

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
and Monthly Record

Vol. 95

APRIL 1990

No. 4

Justification by Faith

“By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified,” is the testimony of God’s Word. Under the Covenant of Works it was not so, for had Adam stood he would have procured life for himself and for his posterity. Through Adam’s sin, as the representative of his race, that door into the kingdom is forever closed. Yet it is by this door — the Covenant of Works — that multitudes of our race are seeking entrance into the kingdom of God and possession of eternal life. How diligently and earnestly do some seek to please God by their good works and religious duties, and expect that God, on this basis, will receive them to Himself and be reconciled to them. Yet all such efforts are vain, as the Word of God makes so plain — “By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” What need there is then for poor sinners to see that they can never commend themselves to God in this way, and that a better way must be found. That way is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This, Luther came to see after he had long tried to win the favour of God by his own works. This proved, by the blessing of God, to be the beginning of a new era in Europe when, through the Reformation, multitudes were delivered from the darkness and bondage of Romanism. The doctrine of justification by faith has proved a life-giving doctrine to many since that time, and shall prove so to the end of time.

But what is this doctrine of justification by faith and what is it to be justified? Justification means to be declared righteous. In this case it means to be declared righteous, not merely in the sight of men, but in the sight of God. On what basis then can a sinner be declared righteous in the sight of an infinitely holy God? It cannot be on the basis of his own righteousness or good works. The Scriptures declare that “all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” So it cannot be on such a basis that

we are justified. Our best works are marred by sin and so are unacceptable to God. If we cannot be accepted of God on the ground of our own righteousness, is it possible for us to be accepted on the basis of the righteousness of another? The Bible plainly reveals that this is so, and that on the ground of the righteousness of Jesus Christ we may be accepted of God. But what is the righteousness of Jesus Christ? Is it that infinite righteousness that is His as the Son of God? Verily, no. Rather is it the righteousness that He wrought out for His folk through His perfect fulfilling of the Divine Law for them, and the infinite satisfaction that he gave to Divine justice in His sacrificial death on the Cross of Calvary. He came into this world and took the nature of His people so that He might work out a perfect righteousness for them — a righteousness which would make them acceptable to God — a garment to cover them in which they might stand before God without spot in His sight. This is the garment with which we should seek to be clothed for time and for eternity.

But will God accept the righteousness of another in the place of the sinner's righteousness? It is indeed so, but we are never to forget that this is of the free grace of God. God is willing to accept the obedience and satisfaction of the holy Lamb of God in place of that of the sinner. This is clearly revealed in His sending of His beloved Son into the world to work out eternal redemption for His folk. What reason poor sinners have to rejoice in this — that when they "were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly"! Without this they would be without hope.

But what about the application of this redemption to sinners of Adam's lost race? How can this be?

It is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ the sinner is justified. In the day that the sinner looks by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him. The perfect righteousness of Christ is made over to the sinner, as though it were his very own, and he is declared righteous in the sight of an infinitely holy God. On what basis is he accepted? On the basis that Christ has satisfied divine law and justice in his room and stead. The sinner's sins have been imputed to the Sin-bearer and He has made an end of them for ever. But how does it all come about in the experience of the sinner? It is through the effectual application to the sinner of the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. It is the work of God, the Holy Spirit, to apply that redemption to the soul. He it is who takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to the soul. He it is that works faith in the heart, enabling the soul freely to embrace Jesus Christ offered to sinners in the Gospel of God's grace. Having been made willing, — how willingly the soul embraces Christ in the Gospel.

What evidence will the soul have that justification has taken place? Scripture gives the answer. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Pardon and peace are sealed on the soul through the application of the blood of Jesus Christ. The soul receives the kiss of reconciliation. Christ becomes all to that soul. A new day dawns and the soul begins to live a life of faith on the Son of God, dying daily unto sin and living unto righteousness.

"In the light of all this, must we not ask ourselves whether we have been justified through faith in Jesus Christ. Is our hope in Him for time and for eternity, or are we resting upon something other than the Lord Jesus Christ? If the latter is true, ought we not to cast all our righteousnesses to the moles and to the bats, and betake ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith so that He may become to us "The Lord our righteousness."

Sermon

by Dr. James Begg

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Malachi 3: 16.

The prophet proceeds to make a cheering statement after the dark picture which he has just presented. Even in the most degenerate ages, God never suffered the light of truth completely to be banished from the earth. When the old world was covered with wickedness, still in one family the fear of God was preserved. When all Israel appeared to have gone after idols, still many hundreds were left "who had not bowed the knee to Baal." And now, when the people had sunk into carelessness and contempt of God, even then a chosen few were left, "who feared the Lord, and spake often one to another". And since that period the case has been the same. When the great mass of the Jews rejected the Saviour, there were a few who "looked for redemption in Israel". When the apostles were persecuted from city to city, still some everywhere believed. Even in Sardis of old, wicked as it was, "a few names" were found of men "who had not defiled their garments." During all the ages which have succeeded, a race has always existed, running parallel to the great masses of the ungodly, "declaring God's works, shewing forth his mighty deeds." And at length, out of Babylon itself, borne down as it is with the guilt of centuries, God will call a chosen few who have shunned her awful wickedness. Like wheat amidst the multitudes of tares, like a few faithful soldiers amidst the ranks

and in the country of the enemy, have they always been found, one in a city, two in a family, whom God takes and brings to Zion. This is the first remark that strikes us on reading these words.

The second is that where and when sinners have been most determined in their opposition to God, the servants of God have ever been most bold and resolute. Even as the fierce energy of fire purges out the dross and makes the gold come forth pure and radiant, even as the fierce wind carries off the chaff and makes the wheat pure, so if we look for the brightest names in the Christian calendar, we shall not find them during times of peace when all the world was at rest and men professed their Christianity unheeded, but during times of stormy persecution. Then the Christian graces were ripened into a determined energy, and stood out in bold relief before the eyes of men. Then heaven has been filled with "those who came out of great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Even as in the case before us, when all Israel was sunk in wickedness, then, at that time, "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another", and God said "they shall be mine in the day when I make up my jewels." Having made these remarks, let us proceed to the more particular consideration of these words.

I. We learn from them that it is the duty of Christians, at all times, to stand by and support each other, especially in times of abounding iniquity. This was the conduct of these Jewish servants of God and was highly approved of by the Almighty. There are many injunctions to the same conduct in the New Testament: "Exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." "Let us consider one another, to provoke one another to love and to good works." Our Lord said to Peter, "And when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." The progress of sin has in every age been advanced by the determined union of its supporters. A strong banded conspiracy is formed — Satan is at its head — all the spirits of darkness are amongst its supporters — all the wicked in every age, in every land, have taken part in the dark confederacy. Many and deep have been their devices, and although many the differences by which they have been characterised, in this they have agreed, with all their might to oppose the progress of the holiness and the truth of God.

God has appointed a way in which all this may be met and overcome, viz., a determined union amongst all the followers of the Lamb. Satan is full of subtilty, but Christ is a leader more wise, for in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge. Satan has now led men astray for nearly six thousand years, and therefore, has a great and con-

stantly increasing experience in temptation; but He, Leader of the armies of the living God has endured from everlasting ages — was the creator of Satan, and possesses a power which nothing can resist. Satan is backed by all the spirits of darkness “who go about seeking whom they may devour;” but the Captain of our salvation has all the angels of heaven subject to Him, and makes them all ministering spirits to them who shall be heirs of salvation. And although the number of Christians has ever been small in comparison to the overwhelming masses of ungodly men, yet truth and righteousness must in due time prevail — the armies of God will become stronger and stronger, till at length, sin shall depart from this region of God’s dominions — the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. All shall see with one understanding and feel with one heart, and utter one language and adopt one resolution, and the temple of the God of heaven shall rise on the ruins of superstition and idolatry and every form of sin.

There is no doubt a decided and close union amongst all real Christians whether it is externally visible or not. They are called members of the same body, branches of the same vine, living stones in the same glorious building. Touch one stone of the building with rude violence and the whole building must feel the shock; touch one member of the body and all the rest must feel with generous sympathy. That must be no part of the building which can be removed without affecting the whole framework; that no part of the mystical body of Christ that feels no concern when the others are doomed to suffering. “Whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.” Therefore I say not merely that it is the duty of all Christians to feel a deep interest in each other’s prosperity, but that they cannot be Christians without feeling such an interest; and what is required is, that this union be as open and manifest as it is real and unalterable.

No doubt the ministers of truth are especially bound to stand up for the cause of God in stormy times. Their voices shall rally the troops, and be loudest in urging their brethren to courage; they should be first in exposing the delusions to which their brethren are liable. Theirs is the post of responsibility and danger. They are the standard-bearers who lead on the troops; and the meetings of God’s saints from Sabbath to Sabbath, to consult the holy oracles to learn what must be done in every emergency. It is their voice which must be heard animating the feeble, comforting the sorrowful, strengthening the weak, bringing out of their treasures things new and old suited to the needs of those they address; but, still, all Christians are bound, as they value God and truth, a glorious eternity and the

immortal souls of their brethren, to aid their efforts by speaking often one to another words of encouragement, consolation and reproof. "Am I my brother's keeper?" was not the voice of a child of God; it is the voice of Cain "who was of that wicked one and slew his brother." It were well if the ancient proclamation made before the armies of Israel as they proceeded towards Canaan, were repeated to those who are now proceeding towards the heavenly Canaan, — "Whoso is faint-hearted, let him go and return to his house, lest his neighbour's heart faint as well as his." The eye of the great Captain of our Salvation is fixed on those who stand prominent for their courage amongst the rest — who go boldly on from strength to strength, turning their faces from no foe, or if they turn at all, only that they may cheer on their brethren, saying, "Zion is before you — unspeakable glories await you there, O ye followers of the Lamb — be steadfast in the faith and omnipotence will be your defence — omniscience your guide — infinite goodness the storehouse out of which your wants will be supplied — God your Father — Christ your friend — angels your companions — heaven your home — a martyr's crown and a robe of brightness shall adorn you — eternity shall be the limit of your joy. These dark ranks, numerous though they seem, have all been conquered and condemned already, and on all their necks will be found the footprints of your glorious Leader. Their power is but weakness, and death will soon mow them down like corn fully ripe in the time of harvest; they shall rise against God and His servants no more. Be strong, fear not; be faithful unto death, Christ will give the crown of life."

Thus it is that Christians under proper feelings should speak one to another, in their private meetings in such times as these; but we might, in like manner, go over all the different situations in which a Christian may be placed, and show how the words of a friend may inspire and comfort; for as iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the face of a man the countenance of his friend. When the Sabbath comes round we can take sweet counsel together as we walk to the house of God in company. When we go together with trembling steps to the communion table, remembering how unworthy we are, the words of a friend are often "like ointment poured forth," or "like the dew on the Hill of Hermon, where God commandeth the blessing, even life that shall never end". When disease, with its dark clouds, settles upon our dwellings, when wearisome days and nights with many tossings to and fro till the dawning of the day is appointed to us or any of our dear Christian relations, then it is grateful to the heart to hear accents of tenderness proceeding from human lips, and to be borne up by others who have known like afflictions, and are not strangers to sympathy.

When death cuts off the desire of our eyes with a stroke, and when a crowd of mourners come to carry from our sight the remains of all that was dear to us, when we see the last sight of the sad procession and return and find the place unoccupied where our friend once was, what so soothing in such hours as these, as the conversation of those who can remind us of the time when the earth and the sea must give back their dead, and all the triumphs of death must be swallowed up in an eternal victory. In all the circumstances, it is the duty of Christians to speak to one another; for a word fitly spoken, how good it is; and this is one of the means appointed by God for saving souls from death, and promoting the sanctification of His people.

Oh! if God would offer us a golden wedge of Ophir, or a kingly crown for every soul that we comforted, for every delusion detected and exposed, every soul taught to surmount its difficulties and enter the land of rest, how diligent we would be. See the physician, for a temporary subsistence, passing through a laborious course of study, from many parts of which human nature recoils, — exposing himself to the contagion of deadly disease, — content to have his rest disturbed and to sit up the weary night that he may gaze upon human nature in agony, — passing from one sad chamber of sickness to another, till a sedate and melancholy air becomes habitual and sits fixedly on his countenance. He does all this for his fellow men, only to obtain a small and temporary reward. See the lawyer putting forth his whole store of learning and subtilty in defence of another, burning the midnight oil that he may find arguments in his defence, and throwing his whole soul so completely into the case, that as he speaks so earnestly, a stander-by will imagine that it must be his own. Will they do all this and more for their brethren, only for a reward in time, and will you professing to be Christians, do nothing to promote the comfort and salvation of your Christian brethren, although God looks on with deep interest, and though He has declared that an immortal prize will reward your efforts, not of thousands of gold, or earthly crowns, but of endless joy, a long immortality of blessedness?

II. God not merely remembers but will reward those who thus promote the salvation of his people, and retain their holiness amidst abounding iniquity, and in illustrating this point, the great advantage of holiness will appear.

The figures here employed are strikingly fitted to convey an idea that decided Christians are exceedingly precious in the eyes of God. With what care do men store up their jewels! All their goods are reckoned less valuable than these. They store them up in secret and strong repositories and when

danger seizes upon their dwellings, they fly to these — their jewels are first secured. When a day of mirth and feasting is appointed, is it possible for the sons and daughters of Adam to forget their ornaments? And if we speak of kings, their crown and the jewels with which it is adorned, their sceptre of gold, all the rubies and diamonds which their ancestors have collected, all the precious things which go to make up the regalia of majesty, constitute the emblems of the glory and greatness of their kingdom. And when foreign princes come, as the Queen of Sheba did from the uttermost parts of the earth to see the wisdom and glory of Solomon; when a great display must be made, the crown royal is placed on the monarch's head, and all the jewels of the kingdom are brought forth to dazzle the foreign eyes and make the assembled thousands shout for joy. And so God gives us to believe that when at last He comes down to exhibit to the world His glorious majesty, and when all the princes of many generations must meet together, and all the potentates of hell must come to see the glorious spectacle — nothing fairer will be there, nothing which illustrates more the dignity and glory of His power, His love and all His attributes than the members of the Christian church, fair and glorious, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels."

Or take the other figure. We all know how tender is the affection of parents towards their children. It reigns amongst all the creatures of God. The very eagle, cruel to all the other fowls of heaven, "fluttereth over her nest, carrieth her young upon her wings". The bear robbed of her whelps, makes the forest ring with the wailings of her grief. And man, guided by reason, betrays stronger and deeper feelings than these. Hear them expressed by Jacob: "Me ye have bereaved of my children; Joseph is not and Simeon is not, and will ye take Benjamin also? All these things are against me." Even the utmost cruelty, the most base ingratitude, is unable to quench a father's love. David "was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! would God that I had died for thee." And the eternal Jehovah gives us to believe, that as parents write the names of their children in their sacred books, so He writes the names of His on the palms of His hands — they are ever before Him. Even as they watch over infants with an ardent zeal which tires not — an ardent unquenchable affection; and as they call their friends together, they love to deck out these and show them as the objects most precious in their sight; so the God of heaven and earth, when he calls a vast assembly of all the universe, will bring forth His children, decked with beauty and

prepared to enter upon an eternal joy. "I will spare them as a man spareth his son that serveth him."

The time is fast approaching when the reign of delusion will end forever — when this strange scene, in which holiness is oppressed and sin apparently triumphant, shall change — light coming out of darkness, order out of confusion — the wicked being driven away in their wickedness, the chosen sons of God brought forth from their obscurity that they may shine as jewels in their Saviour's crown, as the stars for ever and ever. How strange to stand on an eminence on that day of final decision and see the wondrous issue. Every eye shall see it, every heart shall feel its overpowering interest. It shall be a day of joy and unspeakable alarm — of hope more than fulfilled, of terror more than realised. It will teach in one hour what men could not be taught by a thousand sermons and it will teach with a force and authority which none will venture to gainsay. This is the meaning of the prophet, "Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked." At present you may be deceived, and the flatteries of men, apparently backed by many strange appearances, may lead you astray. You may silence the voice of conscience which proclaims aloud that there is an endless distinction between sin and holiness, you may lull yourself into a temporary feeling of security; but the thunderclap of the day of judgement will dispel the delusion "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Now there is peace, then there will be no more peace; now there is a firm world beneath your feet, then the world will be burning with fire; now God hides Himself, then He will come forth in wrath; now ministers beseech, then their voices will be silenced; now the wicked prosper, then they will be driven away to endless misery; now there is time, then eternity will have begun and hope fled forever away. "Then shall ye turn and discern between the righteous and the wicked."

All this shall thrust itself on everyone's observation; there will be no disinterested spectator; all will learn from experience, whether of sorrow or joy. Will you not be wise in time? You are spending your years as a tale that is told and now is the day of revelation nearer than when we last met in this house of prayer. Are you anxious to shut your eyes still, and to press on through another period of time, which shall perhaps lay some of us with the dust uninstructed and unmoved? If ye are resolved, O why should we disturb you before the time? Rejoice and let your hearts cheer you; but take heed lest the earth should suddenly reel beneath your feet, and in the hour of your extremity you send for those ministers whose warnings you now despise, to administer a consolation which you now put away. Now is the accepted time, God waits to be gracious — His salva-

tion is offered to the chief of sinners — His Spirit can cleanse from all sin — His glory can satisfy the longings of an immortal soul. Flee to the stronghold as prisoners of hope. And ye Christians, hold fast that which you have, let no man take your crown; yet a little while and He that shall come will come. His reward is with Him but His work is before Him. "Be ye faithful unto death and Christ will give you the crown of life."

The Real Presence — What is it?

by Rev. J. C. Ryle

(Continued from page 80)

Let our daily cry be, "Come, Lord Jesus". This is the real bodily presence of Christ, for which every true-hearted Christian ought daily to long and pray.

Then, and then only, will . . . sickness and death be taken away, tears be wiped from all eyes, and the redemption of the saint, in body as well as soul, be completed. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3: 2). The highest style of Christian is the man who desires the real presence of his Master, and "loves His appearing" (2 Tim. 4: 8).

I have now unfolded, as far as I can in a short paper, the truth about the presence of God and His Christ. I have shown (1) the general doctrine of God's presence everywhere; (2) the Scriptural doctrine of Christ's real, spiritual presence; (3) the Scriptural doctrine of Christ's real, bodily presence. I now leave the whole subject with a parting word of application, and commend it to serious attention. In an age of hurry and bustle about secular things, in an age of wretched strife and controversy about religion, I entreat men not to neglect the great truths which this paper contains.

(1) What do we know of Christ ourselves? We have heard of Him thousands of times. We call ourselves Christians. But what do we know of Christ experimentally, as our own personal Saviour, our own Priest, our own Friend, the Healer of our conscience, the comfort of our heart, the Pardoner of our sins, the Foundation of our hope, the confidence of our souls? How is it?

(2) Let us not rest till we feel Christ "present" in our own hearts, and know what it is to be one with Christ and Christ in us. This is real religion.

To live in the habit of looking backward to Christ on the cross, upward to Christ at God's right hand, and forward to Christ coming again, — this is the only Christianity which gives comfort in life and good hope in death. Let us remember this.

(3) Let us beware of holding erroneous views about the Lord's Supper, and especially about the real nature of Christ's "presence" in it. Let us not so mistake that blessed ordinance, which was meant to be our soul's meat, as to turn it into our soul's poison. There is no sacrifice in the Lord's Supper, no sacrificing priest, no altar, no bodily "presence" of Christ in the bread and wine. These things are not in the Bible, and are dangerous inventions of man, leading on to superstition. Let us take care.

(4) Let us keep continually before our minds the second advent of Christ, and that real "presence" which is yet to come. Let our loins be girded, and our lamps burning, and ourselves like men daily waiting for their Master's return. Then, and then only, shall we have all the desires of our souls satisfied. Till then the less we expect from this world the better. Let our daily cry be, "Come, Lord Jesus".

A Communion Monday at Kinlochbervie

The occasion referred to was the dispensation of the Lord's Supper at Kinlochbervie in the time of Rev. John Kennedy, father of the famous Dr. Kennedy, Dingwall. The older people in Kinlochbervie still point out the spot referred to in the following extract taken from *The Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire, with Memoirs*: — "On Monday in particular so much of the Lord's presence was enjoyed by His people that to many of them it was the happiest day of their life. When the time for parting came none had courage to say farewell to the minister (Rev. John Kennedy); they lingered round him and followed him to the house and before they separated he and they sat down together to a refreshment in the open air. That over they walked together to an eminence over which the people had to pass. On reaching the summit they stood round the minister as he prayed and commended them to the care of the Good Shepherd of Israel. He then said to them as the tears ran down his cheeks; 'This is pleasant, dear friends but it must end and we need not expect unbroken communion, either with each other or the Lord till we all reach in safety our home in heaven'; and, without trusting himself to bid farewell, he turned away from them, and they each one weeping as he went took their respective journeys to their homes" (pp 175: 6).

Advice to all God's People

by John Bunyan

1. Believe that as sure as you are in the way of God, you must meet with temptations.
 2. The first day therefore that you enter into Christ's congregation, look for them.
 3. When they do come, beg of God to carry you through them.
 4. Be jealous of your own heart, that it deceive you not in your evidences for heaven, nor in your walking with God in this world.
 5. Take heed of the flatteries of false brethren.
 6. Keep in the life and power of truth.
 7. Look most at the things which are not seen.
 8. Take heed of little sins.
 9. Keep the promise warm upon your heart.
 10. Renew your acts of faith in the blood of Christ.
 11. Consider the work of your generation.
 12. Count to run with the foremost therein.
- Grace be with thee.

Babylon's Fall

by Rev. Wm. Bridge

(Continued from page 89)

If antichristian and Romish Babylon be truly Babylon, then set yourselves in array against her round about. I mean not in way of warlike hostility, oh that all your swords were turned into ploughshares, my exhortation is no other than that of the prophet Jeremiah, concerning old Babylon 50: 14, "Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows, for she hath sinned against the Lord." It is the wisdom of every man, to observe what design God hath upon the world, a kingdom, or place, and to be in our callings serviceable, and helpful to God's designs. God will help us, if we help him. We love to be on the strongest side, and God is strongest. Now is the time that God is bearing down the walls of proud Babylon, that are raised up in every kingdom. Magistrates, ministers, people, help. Help, oh, you that love the Lord, help the Lord, down with them, down them with them even to the ground.

But what shall we do to help forward the fall of Babylon?

And if you be a minister, you know your duty; only, as Luther phrases

it, let your knowledge be incarnate into godly practice; good works are faith incarnate, knowledge incarnate. Now you read Joshua 3: 13, 15, 17, that when the children of Israel went through Jordan, these priests that bare the ark of the Lord, were first to enter upon the waters, and to stay in the midst of them, till all Israel passed over. The water doth note affliction, the feet of those that bare the ark are to be first in danger, and there to stand till all be over. In the place before mentioned, Exek. 44: 10-12, God's threatening is very terrible. As if he should say, As for those Levites that go astray when Israel goes astray, and do admit the uncircumcised in heart to mine holy things, though they be suffered in mine house, yet they shall but do the out-works thereof, as for those inward things of mine house and self, they shall not be admitted to them, nor trusted with them. Though they may preach some outward truths, which they may read of in books, yet for those inward secret heart things of the covenant, I will never trust them with them, they shall not draw near to me. Oh, therefore beloved, that we could deny our own knowledge, wisdoms, parts, gifts, liberties, and all that is ours in this great service.

But if a man's condition and state be private, what must he do to help forward the fall of Babylon?

Take heed that thou do nothing to hinder God's public design by your private practices, put away the evil of all your doings, lest your private wickedness do *ponere obicem* to God's providence.

Achan's wickedness was committed in the dark, and with much privacy, yet what influence had it into public misery.

Miriam and Aaron murmured against Moses, and envied at him, for which she was stricken with leprosy whereby the whole congregation was stayed, and their march hindered. It is said, 2 Chron. 20: 33, that the high places were not pulled down, "because the people were not prepared for the Lord;" not because the *prince* was not prepared, or the *great ones* not prepared, but because the *people* were not prepared. It is in regard of truth, as in regard of error in this particular, though the baker may have kneaded his dough, that is, his false opinion, and made it ready, yet as the prophet Hosea speaks, and as Zanchy interprets the place, he sets not in, till the oven be heated, that is, the heart of the people warmed and prepared for it. So for a truth also, or a public mercy and deliverance, though God have provided it for a people, yet it is not handed to them, and set in, till their hearts be warmed and prepared for it. You may observe therefore, that when David had made his penitential psalm for his own sin, Ps. 51, after much supplication for the pardon of his own evil, and for grace, and comfort he comes at last in the 18th verse to this petition:

"Do good in thy good pleasure unto Sion," &c. How comes that in here? Yes, when a man hath once repented of his own sin, and cleared that reckoning, then he is fittest to ask mercy for the church, and till then unfit. Therefore though in regard of your own souls, your own eternity, you will not part with your own sins, yet if you have any pity, any compassion, any bowels towards your own country, or churches of God, put away the evil of all your doings.

Though your condition be never so private, you may discover the ways of Babylon, the works and complotments of the Babylonish party: and the discovery of evil is half its ruin, as the apostle speaks, 2 Tim. 3: 9, "They shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest to all."

You may believe down the walls of Babylon. Faith removes mountains, though it be but a grain; by it the walls of Jericho fell, in the blowing of those poor rams' horns. And the walls of Jericho were built up to heaven, surely then the walls of Babylon cannot be higher. Wherefore seek out those promises and threatenings, set your heart towards them, bear yourselves upon them, urge, and press God by virtue of them, and say, though it be very unlikely that Babylon should fall, yet God hath thus and thus promised, thus and thus threatened, and he is faithful, here I will stay, and here I will wait.

You may spread the blasphemies of the Babylonish faction in the eyes of heaven. Thus did Hezekiah when Rabshakeh blasphemed, and we know how it prevailed. Great and grievous have the blasphemies been wherewith the men of Babylon have blasphemed the saints of God, and the footsteps of his anointed, which God takes as done against himself, and so repays them, Ezek. 35: 12, compared with the 13th verse. In the 12th verse it is said, "I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, they are laid desolate, they are given us to consume:" but in the 13th verse these words are charged upon them, as if they were spoken against God himself: "That with your mouth you have boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me." Therefore at the 14th verse follows the punishment. The spreading of their hellish blasphemies, is exceeding prevalent with God, and very potent.

You may use all the interest you have in heaven, and whatsoever credit you have there, improve it, which we beseech you do now in this particular. Your prayers puts them under God's curse.

Though your condition and station be never so private, you may according to your place, curse the practices and complotments of all the enemies. Doth not Jacob seem to pronounce a curse upon the practices

of Simeon and Levi, though his own children, Gen. 49: 7, "Cursed be their wrath for it was cruel, &c., for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall." What is the endeavour of the Babylonians, but to dig down the walls of Jerusalem, and of our protection. Oh, my soul come not thou into their secret. God hath commanded that Meroz should be cursed, and cursed bitterly; because they went not forth to help the Lord against the mighty. How bitterly then are they to be cursed, that go forth to help the mighty against the Lord.

It was a statute and a law in Israel, that if any removed the ancient landmarks, he shall be cursed. "Cursed," says the text, "shall he be that removes the ancient landmarks, and let all the people say Amen." What is the ancient landmark of England, but our laws and religion? and therefore if any man shall remove this our landmark, cursed shall he be, of the Lord cursed, and let all the people say Amen.

Whatever personal injury hath been done unto you by any of the enemies of the churches, you may, you must pass them by, so far as it is a private concernment, and you shall not lose hereby, your forgiveness hastens their ruin. For this cause, as you may read Numb. 12: 2,3,4 God himself took vengeance on Miriam, because Moses was a meek man. See how the mention of his meekness is brought in by way of parenthesis at ver.3, as the cause of God's proceedings against her, ver.4. Wherefore, my beloved, have any been wronged and injured by your and God's enemies, carry it meekly, carry it humbly, no revenge, no revenge, but all forgiveness. And have they begun to fall before you, let there be much rejoicing, but no insulting; praises, but no insulting; prayer still, but no insulting. Let your moderation be known to all, for God is at hand. These are your duties; which things if they be in you and abound, in due time Babylon shall fall, and you shall see it; for the next doctrine tells us it:

Though antichristian and Romish Babylon be never so great, yet it shall fall, and fall assuredly.

This is but equal: those that have fallen from God, shall fall by God; those that have made others to fall, shall fall themselves. Now the man of sin is the star that is fallen from heaven, who in 2 Thess. 2: 3, as some observe, is called in the abstract, *apostacy*, not an apostate, a *falling away*, not one that is fallen away, so notorious is he for sinful falling. And as God rewards grace with his own grace, so he rewards sin with its own likeness.

How else shall Sion rise, if Babylon do not fall? It is said, when the Lord exalteth the low tree, he bringeth down the high tree, then shall all the trees of the forest rejoice. God is making way to such a jubilee,

therefore Babylon must fall, and that assuredly.

Those that are too big for themselves, and cannot manage their own greatness, must needs fall. Pride goes before a fall. It is the natural genius of Babylon to be proud and great, great and proud. Babel was at first built to affront providence, that the world might be no more drowned. Afterwards says that king, in Daniel, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for mine honour?" And, Rev. 18, saith our late Babylon, "I sit a queen," &c. They have been great, and in their own eyes great, surely therefore their own weight shall sink them.

Must not those needs fall, that are set in dark and slippery places, whom the angel of the Lord drives? Now, if ever, the places of God's enemies are very slippery, themselves in the dark, and the angel of God driving them. Therefore they shall fall, and fall assuredly.

As the fall of Babylon is very certain, so it is the duty of the saints to speak of it as if it were done already.

We are bound to honour the faithfulness of God, more than the faithfulness of any other, because other things are faithful to us, us Salvation observes, because he is faithful. We expect cooling and cleansing from the water, and that is faithful. Why? For God is faithful, he bids it be faithful to us. We expect warmth and light from the fire, and that is faithful. Why? For God is faithful, he bids it be faithful to us. In all these faithful creatures there is but a drop of God's faithfulness; and when they promise, we believe them: and shall we not believe Him, when he promises and when he threatens? When a faithful friend promises, we say it shall be; but we are to honour God's faithfulness more, and therefore to speak of the thing promised or threatened, as if it were done already.

When we do but begin a good work, God speaks of it as done already. It is said, "By faith Abraham offered up Isaac," Heb. 11: 17; yet he did not actually offer him up, but intended it, and set himself to do it at God's command. It is said, that "Moses took his wife and son, and returned to the land of Egypt," Exod. 4: 20; yet he was but in the beginning of his return. When we have begun any good work for God, he speaks of it as done altogether. Therefore he having begun that great and good work for the churches, the fall of Babylon, it is our duty also to speak of it as if it were done already.

Let us therefore correct our manner of speaking. If any storm or trouble arise upon the churches, we are ready to break forth into despondent conclusions, saying, God is now gone, mercy gone, the ordinances gone; we were in good hope to have seen good days, the ruin of the church's

enemies; but they do so prevail, as that we have no hope at all in this particular. But though the extremity of the church be never so great, and the enemies never so flourishing, we ought to say, They are fallen, they are fallen.

But how can we speak thus, when an utter improbability and unlikelihood dwells upon the business?

Yes. For when God destroys his enemies, he either takes them away by a weak hand, as Jer. 50: 45, "The least of the flock shall draw them out;" or, they shall perish by their own hands, as Ps. 9: 16, "The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands;" or, they shall be destroyed without hands, as Job 34: 20, "The mighty shall be taken away without hands." And is this true, may the soul say, that the enemies of the church shall perish by a weak hand, or by their own hand, or without hands; then will I never sink and despair in my heart, or give ill language to God's faithfulness, though the condition of God's churches be never so low, though the condition of the enemies be never so high.

If we are to speak of this work as if it were done already, when it is not done indeed; then how contrary are those to God's word, who say it is not done when it is done indeed: that will not acknowledge God's work, that say on the contrary, It is not fallen, it is not fallen, when it is fallen in truth. And such there shall be, who when the vial is poured upon the seat of the beast, "shall gnaw their tongues, and blaspheme the God of heaven, not repenting of their deeds," Rev. 16: 10, 11. But I hope better things of you, and such as accompany salvation. Only now if there be any here, that have given any assistance to Babylon, by pen, tongue, or hand, let them repent. Oh, every one, repent you of your superstition, repent, repent you, lest you partake with Babylon in all her plagues and torments to all eternity. And remember that speech of Godtesscalchus: I am afraid to deny the truth, lest I be for ever denied by the truth. *Christus est via et veritas, non consuetudo*. Christ is the way and truth, not custom, not innovation. . . .

And if any have had any ill thoughts or words of, or against God's people, now change your words and your thoughts of them, for, for their sakes it is, that these great works are to be done. "Thus saith the Lord your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, for your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all the nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry is in the ships," Isa. 43: 14.

"The fitter we grow for heaven the faster we must press towards it."

Matthew Henry

Obituaries

The Late Mr Donald MacLachlan, elder, St. Jude's

Donald MacLachlan was born in the town of Rothesay. He came at a later stage to dwell in Tighnabruaich, where he engaged in the boat-building trade. He qualified as a carpenter, and continued in this trade for the rest of his life.

It was while he was resident in Tighnabruaich that he underwent the great change of becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus. He did not speak a great deal about his spiritual experiences, but it was very evident from his whole demeanour and spiritual exercises in prayer, that his eyes had been opened by the Spirit of God to see the sinfulness of sin and the depravity of his nature. This led him to seek mercy through the glorious One appointed as the alone Mediator between God and man. As his mind was enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, he was given strength to embrace Christ in the everlasting Gospel by faith, the following portion of the Word of God being applied with power to his soul "him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." John 6: 37. Speaking of this experience he would say most emphatically "It came with power". He evidently rejoiced in the bands of unbelief being broken, as he entered into the liberty of the Gospel concerning which the Saviour declared "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." He also knew and appreciated the value of the Redeemer's words "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." By Divine grace he was enabled to continue in the Word of God to the end.

He became a communicant in the Kames congregation in May, 1959. In that year he married Jessie Ross, a native of Hilton, Fearn, Ross-shire, and they set up home in Glasgow. In November 1969 he was ordained to the eldership of the Glasgow congregation. He took very seriously the responsibilities laid upon him by his ordination vows, and endeavoured to discharge all the duties of the eldership as one who was involved in the affairs of the glorified King of Zion. He was held in high regard by his fellow office-bearers, and by the whole congregation. His prayers in public were specially valued, as they evidenced his deep sense of unworthiness, and his absolute need of that salvation to be found in Christ alone. His petitions were expressed with fervency as he prayed for pastor and people. The young people had a particular place in his intercession, as he longed for them to be gathered in to Christ, and to become witnesses for Him in their day and generation. For some time before his death he

was disturbed at a form of Christian profession that he was meeting with in some parts of the Church. It seemed very different to him from what he himself knew in former days, and he did not view it with favour, nor did he expect such to be of much value to the church of God.

He was sincerely and uprightly attached to the testimony on the side of truth raised in 1893. He could not tolerate any lowering or undermining of the standards enshrined in that testimony. The recent trials through which the Church was called upon to pass were painful, but not altogether suprising to him, and many a cry was sent up to the throne of grace, that the Synod would be kept faithful to Christ's glory and cause at its meeting in May, 1989. When word came of the Synod's decision in the case of Lord MacKay, he rejoiced, and immediately saw the Lord's hand in this signal deliverance. To those around his bed and in the house he said "The Lord has answered prayer, we must now give thanks."

His love to the ordinances of God's house was manifest to all who knew him. In him was beautifully exemplified the spirit of the Psalmist, "Lord I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth" Psalm 26: 8. In these ordinances he got spiritual views of the beauty of the Lord, and the fulness and suitability of His salvation, which gave him to rejoice. He consequently felt very much the dispensation in the Divine providence, by which he was deprived of these means, for a prolonged period, due to chronic ill-health. He sought to be submissive to the Divine will, and his prayerful interest in all which concerned our congregation, continued to the end.

Like all the people of God, he was troubled, with indwelling sin, and with the temptations of Satan. He was, on one particular occasion, disturbed by the coarse language of his workmates. He managed to get a place away from them, where he could engage in prayer. While thus engaged, he said "I got wonderful views of my Saviour." During the illness referred to he was tenderly and competently nursed by his wife, but the time came when medical skill and wifely love could do no more, and the intercession of the Saviour was fulfilled in his case, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world." John 17: 24. On 6th June, 1989, the soul of Donald MacLachlan departed to be with Christ, which is far better, and he now enjoys beautiful views of his Saviour, in a state of glory. "Help Lord, because the godly man doth daily fade away, and from among the sons of men the faithful do decay." Psalm 12: 1.

To his sorrowing widow and the members of his own family we extend

our sincere sympathy, and pray that the Father of mercy and the God of all comfort will be with each one of them.

D. McL., Glasgow

The Late Mrs Catherine MacKellar, Glasgow

Catherine Forbes was born in Kiltarlity on 22nd April, 1911. Her father was well-known as the precentor in our Beaully Congregation. She often spoke of the godly men and women whom she met in her young days, and of the serious impressions made on her young mind by the evident piety of such as loved the ways of Zion, and delighted in the worship of God. She was a frequent visitor to the home of the late Miss Harriet MacDonald, Dingwall, where she was given useful advice and encouragement to seek the Lord in the days of her youth. Harriet was a choice Christian, and a close friend of two godly ladies in the Glasgow congregation, the Misses Morton. Of each of them it could be said that the language of the Psalmist expressed the experience of their souls "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God" Psalm 42: 1-2. On one occasion these three ladies were returning from a Communion in Tomatin, where it was evident that showers of blessing had fallen around the hill of God. As they sat together in the train to Inverness, Harriet exclaimed "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Proverbs 3: 17. In God's good time Catherine was to come to have such desires, and to have them fulfilled with the same sweetness.

In 1933 she left the quietness of country life in Kiltarlity to go to Edinburgh, where she trained as a primary school teacher. While there she sat under the ministry of the late Rev Neil MacIntyre, and spoke appreciatively of his preaching. She then taught in various schools in such places as Laggan, Glenelg and elsewhere. She was highly respected by both parents and pupils.

In 1939 she was joined in marriage to James MacKellar, a native of Inverness, and a gardener to trade, to whom she bore a daughter called Margaret, who was to prove such a help to her mother in the future. James was called up to serve in the 2nd World War. He was posted as a gunner to the 88th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, and no doubt the young wife felt this separation keenly, but sadder news was to follow. While on war service, her husband was captured by the Japanese, and taken to Thailand to work with the 70,000 British, Australian, Dutch and American prisoners of war in the building of the notorious Thailand to Burma Railway, known

as the Death Railway. The cruelty shown to these prisoners of war by the Japanese cannot be expressed in words. Added to this cruelty, malnutrition, tropical diseases and other ailments took a heavy toll of the prisoners. The doctors among them did their best to save life and limb, but their captors would not supply either the necessary medical stores or drugs. Among those who succumbed to this inhuman treatment was James MacKellar, who died in a prisoner-of-war camp on 10th June, 1944 aged 37 years. He was buried in Kamchanaburi War Cemetery, Thailand. This place is a town about 129 kilometres west north west of Bangkok. It contains the graves of over 5000 Commonwealth forces, who died as prisoners-of-war during the construction of the notorious Burma-Siam Railway.

In 1985, Mrs MacKellar, with some other war widows, was taken by an Agency, to see the place where her husband was buried.

It was during the 2nd World War that Mrs MacKellar came under concern of soul. We are not in a position to say if it was the death of her husband that was blessed to her or not, but she now began to seek a Husband who will never die. The reality of her condition as a sinner before God became a pressing concern, and she gave an attentive ear to the Word of God. She said that she greatly appreciated the addresses in the Beaulieu Church given by the late John and Alexander MacLennan. It was evident that Christ, the bridegroom of the Church, was made very precious to her. She could say "His mouth is most sweet, yea He is altogether lovely: this is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." Faith in the heart now found expression in the practice, and in July 1969 she came before the Beaulieu Kirk Session, who were very pleased to receive her as a communicant in the Church. She was one who adorned her profession, and followed the Lord fully to the end of her days.

About 1970 she came to Glasgow, and in 1974 was placed on our Communion Roll. Mrs MacKellar was a very spiritually minded person. It was very evident from her conversation that she believed that to be spiritually minded was life and peace. Possessed of a high intelligence, she was a great reader, and found much source of satisfaction in reading the old Divines. She was also a strong Protestant, and took a lively interest in the history of those who contended earnestly for the faith against the errors of Popery. When the Bookroom opened in Glasgow, she was one of the ladies who so wholeheartedly engaged in this work. Being so well-read herself, she was a real asset to the Bookroom. She was very pleased at its recent success, and no doubt prayed for its prosperity.

Mrs MacKellar was a lady of decided convictions. She was therefore a loyal communicant member of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

She had been a witness of the solid and savoury piety of those whom she knew in her young days, and during the time of her public profession. She had no time for those who, while professing to approve of the principles of the Church, made plain by their lukewarm spirit that they had no real love for the Truth of God and the practices based on that Truth. Mrs MacKellar enjoyed a good measure of health, and it was always a pleasure to see her make her way to church with such a vigorous step. But eventually illness did overtake her, and although she made a recovery for some time, it soon became evident that she was failing. Although not well, she made every effort to attend church to listen to the Gospel, which by the power of the Holy Ghost refreshed, comforted and strengthened her soul. Although feeling weak, she expressed a very strong desire to attend our Communion in November 1988. It was to be her last time at the Lord's Table in this world. Speaking to a close friend afterward, she spoke of her pleasure at being at the Lord's Table, and referred to the large congregation. She then went on to say "That is the largest congregation you will see in St Jude's before the split." Like many of the godly in the Church, she had come to the conclusion that if the witness of the Church was to be preserved in its integrity and fullness, there would need to be a removal of some among us who would weaken that witness. She did not live to see the event she had so clearly foreseen, and which took place in May 1989.

It was a real privilege and pleasure to have known Mrs MacKellar. She was so transparently honest and straightforward that you felt that you were in the company of a steadfast friend of Christ and His Cause and people. Her cheerful disposition, reflected in a warm smile, made her a most attractive Christian, in whom the grace of God was manifest. We read of Barnabas, that when he was sent to Antioch, he saw the grace of God and was glad. Acts II, 23. So, in the case of our late friend, those who saw the grace of God in her found it a cause of rejoicing and encouragement.

Mrs MacKellar's last days were spent in the home of her daughter, Margaret, where she obtained skilled and loving care, till the end, which took place on 14th March, 1989. She often spoke to the writer of her deep appreciation of the kindness and attention that she received from Margaret, her son-in-law, and their children. "Dear in God's sight is His saints' death" Psalm 116. It is then that they are brought nearer to Him, as far as their souls are concerned, than ever before, for to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Mrs MacKellar's Christian profession can best be described in the words of the Apostle "For they that say

such things declare plainly that they seek a country: and truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country that is, an heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city." Hebrews 11, 14, 15, 16. Her body was laid to rest in Dunlichity Cemetery, where the dust of many of the godly lie, until the morning of the resurrection.

To Margaret, her husband and children, together with the other relatives, we express our sincere sympathy, reminding them that they should not sorrow as those who have no hope, for the Word of God declares "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Revelation 14, 13.

D. McL., Glasgow

Book Reviews

ON TRUTH AND HERESY: On Being Steadfast in the Truth by George Gillespie. Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1989. Paperback booklet, 36pp. £1.50. Available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE.

Presbyterian Heritage are continuing to make suitably sized booklets available, in an attractive format and reasonably priced, of selections from worthy Presbyterian divines of a bygone but spiritually enriched era whose works are out of print. The present work was originally published as chapters 9-11 (rearranged) of *A Treatise of Miscellany Questions* (Edinburgh 1649). As usual the text has been edited to bring it into greater conformity with contemporary spelling, punctuation, and grammatical usage. (I suppose we cannot murmur at the American spelling, but the use of "you" for "thou" and "ye" in biblical quotations, pp4, 5, 6, 7, *et passim*, has wider implications, e.g. Ps. 25: 12 on p7 is a conflation of old syntax and new language. There are typographical mistakes on pages 10, 25, 28 and 36). A welcome new feature of this edition is the translation of the latin footnotes.

The message of this booklet is timely for the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Based upon 1 Corinthians 11: 19 "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you", the booklet opens by discoursing on the importance of stability and firmness in the truth. Gillespie then explains heresy to con-

sist in six things concurring — it is an error of such a nature that (i) it is held within the church, (ii) it is voluntarily and freely chosen, (iii) it rejects truth, (iv) it is professed and maintained openly so that it becomes a scandal and snare to others, (v) it is a gross error contradictory of some chief and substantial truth, (vi) it is factiously maintained to the extent that it rends the Church and draws away disciples.

He further explains that God has decreed that there will be heresies so that the “truly godly”, true and sincere saints, may be distinguished from others by this characteristic — “they hate, avoid, and resist heresies, and earnestly contend for the faith; they hold fast the truth of Christ without wavering.”

He makes the interesting observation, that if God has decreed that there must be heresies to make more manifest those whom God approves and those whom He does not approve, “then let no thoughts arise in our hearts toward the accusing of divine providence” in allowing heresies within the Church! “We ought not to censure, but humbly and reverently to adore God’s most wise and most holy (though secret and unsearchable) dispensations.”

He concludes with some sanctified common sense being applied to the objection that confessions of faith and church discipline prevent new light and interfere with liberty of conscience. He gives us eleven particular cautions concerning new light among those who plead for liberty of conscience. e.g. “Seventhly, beware of separating new lights. To separate from, or gather new churches out of true reformed or reforming Churches, has not the least warrant from the Word of God.” “Ninthly, refuse such new lights as have ‘fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.’ Eph. 5: 11. It is a deceitful new light which makes men forbear to reprove, speak or petition, against those evils in a state which their consciences know to be sinful, and to wink at such things as publicly dishonour God in a nation, upon hopes that themselves shall be winked at and tolerated. But ‘what communion hath light with darkness?’ 2 Cor. 6: 14. There are some who pretend to a new light, and to tenderness of conscience, who are yet content to combine and associate themselves with those of another and different way (which themselves condemn as a sinful way), in that common cause of theirs, for crying up their great Diana, liberty of conscience, and for opposing the church government by presbyteries and synods.”

This short booklet repays study, particularly as the scriptural texts expounded are rarely quoted or expounded, far less understood and practised, in the present ecumenical scene. The treatment of those who volun-

tarily chose error, pp 14-15, and the discriminating nature of this subject to manifest those approved of God, pp 21-25, are worthy of close perusal.

D. M. B.

COMFORT IN AFFLICTION by James Buchanan D.D., Free Presbyterian Publication.

This most attractively bound paperback by Free Presbyterian Publications justifies its title. The consolation of the Gospel is extracted from a variety of passages from the Word of God. Typographically, the first two chapters excel. This comparison however casts no reflection on the remainder of the book. The context is sound and sweet. Dr Buchanan has long since ensured himself a place in the affections of the godly by his better known works on Justification, and The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. Less well known but not less worthy of the author is this smaller production. It scintillates with heart warming thoughts, on the profound age long problem of the afflictions of the godly in this world of sin and sorrow. Instead of vain speculation Dr Buchanan furnishes us with thoughts on the true Biblical philosophy of suffering. The selection of texts so diverse, yet all related to the basic theme, indicates the author's ability to distil comfort for the afflicted. There is here a blend of depth and variety in small compass. There is also, more than the 'aura' of gravity and earnestness. This book could well be a word in season to ourselves in our present circumstances.

F. M.

THE CHRISTIAN IN COMPLETE ARMOUR, Volume Three, by William Gurnall, Banner of Truth Trust.

We fear that the modern mind is greatly prejudiced against the Puritan authors. To spend time poring over, what was originally written in the 17th century, it is argued, can have no relevance for today. A similar taunting criticism of our Subordinate Standards, has operated effectively to open the door to all kinds of heresies with the loss of systematised, crystallised, and stabilising truth. Having perused this appropriately bound paperback by the Banner of Truth, we were deeply impressed and refreshed by its relevance. Solemn, forthright, instructive, searching and edifying, it is literally dripping with more than suggestive allusions from the Word of God itself. Most telling comparisons and analogies seem to come naturally to Gurnall. The book is studded with real gems and spiritual

insights into the Scriptures. To help the reader find, what he would like to read, or quote, the book is sectionalised. The print is good, the contents excellent, and all for the very modest sum of £2.95.

F. M.

Notes and Comments

General Synod and Bishop of Durham

A motion was put forward at the General Synod of the Church of England which sought to condemn the views held by the Bishop of Durham on the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. This, however, was defeated by a large majority and reflects the sad state of the Church of England when heretical views are tolerated and defended. Those who propagate these views fail to realise that they must yet give in their account at the judgment seat of Christ.

Christian Broadcasting

Fears had been expressed in different quarters that the new Broadcasting Bill was seeking to curtail religious broadcasting. Mr Mellor, Minister of State at the Home Office did not accept that there was any such restriction apart from editorialising and that there was a prospect of more religious broadcasting with Churches being permitted to own radio stations. So far as Britain is concerned, religious broadcasting has included very little that would be of spiritual profit to anyone. It is not so in the U.S.A., nor in parts of Africa where Reformed Christian teaching may be broadcast. It would be good if the way was opened in Britain also for Christian broadcasting of a truly Reformed kind.

Pope to Visit Hungary

Already full diplomatic relations have been established between Hungary and the Vatican, and the Pope expects to visit that country next year. How quickly the Vatican acts in order to establish itself in a position of influence in that country. As it has already powerful influence in Roman Catholic Poland, so it will seek to establish close relationships with other Eastern European nations. It is to be hoped that with the door open in these countries for the Word of God that the Gospel will spread and truly liberate those who have been so long in bondage. We trust that the Lord will overthrow all the schemes of the Vatican for the furtherance of Roman Catholicism within their borders. There is nothing too hard for the Lord.

The Rushdie Affair

The Rushdie affair continues to occupy the headlines. In the High Court judgment was reserved at the beginning of March on the case brought by the British Muslim Action Front in an attempt to force the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate to issue summonses against Mr Salman Rushdie, author of *The Satanic Verses*, for blasphemous and seditious libel. The House of Lords has had a debate on the Rushdie affair in which the right of free speech was asserted. It was also pointed out that only a minority of Muslims in this country supported the Iranian Muslim death threat against the author. It seems that in this case the freedom of speech contended for means the right to include as many swear words as one pleases in a book. It was pointed out in the Court that the book contains no less than 52 four-letter swear words. Again the right to criticise the false teaching of Mohammedanism is one thing — the way it is done is another. So far as the threats against the life of Salman Rushdie are concerned, the Government is now facing the consequences of allowing into what was a Christian country an influx of immigrants of a very different culture and background, some of whom are still tied to the beliefs of Mohammedan fundamentalism and to all the rigours of its religious laws. How the dilemma is to be resolved is not easy to see, apart from an abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our land, of which the Muslim community would also be partakers.

Dangers in Future Broadcasting

Lord Rees-Mogg, Chairman of the Broadcasting Standards Council warned of the danger of the increase of violence and soft pornographic programmes on British Television over the next five years when he spoke at a Conference in London. He is afraid that, not only will standards slip, but that violent programmes will be brought in deliberately to increase ratings, according to a report in *The Times*. In the same way he thinks there will be an increasing resort to soft pornography. Lord Rees-Mogg who was formerly editor of *The Times* was appointed by Mrs Thatcher as Chairman of the Broadcasting Standards Council. He is a Roman Catholic.

Church Notes

Urgent Appeal for Foreign Mission Staff

At Ingwenya, Zimbabwe, the John Tallach Secondary School will be losing three teachers in April. There is urgent need for teachers having

Mathematics or Science at degree level. Persons not having teacher training will be acceptable.

At Sengera in Kisii Province in Kenya there is urgent need for a doctor or nurse to supervise the setting up and running of the Hospital Clinic which has recently been built.

Again we would urge suitably qualified persons to give prayerful consideration to the above appeal. Anyone willing to respond to these needs should contact the Clerk to the Foreign Missions Committee, Rev. Dr. J. R. Tallach, Free Presbyterian Manse, Raasay, Kyle, IV40 8PB.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Skye: At Portree on 3rd April at 11 a.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 3rd April at 12 noon.

Northern: At Dingwall on 17th April at 2 p.m.

Australia and New Zealand: At Sydney on 4th May at 2.30 p.m.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo on 12th June at 2 p.m.

Western: At Laide on 19th June at 6 p.m.

Oban and Fort William Communion

There will be no Oban Communion but the Fort William Communion will be held on the fifth Sabbath of April (D.V.)

(Rev.) L. MacLeod, Interim Moderator

Northern Presbytery Protest Against Sabbath Postal Collections

The District Head Postmaster

14-16 Queensgate

INVERNESS

Dear Mr Horlor,

I am writing on behalf of our Presbytery to express our sadness and dismay at the re-introduction by the Post Office of collections of mail on the Lord's Day in certain parts of the Highlands and elsewhere, and to protest against this violation of the Fourth Commandment.

The Presbytery rejoiced when this service was withdrawn many years ago. Why it should be thought necessary to re-introduce it in an era of faster and faster communications, we cannot understand. The Presbytery are certain that this is the thin end of the wedge so far as Post Office services on the Lord's Day are concerned and that, if it is not halted now, it will lead to further encroachments on the sanctity of the Lord's Day.

We would remind the Post Office Management that the Fourth Commandment is an integral part of the Moral Law of God and that any under-

mining of this Commandment will inevitably result in further encroachment on the other Commandments. The Ten Commandments are binding on all men everywhere, and every person has an inalienable right to be free from all employment on God's holy day, apart from works of necessity and mercy. Where Sabbath work has been introduced in other areas of employment, it has very often meant that those who have refused to participate in it have been victimised in one way or another. We would urge the abandonment of the present scheme, which we regard as a serious retrograde step and one which God will not honour, but will manifest His displeasure against it.

“Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work.” Exodus 20: 8-10.

If the decision to reintroduce the Sabbath postal collections has been taken at a higher than District level, I would be very grateful if you would forward this letter of protest to the appropriate authority.

On behalf of the Presbytery,

Yours faithfully,

D. B. Macleod, Clerk of Presbytery.

(Since the above letter was written, Lord Hesketh, Under Secretary of State, Environment, intimated in the House of Lords that the Post Office is to re-introduce 'Sunday' collections throughout the country from this autumn.)

Appeal for Historial Material

Mr James MacLeod is currently embarking on a 3-year Ph.D. Research Project at Edinburgh University, studying the Origins and Early History of the Free Presbyterian Church. He would welcome any private letters, notebooks, diaries, scrapbooks, articles etc relating to this topic, also personal or family anecdotes from that time. Anyone willing to help him may forward material to him at 43 Denholm Street, Greenock. All material will be returned in due course.

FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND **CONGREGATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS SENT TO GENERAL TREASURER — 1989**

Places	Sustentation Fund	Home Mission Fund	Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund	Aged and Infirm Ministers', etc., Fund	College, Library and Bookroom Fund	Organisation Fund	General Building Fund	Dominions and Overseas Fund	Outreach Fund	Publications Fund	Centenary Fund	TOTAL
NORTHERN PRESBYTERY												
Aberdeen	£3828.34	£111.67	£133.67	—	—	—	£78.00	—	—	—	—	£4151.68
Bonar Bridge												
Lairg	2347.34	234.34	359.34	—	93.00	—	89.00	90.00	20.00	53.00	—	3286.02
Dornoch												
Rogart	2236.55	265.00	365.00	—	100.00	—	105.00	80.00	—	100.00	—	3251.55
Beauly	4193.00	463.00	537.50	2.00	151.00	—	162.00	316.60	2.00	157.67	100.00	6083.77
Dingwall	600.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	600.00
Fearn	1083.00	162.00	123.00	—	88.00	—	—	68.00	—	62.00	—	1586.00
Tain	1320.00	164.00	154.00	4.00	—	—	4.00	63.00	—	50.00	—	1659.00
Halkirk	30.00	161.00	165.00	—	—	—	52.50	—	—	—	—	408.50
Strathg	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thurso	12000.00	1200.00	2500.00	50.00	500.00	201.42	500.00	500.00	50.00	500.00	500.00	18501.42
Inverness	1135.50	230.00	345.00	25.00	138.50	—	60.00	51.00	—	40.00	—	2025.00
Kinlochbervie	328.00	73.00	92.00	15.00	71.60	—	47.00	41.50	—	25.00	—	693.10
Scourie	3596.01	379.50	459.40	2.00	157.50	—	174.75	160.35	3.00	56.00	—	4988.51
Daviot etc.	1097.00	145.00	357.00	—	16.00	—	185.00	—	16.00	—	—	1816.00
Wick												
	33794.74	3588.51	5590.91	98.00	1365.60	201.42	1457.25	1370.45	91.00	1042.67	600.00	49200.55
SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY												
Dumbarton	3173.68	241.00	328.67	—	106.00	—	154.00	126.00	77.00	75.00	—	4281.35
Edinburgh	2453.68	274.00	301.00	—	131.00	—	112.00	152.00	40.00	62.00	—	3525.68
Fort William	1158.00	38.00	129.00	4.00	22.00	—	17.00	30.67	13.00	27.00	—	1438.67
Glasgow	14054.00	1744.00	2484.50	29.00	864.50	—	790.00	875.50	597.50	724.00	—	22193.00
Dunoon	94.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	94.00
Greenock	2207.33	201.00	398.00	—	43.50	—	62.00	62.00	20.00	46.00	—	3039.83
Kames	616.00	126.00	220.00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	962.00
London	4707.00	322.33	1114.99	—	195.00	—	221.00	193.50	144.00	167.67	75.00	7140.49
Oban	1403.00	113.00	306.00	3.00	13.00	—	101.00	18.00	8.00	19.00	—	1984.00
Stirling	543.00	137.00	107.00	—	113.00	24.00	15.00	41.00	79.00	19.00	—	1078.00
Perth	460.00	77.00	91.00	—	4.00	—	3.00	30.00	—	4.00	—	669.00
Dundee	1000.00	65.00	215.00	—	—	—	12.00	50.00	—	20.00	—	1362.00
Barnoldswick	1300.00	200.00	278.00	50.00	75.00	50.00	150.00	125.00	65.00	25.00	—	2318.00
Larne	1700.00	100.00	250.00	—	25.00	—	44.00	48.00	29.00	25.00	—	2221.00
	34869.69	3668.33	6223.16	86.00	1592.00	74.00	1681.00	1751.67	1072.50	1213.67	75.00	52307.02
OUTER ISLES PRESBYTERY												
Achmore	865.00	57.00	59.00	—	20.00	—	20.00	20.00	31.00	23.00	—	1095.00
Stornoway	11468.30	696.00	1085.60	—	310.50	—	300.00	350.00	254.50	309.50	—	14774.40
North Uist	4020.04	596.00	363.00	—	109.30	—	108.75	97.00	—	—	—	5294.09
Breasclete	552.00	160.00	160.00	—	70.00	—	45.00	75.00	58.00	—	—	1120.00
North Tolsta	6980.00	491.00	507.80	—	230.00	—	242.50	253.50	223.50	221.00	250.00	9399.30
North Harris	3791.10	382.00	308.00	—	261.00	—	93.00	102.00	76.50	95.50	—	5109.10

South Harris	6921.00	707.50	569.50	—	—	—	203.50	192.00	154.50	140.50	—	8886.50
Ness	2367.00	138.00	150.00	—	40.00	—	49.00	53.00	40.00	35.00	—	2872.00
Uig	3000.00	75.00	150.00	—	40.00	—	130.00	—	80.00	50.00	50.00	3575.00
	39964.44	3302.50	3352.90	—	1080.80	—	1191.75	1142.50	918.00	874.50	300.00	52127.39
WESTERN PRESBYTERY												
Applecross	1924.94	204.00	190.90	3.00	103.00	—	96.88	23.05	50.20	87.60	50.00	2738.50
Gairloch	6141.20	399.30	374.40	—	138.10	11.50	126.20	152.50	85.70	171.10	—	7600.00
Laide	4129.00	228.00	478.00	8.00	92.00	—	136.00	105.00	33.00	93.00	100.00	5402.00
Kyle of Lochalsh	686.00	47.00	51.00	—	—	—	35.00	—	—	—	—	819.00
Plockton	43.00	1.00	3.00	—	—	—	3.00	—	—	—	—	50.00
Lochbroom	5000.47	443.11	492.11	—	175.00	—	162.00	205.00	3.00	166.00	250.00	6896.69
Lochcarron	2600.50	201.00	279.00	5.00	81.00	—	106.00	69.00	66.00	73.00	50.00	3530.50
Lochinver	3000.00	447.00	549.00	—	133.00	—	109.00	119.00	—	118.00	—	4475.00
Stoer & Drumbeg	1464.67	318.00	531.00	—	50.00	—	131.00	66.00	5.00	75.00	—	2640.67
Shieldaig	2750.02	60.00	230.00	—	40.00	—	40.00	60.00	—	40.00	50.00	3270.02
	27744.80	2348.41	3178.41	16.00	812.10	11.50	945.08	799.55	242.90	823.70	500.00	37422.45
SKYE PRESBYTERY												
Bracadale	1170.00	118.50	128.00	—	62.00	10.00	65.50	25.00	27.00	120.00	40.00	1766.00
Strath	1451.50	103.00	217.50	—	85.00	—	46.00	37.00	34.67	54.00	—	2028.67
Flashadder	361.00	110.00	68.00	—	38.60	—	—	45.00	—	48.20	15.00	685.80
Glendale	2622.00	205.00	147.00	—	92.50	—	55.00	128.00	41.00	82.50	40.00	3413.00
Vatten	1536.34	125.66	118.67	—	30.34	5.00	48.00	42.00	36.00	34.50	—	1976.51
Waterish	75.00	40.00	40.00	10.00	10.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	—	8.00	—	209.00
Portree	11206.90	1413.00	1071.67	9.00	194.00	100.00	241.00	234.00	109.00	195.00	100.00	14873.57
Raasay	5500.00	296.68	361.68	—	100.00	—	115.50	139.00	—	97.00	50.00	6679.86
Staffin	3217.15	194.00	224.00	—	88.00	—	66.00	90.50	73.50	87.50	—	4040.65
	27139.89	2605.84	2376.52	19.00	700.44	125.00	645.00	748.50	321.17	726.70	245.00	35673.06
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND PRESBYTERY												
Wellington	—	—	357.05	—	15.00	—	—	73.79	—	73.00	—	576.84
Gisborne	—	—	357.05	—	73.00	—	—	73.79	—	73.00	—	576.84
Auckland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	209.62	—	—	—	209.62
Grafton	—	—	333.47	—	—	—	—	142.12	—	—	—	480.59
Sydney	—	—	—	—	40	—	—	—	—	—	—	40
	—	—	1409.47	35.00	108.40	—	16.00	506.15	—	73.00	—	2148.02
CANADIAN PRESBYTERY												
Vancouver	—	—	1391.22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1391.22
Toronto	—	—	112.02	—	77.24	—	—	104.25	—	—	—	294.11
Chesley	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	576.82	—	—	—	576.82
	—	—	1508.24	—	—	—	—	681.67	—	—	—	2262.15
SUMMARY												
NORTHERN PRESBYTERY	33794.74	3588.51	5590.91	98.00	1365.60	201.42	1457.25	1370.45	91.00	1042.67	600.00	49200.55
SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY	34869.69	3668.33	6223.16	86.00	1592.00	74.00	1681.00	1751.67	1072.50	1213.67	75.00	52307.02
OUTER ISLES PRESBYTERY	39954.44	3302.50	3352.90	—	1080.80	—	1191.75	1142.50	918.00	824.50	300.00	52127.39
WESTERN PRESBYTERY	27744.80	2348.41	3178.41	16.00	312.10	11.50	945.08	799.55	242.90	823.70	500.00	37422.48
SKYE PRESBYTERY	27139.89	2605.84	2376.52	19.00	700.44	125.00	645.00	748.50	321.17	726.70	245.00	35673.06
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND PRESBYTERY	—	—	1409.47	35.00	108.40	—	16.00	506.15	—	73.00	—	2148.02
CANADIAN PRESBYTERY	—	—	1503.24	—	77.24	—	—	681.67	—	—	—	2262.15
	163513.56	15512.59	23634.61	254.00	5736.58	411.92	5936.08	7000.49	2645.24	4754.24	1720.00	231150.64

Acknowledgement of Donations

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

Trinitarian Bible Society: Breasclete Congr., £200; Lewis Friends £1000; Staffin Congr. £136.

Foreign Mission Fund: Anon., £300; Lewis Friends £1000; D.M. £20; J.V.S. per N.M. Z\$1000; Larne £25.

Bibles for Eastern Europe: Anon., £50; Anon., Friend, Broadford per D.A.R. £150.

Magazine Fund: Anon., for Free Distribution £300.

Dominions and Overseas Fund: Donation from Auckland towards next Deputy to N.Z. fare £436.82.

Home of Rest, Inverness: Friend, £230; Miss Campbell £10.

The Treasurers of the following Congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:-

Kinlochbervie: From the Estate of the late Mrs Johan MacKay, Innes View, Kinlochbervie £21,051.95 for Kinlochbervie General Purposes Fund per Munro & Noble, 26 Church Street, Inverness.

Larne: For Congregation Fund (in plate) £25; Anon., Inverness per G.G.H., £10.

Laide: Anon., (in plate) £20 for Sust. Fund; Anon., for Car Fund per Rev. D. A. R. £70; Anon., £5; Anon., £5; Anon., £2 — Gairloch Friends per Rev. D.A.R.; Anon., £5; Anon., £3 both for Bibles for Eastern Block per Rev. D.A.R.; Anon., £10 for Bibles for Russia; Mrs J. M., Mellon Charles £10 for Sust. Fd.; Anon., (in plate) £3; F.M., Inverness per A.D.R. £20; From a Friend Ps. 107: 1-8 £30 per Rev. D.A.R.; Friends, Ardishlaig per Rev. D.A.R. £20, all for Bibles for Russia; Anon., Laide for Sust. Fund per Rev. D.A.R. £20; Friend, Gairloch £20; Friend, Gairloch £10 per C. Ross. Friend, Cove per Rev. D.A.R. £20; Anon., Bibles for Eastern Block, Inverness Postmark £20; Friend, Raasay £25 for Bibles for Eastern Europe, both per Rev. D.A.R.

North Harris: M. K. MacD., £10 for Door Coll. per R.M.C.; A Friend of the Cause £100 for Church Funds per J.F.M.; Friend, Stockinish £10 for Door Coll., per R.M.C.

Raasay: Friend of the Cause £40, where most needed per M.D. MacKay; Anon., £20; envelope in plate £20, both for Manse Central Heating.