

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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June 2026

Vol 131 • No 6

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

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

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

Published by The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (Scottish Charity Number SC003545). Subscriptions and changes of address to be sent to the General Treasurer, Mr W Campbell (for contact details, see above). The subscription year begins in January. Prices are on back cover. One month's notice is required for change of address. Queries about delivery of the magazines should be sent to the General Treasurer, not the printer.

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

Deadline for sending material to the Editor: The beginning of the month previous to publication.

The Gaelic Supplement (quarterly): Editor: Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546. Available free on request.

Youth Magazine: *The Young People's Magazine*. Editor: Rev K D Macleod BSc.

Communions

January: First Sabbath: Nkayi; **Fourth:** Auckland, Inverness, New Canaan.

February: Second Sabbath: Dingwall; **Third:** Stornoway; Carterton; **Fourth:** Zenka.

March: First Sabbath: Sydney, Tarbert; **Second:** Ness, Portree; **Third:** Halkirk; **Fourth:** Barnoldswick. **Fifth:** Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

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

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo.

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Volume 131

June 2026

Number 6

Those Whose Strength Is in God

The people of God are repeatedly declared in Scripture to be blessed. Yet when they are spoken of as “blessed”, they are also described in many other ways. One of these is to be found in words addressed to God in Psalm 84:5: “Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee” – they are not trusting in themselves or in any other person, however powerful, but in God. God is absolutely trustworthy, and that is something *not* true of any other being. God’s people do trust in Him, for the salvation of their souls particularly, but also for their other needs. Again the Psalmist expresses himself at the end of this Psalm: “O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee”.

In themselves, believers are weak; yet Paul could say, “I can do all things”. Yet these words are only true if we take into account what follows: “through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil 4:13). For instance, he could only preach the gospel faithfully because of the grace that was given him for the sake of Christ, working in him by the Holy Spirit. And how was it possible for Paul and Silas to sing praises to God at midnight in the inner prison in Philippi? Again, it was through divine grace. They were men whose strength was in God, not in themselves.

We are also told that they prayed in the inner prison. What for? Quite possibly, for deliverance from the stocks into which they were thrust. But they knew that this request could only be granted if it was according to God’s will. We might think of them praying for their release so that they might be made a means of doing further spiritual good among the people in Philippi, beyond the prison doors. But the spiritual blessing that, by God’s grace, they were to be the instruments of, was the salvation of the jailer and his family. They had no power to change the heart of the jailer or of anyone else. They could not regenerate him, they could not forgive his sins, they could not change his attitude to God; they did not have the power to do so.

Yet the words that they spoke to him were the means of bringing about these blessings: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31). They knew their powerlessness to bring about these changes, but they also knew God’s power to change the hearts of the

jailer and his family. And they knew it was their duty to answer the jailer's question with the gospel call to believe.

We read further that Paul and Silas "spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house"; they gave him further teaching – no doubt especially about sin, and about salvation through the One who came into the world to save sinners. The result was that the jailer "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house" (Acts 16:31,34). He was saved, not by human power; Paul and Silas were only the instruments, whose words the Holy Spirit applied effectively to the souls of the jailer and his household.

Supposing Paul was walking along a road alone, with no one within sight to tempt him. Could he keep himself from sinning? Though unseen, the devil could tempt and, what is more, his own heart could lead him astray. That was why he had to cry from the depths of his heart: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Though he felt great weakness in himself, he knew that his strength was in the Lord. Trusting in his faithful, covenant God, he went on to add, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 7:24,25).

In the passage where these verses appear, Matthew Henry's *commentary* notes that Paul here "complains of the remainder of indwelling corruption, which he here speaks of, to show that the law is insufficient to justify even a regenerate man, that the best man in the world has enough in him to condemn him if God should deal with him according to the law. This is not the fault of the law, but of our own corrupt nature, which cannot fulfil the law." Henry later says, "Had I been required to speak of Paul, I should have said, O blessed man that thou art, an ambassador of Christ, a favourite of heaven, a spiritual father of thousands!

"But in his own account [of himself], he was a wretched man because of the corruption of [his] nature, because he was not so good as he [wished to] be. [He] had not yet attained, neither was already perfect. Thus miserably does he complain, 'Who shall deliver me?' . . . The remainders of indwelling sin are a very grievous burden to a gracious soul."

Paul could not deliver himself. But he knew that he could be delivered through Jesus Christ and, by divine grace, he looked to the Saviour and then said, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord". So must today's believers look to Christ for deliverance from the power of every kind of sin. And they are to thank God also for the provision of the means through which that deliverance will finally be completed, when beyond death they will be brought into the perfect paradise where there is no sin. And there they will have a complete understanding that their salvation was all of grace, from beginning to end. In themselves, there had been only weakness, but in God

there was strength; there was sufficient strength to supply all their needs.

Take Jehoshaphat as a further example, when he was attacked by, among other tribes, the Moabites and the Ammonites. He confessed his weakness: “We have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do”. Yet he was not in despair; he did not surrender. Instead he added, “but our eyes are upon Thee” (2 Chr 20:12). Jehoshaphat had no strength in himself but he trusted in the Lord God, in whom he had, in God’s mercy, believed for the salvation of his soul. He knew that in the Lord there was infinite strength for every conceivable set of circumstances. And the Lord did not fail Jehoshaphat; He gave His servant a wonderful deliverance, and it was demonstrated once more that “blessed is the man whose strength is in” God.

Circumstances vary, and the needs of God’s people differ, but if they feel their need and cast themselves on the One who sits on the throne of heaven – making continual intercession for them – they will have an absolutely suitable answer to their cry. The answer may not be according to the precise terms of the request, as was the case with Paul when he sought deliverance from the thorn in his flesh, but the answer was better than the one he looked for. The Lord gave him the promise, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor 12:9).

While the people of God are spared in this world, they will seek to go on in the strength of the Lord, even when they are “old and grey-headed”, as a psalmist expressed himself. And they may become increasingly dependent on the Lord *alone* as the years go by, which is how it should be. Thus this Psalmist also stated, “I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of Thine only” (Ps 71:16). How good it is for the people of God to look less and less to themselves and more and more to Christ! Let them remember that it is *for the sake of Christ* that “God shall supply all [their] need” (Phil 4:19).

The blessedness of God’s people can be summed up in the words of Asaph to his God: “Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory” (Ps 73:24). The Good Shepherd will guide His sheep through this world by God’s Word, and at last He will bring them home to heaven to be in His presence for ever.

But are we among them? If not, we cannot expect to enjoy the blessedness that belongs to the people of God when this life is over. We need to put away all confidence in ourselves, and in every other human power, and to look, only and altogether, to the redemption purchased by Christ. These benefits He distributes to those who have no strength in themselves and are made able, by God’s grace, to trust in Him alone. Salvation *is* all of grace.

The Lord Helping His People¹

A Sermon by *Thomas Boston*

1 Samuel 7:12. *Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.*

If we look back in this Book, we find Israel brought to a very low state. By the sword of the Philistines, 30 000 footmen were slain, and by the sword of the Lord, 50 070 “men were smitten”. After this the ark was brought to Kirjathjearim, a city of the Levites in the tribe of Judah. There it remained till David brought it up. It was 20 years there before the children of Israel lamented after the Lord.

Now Israel was in a great strait; the Philistines were strong and could not be resisted. God was angry and would not be entreated; they lamented after Him but did not find Him. In this sad state, Samuel advised them to deep humiliation and complete reformation. They fell in with his advice in some measure. They gathered for humiliation and fasting in Mizpeh, a city on the borders of Benjamin and Judah, lying in the heart of the country, and so it was proper for such a meeting. The Philistines were alarmed at this, looking on it as a rendezvous of rebellion, and so they brought an army against Israel. It was good they were found at their duty, which was a good pledge of the Lord’s help. While Samuel was sacrificing and praying, the Philistines drew near to battle. God Himself took the cause in hand and thundered against the enemy, so that Israel had nothing more to do except to pursue.

The text gives us an account of the setting up of a monument to this great victory and glorious deliverance. The monument set up was a stone. A stone is most durable and was suitable for perpetuating the memory of this glorious victory. The person who set it up was Samuel – that is, by his order and direction. He was their prophet and their judge. By means of him especially the victory was procured, and he was careful to set up this monument of thankfulness. It was set up where they got the deliverance and near to where they prayed for it. We have also the name which was put upon the monument, Ebenezer. “Ebenezer” – that is, *the stone of help* – includes a reference not only to the victory, but that it was obtained, not by them, but by the Lord.

We have the reason of the name: “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us”. It is a grateful acknowledgment of the Lord’s help in the past, to raise their confidence in Him for the time to come. He has helped us and shown Him-

¹A sermon preached in Ettrick on 4 May 1707, the Sabbath after his induction there. It is taken from Boston’s *Works*, vol 4 and has been edited.

self on our side; He not only has helped us to bear our burdens, but He has taken them off our shoulders and wrought for us.

Doctrine. It is the duty of the Lord's people to keep the memorial of the experience they have had of the Lord helping them.

I shall discuss this point under two general heads: (1.) The Lord helping His people. (2.) Keeping up the memorial of the experiences they had of His helping them.

1. The Lord helping His people. Here I shall answer two questions: (1.) How does the Lord help His people? (2.) Why does He help His people?

(1.) *How does the Lord help His people?* [1.] Sometimes the Lord helps His people *by working all* for them – they themselves contribute nothing to their deliverance. Moses said to the people. “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show you today; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.” Often the children of God may be brought to this: they do nothing for themselves, but commit their cause to God and depend on Him. But even then their ease is not despair: “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass” (Ps 37:5). Thy Lord can do all things, said Luther to someone concerned about a future event.

[2.] Sometimes the Lord *assists His people in working*. They try to deliver themselves in God's way, and He fits them to act, and He blesses their exertions, crowning them with success. As Paul said, “I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me”. In this, God's help is to be acknowledged, for all depends on Him. For “except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it”. We must be at our work and look to God for His assistance. Pray and labour.

[3.] Sometimes God helps His people *by appointing means*. Thus in the case of Hezekiah, Isaiah said, “Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover”. When God intends to help His people and to make use of means for it, He can easily bring them about and raise them up. Sometimes no way appears for their help, but the Lord brings about means unexpectedly, so that “when the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream”. If He intends to have His people brought out of Babylon, He raises up Cyrus for that purpose. If Elijah must be fed in his hiding place, the ravens shall be employed rather than he will suffer hunger. And often their help comes by such unexpected means that they must say as Jacob did of his son's venison. “How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the Lord thy God brought it unto me.”

[4.] Sometimes *without means*. “Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” God is not bound to means, as He can work without them. A word from the Lord will bring about His people’s help. He can speak peace to them, and so create it. And often when He has tried His people’s patience, by frustrating the means used, He will bring about their help without the means.

[5.] Sometimes *by contrary means*, as the Lord cured the blind man by laying clay on his eyes. God does not only bring light after darkness, but out of it. The troubling of the waters of Bethesda made them healing waters; and the whale that swallowed up Jonah was the ship in which he came ashore. Christ’s going away filled the disciples’ hearts with sorrow. “Nevertheless,” said He, “I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you”. The promise guides the ship of providence and will make a cross wind drive them to the harbour.

“Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.” For “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose”.

(2.) *Why does the Lord help His people?* [1.] Because they are *in covenant with Him*. There is an offensive and defensive league between Christ and His people. They have common friends and common enemies. Hence all the attributes of God are engaged for them, and for their help. The promise is made: “He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him”. Thus the power of God is made the ground of Abraham’s comfort by virtue of their covenant (Gen 17:1,2).

[2.] Because of *their special relation to Him*. Christ is the believer’s Head. Hence if the foot is hurt, the Head in heaven cries out, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” (Acts 9:4). He who is their maker is their husband, their father and elder brother; in a word, they are one with Him, one spirit. This is the ground of sympathy between Christ and His people, and secures help for them. “For he that toucheth [them] toucheth the apple of His eye.”

[3.] Because they *look to Him and trust in Him* for their help. Psalm 18 has in it a great many blessed promises, but see to whom they belong. The Lord “is a buckler to all those that trust in Him”. The Lord gives this for the reason why He would help and deliver Ebedmelech the Ethiopian: “because thou hast put thy trust in Me, saith the Lord”. It lies upon the honour of God to help those who trust in Him. Trust in a sincere man will engage him to answer the trust put in him, and God will see that those who trust in Him shall not be ashamed.

[4.] Because the Lord brings His people into straits *so that He may have*

the glory of helping them and that they may get more experience of His kindness. A good friend is best known in adversity, and the Lord will let His people's case grow darker till it is nearly past hope. Then He will arise. "For the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeeth that their power is gone." For the lower they are, the greater is the glory of God in delivering them, "For great is Thy mercy toward me", says David, "and Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell." And none have such rich experiences of the Lord's goodness as they that are most in straits (Hos 2:14).

2. Keeping up the memorial of their experiences of His help. Three things demand our attention: (1.) What is it to keep up this memorial? (2.) Which of these experiences of the Lord's helping should be kept in memory? (3.) Why should we keep up such memorials?

(1.) *What is it to keep up this memorial?* [1.] It implies *observing the providences* we meet, so that we may be helped in the course of our life. If the thing itself is not observed, we cannot keep up the memory of it. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." Many times the Lord helps when we are sleeping and do not observe it.

[2.] *Discerning the Lord's hand* in the help we receive. Alas, men are ready to sacrifice to their own net and burn incense to their drag; it requires wisdom to see the hand of the Lord in the good things we meet. "For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal."

[3.] *Laying up these experiences and recording them*, if not in a book, yet in a faithful memory. "And all they that heard them [the things said of John the Baptist at his birth] laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him." Many, instead of laying such things up, lay them down in the grave of forgetfulness; and instead of setting up a stone, lay a stone upon them, burying them out of sight. They forget that God remembered them in their low estate. "My people", God says, "have forgotten Me, days without number." But if these experiences were carefully laid up, the former part of our life would help the latter, and the longer we live the richer we would grow. As in wars, former success encourages to future exertions, so it is with Christian warfare. "Thy servant", said David, "slew both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God."

(2.) *Which of these experiences of the Lord's helping should be kept in memory?* [1.] We should record *the timing or seasonableness of them*. Weight

often lies on this very circumstance – that the help came at such a time and not another is worthy to be remembered. Many instances of this kind occur in Scripture (Gen 45:25,26, Jdg 7:13). The Church remembers the time of her deliverance (Ps 126:1). The Lord's help always comes seasonably: though not at our time, yet at His time, which is the best. This will let us see the frame of spirit in which the help overtook us, sometimes when we were looking for it, and sometimes when we were not.

[2.] *The effects of these experiences on our spirits*; how we are affected with them when they come. The Church says, "Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing". Many times the Lord helps His people in such a manner that the experience of gladness fills them with shame, removes their doubts and fears, proves their unbelief to be a false prophet, makes them resolve never to distrust God again, and fills them with thankfulness (Is 38:10,12; Pss 73:22,23; 106:11,12). How useful should this be to the Christian afterwards!

[3.] *Their harmony and agreement with the promise*. If help does not come by virtue of a promise, little use can be made of it in this way; and in the absence of recording this, many of the Lord's people do often question their experiences. Experiences are the bread which the saints have to feed on in their mournful hours; but the promise is the staff and stay of this bread, without which there will be no nourishment in it. Now as face answers to face in a mirror, so God's works answer His words. "As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts". Thus David records his experience, saying, "Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O Lord, according unto Thy Word". The promises in the Bible are all written over in the experiences of the saints. "There failed not ought", said Joshua, "of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."

[4.] *The agreement with their prayers* (Gen 24:45). What are the Christian's experiences but returns of prayers. Such was that recorded in the text. This seems to be the ground of that conclusion: "By this I know that Thou favour-est me, because Mine enemy doth not triumph over me". It is of great importance to notice this, for a mercy that is an answer to prayer is a double mercy; and mercies that are obtained by prayer are enjoyed with thankfulness, as in the text. But there is need of wisdom here, for sometimes God answers prayer, not with the blessing that was desired but with something as good. So instead of removing Paul's thorn in the flesh, God said to him: "My grace is sufficient for thee".

[5.] *Even the very place of our experiences should be recorded*. The stone was set up where the victory was obtained. There are some golden spots on earth where the Lord has entertained His people, and the very remembrance

of the time has refreshed them afterwards. "I will remember thee," says David, "from the land of Jordan and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar" (Ps 42:6). And the Lord loves to have His people remember these blessed places (Gen 31:13; 35:1).

(3.) *Why should we keep up such memorials?* [1.] We owe this *to God* by way of obedience. When we meet experiences, He calls us to set up our Ebenezer. We are to "remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgements of His mouth". It is very grieving to the Spirit of God to let these things slip; and God complains of His people for it (Jer 2:31,32). We owe it to Him by way of gratitude. Acknowledgment and the remembrance of the benefit is the tribute we owe to God for His goodness. They called the stone *Ebenezer* to acknowledge that it was not they who got the victory, but God who got it for them. O monstrous ingratitude to forget experiences!

We owe it to Him also by way of compliance with His purpose in giving experience of His help to His people. God intends His people more comfort by a mercy than the mercy itself, considered alone. He intends it as a ground to hope for more. He gives the valley of Achor for a door of hope. But how can they comply with this purpose unless they remember them? "Thou brakest", says Asaph, "the head of the leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness." The heads of the leviathan are the princes of Pharaoh. God in that help, which He gave to His people at the Red Sea, would have them not only feast themselves on it for the present, but carefully lay it up in their memories, that their faith might not lack support in the wilderness.

[2.] Believers owe this *to themselves* by way of their interest in God's help. If they would consult their own advantage, they would not let their experiences slip. For former experiences of the Lord's help are very supporting to the soul in a dark night. Sometimes, when a Christian's spiritual rest is broken, it is useful for him to read the records of his experience. Sometimes a little piece of writing is found in a man's study that saves his estate and keeps him out of prison. In such times "we should remember the years of the right hand of the Most High". This may revive our hopes.

These experiences are pledges of further mercies. Some promises have their day of payment in this life, others afterwards. The performing of the former is an earnest given to faith to look for the other. "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Every mercy a child of God receives may be called Joseph, for the Lord shall add another to it.²

²A reference to: "She called his name Joseph; and said, The Lord shall *add* to me another son" (Gen 30:24).

It is not so with other people, and the two reasons shall be found in these words: "O continue Thy lovingkindness unto them that know Thee; and Thy righteousness to the upright in heart". The mercies bestowed on the Lord's people flow from solid love, and love knows no enemy. The son abides in the house; the servant goes away at the end of his term. The saint's mercies are made over to him by promise.

It is remarkable that David perceived that the Lord had established him in the kingdom, by his having prospered till that time (2 Sam 5:12). Saul too prospered at first but was not established; the reason was that there was a special promise that David would be established. The word of promise gives not only bread to the eater, but seed to the sower. These experiences then are good arguments in prayer. We find the saints often pleading with God on the basis of former experience. "Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto Thee. For Thou hast delivered my soul from death." It is not the way to plead with men, but it is a notable way to plead with God, for He is unchangeable; whom He loves, He loves to the end.

[3]. We owe this *to others*. It is a duty to communicate our experiences of the Lord's goodness to our fellow Christians. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." But how can we do this, unless we record them, and keep up the memory of them. It must be very encouraging to distressed Christians to hear that others have been plunged in the same or similar depths, and yet they have been delivered. "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee, in a time when Thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters, they shall not come nigh unto him."

Application 1. To Christians, whose work it is to look to the Lord for His help, being conscious of their own weakness.

1. *Record your experiences*, keep up the memory of them. It is a soul-enriching trade to gather experiences. It makes a strong Christian. It makes one ready to suffer for Christ and to venture for Him.

2. *Use your experiences for strengthening your faith and hope* for the time to come, in the promise of God. And to help you to this, take these notes: the same God still lives that helped you formerly; His arm and power are as strong as ever. Doubting the Lord's willingness to help is a sad leak in the ship, but it will never sink till faith lets go its hold of the power of God.

Though awful diseases break out in the people of God in times of affliction, yet He will still perform His word to them. He will save His people notwithstanding (Ps 116:11,12). If it were not so, we could not have remained out of hell till this time. The Psalmist makes this a ground of hope to others in Psalm 31:22-24. If you are a Christian, God has delivered you

from greater difficulties than any in which you now are, He has delivered your soul from death.

Objection. But though God will deliver in one difficulty, yet He lets a man fall in another. *Answer.* Even affliction itself, a valley of Achor, may be a door of hope, a door by which a great mercy may enter. So was Joseph's prison and Daniel's den. A debt may be paid either with money, or with something equal in value. If God does not take away the trouble, but gives strength to bear it; if He does not remove the sickness, but removes the sick saint to heaven, he is no loser.

Application 2. To all. Go to God for help in all situations. Let God be your helper. Consider:

1. You have many strong enemies. You are not able to grapple with Satan, the world and the flesh. These will ruin you if God does not help you.

2. He is a present help. He is not far off. He can hear your cry. Men may perish when help is far away.

3. He is willing to help.

4. He is able to help you in all cases and at all times. When friends can do nothing but close your eyes and prepare for the funeral, Christ can take your soul to His Father's glory and present it there with exceeding joy.

David Brainerd¹

15. Preaching Christ

On a Sabbath in May 1746, Brainerd preached “both parts of the day from Revelation 3:20: ‘Behold, I stand at the door’. There appeared some affectionate melting [of soul] towards the conclusion of the forenoon [service], and one or two instances of fresh awakening.” Between the services, he took the opportunity to speak to several people “in a more private way, on the kindness and patience of the blessed Redeemer in standing and knocking, in continuing His gracious calls to sinners, who had long neglected and abused His grace; which seemed to take some effect” on some of them.²

At the afternoon service, Brainerd adds, “divine truths were attended with solemnity, and with some tears, although there was not that powerful

¹A further part of a longer version of a paper given at the 2024 Theological Conference. Last month's article described a remarkable conversion.

²Jonathan Edwards, editor, *The Diary and Journal of David Brainerd*, Banner of Truth Trust, 2023 edition, p 352. Page references in brackets, in the body of the text, are to this edition of the *Diary and Journal*.

awakening and quickening influence which in times past has been common in our assemblies. The appearance of the audience under divine truths was comparatively discouraging; and I was ready to fear that God was about to withdraw the blessed influence of His Spirit from us.

The next day, the missionary visited some of his people and preached to them from Acts 20:18,19. He tried “to rectify their notions about religious affections; showing them, on the one hand, the desirableness of religious affection, tenderness and fervent engagement in the worship and service of God, when such affection flows from a true spiritual discovery of divine glories, from a justly affecting sense of the transcendent excellency and perfections of the blessed God – a view of the glory and loveliness of the great Redeemer”. He showed them also “that such views of divine things will naturally excite us to ‘serve the Lord with many tears’, with much affection and fervency, and yet ‘with all humility of mind’”.

He noted, on the other hand, “the sinfulness of seeking after high affections immediately and for their own sakes; that is, the sinfulness of making them the object of our eye and heart . . . when the glory of God ought to be” the chief matter. He “showed them that if the heart [is] directly and chiefly fixed on God, and the soul engaged to glorify Him, some degree of religious affection will be the effect . . . of it. But to seek after affection directly and chiefly, to have the heart principally set upon that, is to place it in the room of God and His glory” (p 353).

In early June, William Tennent, a well-known Presbyterian minister, invited Brainerd to assist at a communion season in his congregation. Most of Brainerd’s people came also, who had recently been to the Lord’s table at home. Some of them were again very much moved with a sense of the love of Christ – though less so than when they had observed the sacrament in their own congregation. Some of those who only looked on were moved to see Brainerd’s people, who had recently lived “without hope and without God in the world”, coming “near to God as His professing people”. Some others, Brainerd was told, “were awakened . . . apprehending the danger they were in of being themselves finally cast out, while they saw others . . . preparing, and hopefully prepared in some good measure, to ‘sit down in the kingdom of God’” (p 355).

On the Monday, many of Brainerd’s people met early in the morning in a quiet place in the woods. There they prayed, sang and talked together about the things of God, probably especially what they had heard during the communion services. Afterwards they attended the final services and then set off for home, “rejoicing for all the goodness of God they had seen and felt”. Brainerd felt that “this appeared to be a profitable” time and that to see

some of his people “communicating at the Lord’s table, with others of God’s people, was, I trust, for the honour of God and the interest of religion in these parts, as numbers, I have reason to think, were quickened by means of it” (p 356).

Later that week, Brainerd baptised three adults and two children. One of them was an old woman of whom he had previously spoken in his *Journal*. He wrote “that she had now given him a rational . . . and satisfactory account of the remarkable change she experienced some months after the beginning of her concern, which, I must say, appeared to be the genuine operations of the divine Spirit, so far as I am capable of judging”. He found that he could not bring out any coherent account of her experience by questioning her; “yet when I let her alone to go on with her own story, she could give a very distinct and particular relation of the many and various exercises of soul she had experienced. And I have great reason to hope she is born anew in her old age” (pp 356-357).

Afterwards he completed the year for which he had been asked to keep a journal. His final paragraph reads: “This day makes up a complete year from the first time of my preaching to these Indians in New Jersey. What amazing things has God wrought in this space of time for these poor people! What a surprising change appears in their tempers and behaviours! How are morose and savage pagans in this short space of time transformed into agreeable, affectionate and humble Christians; and their drunken and pagan howlings turned into devout and fervent prayers and praises to God! They who were sometimes darkness are now become light in the Lord. May they walk as children of the light and of the day! And now to Him that is of power to establish them according to the gospel and the preaching of Christ – to God only wise be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever and ever. Amen” (p 357).

The *Journal* is followed by a number of appendices. The first section of the first of these summarises “the doctrine [that Brainerd] preached to the Indians”. It reads as follows:

“Before I conclude the present *Journal*, I would make a few general remarks upon what to me appears worthy of notice, relating to the continued work of grace among my people. And, first, I cannot but take notice that I have, in the general, ever since my first coming among these Indians in New Jersey, been favoured with that assistance which to me is uncommon in preaching Christ crucified, and making Him the centre and mark to which all my discourses among them were directed.

“It was the principal scope and drift of all my discourses to this people, for several months together (after having taught them something [about] the being and perfections of God, His creation of man in a state of rectitude and

happiness, and the obligations mankind were thence under to love and honour Him), to lead them into an acquaintance with their deplorable state by nature, as fallen creatures: their inability to extricate and deliver themselves from it; the utter insufficiency of any external reformation and amendments of life, or of any religious performances they were capable of, while in this state, to bring them into the favour of God and interest them in His eternal mercy. And thence to show them their absolute need of Christ to redeem and save them from the misery of their fallen state, [and] to open His all-sufficiency and willingness to save the chief of sinners.

“The freeness and riches of divine grace, [were] proposed ‘without money, and without price,’ to all that will accept the offer. And thereupon to press them, without delay, to betake themselves to Him, under a sense of their misery and undone state, for relief and everlasting salvation. And to show them the abundant encouragement the gospel proposes to needy, perishing and helpless sinners, in order to engage them so to do. These things I repeatedly and largely insisted upon from time to time.

“And I have oftentimes remarked with admiration, that whatever subject I have been treating upon, after having spent time sufficient to explain and illustrate the truths contained therein, I have been naturally and easily led to Christ as the substance of every subject. If I treated on the being and glorious perfections of God, I was thence naturally led to discourse of Christ as the only way to the Father. If I attempted to open [up] the deplorable misery of our fallen state, it was natural from thence to show the necessity of Christ to undertake for us, to atone for our sins, and to redeem us from the power of them. If I taught the commands of God and showed our violation of them, this brought me in the most easy and natural way to speak of and recommend the Lord Jesus Christ as One who had ‘magnified the law’ we had broken, and who was ‘become the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth’. And never did I find so much freedom and assistance in making all the various lines of my discourses meet together and centre in Christ, as I have frequently done among these Indians.

“Sometimes when I have had thoughts of offering but a few words upon some particular subject, and saw no occasion, nor indeed much room, for any considerable enlargement, there has at unawares appeared such a fountain of gospel-grace shining forth in, or naturally resulting from, a just explanation of it, and Christ has seemed in such a manner to be pointed out as the substance of what I was considering and explaining, that I have been drawn in a way not only easy and natural, proper and pertinent, but almost unavoidable, to discourse of Him, either in regard of His undertaking, incarnation, satisfaction, admirable fitness for the work of man’s redemption, or the infinite

need that sinners stand in, of an interest in Him; which has opened the way for a continual strain of gospel invitations to perishing souls, to come empty and naked, weary and heavy laden, and cast themselves upon them.

“And as I have been remarkably influenced and assisted to dwell upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation by Him, in the general current of my discourses here, and have been at times surprisingly furnished with pertinent matter relating to Him, and the [purpose] of His incarnation; so I have been no less assisted oftentimes in regard of an advantageous manner of opening the mysteries of divine grace, and representing the infinite excellencies and ‘unsearchable riches of Christ’, as well as of recommending Him to the acceptance of perishing sinners.

“I have frequently been enabled to represent the divine glory, the infinite preciousness and transcendent loveliness of the great Redeemer; the suitability of His person and purchase to supply the [needs], and answer the utmost desires, of immortal souls: to open the infinite riches of His grace, and the wonderful encouragement proposed in the gospel to unworthy, helpless sinners; to call, invite and beseech them to come and give up themselves to Him and be reconciled to God through Him; to expostulate with them respecting their neglect of one so infinitely lovely, and freely offered; and this in such a manner, with such freedom, pertinency, pathos and application to the conscience, as, I am sure, I never could have made myself master of by the most assiduous application of mind. And frequently at such seasons I have been surprisingly helped in adapting my discourses to the capacities of my people, and bringing them down into such easy and familiar methods of expression as has rendered them intelligible even to pagans.

“I do not mention these things as a recommendation of my own performances; for I am sure I found, from time to time, that I had no skill or wisdom for my great work; and I knew not how ‘to choose out acceptable words’ proper to address poor benighted pagans with. But thus God was pleased to help me ‘not to know any thing among [them], save Jesus Christ and Him crucified’. Thus I was enabled to show them their misery without Him, and to represent His complete fitness to redeem and save them.

“And this was the preaching God made use of for the awakening of sinners, and the propagation of this work of grace among the Indians. And it was remarkable, from time to time that, when I was favoured with any special freedom, in discoursing of the ability and willingness of Christ to save sinners and the need they stood in of such a Saviour, there was then the greatest appearance of divine power in awakening numbers of secure souls, promoting convictions begun and comforting the distressed.

“I have sometimes formerly, in reading the Apostle’s discourse to

Cornelius (Acts 10), wondered to see him so quickly introduce the Lord Jesus Christ into his sermon, and so entirely dwell upon Him through the whole of it, observing him in this point very widely to differ from many of our modern preachers. But latterly this has not seemed strange, since Christ is revealed to be the substance of the gospel, and the centre in which the several lines of divine revelation meet. Although I am still conscious there are many things necessary to be spoken to persons under pagan darkness, in order to make way for a proper introduction of the name of Christ, and His undertaking in behalf of fallen man” (pp 359-62).

Means for Coming to Know God (3)¹

George Swinnock

3. Be often fervent with God to give you a knowledge of Himself. A twofold light is necessary for bodily vision: a light in the eye (a blind man cannot see even at noon) and a light in the air (the best eye cannot see in the dark); so a twofold light is necessary to see God effectively – namely, the light of the Word and the light of the Spirit. The Word cannot do it without the Spirit, and the Spirit will not do it without the Word; where the Word is given, both are needful. “There is a spirit in man”, a passive receptiveness as a capable subject, but “the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding” (Job 32:8).

All natural abilities, all acquired endowments, all the reading and learning, all the teachers and tutors in the world, cannot help one poor soul to a saving knowledge of God. It is God that teaches man knowledge (Ps 94:10). Only He who made light in the first creation can cause light in the new creation: “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor 4:6). He that at first said, “Let there be light”, when darkness covered the face of the world, “and there was light”, a natural light, He can command spiritual light and the knowledge of His glory in the face of Christ, who is the express image of His Person. Therefore the Apostle betakes himself to God for the gift: praying “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Him . . .” (Eph 1:17,18); David often prayed thus (Ps 119:18,34,35,125,144).

¹Taken with editing from “The Incomparableness of God”, in Swinnock’s *Works*, vol 4. This is the final article in this series. The previous section, last month, gave the counsel: “Study much the works of God, and especially His Word”.

Reader, are you blind? Take the counsel of the Saviour. Go to Him for eyesalve that you may see, and be confident that He who bids you come to Him for that will bid you welcome when you are earnest (Rev 3:18). "No man knoweth . . . the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Mt 11:27). Therefore, whoever you are who is sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, go to the sun for light, go to the Sun of righteousness, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:3) for the light of the knowledge of God. Do you not know the sinfulness and misery of a blind, dark state? Do you not know that vengeance is the fruit of this ignorance, that God will pour out His wrath upon them that know Him not? (Ps 79:6).

Go therefore, as the blind man, to the Lord Jesus Christ. Cry, sigh, mourn, pray: "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me". Though He may not hear at once, hold on, persevere in prayer; though the devil and the flesh rebuke you, as the multitude rebuked the blind man, yet hold on, call louder, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me . . . Lord, that I might receive my sight" (Mark 10:47,51). Do not doubt that He will have pity on you, as He had on him, and touch your eye, and make you see the things of your peace; for your encouragement you have His promise: "I will give them an heart to know Me, that I am the Lord" (Jer 24:7); "They shall all know Me, from the least . . . unto the greatest" (Jer 31:34). (So Jas 1:6; Hos 2:20; Heb 8:8,9). O with what hope you may plead these promises, when He that made them is God, that cannot lie (Tts 1:2), and therefore cannot but perform them!

Again, observe how kindly He took it from Solomon, when He bade Solomon ask what he wanted, that he asked for wisdom (2 Chr 1:10). "Give me now wisdom and knowledge", said Solomon; and the thing which he asked for "pleased the Lord" (1 Ki 3:10). And the Lord said unto Solomon, "Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life . . . wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee, and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour" (2 Chr 1:11,12).

When a poor creature, conscious of its blindness and darkness, lies at the feet of God, begging spiritual light and sight, the heart of the Redeemer is taken with such a request, and subscribes the petition with, "Wisdom and knowledge is granted to thee". Only be diligent, reader, in the use of these means, and thou mayest be confident of success: "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom, out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (Prov 2:3-6).

Free Will (5)¹

Rev I D MacDonald

4.2 *Free will in the now-regenerated man.* When we come to consider the teaching of *The Westminster Confession of Faith* on the ongoing nature of free will in a now-regenerated sinner, we remember the truth that “it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil 2:13), and also: “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (Heb 13:20,21).

The *Confession* refers to the nature of free will in the believer in the following way: “And by His grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that, by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil”.

The will of the regenerated believer now united to Christ is free, theologically and spiritually, to choose spiritual good once more. A bias to spiritual good is its settled, habitual, prevailing propensity. Yet through the remaining principle of sin, there is a competing moral disposition in the soul, which has a fixed spontaneity towards evil. In a sense there is in the will, considered as a faculty, a certain power of contrary choice, in that the will can choose between good and evil.

This gives rise to a great conflict in the soul for the mastery of the will. It is as if our ship is now under the competing command of two captains, Captain Sin and Captain Grace. These two principles contend with one another for the mastery of the faculties of the soul, including the understanding and the will. The two captains aim at entirely different courses and destinations, with Captain Grace seeking to direct the ship in the course of holiness leading to eternal life, and Captain Sin seeking to direct the ship in the ways of sin leading to eternal destruction. Thus the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. These two “are contrary the one to the other so that ye cannot do the things you would”. When a holy choice is formed in the will, the principle of sin immediately opposes it and vice versa. There are not two faculties of will, but two principles contending for the supremacy in the one faculty, and aiming at the utter extinction of each other.

This does not mean that an equal power is granted to both contending

¹Another section of a paper presented to the 2024 Theological Conference. The previous article, last month, dealt with the point: “Free will in a state of regeneration”.

principles, for the will is freed from its prior bondage, and the promise is that sin shall not have dominion. When grace prevails, the choice for spiritual good is conceived and brings forth fruit unto holiness, but when sin prevails, the choice for evil is conceived and brings forth actual sin. The strength of each contending principle in the will varies from time to time. When the Holy Spirit is poured out from on high and there are rich blessings in the means of grace, then the renewed principle in the will is in a high degree of exercise. The believer can say when their hearts are thus enlarged, "I'll run Thy precepts way".

At other times they are in a backslidden and decayed condition; then the power of sin rises up and prevails and they have to cry, "The good that I would I do not", and, "The evil that I would not that I do". To use the instance of Rebecca and the twins in her womb, there is strife in the midst of the will so that it is divided against itself, and the cry from the believer is: "If it be so, why I am thus?" and the reply comes, "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger" (Gen 25:23).

But all this only serves to show the need believers have that God would continue to work in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. They stand in need of fresh supplies of grace from Christ Himself, the Admiral over the fleet, who is Himself able to come to the field of battle, alongside Captain Grace – entering in to the soul with His sword girt upon His thigh. When the believer cries, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom 7:23,24); before long they will be able to say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 7:25).

Thus they are kept poor and needy all their days and, with a growing sense of their corruption and of their need of the great Captain of Salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ. J L Girardeau, speaking of this, says beautifully, "It is He who fights upon the arena of the believer's soul, He the conqueror of sin and the devil, and therefore the principle of holiness must finally succeed. . . . The old nature is ever in a state of mutiny, but will never recover supremacy."

Therefore it is of great comfort to the believer to know that in working out their salvation, it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure. His working in them "to will" of His good pleasure may refer to the maintaining and strengthening of the inclination in the will towards spiritual good, which is capable of increase. And His working in them "to do" points to an additional infusion of what some term determining grace,

whereby the opposing force of sin in the will is overcome and the soul is able to say, The good that I would, I have been enabled to do. Therefore, where the soul has been regenerated, and the will has been won to Christ, the believer will not habitually indulge in any sin, especially open and outward “conscience-wasting” sins, though they may be often foiled and overcome in transient lapses. Certainly the believer does not sin habitually with the full consent of the will as in his unregenerate days.

Moreover, the renewed will is not like that of Adam in innocence, which was mutable. The regenerated will is rendered immutable in a fixed spontaneity towards spiritual good. This fixedness of the regenerated will is secured by their union with Christ, the Head of the Covenant of Grace, and the fresh supplies of grace which are continually infused into their wills from Him by the Holy Spirit. This privilege innocent Adam never enjoyed, or he never would have fallen.

A shape, as it were, has been put upon their will which will never be lost. This was the supposed reply of the blacksmith to the horseshoe which he had made on his anvil and in the heat of fire and then propped it outside his shop for years, left rusting in the rain. If the horseshoe could speak, it would say, “I do not understand your dealings with me, for at the beginning of your work upon me you exerted great power and care, and now you have left me to rust away here in uselessness”. And the blacksmith replies, “That may be true, but I put a shape upon you then which will never be lost”. So, however useless and decayed a believer feels in after years, when the time of their first love has passed, a shape was put upon their wills then which will never be lost, for the propensity to spiritual good can never be lost. This touches on the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, and stands in opposition to the Arminian doctrine that regeneration may be undone, and that the will of the regenerated man has no fixed inclination.

On board the ship of the believer’s soul, this fierce battle rages for the mastery of Helmsman Free-will, and the two Captains – Sin and Grace – with their forces are warring with one another continually. Yet through the prevailing power of grace, the ship is on the whole kept on a new course towards the fair haven of eternal life in the way of holiness.

The really good man or angel refers his character to God, and is filled with abhorrence at the thought of glorifying himself, or being glorified for it. And there is no sin that so grieves him as his propensity to a detestable self-idolatry. *W G T Shedd*

All spiritual excellence resolves itself, ultimately, into a desire to render unto God the glory due unto His name – into a desire to worship. *W G T Shedd*

Preaching is the chariot that carries Christ up and down the world. *Richard Sibbes*

Necessity of a Great Spiritual Change¹

4. God Cannot Deny Himself

James Buchanan

3. No unregenerate man can see the kingdom of God, *because it is impossible for God to “deny Himself”*, or to act in manifest opposition to the infinite perfections of His nature, in order to save those from suffering who obstinately remain in a state of sin. “If we believe not,” says the Apostle, “God abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself.” Even if God’s determination in this matter was purely arbitrary, yet being framed by His omniscient wisdom, sanctioned by His supreme authority, supported by His almighty power, and declared by His unchangeable truth, it should command our reverent attention. It is not arbitrary; it flows, like every other part of His counsel or procedure, from the essential and immutable attributes of His divine nature.

There are some things that cannot be otherwise while God is God, and this is one of them: He cannot admit an unregenerate man into His kingdom, for this would be to “deny Himself” and to act in direct opposition to every principle which regulates His procedure as the Governor of the world. The supposition that a sinful man may enter into His kingdom without being born again implies that God must deny Himself in three respects: that He must repeal the law of His moral government; that He must depart from His declared design in the scheme of redemption itself; and that He must reverse the moral constitution of man, or, in other words, alter the whole character of His kingdom.

It may be inferred from the general laws of God’s moral government that a spiritual character is indispensably necessary if we are to be admitted into the kingdom of God. In one sense, all men, however rebellious, and even devils themselves, are subjects of His kingdom – that is, they are under His government, as being bound to obey His authority and responsible to Him as their Judge. That we are under a system of government is the intuitive conviction of every thinking mind. We feel that we are subject to checks and restraints which are imposed on us by some external authority, and which are altogether independent of our own will. Indeed, although free to act according to our own choice, we cannot alter the constitution under which we

¹Another section of the first chapter of Buchanan’s book, *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*. The previous section, last month, continued to show that it is impossible for anyone to be saved unless they have been regenerated. It ended by stating that it is impossible for a man “born of the flesh” to enter the kingdom of God without being “born again” by the Spirit. So the conclusion must be, in Christ’s words, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”.

live, nor free ourselves from the control of law, nor escape or avert the consequences of our own conduct.

That the system of government under which we are placed is essentially a moral one, appears alike from two things: from the evidence of our own consciousness, and from our experience and observation of the world at large. There is a mysterious law written on our own hearts which reveals God as a Lawgiver and a Judge; and our whole experience bears witness to the inseparable connection which He has established between sin and misery on the one hand, and holiness and happiness on the other. This is the general constitution of God's government, and the wicked are not exempted from that government. On the contrary, its reality is shown by the very experience of those who most resolutely resist it – just as rebels, when they are punished for their crimes, are still treated as subjects and become the clearest reminders of public justice.

When Jesus speaks of the “kingdom of God”, He does not refer to the moral government which is common to all men; but to that kingdom of grace and glory, into which it is His will to gather into one all His redeemed people, a kingdom in which every subject shall be alike safe and happy, being delivered from all evil and defended by His almighty power. He speaks of the state into which He, as the Saviour, brings His people – a state of perfect safety and peace. Yet you will observe, He speaks of it as a “kingdom”, indeed as “the kingdom of God”.

This implies that, while in other respects it differs from the universal kingdom, which comprehends under it the righteous and the wicked, the fallen and the unfallen, and extends alike to heaven, earth and hell, it agrees with it in another matter. It implies a system of discipline and government, administered by God Himself, according to such rules and principles as are consistent with the perfections of His nature and sanctioned by His unchangeable will. He is represented as the Head of this new kingdom, and His people as His subjects there.

Although Christ does not refer here to God's general government, but to this new kingdom of grace and glory, we may infer from His language that this kingdom will bear some resemblance to the former – at least by having a moral constitution that will make a holy character essential for enjoying its privileges. Indeed it must be so, unless that kingdom is designed to supersede, or rather to reverse, the whole moral constitution of the world, and to introduce an opposite system, which would make no account of character in the distribution of happiness, and would secure exemption from suffering without bringing about any deliverance from sin. How far this corresponds with God's actual design as it is revealed in the gospel will be considered later.

Meanwhile there are two considerations, I would suggest, that afford a strong presumption that Christ's kingdom cannot materially differ in this respect from God's general government. The first point is that this government is not an arbitrary constitution, arising like the Jewish ritual from His mere will, and capable of being abolished. Instead, this constitution derives its authority from His supreme will and so is derived from the unchangeable perfections of His nature. Thus unless God Himself was to change, or the relation between God and His creatures to cease, the leading principles of that government must remain the same under every successive dispensation.

The second point is that this government is not confined to men, but takes in all orders of His intelligent creatures and applies to all who can know God and serve Him. It extends to angels and seraphim, to whose society His people are to be united in the kingdom of glory; so that, unless the redeemed are to be governed by a different law, it is absolutely necessary that they should be spiritual and holy, as the angels are in heaven. From these two considerations it is clear that, in setting up a new kingdom, God will adhere to those great principles which are involved in His universal moral government. And from its fundamental laws, we may infer with certainty that, as they who are saved are said to be brought into a kingdom – into the very kingdom of God – they must be given a holy character.

Temptation (1)¹

John Newton

That I may not weary you by an introduction, I take the basis of my letter from a passage of Scripture, and I fix on that which just now occurred to my thoughts. It is a clause in that pattern of prayer which He who best knows our state has been pleased to leave for the instruction of His people in their great concern of waiting at His throne of grace: “And lead us not into temptation” (Mt 6:13). This petition is suitable at all times, and to all those who have any right knowledge of themselves or their spiritual calling.

The word *temptation*, taken broadly, includes every kind of trial. To *tempt*, is to try or prove. In this sense, it is said, “The Lord tempted Abraham” – that is, He tried him, for God cannot tempt to evil. He proposed an act of obedience to him that was a test of his faith, love, dependence and integrity. Thus all our afflictions, under His gracious management, are appointed to prove, manifest, exercise and purify the graces of His children – and not

¹The first part of a letter taken, with editing from Newton's *Works*, vol 1, 1985 reprint. It was written in July 1776.

afflictions only, for prosperity likewise is a state of temptation. Many who have endured sharp sufferings, and came off honourably, have been afterwards greatly hurt and ensnared by prosperity. To this purpose the histories of David and Hezekiah are relevant.

But by *temptation* we more frequently understand the wiles and force which Satan employs in assaulting our peace, or spreading snares for our feet. He is always acting against us, either directly and from himself, by the access he has to our hearts; or indirectly, by the influence he has over the men and the things of this world. The subtlety and power of this adversary are very great; he is an over-match for us; and we have no hope of safety but in the Lord's protection.

Satan's action upon the heart may be illustrated by the action of the wind upon the sea. The sea sometimes appears smooth, but it is always liable to swell and rage and to obey the impulse of every storm. Thus the heart may be sometimes quiet, but the wind of temptation will awaken and rouse it in a moment. It is a necessary part of our depraved nature to be unstable and yielding as the water, and when it is under the impression of the enemy, its violence can only be controlled by Him who says to the raging sea, "Be still"; "here shall thy proud waves be stayed". The branches of temptation are almost innumerable; but the principal temptation may be reduced to the several faculties of the soul (as we commonly speak), to which they are more directly suited.

1. Satan has temptations for the *understanding*. He can blind the mind with prejudices and false reasonings, and he can ply it with arguments for unbelief, till the most obvious truths become questionable. Even where the gospel has been received, he can insinuate error which may be properly compared to poison, because of the suddenness and malignity of its effects. A healthy man may be poisoned in a moment; and if he is, the destructive drug is usually mixed with his food. Many have had their judgements strongly and strangely perverted, and have been prevailed on to renounce and oppose the truths they once prized and defended, although for a time they seemed to be sound in the faith. Such instances are striking proofs of human weakness and loud calls to watchfulness and dependence, and we are to beware of leaning to our understandings. For these purposes he employs both preachers and authors who, by fine words and fair speeches, beguile the hearts of the unwary. By his immediate influence on the mind, Satan is able (if the Lord permits him) to entangle those who are providentially placed out of the reach of corrupt and designing men.

2. Satan tempts the *conscience*. By working on the unbelief of our hearts and darkening the glory of the gospel, he can impress on the soul the number,

weight and aggravation of its sins, so that he is not able to look up to Jesus, nor draw any comfort from His blood, promises and grace. How many go burdened in this manner, seeking relief from duties and perhaps spending their strength in things not commanded, though they hear the gospel and perhaps acknowledge it!

Nor are the wisest and most established able to withstand his assaults, if the Lord withdraws and gives Satan unrestrained leave to use his power and subtlety. The gospel affords sufficient ground for an abiding assurance of hope; nor should we rest satisfied without it. However, the possession and preservation of this privilege depends on the Lord's presence with the soul, and His shielding us from Satan's attacks; for I am persuaded he is able to sift the strongest believer upon earth and shake him.

3. Satan likewise has temptations suited to the *will*. Jesus makes His people willing in the day of His power; yet there is a contrary principle remaining within them, of which Satan knows how to avail himself. There are occasions in which he almost prevails to set self again upon the throne, as Dagon was raised after he had fallen before the ark. How else should anyone, who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, give way to a repining spirit, account His dispensations hard, or His precepts too strict, so as to shrink from their observance through the fear of men, or a regard to his worldly interest?

4. Further, Satan has snares for the *affections*. In managing them, he gains a great advantage from our situation in a world that does not know God. The Scriptures give Satan the title of "the god of this world"; and believers learn, by painful experience, how great his power is in, and over, the persons and things of this world. Thus to be steadfast in wisdom's ways requires unremitting efforts, like pressing through a crowd, or swimming against a stream. How hard it is to live in the midst of tar and not be defiled! The air of the world is infectious. Our business and unavoidable connections are so interwoven with occasions of sin, and there is so much in our hearts suited to it. Thus, unless we are continuously upheld by almighty strength, we cannot stand a day or an hour.

Past victories afford us no greater security than they did Samson, who was shamefully surprised by enemies whom he had formerly conquered. Nor are we only tempted by compliances that are evil in themselves. Conscience may then be awake, and we stand upon our guard; but we are still upon Satan's ground. While he may seem to allow himself to be defeated, he can dexterously change his method and come upon us where we do not suspect him. Perhaps our greatest danger arises from things in themselves lawful. He can tempt us by our nearest and dearest friend, and pervert every blessing of a kind providence into an occasion to draw our hearts away from the Giver.

Indeed, spiritual blessings, gifts, comforts, and even graces, are sometimes the means which he uses against us, to fill us with vain confidence and self-sufficiency, or to lull us into formality and indolence.

The Sun of Righteousness¹

W K Tweedie

Malachi 4:2. *Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings.*

The mercies of God, in all their fullness, are freely offered to all. Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, are all welcome; indeed all are pressed to close with the Holy One's offers. Expostulation, remonstrance and melting entreaty are each in turn employed to prevail on the sinner to return to God and live.

But free as these mercies are in the offer of them to all, the Bible is ever circumspect and cautious as to those who actually enjoy the benefits thus presented. There is no happiness for man while living in sin, and no mercy till he forsakes sin by fleeing to Christ. No promises are fulfilled in any saving sense while man continues in a state of revolt from God. Before any saving blessing can be enjoyed, a certain character must be possessed. It is written, for example, "Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings". And there is no light, no healing, no spiritual joy, for any others. I must come to Christ before I get the promised rest. I must seek as God commands, before I can find, as God has guaranteed in His Word.

And how blessed the assurance which we have here! The Sun, the Sun of Righteousness, arising! At sunrise, all nature seems to revive. The mountains, first tipped with light, speed on the glad information to the valley, and nature is forthwith all aglow. Now, what happens on the visible landscape – when the sun arises, and rocks, streams, towers and waving woods all change from twilight into sunshine – takes place also in the soul when the Sun of Righteousness arises upon man.

All becomes radiant now. The darkness of nature is slowly dispelled; and as the soul sees light in God's light, it rejoices more and more in the splendour. O how suicidal is man, who prefers darkness to that, and often plunges into sin, lest the true light should irradiate and save! My soul, let the dust be your bed, and sackcloth your covering – because you once loved darkness – but let your life henceforth be lived to the praise of Him who has now made you to differ.

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

Book Reviews¹

The History of the Puritans, from the Reformation in 1517 to the Revolution in 1688, by Daniel Neal, abridged and edited by Geoffrey F Main, published by the editor, hardback, 691 pages, £25.00.

Daniel Neal (1678-1743) was an Independent minister and historian. He was born in London. His parents died when he was very young and he was raised by his maternal uncle. Neal was educated at the Merchant Taylors' School and studied for the ministry at a Dissenting academy and at the Universities of Utrecht and Leiden. In July 1706, when he was 28, he was ordained pastor of Lorimer's Hall. The congregation grew and moved to a large chapel in Jewin Street, where he remained the minister until his retirement five months before his death in 1743. He was buried in Bunhill Fields, the historic non-conformist burial ground in London.

Though he published a number of other works, Daniel Neal is chiefly remembered for his *History of the Puritans, or Protestant Nonconformists from the Reformation in 1517 to the Revolution in 1688*. The project of writing a history of nonconformity originated with John Evans. His plan was to write the first part of the history, from the Reformation to 1640, and that Neal would write the final part, from 1640 to 1688. Evans, having collected some of the source material for the work, died in 1730. Neal then assumed full responsibility for the entire project.

The book has quite a history. It was originally published in four volumes between 1732 and 1738 and reprinted in two volumes in 1754, a decade after Neal's death. However, the standard edition of the book in five volumes was edited by Joshua Toulmin (1740-1815) between 1793 and 1796, with a revised edition in 1822. Toulmin added extensively to Neal's text, including histories of the Baptists and the Quakers, biographical notes and a life of Neal. The material on the Baptists and Quakers was originally interspersed throughout the volumes; the 1822 edition gathered the material together in volume 5. The 1822 edition was reprinted in 1837 and compressed into a three-volume edition.

The problem with the standard edition of Neal's *History* was that Joshua Toulmin was a Unitarian. Accordingly, in 1811, an abridged version was produced, edited by Edward Parsons (1762-1833). Parsons was an Evangelical and was one of the first students at the Countess of Huntingdon's College at Trevecca. He was a minister at first in her Connexion but later became a congregational minister in Leeds. He was also one of the "Fathers and Founders" of the London Missionary Society.

¹Both books reviewed here may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Parsons' edition of Neal's *History* was intended to reclaim it for Trinitarian Dissenters by stripping away what he viewed as the "Unitarian bias" introduced by Joshua Toulmin. While Parsons respected Toulmin's scholarly corrections, he fundamentally disagreed with Toulmin's theological perspective. Parsons' 1811 abridgement was a deliberate attempt to redirect the narrative in several ways. He intended to remove what he regarded as heterodox glosses. He omitted or heavily revised many of the footnotes and commentary that Toulmin had added, which often used Puritan history to support Unitarian or "rational" Dissenting arguments. He restored the volumes' original Evangelical focus. His purpose, in short, was "theological cleansing". We are pleased to note that the volume under review, edited by Geoffrey Main, a Gospel Standard Strict Baptist, uses the theologically cleansed Parsons' edition as the basis for further editing of the text to make it more accessible. Though further editing has taken place, the text still includes helpful footnotes and is a substantial volume of 675 pages.

The book begins with the Reformation at the time of Henry VIII and then proceeds to the period of Elizabethan Puritanism, the Stuart period, the Civil War, the rule of Cromwell, the Westminster Assembly, the Restoration of the monarchy, and the ejection of the Puritans, through to the Act of Toleration of 1689 and the Glorious Revolution. No history written before the twentieth century has traced the history of Puritanism in such detail.

Geoffrey Main concludes his introduction with these words, "Neal has written a history from the dawning of the Reformation in England to that point where people became free to worship as conscience allowed, unfettered by criminal law, and has outlined the key part played by the Puritans in that struggle. It is a work that should be better known" (p xv). One criticism that has been made of Neal's *History* is that it views Puritanism from an Independent and Congregational viewpoint rather than from the majority Presbyterian perspective.

We are indebted to Mr Main both for his labour in abridging Neal's *History* and for publishing it himself at such a reasonable price for a well-produced hardback of almost 700 pages. The book gives readers the opportunity to learn the history of the men whose writings have proved so valuable to godly men and women for over 300 years. We warmly recommend this abridged edition of Daniel Neal's *History* to our readers.

Roy Middleton

A Guide to the Puritans, by Robert P Martin, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 546 pages, £19.00.

This volume is a hardback reprint of a book that was originally published by the Banner of Truth in paperback in 1997. The volume provides a valuable

series of indices that are a guide to the writings of the Puritans. There are two main indices and nine smaller ones. The primary index is a guide to the topics addressed by the Puritans and their successors. Included among the Puritans are the whole range of Puritan reprints since the 1950s, including the works of such men as John Owen, John Bunyan, Stephen Charnock, Thomas Watson, Thomas Brooks and Thomas Manton. By the designation “their successors” are included men like George Whitefield, William Romaine, John Newton and Andrew Fuller in the eighteenth century; Archibald Alexander and his Princeton colleagues, Disruption Free Church ministers and John Charles Ryle in the nineteenth century; along with such men as Benjamin B Warfield and John Murray in the twentieth century.

The topical index, which is arranged from A to Z, gives book references to doctrinal, ecclesiastical and experimental subjects in the writings of the Puritans. What makes the guide so useful is that most of the references are to books that have been reprinted in the last 50 to 60 years that are either currently in print or available second hand. Although the larger work by James Darling, *Cyclopaedia Bibliographica* (5 volumes, London, 1854) is much more detailed, this volume references material and books that are more readily available at the present time. To illustrate the comprehensiveness of the book references, those to “Christ”, which deal both with His Person and work, cover 29 pages. The references to “God” cover 19 pages. The topical index of references to Reformed teaching, on a vast array of topics from “Abortion” to “Zeal”, covers 262 pages. If you want a reading list on most topics, this volume will give you a significant start to how the Puritans and their successors viewed the matter.

The second main index is a Scripture index and lists sermons and expositions of Bible texts from Genesis to Revelation. Commentaries are not included. This covers 187 pages of references to sermons or portions of Puritan works explaining and applying specific texts of Scripture. The nine smaller indices are of Biographies and Biographical sketches, Reviews and Introductions, Funeral sermons, Sermons and Meditations for the Lord’s Table, Ordination sermons, Sermons on special occasions, Farewell sermons at the Great Ejection of 1662, Unindexed letters and Miscellaneous items, along with a Bibliography of the Works referenced. The book does not claim to be either a scholarly apparatus or a comprehensive guide to the body of Puritan writing. What it is, however, is a helpful guide for those with an appetite to read and understand the teaching of the Puritans and their successors.

It is to be regretted that the work has not been updated to include references to the extensive Puritan material reprinted since the mid-1990s. The author’s death in 2016 prevented that. We are, however, indebted to Robert

P Martin (1948-2016) who was the minister of Emmanuel Reformed Baptist Church, Seattle, Washington, and Professor of Biblical Theology at Trinity Ministerial Academy, Montville, New Jersey. This was the Academy where Albert N Martin gave his well-known lectures on Pastoral Theology. The book being reviewed is highly recommended and has been used extensively by the reviewer since its publication almost 30 years ago. This hardback volume has been produced to the usual high quality of the Banner of Truth Trust.

Roy Middleton

Protestant View

Rome and Canterbury Meeting

The newly-installed Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mullally – the first woman, sadly, ever to occupy that position – was quick to visit the Pope in Rome in April. She praised his recent speech which stated that the world is being “ravaged by a handful of tyrants”. This drew criticism from President Trump in the USA, who stated that the Pope was “weak on crime and terrible for foreign policy”. The Pope subsequently claimed he was not referring to the President in his speech.

The Archbishop also mentioned how appreciative King Charles was of his recent visit to the Pope, “especially the shared prayer and spirit of fraternity it embodied”. So we see that the new Archbishop predictably continues the long-standing policy of the Church of England towards greater co-operation with Rome, praising the “common witness” of the two bodies and thanking the Pope “for his ministry as bishop of Rome”. How fatal the embraces of the “mother of harlots” are to those who enter into alliance with her!

The Church of England has a Reformed creed, the Thirty-Nine Articles, but has drifted very far from it in practice. The world is indeed in a terrible condition, but that is because of man’s sinfulness. But that is a message which neither Rome nor Canterbury wish to proclaim to a generation that is pure in its own eyes. The whole world needs the true gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed in the Word of God, but not the false gospels of Rome or of liberal Anglicanism.

AWM

This great idol-god, the world, will be lying in white ashes in the day of your appearance; and why should night-dreams and day-shadows, and water-froth and May-flowers run away with your heart? When we come to the water-side, and black death’s river-brink, and put our foot in the boat, we shall laugh at our folly.

Samuel Rutherford

Notes and Comments

The Situation in Manipur, India: A Call to Prayer

For the past three years, a severe conflict has involved many of the predominantly Christian hill tribes in Manipur, India, with other ethnic groups. While the grounds of the conflict are more political and involve land issues, it has at times involved the burning of churches and Christian homes. On the very day on which this note is being written, some unarmed Christians returning from a church gathering were ambushed by armed men. Three ministers were killed, and others were seriously injured. Although full details of this incident are not yet available, it is known that at least one of those who died – Rev Dr Vumthang Sithhou – had long been associated with the Trinitarian Bible Society. For many years, he was closely and actively involved in helping to provide and promote trustworthy translations of the Holy Scriptures in the local languages of the towns and villages of the Manipur Hills, especially his own Thadou language.

May we pray that the Lord will be pleased to raise up many others marked by the same prayerful concern and humble zeal for the glory of His Name and the spiritual good of their fellow men. *DPR*

“Unbelievably Cruel and Unkind”

A woman who was arrested in 2025 and charged for taking part in an anti-abortion protest outside the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow has had her case dismissed. In reporting the case, the BBC once again aired a quotation – made several years ago – by a doctor in the same hospital who often confronted anti-abortion protestors. He described the anti-abortion protests as “such an unbelievably cruel and unkind thing to do”.

On the contrary, it is the users, promoters, and defenders of abortion who are “unbelievably cruel and unkind”, both to the helpless infants whom they destroy and to the many mothers whom they deceive or bully into allowing their unborn children to be slaughtered. It is not a “cruel and unkind thing” to warn people that they are committing a great evil. These evildoers are in danger of hellfire, and it is a kindness to try to prick their consciences before it is too late. *DWBS*

Bank Holiday in Aberdeen

In Aberdeen, the Sabbath of the May bank holiday was marked by widespread drunkenness and indecency on the streets and loud music from the drinking-dens. Probably the same was true in many other parts of Britain. The nation is under judgement, but the white population is debasing itself

further and further in every sort of sin and irreligion. “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!” (Is 5:20-23).

God’s judgement will not be lifted off by going further into sin, but only by repentance: “For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still” (v 25). *DWBS*

Government Values

In the present difficulties being experienced by the British Labour Party following recent elections, the former Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner, has commented, “People feel we haven’t stuck to our values”.

I am not going to describe what Labour Party values are, but I do wish to state briefly what the values of any UK government *should* be – or indeed the values of the government of any country. First, what should the source of a government’s values be? Clearly, it ought to be the Bible. It is a revelation from the Creator. As Creator, God has authority, not only over individuals, but also over nations. So any government should adopt biblical principles in making its decisions and in framing the legislation that it lays before Parliament. For instance, they are to promote obedience to the Sixth Commandment, “Thou shalt not kill” (Ex 20:13).

This means that, although governments may often leave bills on moral issues to the conscience of individual MPs, they do have a duty to prevent those passing that will do harm to human life. One thinks particularly of recent changes to abortion legislation, which were sadly successful, and proposed legislation which would have introduced assisted suicide, which thankfully was not successful. But the Government should have opposed them.

One wishes to have godly rulers, who would repeal the ungodly legislation of past decades. But how can we have a godly government unless there are large numbers of godly voters? But may the Lord grant that!

Church Information

College and Library Fund

By appointment of Synod, the first of two special collections for the College and Library Fund is due to be taken in congregations during June.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

Aberdeen: 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tues, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.

Duirinish and Bracadale: **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Glendale** and **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thurs 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact: Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.

Dingwall: Church, Hill Street, IV15 9JP; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. **Beaully** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thurs 7.30 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.

Dornoch: Sabbath 11.30 am. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wed 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). 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. (Each as intimated). **Stratherrick:** no services at present. Contact: Mr M A 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; **Strathly:** 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 I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.

Laide (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wed 7.30 pm as intimated. Manse tel: 01445 731340. Contact: Rev A W MacColl; tel: 01349 866546.

Lochcarron: Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7 pm. Manse. Contact: Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.

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 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; Wed 11 am; or as intimated. Manse: 5 Main Road, Luncarty, PH1 3EP. 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 I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.

Staffin: Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Tues 7 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 or as intimated. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449. Contact: Mr K C MacLeod; tel: 01854 612805.

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

Sancta 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 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact: Rev G B Macdonald ; tel. (02) 9627 3408; e-mail:sydneyfchurch@protonmail.com.

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: 022 092 2136.

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.

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

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