

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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Communions

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

February: First Sabbath: Broadstairs; **Second:** Dingwall; **Third:** Stornoway; **Fourth:** North Uist, Zenka.

March: First Sabbath: Larne, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Ness, Portree, Tarbert; **Third:** Halkirk, Kyle of Lochalsh; **Fourth:** Barnoldswick, Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

April: Second Sabbath: Leverburgh, Staffin; **Third:** Chesley, Laide; **Fourth:** Gisborne, Glasgow; **Fifth:** Mbuma.

May: First Sabbath: Aberdeen, Grafton, London; **Second:** Achmore, Donsa, New Canaan, Scourie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fourth:** Chiedza.

June: First Sabbath: Auckland, Farr, Perth; **Second:** Nkayi, Santa Fe, Shieldaig; **Third:** Lochcarron, Uig; **Fourth:** Bulawayo, Gairloch, Inverness, Raasay.

July: First Sabbath: Beaulay; **Second:** Bonar Bridge, Staffin; **Third:** Applecross; **Fourth:** Struan; **Fifth:** Cameron.

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

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

October: First Sabbath: Dornoch, Grafton, Lochcarron, North Tolsta; **Second:** Gairloch, Ness; **Third:** London; **Fourth:** Edinburgh, Gisborne, Uig, Mbuma.

November: Second Sabbath: Glasgow; **Third:** Wellington; **Fourth:** Chiedza.

December: First Sabbath: Singapore; **Third:** Bulawayo, Santa Fe, Tauranga.

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If Jesus Had Come . . .

Great sadness had fallen on the house in Bethany where Mary and Martha lived with their brother Lazarus, a home which Jesus had often visited, where He had enjoyed their hospitality and where they had benefited from fellowship with Him. Lazarus had taken ill and his sisters had sent a message to Jesus to let him know. They expected Him to come at once and heal their brother. But He did not. As the Son of God, He had His own purposes and was working them out to His own glory.

Clearly the sisters had sufficient faith to believe that Jesus was able to heal their brother – if He had come sooner to their home in Bethany. But they were presuming that it would have been for His glory and for their good to have done so. And they were further presuming that it would have been most for His glory and for their good to have done so at that particular time. George Hutcheson points out that, even when God’s children believe that “Christ’s power and goodwill” is such that He will act for them, “they yet limit Him to their own conceived way of working”. Martha was not expecting Him to do anything for them unless He was physically present; she said to Jesus, “Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died” (John 11: 21).¹ The clear implication was that, as He had not come before Lazarus died, it was now too late for Him to do anything for their brother.

While Martha believed in the power of Jesus to heal her brother, she clearly had much to learn about His sovereignty – in this case, His right to do what He desired, but also His right not to do exactly what she wanted, and indeed His right to heal at another time, if that was what pleased Him and would be more for His glory. She could not understand how, when Jesus had the power to heal her brother, He had left him to die. Hutcheson also points out the fault of people such as Martha, as to whether they will trust or not trust: “They make a bible of their own thoughts, apprehensions and fears, without regarding what the Scripture saith”. It is a fault to which all believers are subject. To grasp the fact of God’s absolute sovereignty in their own providence is

¹Hutcheson’s remarks quoted in this article come from his comments on this verse in his volume on *The Gospel of John* (Banner of Truth Trust 1985 reprint).

not the work of a moment; it has to be a continuous learning process and it will last a lifetime.

How hard it is even for believers to learn that God knows better than they do! There is a tone of reproach in Martha's statement. But the Lord Jesus was to make her see clearly what He had already told His disciples: that He, the Son of God, was to be glorified as a result of this illness. To raise Lazarus from the grave was a work of much greater power – and therefore was more glorifying to Christ – than to deliver him from his illness while the disease had not proved fatal. And to perform the miracle publicly, at the grave, rather than in the quiet of the family's home was to ensure that this testimony to Christ's power and glory would spread far and wide.

We all suffer from a tendency to prescribe to God how He should act. But we must learn that He always acts in a way that is most for His glory and for the good of His children. These outcomes may not be obvious at first, but time – or eternity – will demonstrate God's wise control of events. It was far from clear to Jacob, when his sons came home with the tale that Joseph was dead, that what had happened could possibly be for his good. "All things are against me", he exclaimed emphatically. Yet there was much about the future the Jacob could not know; indeed there was much even about the present that he did not know.

But God knew everything about his situation and, however hard it was for Jacob to believe that all things were working together for his good, it was actually God's purpose that this particular series of events would lead on to a great deliverance for him and for all his family. Joseph, of course, was not dead. He was to experience some difficult years, first as a slave and then as a prisoner, before he became governor of Egypt – which was to give him authority to provide for his family in a way beyond what anyone could have anticipated. And the unexpected difficulties which Jacob experienced over these years were part of the training he needed to help on the process of sanctification he was undergoing to fit him for the perfection of heaven.

We may very readily say, If some particular event had not happened, or if something had turned out rather differently, our situation would have been much better. That may indeed be so, but if to speak in this way is not to reproach the God of providence, it is to ignore Him, and His infinite knowledge and wisdom and sovereignty. Even in the small matters of the daily lives of believers, God knows what is best for them and He knows what is most for His own glory. And He has the right to order everything in the way that seems best to Him.

Difficulties in life – sickness, for instance – may continue for many years without the person who is suffering being able to see that these difficulties

can be of any benefit. And, in spite of earnest prayer, God does not seem to answer. Thomas Manton, when preaching on Noah's faith in building the ark at God's command, points out that the ark could be of no use to Noah for a long time after he started work on it. He then asks his hearers if they can wait for the time when God will fulfil His promises. He continues: "So David was anointed king a long time before he reigned. . . . So can you tarry God's leisure for the accomplishment of His promise and, during the time of your pilgrimage, wait and be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promise? (Heb 6:12.) Seldom any go to heaven, but they have a long time to exercise their faith and patience."²

Again we may look back at God's dealings with His Church and consider that, if He had acted differently, circumstances would now be much better than they are. If, for instance, the Lord had sent a minister to a particular place, or if He had sent one sooner, or if He had sent a different minister, the situation there would be much healthier than it is. Of course, those who have responsibilities in the Church do make mistakes, even sinful mistakes, and they are accountable to God for all of them.

What we are trying to consider, however, is the overruling providence of God. We must believe that He knows what He is doing in the sovereign exercise of His infinite wisdom and power. Christ has already gone out to conquer and, while we might expect Him to have achieved a complete victory over all His enemies by now, He at all times has everything under His control and the final, complete victory is sure. At each stage in the conflict He knows how far and how quickly it is best to go so that the final victory will bring the greatest possible glory to God.

In many particular battles we know too little to understand how God will be glorified by the outcome – when, for instance, persecutors slaughter the saints of God, or when atheists and scoffers seem to have control over the airwaves, or when most people, even in the Church, reject the authority of God's Word. But the end has not come yet. This is the time for faith, and faith will ever be tried. And when the end does come, all the elect will have been gathered in and all God's other purposes in connection with the human race will have been accomplished. Then it will be perfectly obvious that God has been ordering all the affairs of this world, and everyone will recognise that His glory, in connection with all His attributes, is exceedingly great.

In the meantime the Church of God must labour on with patience, believing that the Lord Jesus is working out His purposes stage by stage. And although He is no longer physically present here, His promise holds true: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt 28:20).

²Thomas Manton, *By Faith, Sermons on Hebrews 11*, Banner of Truth, 2000, p 362.

Forgiveness (1)¹

A Sermon by Alexander Grierson

Luke 5:20. *And when He saw their faith, He said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.*

“**T**he works of the Lord are great,” says the Psalmist, “sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.” The statement is equally applicable to the works of God in creation and in redemption. Those whose eyes have been opened by the Spirit behold the glory of redemption as wrought out and applied by the Son of God – not merely in the more prominent events of His history, at, for example, the stable at Bethlehem, the summit of Tabor, Olivet, or Calvary, the throne of glory to which He is now exalted, or the judgement seat on which He shall be enthroned on that “great and dreadful day” when all nations shall be assembled before Him.

They see the Redeemer’s glory in every event of His private life and public ministry, in every word that He uttered, and every miracle that He wrought; there the man who really loves God’s law finds a subject of profitable study and devout meditation. On every trace of his great Master’s footsteps, the genuine disciple loves to linger, because they are the footsteps of Immanuel, God in our nature – incarnate wisdom, holiness and love. In recording the personal beauty of Absalom, the Scriptures tell us that “from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him”; and in a far higher sense it is recorded of Christ that He is “fairer than the children of men” – to the eyes of His people He is “altogether lovely”. “All His garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia out of the ivory palaces.”

The incident to which the text refers is recorded with so much simplicity, yet with such minuteness of detail and distinctness of outline, that we may see the whole incident almost as vividly as if it was happening before our eyes at this moment. It is in Capernaum, a town on the north-west shore of the Lake of Gennesaret, where Christ spent the greater part of the three years of His public ministry, and on this account Matthew calls it “His own city”. Here He had already performed many wonderful works, and had often taught in their synagogues, so that He must have been well known here.

On the present occasion, He has just returned from the wilderness, where He had retired for prayer, and has been seen entering a house. The report goes abroad. Multitudes flock from all quarters of the town to hear Him, and among them a deputation of Pharisees and doctors of the law, who had come out of every village of Galilee and Judea, and from Jerusalem itself. They

¹Taken, with editing, from a posthumous volume of the preacher’s *Sermons*. Grierson (1817-1880) was Free Church minister of Irongray, just west of Dumfries.

have come to sit in judgement on Him of whose sayings and doings they have heard so much, who claims to be “the Messiah promised to the fathers”. Jesus has seized the favourable opportunity and begun to teach, and the house is crowded with a multitude of eager listeners drawn together by a great variety of motives.

Coming down the street, and slowly approaching the house where Jesus is, are four men carrying on a bed a man who has been “taken with a palsy”, that is, one who is paralysed. It is obvious that it is no idle curiosity that has attracted him to the spot, but that under the sore pressure of disease which no earthly physician can cure, he is seeking the help of the Almighty Physician. After many an ineffectual effort to pass through the crowd, they go round to the back of the house; they ascend the outer stair to the flat roof of the dwelling; they remove some of the tiles to make an opening large enough for the couch; and by the help of cords they lower the bed into the midst before Jesus. The helpless sufferer is unable to plead his own cause, probably unable to utter a single word about the sufferings of his body or what he desired Jesus to do for him.

Jesus’ omniscient eye sees before Him, not only a diseased body, but a soul oppressed with apprehensions of guilt and powerless to relieve it. With calm but compassionate majesty, He says to the paralytic: “Man, thy sins are forgiven thee”. The spectators are astonished. When they saw the sick man let down before Jesus, they probably expected that He would heal him. Already, in this very town, Christ had given many proofs of His miraculous power. He had healed Peter’s wife’s mother by a touch of His hand. He had healed the centurion’s servant by a word of His mouth. Had He healed this man only of his bodily disease, it would in all probability have been but what they expected. But when, without taking any notice of his bodily disease, He begins by saying, “Man, thy sins are forgiven thee”, they are not only astonished but shocked. Though they do not speak their thoughts, each says secretly in his heart, “Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He said to them: “What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?” As if He had said, He that in his own name and authority can do the latter can do the former also; He that can by miracle counteract the effects of sin in the disease that afflicts the body can also put away sin itself, in its guilt and pollution, from the soul. He then applies this principle to the case in hand, by accompanying His power to pardon with His power to heal: “But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (He said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee,

Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house". At once strength is restored to his withered frame; he stands up and, in the presence of them all, takes that bed on which he was borne and departs to his own house glorifying God. Amazement pervades the assembled multitude. Their objections are overborne by a force of evidence which they feel to be irresistible. They too begin to glorify God, and return to their respective homes, saying, "We have seen strange things today".

Now there is an element in this transaction which distinguishes it from other instances of Christ's healing power, and that element is *forgiveness*. A special aspect of the Redeemer's character is here unfolded. We see Him exercising His prerogative to pardon. "Man," He says, "thy sins are forgiven thee." This is manifestly the leading truth which the passage is designed to illustrate, and let us for a little concentrate our attention on it. May "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give unto [us] the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of [our] understanding being enlightened," while we speak, *first*, of the Author and Bestower of forgiveness; *second*, of its nature; *third*, of the channel through which it is conveyed and appropriated; and, *fourth*, of the evidence by which it is accompanied and followed.

1. The Author and Bestower of forgiveness. I need not remind you that it is Christ who speaks these gracious words. But it is a specially-important aspect of His character that is here set before us; and it is well for us to be reminded that, if such a gracious assurance is ever to be granted to us, that assurance must come from the same Person, not another. The forgiveness of sins is one of the inalienable prerogatives of Christ as mediator, yet this is a part of Christ's mediatorial character which we are too prone to overlook.

We tend to contemplate Christ exclusively in other aspects of His character, as purchasing forgiveness by His obedience and sufferings in the place of His people, and so laying a sure foundation on which forgiveness may be bestowed consistently with the claims of God's justice and the honour of His law; or as pleading for their forgiveness by His all-prevailing intercession at the right hand of the Father, on the ground of the full satisfaction He has made for their sins; or as giving authority to His ambassadors to preach forgiveness in His name among all nations. We are apt to forget that Christ does more than this. He not only purchases forgiveness, but He bestows it. He not only pleads for forgiveness, but He confers it. He not only commissions His ministers to preach the doctrine of remission in His name, but He applies it to the conscience and seals it upon the heart of all that believe; and He tenderly invites all who hear the gospel to come to Himself that they may enjoy the inestimable boon of forgiveness.

Without this any view of Christ's character is defective – to such an extent that is derogatory to the Redeemer's glory and injurious to the best interests of His people; for it is just this view of Christ – as *actually bestowing* forgiveness upon all who come to Him – that renders His character so perfectly suited to the real necessities of man. What is it that the awakened sinner seeks to obtain? What is it that his troubled conscience so clamorously demands? Is it merely to know that there is a Saviour, and to become acquainted with the way of forgiveness?

This might have satisfied the Pharisees and doctors of the law who were "sitting by", as it may still satisfy the mere speculator about divine things. But it could never have satisfied the man who, under the pressure of guilt and disease, sought unto Christ that he might be pardoned and healed. Nor will it satisfy any sinner who feels that he is poor and perishing, and earnestly desires to be saved. Sin has deeply wounded his conscience; every recollection causes him a fresh pang; and nothing but the healing balm applied by the Great Physician can give him relief. His soul is bowed down by the heavy burden of guilt, and nothing but its removal can give him deliverance. Now none but Christ can satisfy this longing of the awakened soul. He did so effectually when He said to the paralytic, "Thy sins are forgiven thee", and He is still just as able and willing to do so to every sinner who comes to Him by faith.

Jesus Himself said to the Jews: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father . . . and hath given Him authority to execute judgement also, because He is the Son of man" (John 5:22,23,27). And as it is Christ that shall hereafter sit on the throne of judgement, so it is He that now receives the penitent sinner at a throne of grace. Thus Peter testifies, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:30). "This is the record," says John, "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." To bestow pardon, as well as every other blessing pertaining to salvation, belongs to Christ in virtue of His office, and He does not transfer it to any other.

When He sent His disciples forth to preach, "He breathed on them and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:22). But in order to be rightly understood, this must be coupled with His other statement: "All power is given unto *Me* in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the

end of the world” (Mt 28:18-20). From this it is plain that the power of the Lord’s apostles to forgive sins was not authoritative, but only *declarative*. So the High Priest under the law had no power to cleanse the leper, but merely to declare him cleansed after the due observance of the prescribed rites. And it is the same with the ministers of Christ still. We are commissioned to publish the glad tidings of remission of sins through the blood of Christ, even to the chief of sinners.

Still, the forgiveness we preach is not absolute but conditional. While, by Christ’s authority, we declare that “all who believe are justified from all things”, there remains the all-important question for the conscience of each to settle for himself: whether with the heart he has believed unto righteousness. The anxious sinner may still be left in doubt and would wish to have his doubts removed. Where shall he then go? Shall he have recourse to the sacraments, and hope to find in them that sense of forgiveness which he seeks? Alas, this would avail him nothing.

Sacraments, like all the other ordinances of God’s house, are precious only as *means* of grace. When they are observed according to the purpose for which they were instituted, as channels through which Christ conveys His blessing to the souls of His people, they serve a most important end. But whenever they are regarded as substitutes for Christ Himself, they become a delusion and a snare, alike derogatory to the Redeemer’s glory and opposed to the good of those who misuse them. Those who labour under this delusion may run from sacrament to sacrament, like an unblessed spirit walking through dry places, seeking rest and finding none. But a felt need will remain unsupplied in the soul, and the most urgent demands of the awakened conscience will still continue unsatisfied.

The Church of Rome has dexterously availed herself of this craving in the awakened soul, in such a way as to exalt herself and her priesthood. Instead of directing the soul to Christ, she has arrogated to her priests what she calls the power of absolution – the power, not of pointing out the way of forgiveness, or declaring the blessed truth that all are forgiven who cherish repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, but the power of actually pronouncing sentence of acquittal from sin. In the language of her great ecclesiastical council, this power is thus defined: “Our sins are forgiven us by the absolution of the priest. The voice of the priest, who is legitimately constituted a minister for the remission of sins, is to be heard as that of Christ Himself, who said to the lame man, ‘Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee’.”

What is this, but for a poor sinful creature, who stands himself as much in need of pardon as the person whom he misleads, to assume an authority

which no being in the universe but One can assume lawfully? It is to usurp one of the most glorious prerogatives of "God our Saviour". "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses." "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." So exclusively is this the prerogative of God, and so clearly is it shown to be such by man's natural conscience as well as the Bible, that the scribes and Pharisees were shocked at the idea of even Jesus exercising it. "They began to reason, saying, Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?"

They were right in the general truth, for unquestionably no one can forgive sins but God only. He it is against whom we have sinned, and it therefore belongs to Him, not only to say whether sin is to be forgiven at all and on what terms, but also to dispense forgiveness. But while the scribes were right in the general truth, they were wrong in their application of it to Christ. They did not know that He was Immanuel – God in our nature. It is on this that the whole question hinges. It is against God that I have sinned. It is His forgiveness that I need. Condemnation or acquittal by any third party, whether man or angel, is of small consequence indeed. If God justify, who can condemn? But if God condemn, who then can justify? This shuts me up to transact with God Himself in this, the highest of all my interests.

But how can I transact with God? The Bible and my own conscience both tell me that God is "a consuming fire". For a *sinful* creature to approach God directly is to rush into the midst of a consuming fire. But see here the merciful and marvellous provision of the gospel. It reveals a mediator in the person of Immanuel, who unites in Himself all the power of God with all the tender sympathies of man. By a life of unsinning obedience, followed by a death of atoning power, He has in our nature made reconciliation for iniquity in the place of sinners. With the one hand He upholds the pillars of immutable justice, while with the other He sets open the gate of everlasting mercy. Not only so, but He stands at that gate to take the sinner in. None can dispute His power to pardon, for He is not only God equal to the Father, but all power has been given to Him in heaven and in earth. None can doubt His willingness, for He died to redeem.

If there is anyone here sorely pressed with sin, the cry of whose soul is, What must I do to be saved? We point that sinner to Christ, and our answer to him is the same as that which the King of Israel gave when he passed by upon the wall and heard the cry of the woman at the siege of Samaria, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!" He said, "If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? Out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress?"

Let no sinner imagine that, because Christ is no longer personally present

on earth, He is not still accessible to sinners. "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is to bring Christ down from above;) . . . The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach." Let us remember the cure of the centurion's servant (Mt 8:5-13), which was effected without Christ's personal presence. When the centurion came to Jesus, saying, "Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of a palsy, grievously tormented; Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour."

Though Jesus is now exalted, His very exaltation is in order to forgiveness. "Him hath God exalted . . . to give repentance . . . and remission of sins". He is not only represented as waiting to be gracious, but as coming out of His place, walking among the seven golden candlesticks, and through His Word and His appointed ordinances, knocking for admittance at the door of the sinner's heart. He says to everyone whose desire is towards the remembrance of His name, as He did to the blind man who sat by the wayside begging, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy."

2. The nature of forgiveness as dispensed by Christ to the paralytic. We will see how suited it is to the needs and desires of the awakened soul.

(1.) It is a *great* forgiveness, commensurate with the full extent of his guilt. We are not told the number or the aggravations of the sins with which the paralytic was chargeable. But they were all well known to Christ and, when He says, "Thy sins are forgiven thee", He shows him that *all* his sins – original and actual, of omission and commission – were without exception blotted out of the book of God's remembrance and could never rise up in judgement against him any more. And so it is in the case of every penitent sinner who comes to Christ for pardon. The forgiveness is not partial but complete. Not some of his sins only, but all his sins, are blotted out.

This is a point of vast practical importance to the anxious sinner. From the moment that he is truly convinced of sin, he feels that he is a *great* sinner. His sins appear to him more in number than the hairs of his head, and the provocations he has offered to the Holy One greater than the mountains. If you were to suggest to him now that, although he is a sinner, he is no worse than others – for all have sinned – he would at once feel that you were trifling with his soul. And he would tell you that what is pressing him down to the very gates of hell is not that he is a sinner in common with others, but that his sins have been so many, so long-continued and so aggravated that he is re-

duced to the very borders of despair; that he fears there is something special in his case that places him almost beyond the reach of God's mercy.

Now the forgiveness that Christ dispenses meets the needs of such a case, for it covers "all trespasses". Besides the example in our text, other instances of forgiveness are recorded, such as Zaccheus the publican, Saul the persecutor, the woman that was proverbially "a sinner", and the malefactor who was crucified along with our Lord, together with the fearful falls of such men as David and Peter. These show that sins of every varying degree, whether committed before or after conversion, have been forgiven in the past. And these particular cases are accompanied by general invitations addressed to all: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool". "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins", and this is addressed to the betrayers and murderers of our Lord. And it is the express testimony of God Himself that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all* sin", which intimates that as there is no sin, however small, that can be forgiven in any other way, so there is no sin, however great, which the blood of Christ cannot cleanse.

To despair of pardon on this ground is to limit the Holy One of Israel, for with Him there is plenteous redemption; if the sinner is justified at all, he is justified from *all* things. The deepest stains of guilt, as well as slighter spots of defilement, are indeed such as no fuller's soap can purify, but they all disappear before the cleansing virtue of Christ's blood. Those mountains of sin whose summits reach to heaven, as well as smaller hills, all vanish for ever when cast into the deep ocean of infinite love. And the sinner, freely forgiven all trespasses, can say exultingly with Paul, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

Art thou burdened with the power of sin? God hath promised relief: "Sin shall not have dominion over you" (Rom 6:14). Doth the guilt of sin trouble thee? See Isaiah 43:25, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins". Doth the law threaten thee with death for sin? Remember the promise, "There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Rom 8:1). Doth the fear of being separated from communion with Christ trouble thee? See Revelation 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me". Art thou despised? Cast thy eye upon Micah 7:8-9: "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me". Hast thou backslidden? There is a promise: "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand".

Andrew Gray

Job at the End of His Trial¹

William H Green

Job has now come to the end of the third stage of the temptation, the last and most fearful. The struggle has been tremendous. It has been a long and a wearisome conflict, desperately contested. But the issue is glorious. The forces of the enemy are not merely driven back, and left to rally and return to the charge; they are not merely routed and put to an ignominious and disordered flight. They are positively annihilated and the victory is complete and final.

Sublime as was Job's resignation in the first and second stages of his afflictions, it is more sublime now. When his property and his children were all swept from him at a stroke, Job still blessed the name of the Lord, mindful of the fact that the Lord had given what He now took away. When, in addition, his own person was visited with a dreadful and incurable malady, he meekly received the evil at the hands of the Lord, mindful of the good which He had previously bestowed. His constant trust in God rooted itself each time in the past, in the abundance of former mercies; his grateful sense of these was not effaced by all the severity of his present trials. He put his trials in the scales over against the benefits which the Lord had so bountifully conferred upon him, and the latter still largely outweighed the other.

Yet each infliction of evil was an opposing weight, acting with whatever force it possessed in a contrary direction from God's mercies, and to that extent detracting from his sense of His goodness and love. This laid him open to the temptation of Satan. It created the possibility that if weight enough could be accumulated on the side of affliction, it might at length turn the scales the other way. And if this takes place, Job has fallen and Satan has gained the victory. During the most terrible period of his sorrows, when Satan seemed to have summoned every possible influence to depress the scale, Job was indeed hard pressed by his wily and unscrupulous foe and was put to the greatest straits. It was as much as he could do, by straining his strength to the utmost, to maintain the balance on the right side. It was only by the strenuous efforts of a faith which took hold of the unseen, brought to its aid the world of the future and laid its grasp upon the immutable attributes of God Himself – thus pinning the scale down to the everlasting rock – that he could keep the balance on the side of God and piety, against a pressure too great for nature to sustain.

Thus there was, to this extent, some foundation for Satan's malignant

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Argument of the Book of Job Unfolded*. An extract from an earlier part of this book appeared last month.

sneer, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" The enemy had detected a crevice in the structure of Job's faith, into which he hoped to drive a wedge that should cleave the edifice asunder and bring it crumbling down into ruins. Job's sense of God's goodness rested on the benefits received from Him, instead of the divine goodness being itself the fixed foundation and everything received from the hand of God being for that reason counted a benefit. He judged of God by his own partial and defective notion of His dealings, instead of judging of those dealings by his knowledge of God. Job had, in the fierce conflict which Satan had waged against him, been driven by sheer necessity to base his faith on the irremovable foundation, notwithstanding the darkness and confusion of mind which still rested upon the mysterious subject of his sufferings.

But now that Elihu had, as God's messenger of instruction, pointed out to him the gracious ends of affliction, and the Lord had revealed Himself to him in the true glory of His nature, the previous flaw in Job's faith is closed up. The perfections of God have now become his first presupposition, independent of any support to be derived from His particular dealings with him.

Heaven and earth may pass away. All things seen and temporal may fluctuate and change. But the perfections of God abide, incapable of mutation or decay. This is the one fixed point, the basis of all certainty and of all correct judgements. It is, in mathematical phrase, the origin to which everything is to be referred, and from which everything is to be estimated. God must ever act like Himself. Whatever He does must be consistent with His glorious attributes; it must in fact be the outflow of those attributes. The orderings of providence have their spring in the perfections of the ever-blessed God. Sense cannot discern this. But faith affirms it and persistently adheres to it, whatever the outward appearance of things.

This is the lesson which Job has now learned, and hence he retracts all his murmuring words and all that was reproachful to his Maker. He abhors himself for having uttered them; he repents in dust and ashes. He would not now ask as before, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" There is no evil, there can be no evil, from the hand of the Lord. Evil is good when it comes from Him. He no longer puts the benefits received from God in one scale and afflictions in the other; afflictions are put in the same scale with benefits. They too are benefits when God sends them.

Thus, instead of tending to create a counterpoise, they add their weight to that of the obligation previously existing. The nerve of Satan's temptation is now cut completely. Every weight goes henceforth into the scale of God's goodness, and there is no possibility of disturbing the existing predominance. He who has learned to place his sole and undivided trust in God, and to

estimate all things by the standard of His perfection, is beyond the reach of any serious attempt to detach him from the Lord's service. To such a faith Job has risen under the felt power of God's immediate presence. His position is now perfectly impregnable, and Satan can assail him no longer. His spiritual deliverance is complete.

The Lord's purpose in permitting these dreadful sorrows is at length fully accomplished. There is therefore no further occasion for them to continue. Accordingly the Lord now removes them. And first he pronounces in Job's favour and against his friends. "The Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath." They had really accused the providence of God when they professed to defend it. By disingenuously covering up its enigmas and seeming contradictions, they had cast more discredit on it than Job by honestly holding them up to the light. Their denial of its apparent inequalities was more untrue and more dishonouring to God's administration, as it is in fact conducted, than Job's bold affirmation of them.

Even the most startling utterances wrung from him in his bewilderment and sore perplexity were less reprehensible than their false statements and false inferences. In averring that God was treating Job as a gross offender, they indirectly charge Him with injustice and cruelty to His faithful servant. Job's impatient outcries under his sore distress were less offensive to God than these unwarrantable misrepresentations. And now that, humbled and penitent, he had retracted all that he had rashly spoken, everything was forgiven. And everything was forgotten except his present noble confession in which, stricken as he was in the dust and bleeding at every pore, he had placed God upon the throne and submitted without a murmur to His holy will.

The friends of Job, who had thought him an outcast from God's favour, can only be restored to that favour themselves through the intercession of their maligned and injured friend. This intercession is not withheld, for he bears no malice toward them and no resentment for all their ill-treatment. The bitterness that had sometimes broken out in his former speeches is entirely gone. He forgives them as God has forgiven him. And with this renewed evidence of the profit which he has derived from his afflictions, his captivity is turned and his former prosperity is renewed and doubled.

Job is now entirely extricated from Satan's snare and released from his burden of woe. And the riddle is at length solved. The explanation of the sufferings of God's dear children, as suggested by the case of Job, may be embraced in the following particulars. They afford to all gainsayers a palpable test of their integrity. The very intensity of the struggle develops their faith

and other graces, and leads them on to clearer views of heavenly truth. These sorrows are sent on the part of God with a gracious design, and afford the occasion of His revealing Himself to chastened souls with new fulness and power. In consequence of this they are brought nearer to Him than ever before, and their happiness and welfare are proportionally promoted. “Behold,” says the Apostle James (5:11), “we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

The Reformers on Church Government¹

4. The Superintendents

Rev J R Tallach

As noted already, the office of superintendent was set up in the Scottish Church under the *First Book of Discipline*. In arranging for the supply of preachers throughout Scotland, appointments were made to the main cities but, lest the outlying areas be bereft of a gospel witness, some ministers were appointed to provinces or dioceses, as they were called. These areas were 10 in number and covered the whole of Scotland.

The duties of the superintendent were laid down very carefully to prevent their falling into the pattern of “yon idle bishops heretofore”.² He was limited to three or four months in any year in his own parish, in one of the principal towns; the rest of the time he must visit throughout his diocese, preaching at least three times a week, ensuring that the area was provided with ministers or readers, supervising their work and behaviour and taking forward the education of the young and the care of the poor. The supervision, however, was mutual, as the ministers he was supervising might equally examine and judge his actions and complain of his faults and negligence.

Superintendents were appointed in the same way as other ministers, except that in their case the electors were not those in a single congregation but the inhabitants of the diocese, gentlemen and burgesses. The reference in the *First Book of Discipline* to their appointment reads: “Nothing desire we more earnestly than that Christ Jesus be universally once preached through this realm, which shall not suddenly be,” unless superintendents be appointed.³ They were seen as a missionary agency and the *once* in the above quotation

¹The final part of a paper delivered at the 2010 Theological Conference. The last two articles outlined how the Presbyterian system was formed in the Scottish Church.

²J H S Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, Oxford University Press, 1960, p169.

³Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, p170.

speaks of the urgency of the provision which the situation required. Superintendents were appointed under these conditions to the West, Angus, Argyll and the Isles, Lothian, Fife, Strathearn and Perthshire. Three former bishops under the Roman Catholic Church professed conversion and joined the Reformers. They continued in their former dioceses: in Galloway, Orkney and Caithness. These men acted as superintendents and were to stop using the term *bishop* “in regard to their office”.⁴ Of the three converts from Rome, two proved unsatisfactory in that they spent too much time in Edinburgh pursuing other interests, but the overall judgement is that the other superintendents took their duties seriously. Many of the difficulties which arose from these appointments can be traced to the fact that too much was expected of them.

In view of the appointment of the superintendents, the charge has been laid against the early Reformers that they were Episcopalians at heart. However, though A R MacEwen states that Knox did not give the same importance to polity as he gave to doctrine and did not think the form of Church government was necessarily fixed in all times and in all circumstances, it is evident that, like Calvin, he favoured Presbyterianism and that the word *superintendent* was not another name for bishop. In the matter of discipline a bishop would have the power to excommunicate an offender. In the Scottish Kirk, in the ordinary course of events, an offender would be dealt with by his own minister acting with his own kirk session and with the consent of his congregation, with or without the participation of the superintendent of the area.⁵

Referring to the wider duties involved in their being “called as watchmen over His flock”, James Kirk says that “it would be difficult to determine any function performed by a superintendent which could not also be undertaken by another minister who received a short-term commission from the General Assembly to that effect”.⁶ Superintendents were not allowed by the Assembly to admit ministers into the church in their areas “without the assistance of three of their qualified ministers”. The usual reaction of the Assembly in the later 1560s was to appoint a commissioner, where originally a superintendent would have been appointed. Commissioners were simply ministers of the Church assigned to an area, in addition to their own parish, for a fixed term of usually a year. All of these factors lead to the conclusion that the office of superintendent, and bishop as defined by the Episcopalians, were radically different and in any event the office was not renewed in the *Second Book of Discipline* of 1578.

⁴Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, p 179.

⁵James Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, T & T Clark, 1989, p 184.

⁶Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, p 186.

Finally, we may learn from Knox to value every believer and to give every believer his due place. In pursuit of this the Reformers had to fight Episcopacy from without, but later in the Church's history bishops arose from within and threatened its witness. Concerning bishops without and bishops within, may we be ever vigilant and always delivered!

Benefits of the Reformation to Scotland¹

2. A Nation Revolutionised and Reformed

Matthew Vogan

1. A Revolutionised Nation. As the last state reformation in Europe, the Scottish Reformation was remarkably peaceful in its transition: the popish regime crumbled without the scale of brutal response witnessed elsewhere in Europe. As the historian Gordon Donaldson has noted, there were no massacres or wars of religion as in France, few of the horrific executions in England and little of the brutality witnessed in Germany and the Low Countries.²

We therefore use the word *revolution* cautiously and advisedly as meaning broad, fundamental and lasting changes in important aspects of people's behaviour and in major features of society's institutions. In applying the word *revolution*, we cannot emphasise too strongly that the Reformation in Scotland was the work of the Most High in His holy providence, plucking up and pulling down, and building and planting. If we consider the influence of the nobility as a factor in the success of the Reformation, it was the work of God to turn these men from the darkness of Romanism to the truth. John Knox observed that "the thirst of the poor people, as well as of the nobility here, is wondrous great".³

W Stanford Reid wrote: "Of all the countries that accepted the Reformation in the sixteenth century, Scotland was probably the most unlikely. With a turbulent nobility, a corrupt church and a relatively poor economy, there seemed to be little chance that a radical religious and social reform would take place. Yet Scotland experienced a religious and intellectual revolution that drastically altered its whole orientation."⁴ Previously, it was centred around the Roman Church and the traditions of men; now it was centred around God and His Word alone. The English correspondent Thomas Randolph observed this at first hand, commenting that "it is almost miraculous

¹Last month's article provided an Introduction to this Theological Conference paper.

²*The Scottish Reformation*, Cambridge University Press, 1960, p 75.

³Quoted in Iain H Murray, *The Puritan Hope*, Banner of Truth, 1971, p 5.

⁴"The Earls of Argyll and the Reformation", *Scottish Tradition*, vol 17, 1992, pp 1-50.

to see how the Word of God taketh place in this country. They are better willing to receive discipline here than in any country that ever I was in.”⁵

It is hard to overestimate the scale and significance of the radical changes effected with such speed and decisiveness by the Reformation. At a national level, it transformed government and politics, international relations, law and order, poor relief and education. We shall consider some of these in due course.

The extent of the corruptions requiring reform and the degree of reformation achieved are what highlight the revolutionary character of what took place in Scotland. Thomas M’Crie observes that “the corruptions by which the Christian religion was universally disfigured, before the Reformation, had grown to a greater height in Scotland than in any other nation within the pale of the western Church”.⁶

One of the most evident changes to community and family life was that the familiar markers in the calendar such as Romish festivals were swept away as the mere appointments of men, and the Christian Sabbath carefully observed instead. Thomas M’Crie made the following assessment of the importance as well as the national benefits of this change: “This thorough reform” in “abolishing at the Reformation . . . holidays and a multitude of other ceremonies, constitutes the high distinction of Scotland among the Protestant Churches. Its beneficial influence has extended to all departments of society; it has improved our temporal as well as our spiritual welfare.”⁷ The sheer number of holidays was a burden upon productivity whereas the Sabbath was conducive to it.

Previously, the Sabbath had been profaned by manual work at mills and salt-pans, shearing and harvesting, and by holding markets and fairs. Kirk sessions were careful to deal with offenders who profaned it in similar ways, or else by sporting activities or hanging out washing. It was to be kept “straitly”, or strictly, as a day of public and private worship. Sabbath-breakers could expect to be fined as well as to make public repentance. Burgh councils, for their part, ensured church attendance and saw that the Sabbath was not broken. The faithful exercise of discipline bore fruit for some kirk sessions such as that of St Andrews, where by 1600 it was necessary to establish a parallel Sabbath afternoon service.⁸

⁵Quoted in Alec Ryrie, *The Origins of the Scottish Reformation*, Manchester University Press, 2006, p 190.

⁶*Life of John Knox*, 1831, vol 1, p 14.

⁷Quoted in James Gilfillan, “Sketches of Sabbath Literature”, *Anthology Of Presbyterian & Reformed Literature*, vol 5, p 224.

⁸There are numerous further examples of insufficient space for increased congregations from Orkney to Berwickshire. Similar success against Sabbath-breaking can also be identified in Perth, Elgin and Newbattle. Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in*

The scriptural standard of Sabbath observance has been one of the great boundary markers of the Reformation and its benefits in Scotland. There are few more powerful visual indications, therefore, of the extent to which Reformation truth has been trampled under foot in this land than the way in which the Sabbath is entirely profaned for business and pleasure throughout almost the whole land today.

The changes brought about by the Reformation affected the life of the individual citizen from cradle to grave in terms of an entirely different manner of administering baptism, marriage and burial. The individual would also have witnessed a complete change in the nature of the service that they attended, where they were now able to understand the service in their own language (rather than Latin) and were even permitted to participate in the praise. Even the way that the church building was organised presented a powerful visual symbol of change, with the pulpit taking over the central place that the altar had previously occupied. This often meant that the congregation now faced a pulpit placed on the south wall rather than the altar, which had been in front of the east wall. The focus of medieval Romanism was upon the mass, while the focus of the Reformation was upon the Word of God.

It is now increasingly recognised that psalm singing was a crucial factor in the success of the Reformation in Scotland and elsewhere.⁹ This was the way in which the Word of God took hold upon the hearts of a people who were not on the whole able to read it for themselves. Singing was a vital part of the life of society and the home at this time but previously it had been virtually absent from church. Knox tells us of one Elizabeth Adamson, who when dying asked for Psalm 103 to be sung because, she said, “at the teaching of the Psalm, began my troubled soul first effectually to taste of the mercy of my God”.¹⁰

The *First Book of Discipline*, which was the manual of church order introduced by the Reformers, declares that men, women, and children should be exhorted “to exercise themselves in the Psalms, that when the church conveneth and does sing, they may be the more able together with common heart and voice to praise God” (Ninth Head). By the end of the century it could be said that the people in general knew all or at least most of the psalms by heart. An event that demonstrated this was the return to the city, after *Early Modern Scotland*, Yale University Press, 2002, pp 43,45.

⁹See John McCallum, *Reforming the Scottish Parish: The Reformation in Fife, 1560-1650*, Ashgate, 2010; Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism*, pp 71-72; Andrew Petegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp 60,64. Margo Todd suggests that “giving out the line” by the precentor would have helped the congregation to learn the metrical psalms by heart due to the repetition involved.

¹⁰*The History of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland*, 1831, p 84.

enforced exile, of one of Edinburgh's ministers, John Durie. He received a rapturous welcome by a crowd of 2000 who joined in the singing of Psalm 124.

We can compare the Reformation in Scotland with that which took place under Hezekiah's reign: "Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly" (2 Chr 29:36). Scotland saw a sudden, radical and complete transformation. Maitland of Lethington witnessed it first hand and recorded: "It was no small wonder to see what victory the truth obtained by so uniform consent".¹¹ The Covenanter church historian, James Kirkton, wrote that "in Scotland the whole nation was converted by lump; and within ten years after Popery was discharged in Scotland, there was not in all Scotland ten persons of quality to be found who did not profess the true reformed religion, and so it was among the commons in proportion. Lo! Here a nation born in one day, yea, moulded into one congregation, and sealed as a fountain with a solemn oath and covenant: this was singular."¹²

2. A Reformed Nation. The Reformers sought Reformation of the whole of Scotland, which was now the first formally Presbyterian nation. "Christ's religion" alone and no "other face of religion" was to be permitted in the realm.¹³ The *First Book of Discipline* urged it as necessary that Christ's "evangel [or gospel] be truly and openly preached in every kirk and assembly of this realm; and that all doctrine repugnant to the same be utterly suppressed as damnable to man's salvation" (First Head: Of Doctrine).

The *Scots Confession* could claim that "such [true Reformed] kirks we, the inhabitants of the realm of Scotland, professors of Christ Jesus, confess ourselves to have in our cities, towns, and places reformed" (chapter 18). The changes that Calvin had endeavoured to make in doctrine and practice within a city of 10 000 people were in Scotland successfully implemented across a very large land mass with a population of around one million. The Scottish Reformed Church claimed the active allegiance of all citizens within an entirely reformed nation which was the key difference with, for example, the Reformation in Holland.

Some are quick to observe that, while the Reformation created a Protestant

¹¹Peter Lorimer, *The Scottish Reformation: A Historical Sketch*, 1860, p 246.

¹²James Kirkton, *The Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland*, 1817, pp 21-22.

¹³An Act anent the Jurisdiction of the Kirk was passed in December 1567 by the Scottish Parliament, declaring that "there is no other face of Kirk, nor other face of religion, than is presently by the favour of God established within this realm, and that there be no other jurisdiction ecclesiastical acknowledged within this realm, other than that which is, and shall be within the same Kirk, or that which flows therefrom concerning the premises". *The Actis of King James the Sext* (Edinburgh, 1568), ff 12v-13r. This is also quoted in the National Covenant of 1638.

nation, it did not create a nation of Protestants.¹⁴ The Reformers themselves were all too aware that their work was only beginning and accordingly they set out a blueprint for a godly society. They worked to establish, not just church discipline, but a Protestant state with civil laws and punishments in accordance with Scripture. Both Church and civil courts complemented each other in seeking to transform what was (in one historian's words) a "particularly violent and disorderly society".¹⁵ The *First Book of Discipline* draws the distinction between these jurisdictions. "Blasphemy, adultery, murder, perjury" were to be punished by the state. Other sins such as "drunkenness, excess (be it in apparel, or be it in eating and drinking), fornication, oppression of the poor . . . wanton words and licentious living tending to slander, do properly appertain to the Church of God, to punish the same as God's Word commands" (Seventh Head: Of Ecclesiastical Discipline).

In defining the role of those engaged in civil government, the *Scots Confession* emphasised that, "not only they are appointed for civil policy, but also for maintenance of the true religion, and for suppressing of [any] idolatry and superstition whatsoever: as in David, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah, and others, highly commended for their zeal in that case, may be espied" (chapter 24). Among the first concerns of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was that "none be put in judicial offices to be magistrates, as provosts, baillies and officers of towns, excepting them who are also known to be plain and true professors of the evangel" and that this should also extend to judges and the national governing council known as the Lords of Secret Council.¹⁶

In 1564, the General Assembly expressed their concern at the "horrible crimes" abounding "without any correction".¹⁷ The same year, Parliament responded to this pressure from the Kirk to uphold the moral law, and Acts against breaches of the Third, Fourth and Seventh Commandments were passed and posted in every burgh and sheriffdom in the land. This was a new feature and showed the national extent of the application of laws conformable to Scripture. Before the Reformation, the law courts in Scotland were denounced by the poet William Dunbar as corrupt. After the Reformation these were properly established, together with legal literature and education, and the bishops' courts were abolished.

One area where the laws of the nation were reformed according to Scripture was marriage, which is foundational to a properly ordered and godly society.

¹⁴John McCallum, *Reforming the Scottish Parish*, p 1.

¹⁵Michael F Graham, *The Uses of Reform: "Godly Discipline" and Popular Behavior in Scotland and Beyond, 1560-1610*, Brill, 1996, p 3.

¹⁶*The Book of the Universal Kirk of Scotland*, Alexander Peterkin, 1839, pp 3-4.

¹⁷*The Book of the Universal Kirk*, p 29.

The *First Book of Discipline* asserts that marriage, as “the blessed ordinance of God, hath been so contemned and weakened” by “cursed Papistry” (Ninth Head) that no one married could be assured that they would continue to be so if the bishops and prelates wished to dissolve the marriage. The Romish Church before the Reformation had imposed restrictions on who could marry which went far beyond the prohibitions found in Scripture. Even when the relationship was no more than that of godmother or godfather (sponsors at the baptism of an infant) it was treated equally as incest.

Divorce was allowed in Scotland on the grounds of adultery from 1560 and on the grounds of desertion from 1573. The very first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland petitioned the state to make laws according to the prohibitions laid down in Scripture. The *First Book of Discipline* outlines a joint role for the Church and state in ensuring that the honour of marriage is preserved according to Scripture. Perhaps due to the way that marriage was weakened and despised by Romish regulation, adultery had become a widespread evil within the land. It was necessary to urge “that the law may now and hereafter be so established and executed, that this ungodly impunity of sin have no place within this realm” (Ninth Head).

In its canons of 1563 the Roman Catholic Council of Trent thunders anathemas of excommunication against those who say that the Roman Church does not have a right to establish impediments to marriage as it pleases and that only biblical prohibitions may be applied. It should be evident that divorce or the annulment of marriage was a very easy thing to obtain when there were any number of possible impediments. Similar impediments still exist today in the Roman Catholic Church, allowing Church authorities wide latitude in declaring an existing marriage null and void by interpreting canon law in favour of annulment. The effect of this is that, although a couple may have been legitimately married in the eyes of the state and/or a Protestant Church and have subsequently had children, the Roman Catholic Church can declare that the marriage never existed. Richard Bennett estimates that there are over 110 canon laws in relation to marriage which only a Roman Catholic canon lawyer can interpret accurately.¹⁸

When we consider together all of these changes within the nation, we can understand the significance of Roger Mason’s observation that the Reformation redefined “what it meant to be a Scot”.¹⁹ There was a desire that the moral condition of the people should conform to the requirements of God’s Word through godly laws. A new Scotland, a reformed Scotland, had been born.

¹⁸See relevant chapter in Richard Bennett, *Catholicism: East of Eden*, Banner of Truth, 2010.

¹⁹“Usable Pasts: History and Identity in Reformation Scotland”, *The Scottish Historical Review*, 76:1, April 1997, pp 54-68.

Union with Christ¹

Thomas Case

Use 4. O that such as have for many years together sat under the ministry of the gospel of Christ, who to this day are altogether strangers to this blessed union with Christ, would now apply themselves, with all seriousness, to know it – and to know it experimentally. O that they would, with holy Paul, “count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:8) – even this, that they may “be found in Him”, to know Him in this mysterious and blessed union: Christ in them, and they in Christ.

Alas, this is the undoing mistake of thousands who are called Christians: they know somewhat of the history of Christ; they have some notions of Christ in their heads. But this is the precipice on which they ruin themselves: they think they will be saved by a Christ not united to them; they hang upon the outside of the ark; they live upon bare notions: the Son of God took our nature upon Him, died for sins, rose again and is gone up into heaven and sits at God’s right hand; and they therefore conclude they shall be saved. O how they deceive their souls (Jas 1:22)! Christ is the hope of salvation, it is true, but it is not simply Christ in our nature, not simply Christ on the cross, not Christ in the grave, no, not Christ on the throne only, but, says the Apostle, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col 1:27). It would be an easy thing to be saved if a Christ not united to us were all. And I know no reason why reprobate men and devils might not get to heaven on such terms.

Christ must be in us by His Spirit and we must be in Christ by faith, or else our persons and our hope are both reprobate (2 Cor 13:5). If you appear before God’s tribunal in the great day without this union, you will be answered thus, plead what you will, “I never knew you; depart from Me . . .” (Mt 7:21-23, Luke 13:26,27).

Believe this, all you carnal, Christless Christians, and tremble, and swim no longer down the stream of security, lest it empty you forth into the lake of perdition. But work out your salvation with fear and trembling, and give all diligence to make this union with Christ sure to your own souls, that when He shall appear you may also appear with Him in glory (Phil 2:12, Col 3:4). Remember, all your true and solid comfort and rejoicing in life, in death, and at the day of judgment, is all bound up in your union with Jesus Christ, “Christ in you, the hope of glory”.

Use 5. The doctrine of this glorious union with Christ is not more for the

¹Taken, with editing, from *Mount Pisgah*, or *A Prospect of Heaven*, one of two productions of this English Puritan (1598-1682) included in his *Select Works*. A London minister, he was a member of the Westminster Assembly. This extract gives two points of application.

honour of the living than for the comfort of dying saints and of their surviving mourners. Why do you tremble at the thoughts of death, you saints of God? And why do you do what the Jews supposed Mary did: go so often to the sepulchre to weep there? (John 11:31). Behold, your beloved Lazarus “is not dead, but sleepeth” – indeed, what is of an infinitely higher consideration, he sleeps in Jesus. Did he live in Christ? Behold he died in Christ also. Did he die in Christ? Behold he sleeps in Christ. Christ is nearly related to the saints’ dust; their ashes are not laid up in the grave so much as in Christ. Though they should pass through ever so many changes and should be scattered at length into all quarters of the world, He that calls the stars by their own names knows every particle of the dust of their precious bodies, keeps it in His hand, and is as really united to it as to His own human nature in heaven.

This may be as Jonathan’s honey upon the top of the rod. Taste it, O mourners of hope, and your eyes will be enlightened. Do not look on your precious relations, so much as they lie rotting in the grave or turn into dust, as upon their dust laid up, as it were, in the hand of Jesus Christ. He Himself will be responsible for it and bring it forth safely and entirely on the morning of the resurrection; for so it is written: “Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him”.

Obituary

Rev Hugh M Cartwright

It was with a sense of great sadness, and of loss for the Church in Scotland and beyond, that we heard, on 20 September 2011, the news of Rev Hugh Cartwright’s passing, after a brief illness, to his eternal rest.

Hugh MacLean Cartwright, the eldest son of godly parents Thomas and Margaret Cartwright (nee MacLean), was born on 22 October 1943 in Motherwell, Lanarkshire, where his father was serving as a sergeant in the Royal Artillery. At the end of the war the family lived for a short time near his mother’s home in Dorcas, Inverness-shire, before moving to Kennoway, Fife, where young Hugh’s education began. In 1956, when he was about 13, the Cartwrights returned to Inverness-shire, where the rest of his early education took place, first at Glen Urquhart Secondary School, near where his parents resided, and then, from the age of 15, at Inverness Royal Academy.

Although Mr Cartwright did not speak much about those early years of his life, it would appear from his comment at the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1997 that it was in 1955, as he put it, “grace enabled me to entrust myself to Christ”. It was probably not too long after this that Mr Cartwright

began to have thoughts about the gospel ministry for, when we follow his career after his secondary education, we find him embarking on six further years of study, three at the University of Aberdeen, where he took his MA degree in 1966, and then three more at the Free Church College, Edinburgh.

On completion of his studies, Mr Cartwright was ordained and inducted to the pastoral charge of Ferintosh Free Church in the Black Isle, where he faithfully laboured for 21 years, assisted by his like-minded, devoted wife Mina Mackintosh, whom he married on 4 July 1969, shortly before his induction. These were happy years and the writer has fond memories of four years under a rich ministry, as well as of much kindness, encouragement and hospitality in the Ferintosh manse.

In 1990, when the need of a professor to fill the vacant Chair of Church History and Church Principles arose at the Free Church College, Mr Cartwright's abilities and gifts were recognised and he was duly appointed. Three years later he was appointed to the further position of Assistant Clerk to the General Assembly.

Everything would suggest that Mr Cartwright enjoyed those early years in the College, and his high-quality teaching and warm pastoral care were much appreciated by the students. As time went by, however, his position as a professor proved difficult, as Mr Cartwright felt obliged to support the investigation of allegations made regarding the moral conduct of one of his fellow professors. This stand resulted in him being censured by the General Assembly and removed from committees within the Free Church.

In 1998, with no end to the worsening crisis in the Free Church in sight, Mr Cartwright resigned his Chair and applied to the Free Presbyterian Church to be received as a minister. While, no doubt, there were some who thought that Mr Cartwright's leaving the Free Church and entering the Free Presbyterian Church was simply his getting away from the difficult position he was in, we do not believe that this was the case; nor do we believe that he ever regretted the decision which he took.

In a letter of February 1998 to the writer, which I am sure he would not mind me quoting, Mr Cartwright states, "In God's providence the Free Presbyterian Church has been freed from the elements which were unhappy with her position and I hope that her unqualified subscription will provide a rallying ground for others. The Formula is identical. The only additional question relates to approval of the 1893 Deed of Separation. 105 years on, looking at it in the light of the situation in the Free Church today, I find it reflecting my own attitude to those in charge of the judicatories of the Free Church today, and have come to the solemn conclusion that, for me, the time to take this step has come."

Mr Cartwright was warmly welcomed by the Free Presbyterian Church and was inducted to the vacant congregation in Gilmore Place, Edinburgh, later in 1998. The respect with which he was regarded within our Church was reflected by his appointment as Theological Tutor in Greek and New Testament, in 2000. He also became a regular contributor of articles to *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*.

Although Mr Cartwright did not naturally possess a strong voice, his sermons were most carefully and thoughtfully constructed and relied for their force on the clear argument and warm experimental content of the message. Such a ministry was greatly appreciated in Edinburgh and in the wider Church, and under this ministry – along with warm pastoral care – his congregation in Gilmore Place, which was largely made up of young people, almost trebled in size.

On 22 September, 2007 a shadow was cast over Mr Cartwright's life in the sudden and unexpected death of his beloved wife Mina. In a letter written shortly afterwards he writes of the great support Mina had been to him throughout his ministry. He also spoke of his congregation as having "enveloped me in love and prayer". This love continued to be shown in the years that followed, when every Sabbath evening the young people would gather at his manse for fellowship.

Despite his handicap, which became increasingly difficult latterly (in infancy he suffered from polio, which left him being semi-crippled all his life), Mr Cartwright continued to assist at communion seasons throughout the bounds of the Church. He assisted in Dingwall on the first Sabbath of August 2011, and it was only on phoning him after his return to Edinburgh that the writer gathered that there was a serious health problem. Mr Cartwright managed to take the services in his own congregation on August 14. In the evening he preached on the words of Elijah in 1 Kings 18:21: "How long halt ye between two opinions?" and concluded with the urgent command of God to repent. This was to be his last sermon.

Soon afterwards he was admitted to hospital, where his condition rapidly worsened until, on September 20, he departed to enjoy the rest that remains for the people of God. On September 28 a large number from all parts and all denominations gathered in Edinburgh to the funeral, where the grief that was evident reflected the fact that many felt they had lost, not just a minister, but a true friend and brother in the Lord.

"Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men" (Ps 12:1).

(Rev) W Weale

Book Review

Smooth Stones Taken From Ancient Brooks, *Selections from the Writings of Thomas Brooks* by C H Spurgeon, published by the Banner of Truth Trust in their Puritan Paperbacks series, 197 pages, £5.75, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

This compilation of quotations was gleaned from the writings of the well-known Puritan writer Thomas Brooks by C H Spurgeon and first published in 1855. The work will already be familiar to a number of our readers but we are glad that this new edition has been produced by the Banner of Truth Trust in their Puritan Paperbacks series.

Thomas Brooks' writings on practical and experimental themes have proved helpful to many over the years and we hope that this collection will be used by the Lord to continue to bring the wisdom and skill of a master spiritual physician to needy souls. This work clearly shows how gifted Brooks was in the use of memorable language and vivid illustration. It is rather a pity that the quotes were not referenced or laid out in a more thematic order when originally compiled but, nevertheless, one may take even a page or a few pages at a time and find the variety of matter very stimulating for devotion and further reflection.

A few examples may suffice to whet the appetite for more. Concerning the sympathy of Christ exhibited in Isaiah 63:9, Brooks writes, "The Lord Jesus shares with saints in their afflictions . . . It is between Christ and His Church as between two lute-strings – no sooner one is struck, but the other trembles." He offers comfort to believers lacking assurance with the following: "Doubtless, when the soul cleaves to Christ in the face of all afflictions and difficulties, this carries with it very great evidence of its interest in Christ. . . . Christ cannot, Christ will not throw such into hell that hang about Him, that cleave to Him." Practical teaching abounds here, for example: "Clothes and company do oftentimes tell tales in a mute but significant language". On the subject of prayer, Brooks comments, "Private prayer is a golden key to unlock the mysteries of the Word unto us. The knowledge of many choice and blessed truths are but the returns of private prayer, The Word dwells most richly in their hearts who are most in pouring out their hearts before God in their closets."

(Rev) A W MacColl

The doctrine of the atonement is put in its proper light only when it is regarded as the central truth of Christianity and the great theme of Scripture. The principal object of revelation was to unfold this unique method of reconciliation by which men, once estranged from God, might be restored to a right relation, and even to a better than their primeval standing.

George Smeaton

Notes and Comments

Christian Britain

The Prime Minister, David Cameron, surprised many people by declaring, in a speech in Oxford in December, that Britain is “a Christian country”. Mr Cameron was speaking on the occasion of the four-hundredth anniversary of the Authorised Version. He commented on the immense influence that this Version has had on the English language, on the British constitution and parliamentary democracy, and on morality and “values” in Britain. It was in relation to the third of these points that he described Britain as a Christian country.

The point is an interesting one and on the whole, we think, valid. The effects of the Reformation and the subsequent dissemination of the Word of God throughout the British nation are still clearly discernible. Indeed they are strikingly obvious when Britain is compared with certain other countries which might be described as Muslim, Hindu, or Roman Catholic. The standards of kindness, fairness, industry, unselfishness and honesty are far from what they should be in Britain but they are far better than they might be, and they compare favourably with those in many parts of the world.

One evidence of this is the desire of people from different parts of the world to live in Britain. They are attracted, not simply by the free health care and the sometimes-ludicrous benefit system, but by the general state of society. We were reading recently about the eagerness of Germans at the end of the Second World War to surrender to the advancing British and American armies rather than to the Russians, and we would like to think that some of the compassion that the Germans were hoping for still remains two generations later.

Mr Cameron’s statement was greeted by a predictable storm of complaints from the atheistic sections of society. In recent years, militant atheists have done much to undermine the legacy of Christianity in Britain with their perversion of equality and human rights which goes by the name of “political correctness”. Increasingly we have been experiencing what atheistic society might be like. Its main features seem to be selfishness; unfairness, especially towards Christians; immorality, in the promotion of homosexuality and pornography, and in an antipathy to marriage; and the shedding of blood through abortion and euthanasia. Probably most atheists, if they made the experiment, would find that they would rather live in the “Christian Britain” of 2012 than in a society in which their own evil principles were more fully worked out.

The United Kingdom is Christian in her constitution, has the remnants of a Christian ethos, contains many nominal Christians, and also has not a few, we would hope, of the true people of God. But she is far from being the

Christian nation that we would desire. We seek the repeal of the wicked laws of recent years, the purging of the national Churches of false shepherds and enemies of Christ, the filling of the places of worship with multitudes of God-fearing people, the discountenancing of false religion, and the honouring of Christ in public places such as schools, law courts, and the Houses of Parliament. In short, we are pursuing the aims of the National Covenant of 1638 and the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643.

We are glad that Mr Cameron made his remark and spread dismay in the ranks of the ungodly. But the truth is that Britain falls far short of what she has been as a Christian nation, and infinitely far short of what she ought to be. “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Mt 6:10).

DWBS

Lord Falconer’s Commission Recommends Assisted Suicide

The euthanasia lobby in the UK has fought persistently to have the blanket prohibition on assisted suicide lifted. It is determined to have its way by fair means or foul, as is shown by the recently-published final Report of the Commission on Assisted Dying chaired by Lord Falconer, a former Lord Chancellor.

The findings are what might be expected, given that Lord Falconer has long advocated changing the law to make assisted suicide legal, that nine of the 11 commissioners (chosen by himself) are actively in favour of euthanasia, that the Commission was sponsored by Dignity in Dying (formerly the Voluntary Euthanasia Society) not by the Government, and that it was funded by two prominent supporters of Dignity in Dying, Sir Terry Prachett and Bernard Lewis. So, yes, the Commission states there is a case for legislating for assisted suicide.

It is not surprising that more than 40 organisations, including the British Medical Association refused to give evidence to the Commission, believing it to be biased, lacking in transparency and quite unnecessary. It was unnecessary, argues Dr Peter Saunders of the Christian Medical Fellowship, because in 2005 a House of Lords Select Committee carried out an official parliamentary inquiry into assisted suicide which covered some 860 pages in Hansard, had 48 groups or individuals give evidence, with 88 witnesses giving written evidence. “Falconer’s enquiry, in comparison, was not only unbalanced but miniscule,” says Saunders.

Parliament has refused three times in recent years to change the law, but, as Christian Concern says, “Lord Falconer and his allies know that change comes through persistence”. Baroness Hollins, president-elect of the British Medical Association is certainly correct in saying, “We risk sliding towards a situation in which euthanasia is not just legal, but normal – not just for the

sick, but for the old, or simply the inconvenient”. We pray that Lord Falconer and his allies will be defeated. “Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail” (Ps 9:19).

NMR

Judge Moves to Mend Marriage

It is a major move in the right direction. A High Court judge, Sir Paul Coleridge, has taken steps to launch a pro-marriage pressure group, The Marriage Foundation, which is to be established this spring. He told couples contemplating divorce: “My message is, Mend it, don’t end it”.

The initiative has the support not only of leading legal figures but also of many MPs. Julian Brazier MP said, “This can only help make the political and legal establishment aware of the importance of marriage. Too much family law has been driven by judges for the past two generations. The courts brought in no-fault divorce, marginalising the rights and wrongs of the behaviour of husbands and wives, well before Parliament considered it.”

Mr Justice Coleridge said, “Over 40 years of working in the family justice system, I have seen the fallout from these broken relationships. . . . There are an estimated 3.8million children currently caught up in the family justice system. I personally think that’s a complete scandal. . . . I am unashamedly advocating marriage as the gold standard for couples where children are involved.”

Labour leader Ed Miliband and Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg have dismissed the idea of adjusting the tax system to encourage the institution of marriage. But we hope the Prime Minister will keep his pledge to give tax breaks to married couples.

Our society has for too long lost sight of the divine purpose of marriage. It is not only the best environment in which to bring up children, but, more fundamentally, it “was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the increase of mankind with legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed; and for preventing of uncleanness,” as *The Westminster Confession of Faith* so admirably sums up the teaching of Scripture.

NMR

Protestant View

Misguided Co-operation with Roman Catholicism

At the time of writing, Mitt Romney, an ardent member of the Mormon sect, is in the lead to be chosen by the Republican Party to run for the USA presidency in November. Evangelicals in the Party are anxiously looking for another Republican to challenge Romney, but their only realistic options are Rick Santorum and Newt Gingrich – both Roman Catholics.

One of America's leading conservative spokesmen, Gary Bauer, the Protestant president of American Values (which is "committed to defending life, traditional marriage, and equipping our children with" conservative values), has openly endorsed Rick Santorum because of his "commitment to defending American families and defending the sanctity of life". This apparent alliance of the "Christian Right" and Roman Catholics is surprising in view of, for instance, the strenuous endeavours of Protestants, just decades ago, to prevent the election of Roman Catholic John Kennedy as President.

It seems wise to many Protestants to work with Roman Catholics in challenging such evils as abortion, erosion of family values, euthanasia and same-sex marriage. But such Protestants have lost sight of other evils – evils inherent in Roman Catholicism, which are not only abominable to God but also indicate that separation from Rome, not co-operation with her, is what is called for.

Take, for example, what Rome calls "the holy sacrifice of the mass", an evil which is the very core of the system. How unspeakably offensive to the blessed Saviour that the once-for-all atoning sacrifice He offered on Calvary is supposedly offered again in every mass. A Roman Catholic catechism states, "The Holy Mass is one and the same Sacrifice with that of the Cross, inasmuch as Christ, who offered himself, a bleeding victim, on the Cross to his heavenly Father, continues to offer himself in an unbloody manner on the altar, through the ministry of his priests".

How right our Reformers were to describe the mass as "blasphemy". To co-operate with Roman Catholicism in combatting moral evils is to give it a certain credence, which its false doctrines and unscriptural practices show is completely unwarranted. It is also disloyal to the Lord Jesus Christ, because, as the *Confession of Faith* says, the so-called sacrifice of the mass "is most abominably injurious to Christ's one only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect".

NMR

Church Information

Committee Meetings

Synod committees will meet, DV, in Inverness Free Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, March 20, as follows:

10.00 - 10.30 Church Interests Committee

10.30 - 12.00 Training of the Ministry Committee

12.00 - 1.00 Sabbath Observance Committee

2.00 - 3.00 Outreach Committee

2.00 - 5.00 Finance Committee

- 3.00 - 5.00 Religion and Morals Committee
- 6.00 - 7.30 Publications and Bookroom Committee
- 7.30 - 8.30 Welfare of Youth Committee
- 7.30 - 8.30 Dominions and Overseas Committee

(Rev) John MacLeod, Clerk of Synod

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Northern: At Dingwall, on Tuesday, February 28, at 2 pm.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Wednesday, February 22, at 4.30 pm.

Western: At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, February 28, at 11 am.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, March 27, at 11 am.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, March 13, at 11 am.

Auckland Congregation

Following the ordination and induction of Rev Jett Smith, the Australia and New Zealand Presbytery authorised the Auckland Deacons' Court to place this notice in *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*. Should any of our people desire to assist the congregation in meeting costs of the relocation and establishment of the new minister and his family, they may do so through the General Treasurer. The Auckland congregation wishes to record its gratitude for all support given so far.

C Van Kralingen, Congregational Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: The Barn Chapel, Bury St Edmunds, £85; Anon, for African Missions, £245; Anon, for Thembeiso Home, £200; Anon, for Kenya Maize Fund, £50.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Assynt: Anon, £64.50 per WC.

Dingwall: Friend, Caithness, £10; Friend, Caithness, £10 per Rev NMR.

Duirinish: Glendale Friends, £20 per RAC.

Inverness: Mr N Pearce, Cymru, £123. *TBS:* R MacDonald, £5, £5, £5, £5, £10, £5; E Nicolson, £250; D Nicolson, £50; Anon, £10, £15. *Where Most Needed:* Friend, £20. *Bus Fund:* Anon, £12, £20, £30, £20, £30, £20, £20; C MacDonald, £20, £30, £20.

Lochbroom: Friend, Elgin, £30.

North Harris: Anon, for funeral expenses, £40; Mrs S, £20; EMI, £20, both in appreciation of AV Bibles; C Morrison, £15 per Rev JBJ. *Petrol Fund:* Anon, £20.

North Tolsta: Mrs MacLeod, £35; Family of the late Jessie Morrison, £200; Anon, £100; Campbell, Glen, £20. *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £20, £10; Campbell, Glen, £20. *Sustentation Fund:* Mrs MacKenzie, £100. *TBS:* Anon, £10.

North Uist: Friend, £200; Family of the late Roddy MacCuish, £200; Friend, £500.

South Harris: AR, £500; MAM, £171.89; CM, £300; JF, £286.49, all in memory of Miss K A Ross. *Communion Expenses:* CM, Stornoway, £40.

Staffin: Friend of the Cause, Stornoway; Anon, £20, £40, £40. *Manse Fund:* Anon, £50, £200; Anon, North Tolsta, £195; B & Mrs G, £50; G Sharp & family, Ps 60:4, £300; Anon, Glasgow, £2200; Anon, Wick, £20 per Rev WAW. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £400. *TBS:* M & MR, £40, 40.

Uig: *Congregational Funds:* Mrs A Gessesse, Edinburgh, £300 per WC.

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

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

Bracadale: Struan: Sabbath 12 noon; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.

Breasclete: no services meantime.

Dingwall: Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, Dingwall, 10 Achany Rd, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nmross2001@yahoo.co.uk.

Dornoch: Sabbath 11.30 am. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.

Dundee: Manse. No F P Church services.

Edinburgh: 63 Gilmore Place, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 0131 447 1920. Contact Mr I R MacLeod; tel: 0131 334 4057.

Farr (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon (other than second and fourth Sabbaths of month), 6 pm. Thursday 7.30 pm. **Tomatin:** second Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** fourth Sabbath 12 noon. Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.

Fort William: Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.

Gairloch (Ross-shire): Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.

Glasgow: St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev Roderick MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.

Greenock: 40 East Hamilton Street, Sabbath 2.30 pm.

Halkirk: Sabbath 11.30 am, 5 pm; Thursday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01847 831758. **Wick:** Church; **Thurso:** Church; **Strathly:** Church; no F P Church services.

Harris (North): Tarbert: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm. **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7 pm. 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. **Sheilebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (except first Sabbath of month). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh, Sheilebost, Strond** and **Geocrab** as intimated. Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Leverburgh, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.

Inverness: Chapel Street, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA, 11 Auldcastle Road, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.

Kinlochbervie: Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.

Kyle of Lochalsh: Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.

Laide (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.

Lochcarron: Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.

Lochinver: Sabbath 12 noon. Manse tel: 01571 844484.

Ness: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.

North Tolsta: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, F P Manse, North Tolsta, HS2 0NH; tel: 01851 890286.

North Uist: Bayhead: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS; tel: 01876 510233.

Oban: Church and Manse. No F P services at present.

Perth: Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr J N MacKinnon; tel: 01786 451386.

Portree: Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.

Raasay: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.

Shieldaig: Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6 pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.

Staffin: Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 9JX; tel: 01470 562243.

Stornoway: Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.

Tain: Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.

Uig (Lewis) Miavaig: Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 672251.

Ullapool: Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.

Vatten: Sabbath 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). **Glendale, Waternish:** As intimated. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.

England

Barnoldswick: Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Contact Mr R Middleton, 2 Emerald Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 4ND. Tel: 01270 761673. Manse tel: 01282 851782.

Broadstairs: Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peters Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.

London: Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU. Tel: 0208 309 1623.

Northern Ireland

Larne: Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J L Goldby MA, 23 Upper Cairncastle Road, Larne BT40 2EF. Tel: 02828 274865.

Canada

Chesley, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 7 pm; Wednesday 8 pm. Contact: Mr David Kuiper, Tel: 519 363 0367. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

Toronto, Ontario: Church and Manse. No F P Church services at present.

Vancouver, British Columbia: Contact: Mr John MacLeod, 202-815 4th Avenue, New Westminster, V3M 1S8. Tel: 604-516-8648.

USA

Santa Fe, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith, 13732 West 6th Street, Santa Fe, 77517. Tel: 409 927 1564. Manse tel: 409 925 1315.

Australia

Grafton, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev E A Rayner BA, 23 Nairn Terrace, Junction Hill 2460 (mail to: PO Box 1171 Grafton, 2460). Tel: 02 6644 6044.

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765. Tel. 02 9627 3408; e-mail: sydneyfpcchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

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

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact: Dr G Cramp. Tel: 02 7454 2722.

Tauranga: Girl Guide Hall, 17th Avenue, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Dick Vermeulen. Tel: 075443677.

Wellington: 4 Rewa Terrace, Tawa. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; 3rd Wednesday of the month (not secondary school holidays) 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Hank Optland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743. Tel: 02 7432 5625.

Singapore

Singapore: Sabbath: 9.30am and 5.30pm; Wednesday: 7.45pm. Room: "Tanglin I/II" (Level 2), 60 Stevens Road, Singapore 257854. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, 4 Chuan Place, Singapore 554822. Tel: (65) 6383 4466, fax: 6383 4477, e-mail: byong1@singnet.com.sg.

Ukraine

Odessa: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D Levytsky; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytsky@gmail.com.

Zimbabwe

Bulawayo: Lobengula Township, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo. Rev S Khumalo, F P Manse, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo. Tel: 00263 9407131.

Ingwenya: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean. Postal Address: Ingwenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo.

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

New Canaan: Church: Rev Z Mazvabo. Postal Address: Private Bag 615, Zvishavane. Tel 00263 512196.

Zenka: Church. Rev M Mloyi. Postal Address: Private Bag T5398, Bulawayo. Cell phone: 0026311 765032.

Kenya

Sengera: Rev K M Watkins, PO Box 3403, Kisii; e-mail: watkinskenya@access350.co.ke. Tel: 00254 733 731002.

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