

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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

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

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

July: First Sabbath: Beaul; **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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Walking Humbly Before God

The question is asked in Micah 6: “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?” And by way of pointing to a response that some would have made, the further question was asked, among others: “Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?” It is impossible, of course, for such a possibility to open a way for anyone to approach the holy God. No sacrifice can possibly take away our sin, which stands in the way of our drawing near to God. We sinful creatures cannot approach God unless we have the beginnings of holiness, and Jesus made it clear that “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:3). Not only is it impossible for us to enter heaven itself – but we cannot be received within God’s kingdom in this world – apart from the new birth, and its consequence: a new, holy heart.

Micah’s answer is: God “hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Mic 6:8). God had already shown Israel how they should live; what they needed to do was to search the Scriptures and to seek God’s blessing on them. There they would have found the need to live a holy life. In this article we will focus on this part of duty, as expressed in the verse just quoted: “to walk humbly with thy God”.

The Lord is our God, for He made us; He has a right to our obedience; He has a right to demand that we walk humbly before Him and that we do so in a consistent way. Enoch was consistently obedient to God’s revealed will; in the words of Scripture, he “walked with God” (Gen 5:24). Accordingly “he had this testimony, that he pleased God”, and so he passed into the eternal world without passing through death; he “was translated that he should not see death” (Heb 11:5). He walked humbly; he was far from being proud; he was ready to submit to all the commandments of God.

Those who walk humbly are submitting to God and to His will. It is not that they are perfect, but there is in them a sincere readiness to obey. They will not escape death, but they will be brought safely through it and they will spend eternity in the presence of the One who gave them grace to walk humbly.

ly before Him while they were in this world. “Every thought within us”, says Matthew Henry in his *Commentary*, on Micah 6:8, “must be brought down, to be brought into obedience to God, if we would walk comfortably with Him. This is that which God requires, and without which the most costly services are vain oblations; [to walk humbly with God] is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

A man who at first did not walk humbly before God was Saul of Tarsus. In early life, he was becoming more and more prominent as an earnest Pharisee. He was later to describe such people as “ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Rom 10:3). Charles Hodge points out that “the grand mistake of the Jews was about the method of justification. Ignorance on this point implied ignorance of the character of God, of the requirements of the law, and of themselves. It was, therefore, and is, and must ever continue to be a vital point. Those who err essentially here, err fatally.”¹ Many who would not obviously err in their doctrine go astray in their practice. They are ignorant of the character of God, of the requirements of the law, and of themselves. They have no sense of the absolute holiness of God, or of His demands for perfect obedience (or complete submission) to His law, and how entirely fallen they are, so that they are entirely unable to satisfy God and His law.

Hodge goes on: “The cause of the rejection of the Jews was the rejection of the method of salvation through a crucified Redeemer, and their persisting and confiding in their own merits and advantages as the ground of their acceptance with God. . . . As we have no righteousness of our own, nothing that we have done or experienced, nothing personal or subjective that can answer the demands of the law, we can be justified only through the righteousness of God, imputed to us and received by faith.”²

These truths about ourselves and our fallen state may be unpalatable, but they are accurate, and we need to be convinced of them, or else we will never seek the righteousness that brings salvation to lost sinners like ourselves. We also need to submit to the truths that Hodge points to about the way of deliverance, by way of a free justification made possible by the glorious work of the God-man Jesus Christ while, in a state of humiliation in this world, He acted as the Substitute of sinners.

But a massive change came over Saul. Instead of being proud and un-submissive, he began to walk humbly before his God. In particular, his

¹Sad that, in recent decades, prominent theologians such as N T Wright, former Bishop of Durham, have been redefining justification in a way opposed to Scripture.

²C Hodge, *A Commentary on Romans*, Banner of Truth 1983 reprint, pp 334,335.

attitude to the Lord Jesus Christ became altogether humble and sincere; he received Him as the promised Messiah and trusted in Him for the salvation of his soul. His language now was: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ". Previously he had been rejecting Jesus' self-sacrifice, placing no value on it; now he sought to put away from himself every thought of glorying in anything else whatever. And this is the humble, submissive attitude he carried with him for the rest of his life.

At the very beginning of his Christian life Saul addressed a very significant question to the Saviour; it was: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The question is permeated with a sincere desire to obey humbly the King of all the earth, and in that spirit he walked throughout the rest of his course in this world. Whatever duty God laid upon him, however difficult, he would submissively take it up; whichever of the commandments applied to the situation he was in, he would humbly seek to obey it; whatever teaching God had revealed, he was willing to receive it wholeheartedly as the truth. The risen Saviour was Saul's Lord and God, and this is the spirit of believers throughout the ages: they seek to walk humbly before God; they seek to submit to all that God has made known in the Scriptures. They recognise the whole Bible as "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Some will react negatively to the apparent contradiction between God's commands and human inability. They will ask how it is that God commands us, as He commanded the jailer in Philippi, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16:31), if we as dead sinners are unable to carry out any spiritual action, such as the exercise of faith. The answer is that what God requires *He* must give. If He requires faith, He must give faith; it is His gift (Eph 2:8). If God commands us to repent of our sins, He must give the grace of repentance. If God commands us to live a holy life, He must begin and continue the work of sanctification so that we may live in a godly way. These are all the Holy Spirit's work. We must be altogether dependent on God for everything, and especially for every aspect of salvation.

All these are benefits which we are to seek with real earnestness, knowing that God is far more ready to give than we are to receive. Every step that we take on the journey through life, we ought to be concerned to bear in mind the words of Micah: "Walk humbly with thy God". Yes, we must realise that we will come short continually. So we need grace to begin a humble walk with God; believers need grace to continue that walk; they need to grow in grace so that they may walk more and more submissively before God; and they need grace to take even the last step of their journey, the step that will bring them into the promised land of heaven.

Leading Captive Captivity (2)¹

A Sermon by Rev Donald MacLean

Psalm 68:18,19. *Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captive captivity, Thou hast received gifts for men: yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.*

2. The Saviour had to descend, to come into a state of humiliation. That was part of the scheme of redemption, part of the way whereby He was to rob these powers of their capacity to hold sinners in captivity. He was to take captivity itself a captive and rob them of their powers. It was necessary that He would descend – that He would become man and yet remain the Son of God, that He would be born in a low condition and come into a state of humiliation although He was the Lord of glory, the Prince of life, the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of His Person, God the eternal Son, the only begotten Son of the Everlasting Father. He took into union with His divine Person a holy humanity. Joseph was told: “Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins”.

He shall take captivity captive. He would do this while dwelling in a holy humanity, in the valley of humiliation, in this present evil world. He would also descend in coming to grips with the sentence of death against His people. That sentence held them in captivity, and that sentence had to be robbed of its power to condemn them, and the Saviour came in order to do so. There was only one way in which death could be swallowed up: that the sentence of death would be executed against Himself rather than against His people. He descended to drink the cup of death, to be numbered with the transgressors, to take the guilt of His people’s sins in His own body and His own Person, to bear the guilt of their sins, to be made under the law and to magnify the law and make it honourable. He undertook to rob the sentence of death of its power to condemn His people, by coming under that sentence Himself, by dying in the place of the guilty. This was how the sentence of death was to be led captive and emptied of its power to condemn His people, to condemn those who are to be loaded with the benefits of salvation.

In Psalm 89, we were reading, “Justice and judgement of Thy throne are made the dwelling place”. Judgement is justice that has been executed, when sin has been laid on and exercised against the Person who was standing in the place of the guilty. Now, on the day of atonement, the high priest took the blood and sprinkled it upon the throne. The blood was the sign that justice

¹The final part of a sermon preached in Glasgow on 8 May 1983. The first section dealt with the first head, which was: “The captivity which Christ has taken captive”.

had been satisfied, through judgement being executed against the sins of Israel. The sins of that year were atoned for in this symbolic way. Now the antitype of the sacrifice was the descent of the divine Redeemer into the valley of sorrow, where He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His sufferings were the sentence of death against the sins of His people. Justice was satisfied and the sentence was, as it were, emptied of its power to condemn.

That is why Scripture says, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus” – because the sentence has been executed against Christ Jesus, and because He descended to this place on the tree of Calvary, where He endured the sentence when He drank the cup of death and satisfied the justice of God by judgement being executed against Him. By dying in the place of the guilty, He as it were took captive the sentence of death. The sentence of death has been emptied of its power to condemn, because it has condemned the innocent One. It has condemned the spotless Lamb of God standing in the place of the guilty, of the hell-deserving and the undone.

There was a contest with the god of this world, Satan using all his powers against Jesus of Nazareth. The New Testament David grappled with the Goliath who is the devil, who tempted Christ, unleashing all the forces of Satanic power against Him. Satan sought to come between Him and finishing the work that the Father had given Him to do. Satan was overthrown, in the death of the Saviour. Satan’s head was bruised when Christ died for His people. They can no longer be left to be led captive by the devil at his will. Christ has secured for them deliverance from that captivity. As the One who died, He has been given the Holy Spirit without measure, so that He may deliver them from the captivity of the god of this world.

Satan has great power in our day – going about as a roaring lion, as an angel of light, in the various ways in which he exercises his deceit. But we must never forget that he is a captive. He has great liberty to do many things, but only what Christ permits him to do. He is held in the chain of the New Testament David. The stone from the sling of the New Testament David has broken the head of the god of this world; his head has been crushed. He is a captive held by the chain of the divine Saviour, whose heel was bruised, but who also crushed the head of that old serpent, the devil. However great his power may appear to God’s people in this world as they survey the generation in which they live, and even their own spiritual experience, they must never forget that he is a captive.

Christ had also to descend into the grave; it was necessary for Him that His body and soul would become separate from one another. But it was so

that He would lead death and the grave captive, That He would take the sting out of death, that He would rob the grave of its victory. The first step in His ascension was His resurrection from the dead, in which He demonstrated clearly that He fulfilled the words that He spoke, way back in the days of Hosea: “O death, I will be thy plagues: O grave, I will be thy destruction”. That voice, reaching down through the centuries, was now fulfilled at Christ’s resurrection, when the divine Saviour rose from the dead by the power of an endless life. He showed that He was the conqueror over death and the grave, which He will again demonstrate at the resurrection at the end of time.

But we read of those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetimes subject to bondage – that is, subject to captivity. That is because they are not looking to this: that death is captive to the Prince of life. Death is held in the chain of the Redeemer, and death cannot come before the time that Christ has appointed. It is appointed unto men once to die; it is God, not death, who has made that appointment. Death cannot approach them until that time. Medical services do their duty and, by the blessing of God, they very often heal and cure diseases. But death cannot come for God’s people before the time because death is held in the chain of Christ. It cannot come before the work of the child of God in this world has come to an end. And when it does come, it is emptied of its sting.

When Thomas Goodwin was dying, he said, “Is this death, this smiling friend?” This was so because the Prince of Life had taken the sting out of death, and death is the chariot that is to take the soul out of the body, to go to everlasting glory. “Is this death,” he said, “the death that so many feared, the death which brought so many in bondage through fear of death?” Christ shall show this particularly at the resurrection, when the bodies of God’s people shall arise out of the grave. They are there, but they are still united to Christ there. They are held in the grave, and Christ will demonstrate that the grave has been brought into captivity, by raising the bodies on the morning of the resurrection, and by glorifying these bodies, when their souls meet their bodies.

I have often mentioned an exclamation, which I think is beautiful, made by Christmas Evans, the Welsh divine: “O with what joy and wonder shall the saints of God, the souls of the saints of God, contemplate the frail barques of their bodies, in which they so often thought they would perish in this world, coming in on the tide of the resurrection, into the harbour and haven of everlasting glory”. And this because He has led captivity captive.

3. Christ has ascended and loads His people with benefits of salvation. The first step in Christ’s ascension was His resurrection. He stayed with His disciples for 40 days before He went to Mount Olivet. Then He ascended

from this earth to the right hand of the Majesty on high, which means His holy humanity was glorified. We cannot say much about that because Paul himself, under the Spirit of inspiration, could not say much about it. He said, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that . . . we shall be like Him”. That is, the humanity of the Saviour was glorified in His ascension; we do not mean that He was deified. The humanity of the Saviour is a glorified humanity, but a humanity still.

Lutherans speak about the body and blood of Christ being present in, with and under the bread and wine, in a way other than to faith – calling it consubstantiation. This error is not transubstantiation, the actual conversion of the bread and the wine into the body and blood of Christ when the priest pronounces the words of institution. That is a blasphemy and superstition. In order to hold consubstantiation, the Lutherans proceeded to another error: to attribute omnipresence to the humanity of Christ, because, if the body and blood of the Saviour was to be in, with and under the bread and the wine in the way that they were speaking of, the body and blood could not be in heaven, but on earth. And omnipresence is a divine attribute, not a human one. Christ is with His people by the Holy Spirit, but His body and His soul are present at the right hand of the Majesty on high and not on earth, because He ascended to glory.

The everlasting gates were opened, And what a day it was for Abraham – who saw His day and was glad – for Isaac and Jacob, and what a day it was for Moses, who had prayed, “Show me Thy glory”, and what a day it was for Elijah! What a day it was for Isaiah, who saw His glory when he spoke of Him by the spirit of prophecy! Yet the Saviour did not come in their time. But they saw Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God in His glorified humanity, coming into heaven. The angels of glory rejoiced in it. We are told: “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels”. No doubt, when Christ ascended to heaven, they accompanied Him, as also when He will descend to judge the world in righteousness.

Jesus ascended through the multitude of angels and came to where His Church was at God’s right hand. How Abraham rejoiced to see Christ’s day by faith, when he saw it in God’s promise! And what a rejoicing there was in the soul of Abraham (taking him as an example) when, for the first time, he saw the Son of God in human nature! We lose a great deal by not grasping, to the extent we can grasp that great fact, that when they saw the Saviour coming into heaven, it was the first view the Old Testament saints of God – Enoch and all the others from Abel downwards – got of the Son of God in our nature, now glorified.

We have no doubt that, whatever joy unspeakable the Old Testament saints

who were in heaven had during these thousands of years, their joy was increased when Christ in our nature came in through the everlasting doors into heaven, into the presence of the spirits of just men made perfect, who were gathered there. We have no doubt whatever but that it added to Abraham's joy in heaven to see the Son of God in our nature coming in through the everlasting doors, to take His place at the invitation of His everlasting Father, "Sit Thou at My right hand". We cannot say, What a *day*! This is because it refers to eternity, but we can say, What an experience the ascension of the Saviour was and His being at God's right hand! There He is in possession of the Holy Spirit to bring the benefits of salvation to sinners, and to demonstrate to His people that He has broken the captivity under which they were.

We see here that there are gifts for the rebellious. All those who are taught by the Holy Spirit confess that they were rebels, under the dominion of sin. They confess that they were under the kingdom of Satan and were rebellious against the invitations of the everlasting gospel. They were making excuses for many a long day when hearing these invitations; they needed to be made willing, which is bound up with the ascension of Christ: "A willing people in Thy day of power shall come to Thee". The rebellious are made willing by the gracious power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God – convincing them first of all of their rebellion, that they are captive to sin. How the sinner under conviction of sin strives against sin, and how he imagines on many an occasion that he is making some progress, and then he falls back into the miry clay once more. So they all learn: "Iniquities prevail against me". They all acknowledge that they were in the kingdom of Satan and that, if they were made willing, it is because it was in a day of Christ's power – the power of the Holy Spirit coming to their souls to make them willing.

Now to be made willing is bound up with a new desire and a new nature. That is a new creation. So those people who preach that Christ died for all, and therefore everybody has sufficient grace to believe in Christ, having the will to do so – they just do not know what they are talking about. But God's people learn this, and that is why I was making the point about the will acting according to the prevailing disposition and desire. It cannot be otherwise. The old nature will never believe in Christ; no, though the sinner is shaken over the flames of hell. It requires the power of the Holy Ghost, and a new disposition is wrought in the soul, so that the sinner comes to desire Christ, salvation, pardon, and to be washed. It finds Christ to be the One in whom there is pardon and deliverance.

The rich man, when he was in hell, became a great evangelist. He wanted Abraham to be sent back to preach to his brothers who were still alive. But Abraham said, "They have Moses and the prophets . . . neither will they

be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” Although someone you knew was raised from the dead and came to this pulpit and began to preach, it might make a great impression for a time, but it would not convert you. Nothing will convert you but the power of the Holy Ghost through the Word of God. This is one of the benefits that are spoken of here: the rebellious being made willing in a day of Christ’s power. They have to be brought to embrace Christ by faith in the everlasting gospel – brought to say that this is all my salvation and all my desire. When the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to the soul, how willing the sinner is to embrace Christ and to say in the depths of his soul, This is all my salvation and all my desire! He never did anything so willingly in his life.

Then they are loaded with benefits. Their sins, which are many, are forgiven them. And by virtue of the new birth, they are not only brought to believe in Christ, but they have a new principle placed in them, a new nature. And that new nature sets them free to an extent from the dominion and power of sin. “Sin shall have no more dominion over you” – that is in the sense that it had dominion before – because now, due to the new nature that is in the soul, there is opposition to sin. There is grace in the soul in opposition to sin. There is now in the will what was not there in a state of nature: that disposition to hate sin, to flee from sin. Although it will not be perfect in this life, that disposition is there, and this is one of the benefits of grace being in the soul. It will not be perfect until God’s people are made perfect in holiness, and that will take place at death. Although it may seem weak at times, and many a fear God’s people have that it is too weak altogether, yet the lame will take the prey. Grace will have the final victory, and Christ will have the final victory in that soul.

Christ loads them daily with His benefits. And among these gifts are the ministers of the gospel. True ministers, called by God, are given to His Church in the world – those who preach the gospel of the grace of God: the benefits, the gifts, which Christ, the ascended Lord, gives His Church in the world. In connection with these gifts, He gives all the ordinances: the preaching and reading of the Word of God, among others, and the singing of God’s praises, the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, Church discipline. These are benefits with which He loads His people in this world. There is the benefit of communion with Himself in these ordinances, in public and in private. By the Holy Spirit, Christ loads His people with these benefits.

Blessed is the man whose God is the God of Jacob, who have Him as their Saviour, as the shield of their deliverance and the sword of their excellency. They are blessed to have Christ, the ascended Lord, their Friend, their Beloved, as their intercessor at God’s right hand. They are blessed because

Christ has said even to the weakest among them, “Where I am, there ye [shall] be also”. He ascended as the head of His body, the Church, to the right hand of the Majesty on high. He said to His people: “I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am [where the ascended Lord is], there [shall ye] be also”. That is His promise, and it shall be fulfilled.

It is one of the reasons why we do not believe the view – although it is widespread even among commentators who are sound in other things – that this world is to be purified and is to be the ultimate dwelling place of Christ and His people. There are many reasons why we believe that the Scriptures teach that the world is to pass away and go back to the nothingness from whence it came. But one of the principal reasons is this, that when Christ was standing on this earth, He said, “I go to prepare a place for you”, and that was heaven. That is the place He was going to prepare – not a purified earth, but heaven – the place where the Saviour now is in His glorified humanity: that is the heaven of God’s people. When He was standing on this earth, He said that he was going. We are going to leave this earth. It is not to be made a dwelling place for Christ and His people; He went there when He ascended on high. When He carried captivity captive, He went there and He said, “Where I am there ye [shall] be also”. That is the heaven God’s people are looking forward to, and they have every reason to believe that “none perish that Him trust”.

If they are loaded with benefits in this world, these benefits are only foretastes of that eternal glory which is to be theirs, world without end. Therefore each one of us to whom the gospel of the grace of God has come should have the desire to be found in Christ, to be found among those of whom it is said: “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature”. Yes, and “there is . . . now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus”, but everlasting life and everlasting blessings, world without end.

Perfectionist View of Sanctification (2)¹

Rev J MacLeod

The same Pelagian and Arminian principles are incorporated in the fourth main theory to be considered – the *Perfectionism that came to be associated with the Oberlin University* in the United States of America, the prom-

¹These four main interpretations of the Perfectionist view of sanctification are the Pelagian, the Roman Catholic, the Arminian and the Oberlin. The first three of these were considered in last month’s article.

inent advocates of which were Charles G Finney and Asa Mahan. They, however, claimed that, far from drawing their doctrine from the teaching of others before them, they got it directly from the Bible. "I gave myself earnestly", said Finney, "to search the Scriptures and to read whatever came to hand upon the subject, until my mind was satisfied that an altogether higher and more stable form of Christian life was attainable, and was a privilege of all Christians. . . . I was satisfied that the doctrine of sanctification in this life, and entire sanctification, in the sense that it was the privilege of Christians to live without known sin, was a doctrine taught in the Bible, and that abundant means were provided for securing that attainment.

The root of this whole system is found in the adoption of the principle that every man, in virtue of being a free agent, has full ability to fulfill all his obligations. Perfection, according to Mahan, "is a free and perfect discharge of our entire duty, of all existing obligations to God and all other beings," and according to Finney, "Nothing, more or less, can possibly be perfection or entire sanctification than obedience to the law. . . . Nothing can possibly be perfection in any being, short of this; nor can there possibly be anything above it." According to this school, all virtue consists in disinterested benevolence and nothing is sinful but voluntarily transgression of known law – a voluntary failure to meet obligation. Anything which lies beyond the range of voluntary action is not a matter of immediate obligation and can neither be holiness nor sin. Consequently, when a man's generic choice or purpose is at any moment to promote the happiness of the universe, he is perfect.

But the law is again a modified law and the service required is regulated by our ability and condition. As God therefore expects from every man, at any given moment, only the best that he can do with his impaired faculties, perfection is simply "doing one's best"! In other words, perfection is fully present in a surrendered will. This may be regarded as a sinless state because, according to this theory, nothing outside the will is sinful, there being no moral character in feeling, for example, and much less in states of mind not determined by the will. In affinity with the Methodist doctrine, the moral law is considered to have been superseded by the law of faith. The life of faith is now the perfect life and, when perfectly maintained, excludes the presence and power of sin.

Finney and his colleagues insisted that this sanctification is to be obtained by faith alone. Mahan tells us that, on seeking light on this great problem of Christian perfection, he found Christ to be "attainable" and that in Him not merely was justification to be had, but also sanctification, the one being as truly a gift of grace, as exclusively a work of God as the other and to be received from Him by a direct act of faith. This is how he himself claims to

have emerged out of the “twilight” state of the ordinary Christian into the sunlight of the perfect one. The gift of faith which makes perfect is a distinct bestowal of the Holy Spirit, a “second blessing” following the primary gift of faith. When Finney was made aware, as he claimed, of the “great truth” that, being “baptized with the Holy Ghost”, the Christian can be filled with all the “fullness of God”, he sought and obtained this second blessing also, and so, from then on, the doctrine became contagious and widespread as it was preached and taught.

This teaching today² prevails among those who regard Christian perfection as being reached in this present world. Among them are the Higher Life movement, the Keswick movement and the Victorious Life movement. The Keswick school may be regarded as typical of modern Perfectionism. The perfect Christian, according to them, is one who has attained to “an entire surrender of the will to God, issuing in the power and joy of full concentration to His service”. This state is to be attained, not by long prayers and laborious effort but by “a deliberate and decisive act of faith”. What it amounts to is that sanctification and justification are thought of as two distinct “blessings”, each a gift of grace, each bestowed on condition of faith.

The Oberlin theory, A A Hodge maintained, appears to assimilate more nearly than the others the self-consistency and anti-Christian spirit of the Pelagian view. It is inconsistent with the true nature of God’s law, the true nature of sin, and the true nature of virtue.

Diverse as these theories of perfectionism may be in many respects, yet they all agree, as Charles Hodge pointed out, in teaching that the law of God has been lowered, in so far as its demands are satisfied by a lower degree of obedience than was required of Adam, or of man in his normal state – and therefore in calling that perfection which in fact is not perfection, either in the sight of God or of an enlightened conscience. It is, he says, a contradiction to say that a man is perfect whose acts and shortcomings need expiation and the pardoning mercy of God.

Warfield’s main criticism of Perfectionism lay in the inadequate notion of sin, in that the doctrine ignores the fact that sin consists of any lack of conformity unto the law of God as well as transgression of that law. This accordance with the Reformed tradition, which rejects any kind of earthly absolute perfection – sanctification being, in the words of *The Shorter Catechism*, “the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness”.

It is at their death that the souls of believers are made perfect in holiness,

²It should be noted that this paper was written in the 1960s.

when they “immediately pass into glory”. At every stage prior to this it can only be said that “this sanctification is throughout in the whole man, yet imperfect in this life” (*Westminster Confession of Faith* 13:2). Many declarations of Scripture, such as, “There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not”, expressly condemn perfectionist views, as do the experiences of God’s people, as we have them recorded in the Word of God for our admonition and example.

Nowhere in the Scriptures do we read of a saint claiming that he is fully sanctified and free from imperfection. On the contrary, Paul says, “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . . For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” The conflict thus described is the one in which all real Christians aspiring after perfection find themselves engaged, and the one out of which they are finally to emerge “more than conquerors” through Him who loved them.

Keeping the Heart (4)¹

John Flavel

(4.) *The comfort of our souls* much depends on the keeping of our hearts; for he that is negligent in attending to his own heart, is (ordinarily) a great stranger to assurance and the sweet comforts flowing from it.

Indeed, if the Antinomian doctrine were true, which teaches you to reject all marks and signs for trying your condition – telling you it is only the Spirit that immediately assures you, by witnessing your adoption directly without marks – then you might be careless about your hearts; indeed, you might be strangers to them, and yet no strangers to comfort. But since both Scripture and experience confute this foolishness, I hope you will never look for comfort in that unscriptural way. I do not deny that it is the work and office of the Spirit to assure you, and yet I confidently affirm that, if ever you

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). March’s article spoke of it being the great business of a Christian’s life to keep their heart. This is the final article in the series.

attain assurance in the ordinary way wherein God dispenses it, you must take pains with your hearts. You may expect your comforts upon easier terms, but I am mistaken if you ever enjoy them on any other way than: “Giving all diligence”; “Prove your own selves”; this is the scripture way.

I remember that [Francis] Roberts,² in his treatise on the covenant, tells us he knew a Christian who, in the infancy of his Christianity, so vehemently panted after the infallible assurance of God’s love that for a long time together he earnestly desired some voice from heaven. Sometimes when walking alone in the fields, he earnestly desired some miraculous voice from the trees and stones there. After many desires and longings, this was denied him; but in time a better was afforded in the ordinary way of searching the word, and his own heart. A learned writer gives a similar instance of someone who was driven by temptation to the very borders of despair; at last, after being sweetly assured, someone asked him how he attained it? He answered, “Not by any extraordinary revelation, but by subjecting my understanding to the Scriptures and comparing my own heart with them”. The Spirit indeed assures by being a witness to our adoption. He is a witness in two ways.

(1.) *Objectively*, that is, by working those graces in our souls which are the conditions of the promise, and so the Spirit and His graces in us are all one: the Spirit of God dwelling in us is a mark of our adoption. Now the Spirit cannot be discerned in His essence, but in His operations; and to discern these is to discern the Spirit. And how these should be discerned without serious searching of the heart, and diligent watching, I cannot imagine.

(2.) The other way of the Spirit’s witnessing is *effectively* – that is, by irradiating the soul with a grace-discovering light, shining upon His own work. In order of nature, this follows the former work; He first infuses the grace and then opens the eye of the soul to see it. Now since the heart is the subject of that infused grace, even this way of the Spirit’s witnessing also includes the necessity of keeping our own hearts carefully. For:

(1.) A neglected heart is so confused and dark that the little grace which is in it is not ordinarily discernible. The most accurate and laborious Christians, that take most pains and spend most time about their hearts, do yet find it very difficult to discover the pure, genuine workings of the Spirit there. How then shall the Christian who is (comparatively) negligent about heart work ever be able to find it out? Sincerity, which is the thing sought for, lies in the heart like a small piece of gold in the bottom of a river. He that will find it must stay till the water is settled and clear, and then he shall see the gold sparkling at the bottom. And that the heart may be settled

²English writer on covenant theology (1609-75).

and clear how much pains and watching, care and diligence, will it cost?

(2.) God does not usually indulge lazy and negligent souls with the comforts of assurance; He will not so much as seem to patronise sloth and carelessness. He will give assurance, but it shall be in His own way. His command has united our care and comfort together; they are mistaken that think the beautiful child of assurance may be born without pangs. How many solitary hours have the people of God spent in heart-examination? How many times have they looked into the Word and then into their hearts? Sometimes they thought they discovered sincerity, and were even ready to draw forth the triumphant conclusion of assurance. Then came a doubt they could not resolve and dashed all down again; they have had many hopes and fears, doubtings and reasonings, in their own breasts, before they became comfortably settled.

To conclude, suppose it is possible for a *careless* Christian to attain assurance, yet it is impossible he should long retain it. For, if extraordinary care is not used, it is a thousand to one that those whose hearts are filled with the joys of assurance, if ever they enjoy it for long, a little pride, vanity, or carelessness will dash to pieces all for which they have been labouring a long time, in many a weary duty. Then, since the joy of our life, the comfort of our souls, rises and falls with our diligence in this work, keep your hearts with all diligence.

(5.) *The increase of our graces* depends upon keeping our hearts. I never knew grace thrive in a negligent and careless soul. The habits and roots of grace are planted in the heart; and the deeper they become there, the more thriving and flourishing grace is. We read of “being rooted in . . . love” (Eph 3:17); grace in the heart is the root of every gracious word in the mouth and of every holy work in the hand (Ps 116:10, 2 Cor 4:13). It is true that Christ is the root of a Christian, but Christ is the originating root. And grace is a root originated, planted and influenced by Christ. According as this thrives under divine influences, so the acts of grace are more or less fruitful or vigorous. Now, in a heart not kept with care and diligence, these fructifying influences are cut off, multitudes of vanities break in upon it and devour its strength.

The heart is, as it were, the pasture in which multitudes of thoughts are fed every day; a gracious heart diligently kept, feeds on many precious thoughts of God in a day. “How precious are Thy thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with Thee” (Ps 139:17,18). And as the gracious heart feeds on them, so they refresh and feast the heart. “My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness . . . while I remember Thee” (Ps 63:5,6). But in the neglected heart, swarms of vain and foolish

thoughts perpetually jostle out those spiritual ideas and thoughts of God, by which the soul should be refreshed.

Besides, the careless heart makes nothing out of any duty or ordinance it performs or attends on, and yet these are the conduits of heaven, from whence grace is watered and made fruitful. A man may go with a heedless spirit from ordinance to ordinance, abide all his days under the choicest teaching, and yet never be improved by them; for heart-neglect is a leak in the bottom. No heavenly influences, however rich, abide in that soul (Mt 13:3,4). The heart that lies open, like the highway, free for all passers-by, when the seed fell on it, the fowls came and devoured it. Alas, it is not enough to hear, unless we take heed how we hear; a man may pray, and never be the better of it, unless he watches unto prayer. In a word, all ordinances, means and duties, are blessed unto the increase of grace, according to the care and strictness we use in keeping our hearts in them. By this time, reader, I hope you are fully satisfied how necessary a work the keeping of the heart is and how great are its consequences, it being a duty that wraps up so many interests of the soul.

(6.) *The stability of our souls in the hour of temptation* will be much according to the care and conscience we have of keeping our hearts. The careless heart is an easy prey to Satan in the hour of temptation. His main batteries are raised against the heart; if he wins that, he wins all, for it commands the whole man. Alas, how easy a conquest is a neglected heart! It is no more difficult to surprise it than for an enemy to enter that city whose gates are open and unguarded; it is the watchful heart that discovers and suppresses the temptation before it comes to its strength. Divines observe this to be the method in which temptations are ripened and brought to their full strength.

Forgiving One Another¹

W K Tweedie

Ephesians 4:31,32. *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

It should be noticed, with special care, that the forgiveness which God extends to sinners is held out as the model for us to imitate. If the holy Jehovah has forgiven us countless talents, much more are we to forgive a

¹Taken with editing from *The Christian's Daily Companion*.

fellow mortal a penny. If he has blotted out offences that were like crimson and scarlet, how prompt should we be in blotting from our hearts every trace of offences against us! The plan of redemption is a system of forgiveness, and the man that is unforgiving sins thereby against the whole gospel – he sets himself in opposition to the mind of God, who is revealed to men as the God of pardon, the God that delights in mercy. The Christian should therefore have no enemy but one: namely, sin. Towards every other enemy he should steadfastly present the aspect of kindness. Never are we more like Him who prayed amid His dying agonies, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do,” than when we are enabled by the grace of God to pray for and pity even the men that traduce us and would persecute us.

But further, the religion of the gospel is so exquisite in its structure that, if we are not forgiving, we cannot be forgiven. “If [we] forgive not men their trespasses, neither will [our] Father forgive [our] trespasses.” As restitution is an essential part of repentance, when we have inflicted injury, so forgiveness is an invariable result of that faith which worketh by love, and which connects us with Him through whom alone pardon can be obtained. For us therefore to pray to God to pardon us while we refuse to pardon another, or while malice rankles in our hearts, is to mock God by asking for what He assures us He will not give.

It is just as certain that a revengeful man will not obtain pardon from God as it is certain that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. The man who can harbour revenge cannot be a believer in Him who loved His enemies – who died for them – and taught His followers to bless them who curse us, and pray for them who despitefully use us; and if there is no belief in Christ, there can be no pardon.

Now let us apply all this in the work of self-scrutiny. See that man toiling at that shapeless block of stone. He intends it to be a statue and has just begun his labour. It bears no marks which could tell the inexperienced eye what purpose it is to serve. But slowly, under the sculptor’s hand, it emerges into beauty, and now it stands as an exquisite monument of his skill. That is an emblem of the New-Creator’s power over the heart and soul of man. It is at first rough and shapeless, but slowly it grows in “the beauty of holiness”. The Word is the implement that the Spirit uses for that purpose; it is at once the model and the means of producing conformity to itself.

Has it been so with my soul? Have I been brought by the blessing of God’s Spirit from a state of rough nature, where all was morally deformed, into a state of grace, where the soul ripens for glory? That is, am I growing in conformity to Jesus, who prayed for His crucifiers – who loved His people to the death, who suffered for them, leaving them an example that they should

walk in His footsteps? If we have gospel grounds for thinking that this is the case, then “bless the Lord, O [our souls], and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all [our] iniquities: who healeth all [our] diseases: who redeemeth [our] life from destruction: who crowneth [us] with loving-kindness and tender mercies” (Ps 103:2-4).

Obituary

Rev A E W MacDonald (1)

When faithful watchmen are removed from their posts on the walls of Zion, the Church has a duty to remember them as those who have spoken the Word of God, and to follow their faith, “considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever” (Heb 13:7,8). Rev Alfred MacDonald was an eminently vigilant and able watchman upon the walls of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and in this obituary, we endeavour to keep fresh the memory of his life and labours among us.

He was born in the year 1926 in Oban, amidst the rolling green hills of Argyll and by the beautiful Firth of Lorn, overlooking the mountains of Mull. Upon these same mountains the simple but godly Ewen Cameron gazed on his last night on earth, and exclaimed, “Is not the world which God created beautiful? But what is good for me is that I have found Christ in it.” Alfred MacDonald was named after a wealthy English gentleman, Alfred Ebenezer Wenham, who then resided in Kilbowie House, a baronial mansion overlooking the Island of Kerrera just outside Oban. Wenham became a member of the Free Presbyterian Church and showed much kindness to the MacDonald family and to others in the Oban Congregation. His grandson was the well-known Biblical scholar, John Wenham, who authored a standard textbook on *The Elements of New Testament Greek*.

Alfred MacDonald’s father and mother were faithful Free Presbyterians who feared God above many. His father, John, was an elder in the Oban congregation and was raised on the Island of Mull. John MacDonald’s own father, Allan, originally from the Isle of Barra, was brought up by relatives on the tiny Island of Muck, part of the Inner Hebrides to the north of Mull. Having run away to sea as a teenager, the Lord called him by irresistible grace and he became a follower of the Lamb through good and evil report. He cast in his lot with the Free Presbyterian Church after its formation in 1893, and held the office of Deacon in the Oban Congregation when he came to settle there with his family. Both Allan and John MacDonald were noted for their

godliness, and had such a zeal for the honour of Christ and His day that they became known for their reproofs against open Sabbath-breakers.

Alfred MacDonald's mother, Jessie, was a woman of eminent piety. She was one of a large family of Frasers who grew up at Seanlios, a farm in Clunes, part of the Kirkhill area west of Inverness. Her father, Alexander Fraser, was a gracious man who was known to travel by foot over the hills and across Loch Ness by boat to attend communion seasons at places such as Stratherrick. Jessie came under the power of the Word while still in her teenage years. During that period she heard Rev J R Mackay preaching in the Inverness church on: "My head is filled with dew, and My locks with the drops of the night" (Song of Solomon 5:2), and being so overcome with the power of the truth on her soul, she had to be carried out of the church. It was not till quite some years afterwards that she believed she had come to the liberty of the gospel. She made a public profession of faith in Glasgow under Rev Neil Cameron. She proved herself to be a lover of the Lord's people and often the busy family home in Oban would be full of visitors at communion seasons. A particularly close spiritual bond was formed between herself and the late Rev Donald MacLean, Glasgow, who ever after spoke of her with the warmest affection and highest regard.

But returning to the subject of this obituary, Alfred MacDonald grew up in a home permeated with godliness, and under the saintly ministries of Rev D A Macfarlane, and his successor Rev Donald Beaton. Gospel privileges, however, do not in themselves bring grace and cannot without the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit overcome the dominion of sin. Thus he grew up, like all the fallen sons of Adam, as careless and independent as a wild ass's colt. Speaking for one of the first times at a fellowship meeting many years after, he concluded by saying that he had to confess that these words in Lamentations were true of himself, "They that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills" (Lam 4:5). Naturally fearless and strong-willed, he ran on in a course of rebellion against God, though preserved from any scandalous outbreaking of sin.

While in his late teens, the conversion of one of his older brothers, Fraser, proved to be the means of awakening him to a concern for the salvation of his own soul, and a desire to possess "like precious faith". His mother read out in his hearing a letter from Fraser, detailing the Lord's saving work in his soul under the ministry of Rev D A Macfarlane while residing and working at the old family farm in Clunes. The instant he heard these tidings he came to see that nothing else would do for him henceforth but to have what his brother had. Incidentally, this afterwards proved to be an occasion for the accuser of the brethren to assault him with the temptation that it was only

natural emotion and not true spiritual concern which led him to begin to seek a Saviour. Others have had such a temptation, as pictured by John Bunyan in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, where Mercy in seeking entrance to the wicket gate was afraid and confessed, "I am come for that unto which I was never invited, as my friend Christiana was. Hers was from the King, and mine was but from her. Wherefore I fear I presume."

However, the truth of God took hold of Alfred MacDonald from this time forward, and especially the words of the call given to Abraham to come out of Ur of the Chaldees: "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee" (Gen 12:1). He would recall how in his experience, when these words would speak to him as they often did, they were always accompanied with the call in metrical Psalm 45, "O daughter, hearken and regard, and do thine ear incline, Likewise forget thy father's house, and people that are thine". A period of deep soul exercise followed, sinking at times to a fear that he had sinned the unpardonable sin, and that therefore there was no mercy for him.

When the time came for higher education, in Glasgow, he pursued the line of mathematics and business, as well as Spanish. He was only in Glasgow for around a year before he was called up into the army to join the war effort. During his year there he had frequent opportunity to hear Rev Roderick Mackenzie, who was then minister of the St Jude's congregation, and whose preaching made a deep impression upon him. With the Second World War raging, he began service with the Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME), and spent some years stationed in the south-east of England. For a while he attended one of the local Strict Baptist chapels. He spoke of one particular night there when the Word was with great power and sweetness in his experience, so much so that on the way home he felt compelled to dismount from his bicycle and to turn aside into a field to pour out his heart in gratitude to the Lord. Indeed, it is likely that this experience was his coming to the liberty of the gospel.

One Sabbath, when presumably he was not free to travel to the Strict Baptist chapel, he was in a quandary as to whether or not to attend the preaching of the army padre. His decision to attend was not regretted as he received a rich blessing that day under the padre's preaching on "I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten" (Joel 2:25), and often afterwards he continued to find great encouragement from these words. His desire was to be able to attend regularly the Free Presbyterian services in London under Rev J P MacQueen. He requested permission from a senior military officer to be allowed to travel to London for the weekend in order to

worship there. Suspicious of the motives of a young man seeking freedom to be in London every weekend, the officer refused the request. Needless to say, the expedient of using public transport run in systematic disregard of God's holy day never entered his mind. However, the Lord was to open the door for the young soldier to have the desire of his heart.

After some time, all the soldiers in the barracks were given a special reward of a free ticket to the theatre in London one Friday or Saturday evening. Alfred MacDonald, having been weaned from the vanities of the world and alive to their deadly poison, refused the offer. The senior officer who had before refused him the permission to travel to London every weekend, heard of his principled refusal of a night's free amusement there, and was so impressed that he soon approached him to give him full permission to travel to London every weekend, leaving on Saturday and returning on Monday morning. Thus began his acquaintance with Rev J P MacQueen, under whose ministry he now sat, and in whose manse at Battersea Park, London, he used to stay during his weekend visits to London. To the end of his days, Alfred MacDonald held Rev J P MacQueen in the highest esteem. His love to the long-departed saint had obviously not perished with Mr MacQueen's death, and he delighted to regale the Lord's people with striking and valuable quotes from him. One such quotation which he would repeat was Mr MacQueen's persuasion that in prayer we may take everything to the Lord "from the inconceivably vast to the infinitesimally small".

During these war years in London, he also came to form a close and lasting friendship with Duncan MacSween, Glasgow, who was then also a young man in London who had recently set out on his way Zionward. A close bond was also formed with Jan van Woerdan, a young Dutchman working for the Dutch Embassy in London, who attended the Free Presbyterian services in London and was awakened to a concern for eternity under Rev J P MacQueen's preaching. Their paths would later intertwine at different stages of their lives.

It was during his time as a soldier that he was led to take the solemn step of making a public profession of faith in the Divine Redeemer. Upon his release from the services in 1948 he resumed a course of academic studies which led to him graduating with an MA degree from Edinburgh University. He was in Edinburgh for three years, where he had the privilege of the last years of Rev Neil Macintyre's ministry, and the first year of Rev Donald Campbell's. Having undertaken teacher training in Moray House, Edinburgh, he now pursued a career teaching mathematics. His first post was at Wick High School in 1951, placing him under the ministry of Rev R R Sinclair, Wick. It was here that he was first prevailed upon to speak in public, when

Mr Sinclair asked him to take the services in Thurso. During the long summer holidays, he would spend the weeks at the family home in Oban and would sometimes be asked to conduct public worship.

After four years in Wick, he took up a new teaching post at the Nicolson Institute in Stornoway, Isle of Lewis. His brother Fraser was then the Free Presbyterian minister of North Tolsta, and another brother, Iain, also resided on the Island, teaching at the same school. Alfred MacDonald was popular among his pupils, but his zeal for the truth and refusal to compromise with error came to be well known in the school and further afield. Sometimes his minister, Rev James Tallach (senior), asked him to take services and it is known that at least one hearer received a blessing for eternity under his preaching there. It was during his time in Stornoway that he began to wrestle in earnest with the call to the ministry. It is possible that he had been led to wonder whether he was called to the ministry prior to this, because while in Wick he had studied for a Bachelor of Divinity degree.

After two years in Lewis, he came forward desiring to study for the ministry, constrained by the divine call. Having been accepted, he began his divinity studies in Portree, Isle of Skye, under Rev Donald MacLean who was then in his first year as the Church's Systematic Theology tutor. His fellow students were the future Revs Alexander Morrison, Donald B Macleod and John Martin. Mr Martin's ministry was sadly very brief, being cut short by his death after only four years. But a lifelong bond of brotherly love and mutual respect was formed between Mr MacDonald and his fellow students.

His course of divinity studies was to take a rather unusual turn. Before the first academic year had been completed, he was asked to go out to the Church's mission in Zimbabwe, upon the occasion of the death, on 28 March 1959, of Rev James Fraser, who had been labouring with much acceptance as a missionary there. Rev Donald MacLean, the then Clerk of the Foreign Mission Committee was, it seems, the inspiration behind the suggestion. It is likely that this unusual step took account of his previous private studies in the biblical languages while studying for his Bachelor of Divinity degree. To this proposal he agreed, and some further studies were undertaken with Rev Malcolm MacSween in his home town of Oban, including Pastoral Theology, Church Law, and the *Confession of Faith*.

The Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee noted their appreciation of this arrangement: "The Committee is much indebted to Mr MacDonald for his willingness to step in and help in the difficult circumstances which have arisen due to the lamented death of the late Rev J S Fraser. Mr MacDonald himself is a fully-trained and experienced teacher and his going out to the Mission will be a great encouragement to our staff there, who are being very

much over-worked as they do their utmost to serve the needs of the Africans.”² The Synod meeting in May 1959 granted the crave of the petition of the Outer Isles Presbytery to ordain him before he went abroad. He was licensed on 21 July 1959, and was ordained to the ministry the following day in Stornoway, with Rev James Tallach (senior) preaching the ordination sermon on 2 Corinthians 4:14, “for the love of Christ constraineth us”.

After the necessary arrangements were made for the journey, he sailed to Africa early in August of that year, arriving safely on the twentieth of the same month to commence his labours at Ingwenya. His old London friend, Jan van Woerden was now labouring in medical work on the Mission, so that their acquaintance was renewed. During 1960, Mr MacDonald conducted the ordination service on the occasion of Mr van Woerden being ordained to the office of elder.

Fresh opportunities arose to preach to those outside the Church, and to compel “the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind” to come to the gospel feast. Only six miles from the Ingwenya mission there was a “vagrant’s camp”, housing unemployed men. These men had rioted on several occasions, attacking the guards who were over them. Jan van Woerden had gained access to speak at the camp, and he addressed them from John 8:36, “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed”. These poor detainees gave a warm welcome, and begged to be addressed again. Accordingly, Mr MacDonald went on a subsequent Sabbath and preached the glad tidings of great joy that “this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”. The opportunity was taken to distribute copies of the Gospels in their own tongue.³

In addition to the core work of the gospel ministry, Mr MacDonald also took a lead role in the School at Ingwenya and even taught some mathematics classes. This brought him into close contact with the pupils at the School. He was a firm disciplinarian, enforcing high standards of behaviour in and out of school hours. But it was the preaching of the gospel which was ever uppermost in his mind and affections. During his first spell in Africa, he had one particularly memorable experience in preaching. It was at a Zenka communion and he preached the action sermon in the open air amidst the warmth and sunshine of the African summer on Song of Solomon 2:1, “I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valleys”. It seems he was anointed with the unction of heaven that day and could join the Psalmist in saying, “My head Thou dost with oil anoint, and my cup overflows”. At least one poor sinner, David Ndlovu, was drawn that day to the beauty of Sharon’s Rose,

²*The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 64, p 94.

³*The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 65, p 370.

and afterwards became a much valued elder in the Church, and was noted for his zeal and godliness.

When the late Rev Alasdair B MacLean was zealously labouring in Ingwenya many decades afterwards, he found that the older people could still recall, and loved to speak about, the sermons they heard from Mr MacDonald's lips during these years. He also told the story of how he asked one old woman in his congregation, an established member in the Church for many years, how she had first come to the church. She replied that she was not brought up in the Church but one day Mr MacDonald was visiting her village and he saw her carrying a little infant without any blanket for warmth and protection. Obviously touched at the indigence of this poor woman, he later returned with a blanket for the infant and directed the woman to give attendance to the needs of her soul by beginning to attend the services of the Church. She did so from then on and, decades later, three generations of her family were also in attendance with her. Most importantly, she had apparently found Christ for her soul under the preaching of the Word.

(Rev) I D MacDonald

Union with God in Christ¹

Matthew Henry

John 17:26. *And I in them.*

There is no getting into the love of God but through Christ. Nor can we keep ourselves in that love but by abiding in Christ – that is, having Him to abide in us. Nor can we have the sense and apprehension of that love but by our experience of the indwelling of Christ – that is, the Spirit of Christ in our hearts. It is Christ in us that is the only hope of glory (Col 1:27) that will not make us ashamed.

All our communion with God, the reception of His love to us with our return of love to Him again, passes through the hands of the Lord Jesus, and the comfort of it is owing purely to Him. Christ had said but a little before, “I in them” (v23), and here it is repeated (though the sense was complete without it), and the prayer closed with it, to show how much the heart of Christ was set upon it; all His petitions centre in this, and with this the prayers of Jesus, the Son of David, are ended: “I in them”; let Me have this, and I desire no more”. It is the glory of the Redeemer to dwell in the redeemed: it is His rest for ever, and He has desired it. Let us therefore make our

¹Taken, with slight editing from Henry's *Commentary*, on the words at the top of the article. Henry is pointing out from these words that the only way to have communion with God is to be in union with Him in Christ.

union with Christ sure, and then take the comfort of His intercession. This prayer had an end, but *that* He ever lives to make.

Jesus on the Sea of Galilee (1)¹

Alexander Moody Stuart

Matthew 8:18-27. *Now, when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave commandment to depart unto the other side. . . .* (See Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25.)

Luke 9:57-62. *And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto Him, Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. . . .*

One of the great occasions in Christ's ministry at Capernaum is the telling of the parables of the Sower, the Tares of the field, and others. In the morning he leaves the house, goes down to the seashore, and there delivers those parables from the ship to a great multitude of people; not only from the neighbourhood, but "gathered together . . . out of every city". He then returns home with His disciples, and opens the spiritual meaning that lay concealed beneath the various similitudes.

On the evening of the same day, Jesus gives orders to pass over to the other side; and the incidents which then occur may be thus arranged: the followers on the sea-shore, the voyage across the lake, the sleep of Jesus in the storm, and the deliverance of the disciples.

1. The followers on the seashore. There is no need to suppose that the two cases recorded by Matthew and the three by Luke occurred on different occasions; the one might add a part which the other had omitted, as so often happens. The only descriptive note given by Luke is in the words, "It came to pass as they went by the way"; but this is consistent with Matthew's definite account of time and place in the incidents.

After a long day's work, Jesus is about to pass to the other side of the Sea with His disciples; between the house and the boat, He addresses memorable words to three of His followers. This He does partly of His own accord and partly in answer to them. But they appear to be all professed disciples already, in the more general sense of the term, for the conversation refers to following Christ, in a constant way. The three may be distinguished as the hasty, the tardy, and the limping followers of Jesus.

(1.) The *hasty* follower is the first who presents himself, and he is *sifted* by Christ. He is a scribe, a doctor of the Hebrew law, a member of a learned and distinguished body that the people held in the highest esteem, one who

¹The first section, as edited, of a chapter from Moody Stuart's book *Capernaum*.

sat in the seat of Moses. He has been with the multitude, listening on the shore to the wondrous parables spoken from the ship, and has probably been privileged, along with the disciples, to hear in the house the opening of their mysteries. He is not only astonished and delighted with the great untaught Teacher, but is deeply impressed with all that he has heard, and his heart is moved with a tide of religious affection to the Lord Jesus.

Nothing less could induce him to make such an offer of service: "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest". It is the offer of a man of learning and worldly prospects to cast in his lot with the lowly Jesus of Nazareth; it is very humbling for him to make, apparently both highly honourable and very helpful for Jesus to receive. It is the offer of a studious man, accustomed to comfort and respect at home with others waiting on his command, to leave it all and follow Christ about the country. Jesus is in the act of stepping into the ship to an unknown destination on the other side, when this disciple in the warmth of his affection and zeal accosts Him before all: "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest".

"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out", is the cordial, invariable reception for every returning sinner. But Jesus, who receives all who apply for salvation, does not accept all who make offer of service; He gives no consent to take this scribe into the ship along with Him. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." It is not absolute penury that Jesus speaks of, or the lack of necessary accommodation for the night, because there were many houses open to Him with many cordial hosts, both in Capernaum and elsewhere. But it is a willing uncertainty for time, the hold of this life being let go, a severance from all the ties of earth. The fox in his widest roamings has still his well-known retreat, to which he ever returns; the bird in all its wanderings has still its own secure resting-place for the night. But the Son of Man has not earth for His home, nor any home on earth; and every follower of the Son of man leaves all, without any earthly rest or refuge in reserve. This is not His rest; but the rest that remains for the people of God.

In the depths of this lawyer's heart, as in the heart of so many professed followers of Christ, there was something to fall back on if Jesus failed. There was to be for the present, a constant and ardent following of Christ throughout the land; but he expected some home with honour to be offered him by Jesus, or his own home to retire to in the end if he was disappointed. The ties to the world are not cut through; Jesus cuts them completely by these words, if this man is to go with him at all; or else He cuts the slender tie that binds him as a disciple.

The world to be completely given up; the nest a man makes for himself is

to be forsaken for ever; the refuge in which he takes shelter is to be abandoned once and for all: such an ordeal cools many an ardent follower of Christ. It is a balance in which many have been weighed and found wanting; in which many will yet be weighed, and their lack shown to all. Can we abide it?

This spontaneous sacrifice seemed by far the best of the offers of service now made to Jesus. The offerer was ready to go with Him at once: he had no father to bury before he went; no mother or sister to whom he must bid farewell with a parting kiss; but Christ was to be his immediate and entire portion: "I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest". The offerer thought his own service as sincere as his sacrifice was great, yet the Searcher of hearts discovers some unforsaken idol, in the depths of the soul within. "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

(2.) The *tardy* follower is *hastened* by Jesus. He says, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father". "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." The command is trying and sounds severe; yet at the same time, it is highly honourable to the disciple. The other two make an offer of service, but he is called to the work by Jesus Himself, for the divine rule that "no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God," is remarkably illustrated in the whole Gospel history. It does not appear that Jesus ever accepted any self-moved offer of service, but "He called unto Him whom He would".

The call on this occasion is not declined by the disciple, and the delay that is pleaded for is neither for a mere excuse or for a trifling reason, but for a serious and urgent cause, and even a binding duty except for the intervening call of Christ. The call comes while the disciple's father lies dead and unburied, and he pleads the necessity of interring his father first. This implies that he cannot now enter the ship with Christ but will be ready to follow Him on His return. Jesus intimates no disapproval, as if his difficulty indicated any unfitness for the ministry, but He enlightens his conscience and removes the obstacle by leaving the burden on others and commissions him: "Go thou and preach the Kingdom of God".

The command is honourable to him who receives it, but the words of Jesus convey a unusually severe and awful reflection on the mass even of the respected members of society. "Let the dead bury their dead"; that is, Let the dead in sins bury their dead relatives. Of the maiden who dies after being committed into the hands of Jesus, He declares that she is not dead; but He pronounces all the unrenewed, who are engaged in the duties and decencies of life, to be but dead men; their living to be but dying bodies entombing their dead souls. These are not wild and reckless prodigals, but such as can

be entrusted decently to discharge a solemn duty; yet their souls have not one spark of life in them, and they are hasting forward to the second and everlasting death. It is as sadly true in the midst of us, as in Christ's own city, that many a decent funeral is only a solemn procession of the dead burying their dead, while in some cases the dark gloom is deepened by the Lord's holy day being selected for the dead work.

The duty, however, was a most fit one for this son to discharge, had not the Lord called him to better work. It was quite incumbent, if there had not been other relatives capable enough of discharging it; probably other sons who were ready to bury their own dead. They could do what was detaining him, but not the gospel work to which he was called. In burying his father, he was only taking part in what others could perform as well without him, but in preaching the gospel he would do what none of them could attempt. Let them attend to their duty, but let him follow his.

His call is not to the dark work of interring the dead, but to preach the life-giving Word; not to sound the funeral wail, but to blow the silver trumpet of jubilee and carry the glad tidings of salvation. His call is to raise the dead, not to bury them. It is more important, more necessary, more urgent by as well as more noble. "Go thou and preach the Kingdom of God", by the living Word, breathed on by the quickening Spirit; go and heal the sick, open the eyes of the blind, cleanse the lepers and raise the dead from the grave of sin.

The words of Jesus carry a lasting lesson to ministers of the gospel to leave to others the many concerns of this life, of which they may be tempted to take a burden; works good and useful in themselves for the social interests of the community, but which others will discharge as well as they without interfering with higher calls. The minister's time is most precious for his own special work; no other man's time in the world is so valuable as his, for no calling is so high or so important. Let him therefore leave to others what they can do as well as he, and let him keep fast by his own holy and special calling. The rest are often only dead works, which can be done by dead men; his is a living work, requiring a living man with all his time and all his life. Others also not in the ministry, but called by God into special nearness to himself in prayer for the salvation of souls or in effort on their behalf, will find in the words of Christ a helpful warrant of release from many things which they might do, but which there is no fear of others neglecting. These things they may safely leave for more spiritual, more profitable, and more lasting labour in the vineyard of the Great Husbandman.

(3.) The last of the three followers is *limping* with a divided heart and is *reproved*. He desires to go with Jesus, with the homeless Son of man, yet he cannot quite embark with him at the moment, but must first take a last look

at his own cherished home before he renounces it, and have some parting interchange of affection with his friends before he leaves them. It is not the claim of family and friends upon him in the way of duty, as in the last case, but the clinging of his own unloosened attachment, that detains him. He has gone forward to the great field of the Lord's husbandry, has put his hand upon the plough and seems ready to start in the work, but his eye is turned backward to his pleasant home, where his heart has remained all the while. Conscience urges him on under a sense of duty; hope of eternal life draws him on in the prospect of great advantage; fear drives him on by the terror of the wrath to come. But love binds him to earth; his heart cleaves to the dust; his affections remain unsevered. He is not "fit for the kingdom of God"; his present disposition is unsuitable, and probably the man himself has no spiritual fitness for the kingdom.

There is nothing so common in the professing Church as this divided heart, though it is the very note of the man whom the King pronounces unfit for the kingdom. Often also, as in this case, the act of placing the hand on the plough emboldens the heart to cast the eye back the next moment. Till the hand is stretched out to grasp the plough and reaches it, the man both moves forward and keeps looking forward, but now it seems as if all were safe and right. The decisive effort, it seems, is made, and the eye may look back without danger. So it was with Lot's wife: till she is out of Sodom and its more immediate dangers, both foot and eye are onward; but she looks back after she seems to have fairly escaped the threatened flames.

This follower of Jesus first of all lays his hand upon the plough. He does not run home to bid farewell and then come after Jesus; he seems afraid to take so much upon himself and to run so great a risk of losing heaven. But he commits himself to Christ; he declares, "I will follow Thee"; and having made the open profession, he now lets his eye instantly look back, adding, "But let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home". There is no subtler snare than seeking to have so much nearness to Christ, and so much dedication to His cause, as will entitle and safely enable us to love the world and the things of the world. Yet by such love, we brand ourselves as devoid of the love of the Father.

Notes and Comments

"Easter, Christian Culture and Heritage"

On Thursday, March 21, there was a debate by MPs on the topic of "Easter, Christian Culture and Heritage". The debate had been requested by Mr Nick

Fletcher, Conservative MP for Don Valley, and was held in Westminster Hall, which is an alternative debating chamber for MPs. In Westminster Hall debates, a government minister always gives the final speech, and no votes may be taken on the debate topic.

Although a debate on the subject of Easter would not normally draw the attention of Free Presbyterians, the vocalising of Christian sentiments among parliamentarians was refreshing. In opening the debate Mr Fletcher said, “The Christian way of life has enabled us to live a life of freedom in this country. When God is removed from our lives, then man is reduced to his base nature, which is worse than we imagine; it is not good . . . if the teachings of a Christian life are further eroded, then each generation will fall further away from our God”. He went on to say, “If we turn our back upon God, He will give us up to ourselves, and I think that in many places in society He may already have done so. We become filled with all kinds of wickedness, evil and greed. With all the benefits of the vanities of this world, how many people in the UK are struggling with their mental health? If we continue on this trajectory, we will rapidly see the end of what many believe was British culture, a Christian culture.”

Sir John Hayes, Conservative, interjected to say, “We hear people speaking not of truth, but of their truth, as though truth can be negotiated. But truth cannot be negotiated; it is an absolute and is embodied in the message of Christianity.”

Mr Fletcher concluded by saying, “I am a sinner and Jesus died on the cross for me. I want this nation to fix its eyes on the living God and not fashionable ideologies. The angels are ready to sing for every sinner that repents and believes in our Lord, and if the Government embraces this, God will not turn His back on us.”

In her concluding remarks, Felicity Buchan, an Under Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, quoted John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”, saying she had learned the verse at school. (She attended Fraserburgh Academy in the 1980s. Sadly it is unlikely that Scripture verses are memorised in schools today; another example of the slippage down the ladder of secularism.)

Seeing so many MPs publicly professing the Christian faith, one is reminded of the Lord saying to Elijah, “Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him” (1 Ki 19:18). One can only pray that amongst those MPs there are true followers of Christ who will be strengthened to take a stand as Daniel did in Babylon.

Sadly, there is also much to discourage; it was reported that on March 14 that the Islamic call to prayer, the “adhan”, was made in the official residence of the Speaker of the House of Commons. The prayer in Arabic repeats, “Allahu akbar” (Allah is great) six times, and, “I testify that there is no god but Allah” three times, and, “I testify that Muhammad is Allah’s prophet” twice. It proclaims Islam’s superiority over all other religions. On March 21, the “adhan” was made in Bute House, the official residence of the First Minister of Scotland. These events did not take place in a private meeting of Muslims who had gathered for worship, but with people from across different faith communities. What a provocation to the Lord Jesus! As Mr Fletcher said in the debate, “If we turn our back upon God, He will give us up to ourselves, and I think that in many places in society, He may already have done so”. *FRD*

Death Penalty for Murder

The recent sentencing of two murderers highlights the unsatisfactory nature of mere imprisonment for such a grave crime and sin. The girlfriend of the victim said of the two men: “They’re still here and they still get to have a life, in a sense, whereas they’ve taken Cody’s life away from him. So I don’t think you ever really get any justice because you don’t get the person you lost back.” The biblical requirement is that murderers should be put to death: “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man” (Gen 9:6).

There are many reasons why the death penalty should be reintroduced: it honours God through obedience; it emphasises the importance of human life; it helps bring home to murderers the enormity of what they have done; it gives some measure of relief to the family of the victim, and to society at large; and it acts as a deterrent. In the absence of the death penalty, the guilt of the murder lies on the whole nation: “So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it” (Num 35:33). *DWBS*

Glasgow University Rector Calls for Expansion of Gaza War

A few months before being elected the Rector of Glasgow University, Dr Abu-Sittah provocatively called for the war in Gaza to expand and become regional, something that many fear may lead to World War III. He said, “A regional war will force the entire system – the Americans, their Israeli and Arab collaborators, and their subordinates like the WHO, the World Bank, the IMF, and the Red Cross You will not be able to negotiate with these subordinates unless the Americans have to deal with a regional war.”

Dr Ghassan S Abu-Sittah is a British-Palestinian Professor of Surgery. He treated victims of the London bombings, has provided medical assistance in Gaza several times and in other war zones.

In March 2024, the UK Lawyers for Israel sent an open letter to Glasgow University, which included a series of Abu-Sittah's social media comments. The letter noted that he had reposted "an image in honour of Nasser Abu Hamid, a leader of the terror group, Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, the day after he died, depicting him holding a machine gun and dripping with blood." (It should, however, be noted that Dr Abu Sitta commented to the *Jewish Chronicle*: "I vehemently oppose terrorism and civilian casualties on all sides. As a surgeon, my vocation is preserving life and I repeat my calls for a sustainable ceasefire and lasting peace.")

On 26 March 2024, the Glasgow University student body elected Dr Abu-Sittah their Rector, winning 80% of the vote. As Rector, Dr Abu-Sittah will represent students at the highest level of university decision-making for the next three years. How exceedingly solemn it is to think of one of Scotland's oldest and most prestigious universities having for the next three years a rector who is calling for the war in Gaza to become a regional war. Also, how solemn to think of such a considerable proportion of those who voted in Glasgow University supporting such a person!

May we pray that the Lord will be pleased to convert Dr Abu-Sittah and his family. And not only them but also many of the students at our universities, so that they may all, by His grace, be of a wholly different spirit. May they be made new creatures in Christ Jesus, and may Dr Abu-Sittah, as a truly converted man (with all his evident abilities), be instrumental in the wondrous and mysterious workings of God's providence to advance His kingdom among the Palestinian people. May this be our earnest prayer! DPR

Church Information

Meetings of Synod

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland will meet in the Inverness church, on Tuesday, 21 May 2024, at 6.30 pm, DV, when the retiring Moderator, Rev S Khumalo, will conduct public worship.

(Rev) *Keith M Watkins*, Clerk of Synod

Home Mission Fund

By appointment of Synod, this year's special collection on behalf of the Home Mission Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during May.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

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 DPhl, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath: Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Glendale and Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thurs 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street, IV15 9JP; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. **Beaully (Balblair):** Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thurs 7.30 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wed 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Laigr:** Church and Manse; Sabbath 3.30 pm as intimated. Rev J A Morrison BA, 2 Cherry Grove, Bonar Bridge, IV24 3ER. Tel: 01863 766157.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, EH3 9NU, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227, e-mail: dcampbell1560@gmail.com.
- Farr (by Daviot):** Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon. (Each as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm, as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch (Ross-shire):** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thurs 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01445 712118. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- 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 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Greenock:** Sabbath 2.30 pm, held in Free Church of Scotland hall, 14 Jamaica Street, PA15 1XX. Contact Rev R MacLeod; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Halkirk:** Bridge Street; Sabbath 11.30 am, 5.30 pm, second, fourth and fifth Sabbaths of month; Thurs 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. First and third Sabbaths of month: **Thurso:** Duncan Street; 3 pm; **Strathy:** 6 pm.
- 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.
- Kinlochervie:** 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 B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- North Uist:** Bayhead; Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01876 510233. Contact: Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- 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.
- 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, or as intimated locally. Manse: 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501. Contact: Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- 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:sydneyfpchurch@protonmail.com.

New Zealand

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

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

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

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

Singapore

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

Ukraine

Odessa: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 6 pm. Rev D Levytskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: 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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