

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

Contents

God’s Greatness (2)	65
“Surely I Come Quickly A Sermon by <i>Rev H M Cartwright</i>	68
Theodore Beza A Review Article by <i>Roy Middleton</i>	76
Synod of Dordt & Arminian Controversy 3. The Canons of Dordt <i>Jan Freeke</i>	80
Keeping the Heart (2) <i>John Flavel</i>	84
Book Reviews: <i>Beholding His Glory</i> by <i>J K Popham</i>	87
<i>A Very Present Help</i> by <i>Sir William Dobbie</i>	89
Congregational Contributions for 2023	90
The Force of Truth <i>W K Tweedie</i>	92
Notes and Comments	93
Church Information	96

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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: Beaulay; **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 (2)

God has revealed Himself in creation, but He has revealed Himself much more fully in the Scriptures. It is in the light of God's revelation, especially in the Bible, that we are to obey the call of Deuteronomy 32:3: "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God". So, as we noted last month, 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. We then went on to consider God's greatness in relation to three of His attributes: (1) His power, (2) His justice and (3) His mercy. Let us now go on to consider the greatness of God in some of His other attributes.

4. God is infinitely great in His *knowledge*. The Apostle John wrote, "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (1 Jn 3:20). Matthew Poole interprets *heart* here as referring to the conscience; so if our conscience wrongly judges our thinking or our behaviour, God will not judge wrongly, because He knows everything and understands it all perfectly. We are to bear this in mind always: God knows us; He sees all we are doing; He hears all that we are saying and understands all that we are thinking. Jeremiah confessed that about himself: "Thou, O Lord, knowest me: Thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward Thee" (Jer 12:3).

We should acknowledge this about ourselves in particular. We may use the words of Hagar: "Thou God seest me" (Gen 16:13), but we must acknowledge that He knows not only where we are but also our sins and our spiritual condition in every detail. This is not only relevant at the present moment but particularly when we will all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, when "the books" – which contain God's perfect record of all that we have done, said and thought during our time in this world – are opened. It means that the judgement to be pronounced on each of us at the last day of this world's existence will be absolutely in accordance with the facts of the case. All will be done in perfect justice.

As God knows everything about His children and all their circumstances, they can go to Him with confidence, whatever their situation may be. So David went before the Lord in prayer when he had got into a very difficult

position in Gath. He knew that God knew the situation perfectly and was able to deliver him. So he recorded with great thankfulness: “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles” (Ps 34:6). David Dickson comments (on Ps 34:17): “The Lord putteth the godly to trouble, and by trouble putteth them to their prayers, and delays till the need be great; and then they cry to the Lord, and He giveth evidence of His hearing, and sendeth deliverance”. This reflects the Lord’s complete knowledge of what is best for His people; He knows when it is best to send trouble; He knows how long it is best to let the trouble continue; and He knows how it is best to send the deliverance. It was so for David; it is so for God’s children today.

5. God is infinitely great in His *wisdom*. Wisdom is the capacity we may have to use our knowledge to the best effect. So God’s wisdom, or understanding, is His capacity to use His infinite knowledge in what is the best possible way. The Psalmist sang, “Great is our Lord . . . His understanding is infinite” (Ps 147:5). And W S Plumer remarks on this verse: “What a joy to the tempted, the imperilled, the perplexed, that to the Almighty no subject is complex, no proposition is doubtful”.¹

God has shown His wisdom in the way He created, in particular, the universe, the earth and the human body, though so many people today refuse to acknowledge this. They prefer to accept that everything has come into existence by a long series of random, undirected events. Such people may show great wisdom when studying the details of nature, but show no wisdom in recognising that the Creator of all things is the eternal God – to whom they are responsible, yet that is a truth that they want to avoid.

But God shows His wisdom especially in devising a way of salvation for fallen sinners, where justice perfectly harmonises with mercy. Sinners are saved in a way whereby the perfect righteousness of God was completely preserved. This was by giving His own Son to take the place of sinners, to bear away their guilt through His sufferings and death, and in keeping the law as their Substitute. Praise will go out to God throughout eternity for, in particular, His wisdom in devising this plan of salvation and in applying the benefits of Christ’s finished work until every last elect sinner is brought into the kingdom of God.

6. God is infinitely great in His *truth*. When God was revealing Himself to Moses, He declared He was “abundant in . . . truth” (Ex 34:6) – infinitely so. Perfect in truth as He is, everything He says is according to truth; nothing is false; nothing deviates from the truth in the slightest degree. That is why we can rely totally on the Bible, of which He is the primary Author. Whether

¹Plumer, *Psalms*, Banner of Truth 1975 reprint, p 1200.

what He reveals is about creation, sin or salvation, heaven or hell, or any other matter, we can be sure that it is perfectly true.

In particular, God's promises are always true; He is always faithful to what He has promised. So if God promised Joshua: "The Lord, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee" (Deut 31:8), we must expect that He will be faithful to this undertaking. He is the God that "cannot lie" (Tts 1:2). And God *was* with Joshua; He led him on safely until the land of Canaan was largely conquered and Israel could settle down there. What is more, these promises to Joshua are directed to all the children of God, according to their circumstances; He will not fail them. He will, in His faithfulness lead them on safely until He brings them to the rest that remains for the people of God in heaven.

Some application. We have demonstrated from Scripture a little of the greatness of God. Clearly we are then to ascribe greatness to Him. He is to be worshipped; as Psalm 95 tells us, "the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. . . . O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker" (vv 3,6). And David Dickson points out that "religious kneeling is a part of divine worship, whereby we testify our absolute submission unto, and highest giving of honour to, God in [our] soul and body; and this honour is incommunicable to any creature".

In Deuteronomy 32, already quoted, Moses directs the Israelites to command their children to observe the law. Every generation is obliged to pass on to their children the law of the God of infinite greatness and to pass on a sense of that infinite greatness. For several generations now, there has been little sense of that infinite greatness and of His creatorship, as what gives authority to His law. Not least, in contemporary society, little effort is being made to pass on that sense. This is what leaves present-day society in such a moral quagmire and, not till that sense of God's greatness is restored, will society have some appearance of sanity.

Mankind does not like the idea of God's greatness. He wishes to feel in control of his own destiny and to feel independent of any superior power. But God has said, "I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow" (Is 45:23). All must submit to the greatness of God. How good it would be for sinners, each of us in particular, to submit *now* to the authority of the great God while He still offers mercy for the sake of Christ, who says, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved" (Is 45:22)! How very much better for sinners to believe in Him rather than to go on in rebellion until it is too late, and then pass on into the blackness of darkness for ever! Then they must bow their knee to Him, as captives who cannot resist His righteous judgements.

“Surely I Come Quickly”¹

A Sermon by Rev H M Cartwright

Revelation 22:20. *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

The book we usually call the Revelation has its title in the first two verses: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass. And He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John, who bare record of the Word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ and of all things that he saw.” The Revelation was given by God. And there are three witnesses to that revelation mentioned. There is Jesus Christ, there is His angel, and there is His servant John. These three witnesses appear throughout the book, and they appear in the chapter which we have read.

Whether the speaker is Jesus Christ Himself or His angel or His servant John makes no difference to the authority of what is said, because in each case it is the Word of God that is spoken. In this chapter we have words similar to our text in verse 7, “Behold, I come quickly”, and again in verse 12, “Behold, I come quickly”. And these words seem to be quoted by the angel or else spoken by the Lord while the angel is speaking. But there is no doubt at all that it is Himself who speaks directly in the verse before us here, “He which testifieth these things”. This is the true and faithful witness, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is truth itself, and He says, “Surely I come quickly”. On behalf of the Church, John responds to the Lord Jesus by saying, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” We have here what we might describe as the last words spoken by Christ to His Church.

We might try to think a little of: (1.) The Lord’s assurance to His people, “Surely I come quickly”. (2.) Their response to that assurance, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” (3.) The reason for that response. We believe we find that reason in the view they have of Christ: He is their Lord Jesus. Perhaps this would be blessed to help us answer the inquiry as to whether or not we can join with John in this response to the intimation that Christ is coming.

1. The Lord’s assurance to His people. He says, “Surely I come quickly”. He desires His people to be in no doubt about the matter. He is making it as certain as possible. Indeed, we have no stronger guarantee of anything than the Word of the Lord. If the Lord has said something, it will come to pass. Nothing can hinder Him accomplishing what He has promised. Nothing can slow down the accomplishment of His purposes. Nothing outside of Himself

¹Preached in Edinburgh on 17 December 2006

can interfere with His purposes. Everything is embraced within His purposes. And when He says, “Surely”, then it certainly will come to pass, – no matter how people may put it out of their minds, no matter how it may seem to be contradicted by the things that happen. The Lord desires us to have this firm ground under our feet to be able to stand on – that He has said it. He who testifies these things, the faithful and true witness, says, “Surely I come quickly”.

Now what does He mean when He says, “I come”? We have to notice that the Lord is speaking in the present. He is not saying, I will come. He says, I am coming. There is no doubt this will be ultimately fulfilled in His coming again at the end of human history. This is perhaps much more prominent in the Bible than in our own thinking. It is found in the Old Testament, but there the first and second comings of Christ often seem to be telescoped together – the people were looking forward to the coming Saviour. In these prophecies, you have some aspects which belong to His first appearing; others belong to His second appearing. That becomes clear in the light of the New Testament, where the Lord Himself and His apostles make very clear that He shall come again in like manner as He ascended into heaven. He came in a state of humiliation, and He will come in a state of glory.

When we think about the second coming of Christ, to summon us to resurrection, judgement and our eternal state, we find the Bible describes this as a single event at the end of time, and that it is going to be a personal return on the part of the Lord Jesus Christ. This same Jesus who died on the cross of Calvary, who rose from the dead, who ascended up on high, shall come again. It will be a visible appearing. Every eye shall see Him – not only His friends, but also His foes; not only those that were looking for Him, but those who never heard of Him. No one needs to say Christ has come.

You get all sorts of sects and cults, with all their notions about the second coming of Christ. The Lord Jesus knew what was to happen and He said, You do not need to listen to people who say that He has come, that He is in the wilderness or in the mountains. When He comes, no one will be in any doubt about the matter. Every eye shall see Him, those also which pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him, because the second, personal, physical, visible coming of Christ will be the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He will appear in the glory of His Father and of His holy angels, accompanied by His saints. His appearing will make it apparent to all that He is the great God, the King of kings and Lord of lords. And that coming of Christ will bring time to a conclusion, bring this world to its end, and bring us all before the judgement seat. Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory,

and before Him will be gathered all nations, and He will separate between the sheep and the goats, He will separate between His people and those who were strangers to Him. He will say to the one: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you". And He will say to the other: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and His angels". Yes, there is a day when the Lord Jesus will come, in His glory, as the exalted Redeemer, as the Judge of all. That is what He is saying, I come. His coming is certain. We do not know when, but we know that, at the time appointed by the Father, the Lord Jesus shall come again.

As we suggested already, He is not saying, I will come, but, "I am coming"; in other words, I am on the way. That is the message of Revelation: what we see in the unfolding of the purposes of God in the Church and in the world is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is approaching in every event. He is coming to His people. Every event is bringing His arrival nearer. Many things will take place before this event. The Lord Jesus comes to the individual believer in His providence and in the effectual call of His grace. That, of course, is what brings a sinner to the Saviour – when the Lord Jesus comes in the power of His Spirit and regenerates the soul, puts the cords of His grace and love around that soul and draws it effectually to Himself. For most of human history, the Lord comes to take the souls of His people to glory. These are all steps towards this final coming. When He comes to call the soul effectually, when He comes to visit the soul from time to time, when He comes to bring the soul to glory, these are all steps towards the ultimate coming for the child of God.

And the same is true in the grander scale of the Church and the world. Many things are taking place and we tend to think of them as moving towards the end; whereas when we see it from the Lord's side of things, what we see is Himself coming towards us. These events are His "steps of majesty". He comes, "leaping upon the mountain, skipping upon the hills". That was one way that Samuel Rutherford used to think of the coming of Christ. These seventeenth-century men thought a lot about Christ's second coming. They were very much taken up with the affairs of the Church in this world, looking forward to the overthrow of Antichrist, to the ingathering of the Gentiles, to a great work of grace among the Jews and to times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, as we look forward ourselves. But they never lost sight of the fact that all these things were steps towards the coming of Christ at last. And their desire was for His coming. Samuel Rutherford used to say, "O that the Lord would be sweeping up all the ages and centuries before Him and coming in His mighty power".

In the Old Testament, of course, they were looking for His coming, and

they must have thought He was long in coming. Yet, as we see in the Song of Solomon, He was coming, “leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills”. The Lord was progressing towards His first coming. They were looking for Him, looking for redemption, waiting for Him. And now it is His second coming that is in the future. And everything that takes place is a step towards this final appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He says, “Surely I come”. I am coming. I am on the way. And the child of God on the personal level can take all the experiences through which he or she passes as intimations that He is coming, that He is on the way for them. And so can the Church at large: “I come”.

He says, “I come quickly”. It is almost 2000 years since these words were uttered. People seem to think that this book was probably written about 100 AD, a long time ago. Yet the Lord Jesus said to John: “I come quickly”. He is hurrying. He is not delaying. Of course, there are those who say, as Peter records, “Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation”. But His caution was, “One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish” – the longsuffering of God.

But the Lord Jesus is coming quickly when you think of it in relation to eternity. The whole of human history is just a flash, in comparison to eternity. We talk about eternity, but who can grasp the concept? It brings that home to us when we think of the whole history of this world. Supposing it has existed as long as some of these people are saying, millions and billions of years – and we do not believe it for one moment – what is that compared to eternity? Eternity cannot be measured. Christ is coming, and every step of His way is taken precisely at the moment ordained by Him from all eternity. That is what He means, we believe, when He says, “I come quickly”. There is no hesitation, no delay. Nothing happens a moment behind the appointed time. The assurance that the Lord Jesus Christ is giving to His Church on earth is: He is coming; He is on the way. All the events that take place are the steps of majesty of our God and our mighty King.

2. The response of the Church to the assurance. It is: “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Certainly that word, *Amen*, can either be the conclusion of what the Lord said or the beginning of what John said on behalf of the Church. It is a word of affirmation or one expressing our concurrence and desire. We take it along with what follows: *Amen* – so let it be – “Even so, come, Lord Jesus”. The words *surely* and *even so* are the same word. The Church is echoing what the Lord had said. I noticed a very good comment

by Matthew Henry: "What comes to us from heaven in a promise should be sent by us to heaven in a prayer". He says that is what is happening here. The Lord said, "Surely I come quickly". And the Church is saying, "Surely", or, "Even so", "come, Lord Jesus."

This is the kind of prayer that can look for an answer, one that turns back a promise to the God who has given it. That was David's way of praying. "O Lord", he said, "do as Thou hast said." And that is the desire in the heart of the child of God: that He would do what He has said. We dare not ask for something that He has not said, but when we have His promise, we can go to the throne of grace, to the very court of heaven, with that promise. We can be sure that, if it is His promise, He will be faithful to it. And we can say to Him with reverence, and yet with confidence, "Do as Thou hast said". The Lord says, "Surely I come quickly". And the Church says, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" – the desire in the heart for what the Lord has promised.

Now the desire is for the coming of the Lord. That desire is implicit in all that Christians desire. But it should also be explicit; it should be quite clear. The Lord's people are desiring perfect holiness in soul and body. They desire to have unbroken fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, to be able to give themselves soul and body in the service and worship of God. They desire the conversion of all those whom God has given to Christ in the everlasting covenant, and the perfection of the Church and the glory of Christ to be manifested. These are desires in the heart of the child of God, even of the unassured child of God, who questions if he is a child of God at all. Because the Spirit of God is in that person, he or she desires holiness, Christ, the service and worship of God.

All these desires will be met most fully when the Lord Jesus comes. In the day of resurrection, He will gather all His people home to glory. That is when soul and body will be made perfect in holiness, when communion with Christ will never be broken again, when every single member of Christ's body will be found together before the throne of God and of the Lamb, when the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ will be manifested in a way beyond anything that was ever known in this world. Then every single living soul will breathe out this desire, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus".

Not only will the desire say so, but the life also. This is something the Bible emphasises in its references to the coming of Christ. It connects this with the effect it has on the life in making the person desire to be conformed to the likeness of Jesus: "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come". And: "The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us

that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ”. The longing for the coming of Christ manifests itself in the desire and endeavour after new obedience, the desire to be prepared for that place into which nothing shall enter that defiles.

Yet the Lord’s people have it as a conscious desire. They should not be able to rest until they can express their own confidence that they desire not only those things which will be accomplished when He comes, but that they desire His coming. They are looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of the Lord. John says emphatically, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus”. He desires the accomplishment of all that has been promised in the Bible. That will be close to the heart of God’s people when they look around at the world, the Church and themselves. They will desire to see evidences of the coming of the Lord in the accomplishment of what He has promised. That is why they pray for the overthrow of the Antichrist and of the False Prophet, for a great revival of true religion that would gather many in from the Gentile world, for the ingathering of the Jewish people to the Church of Christ – because they believe these things are promised as steps towards the ultimate accomplishment of God’s purpose for the Church in this world. That is why they desire their own growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They look for the coming of the Lord at last.

How can one look for something which they believe will take place once they have died? We tend to think that Christ’s coming is, in temporal terms, perhaps hundreds or thousands of years away. One of the nineteenth-century ministers in Edinburgh, in trying to understand this, pointed out that faith does not take account of temporal distance. We do not have to project our mind over 2000 years, to come to Christ in the exercise of faith. Nobody who has been taught by the Spirit of God ever does so. If you read a book about the Middle Ages, you have to try to project yourself into that time in order to understand it, but nobody has ever felt like that about the revelation of Christ in the Bible. We do not have to project ourselves over 2000 years to come to Christ by faith. The truth about Christ and His coming is set before us in the pages of the Bible, and the sinner is enabled by the grace of God to embrace Christ and the truth about Him as a present reality, as something of present influence in one’s life.

This minister said it is the same with the second coming of Christ. John lived 2000 years ago but he did not have to project His mind through thousands of years so that he could look for Christ’s coming. No, just as faith laid hold of Christ in His first coming, so hope lays hold of Christ in His coming

at last and makes it a present reality. The person does not say, It will not happen for thousands of years and therefore I can put it out of my mind. No, it is the next great event in human history which will involve every one of us; we will all be involved in Christ's second coming, whether we are dead or alive, whether we are Christians or Christless. Believing the fact brings all the implications of that fact into our present experience and makes us live in the light of that certain reality. "Surely I come quickly."

That is why someone on earth today can say with John: "Even so, come". The coming of Christ is an object of desire to the Lord's people. The more they are occupied with it, the more they think about it, the more it becomes part of their whole frame of mind, the more desirable it will become. The Lord says, "Surely I come quickly"; the Church says, "Amen. Even so, come" – saying it in its desires, in its way of living, and consciously.

3. The reason for the response. We believe it is bound up with this view of the Lord Jesus. It is He who said, "Surely I come quickly"; it is to the Lord Jesus that the Church says, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus". It is what Christ is to His people that makes them desire Him and desire all that is involved in His coming. He is their Lord Jesus. Is there not something very precious in this description of the Saviour? He is our God. He is the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity. He is the Lord Jesus.

What we come up against continually in the Bible is the combination of the God of glory and the Saviour of sinners in the one Person. He is Lord of all and the Saviour of His people, and He is drawing His people to Himself. He has made Himself known to them as their Saviour and as their Lord. They have come to trust in Him as their Saviour and submitted to Him as their Lord. These things cannot be separated. The faith that receives Christ as Jesus, as Saviour, submits to Him as Lord and God. Where there is reliance upon Him for justification, there will also be a concern to be sanctified, to be submissive to His will, to be governed by His law and that is the effect of effectual calling; Jesus Christ becomes the Lord Jesus to us. He is all our salvation and He is our Lord and God. When Christ is that to someone, he has desires for the Saviour which culminate in this desire for His glory as it will be manifested when He appears at the end of time.

James Durham wrote a commentary on the Book of Revelation. He was a seventeenth-century man of the same calibre and character, we believe, as Rutherford. When he was dying, one of the last things he said was that he wanted a statement put at the end of his book on Revelation – this address which he made to his own soul, to the effect that the Lord Jesus had been saying, and was still saying, to him, "Come", and that in response, he desired to say to the Lord Jesus: "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly".

That is the secret of this desire in the soul of the Christian. However consciously or unconsciously, however confident or lacking in confidence it may be, there is this desire for Christ and for His coming which is the effect of Christ having called the soul to Himself. The Lord Jesus says, “Come”, to His people, and they cannot say anything else to Him. That is what John is doing here: “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

When we try to consider where we are in relation to this, surely there is much encouragement for the Lord’s people, in the assurance that everything that takes place in their personal lives, in the Church and in the world, is summed up in these words of Jesus, “I come quickly”. Whether Satan or the enemies of God are involved, whether it is on the personal level or on the world’s level, everything that takes place echoes the words of Jesus, “Surely I come quickly”. Everything is moving inevitably towards the conclusion He has in mind; nothing hinders His purposes; nothing keeps Him back from His people. There is much encouragement here for believers.

Perhaps there is something to give us some direction as to how we may enter more and more into the spirit of these words, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus”. Some of the Lord’s people feel that this is something they cannot really say because they feel so uncertain about themselves and there are aspects of His coming which terrify them. But what creates, nourishes and strengthens this desire is for the person to be taken up with the Lord Jesus Himself. The more familiar we become with Christ, the more precious He becomes to us, and the more communication there is between us and Him, the more free we will feel our souls in giving expression to this desire, “Come”. Its absence is because there is so often a distance between us and the Saviour. Do you ever feel a distance between you and the Saviour – as if He is a stranger? “Why shouldest Thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?” Do the Lord’s people not have to say sometimes, if they are honest, We are virtually strangers.

When did He last speak to us? When did we last speak to Him? When did our soul last find itself able to say, “I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine”. When that is the case, is it any wonder that we find these words sticking in our throats, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus”? The more we have dealings with Him, the more we see of His preciousness, the more we trust in Him, the more we love Him, the more this will be the breathing of our hearts after Him: “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Indeed that is probably the answer to most of the problems we have in our spiritual experience and most of the problems we have in the Church, that we are not taken up with Christ enough. Yes, He is precious to us, but how precious do we feel Him to be? The more we know of Him and the more we

are taken up with Him, the more ready our souls will be to say, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus”.

These words surely have something to say to those who are strangers to Christ and without God and without hope. He says, “Surely I come quickly”, and sooner or later, inevitably, all of us will be caught up in the events of His coming. We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ – whether our souls have been in eternity for generations, as far as this world is concerned, or we were still alive, whether we are Christ’s or not, whether we were looking for His coming or not – each and every one of us will be witnesses and participants in this event. The following words apply to saints and sinners: “When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe . . . in that day” (2 Th 1:7-10).

Saints and sinners will be caught up in the events which will bring human history to a conclusion and surely it should be a very solemn question to us, a very solemn matter of concern: Where will we appear in that day and what will be the consequences for us of the coming of the Lord?

Theodore Beza¹

A Review Article by *Roy Middleton*

This biography of Theodore Beza by Henry Martyn Baird is rather surprisingly still the only full-scale biography in English of Calvin’s successor at Geneva. Whilst a number of studies, giving a brief sketch of Beza’s life and detailing his theology, have been written, along with very many articles in theological and historical journals about his teaching, this account of his life, first published in 1899, is the only full biography accessible to English readers. Though not stated by Paul Wells in the new introduction to the Banner of Truth edition, Baird’s volume was the fourth in a series of books entitled “Heroes of the Reformation” edited by Samuel Macauley Jackson, and published by G P Putnam’s Sons. It is this series that includes the frequently reprinted life of John Calvin by Williston Walker.

The American historian Henry Martyn Baird (1832–1906) was an ideal

¹A review article of *Theodore Beza: The Counsellor of the French Reformation* by Henry Martyn Baird, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 420 pages, £13.50, and obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

person to write the life of Theodore Beza. Baird is best known as a historian of the Huguenots. He spent eight years of his early youth with his father, Robert Baird, a Presbyterian minister, in Paris and Geneva. In 1850 he graduated from New York University and in 1856 from the Princeton Theological Seminary. Baird's research and writing on the Huguenots appeared in three two-volume sets, entitled respectively, *History of the Rise of the Huguenots of France*² (1879), *The Huguenots and Henry of Navarre* (1886), and *The Huguenots and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes* (1895). His life of Beza was written after his monumental work on the Huguenots. Baird's historical writing has been described as being "characterised by painstaking thoroughness, by a judicial temper, and by scholarship of a high order".³

Theodore Beza (1519-1605) was born in Vezelay, France, and was the seventh child of Pierre Beza and his wife Marie Bourdelot. He was brought up and educated by his uncle, who placed him under the tuition of Melchior Wolmar, the German Lutheran scholar who had already taught John Calvin. After Wolmar left France in 1535, Beza studied law at Orleans and then, in 1539, went to Paris to practise in court, which he did with great success. During this period he received the income from several ecclesiastical benefices, but contrary to canon law he secretly married Claudine Desnoz in 1544. Through the instrumentality of a pamphlet written by Henry Bullinger he embraced the Protestant faith. As a consequence, he found it necessary to break with Roman Catholicism and fled to Geneva in 1548, where he was welcomed with delight by Calvin, who was then at the height of his renown and usefulness.

In 1549 Beza took up residence in Lausanne, where he opened an academy in which he taught Greek. While holding this position, he began to write extensively. His best-known work published during his time at Lausanne is titled, *Concerning the duty of punishment of heretics by the civil magistrate*. It is essentially a defence of Geneva's execution of Michael Servetus. In 1558 he left Lausanne for Geneva. He did so partly because of a disagreement with Pierre Viret, the leading pastor in Lausanne, over the latter's antagonistic attitude to Berne, the city which ruled Lausanne, and partly because he had been offered the position of rector of the newly founded Genevan Academy, a post which he assumed in June 1559, the year in which the definitive Latin edition of Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was published. At the same time Beza was appointed pastor of the city's churches and, following Calvin's death in 1564, he was regarded as his successor for over 40 years until his death in 1605.

²This set was reprinted by Tentmaker Publications in 2007.

³"Baird, Henry Martyn", in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (11th ed, Cambridge University Press).

During his years in Geneva, Beza's career had three distinct aspects.

1. *Leadership in Geneva.* By common consent he was acknowledged as Calvin's successor and the leader of the city's ecclesiastical organisation, being elected annually to the position of president of the Venerable Company of Pastors, until 1590. Up to 1598 he continued to teach in the academy, which under his guidance and direction became one of the most famous of Europe's universities. Baird describes how Calvin and Beza divided the work of the academy in the five years they worked together: "As to Beza he began at once to devote himself to theology. Calvin had for years been teaching this same subject, and he continued to do so, although he was never formally inscribed as a professor. How they divided the instruction between them is not quite certain; but it must have been as Calvin, the author of the entire scheme, had arranged it. The instruction of both was essentially exegetical. Calvin and Beza at first confined themselves to the simple interpretation of the books of the Bible, and successively lectured upon them in alternate weeks. At a later time, while one of the two professors continued to devote himself to exegesis, his colleague treated, in his lectures, the 'common places, or systematic theology'" (p 104).

As a pastor and ecclesiastical leader he was constantly occupied with preaching and administration. Part of his time was also taken up with aiding Protestant refugees who sought safety in the Swiss Republic, particularly those fleeing from the persecutions in France.

2. *Adviser to the French Protestants.* Of equal importance to Beza's labours in Geneva was his work in France. Baird deals very fully with this aspect of his life; indeed, the sub-title of the volume is "Counsellor of the French Reformation". While still in Lausanne (1557), he had taken part in an attempt to rally Protestant rulers in Switzerland and Germany to protest against the French persecution of the Waldenses. In 1561 he led the Protestants in their discussions with the Roman Catholics at the Colloquy of Poissy, at which time he set forth a confession which was still used in the services of some French Protestant churches into the twentieth century. He presided at the Reformed gathering at La Rochelle in 1571, which prepared *The Confession of La Rochelle*, the creed of the French Reformed Churches.

Then in 1586 he participated in the unsuccessful effort at Montbeliard to bring about a union of Reformed and Lutheran churches. Throughout the whole period he acted also as an adviser to Admiral Coligny, the Prince de Condé, and to the other leaders of the French Protestant party during the times of persecution. Beza, addressing a friend and supporter of the Duke of Guise, the persecutor of the Protestants, did so with words which the Churches of France never forgot, but which, through the ages of persecution that were to

follow, they cherished as a motto to sustain their courage. “Sire,” he gravely said, “it belongs in truth to the Church of God, in whose name I speak, to endure blows and not to inflict them. But it will also please your Majesty to remember that she is an anvil that has worn out many hammers” (p 216).

3. *Author.* The third aspect of Beza’s activity was his writing. While not as able as Calvin, he was undoubtedly more learned than Calvin and equally industrious as an author, producing, besides a voluminous correspondence, some 90 published works. Most of these were theological, but some were grammatical and literary. One of his most important writings in French was *The Ecclesiastical History of the Reformed Churches in the Kingdom of France* (1580, 3 vols), and one of the most interesting is his *Life of John Calvin*.⁴ Probably of the greatest significance was his publication in 1565 of the first critical edition of the Greek New Testament, with a Latin translation. For this he had consulted 17 manuscripts as well as variants collected by H Stephanus. Before the second edition was published in 1582, he was able to avail himself of a manuscript of the sixth century which he had discovered at Lyons. This manuscript, which has been given the name of “Codex Bezae”, he presented to Cambridge University in 1581. Baird’s biography also includes a detailed chapter on Beza’s role, along with Clement Marot, in producing the Huguenot Psalter (pp 295-315).

Although Baird does not deal with it, Beza has, since the nineteenth century, frequently been accused of introducing a form of scholasticism into Calvinism – by his careful defining of the divine decree, and the statement of the doctrine of definite, or limited, atonement. This charge has taken the form of asserting that Calvin was not really a Calvinist, and that the real originators of Calvinism were his successors, of whom Beza was one of the leaders. This false construction was refuted in the nineteenth century by William Cunningham, and more comprehensively in recent times by a number of Reformed writers including Paul Helm – and most notably in the extensive writings of Richard Muller, who until his retirement was Professor of Historical Theology at Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids.⁵

Henry Martyn Baird’s biography of Theodore Beza is highly recommended to our readers and is produced to the usual high quality that we have come to expect from the Banner of Truth Trust.

⁴Beza’s biography of Calvin is reprinted in English in John Calvin, *Tracts and Letters*, Banner of Truth Trust, 1983, vol 1, pp xvii-c.

⁵See: William Cunningham, “Calvin and Beza” in *The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation* (Banner of Truth Trust reprint, 1967), pp 345-413; Richard A Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition*, Oxford University Press, 2003, esp pp 63-102; Paul Helm, *Calvin and the Calvinists*, Banner of Truth, 1982.

Synod of Dordt & Arminian Controversy¹

3. The Canons of Dordt

Jan Freeke

5. Canons of Dordt. The Canons cover five heads of doctrine, in reply to the Remonstrance of 1610:

(1.) Election and reprobation. This section teaches *unconditional election, and faith as a sovereign gift of God*. It is important to notice that the Canons take the infralapsarian² position. Article 1.1 states that man is a fallen creature, lying under the curse of God and deserving of eternal death. “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23); “For the wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23). Therefore God would have done no injustice if He had left all men to perish in such a condition.

Immediately after this, the Canons speak in Article 1.2 of the manifestation of the love of God: “He sent His only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (see Jn 3:16). Article 1.3 continues: “And that men may be brought to believe, God mercifully sends the messengers of these most joyful tidings to whom He will and at what time He pleases; by whose ministry men are called to repentance and faith in Christ crucified”. Article 1.6 indicates that there is a two-fold response to the gospel: some believe and others believe not. Or, to put it differently: some receive the gift of faith, and others God leaves “in His just judgement to their own wickedness and obduracy [that is, hardness]. *And herein is especially displayed* the profound, the merciful, and at the same time the righteous discrimination between men, equally involved in ruin; or *that decree of election and reprobation revealed in the Word of God.*”

In Articles 1.7 and 1.9 the doctrine of election is then defined both with respect to what it is not, and what it is. “*This election was not founded upon foreseen faith*, and the obedience of faith, holiness, or any other good quality or disposition in man, as the . . . condition on which it depended.” The Canons point out that the latter are the fruits of election: “He has chosen us [not because we were, but] that we should be holy, and without blame, before Him in love” (Eph 1:4). Election is defined as “the unchangeable purpose of God whereby, before the foundation of the world, *He has . . . chosen, from the whole [fallen] human race . . . a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ*”. “Whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom

¹Based on a lecture given at the Theological Conference in October 2019. Last month’s article covered some developments in the controversy and gave an account of the Synod itself. This article concludes the series.

²See January issue, p 10.

He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified” (Rom 8:30). This election is “out of mere grace, according to the sovereign good pleasure of His own will”.

To those who murmur at the free grace of election and just severity of reprobation, the Canons answer in Article 1.18 with the Apostle Paul: “Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?” (Rom 9:20).

(2.) The death of Christ and man’s redemption. This section teaches that, *while the death of Christ is abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world, the saving efficacy is limited to the elect.*

This section begins, in Articles 2.1 to 2.3, by emphasising that man, who has sinned against God, cannot be saved without satisfaction to divine justice. Man cannot provide this satisfaction. But God, in His infinite mercy, has given “His only begotten Son, for our surety, who was made sin, and became a curse for us and in our stead, that He might make satisfaction to divine justice on our behalf”. This satisfaction is “of infinite worth and value, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world”.

Article 2.5 states that this satisfaction is to be proclaimed. “The promise of the gospel is, that whosoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish, but have everlasting life. This promise, together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel.”

Article 2.8 states that it is the sovereign purpose of God *that the quickening and saving efficacy of the most precious death of His Son should extend to all the elect, and them only.*

(3.) and (4.) Man’s depravity and his conversion to God. These heads of doctrine were purposely combined, because of the close relationship between the two. This section teaches that *all men are so totally depraved and corrupted by sin, that they cannot effect any part of their salvation. In sovereign grace God irresistibly calls and regenerates the elect to newness of life.*

Articles 3.1 to 3.3 state that man was created after the image of God. But through the Fall, he has become “wicked, rebellious and obdurate [hardened] in heart and will, and impure in his affections”. This corruption is passed on to man’s offspring, not by imitation, but by propagation of a vicious nature. “Therefore, all men are conceived in sin, and by nature [are] children of wrath, incapable of saving good, prone to evil, dead in sin, and in bondage thereto and without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, they are neither able nor willing to return to God.”

In Articles 3.4 to 3.6 it is stated that the light of nature and the law of God

cannot bring man to a saving knowledge of God and to true conversion. But what “neither the light of nature nor the law could do, that God performs by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word or ministry of reconciliation . . . by means whereof it has pleased God to save such as believe.”

Article 3.8 states, “*As many as are called by the gospel are unfeignedly called.* For God has most earnestly and truly declared in His Word what will be acceptable to Him; namely, that all who are called should comply with the invitation. He, moreover, seriously promises eternal life and rest to as many as shall come to Him and believe on Him.”

Articles 3.11, 3.12 and 3.14 state that when God accomplishes His good pleasure in the elect, or works in them true conversion, He not only causes the gospel to be externally preached to them, but He also powerfully regenerates them by His Holy Spirit. This is a supernatural work and “*all in whose heart God works in this marvellous manner are certainly, infallibly and effectually regenerated, and do actually believe*”. God works in them both the will to believe and the act of believing also. “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil 2:13). Yet it is also true that the will of man, renewed by God, “becomes itself active. Wherefore also, man is himself rightly said to believe and repent, by virtue of that grace received.”

According to Article 3.13, “the manner of this operation cannot be fully comprehended by believers in this life. Notwithstanding which, they rest satisfied with knowing and experiencing that by this grace of God they are enabled to believe with the heart, and love their Saviour.”

(5.) Perseverance of the Saints. This section teaches that *those thus saved, God graciously preserves so that they persevere until the end.* In Articles 5.1 and 5.3 it is stated: Those whom God calls effectually, He delivers “from the dominion and slavery of sin in this life, though not altogether from the body of sin and from the infirmities of the flesh, so long as they continue in this world”. “By reason of these remains of indwelling sin, and the temptations of sin and of the world, those who are converted could not persevere in a state of grace if left to their own strength. But God is faithful, who, having conferred grace, mercifully confirms and powerfully preserves them therein, even to the end.”

Article 5.9 states, “Of this preservation of the elect to salvation and of their perseverance in the faith, true believers for themselves may and do obtain assurance according to the measure of their faith, whereby they arrive at the certain persuasion that they ever will continue true and living members

of the Church; and that they experience forgiveness of sins, and will at last inherit eternal life”.

Some Further Points. After covering the five doctrines, as set out in the Canons, this section now concludes with two observations regarding the Canons:

(a.) The Canons were partly written to defend Calvinistic doctrine against *false representations*. The Conclusion of Canons mentions a few of these: (1) it makes God the author of sin, (2) it makes the believer careless and proud and leaves the unbeliever in despair and (3) it frustrates and invalidates the use of means, including infant baptism.

Against these accusations the authors of Canons are anxious to point out:

(1) the cause of man’s unbelief is in no wise in God (1.5), is in no wise due to insufficiency in Christ’s sacrifice (2.6), and is also not the fault of the gospel (3.9);

(2) the doctrine of election is far from encouraging negligence in the observance of the divine commands (1.13). Likewise, the doctrine of the saints’ perseverance should serve as an incentive to the serious and constant practice of gratitude and good works (5.12); and,

(3) the supernatural operation of God, by which we are regenerated, in no wise excludes or subverts the use of the gospel, which the most wise God has ordained to be the seed of regeneration and food for the soul (see 3.17, 5.4 and 5.14). On the children of believers, baptized and who die in their infancy, the Canons state (see 1.17) that godly parents have no reason to doubt the election and salvation of these children. This is based on 1 Corinthians 7:14 “else were your children unclean; but now they are holy”.

(b.) The Canons are written so as to reflect pastoral concerns. The authors recognise that the doctrines can give rise to difficulties for believers, as well as for seeking souls. Therefore they say that the doctrine of election has to be preached (it is part of the whole counsel of God), but it is to be done with reverence, in the spirit of discretion and piety (1.14). They also emphasise the importance of the preaching of the gospel (see 1.3, 2.5 and 3.8). The believer who lacks assurance is directed not to a special revelation contrary to, or independent of, the Word of God, but to the promises of God, most abundantly revealed in His Word. Believers are to attain to assurance “by observing in themselves, with a spiritual joy and holy pleasure, the infallible fruits of election . . . such as a true faith in Christ, filial fear, a godly sorrow for sin and a hungering and thirsting after righteousness” (see 1.12 and 5.9-5.11). The Christian without assurance is encouraged to continue in the use of the means, “since a merciful God has promised that He will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed” (1.16).

6. Concluding remarks. (a.) The Arminian issue is an important one, as it concerns the glory of God and the nature of God's grace in the salvation of sinners.

(b.) Among the Calvinists there was a growing awareness that the five points of Arminianism were only a beginning of erroneous teaching and, if allowed, would result in further departures from the doctrines of Scripture.

(c.) Professor John Murray has compared Calvin, the Synod of Dordt and the Westminster Assembly on the doctrine of predestination. His conclusion is that there is a consensus in Reformed theology. Although there are distinguishing features appropriate to their respective contexts . . . yet on the subject of predestination there is one voice on all the essential elements of the doctrine.

(d.) In this paper the focus was the Synod of Dordt in relation to the Arminian controversy. That was the main business of the Synod. However, other matters were also discussed and agreed. Most notable of these was the decision to embark on a new translation of the Bible. This work was undertaken, and the "Statenbijbel" was published in 1637.

(e.) The Synod of Dordt was a blessing for the Church in the Netherlands. It was now established as a Reformed Church with a Calvinistic creed. The Further Reformation movement in the seventeenth century built on that foundation but emphasized that a sound confession of faith should go together with a life of practical godliness. The way of life in the nation had to be reformed, as well as the doctrine.

Keeping the Heart (2)¹

John Flavel

2. Next I shall give you some account *why Christians should make it the great business of their lives to keep their hearts*. The importance and necessity of making this our main business will manifestly appear in: (1.) The honour of God; (2.) The sincerity of our profession; (3.) The beauty of our lives; (4.) The comfort of our souls; (5.) The growth of our graces; and, (6.) Our stability in the hour of temptation. All of them are wrapped up in, and dependent on, our sincerity and care in the management of this work.

(1.) *The glory of God* is much concerned in this; heart evils are very

¹An 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). Last month's article considered "what it means to keep the heart".

provoking to the Lord. Scholars well observe that outward sins are sins of great infamy, but heart sins are sins of deeper guilt. How severely the great God has declared His wrath from heaven against heart wickedness; the great crime for which the old world stands accused is heart wickedness: "God saw . . . that every imagination [or, fiction] of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen 6:5-7). For this He sent the most dreadful judgement that was ever executed since the world began: "And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping things, and the fowls of heaven, for it repenteth Me that I have made them".

We do not find their murders, adulteries, blasphemies (though they were defiled with these) particularly alleged against them; but the evils of their hearts. Those evils so provoked God that He gave His special inheritance into the enemy's hand: "O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jer 4:14). God took special notice of the wickedness and vanity of their thoughts and, because of this, the Chaldean must come upon them as a lion from his thicket (v 7) and tear them to pieces. It was for the sin of their thoughts that God threw down the fallen angels from heaven and still keeps them in everlasting chains, until the judgement of the great day. By this expression some extraordinary judgement is not obscurely intimated, to which they are reserved, as prisoners with most irons laid on them may be supposed to be the greatest evildoers.

And what was their sin? Only spiritual wickedness! For angels, having no bodies, could not act externally against God. Heart evils are so provoking that, because of them, he rejects with indignation all the duties that some men perform to Him. "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, is as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol" (Is 66:3). In what words could the holy God more fully express abhorrence of a creature's actions? Murder and idolatry are not more vile in His account than their sacrifices, though materially they are what He Himself appointed. And what made them so? The following words inform us: "Their soul delighteth in their abominations".

To conclude, such is the vileness of heart sins that the Scriptures sometimes intimate the difficulty of pardon for them. So in the case of Simon Magus, his heart was not right, he had vile thoughts of God and the things of God; the Apostle told him "Repent . . . and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22). O then, never make little of heart evils, for God is highly wronged by them and provoked; for this reason

let every Christian make it his work to keep his heart with all diligence.

(2.) *The sincerity of our profession* depends much on the care and conscience we have in keeping our hearts; for it is most certain that a man is but a hypocrite in his profession, however careful he may be in the externals of religion, if he is careless of the frame of his heart.

You have a clear instance of this in the case of Jehu: “Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with his heart” (2 Ki 10:31). That context gives us an account of the great service performed by Jehu against the house of Ahab and Baal, as also of the great temporal reward God gave him for that service – that his children to the fourth generation should sit upon the throne of Israel. But in these words, Jehu is censured as a hypocrite, though God approved the work and rewarded it. Yet He abhorred the person that did it as hypocritical and rejected him. Where did his hypocrisy lie? He took no heed to walk in the ways of the Lord with his heart – that is, he did all insincerely and for self-ends. Though the work he did was good in itself, he was a hypocrite because, in doing it, he did not purge his heart from those unworthy self-designs.

And Simon, of whom we spoke before, though he appeared to be someone that the Apostle could not rightly refuse as one who believed, yet his hypocrisy was quickly discovered. It was discovered because, though he professed and associated himself with the saints, he was a stranger to the mortification of heart sins: “Thy heart is not right in the sight of God” (Acts 8:21).

It is true there is a great difference among Christians themselves in their diligence and ability in heart work. Some are more conversant and successful with it than others are; but he that takes no heed to his heart – that is not careful to order it aright before God – is only a hypocrite: “They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness”. Here were a company of formal hypocrites, as is evident by that expression, “as My people” – like them but not of them. And what made them so? Their outside was fair; here were reverent postures, high professions, much seeming joy and delight in ordinances, “Thou art unto them as a very lovely song” (Ezek 33:31,32). But for all that they did not keep their hearts with God in those duties; their hearts were commanded by their lusts; they went after their covetousness. Had they kept their hearts with God, all had been well; but they did not regard which way their hearts went in duty. There lay their hypocrisy.

Objection. If any upright soul should hence infer: I am a hypocrite too, for many times my heart departs from God in duty; do what I can, I cannot hold it close with God.

Answer. The very objection carries in it its own solution. You say, Do what I can, I cannot keep my heart with God. Soul, if you do what you can, you have the blessing of one who is upright, though God sees good to exercise you under the affliction of a disturbed heart. There remains still some wildness in the thoughts of the best, to humble them; but if you find a care beforehand to prevent them, opposition to them when they come, and grief and sorrow afterwards; you will find enough to clear you from a charge of reigning hypocrisy.

[1.] This care beforehand is seen partly in laying up God's Word in thine heart to prevent it: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee" (Ps 119:11), partly in our endeavours to engage our hearts to God (Jer 30:21), and partly in begging grace from God before we take up a duty (Ps 119:36,37). It is a good sign where this care goes before a duty.

[2.] It is a sweet sign of uprightness to oppose them in their first rise, "I hate vain thoughts" (Ps 119:113). "The spirit [lusteth] against the flesh" (Gal 5:17).

[3.] Your grief afterwards reveals your upright heart. If, like Hezekiah, you are humbled for the evils of your heart, you have no reason to question the integrity of your heart because of those disorders. But to suffer sin to lodge quietly in the heart, to let your heart habitually and uncontrolledly wander away from God, are sad and dangerous symptoms indeed.

Book Reviews

Beholding His Glory, by J K Popham, published by Ettrick Press, paperback, 134 pp, £4.95, may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

The nine sermons collected together in this small book were preached by Mr J K Popham during his time at Galeed Gospel Standard Chapel, Brighton, where he was pastor for over 50 years. The sermons are devoted to the Person and work of the Lord Jesus. They were mainly from the first chapter of John's Gospel, a rich place to find golden texts. This is a re-issue of a book first published in 2010, with a couple of extra sermons added.

In the second sermon, taken from John 1:14, "And we beheld His glory", one of the doctrines emphasised is that of the trinity of persons in the Godhead. "Rabbi" Duncan is quoted: "Salvation is built on distinctions in the Trinity". Mr Popham goes on to say, "That is true, everything hangs on the distinctions of the Trinity. One God, three Persons. One love manifested by three Persons. One salvation administered by three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost". In the gospel of Christ there is a "full blessing, full for-

giveness, full sanctification, a full welcome, a blessed welcome to the vilest sinner, and all through this glorious God-man, whose omnipotence, with His love, brought Him to the cross to lay down voluntarily His life. God give us to see this.”

“He is full of grace and truth.” “Go begging, and when you beg, do not excuse your poverty. Confess that it is your sin. When you go to beg, do not excuse any thriftlessness, any wickedness, any waywardness of which you have been guilty. Confession goes well with Him; excuses, never, never! He is ‘full of grace and truth’ to give away; alms to dispense; mercy to reign over every poor sinner’s fears and to remove and wipe away all tears from his eyes.”

In another sermon, from John 1:16, “Of His fulness have all we received”, the preacher says, Without the Saviour we are dead, “we are under the law without Him, we are under condemnation without Him. We have no life without Him – no faith, no hope, no love, no liberty, no access to God, no hope of heaven without Him.

In a sermon on Christ’s dying, taken from John 13:31-32, Mr Popham advises anyone who feels drawn to follow the drawing: “Do you feel impelled to go? Go. Do you feel, if you perish, it shall be in trying to find God’s face, to seek His mercy? Go on. For God, who set forth Christ “to be a propitiation through faith in His blood” (Romans 3:25), will be sure to grant all that the coming sinner wants – that pardon, that acceptance, and that adoption into His family that he is led to seek”.

Mr Popham concludes the last of these lovely sermons with the following: “Now may we go to our homes by the merciful help of the Spirit of Christ, to think on these things. Do not be displeased with me for my poverty in the matter; rather look at the riches I have just named, and tried to commend to you. Look at them – rather, look at Him in whom they all are, at the Lord Jesus, the fairest, the dearest, the sweetest, the greatest in heaven and in earth.” Surely these must be the sentiments of every one of Christ’s ambassadors.

As one would expect from a Gospel Standard minister, Mr Popham does not freely offer the Saviour to his hearers, openly inviting them to come to Christ. However, as you would also expect from a godly minister, his preaching in these collected sermons speaks of Jesus in the most loving and endearing way.

Although the invitation is not there, there is a presentation of the Saviour which would have made the hardest-hearted of his hearers, with the help of the Spirit, see something of His beauty and desirability, and of His call to repentance and salvation. “And I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto

Me.” The beloved Saviour is most certainly raised up as the “Wonderful One” in these sermons.

This little book is to be heartily recommended.

FRD

A Very Present Help, A Tribute to the Faithfulness of God, by Lieutenant General Sir William Dobbie, published by the Ettrick Press, paperback, 110 pages, £5.95, may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Sir William Dobbie was once well known for his leadership in the defence of Malta during World War II. Previously he had gained a degree of fame as the British military officer who signed the order which brought fighting to an end in World War I.

The first chapter sets the scene in Malta when Dobbie was Governor there. On the day that France fell to the Germans in 1940, Dobbie issued an order in Malta, acknowledging that it was “with God’s help” that they would “maintain the security” of Malta and called “upon all officers and other ranks humbly to seek God’s help, and then, in reliance upon Him, to do their duty unflinchingly”. This is the spirit in which Dobbie led the successful defence of the island in spite of serious damage caused by air raids.

The second chapter gives information about Dobbie’s early spiritual experience. Chapter 3 is the first of a number of helpful practical chapters; it deals with “The Christian and the World”. The author says, “The Bible has been written for all times, and therefore deals in principles which are applicable to all times. One of the principles laid down for the Christian is separation from the world” – though not “as a hermit or a monk”. Other such chapters are entitled: “God – A Very Present Help”, “Prayer – Contact with God” and “The Bible – God’s Word”. There are a few fascinating chapters where Dobbie recounts God’s protection in preventing damage being more serious than it was through enemy action against Malta. Many had to acknowledge that this was in answer to prayer. The author also provides a defence of military service in opposition to pacifism.

Overall the book is interesting and helpful but some expressions are not as careful as they might have been.

Sinful self-love is the very heart and core of the carnal man and the great idol of all unconverted sinners.

All things shall work together for the good of them that love God and Jesus Christ. Nothing shall befall them, but first or last shall further them in their way to heaven and tend to their advantage. Many things seem to be against you, but all shall work for you.

Thomas Doolittle

FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND - CONGREGATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS - 2023

CONGREGATION	MINISTER (Interim Moderator*)	SUSTENTATION FUND	HOME MISSION FUND	COLLEGE & LIBRARY FUND	BOOKROOM FUND	GENERAL BUILDING FUND	OUTREACH FUND	JEWISH & FOREIGN MISSION FUND	OVERSEAS FUND	TOTAL
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£

NORTHERN PRESBYTERY

Aberdeen	Rev D W B Somerset	15,585.12	77.50	1,102.50	37.50	37.50	37.50	1,593.75	37.50	18,508.87
Creich, Dornoch, etc	Rev J A Morrison	13,400.00	493.00	333.00	68.00	98.00	180.50	573.00	200.00	15,345.50
Daviot, Tomatin & Stratherrick	Rev K D MacLeod*	3,300.00	137.50	150.00	68.75	62.50	75.00	247.50	75.00	4,116.25
Dingwall & Beaully	Rev A W MacColl	27,378.75	2,330.00	1,023.75	255.00	257.50	400.00	1,760.00	207.50	33,612.50
Halkirk, Strathly, Thurso & Wick	Rev W A Weale	14,990.00	687.50	790.00	312.50	282.50	522.50	2,007.50	540.00	20,192.50
Inverness	Rev K D MacLeod	37,965.75	4,946.25	4,985.00	1,177.25	990.00	1,224.25	5,815.00	882.00	57,985.50
Kinlochervie & Scourie	Rev J A Morrison*	2,335.00	310.00	255.00	30.00	40.00	2,075.00	430.00	50.00	5,525.00
		114,994.62	8,981.75	8,639.25	1,949.00	1,768.00	4,574.75	12,426.75	1,992.00	155,286.12

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY

Barnoldswick	Rev D Campbell*	11,810.00	2,805.00	700.00	885.00	235.00	225.00	1,355.00	65.00	18,080.00
Chesley	Rev R MacLeod*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Perth	Rev D Campbell*	9,504.00	688.25	675.00	355.75	350.00	288.25	1,193.25	373.75	13,428.25
Edinburgh	Rev D Campbell	26,521.00	611.00	3,806.00	319.00	341.00	2,719.00	4,020.00	591.00	38,928.00
Fort William & Oban	Rev R MacLeod*	810.00	80.00	50.00	25.00	30.00	30.00	160.00	30.00	1,215.00
Glasgow	Rev R MacLeod	32,117.10	1,914.31	1,980.37	1,109.06	1,044.50	1,520.00	3,786.75	1,229.52	44,701.61
Greenock (Preaching Station)	Rev R MacLeod	352.50	160.00	35.00	17.50	17.50	5.00	47.50	17.50	652.50
London & Broadstairs	Rev R MacLeod*	20,100.00	500.00	4,000.00	-	-	1,000.00	4,965.00	-	30,565.00
Santa Fe, Texas	Rev D Campbell*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		101,214.60	6,758.56	11,246.37	2,711.31	2,018.00	5,787.25	15,527.50	2,306.77	147,570.36

OUTER ISLES PRESBYTERY

Achmore	Rev J R Tallach	2,706.25	233.75	263.00	231.25	153.75	160.00	925.25	138.75	4,812.00
Ness	Rev K M Watkins*	5,707.50	45.00	35.00	20.00	22.50	-	45.00	10.00	5,885.00
North Harris	Rev B Jardine	9,100.25	331.25	257.50	113.75	116.25	88.75	233.75	113.75	10,355.25
North Tolsta	Rev J B Tallach*	13,373.50	1,315.25	1,029.50	504.75	527.00	422.50	1,180.25	703.00	19,055.75
North Uist	Rev J B Jardine*	4,390.00	270.00	255.00	135.00	135.00	130.00	270.00	135.00	5,720.00
South Harris	Rev K M Watkins	10,040.00	746.00	636.50	372.40	394.50	356.00	783.00	365.40	13,693.80
Stornoway	Rev J R Tallach	17,471.00	1,477.00	1,882.50	577.50	665.00	552.00	1,578.75	511.25	24,715.00
Uig	Rev K M Watkins*	1,630.00	145.00	65.00	30.00	40.00	5.00	100.00	20.00	2,035.00
		64,418.50	4,563.25	4,424.00	1,984.65	2,054.00	1,714.25	5,116.00	1,997.15	86,271.80

The Force of Truth¹

W K Tweedie

Hebrews 4:12. *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

God has magnified His Word above all His name. It is His chosen instrument for reclaiming a world to Himself, and stamping the beauties of holiness upon those who are now covered with wounds and bruises and horrible sores.

Now that Word is quick. It is a *living* thing. It proves its vitality and vigour by the fact that it either warns man to flee from the wrath to come, or, if the warning is slighted, it becomes a savour of death unto death.

It is *powerful* also. Men may resist it, or attempt to dash it from them, but still it holds them fast. It either drags them to judgement, or directs them to the cross.

And it is *sharper* than any two-edged sword. Such a sword can mutilate and mangle the body; it cannot touch the soul. But the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, pierces even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit. It separates what man possesses in common with the beasts which perish, or mere animal life, from that which he may enjoy in common with Godhead, or spiritual life. Like the all-seeing Eye, it penetrates everywhere, and it pierces everything.

Moreover, it is a *discerner* of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It detects the sinner; it unmask the hypocrite, while, like the father of the prodigal, it sees the penitent though he is still a great way off. It takes him by the hand; it speaks words to his heart and guides him to the spot where his God and he walk together again like those who are agreed. In accomplishing all that, it may operate like the surgeon's knife, dividing asunder the joints and marrow; but the pain is salutary, and spiritual health is the result when the Spirit blesses the means.

Is it true then that any soul has felt that keen edge and said, Let the righteous smite me? Is it true that the Word of God is my soul's daily bread, or the man of its right hand? Then God has visited it and the entrance of His Word has given light; it will do for the soul what it was blessed to do for the world in apostolic times, and again at the Reformation, when the churches rejoiced in the truth of God and rejected the lies of man.

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

Notes and Comments

Proposed Changes to the Creed of the Church of Scotland

Moves are afoot for the Church of Scotland to modify her creed subscription. Since 1910, her ministers and elders have given a very loose subscription to “the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the *Westminster Confession*”. What these “fundamental doctrines” are has never been declared, and apparently no office-bearer since 1910 has been found to have breached the terms of this vow. The only “clarification” has been that, in 1986, the General Assembly declared that certain points in the *Westminster Confession* (the rejection of monasticism, the evil of the mass, the Pope as the antichrist, and the prohibition on marrying “infidels, papists, and other idolators”) were not part of the confession of the Church.

The proposal is to replace the *Westminster Confession* by a “Book of Confessions” containing the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed of 325 AD, the *Scots Confession* of 1560, the *Westminster Confession*, and a 1992 Statement of Faith which was affirmed by the General Assembly. The new vows would be: “1. Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith expressed in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds? 2. Do you confess the catholic and reformed faith of the Church as contained in its Book of Confessions, and promise to be guided by the said Book in your life and doctrine?” The proposal has been accepted by the General Assembly and has been sent down to the Presbyteries for discussion.

The inclusion of the *Scots Confession* of 1560 comes as a surprise. If the language of the *Westminster Confession* was too strong for the General Assembly in 1986, how much more the language of John Knox and his companions – for example, when the *Scots Confession* describes the false Church, and especially Romanism, as “that horrible harlot, the Kirk malignant”; or when it states that “we flee the society with the Papistical Kirk in participation of their Sacraments; first, because their ministers are no ministers of Christ Jesus; yea (which is more horrible) they suffer women, whom the Holy Ghost will not suffer to teach in the congregation, to baptize”. The fact is that, if the office-bearers of the Church of Scotland were really guided in their “life and doctrine” by the 1560 *Confession*, they would instantly repudiate liberalism, sodomy, women ministers, Romanism, and many other evils presently tolerated by the Church of Scotland.

The odd-man-out in the proposed Book of Confessions is the 1992 Statement of Faith. This is one of these productions – so popular with liberals – which sounds religious but has very little meaning. For example: “We praise

God the Father: Who created the universe and keeps it in being. He has made us his sons and daughters to share his joy, Living together in justice and peace, Caring for his world and for each other” (the capital letters are used because it is supposed to be set out as a poem). Who is “us” in this statement, one wonders? Is it just Christians, or does it include Muslims? Does “justice and peace” allow for other religions and for abortion, or forbid them? What happens to all these supposed “sons and daughters” when they die, especially if they die in open rejection of Christ? Do they go to hell, and are they punished eternally for their sins? What place does Satan have in God’s created order?

It would be interesting to see an honest statement of the doctrine of a typical Church of Scotland minister. Do they really “believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith expressed in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds?” There have certainly been ministers and bishops in the Church of England who did not. What Church of Scotland office-bearers ought to believe, and subscribe, is the doctrines of *The Westminster Confession of Faith*; and if they do not believe them, the error is not with the Confession but with them. DWBS

Age of the Pliosaur

It was with great excitement that in December 2023 the massive skull of a long-dead sea creature was dug out of a cliff on the “Jurassic Coast” in Dorset, an area famous for the many fossils which can be found on its beach. This particular fossil, of the skull of the huge creature known as a pliosaur, is the largest intact example ever found.

The famous naturalist, Sir David Attenborough, presented a documentary for the BBC which followed the very difficult extraction of the fossil from halfway up the cliff face. The program is very interesting but, as usual, contains a lot of speculation about the evolution of such a creature and claimed that the pliosaur lived 150 million years ago, during the Jurassic period.

The scientists who study the fossils of these long-extinct creatures are clever and knowledgeable, but the Scriptures prove wrong the timescales they use. The standard method of dating organic (carbon-based) materials is Carbon Dating. In a living organism, the ratio of carbon-14 to carbon-12 is constant but, when the organism dies, the radioactive carbon-14 starts to decay until it becomes carbon-12. The half-life of carbon-14 (the time taken for half of it to disappear) is 5730 years. It can be calculated that after approximately 50-60 000 years carbon-14 would no longer be detectable.

The age of dead matter is calculated on the basis of the ratio of the remaining carbon-14 to the amount of carbon-12. Technically therefore, if an organ-

ism is dead for 60 000 years, such a small amount of carbon-14 would be left that it would not be possible to establish a date. It follows that the dating of rocks which are claimed to be many millions of years old requires another method. These are measured by radiometric dating, by measuring the presence of, for example, uranium, which decays to lead; or potassium, which decays to argon. Potassium-40 has a half-life of 1.3 billion years and uranium-238 has a half-life of 4.47 billion years. All of these methods of radiodating take little account of serious catastrophes such as the Flood and make a great many assumptions which bring the whole process into question. Also the six-day period of Creation was a wholly different geological event, and those carrying out these calculations take no account of it.

Many of the samples of fossilised trees, oil and shale oil deposits, which are dated at millions, if not billions, of years old, are found to contain carbon-14, which makes it impossible for them to be older than 50 to 60,000 years. It is argued that in those cases the carbon-14 is the product of contamination either from younger materials, or from the atmosphere (carbon-14 is ever present in the atmosphere). However, materials which have been carefully dug up, or oil which has been pumped up from deep inside the earth, are very unlikely to have such contamination. Diamond is the hardest natural substance and very chemically resistant, and yet diamonds from deep inside the earth are found to have carbon-14 present. This is impossible for something claimed to be billions of years old.

We know, from the Word of God, that none of these materials can be more than about 6000 years old, and this is confirmed by the scientists' own readily accepted dating method – carbon-14 dating shows that these fossils or materials *cannot* be millions or billions of years old.

An American archaeologist, Professor J O Brew, of Harvard University, (quoted in a scientific paper in 1970) summarised a common attitude among archaeologists towards carbon-14 dating as follows: "If a carbon-14 date supports our theories we put it in the main text; if it does not entirely contradict them, we put it in a footnote, and if it is completely 'out of date' we just drop it".

The only way that we can know the true age of the earth is by what is revealed to us in the Word of God. FRD

Royal Family Health Issues

"Let's pray that they're both OK", was the front-page Daily Mail headline, after the announcement was made that King Charles needed a hospital procedure and that the Princess of Wales had undergone an operation that left her in hospital for almost a fortnight. And while the King was in

hospital, a further, cancer-related problem was discovered. The royal family are, of course, not immune to health problems.

But they do need prayer; so Scripture calls us to “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks . . . for kings, and for all that are in authority” (1 Tim 2:1,2). They very much need the prayers of the Lord’s people as they go about their duties. But especially they need prayer for their souls, that they may be saved from their sins and live truly godly lives.

Yet in this ungodly age, when any religious activity is likely to provoke rejection and scorn, it was a welcome surprise to see the newspaper headline. Would that there was more of a focus everywhere on prayer and a sincere desire to have real communion with God through Jesus Christ!

We are to pray also for “all that are in authority”, not least “that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty”. Governments do have a responsibility to rule in the fear of God, though we see so little of it. How we need to pray for godly attitudes among the leaders of the nations!

Church Information

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund

By appointment of Synod, the first of the year’s two special collections for the Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during March.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

General Fund: Estate of late Miss Elinor MacDonald, Glasgow, £6000.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: Providence Strict Baptist Chapel, Irthingborough, £630; Mr N Pearce, Cymru, Diaconal Aid for Zimbabwe Mission, £140; Anon, for Zimbabwe Mission boreholes, in loving memory of Misses C and M Tallach, £20 000.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Creich etc: Anon, £1000; Santa Fe congregation, £459.77.

Dingwall: Anon, for recording sermons, £40.

Edinburgh: Friend, Cymru, £140; Friend, £100 per DC.

Glasgow: *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £80, £80, £80, £100, £80, £60, £80, £80, £80, £80, £70.

Greenock: *Home Mission Fund:* Anon, £100.

North Tolsta: Estate of late Mrs Gunn, £2000; Anon, In memory of loved, £200. Communion Expenses: Anon, £50, £60, £40. *Door Collection:* Anon, £50, £80, £40, £80, £40, £25, £80, £30, £40. *TBS:* Anon, £200, £70.

Perth: Anon, Phil 4:19, £2000; Anon, £2000.

Staffin: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £100. *Manse Expenses:* Anon, £100.

Stornoway: The family of the late Mr Alex Stewart, Wakefield, £150; Family of late Mr Angus Fraser, £100.

Sydney: Anon, for Sydney congregation, \$50 (Singapore Dollars) per Rev GBM.

Uig: *Communion Expenses:* SG, £40. *Door Collection:* Lover of Uig, £50.

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; **Strathly:** 6 pm, first and third Sabbaths of month.
- Harris (North): Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Tarbert and Stockinish:** Wed 7 pm, alternately. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South): Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wed 7 pm. **Sheilebost:** as intimated. Rev K M Watkins BA, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, IV1 1NA; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 6 pm; **Scourie:** Sabbath 11:30 am, Tues 7 pm (as intimated). Contact Dr A Ross; tel 01971 502099.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide (Ross-shire):** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wed 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 810228. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist:** Bayhead; Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01876 510233. Contact: Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Oban:** Church. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. Manse: 5 Main Road, Luncarty, PH1 3EP; tel: 01738 828762. Contact: Rev D Campbell; tel: 07790 068991.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wed 7 pm.. Rev I D MacDonald BA, F P Manse, Achachork, Portree, IV51 9HT; tel: 01478 612110.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 12 noon; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tues 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross, as intimated). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Tues 7.30 pm. Manse: Clachan, Staffin, IV51 9H. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tues 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wed 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.

England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7.30 pm.; **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Upper Room (second floor), 11 Wilmslow Road, Cheadle SK8 1DW; (entrance is from the car park at the back of the building); Wed 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. Contact Mr R Middleton, 2 Emerald Drive, Sandbach, CW11 4ND; tel: 01270 761673.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tues 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1 2AW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 5.30 pm; Wednesday 7.15 pm. Manse. Contact Mr Hugh Campbell; tel: 01923 442497.

Canada

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

USA

Santa Fe, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 5 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith; tel: 409 927 1564.

Australia

Grafton, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA PhD, 3 Martin Crescent, Junction Hill, NSW 2460; tel: (02) 6644 6174; e-mail:grafton@internode.on.net.

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel. (02) 9627 3408; e-mail:sydneyfchurch@protonmail.com.

New Zealand

Auckland: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J D Smith, 9 Pedlar Place, Conifer Grove, Auckland; tel: 09 282 4195.

Carterton: 124 High Street North, Carterton. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact: Mr Hank Optland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743; tel: 02 7432 5625.

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

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

Singapore

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

Ukraine

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

Zimbabwe

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

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.

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