things would have been as He says. His word on this,

as on every other point, is enough for us. May the Lord ever preserve us from the pride which refuses instruction, because God's ways are deeper than our understanding.

But do no towns except Chorazin and Bethsaida neglect privileges and reject means of grace? Have none but the inhabitants of these towns turned a deaf ear to heaven's calls to repentance? It is easy to find fault with others: it is safer to judge ourselves. There are towns in our countries which equal, or perhaps surpass, Tyre and Sidon in wealth, luxury and commercial greatness. Much awful wickedness is to be found in these towns and, if a number of those who are the salt of the earth were not to be found in them, and who preserve them from utter putrefaction and corruption, we might expect those towns speedily to share the fate of Tyre and Sidon.

Indeed, with regard to religious privileges, the towns of our land are as highly favoured as were Chorazin and Bethsaida.<sup>2</sup> For though the mind dwells with a pleasing fondness on the personal teaching of Jesus Christ, it cannot be doubted that a fuller and clearer revelation of the gospel was given after His resurrection than was previously unfolded.

And what was taught to the apostles is now freely and fully taught to us. We do not behold with our eyes the miracles which Jesus Christ wrought in the towns of Judah; we do not hear the living voice of the Son of God. But we profess to believe (but do we really believe?) that these miracles were assuredly wrought by Jesus Christ; and we read and hear a fuller statement of divine truth than it was consistent with the divine will that the Son of God should make, when He tabernacled as a man on the earth. How then shall they escape who neglect so great salvation? Was it only with Chorazin and Bethsaida, and their inhabitants, that God was displeased? Is there no risk of His being angry, even to destruction, with towns and persons in the present day, who are as guilty as they? As guilty? No, guiltier. For Chorazin and Bethsaida never acknowledged the direct authority of Jesus Christ, whose miracles and teaching they resisted.

But how many of us profess to acknowledge the divinity of Christ and admit that He is the only Saviour and that His doctrine unfolds the only way of a sinner's escape from hell and of admission into heaven – yet treat Christ and His doctrine with utter coldness and indifference. It was a fearful sin to refuse altogether Christ, His miracles and His teaching, treating Him as an impostor. But surely it is a sin more fearful still to admit that Christ is a divine Saviour and that His doctrine is absolutely necessary to our eternal well-being and to neglect or despise Him notwithstanding.

Who is guilty of this fearful sin? Is it I? Do I not admit the reality of

<sup>2</sup>Note that this was written around 1840.

Christ's miracles, of which the Gospel writers testify? Do I not hear many a time, in terms plain and earnest, the doctrines of the gospel; and do I not accept the heavenly origin of these doctrines, and their unspeakable importance to sinners of mankind? Yet these miracles have, in truth, had as little weight with me as if they had been the tricks of an impostor. I have many a time heard the glorious gospel with less attention than I have given to an idle tale; and its statements, warnings, entreaties, promises, threatenings, examples, revelations do not affect my heart nor influence my conduct. My Bible, how little it is prized, read, pondered, understood, believed, obeyed, enjoyed! My Sabbaths, how little they are my delight! My minister, the Lord's servant and messenger, how carelessly I hear him, how little I thoroughly believe him, and to how small an extent obey his teaching!

So then I am not free from the sin of Chorazin and Bethsaida. Am I safe from their woe? No voice is heard proclaiming it against me, but is it therefore not in existence? It has not yet come; is that a reason for believing that it will never come? Methinks I hear the Saviour saying to me and to my fellow sinners: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish". May the example not be lost! May the call not be refused or neglected!

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## Book Review

*Near to God, Nine True Stories of a Wonderful Discovery*, compiled by Richard Bennett & Martin Buckingham, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, booklet, 61 pages, £2.50, obtainable from the F P Bookroom.

This booklet contains nine conversion accounts of former Roman Catholic priests. All were previously published in a larger volume, *Far from Rome Near to God*, which contains 50 such accounts.

It is good when Roman Catholics are being brought to realise the need "to separate themselves from the errors of [Roman] Catholicism", as one of the priests whose accounts are printed here expressed part of their experience. We may not approve of everything these people were involved in – for example, going forward to "receive the Lord as Saviour" at an evangelistic meeting, but all of them had much to learn, given the background from which they came.

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It is easy to invite rebels to return to God if there be a keeping out of view of the cause of the quarrel between the rebels and God.

There would come a time in eternity when we would be tired of the enjoyment of God if there was not an infinity in Him.

*John Duncan*

## Notes and Comments

### Repentance

In December 2023, John Stevens, National Director of The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC), wrote an article in the publication, *Premier Christianity*, on the Church of England General Synod's decision to allow a trial of prayers to "bless" same-sex relationships. In the article he said, "It is important to be clear that it is not sexual sin that disqualifies people from the kingdom of God, but the failure to repent and to receive the forgiveness Christ offers. To continue to live in sin, proudly refusing to repent, is a sure sign that a person is not in the kingdom. This is true not just for sexual sin, but other sins which are equally contrary to the clearly revealed will of God." He added, "To allow people to think that they can enjoy forgiveness and the gift of eternal life while continuing in sexual sin is not loving".

In a follow-up article for *Premier Christianity*, Jayne Ozanne, Director of the Ozanne Foundation (which supports LGBTQ+ organisations) and a former member of the Church of England Synod, who describes herself as a "gay evangelical", took exception to Mr Stevens' suggestion that repentance was necessary for salvation, saying she wanted to share the "good news" that repentance is not "central to our salvation". She argues that the thief on the cross did not repent; he acknowledged that he had done wrong, recognised who Jesus was and asked to be with Him. But according to her, he did not repent, and this is an example of the unconditional love of Jesus.

She goes on to say, "Discerning whether or not something is a sin that needs repenting of is a different matter. The key thing, though, is that if repentance is not a salvation matter, Christians can agree to disagree on what is or is not sinful without it causing such huge ruptures in the Church. A prime example of this relates to the question of sex between two loving adults of the same sex who are in a committed relationship. I personally believe this is something God wants to bless and celebrate; others don't. We are never likely to agree on this, but if it is not a salvation issue, we should be able to agree to disagree and move forward."

So there we have it; according to people like Miss Ozanne, we are at liberty to agree among ourselves about what is sinful, and therefore there is no need for upheavals in the Church of Christ. The law of God is to be regarded as flexible, to be disregarded or interpreted as we wish, because the love of Christ is without conditions. According to Ozanne's version of the gospel, there is no need for repentance even if Christ loves us savingly, a version very attractive and appealing to the natural heart.

However, "what saith the Scripture"? "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye

repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” (Lk 13:5). “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in [Christ’s] name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Lk 24:47). Repentance does not save one, faith in Christ does, but none are saved who do not have repentance. It has been said that the sorrow of repentance and the joy of remission of sins are inseparable twins until the day of death. Hebrews 6:1 speaks of “the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God”. The message that Christ came with was: “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt 4:17). We can leave it at that, but there are many more Scripture examples of the call to, and the necessity of, repentance.

The advocates of the LGBTQ+ cause may re-interpret the Word of God in whatever way they wish, in an endeavour to neutralise what the Lord calls sin, but God will have the last word, and He “commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). *FRD*

### **Education’s Necessary Relationship to God and the Bible**

Education in the schools, colleges and universities of the United Kingdom is, for the most part, no longer Christian. This is also true of education at every level in much of the world.

Many Christians would agree that education should ideally be distinctively Christian. However, they are concerned lest that might mean their children would receive a sub-standard education. Others would argue that all education should be unashamedly Christian and biblically-based but with standards of education that are at least on a level with the best of other academic institutions. There would be but few seriously minded Christians who would doubt the need for Christian Education: the difficulty lies with the many significant and practical problems associated with providing Christian Education in our day.

Recognition should be made of the Christian teachers and others who have done their utmost to ensure that biblical standards have been maintained as far as possible, notwithstanding the significant opposition many have encountered: they are to be complimented for their sterling endeavours, as should be the endeavours in this connection being made by our Church.

Arguments for Christian education today would be akin to those propounded by our godly forebears during the Protestant Reformation and the following centuries. They appreciated the need for youth to be educated, and educated correctly in the fear of God. Accordingly, they established schools and other institutions of learning and provided teachers to give instruction based on the Bible and the Church’s confessional standards.

Like us, they believed that the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word are to be

demonstrably central in every area of life. Everything that relates to man and his life here in this world is to be viewed directly and indirectly in its relationship to Almighty God and the complete revelation He has given of Himself in His Word, the Holy Bible. This is our God's clear mandate, which the Church of God is required to proclaim and advocate vigorously to all peoples worldwide in every generation. There is no room for compromise or to question such an essential foundation as the Holy Bible.

Almighty God is infinite in all His being. He is infinite in His wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. Therefore man can have no comprehension or even proper conception of any facet of wisdom, knowledge and understanding if these terms are not defined by, based upon and directly related to God and the revelation of Himself in His Word, the Holy Scriptures.

Throughout the world, there is an almost immeasurably vast array of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding on numerous subjects available to man. But even this stupendously great body of material in its totality is to be seen as comparatively nothing when contrasted with Almighty God's complete, utterly comprehensive, infinite comprehension of all things – from all eternity! He is infinite: there is nothing that He does not know. Therefore, whatever knowledge men or women acquire, be they of the most outstanding intellect, who have spent the entirety of their lives researching their fields of expertise, they will have derived all that they profess to know about these subjects from the resources that God (their Lord and Creator) has Himself provided. Thus it will not be new knowledge, a new understanding, or new wisdom, unknown or only partially known before, but what has been, from everlasting, fully comprehended in God's infinite knowledge, understanding and wisdom.

Sadly, in most schools, colleges, and universities in our land and overseas, the subjects on the curricula are taught and often required to be taught as though nothing in them has any direct or indirect reference to God the Creator or to the Bible. God and the Bible should therefore be completely ignored, and everything should be taught from what they call a wholly neutral perspective: with no definitive standards of truth and morality, everything can be examined neutrally. However, there is no such thing as neutrality: one cannot operate in a spiritual vacuum. Therefore pupils and students are educated without reference to the being of God and the Bible, which is a most biased perspective that leans wholly toward the humanistic antagonism that characterises atheistic rebellion.

Whilst Christian and biblical perspectives are wholly ignored, the demonic and mystical religions of Mother Earth, occultism, luck and fortune are more likely to be mentioned with favour than the one true and living God, our



Creator and Lord! Therefore the great majority of the pupils and students in our educational institutions are taught what is mainly humanistic or heathen, and indeed anti-Christian. Education needs to be accurate and balanced, and therefore it needs to be Christian and not the atheistic brainwashing that fits so well with the “woke” mentality prevalent among many engaged in the instruction of the young today. Of course, this is nothing new, but there has been an increasingly significant slide into this mischievous morass of deceptive and unscriptural teaching in recent years.

Whether professing Christianity or not, our children, grandchildren, and all the young of our lands need to be taught, to the highest standards, what is true, accurate and beneficial. Therefore, notwithstanding all the many difficulties, let us pray that as at the time of the Reformation, all that is taught in the home, church, workplace and educational institutions will be founded upon God and His Word. We are God’s creation; He is our lawgiver. He has revealed in His Word what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man.

Since concluding the draft for this note, the writer has found an excellent paper on the subject, “The Myth of Religious Neutrality”, by Tim Dieppe, Head of Public Policy at Christian Concern. It may be downloaded at: <https://d.pr/ALaxwi>. *DPR*

### **Genetic Diseases**

In recent years, an increasing number of “monogenetic” diseases have been identified. These are diseases that arise from the possession of a single abnormal gene. Depending on the circumstances, the possessor of the abnormal gene may not manifest the disease but is likely to pass it on to the next generation. Thus loving parents find that they have entailed an unpleasant health-problem on their children and grandchildren; and the same disease may recur down the generations of a family.

As in so many other areas, the natural world is here providing an illustration of the spiritual world. We are all naturally under the imputed guilt of Adam’s sin (“As in Adam all die” (1 Cor 15:22)), and we all inherit Adam’s spiritually dead and corrupt nature (“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Ps 51:5)). Furthermore, in providence, God often deals with subsequent generations according to the conduct of their forebears: “Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them

that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments” (Deut 5:8-10).

These spiritual truths are generally denied by an ignorant world which fails to make the spiritual connection between parents and children. The genetic discoveries, however, are showing that there is a very close connection between the generations in natural diseases, and why not then in spiritual matters? God does not make a fresh biological start with each generation; neither does He make a fresh spiritual start. We have to live with the spiritual legacy of those that have gone before, and especially of Adam, and others will have to live with our spiritual legacy. *DWBS*

## Church Information

### Meeting of Presbytery (DV)

**Outer Isles:** At Stornoway, on Tuesday, February 27, at 11 am.

### Synod Committee Meetings

Synod committees will meet, DV, as follows:

#### **Tuesday, March 26:**

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

#### **Wednesday, March 27**

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

### Bookroom Fund

By appointment of Synod, the Special Collection on behalf of the Bookroom Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during February.

*W Campbell*, General Treasurer

### Acknowledgement of Donations

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

*Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, for Odessa congregation, £66, £50.

*General Fund:* Anon, £95.

*Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Friends from Australia, for the work of the gospel in Zimbabwe, £200.

*Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £145.

## 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 Opland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743; tel: 02 7432 5625.

**Gisborne**: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev C Hembd, 5 Goldsmith St, Elgin, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140; mobile: 022 409 1336.

**Tauranga**: For services, contact Rev J D Smith; tel: 09 282 4195.

### Singapore

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

### Ukraine

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

### Zimbabwe

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

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

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

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

**Zenka**: Church.

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