

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

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What Does God Require?

It is a question to which there are many answers in the Bible, which is the one source that we can look to for an authoritative and reliable answer. All of these answers point in the same direction, for there are no contradictions in God's revelation. One of these answers is to be found in the Book of Deuteronomy, where Moses is reiterating the history of Israel's journey through the wilderness and the laws that the Lord had given them during that time. The answer is: "To fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good" (10:12,13).

There are several expressions here which basically run parallel to each other. God's commandments and His statutes are fundamentally identical, and to keep them is to serve Him, to do the part of a servant. And if someone truly acts the part of a servant of God, he or she will act out of love to the gracious God who cares for that individual's body and soul. Further, to keep God's commandments is to walk in the ways that He has appointed for mankind, the manner in which we ought to live. Because we are to walk in all His ways we are to keep all the commandments that He has set before us. Finally, on the basis of these verses, to fear the Lord points us in the same direction as all the other expressions in these verses, but with an emphasis on our attitudes to God as "the high and lofty One" (Is 57:15), whom we are to respect. Let us notice some further points arising from these verses:

1. God's right to command. The Pharaoh whom Moses and Aaron had to confront was certainly not the last person on earth to challenge that right. He asked, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?" (Ex 5:2). There are plenty people today who deny God's existence and reject the authority of the revelation He has given in Scripture. One major reason for this generation being without a sense of God's authority is that previous generations rejected the fact that "in the beginning *God* created the heaven and the earth" (Gen 1:1). But God did create everything, including human beings. Because He brought everyone into existence, we are all under His

authority and so belong to God. The passage in Deuteronomy 10 goes on to give a reason to the Israelites for obeying Him: “The Lord your God [the Creator] is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible” (v 17). It is a reason for *us* also to obey all God’s commandments. But the theory of evolution is one of the most dangerous ideas to have been thrust between God’s authority and human obedience.

2. God’s Commandments. God’s will for how we should live, speak and act is summed up in the Ten Commandments. But these commands are amplified throughout Scripture, giving us a full picture of God’s will for our obedience. Basic to the other nine commandments is the First, where God says, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” (Ex 20:3). Thomas Watson calls it “the foundation of all true religion”, and sums it up as directing us to “sanctify God in our hearts and give Him a precedence above all created beings”.¹ We must remember that we can make gods of those people who are particularly close to us, when we give them a place in our hearts that belongs only to God, and make gods also of our possessions. Among Watson’s points in applying this Commandment is this: “To have God to be a God to us, is to fear Him. . . . This fearing is (1) To have Him always in our eye . . . (2) To have such a holy awe of God upon our hearts that we dare not sin.”²

Many people deem some commandments, such as the Sixth and the Eighth, to be essential for the proper functioning of society, and states throughout the world enforce some aspects of them. Yet God pronounces the Commandments as a whole to be good (see also, for instance, Rom 7:12), including the Fourth. They are good for us; it is good for us to obey them and, in particular, it is good for us to obey the Fourth Commandment.

It is good for us to have an opportunity – and it should be a welcome opportunity – to have a day each week which we can, apart from works of necessity and mercy, set apart for spiritual activity. Yet this is an age when, as it has been said, “there are many Christians for whom the whole notion of one day set aside for God seems a quaint throw-back to Victorian values”.³ But emphatically it is no quaint throw-back; the Fourth Commandment is of permanent relevance and of permanent value. It is good for people to keep it in every generation, not only in Old Testament times. More importantly, God’s authority is behind it today as it has always been.

So far has the Sabbath fallen that there is now very little controversy about it, certainly on a national level in Britain; it is very largely ignored rather

¹Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, Banner of Truth Trust, 1965 reprint, p 49.

²Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, p 51.

³Quoted in Christian Institute e-mail, “In the news this week, 26 July 2024”. *Christian* in the quotation should more accurately be “professed Christian”.

than opposed – for many, it is a weekly holiday and nothing more. However, controversy continues to swirl about the Seventh Commandment, for in many countries the position has been reached where everyone *demand*s the prerogative to do what is right in his own eyes, without any criticism, however mild, being levelled against anyone who argues for obedience to this demand. But people and governments need to learn that “for all these things God will bring thee into judgement” (Ecc 11:9). Even on the human level, disregard of the Seventh Commandment is damaging individual families and the cohesion of society. And the words of Scripture are relevant: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal 6:7). This generation is in many ways reaping the fruits of its rebellion against God’s commands.

One may also note that, although justice systems pursue murderers, albeit imperfectly, the state allows, and provides facilities for, the murder of millions of unborn children, and moves are being made to allow the murder of those who are terminally ill – with, it seems, the approval of many in society. Yet we need to bear in mind that it is not sufficient for us to be outwardly moral. If, on the other hand, by God’s grace, we live in His fear, we will wish to obey these commands in our speaking and thinking, and seek to follow the implications of these commands.

3. *How are we to keep God’s commands?* We are told to keep them “with all thy heart and with all thy soul”; in other words, we are to observe them *diligently*. So Joshua told the Israelites before his death: “Take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you” (Jos 22:5), and he goes on to use some of the other expressions that we find in the verses from Deuteronomy quoted earlier. We are not to be partial in our observance, choosing some commands and neglecting others; we are to take God at His word when He speaks to us by way of command – as we are to take Him seriously whatever He says to us.

The Saviour called sinners to trust in Him: “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28) – and then went on to tell them how they should live: “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light”. Sinners are not only to trust in Christ for salvation, though that is absolutely necessary; they are to come under the yoke of His commandments. And though the world may consider His commandments to be unbearably burdensome, that is to take a totally wrong view of them; they are not burdensome; He assures us that they are light, and He gives grace to His true followers to keep them.

4. *How is it possible for us to keep them?* God’s commands are absolute;

we are obliged to keep them. But we are fallen creatures; it is impossible for us to keep God's law perfectly; we continually sin and come short. How is it then possible for us to reach heaven when every sin deserves God's wrath and curse eternally?

Our first answer is that we need a substitute, to do two things: (1) to endure God's wrath and curse in the place of all who will ever be saved, and (2) to keep all His commandments perfectly in their place. While there are perfect beings in God's creation – the angels who never fell – they can only keep the law for themselves; they cannot act as substitutes for others. Nor can they endure the punishment due to others.

Yet it was God's purpose from all eternity to save sinners, and the saviour that He chose was His own Son; there was no other who was fit for that work. We have the revelation of that purpose in John 3:16: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life". God the Father gave His Son to do all that was necessary for the salvation of sinners. That work on earth was completed and Christ ascended to the right hand of His Father, where He makes continual intercession for those on whose behalf He worked out redemption. He is presenting the merits of His work in this world, so that they may be saved. His work is set before sinners in the Scriptures and in the preaching of the gospel, so that they may believe on Him and accordingly may not perish but have everlasting life.

David Brainerd, the remarkably godly and earnest missionary to the American Indians, writes of a woman he felt was "filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory". She was crying out, sometimes in English and sometimes in her own language: "O blessed Lord, do come; do come! O do take me away; do let me die and go to Jesus Christ! I am afraid if I live, I shall sin again." That was her great motivation: that she would not continue to sin. Her heart was filled with the fear of God. Such was her hatred to sin that she was ready to be taken away even from her young infant, believing that the Lord would make provision for the child. Since that time, Brainerd continued, "she has seemed constantly to breathe the spirit of the new creature, not through fear of hell as before, but with strong desire after Him as her only satisfying portion".⁴ Here is indeed a remarkable example of the fear of God.

Let *us* seek grace, so that we may begin, and continue, to do all that God requires: "to fear the Lord [our] God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord [our] God with all [our] heart and with all [our] soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes".

⁴Jonathan Edwards, ed, *The Diary and Journal of David Brainerd*, Banner of Truth Trust reprint, 2023, pp 331-333.

Christ Dwelling in Believers' Hearts¹

Synod Sermon by Rev S Khumalo

Ephesians 3:17-19. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.*

Paul calls himself “an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the Saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus” (Eph 1:1). We know that this church in Ephesus was founded by Paul, that they were the worshippers of the idol Diana, and were brought out of that idolatry. It was not by their own power; it was all by the grace of God. In their natural state, “they were dead in trespasses and sins”, which is true of us all. The people of God themselves know they were born blind, and they know they were once dead.

We find that the grace of God, working in them by His Spirit, made them alive in Christ Jesus. When they were far away, when they were enemies, when they were without God, without hope, they were brought nigh by the precious blood of Christ Jesus. What a wonder that the Apostle could say to such a people: “In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph 2:22). He was ever mindful of them, as we find in the prayer we have today.

So he brings this great mystery of Christ to their attention as if he was saying to them, Be unmovable, be unmovable. You have been called from darkness to this marvellous light; stand firm and unmovable. He was a minister of Christ, so he had a message from Christ, the great message that comes to those who preach the everlasting gospel. They must know that they are made ministers according to the gift of the grace of God. As the Apostle says, “We are ambassadors”.

He prays for the church in Ephesus, and his prayer is centred on the love of Christ: “That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man” (v16). That is the *first* petition we shall consider today. The Apostle goes on to pray for the Ephesians “that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith”. Christ dwells in the believer’s heart by faith. What a great wonder, when we think about how sin alienated men from God, that by the grace of God, Christ dwells in them. Christ is God, who dwells in the highest; He is the One that inhabits eternity.

Paul lays his desire before God that Christ, who dwells in the highest

¹Preached at the opening of the meetings of Synod in May 2024.

heaven – who dwells in the Father, and the Father in Him, the One who is Himself God – that He would dwell in His people. How can this be? It is by His grace. How much we need that grace – that Christ would dwell in us by His Spirit, as we gather today in connection with His own cause! The desire of the Apostle for the Ephesian church was that He who inhabits eternity would find a habitation in their hearts. If Christ would dwell in them, they could not lack anything.

This is what should come to our mind. Let all of us here have this prayer, that the great Saviour of sinners would dwell in us by His Spirit, as the One who is in control of everything. And what shall we fear if He dwells in us? The Apostle, wishing the church in Ephesus to be strengthened, prays this great prayer, that Christ would dwell in them. He prays to Him who drew them out of darkness into marvellous light, who drew them when they were far away and He brought them nigh.

How does He dwell in His people? It is by faith, which is the grace of God, because of the work done by Christ at Calvary's cross. He dwells in them as a king; He rules in them; He protects them; He provides for them; and as for their life, He quickens them. He works in them as a consequence of their union with Him. He has communion with them and they with Him. What great joy it would be if Christ would dwell in us, and that we would have communion with Him. What then shall we fear? If Christ dwells in us, that dwelling is not temporary, it is perpetual; and so He shall never leave us. He dwells in their hearts, where no good things spring up by themselves, but only Himself and His grace.

That is what the Apostle prays for and it is what we should desire. It should be the prayer of the Church of God in this world, in this great journey as His people pass on to eternity. This is the One whom they should walk with, asking that He would dwell in them. He dwells in their hearts, by His own grace, which means He dwells in them by faith, which is the instrument of receiving Him.

Faith means embracing Him, and they will retain Him; it is by the hand of faith that they receive Him. Faith, which is the grace of God, is given on the basis of the death of Christ. They are given grace to embrace Christ, so that Christ would dwell in their hearts. We need that faith; we need Him to dwell in us. We embrace Him by faith, but faith is not in the work of man, but the grace of God – that grace which flows from Christ to His people.

We notice that Paul prays in the *second* petition that the Ephesians will be “rooted and grounded in love”, in love to God and in love to one another. The Lord spoke of the disciples having “love one to another”. They are to be rooted in the love of Christ.

We read of the unsearchable love of Christ, and the people of God cannot know of His love if they are not rooted and grounded so that they are strong in Christ. They are strong in the love of Christ, so they are unmovable. Yes, this world is full of great storms and many are moved; many are swept away. But here the Apostle Paul prays that they will be rooted and grounded, so they will be unmovable, and will have discoveries of that love. They are to consider this a blessing that is received, flowing from the communion they have with God and Christ.

They will have a better understanding, a better view, of the love of Christ that is revealed in the gospel. The love of God in the gospel is revealed: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son". They will view that love, which is the foundation of salvation. Nothing can move them from this love, because they are rooted and grounded. The foundation of their salvation is itself immovable; it is itself unchangeable. So are the people of God, when they are rooted in that love; they are assured that this is unmovable.

The Apostle Paul was praying that they would be rooted in this love, and have these discoveries of God's love. We have the gospel, which Paul preached in Ephesus, the gospel of the love of God, proclaiming His sending of His only begotten Son. He who died was moved by love for His people. As they view the love of God, they behold Him that died at Calvary's cross. There is no place where the love of God was made so clear as at the cross of Calvary.

The attention of those that are rooted in this love is fixed on Christ. What do they see in Him? They see love. What manner of love is this, when they see the eternal Son of God, who without sin of His own bears the sins of His people; who ascends the mount of Calvary, not looking back, not looking aside, but looking onwards to finish the great work which the Father had given Him? What moved Him? It was His love to His people; nothing could stop Him; He would love them even unto death. So they have a view of this love, as they are grounded upon the love of Christ. This view attracts their attention; it prevents them diverting to any side; instead they would look to Christ.

When we say we know Him; when we say we love Him, will anything divert us from Him? Let this prayer be ours today, so that whatever we do, we are drawn by the love of Christ – not the love of self, not the love of anything else – because we are grounded on it and have a better view of it. Let it be proved that here are the people of God, those in whom the love of Christ reigns, those that are grounded on this love; then nothing shall separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. Others shall see that

here is their Beloved. It shall be said of them, They were chosen in the Beloved, and so they shall see their Beloved. They shall see the One who loved them first, before they loved Him. They shall see the streams of love flowing to them, coming from Christ.

What a great wonder if this grace will be at the centre of all we do because of the view we have of the love of Christ! So we will have a larger and more comprehensive view of the great mysteries of salvation. Remember the people in Ephesus were strangers and aliens; they were not of the commonwealth of Israel. But God had a people there, a people whom He loved. Christ had a people whom He drew because He had shed His own blood. Is it not a mystery that He has a people whom He has drawn to Himself by His Word and Spirit? As the Apostle Paul says, "The love of Christ constraineth us". So here we have the great mystery of salvation; we see the building of His Church; it is all centred in the love of Christ.

Then we notice that Paul speaks about the dimensions that are set before us here. They are viewed by those who are grounded and rooted in love, and they also view the love of Christ. The love of God, in its length, reaches from one eternity to another; in its breadth it reaches to all His elect in this world – all His people – who were given to Christ before the foundation of the world, wherever they are, including the UK and Africa. They are drawn by the love of Christ. It reaches them, and it is viewed with wonder. What manner of love is this? So broad that it reaches all generations, it reaches all peoples, it reaches every country where Christ has a people, those whom He purchased by His own blood, those whom God gave Him before the foundation of the world.

They shall be gathered unto Him, as was true of the Ephesians. They were far away spiritually, but they were gathered; they were drawn nigh by the blood of Christ. You see also the love of Christ gathering sinners without any boundary; it stretches to where the elect of God are. It stretches to those who are dead in trespasses and sins, whom Christ died for, whom He paid the ransom price for – the source of it being the love of God in Christ Jesus. So none of those that Christ loved shall be lost. They shall all be saved; they shall all be gathered in; they shall behold their Beloved; they shall see Him. Because Christ loved them, none of them shall fail to see Him.

Therefore He must draw them wherever they are, whatever nation they are in. This is what those that are rooted see, this is what attracts their attention, this is what fixes their eyes on Christ Jesus, on His love, and they look with great amazement on the breadth and depth of this love. With what great wonder we should look on Christ Jesus, and this is the prayer of the Apostle. And can it not be a desire of our time? Can it not be our prayer that we will

be grounded upon the love of Christ? And if grounded upon the love of Christ, nothing will divert our attention from Him. Christ will appear to us as eminent as He is. He should appear to us a great Saviour; the love of Christ will shine forth, and whatever might come to divert our attention, nothing can do so if we are rooted and grounded in love. That was Paul's prayer and it should be ours also.

We see then what a special love is here shown to Christ's people, to His Church. We should pray to experience that love. It is a wonder when you notice instances of that love: when He engaged Himself to be a surety of His people, taking their nature and dying instead of them. His payment of their debt, His atoning for their sins, that is a great reason for amazement. The people of God shall wonder for all eternity at this great love of God that has been revealed in Christ: that He who was the Son of God became man, in order to die the accursed death of the cross. He knew no sin, but He paid the price for the redemption of the sins of His people at Calvary's cross. What a great wonder! This is the love of Christ, the love that is unspeakable. Who can search this out? No one. Even the people of God, to all eternity, shall look with amazement.

Let us here today look at this great wonder of the love of God: that Christ in His love would grasp a poor sinner who was almost stepping into a lost eternity, and bring him to a higher place. Then he will enter in through the gates of heaven, not because of what he has done, but because of what Christ has done.

It is because of His own love, His own rich grace, and what He did at Calvary's cross, this great sacrifice which was accepted, that sinners are accepted in the sight of God. So the Father said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him". He is the beloved of the Father. Those that hear Him are the beloved of the Son. The people of God must understand the great wonder of this love, this central matter to which Paul drew their attention. Let us go to the cross of Calvary and behold the One who was crucified. What is in His heart? What made Him not rest on the way but go forward? It was because He loved His people, and that becomes a great wonder.

Love drives everything; it brings them to hold on to Christ Jesus; it becomes a joy to them – to behold this love. They see the eternal Son of God suffering at Calvary's cross, but why did He suffer? They have a right to say, He suffered for me. But why me? Because He loved me before I loved Him. He died in the manifestation of that love. He never rested on the way until He had finished the great work, and gathered His people to Himself, until He had set His people before the Father and said to Him, Here are Thy

people whom I loved; here they are whom Thou didst give to Me; here they are whom I loved before the foundation of the world; here they are for whom I died. God sent His beloved Son to show His love to His people; Christ died for them. His people see the love of Him who died and rose again.

Here we are gathered today, and we try to stress that the love of Christ should be the centre of everything that will be done. The love of Christ should be the centre of our gathering, as those that are grounded in love, and whose desire is to look at the love of Christ. Thus it was the desire of the angels to look into that great mystery when they saw Christ passing by the lost angels, coming down to the children of men, full of love in His heart, so that He would die for them.

We see the instances of it in the incarnation of Christ. He became poor, who was Lord of all; He met sin and curse and suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them to God. So the Apostle prayed that these saints might know more of the love of Christ, that their knowledge, which was imperfect, might make progress, that they might grow. And he prayed that they would speak of the unsearchable love of Christ with great wonder and with a great knowledge of this love of Christ, the unsearchable love of Christ Jesus, the love which cannot be fully discovered. Even the saints could not fully discover it, but they get a taste of it, through the revelation that they are given. It will be a great, great wonder to them.

Where are we directing our attention today, as we gather today as the Synod? What should be central? What should be in our view? It must be the love of Christ. We must look to Him in that work of love, taking bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, to die the accursed death of the cross and become a sacrifice for sin. So we can see the great love which He had; you cannot see it without knowing the love of Christ, you cannot see it without being rooted and grounded upon Him.

So here it is: God's people must be rooted and grounded in Christ, so that they would have a view of the breadth and the width and the height of this love, which cannot be fully understood. This great love cannot be comprehended by the carnal mind but by those of the spiritual mind, whom Christ dwells in by faith. Being grounded there, they have a view of this love of Christ.

Let us show, at this court of Christ, what must direct all things. We must show that Christ is in us; that the love of Christ, the love of His work, the love of the gospel, the love of others is in us – that they also would come and taste the love of Christ. That must guide each part of the deliberations of these days, as we continue. We must look to Christ as He sits on the highest throne; we must look to Him as One to whom all power is given; we must look to Him as the great Saviour, as the One who governs His Church. So

let it be for the prosperity of His kingdom. There cannot be any desire for that prosperity if we are not rooted in Him, if we have no understanding of the love of Christ.

We must be filled with all fullness of Him. That is another of Paul's petitions: to "be filled with all the fullness of God", as a God in covenant, as a God to His people. What we need is the grace of God, as Christ came in this way, full of grace, that He would fill His people. He enriches His people by His grace, in whom He dwells by faith. We need the grace of God, even in all our deliberations here at the meetings of the Synod, as we begin and continue. We need the grace of God to fill His people.

As it is said of Christ, the One that is full of grace, we need Him to fill us with grace, with the highest degree of the knowledge of Him, the enjoyment of Him, and conformity to Him and His will. The fullness of God is what we should wish to fill us. We should wish to view the instances of this love, His dying, His sufferings, His sacrifice, His precious redemption for His people, His atonement. We should look at all these things and say, What manner of love is this? And we should desire to be filled with it.

As we begin the work of the courts of Christ, may Christ direct everything by His love and grace, as it is said here: "That ye might be filled with all the fullness of God". The grace is received through Christ, who is rich in grace, so that those in whom He dwells shall not lack anything. He hears their cry; He answers them, and so His grace is sufficient for them. Therefore, as we begin these meetings today, may the Word of God direct all things, may Christ by His Spirit direct all things, may the love of Christ have all our attention; so that whatever we say, it may be directed by the love of Christ, which should be at the centre of all.

Let us not forget that if Paul prayed for the Ephesians, for the saints, for the Church, this is a prayer for the Church and for the people of God today; that they would grow progressively, that they would be rooted and grounded, that Christ would dwell in them by faith, that they would have a view of the love of God, its length, breadth, depth and height.

Then the Apostle Paul, in verse 21, prays that the end of it would be: "Unto Him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." So we have a responsibility to stand on the side of Christ, to be witnesses of His love, to pray that Christ would dwell in the hearts of His people, and that they would grow in grace and in the knowledge of Him.

That is what the Word of God brings to us, brings to our attention, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and

length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God". It passes knowledge to be filled with the fullness of God. What more would we want? If Christ be in us, He is our hope of glory.

If Christ is in us, by His Spirit, who can stand in our way? Let us go forward; let us not look back. Let us look to Calvary's cross and so behold the love of Christ, behold Him who died, who had done nothing amiss but died because He loved His people – behold Him who rose again. You cannot understand this if Christ does not dwell in you by faith, if you are not grounded upon the love of Christ. The love of Christ cannot be understood by the natural mind, but only by the spiritual mind, by which Christ dwells in His people by faith, by which they are rooted in Him, by which they view the love of Christ, and by which they are filled with the fullness of God. But thanks be to God that He has revealed it in His Son, who came to this world and died, that through His death and sufferings, there was the outshining of the love of Christ to His people, which we should desire to be filled with. Then we will see Christ, the eternal Son of God, by faith.

Humility: a True Christian Character (2)¹

Rev J B Jardine

The essence of humility. It consists in lowliness of heart. Pride lifts up the heart and puffs it up. In his conceit, someone proud wishes to be honoured above others. This motivates him in all that he does and is the end of all his actions. He is delighted if he achieves this end, but he also becomes angry when frustrated. But humility brings the heart low. The humble person does not have himself in view in his actions. When he completes his duty, he returns to himself and humbly and quietly remains there no matter the outcome of what he has done. "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants" (Lk 17:10).

Humility is a lowly and unassuming disposition of the heart. Humility does not need much room for itself. The humble are at home when they are inconspicuous, or in the background, and they do not desire to move beyond this position. The humble person acknowledges himself to be dependent upon the grace and power of God. The humble soul does not want to be seen by others or to be honoured by them. He will be satisfied with having done his duty and if this results in honour, this will not puff him up. On the other hand, if it brings him shame, he will not become despondent or

¹This is another section of a paper given at this year's Youth Conference.

discouraged. He will humbly and quietly remain in his place ready to do his duty the next time. A humble person has a childlike disposition, “Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child” (Ps 131:1-2). “Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves” (Mt 10:16).

À Brakel says that true humility consists of several things, “(1) *Humbleness of heart*: ‘I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies’ (Gen 32:10); ‘I . . . am no more worthy to be called Thy son’ (Lk 15:21).

“(2) *True repentance accompanied by faith*: ‘I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens’ (Ezra 9:6).

“(3) *Sorrow over the sinfulness of sin*: ‘For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest’ (Ps 51:3-4).

“(4) *A humbling abhorrence of self*: ‘I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of Thy servant; for I have done very foolishly’ (2 Sam 24:10).

“(5) *A fear of chastisement*: ‘O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure’ (Ps 6:1).

“(6) *A confession of sin, joined with an acknowledgement of it being both hateful and contemptible*: ‘I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord’ (Ps 32:5).

“(7) *Heartfelt prayers for forgiveness and peace of conscience*: ‘Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. . . . Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities’ (Ps 51:1-2,9).

“(8) *A lifting up of the heart by believing the promises made to those who confess their sins*: ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness’ (1 Jn 1:9).”²

God bestows these humble exercises of soul by His grace. These true exercises delight the Lord. We need to be praying for these humble exercises of soul and value them for ourselves.

The Christian’s true attitude towards God is shown by his humility, as

²Wilhelmus à Brakel, *The Christian’s Reasonable Service*, Soli Deo Gloria, vol 2, pp 585-586 (slightly edited).

John Newton says. "He has received from Gethsemane and Golgotha such a sense of the evil of sin, and of the holiness of God, combined with His matchless love to sinners, as has deeply penetrated his heart: he has an affecting remembrance of the state of rebellion and enmity in which he once lived against this holy and good God; and he has a quick perception of the defilements and defects which still debase his best services. His mouth is therefore stopped as to boasting; he is vile in his own eyes, and is filled with wonder that the Lord should visit such a sinner with such a salvation. He sees so vast a disproportion between the obligations he is under to grace and the returns he makes that he is disposed, yea constrained, to adopt the Apostle's words without affectation, and to account himself less than the least of all saints; and knowing his own heart, while he sees only the outside of others, he is not easily persuaded there can be a believer upon earth so faint, so unfruitful, so unworthy as himself. Yet, though abased, he is not discouraged, for he enjoys peace."³

Although he feels himself unworthy of the smallest mercies, he claims and expects the greatest blessings that God can give. He is rooted and grounded in the knowledge and love of Christ. His peace with God remains unchanging.

Humility comes from God. God is the cause of humility. Man by nature is proud and conceited and strives after earthly glory. He has high thoughts of himself. He is motivated by his love of self and is focused only on that. He desires that everyone else would honour, fear, serve and submit to him. The new heart that the Lord gives to His people is different. He forms Christ in them and then gives them humility. This is an ongoing, progressive work and part of their sanctification. The Lord enlightens the eyes of their understanding so that they are able to know and judge themselves correctly.

The true grace of humility results in a right judgement of oneself. The humble acknowledge that they are made of dust and exist in a tabernacle of clay. They know that they have sinned and come short of the glory of God. They know that, by nature, they are blind, miserable, naked, wretched, abominable, hateful and intolerable to God, angels and men. They know that they are unworthy for the sun to shine on them, to walk on the earth, to enjoy the fellowship of other men, to have a piece of bread to eat and to have clothing for their bodies. They see themselves as only worthy of being cast into hell. They would acquiesce in their own condemnation. They are the clay in the hand of the potter.

They see how wrong it would be for them to lift themselves up or to pretend that their good works have some merit. When comparing themselves with others they consider themselves to be foolish, empty of understanding,

³John Newton, *Works*, vol 1, Banner of Truth Trust reprint, 1985, pp 535-6.

to be of a disgraceful and difficult character and all their actions to be only worthy of contempt. They acknowledge that any good found in them that others might admire has been given to them by God. All they have and are is from God. They would be guilty of the greatest foolishness if they were to covet honour or be esteemed for something that had been gifted to them. All esteem, honour, love, fear and obedience are due to God alone. They know that God has forbidden them to covet, strive for, or allow these things to be attributed to themselves. To them, taking such credit would be like an act of theft and unrighteous. They desire to be small in their own eyes.

Will God Return?¹

William Bridge

What shall we do that God may return again? I will carry it on in answer to two cases.

(1.) If this question relates to *your own souls*; if you say, God is now gone from me, what shall I do that God may return to my soul? I answer briefly: Be sure of this, that you keep your door – the door of your hearts – open for Christ’s return. When the master is away, the servant sits up to keep the door open for him to come in.

Be sure that, in the time of Christ’s absence, you neglect no duty, though very unsavoury to you. The more unsavoury the duty is to you now through the absence of Christ, the more acceptable it is to Christ.

Be sure that you go and stand where Christ normally is. And let me tell you this: if you cannot find Him where He normally is, you shall find Him where He normally is not, as you read in Song of Solomon 3. Then be sure that you are not foolish with other lovers in the time of His absence, lest He hear of it and come home no more. Be sure also that you come to Christ through all those words whereby He seems to put you away from Him. Say to Him as the woman of Canaan said, “Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs”. Which made Christ turn in again to say, “O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt”.

But then, be sure that you send unto Him one way or other and tell Him that you are sick of love to His Person. Then He returns. And then say, Lord, though Thou killest me, yet will I trust in Thee. Friends, it was faith that brought Christ and your souls together at the first, and it is faith that must bring Christ and your souls together after a desertion. However therefore the

¹The fifth point, as edited, from a sermon on Psalm 90:13: “Return, O Lord, how long? And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants.” Taken from Bridge’s *Works*, vol 3.

Lord is displeased with you, say, Lord, though Thou killest me, I will trust in Thee; though I cannot see Thee, yet I will trust in Thee and wait upon Thee.

(2.) Suppose it is the case of *the nation*. God is departed in a great measure; who does not see it? What shall we therefore do now, so that God may return unto us? Truly it is not an easy thing to bring God back, when He is in a way of displeasure towards a people. The Lord was angry and sorely displeased with Jonah; the mariners prayed; Jonah confessed his sin, and yet the storm did not cease; God went on. I say it is not an easy thing to bring God back to a nation, when He is once in a way of displeasure against a people.

And sometimes the Lord will never return unto a people. Note the case of the Gaderenes in the matter of their hogs. The whole city came to Christ and besought Him to go. Away He went, and we do not read that He ever came there again.

Sometimes He will return, but with reserves of after-judgements. In Exodus 32, Moses prayed, and “the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do to His people” (v14). But He says, : “Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them” (v34). In other words, Nevertheless, for all I thus repent, and for all I do thus return unto them, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them. Sometimes, I say, He returns with reserves of after-judgments; yet if you look into Deuteronomy, the thing is expressed: “The Lord will judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone”.

But what shall we do then? It is too manifest that God has in a great measure departed from us; what shall we do now, so that God may return again unto this nation? Be sure that you make your peace with Christ. He is this day offended; His gospel and institutions are trampled on. A prophet will the Lord your God raise up among you; hear Him. If not, He – that is, Christ – will not pardon you. He that sins against the great remedy shall be judged without remedy. Christ is the great remedy; it is a dangerous thing to sin against Christ. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,” says Christ, “how often would I have gathered” you, and you would not be gathered; your house is left unto you desolate.

And in Matthew 22, you read that, after the great invitation to the supper, those that were invited refused; “they made light of it, and went their ways . . . and the remnant took his servants, entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city.” It is a gospel quarrel. Therefore, I say, Has the Lord departed from us? Make your peace with Christ; it is Christ that is offended. Make your peace with Christ, or else never look for the Father to return again.

But then, if you desire that God may return to you, let us all return to the Lord with our whole heart. "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. . . . Who knoweth if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him?" Who knows if you will turn to Him with all your heart, and He will return to you and leave a blessing behind Him? But look into Hosea 6:1,2: "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight." God will return.

But what assurance have we of it? Are we certain that God will return? Yes, "His going forth is prepared as the morning" (v3). As sure as a morning is after a night, so sure will God return. His going forth is prepared as the morning; it is as certain He will return as the morning does. Yes, but when will God return? In due season: "He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth". That is, He will return in due season; His return of love shall be as the rain, as the former and the latter rain in their season. Do you now therefore wish that God should return to you? Return unto God now. And that you may do so, only be sure that you pray and believe, believe and pray. Some pray, but do not believe; some say they believe, but they do not pray. What prayer cannot do, nothing can do; and what faith will not do, prayer cannot do. The prayer of faith shall heal the sick, and who knows but it may heal a poor sick nation also? And therefore, I say, pray and believe, and believe and pray.

Be sure that, in all your addresses to God in prayer, you come to the bottom in the matter of your confession. If you have days of fasting and prayer and humiliation, be sure that you come to the bottom in the matter of your confession, to confess the fundamental sin behind all the displeasure that has come upon us. Otherwise, though you fast and pray and confess, yet if you do not confess and bewail the sin which is fundamental to all our miseries, you do but cry a lapwing cry, farthest off from the nest, it will do you no good.

Be sure also that you put away the evil of your doings and do the opposite good; put away the evil of your doings, especially your *Ashtaroth*. Friends, though you fast and pray and humble yourselves; if you will not reform, none of your fasting and prayer will bring God back again. None of the days of fasting and prayer that you keep will do anything unless there is reformation. Yet I confess still, God must have freedom: He will sometimes deliver before we are prepared for it; but, I say, ordinarily, though you fast and pray and cry never so much, yet if you do not reform, none of your prayers will do

anything. And though you do reform, yet if you do not reform and put away your *Ashtaroth*, that sin that has brought this displeasure, your reformation will not be sufficient. And though you do this also, yet if you do not do the opposite good, it will not serve. Look to that therefore.

Be sure that you go out of yourselves and lay down all your worldly interests at the feet of the Lord, saying, Come, Lord, return – not: Return, O my trade; not: Return, O our ships; not: Return, O our peace; but: Return, O Lord. The more you go out of yourselves, the more fit you are for God to return to you.

To conclude, If you desire that God should return to you and that you may return to God, then go to God and pray and say, Turn us, O Lord, and we shall be turned.

Yet there is one thing more. It is tedious to lie under God's departure. There may be hopes that God may return, but what shall we do in the interim till God returns again? *I will briefly speak to this and conclude.*

If your question relates to *your particular souls*, and you say, God has now gone from my soul; what shall I do till God returns? Be sure that you act as the afflicted spouse of Christ in the absence of your husband; and you may read of this at large in the Song of Solomon. Be sure that you maintain your interest, and do not let the sense of your interest in God and Christ be dissolved. "Return, O Lord, how long? And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants." Thy servants still keep their interest. And so the spouse says, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine".

Be sure you never say, God will never return again. Though you say, Lord, how long? yet never say, God is gone and will return no more. Poor, drooping, afflicted and deserted soul, be sure that you never say, God will never return. Lo, He cometh leaping over the mountains, over difficulties, to you; only be willing to go leaping over the mountains of difficulties to meet with Him.

And if your question concerns the public or the nation, What shall we do till God returns again? I answer, Go and lament after God. Has God gone? Has God departed in a great measure from this nation? Now go and lament after God. Twenty years, when the ark was taken, the Children of Israel lamented after God and the ark. Only God knows how long He may stay at a distance from us. Let us all now go and lament after God.

Be sure that you keep His ambassadors with you. When He calls home His ambassadors, He proclaims war against a nation; but as long as He has any agents among you, He is not quite gone.

And if ever God begins to return to us again, be thankful for the beginnings of His return. He that is thankful for little shall have much; and he that

is thankful for the beginnings of a return shall have a whole return. Do thus then, and who knows but that the Lord may yet return and leave a blessing behind Him? That He may do so, let us now pray and say with the Psalmist: "Return, O Lord, how long? And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants."

What Is a Christian? (1)¹

John Newton

Without any preamble, I purpose now to give a few thoughts on the meaning of that name which was first obtained at Antioch – in other words, what it is to be a Christian. What effects (making allowance for the unavoidable infirmities resulting from the present state of mortality) may be expected from a real experimental knowledge of the gospel? I would not suggest that none are Christians who do not come up to the character I would describe – for then I fear I should unchristian myself – but only to consider what the Scripture encourages us to aim at as the prize of our high calling in this life. It is generally allowed and lamented that we are too apt to live below our privileges, and to stop short of what the Spirit and the promises of the gospel point out to us as attainable.

Alexander Pope's² admired line, "An honest man's the noblest work of God", may be admitted as a truth, when rightly explained. A Christian is the noblest work of God in this visible world and bears a much brighter impression of His glory and goodness than the sun in the firmament, and none but a Christian can be strictly and properly honest. All others are too much under the power of self to do universally to others as they would that others should do unto them; nothing but uniform conduct on this principle deserves the name of honesty.

The Christian is a new creature, born and taught from above. He has been convinced of his guilt and misery as a sinner, has fled for refuge to the hope set before him, has seen the Son and believed on Him; his natural prejudices against the glory and grace of God's salvation have been subdued and silenced by Almighty power; he has accepted the Beloved and is made acceptable in Him. He now knows the Lord, has renounced the confused, distant, uncomfortable notions he once formed of God, and beholds Him in Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life, the only door by which we can enter to any true satisfying knowledge of God, or communion with Him. But he

¹Taken with editing from Newton's *Works*, vol 1. This is the first part of letter in a series of "Letters to a Nobleman".

²An English poet of the early eighteenth century.

sees God in Christ, reconciled, a Father, a Saviour and a Friend, who has freely forgiven him all his sins, and given him the Spirit of adoption. He is now no longer a servant, much less a stranger, but a son; and because a son, he is an heir already of all the promises, admitted to the throne of grace, and assured of eternal glory.

The gospel is designed to give us not only a peradventure or a probability, but a certainty, both of our acceptance and our perseverance, till death shall be swallowed up in life. And though many are sadly fluctuating and perplexed upon this head, and perhaps all are so for a season; yet there are those who can say, "We know that we are of God". Therefore they are steadfast and unmoveable in His way; because they are confident that their labour shall not be in vain, but that they shall be present with their Lord when they shall be absent from the body. This is the state of the advanced, experienced Christian, who has been enabled to make his profession the chief business of his life. He is strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Everyone who has this hope in Christ, purifies himself, even as He is pure.

I would now attempt a sketch of the Christian's temper, formed upon these principles and hopes, under the leading branches of its exercise, respecting God, himself and his fellow creatures.

The Christian's state of mind towards God is evidenced by *humility*. He has received from Gethsemane and Golgotha such a sense of the evil of sin and of the holiness of God, combined with His matchless love to sinners, as has deeply penetrated his heart. He has a moving remembrance of the state of rebellion and enmity against this holy and good God in which he once lived, and he has a quick perception of the defilements and defects which still debase his best services. His mouth is therefore stopped as to boasting; he is vile in his own eyes, and is filled with wonder that the Lord should visit such a sinner with such a salvation. He sees so vast a disproportion between the obligations he is under to grace, and the returns he makes, that he is disposed, indeed constrained, to adopt the Apostle's words without affectation – to account himself less than the least of all saints. Knowing his own heart, while he sees only the outside of others, he is not easily persuaded there can be a believer upon earth so faint, so unfruitful, so unworthy as himself.

Yet, though abased, he is not discouraged, for he enjoys peace. The dignity, offices, blood, righteousness, faithfulness and compassion of the Redeemer, in whom he rests, trusts and lives, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, are adequate to all his needs and wishes. They provide him with an answer to every objection, and give him no less confidence in God than if he were as sinless as an angel; for he sees that, though sin has abounded in him, grace has much more abounded in Jesus. With

respect to the past, all things have become new; with respect to the present and future, he leans upon an Almighty arm, and relies upon the word and power which made the heavens and the earth and upholds them.

Though he feels himself unworthy of the smallest mercies, he claims the greatest blessings that God can bestow and expects them. And being rooted and grounded in the knowledge and love of Christ, his peace abides; it is not greatly affected, either by the variation of his own frames, or by the changes of God's dispensations towards him while here. With such a sense of himself, such a heartfelt peace and heavenly hope, how can his spirit but breathe love to his God and Saviour? It is indeed the perfection of his character and happiness that his soul is united by love to the chief good. The love of Christ is the joy of his heart and the spring of his obedience.

With his Saviour's presence, he finds a heaven begun upon earth; without it, all the other glories of the heavenly state would not content him. He knows the excellence of Christ; His love to sinners, especially His dying love; His love to himself, in seeking and saving him when lost, saving him to the uttermost.

But I must stop. Your Lordship can better conceive than I can describe how and why Jesus is dear to the heart that knows Him. That part of the Christian's life which is not employed in the active service of his Lord is chiefly spent in seeking and maintaining communion with Him. For this he plies the throne, and studies the word of grace, and frequents the ordinances, where the Lord has promised to meet with His people. These are his golden hours; and when thus employed, how poor and trivial does all that the world calls great and important appear in his eyes! Yes, he is anxious to keep up heart communion with his Beloved in his busiest scenes; and so far as he can succeed, it alleviates all his labours and sweetens all his troubles. And when he is neither communing with his Lord, nor acting for Him, he accounts his time lost and is ashamed and grieved.

The truth of his love is manifested by submission. This is twofold, and in each of these ways, the submission is absolute and without reserve. He submits to God's *revealed* will, as made known to him by precept and by God's own example. He aims to tread in his Saviour's footsteps and makes conscience of all His commandments, without exception and without hesitation. Again, he submits to God's will *in providence*: he yields to His sovereignty, acquiesces in His wisdom; he knows he has no right to complain of anything because he is a sinner; and he has no reason to complain because he is sure the Lord does all things well. Therefore this submission is not forced, but is an act of *trust*. He knows he is unable to choose for himself; and therefore rejoices that the Lord has undertaken to manage his affairs for him. And if

he was compelled to make his own choice, he could only choose that all his concerns should remain in that hand to which he has already committed them.

Thus he judges of public as well as of his personal affairs. He cannot be an unmoved spectator of national sins, nor without apprehension about the consequences they deserve; he feels, and almost trembles, for others, but he himself dwells under the shadow of the Almighty, in a sanctuary that cannot be forced. Therefore, if he would see the earth shaken and the mountains cast into the midst of the sea, his heart would not be greatly moved, for God is his refuge; the Lord reigns. He sees his Saviour's hand directing every dark appearance and overruling all of them so that he accomplishes His own great purposes.

This satisfies him and, though the winds and waves are high, he can venture his own little boat into the storm, for he has an infallible and almighty Pilot on board with him. Indeed, why should he fear, when he has nothing to lose? His best concerns are safe; and he holds other things as gifts from his Lord, to whose call he is ready to resign them, in whatever way He pleases; knowing well that creatures, and the instruments they use, cannot of themselves touch a hair of his head without the Lord's permission – and that if He does permit them, it must be for the best.

The Bible and the Scottish Reformation¹

1. Opposition to the Bible in English

D Hay Fleming

Though James V wished the morals of his clergy to be improved and the pride of his prelates to be lessened, he steadily opposed Lutheranism. By doing so he won the esteem and favour of the popes. He had been installed as king on 26 July 1524, when he was little more than 12 years old.

Pope Clement VII, in sending his good wishes to the young monarch, wrote on the 11 January 1526: "Dearest son of ours, we have added to the singular and peculiar affection that we deeply felt before to your serene highness as a Christian king, as we ought, because you have kept your kingdom without injury from the perfidious Lutheran heresy, although it is flourishing in the nearest country. While this was altogether in accordance with your piety and duty, and advantageous to all your subjects, and especially to you

¹The first part of a chapter in Hay Fleming's *The Reformation in Scotland: Causes, Characteristics, Consequences* (1910). It has been edited. The original title of the chapter was: "Primary Causes – the Word of God". The author was a noted church historian, writing from a Reformed standpoint.

as an individual, and tending also to the tranquillity of your kingdom, yet we, as in duty bound, took it as a most pleasant and welcome thing, and we have extolled your virtuous conduct and your diligence more than once with great and deserved praises. . . . And, dearest son, we exhort and request you, by every feeling of charity and in the Lord our God, that you be willing to perform and accomplish in the future that same thing in honour of God . . . especially since no staggering blow can be struck at the Catholic faith in your kingdom without your authority being at the same time overturned.”

Clement was, no doubt, delighted with the Act, passed by the Scottish Parliament on 17 July 1526, prohibiting the importation of Lutheran books, and forbidding the repeating of Lutheran opinions except to confute them. In his reply of 1 January 1527, James assured Clement that, as he had already opposed the damnable doctrine of Luther with all his might, so “for the future, by the favour of God . . . we will endeavour to devote ourselves with all zeal to the Catholic religion, and to the defence of the liberty of the Church, so that our territories shall not be invaded either by that most wicked Lutheran heresy or by any similar one. And that venerable religion, so long kept unshaken and unstained by our ancestors, shall remain unpolluted in order that we may deserve to rejoice increasingly . . . in the most ancient privileges granted to us and our predecessors by the Holy Roman Church, and to glory elsewhere [that is, in heaven] as the true and lawful heirs of Abraham.”

Paul III, in sending . . . by a papal chamberlain, a consecrated sword and hat to James, in January 1537, exhorted him to oppose heresy. The King, having just married the eldest daughter of Francis I, the French King, was then in France. On meeting the messenger in February, James manifested the greatest satisfaction at this demonstration of the Pope’s regard, desired to receive the gift with the usual ceremonies, and expressed his gratitude with as many words as he could say in French. Henry VIII was reported to be displeased with James for accepting the gift, as the sword was intended to be used against the English.

James had done something to merit the Pope’s confidence and goodwill, for not only had he promised to do what he could to prevent the spread of Lutheranism; he had warned the Pope against James Melville; had re-enacted, with additions, the Act of 1525 against Lutheran books and heresies; and had delighted the Pope by his fidelity to the holy see.

It was much easier to burn Protestants or drive them into exile than to prevent the introduction and circulation of their books and pamphlets. Before breaking with Rome, Henry VIII and his abettors experienced considerable difficulties in trying to suppress heretical books, many of which were printed abroad and smuggled into England. Lists of them were given in proclam-

ations issued against them. In a proclamation at Paul's Cross, in London, in 1531, no fewer than 30 works are listed, which the people were forbidden to buy, sell, or read. Of these, some attacked the Papacy, its doctrines and corruptions; others set forth the way of life. Some of them no doubt found their way into Scotland, as did the once-famous book, *Unio Dissidentium*.

One of the crimes for which Sir John Borthwick was condemned in his absence, in 1540, by Cardinal Beaton was that he had a copy of the heretical book called *Unio Dissidentium*. John Lambert, who was burned in Smithfield in 1538, defended the doctrine that "faith only doth justify and work salvation, before a man do any other good works". In doing so, he said that this was shown "by many authorities, both of Scripture, and also of many holy fathers in a treatise called *Unio Dissidentium*, which I would to Christ, as it is in French and other languages, we had it truly translated into English".

The primates of England and a body of Oxford and Cambridge divines, called together by Henry VIII, not only condemned a number of books printed in foreign regions as containing dangerous errors and blasphemies, but concluded that it was not necessary for the common people to have the Scriptures in their hands in English, which ought rather to be expounded to them by preachers. It was intimated that, if in future the people abandoned their perverse opinions, the King intended to cause an English translation to be made by "great learned and Catholic persons"; and that in the meantime all translations in circulation should be given up. This proclamation was made in June 1530. The last part struck at Tyndale's translation, which had been in circulation for four years.

It has been supposed that the Act of the Scottish Parliament of 1535, against Lutheran books and heresies, was intended to exclude the English Bible, although it is not named in the Act. If so, it must have been aimed at Tyndale's translation, not at Coverdale's, as the Act was passed in the month of June, and Coverdale's translation – the first complete printed Bible in the English language – was not issued until the following October. Tyndale's New Testament "was smuggled into England, and found no lack of purchasers, who were obliged to keep it in secrecy. But every effort was used by authority to put it down. Copies were bought up by the bishops in the hope that the whole printing would be destroyed; and there was more than one burning of the books in St Paul's Churchyard. But the effect was only to encourage Tyndale to print off further copies and extend the scope of his labours; for he went on to translate some books of the Old Testament from the Hebrew."²

The influence of Patrick Hamilton's converts, of the Lutheran books and

²Quoted from James Gairdner in *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol 2, p 465.

of Tyndale's Testaments, was beginning to tell in Scotland; hence the acknowledgment in the preamble of another Act of that Parliament in 1535, that "the damnable persuasions of heretics and their perverse doctrine gives occasion to [despise] the processes of cursing and other censures of Holy Kirk". Whether the Act against Lutheran books and heresies was intended to strike against English translations of the New Testament or not, the Scottish bishops had already prohibited the reading of it in English. Against this prohibition, Alexander Alesius³ directed his appeal to James V.

Cochlaeus, a leading German opponent of Martin Luther, defended the decree of the bishops. He not only condemned Tyndale's translation and Luther's, which he denounced as corrupt, but also objected to any translation into the common language, no matter how faithfully it might be done. If the King wished to preserve among his people the ancient harmony in piety and divine worship with all the blessings of ecclesiastical discipline, Cochlaeus said, the King should "cease from this business of translation, especially at this time, because far more evil and ruin, than good or edification, will result from it. For the Lutherans will abuse the best and most undoubted translation for their contentions and questions about the faith, in opposition to the bishops and monks, whom they make the people to suspect as persons that do not teach the truth, but for the sake of their belly suppress it and unjustly keep it back. Thus, taking whatever translation in the native language you give them, they will point out to the people many and various passages of Holy Scripture that seem, according to the letter, to read in favour of the Lutheran doctrines, or if they do not read so, still with a wrapping of subtleties, they will wrest it to that sense which they wish."

In his own estimation, Cochlaeus sufficiently proved that the decree of the bishops, to which Alesius objected, was in conformity with God's law, with the ordinance of Christ and the Church, with civil and canon law, and with the right and most ancient practice of Christians, namely, that "the laity should hear the law of God and the gospel of Christ from the mouth of the priest in the church, rather than read them at home, with wicked contention to the destruction of themselves and others".

This pamphlet evoked a response from Alesius. The King promised to do what he could for Cochlaeus, and thanked Erasmus⁴ and Ferdinand,⁵ who had commended him to James. In commending Cochlaeus, Erasmus praised James for repelling Lutheranism, and this praise seems to have given the recipient special pleasure. Alesius' pamphlets were probably consigned to the flames.

³A Scot who became a Protestant and was later a Divinity professor on Germany.

⁴A Dutch scholar of the Reformation period who remained a Roman Catholic.

⁵Holy Roman Emperor from 1556 till 1564.

At all events, Cardinal Pole, in writing to James a few years afterwards, expressed satisfaction at his having burned heretical books sent to him.

The decree of the Scottish bishops was not a dead letter. Not only had Henry Forrest suffered, as Knox alleges, for having “a New Testament in English”; but Lord William Howard and Bishop Barlow, writing from Edinburgh in May 1536, affirmed that the reading of God’s Word in English had lately been prohibited by open proclamation. And writing from Berwick on 29 March 1539, the Duke of Norfolk says, “Daily come unto me some gentlemen and some clerks [churchmen], which do flee out of Scotland, as they say, for reading of Scripture in English; saying that if they were taken, they should be put to execution”.

Book Review

George Smeaton, Learned Theologian and Biblical Scholar, by John W Keddie, published by Ettrick Press, 210 pages: hardback, £17.50; paperback, £9.95, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

It is fair to say that Smeaton is not much remembered today for his activities in church affairs, but he is deservedly remembered for his doctrinal writings, particularly his two books on the atonement and also his work on the Holy Spirit. This second edition of this biography should help to keep his memory alive. It is not very different from the first edition, which was published by Evangelical Press.

Smeaton was born in 1814 in Berwickshire. He attended Edinburgh University and finished his divinity course in 1838. Principal John Macleod described Smeaton as “the most eminent scholar of the set of young men who with M’Cheyne and the Bonars sat at the feet of [Thomas] Chalmers”. His eminence in later life is clear from the three volumes mentioned above.

He began his ministry in 1839 in Edinburgh, from where he moved to Falkland in Fife. During his time there, the Disruption of 1843 took place. Smeaton believed that the whole Disruption movement “sprang from a revival of religion” and that also “a revival accompanied” it. “Thousands were impressed and awakened to divine things who were indifferent before”, Smeaton wrote. Soon after the Disruption, he was called to Auchterarder, in Perthshire, but in 1853 he was appointed a tutor in the Aberdeen Free Church College. During the session that began in 1853, Smeaton continued as minister in Auchterarder while he lectured on Systematic Theology in Aberdeen. He was appointed professor in 1854 before being transferred in 1857 to New College in Edinburgh as Professor of New Testament.

Though Smeaton took little part in the activities of church courts, he did oppose proposals to unite the Free Church with the United Presbyterian Church. The main objections within the Free Church to the proposed union were the weakness within the United Presbyterian Church on the extent of the atonement and their support of voluntaryism rather than the Establishment Principle. Smeaton's writings on the atonement follow a thoroughly scriptural line; he also wrote scripturally on the Establishment Principle.

He died in 1889, having lived through the greater part of the declension that took place in the Free Church on the vital subjects of the inspiration and authority of Scripture. When his lectures touched on these subjects, Smeaton remained faithful to the confessional teaching, but most of his students, during these last years, did not appreciate such teaching. As Mr Keddie notes, "In the late nineteenth century, generally speaking, the rising generation of divinity students became impatient with the older orthodoxy".

The author points out that there is no longer any great amount of material on Smeaton available to help a biographer. Still Mr Keddie has made good use of what is available and has written it up in an interesting way. Besides what is strictly biographical, he analyses Smeaton's surviving sermons as well as his writings. We are glad to see this book preserving the memory of a worthy minister and teacher in a sympathetic way.

Notes and Comments

Moral Decline

Two items appeared in the national news recently which seem to illustrate the UK's slide into godlessness. One concerned the increase in violence against women, and the other the spike in shoplifting.

A new report entitled, The National Policing Statement for Violence against Women and Girls, states that in 2022-23 this offence amounted to 20% of all crime, an increase in this type of crime of almost 40% in recent years. Three thousand crimes of violence against women are recorded by the police every day, with at least one in 12 women becoming victims every year. That such violence is being perpetrated against those whom we should cherish is a national disgrace. Some of the perpetrators will be sexual predators, while some may be family members.

Police records from England and Wales show that shoplifting offences have risen to the highest level in 20 years. According to the Office for National Statistics, more than 430 000 offences were recorded in 2023, up by more than a third on the previous 12 months. Some small retailers report

losing thousands of pounds worth of stock each year because of theft. A survey by the British Retail Consortium (BRC) found the surge in shoplifting went hand in hand with increased violence towards shop workers. Incidents against retail staff – including racial abuse, sexual harassment, physical assault and threats with weapons – rose by 50% in the year to September 2023. In response to the latest figures, a spokesman for the BRC said that “inadequate police action” had given criminals “free rein” to steal goods. “Not only has the number of thefts increased, but thieves are becoming bolder, more aggressive, and more frequently armed with weapons,” he said.

What can we conclude but that the nation has lost its moral compass and cut itself adrift from God’s law? We have grieved away the Holy Spirit by turning our back upon God and His law and, when restraining grace is withdrawn, “the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour,” finding ready accomplices amongst humanity.

“Oh God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast scattered us, Thou hast been displeased; O turn Thyself to us again” (Ps 60:1). *FRD*

Olympic “Sleaze”

The opening ceremony of the Paris Olympics was described by some who watched it as “sleazy”. The most ludicrous aspect must have been the involvement of “drag queens” (men dressed as women), one of whom apparently carried the Olympic torch while others sat in a parody of Leonardo da Vinci’s famous painting, “The Last Supper”. Comment is needless, and Paul says that “it is a shame even to speak” of these things (Eph 5:12), but the fact that such a display was considered appropriate for millions of viewers emphasises the emptiness and vileness of current Western society without Christ. *DWBS*

Climate Change and Theology

It is usual now to blame all destructive weather events – storms, flooding, coastal erosion – on “climate change”, and to give no place at all to God. This conveniently disconnects the sins of men from this particular aspect of Divine judgement. When people’s houses are flooded or destroyed by a forest fire, instead of thinking about their personal sins, they can ignore these completely and lay the blame for the calamity on “society” causing “climate change”. Of course, human activity and folly often does contribute to the severity of some of these calamities, such as flooding and fires, but to disregard the providence of God is atheistic or deistic rather than Calvinistic.

There is a God; so the atheists are wrong. And this God is “Lord of heaven and earth” (Acts 17:24); so He controls everything that happens here.

This control does not rule out “second causes”, such as the folly of building houses on flood plains. It does mean that we cannot stop at “second causes”, but we must always look beyond them to the hand of God as well. God’s judgements have a voice, and those who shout, “Climate change”, so that they cannot hear the voice of God’s judgements will be faced with more severe judgements in due course. *DWBS*

What Does the UK Need to Learn from the Past?

Today, like so many nations of the world, the United Kingdom is in a most sorrowful mess. Whilst maintaining some of the external scaffolding of a national Christianity, we have gradually succumbed over the years to the evil agenda that has resulted in our becoming a multi-cultural society with all the abounding ungodliness, lawlessness, and spiritual adultery that comes with such a departure from the ways of the Lord (see 2 Tim 3:1-5). We witnessed a prominent illustration of the baneful effect of this experiment in social engineering a few weeks ago when tensions in specific sectors of our society became so volatile in parts of England and Northern Ireland that they resulted in riotous behaviour which in other countries might have led to civil war.

Swift action taken by the UK government, the police, together with the judicial services may have, for the present, checked the further spread of the riots. However, we should be concerned lest this action only remove some superficial symptoms (and possibly escalate the development of others) rather than directly address the complex, significant – but essentially spiritual – underlying malaise.

Unlike most countries, we were once a nation lifted high by God’s grace. But, alas, we have dramatically fallen from the eminent position to which God had exalted us. We have thus lost many blessings that we once were privileged to enjoy, proving the truth of the proverb, “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov 14:34). “How is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed!” (Lam 4:1). It appears that, as in the days of Jeremiah, we are today, like Jerusalem, experiencing God’s judgement and are in a state of spiritual desolation that anyone previously knowing us could hardly have conceived possible (see the apt parallelism in Lam 4:12).

Our day is indeed most solemn. The prospects before us are not bright. However, let us never forget that all things are possible with the Lord. The King of Zion, the Lord Jesus Christ, enthroned in glory at the right hand of God the Father, has all power in heaven and earth; may we earnestly pray that, for the glory of His Name, He may be pleased to revive His work amongst us mightily and most wondrously.

Without question, our land has seen much better days: we can read of the “days of the Son of man” (Lk 17:22), days when the Lord shone upon our peoples, when churches were full, and when, to a great extent, the Spirit of God powerfully and effectually accompanied the preaching of the Word of God. Those were the days when it was not an infrequent occurrence for hardened sinners, long dead in trespasses and sins, to be remarkably converted and brought to rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ: days when the Lord’s people joyfully spoke one to another of the great blessings they received in both grace and providence, notwithstanding the many outward sorrows and difficulties they faced.

These were the days when, in the cities, towns and villages throughout the land, the heads of households believed it to be their solemn but blessed duty to conduct family worship in their homes. At these times, both morning and evening, prayer, praise, and reading of the Holy Scriptures were often an occasion of meaningful and objective spiritual profit to parents and children alike as they joyfully and keenly sought to adhere closely to the truth of God.

It was in such days that families wended their way together to their churches whenever the doors were open, Sabbath and weekday, prayerfully and avidly anticipating the presence of their Lord and Master in the tabernacles of His grace (see Ps 84:1). They sought the divine blessing upon the public means of grace, and often (by His grace) returned to their homes after service spiritually roasting that which they “took in hunting” (see Prov 12:27).

These were the days when young and old avidly read and prayed over the Holy Scriptures in private and read the writings of the godly of former days for spiritual light, instruction and guidance; the days when the tried and tempted saints of God lived from day to day in humble dependence on the Most High, whom they joyfully proved, again and again, to be (by grace alone) their refuge, their strength and their very present help in trouble (see Ps 46:1).

What has changed? What makes our day so very different? It is different, but why? Of course, we live in the present and not the past, in the twenty-first century and not the nineteenth. Yet we must assess what accounts for the significant changes that are so evident. Indeed, not everything has changed for the worse; some things have changed for the better. Not everything in the past was pleasant and wholesome. However, it would be accurate to state that the changes are, for the most part, very significant and significantly for the worse.

No doubt, some of the Christianity of that day was like ours: false,

shallow, hypocritical and self-righteous. Not all the churches in those days preached the pure and free gospel of the grace of God. Not all the church members of former generations joyfully radiated God's grace in their lives, and not all ministers of those days had the glory of God and the spiritual good and care of souls as a high, if not the chief, motivation in their work.

May these questions and thoughts of significance and importance assist us in analysing the Christians' place in society and the churches' role today and for the future. We need to learn from the past. Therefore we must prayerfully and carefully reflect on questions and considerations of this nature, finding answers, in the inspired and authoritative Holy Scriptures, to how we should relate to our sad and solemnly wicked day.

We may not find the answers readily. Our answers should not be superficial or simplistic. We are to seek them prayerfully, hammering them out on the anvil of Holy Scripture.

The prayerful thought and consideration necessary to examine the matter ought (by the grace of God) to be of significant profit to all the spiritually minded readers of this *Magazine*. In His fear, it becomes us to endeavour to make this fundamental assessment so that we may be rightly informed from the Divine oracles how to frame our prayers for our nation. May we beseech the God of heaven to look upon us in His mercy and grace for our nation's spiritual health and profit for the generations to come, for the glory and honour of His name!

DPR

St Giles', Edinburgh – Nine Hundredth Anniversary

St Giles' church is now 900 years old. It will celebrate the anniversary with "an immersive art installation exploring the idea of community". Rev George Whyte, the interim moderator, said, "For 900 years, the voices of so many people have echoed around the walls of the cathedral. It is entirely fitting that, as we pass this milestone, we hear each other talk about the things which matter to us and which we hold in common."

What would be really fitting is that people who come to the church would be able to listen to the pure gospel, through which sinners can be delivered from eternal condemnation. This is a building where, immediately after the Reformation and somewhat later, men like John Knox and Robert Bruce proclaimed the pure Word of God. They believed that churches were places where sinners could hear that they needed to be delivered from the wrath to come and to hear how that deliverance may be obtained – through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God who became man that He might offer Himself as a sacrifice to satisfy God's justice in the place of sinners.

Sadly there is very little in the above paragraph that the organisers of the

“immersive art installation” are likely to believe, although it is all biblical truth. May the Lord soon transform the whole spiritual landscape in Scotland! In particular, may large numbers of faithful preachers of the gospel be sent out to proclaim the whole counsel of God, but especially to make known the central message of the gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven!

Church Information

Theological Conference – Apologies

The notice for the Conference in last month’s issue stated that “this year’s Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in Inverness, on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 29-30. The reference to Inverness is wrong. The Conference will, in fact, meet in *Glasgow*, God willing. The Editor would convey his apologies to readers.

Synod Committee Meetings

Synod committees will meet, DV, as follows:

Tuesday, October 1:

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

Wednesday, October 2:

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

Overseas Fund

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

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Jewish & Foreign Mission Fund: Anon, St Andrews, £200.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Glasgow: *Eastern Europe Fund*: Anon, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80, £80. *Sustentation Fund*: Anon, £20, £500.

Inverness: AM, “Where most needed in the manse”, £300 per Rev KDM. *Bus Fund*: Anon, £50.

North Tolsta: *Communion Expenses*: Anon, £40. *Door Collection*: Anon, £25, £80, £80, £40, £80.

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 Achary Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. **Bonar Bridge:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wed 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). 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:sydneyfchurch@protonmail.com.

New Zealand

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

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

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

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

Singapore

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

Ukraine

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

Zimbabwe

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

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

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

New Canaan: Church. Rev T Mwedzi.

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