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“Thy God Reigneth”

It was to a people drifting further and further from God that Isaiah was sent with his prophecies. And, as they gave themselves more and more to sin – idolatry and Sabbath breaking and much more – the fulfilment of those prophecies which spoke of captivity loomed ever closer. Yet the captivity was by no means a final judgement; there was to be a return. How wonderful would be the message that the Persian King Cyrus, the new ruler of Babylon, had decreed to set the captives free! How welcome the messenger that would come over the mountains around Jerusalem with news of the wonderful deliverance! This seems to be the picture drawn in the words: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” (Is 52:7). Good tidings indeed! It was most certainly a message of deliverance, which indicated that the God of Zion was ruling over everything. Notwithstanding the pain of all that had happened, events had never run out of His control.

Yet the return from the captivity is not so much in view in this prophecy as what was revealed long afterwards, in the skies over Bethlehem, when the angel declared: “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10,11). Then a multitude of the heavenly host joined in the praise to add: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth *peace*, good will toward men”. In David’s city of Bethlehem, One had been born to sit on his throne who had already been revealed in another of Isaiah’s prophecies: “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called . . . The mighty God . . . The Prince of Peace” (Is 9:6). And as Calvin indicates in his commentary, *son* here “can mean none else than *the Son of God*”.

The One born in Bethlehem is indeed the Son of God, who came to bring peace, to reconcile sinners to the God against whom they have sinned. Thus Paul declared that He “made peace through the blood of His cross”; He died as a propitiation, to take away what would cause the anger of God to go out

against sinners. He endured that wrath and, in doing so, made it possible for sin to be forgiven. So, when sinners believe in Christ, there is peace between them and their Creator; they will never be condemned.

In Christ's sufferings, it may have seemed that evil was triumphing and that the devil was getting the victory. But, even then, it could emphatically be said to Zion: "Thy God reigneth". "Though He was crucified through weakness" (2 Cor 13:4), He continued to reign as king. So He fulfilled what He said about His life: "No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:18). It was the eternal King who died on the cross and rose on the third day triumphant over death; in it all He was acting for His Church. And they will all rise again on the last day when He will call them from their graves. Then they will enjoy their eternal reward as the loyal subjects of King Jesus.

During that whole period from Christ's resurrection till the general resurrection at the end of time, the Church's King reigns. Time and again it may seem that everything is spiralling out of control. Today, for instance, Christ's kingdom seems to be fighting a losing battle against the forces of the kingdom of darkness, when evil is so often declared to be good, and good evil. Iniquity abounds and unbelief is rampant, as almost everyone within the professing Church and in the wider world does what is right in their own eyes. Yet, whatever the spiritual state of the Church, the message rings clearly through the ages: "Thy God reigneth".

Christ Himself is *the* Messenger, the One who could say, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives" (Is 61:1,2). Thus He came to that immoral woman in Sychar, one who was very willingly being led captive by Satan; He declared to her the glad tidings of salvation; He revealed Himself to her. She was then reconciled to God; she submitted to King Jesus; she was set free to obey His commandments. Then she could say indeed, as she worshipped the Messenger who had revealed Himself to her: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation".

It was indeed a day of Christ's power when He made the woman of Samaria willing to enter His kingdom. And, though now exalted to heaven, Christ still makes sinners willing to submit to Him. The main means He uses is the proclamation of the good tidings of salvation by His messengers. He sent forth the first generation of preachers with the words: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matt 28:18). The King has promised to be with His messengers – always.

Ministers of the gospel in every generation have behind them the authority of the great King; they are His ambassadors. Through them, the King is putting His purposes into effect. As they proclaim the good news of salvation – that Christ Jesus came into the world to bear the sins of many and thus to reconcile sinners to Himself – and as these truths are applied by the Holy Spirit, so sinners are made true subjects of this King. The assurance, “Thy God reigneth”, was intended to encourage the Church both in Isaiah’s time and during the captivity. But not only in biblical times. The Church in every generation, right down to the end of time, is to receive consolation from these very words. She is to believe that her King will always continue to use, to a greater or lesser extent, the preaching of the gospel to bring sinners “from the power of Satan unto God” (Acts 26:18).

In the apostolic age “it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor 1:21), and the Church today is to expect her King to make faithful preaching a means of accomplishing His purposes. The world, educated and uneducated, may despise preaching; it may despise the Bible, God’s messengers and the King Himself. But the King’s purposes will without question be fulfilled, and these purposes include the bringing of multitudes of sinners into His kingdom through the preaching of the gospel – making known that there is peace through the blood of the cross. And every such sinner may say, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings” – speaking not merely of the divine Messenger, but also His ambassadors. But it might seem unreasonable to refer Isaiah’s words to these ambassadors if Paul had not thus quoted them: “How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*” (Rom 10:14,15).

Yet, while that is so, all the praise and thanks and honour are to be given to the King Himself. But what need to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out many more men to proclaim the message of peace to a lost world! And what need also to plead that the preaching of Christ’s ambassadors everywhere would be so blessed to the hearts of multitudes of sinners that they would yield allegiance to the King of Kings! Then Satan’s kingdom would be seriously weakened; unbelief would retreat; iniquity would hide its face for shame; and Christ would be acknowledged in all parts of the world as the King He indeed is. But in the meantime let the children of God not despair; let them take a firm, trustful grasp of the fact: “Thy God reigneth”.

The Universal Calls of the Gospel (2)¹

A Sermon by John Bonar

Proverbs 8:4,5. *Unto you, O men, I call; and My voice is to the sons of man. O ye simple, understand wisdom; and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.*

2. The ground on which sinners are thus called, and the warrant they have for instant compliance with that call. Two things are evidently required in order that all may have full warrant to comply with the call: (1) that there should be a Saviour provided and (2) that His salvation should be freely offered to us. Christ is an all-sufficient Saviour – having all that sinners can need. Christ as thus all-sufficient is freely offered to all, and this offer of Christ is conveyed to us upon the testimony of God; it comes to each as “the word of salvation” sent to himself.

The call to come is thus itself the assurance of welcome. As it would have been presumption to come without an invitation, so it is presumption to hesitate when that invitation is sent. As it might have been a question whether *we* had been meant if only some had been invited, so there is no room for hesitation when the voice is to the “sons of man”. As it would have been a dark thing for us if none but those who had some previous good thing about them had been called, so it is most blessed for us that the call is addressed by the authority of Him who calls to the lost, to the perishing, to the condemned, to sinners, even the chief. And as surely as these words describe our true state and condition, so surely does the call of the gospel reach unto us, unto all of us.

This seems a most full and most blessed provision, meeting exactly the state of those who are utterly lost. But many who would be wise above what is written are not satisfied with this. Those who think that universal commands imply universal power of our own, to comply with these commands, think also that universal offers imply universal atonement as the ground of these offers. Those who think that the call of God cannot be consistently addressed to men, if they cannot of themselves comply, think also that the salvation of Christ cannot be consistently offered to all unless the atonement was made alike for all – alike for those that perish and for those that shall be saved. In a word, they think that God’s calling supposes ability in all, and that God’s offering salvation supposes redemption wrought out for all.

Such men, however, feel that they cannot say this of redemption, viewed as actual deliverance from the punishment and power of sin, without being

¹This is the second half of a sermon, continued from last month, which is reprinted with slight editing from *The Free Church Pulpit*, vol 1. The first head of the sermon was the call of the text to spiritual duty, as addressed to all men.

shut up to universal salvation, and soon cut down the offer of the gospel to the offer of pardon. Feeling that they cannot say of the righteousness of Christ in its glorious fullness – of His active and passive obedience – what they say so boldly of His sufferings and death, they separate these and cut down the ground of the gospel offer to the death of Christ. Feeling that they cannot even say that this is universal in the way of a vicarious sacrifice and real satisfaction, they cut this down next and say that the death of Christ does not secure any saving benefit to any, and is as much endured for the lost as for the saved. And finally, feeling that anything whatever might hamper them, they get quit of all by saying that the atonement is a great fact – a “general something” – equally done for all, but not securing saving blessings, or any blessings, to any; it is as certainly, as fully, wrought out for Judas, who perished, as for Paul, who is saved.

Having thus, with impious hands, parted the seamless robe of Christ’s righteousness and separated what God has joined, and then deprived even that which remained of any definite object – of any special design or saving power – to a troubled soul, it really does not matter much what they say of it or what they do with it. What such a soul needs is not something unconnected with salvation, but something bringing salvation. What such a soul needs is not a death only, but a life; not an atoning sacrifice only, but a perfect righteousness; not a sacrifice on earth only, but a prevailing intercession in heaven also; not a crucified Christ only, but a risen, exalted and reigning Christ also. What such a soul needs is Christ as a Redeemer in all the fullness of His offices; and what he needs to know is whether *this Christ* is offered to him on the authority of God.

Now we dare not say that Christ died for all in the same sense. We dare not pry into the secret book of God and say that Christ’s death was equally designed, in all that it did, for all. We dare not tear the robe of Christ’s righteousness. We dare not separate between His sacrifice and His intercession. We dare not measure what God has left general or make universal what God has made definite. We dare not say that Christ died as much for Judas and for all who perish as He did for Paul and for all who in heaven are recording for ever His grace in loving them and giving Himself for them. But we dare say that Christ is offered to all – freely, truly and fully. We dare say that God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, and not imputing to men their trespasses; and, as ambassadors of Christ – yea, as if God did beseech men by us, as in Christ’s stead – we do beseech men to be reconciled to God. We dare say that, as there is nothing between us and hell – absolutely nothing but the mortal breath of this life, which may every moment be stopped – so there is nothing, absolutely nothing, between us and Christ. We dare say that

He stands at the door and knocks and that, if any man will open, He will come in and dwell with him.

But here a proud objector will triumphantly say, and a trembling soul will sometimes also anxiously ask, How can you consistently offer what is not really designed to be given? We answer: (1.) If the design of God actually to bestow what He offers, and to put everyone to whom the offer comes into possession, must be *previously* known, there could be no probation and no moral government of God at all. (2.) This is a difficulty that lies against every system, and equally against every system which acknowledges the certain foreknowledge of God – indeed against every system but the God-denying one of the fool, which says there is no God. (3.) Those who make this objection have no advantage in point of a full, free and direct offer of salvation; even they cannot say that all receive salvation; even they cannot deny that God from all eternity knows who shall be saved; even they cannot say that God designs either the death of Christ or aught else to save those who from all eternity He knew would not be saved. And, being as ignorant of God's foreknowledge as we are, they can as little assure anyone *beforehand* as to what is the purpose of God. (4.) Our views of the nature of the atonement and the foreordination of God do not in the least affect our free and full offer of the gospel to all, because we do what God has commanded us to do, knowing that He has commanded it, and that He will do as He has said, and that whosoever believes shall be saved.

But an objector may say, You offer what is not there. There is nothing in your system except an offer; there is nothing behind it; there is no reality. But where is it, we ask, that there is nothing? Is it in the original design and eternal purpose of God? Or is it in the work of Christ that there is nothing? There is glorious sufficiency in it. The atonement is complete; nothing needs to be added to it. "His work is perfect" – the righteousness is perfect; the intercession is all-prevailing, *to the very uttermost*. Or finally, is it in the offer that there is nothing? There is the most blessed certainty in it – the largest, the fullest extent in it – and what more could there be in any offer?

But proud man returns and asks, How can you sincerely offer what you say it may not be God's design actually to bestow? And growing bolder, he says, How can God offer to all what is not meant for all? This, instead of an offer of mercy, is but mocking and deceiving man. This is fearful language for man to use, but there is no foundation for it. God neither mocks nor deceives anyone. Where no confidence is placed, no deceit can be experienced. Wherever confidence is placed, there the blessing is received. There is no deceit, and from this God shall stand for ever infinitely clear. No man, surely, would have God fulfil His word of promise to those that do not believe it and

do not claim its fulfilment. And whosoever believes it, and claims the fulfilment, to him it shall be made fully and gloriously good for ever.

Putting down then all such contendings against God, and escaping from the unwholesome atmosphere whence they spring, let us return to rejoice in the full warrant which every minister has to offer Christ to all – and the full warrant which everyone has to receive Christ for himself. Christ is set forth to us not only as a Priest, and not only as a Priest offering a sacrifice for sin, but as a Prophet and a Priest and a King; and as such is made known to us to be received and rested on. The benefits of justification, adoption and sanctification are freely offered in Him. This offer is to be made to “every creature under heaven” on the authority of God. Only they who reject this offered grace perish in their sins; they who believe it and receive it live and rejoice – they joy in God, through Jesus Christ, by whom they have received the atonement.

Thus, without seeking to scan the unrevealed mysteries of the book of God’s decrees, without defacing the work of Christ, without blotting out of the Word of God all that is said of God’s sovereign grace and electing love, without destroying the object of faith in order to make it acceptable to those who do not love God, without reducing the blessed Word to a few portions of it and wishing to forget all the rest, a full and blessed warrant comes to each sinner, wherever he is, and says, “Unto you”. The voice of Christ comes: “Turn and live”; “Look unto Me, and be ye saved”. It is the command of God to offer Christ, to go and preach to all nations. It is the command of God to receive Him: “This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent”. It is the invitation of God to come to Him, and it is the promise of God that whosoever comes shall in no wise be cast out. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come . . . And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely”.

3. We therefore desire now to do what we are thus fully warranted to do – to **preach the gospel to very creature**. Unto you, O men, we would call, and our voice is to the children of man. Unto you is the word of this salvation sent as surely, as directly, as if there was no other sinner in all this world to whom the voice of God had come. If your name is not in the invitation of the gospel, neither is it in the condemnation of the law. If your name is not in the call of God, your nature is; and that is more certain than your name. As certainly as you are lost, as certainly as you are condemned and perishing, so certainly are you among those for whom, as such, salvation is provided – and to whom, as such, the invitation of God is sent.

Yes, Christ is God’s gift to mankind sinners. The cross is God’s ordinance for the salvation of man. God calls you by the ten thousand expostulations

and entreaties which He sends in His Word. Christ calls you by His suffering, by His death, by His tears of compassion and by His entreaties of grace, the Holy Spirit calls you by every one of those words of mercy and of warning, and by every conviction and impression which they awaken in the heart. Your God has found you out, not with words of condemnation, but with words of mercy. His words are all as fresh and full of love as if first now, and first by you, they had been heard in human language. With these words of gracious compassion does He once more overtake you – beseeching you to turn and live, assuring you that in no wise you shall be cast out. O sons of men, His words mean all that they say; they imply infinitely more than human words can say; they are but drops of that infinite fountain out of which they flow, but they are drops of the compassion of God – who is a God of truth, and with whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning.

O how solemn then, how unspeakably solemn, is the situation of those to whom Christ's voice comes in the gracious calls of his glorious gospel! How solemn, how unspeakably solemn, our position this very day! We are present here to hear what God the Lord will speak – called of God to lay hold of eternal life. We are stripped of all vain excuses and compelled to acknowledge that God directly, personally and earnestly beseeches us to be reconciled to Him. Eternal life is offered, Christ is offered, everlasting blessedness is offered, and everyone either receives or rejects these offers.

How dreadful is this place! The Lord is in this place and we have not known it. To the eye of man we seem but a congregation of men and women, older and younger, richer and poorer, gathered together in the way to which men have become so accustomed and hastening to depart as if what we were leaving was only a common thing. But God "seeth not as man seeth". God sees here immortal souls – never-dying creatures, sunk in sin and hanging on the sides of the pit. God reaches into the depth below and measures these awful words, "perish in their sins". God sets forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, and publishes anew the call, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world". God sees everyone either receiving Christ, or rejecting Christ – *His* Christ. Yes, each one shall go out of these doors, either with the joy of having received Christ and His salvation, or with the sin cleaving to his soul of having refused and rejected Christ.

But what an infinite difference between these two! What a difference now! What a difference at death! What a difference to all eternity! Refuse Christ you may – many, many doubtless will – but know that God is infinitely clear of the blood of your soul. Refuse Christ you may, but know that His word will cling to you: "I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded". How often "I would, but ye would not". Refuse

Christ you may, but be prepared to meet the deed of this hour – at the judgement seat. What reason can there be for receiving Him afterwards which is not equally powerful now? What reason is there to think that you shall ever afterwards be moved if you can resist Him now? What cause you have to fear lest the Spirit who takes of the things of Christ, and shows them, will stop striving with you if they are now resisted and quenched! And what reason therefore to fear that the awful, God-defying record of hardness and refusal now entered in the register above will be the record read in “that day”, and read as the just ground of your eternal and unchangeable doom!

Haste then, escape, grasp the hand of Christ yet outstretched to save. Do not venture, in the face of revealed mercy, to live another hour as a rebel. And do not rest until you answer the voice of Christ to the sons of men with the words: “I will arise and go to my Father”.

The Purpose of the Gospel¹

John Colquhoun

The gospel is, in the hand of the Holy Spirit, of special use:

1. To reveal Christ, and God in Him as reconciled, and as reconciling sinners of mankind to Himself. The great use of the gospel is to make Christ known to lost sinners as the only and all-sufficient Saviour; to reveal Him to them, in His infinitely glorious person, as God-man and Mediator; in His surety-righteousness, for their justification before God; in His immeasurable fullness of the Spirit, for their sanctification and consolation; and, in His saving offices and endearing relations, to all who believe in Him. It serves to represent to them how Jesus has loved them, what He has done and suffered for them, and what blessings of salvation He has purchased for them and is ready to dispense to them.

It is of use also to reveal to them God as reconciled in Him, and as reconciling them to Himself by Him. Hence the manifold doctrines, offers and promises of the gospel are, in Scripture, styled “the manifold wisdom of God”. They clearly show that God has devised the scheme of our redemption with such astonishing wisdom that our salvation is all of grace and all of merit, all of mercy and all of justice; that our iniquities are forgiven and yet the punishment due for them is inflicted, that the ungodly who believe are justified and yet ungodliness is condemned; and that salvation is freely

¹Reprinted, with slight editing, from *A Treatise on the Law and the Gospel*. Colquhoun (1748-1827) was minister of Leith and one of the best writers of his time in Scotland. His volume on *Saving Faith* is due to be reprinted soon by Free Presbyterian Publications, DV.

bestowed and, after all, the demands of law and justice are fully answered.

2. It is the gospel which also discloses to sinners the covenant of grace, into which the Father, and the Son as the last Adam, with the infinite approbation of the Holy Spirit, have entered for the salvation of such sinners as believe. Sinful men cannot be otherwise saved than by being enabled so to take hold of that everlasting covenant, by faith, as to come into the bond of it. This, however, they cannot do unless they are made so to know it as to discern spiritually the reality, glory and suitableness of it to their miserable condition as lost sinners. But it is the gospel only, coming to them “in demonstration of the Spirit and with power”, that reveals this gracious covenant to them and that shows them how they may be so established in it as to possess and enjoy the blessings of salvation. They could never, according to the plan established in the counsel of peace, have known that eternal contract but by the revelation of it in the everlasting gospel. It is by the gospel, accompanied with the illuminating influences of His Holy Spirit, that the Lord Jesus, the messenger of the covenant, shows elect sinners His covenant.

3. It serves likewise the highly important purpose of showing sinners their warrant to trust in Christ Jesus for complete salvation. In the blessed gospel, Christ, and God in Christ, are freely offered to sinful men, and men are graciously invited as sinners to receive the offer, and to entrust the whole affair of their salvation to Christ and to God in Him. By the gospel they are informed that the Lord Jesus offers Himself, with all the inestimable blessings of the everlasting covenant, to them and that He graciously invites and urges them as sinners to accept Him as their all-sufficient Saviour and to place the confidence of their hearts in Him for salvation from sin and wrath.

Were they not to know that a divine warrant is thereby afforded them to receive and trust in the Saviour for their salvation, it would be as great presumption in any of them as it would be in a fallen angel to attempt trusting that He would save him. But, by the declarations, offers, calls and promises of the word of grace, an ample warrant is afforded them as sinners of mankind to trust in the divine Saviour and so to take possession of His great salvation. And it is by the gospel, accompanied by the illuminating grace of the Holy Spirit, that their warrant is revealed, that their full right of access to the compassionate Saviour is disclosed to them, and that He manifests Himself to be so near them as to be within their reach. O how great is the importance and utility of the gracious offers and invitations of the blessed gospel to convinced and despondent sinners! By these, under the illuminating influences of the adorable Spirit, they see that it is lawful and warrantable for them to come as sinners and with humble and strong confidence to entrust the eternal salvation of their souls to the Lord Jesus.

4. The gospel is the means which the Holy Spirit employs for communicating the grace of Christ to elect sinners, in order to produce that change of their state and of their nature to which they have been chosen. It is by means of the gospel that, in the moment of regeneration, the Spirit of Christ and His grace enter and take possession of the hearts of God's elect. Sinners who are born again are born "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever". Hence the Psalmist, directing his speech to Messiah, says, "The Lord shall send the rod of Thy strength out of Zion: rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power." The gospel is accordingly called "the spirit which giveth life", "the grace of God that bringeth salvation", and "the power of God unto salvation". By the gospel, God exerts the exceeding greatness of His power in quickening and converting sinners to Himself. It is by means of it that He enlightens their minds, renews their wills, rectifies and sanctifies their affections, and so makes them partakers of a new and holy nature. Hence the Apostle Paul styles it: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus", which made Him "free from the law of sin and death".

5. The gospel is also the instrument by which the Holy Spirit implants the principle and habit of true faith in the hearts of elect sinners. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The Spirit renders the reading, and especially the hearing, of the gospel effectual means of working faith in the hearts of sinners, by which they believe with application the gracious offers of Christ and of His righteousness and fullness, and trust in Him for salvation to themselves in particular. It is by means of the gospel, which the Apostle Paul styles "the word of faith", that the Spirit of Christ implants and increases precious faith in the souls of His elect. Is it then the believer's desire that he may make swift progress in the habit and exercise of that living faith, by which he gives glory to God and receives grace and glory from Him? Let him, in humble reliance on the promise and on the Spirit of faith, read, hear and meditate frequently on the glorious gospel.

6. It is by means of the gospel that the Holy Spirit continues to apply Christ, with His righteousness and fullness, to the hearts of believers for increasing their sanctification and consolation. They are said in Scripture to be "sanctified through the truth", to be "clean through the word" which Christ has spoken unto them, and to have their hearts purified by faith. The Apostle Paul presented this prayer for the saints in Ephesus: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith . . . that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God". And he informed them that they were "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets . . .". It is in proportion then as the saints are enabled to believe, with application to themselves, the offers and promises of the

gospel and to trust in Jesus Christ for salvation that they advance in holiness and comfort. And it is “in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,” that they all come “unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”.

7. The gospel is a means of increasing the knowledge, of restraining the depravity and of reforming the external conduct of many unregenerate sinners, and so of qualifying them for being, in various respects, serviceable to the people of God around them. It is often a means, under the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit, of rendering many unregenerate men less hurtful and more useful to the saints of God than otherwise they would be. As the gospel is a special means of the renewing influences of the Spirit in holy men, so it is a means of His restraining influence on hypocrites and wicked men. Now this restraining or providential influence is of inexpressible importance to the saints. For as no saint could continue to live in communion with Christ and with other saints without sanctifying grace, daily communicated to him, so neither could he live among sinners unless restraining influence were afforded to them. He ought therefore, in a very high degree, to esteem and love the gospel, not only because it is the means of special grace to himself, but because it is the vehicle of common influence to the unregenerate around him.

8. It is by means of the gospel that the glory of Christ, and of God in Him, is manifest to men and angels. It is in and by the gospel that the brightest displays “of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” are graciously afforded. The glory of the Lord Jesus and of all the divine perfections is seen, contemplated and adored in the gospel, as in a mirror – harmonizing and mingling their radiant beams in the redemption of sinners by Him. It is the gospel that, under the illuminating influences of the blessed Spirit, serves to discover to the eye of faith “the glory . . . of the only begotten of the Father”, “the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person”. There the glory of the great Redeemer’s person and work shines forth in the view of holy angels and redeemed men with the most resplendent lustre. Hence the gospel is called “the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God,” and “the glorious gospel of the blessed God”. While the Lord affords far more illustrious displays of His infinite glory in redemption than in any other of His works, all the transcendent displays He makes of it in redemption are in and by the gospel.

The flower of grace will not grow in a wrathful heart. The body may as soon thrive while it has the plague as a soul can that is infected with malice.

What induces a godly man to love the saints is the fact that he is closely related to them. There ought to be love among relations; there is a spiritual consanguinity among believers.

Thomas Watson

The Eternal Sonship of Christ¹

3. Answering Some Errors

Rev J R Tallach

There will be no need to refute each error in detail because, firstly, the different shades of error in this area are so numerous that it would be tedious and largely unprofitable. Secondly, having already set out the biblical view on the generation of Jesus Christ, it may be readily seen where a particular error has departed from the law and the testimony. Most heresies on this point claim that Christ's Sonship was temporary, a Sonship of office and not of Person. Some maintain that he received the title at His incarnation, some at His baptism and others again at His resurrection. All these have either been dealt with directly or at least alluded to.

After his physical eyes were opened, the man born blind was asked if he believed on the Son of God. And when his eyes were opened spiritually, he worshipped Jesus. This would have been entirely wrong if Jesus had merely been given the title of Son of God as a mark of temporary office. Christ was worshipped, and received that worship, as God. Some among the Brethren hold that Christ's eternal generation is a truth but that He became Son only at the incarnation – that is, as a mark of office. It is difficult to think of generation taking place without offspring; and if there was the generation of a son, that son would bear the likeness of the father. The likeness would in this case necessarily include eternity. It is difficult to see where this particular view came from, but it is easy to see that it can only lead to confusion.

In his famous book, *Looking unto Jesus*, Isaac Ambrose writes on the spiritual generation of the Son of God: "As the understanding of God doth act and reflect upon itself from all eternity, so it works this effect: that it understands and conceives itself; it apprehends in the understanding an image of that object which it looks upon, and this very image is the Son of God."² This is certainly an interesting statement, but perhaps it is a conjecture too far and it would be best to leave the mystery of the eternal generation of the Son as the mystery that it is and simply say that the Father eternally begets the Son and that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father.

Perhaps we ought to look a little more closely at the views of Robert Reymond, who has already been mentioned. He is a contemporary American theologian who has lectured on this subject in the UK and whose theology book³ is widely available. He deals with the texts where Father and Son

¹The first two articles in this series gave the scriptural view of the subject.

²Sprinkle Publications reprint, p 47.

³*A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, first ed 1998.

occur as simply denoting “sameness of nature”, and in Jesus’ case, equality with the Father with respect to deity. While there is, of course, a sameness implied in the terms Father and Son, there is also a relationship of begetting and being begotten, and that relationship is from eternity. The second class of texts treated by Reymond is made up of those texts where the term “only begotten” is found. He prefers to render this term as “only” leaving aside the word “begotten”. However, the widespread use of *Son* and *Father* to describe the relationship between Jesus and His Father in heaven would seem to demand the use of the phrase “only begotten” in the New Testament. In John 5:26 we read, “As the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself”. Reymond maintains that “the life” refers to life found in the Son and received by Him at His incarnation. However, the eternal names of Father and Son are used in this passage, and the life given by the Father to the Son was from eternity. John 1:4 would confirm this; it says that “in Him was life” – from the creation, not the incarnation.

The views of Thomas Ridgeley, the commentator on the *Larger Catechism*, are of interest, if a little perplexing. His understanding is that the One who became the Son was a Divine Being. Ridgeley holds that He was given the character of the Son with a view to becoming the Mediator. He quotes Hebrews 5:8: “Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things that He suffered,” and notes that the usual interpretation is: being a Son by eternal generation, He condescended to put Himself into such a capacity that He was obliged to obey and suffer as Mediator. Ridgeley would have this text translated: “And indeed, being a Son, He learned obedience . . .”. The passage would then come down on his side of the argument – that it is agreeable to the character of a Son to learn obedience; it was with this in view that this character was conferred on Him; and in performing obedience and suffering as Mediator, and thereby securing the glory of the divine perfections in bringing about the work of our redemption, He acted in pursuance of that character.

Ridgeley’s view is that all texts where Jesus is spoken of as the Son of God refer to His work as Mediator. He writes, “I cannot find one place in the New Testament, in which Christ is called the Son of God, without sufficient evidence appearing in the context that He is so called as Mediator.”⁴ His handling of Psalm 2 is typical: the whole psalm is a description of Jesus as Mediator: He is set on the hill of Zion, interceding before God, and receiving the heathen as His inheritance. “I will declare the decree” cannot be taken, Ridgeley argues, as referring to the divinity of Christ, as the eternity of the Mediator was not set up by a decree. The statement concerning the Son must

⁴*Commentary on the Larger Catechism*, vol 1, p 164.

then only have reference to Christ as Mediator. Turretin's comment on this assertion is: "Equally vain is the objection that it is such a generation as is the part of a decree (or its effect) and so a merely arbitrary work. 'I will declare,' says He, 'the decree: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance.' This generation is not set forth as a part of this decree, but only as its foundation, upon which the universal kingdom (granted to Him) is built. For unless Christ had been the true and eternal Son of God, begotten by Him from eternity, He never could have been appointed Mediator and obtain a universal kingdom."⁵

What are we to make of Ridgeley's views? We are satisfied with his insistence that the Mediator is a divine mediator. But we are left wondering at his view that the Father declared one of the persons of the Godhead a Son with the aim of making Him the Mediator. Surely John 3:16: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son", means that the Son existed eternally and that the Father gave Him – not that He characterised one of the persons of the Godhead a Son – in order to provide a Mediator.

Separatism in the North of Scotland¹

5. Alexander Gair (1772-1854)

Rev D W B Somerset

Alexander (Sandy) Gair was born at Morangie near Tain in Ross-shire in 1772.² He was related to John Gair, one of the Men of Ross-shire, who was a native of Nigg, and also to Thomas Ross, the eminent minister of Lochbroom.³ In 1796, still unconverted, he moved north to Golspie in Sutherland, where he learnt the trade of carpentry, at which he became highly proficient. Among his companions at this time were Colin Sutherland and Alexander

⁵*Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, Eng trans, Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992, vol 1, p 295.

¹This is the final article in the series.

²The principal sources for his life are: Alexander Auld, *Ministers and Men in the Far North*, Free Presbyterian Publications reprint of second ed, 1956, pp 122-8; John Macleod, *By-Paths of Highland Church History*, Edinburgh, 1965, pp 115-124; Donald Munro, *Records of Grace in Sutherland*, Edinburgh, 1953, pp 238-244; George Sutherland, "Alexander Gair", *John O'Groat Journal*, October, November 1933. There are a few discrepancies between these accounts. For some further sayings and anecdotes, see *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vols 9 and 20-22; Alexander Mackay, *Life and Times of Rev George Davidson, Latheron*, Edinburgh, 1875, pp 184-6.

³John Noble, *Religious Life in Ross*, Inverness, 1909, pp 157-8; *John O'Groat Journal*, 28 July 1854.

Grant, both of whom became eminent for godliness in later years.⁴ In 1799 he married Lucy Gordon, who was aged about 19.

Soon after his move to Golspie, probably in 1798, he came under conviction of sin, and thought that he was converted.⁵ Looking back in 1820 on these days, he wrote, “My young days are a terror to me. I read them clearer now than I did when I acted the mad youth upon Satan’s stage. The law brought me off this stage outwardly, and the law nailed me on it inwardly – Rom 7th chapter. I thought myself a saint when I dismounted the first stage, and Satan and his emissaries, the belly-god ministers, the Doeg elders, and the cursed Gehazi catechists, helped my proud heart to worship the image, and bow to Baal.”⁶ After this false peace, however, his convictions of sin returned with terrible intensity, and it was only during a remarkable spiritual experience crossing Loch Brora that the true peace of the gospel was imparted to him.⁷ The minister of Golspie at this time was William Keith (1741-1816), whose ministry, according to Donald Sage, was “solid and edifying”,⁸ but we do not hear of him having any influence on Sandy Gair.

In 1809 he spoke to the question for the first time, at the Kildonan communion, and about the same time he moved further north, to Collieburn in the parish of Loth, where he lived for the next seven years. It was here that he started to hold Separatist meetings. The minister of Loth was George Gordon, who had been inducted to the parish in 1802. Donald Sage had been a teacher in Loth about 1806, and his recollections of Gordon were not favourable: “Mr Gordon was, as a preacher, sound and scriptural, and a lively and animated speaker, but his mind and spirit were thoroughly secularised, and this great moral defect palpably exhibited itself in his weekday conduct. My remembrance of him is both painful and bitter. He was even then indulging in habits which brought him to the grave about the close of the year 1822.”⁹

The upshot of Sandy Gair’s Separatism, and of his scathing criticism of the non-evangelical ministers in the Presbytery of Dornoch, was that he was evicted from his croft at Collieburn about 1816. He and his family spent two

⁴*Records of Grace*, pp 143-8; *By-Paths*, pp 92,123 (an anecdote in which Colin Sutherland was tempted that he could “now pray as well as Sandy Gair himself”); George Macdonald, *Sketches of Some of the Men of Sutherland* (Inverness, 1937) pp 65-7, 73-9.

⁵In a letter of September 1822 he speaks of the Lord having given him “many a bitter cup . . . for the last 24 years”, *Ministers and Men in the Far North*, first ed, Wick, 1868, p 395; see also *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 6, p 259.

⁶*Letters by the Eminently Pious John Grant, Joseph M’Kay, and Alexander Gair*, np, nd, p 80.

⁷*Records of Grace*, p 238.

⁸Donald Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica*, Wick, 1899, p 186.

⁹*Memorabilia Domestica*, p 150.

nights in the open until a home was provided at nearby Kintradwell, but after a year they were forced out of there as well.¹⁰ Three of his surviving letters date from his time in Loth; in one of them he speaks of an illness that had lasted for two months, and of “the most of the parish people rejoicing that all is against me now”.¹¹

In 1817 he moved north again, to Achow near Lybster in the parish of Latheron in Caithness. The hamlet he lived in was called Reisgill, and his earliest surviving letter from there is dated 29 May 1817. One of the godly “Women”, Catherine Ross, lived in the same hamlet, and was described by Alexander Auld as “perhaps the greatest Christian in the day and district in which she lived”.¹² Another neighbour was the famous Highland evangelist, Finlay Munro, who was teaching at Clyth, a couple of miles away, until about 1820.¹³ The minister of Latheron was Robert Gun, who had been inducted in 1775. He was a Moderate, and Sandy Gair, not surprisingly, continued his Separatist practices in the face of considerable opposition from the Caithness ministers. In a letter of September 1818 he complains that “the whole clergy of Caithness are in enmity against poor and feeble A Gair”. In the same letter he mentions the birth of a daughter, but says that “the child is not, nor will be, baptized by the ministers of Caithness, as Mr Gun says that I am Antichrist”.¹⁴

The saddest and most momentous event of his time at Reisgill was the drowning of his son Robert, his son-in-law Donald Bain, and a third young man on 11 September 1822. Robert must have been his eldest son and was perhaps aged about 20. It does not appear that his body was recovered. In a letter written soon afterwards Sandy Gair describes Robert as “sweet, mild, and affectionate to all”, and says that he had “had the care of the family, a burden which he carefully and wisely bore upon his shoulders, since he was 12 years of age”.¹⁵ Robert’s widow was left with one small child. Sandy Gair himself had another daughter Mary born about 1820, and a son Alexander born about 1822. There is an anecdote of a wealthy neighbour, Mrs Gordon of Swiney House (which is still standing), supplying them with food at this time in a remarkable way when they were in great hardship.¹⁶

Robert Gun died in 1819, and in 1820 he was succeeded as minister of

¹⁰*John O’Groat Journal*, Oct-Nov 1933. For two interesting anecdotes connected with these evictions see *Records of Grace*, pp 239-40.

¹¹*Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 18, p 212.

¹²*Ministers and Men*, p 217.

¹³G N M Collins, *John Macleod DD*, Edinburgh, 1951, pp 203-4.

¹⁴*Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 18, p 261.

¹⁵*Ministers and Men*, (first ed), p 395.

¹⁶*Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 20, p 77.

Latheron by George Davidson. Davidson was Evangelical, and a nephew by marriage to John Macdonald, Ferintosh, but was not popular with his people. Donald Sage, whose first wife was a sister of the first Mrs Davidson, says of him: "Mr Davidson . . . [was] a man of strict principle and consistency of character as a minister, but one of the most unpopular, perhaps, in the Church. This may have arisen from a want of originality of mind, and a certain amount of secularity of spirit, but chiefly from his ignorance of the Gaelic language, which most of his parishioners only understood."¹⁷ He had learnt Gaelic as a young man but lacked the fluency of a native speaker. Sandy Gair shared in the disrelish for Davidson's ministry, although he grew more tolerant towards him in later years. Davidson on his part disliked the Separatist movement, and in December 1822 Sandy Gair wrote of some around him who were "thinking to banish Alex Gair from among them".¹⁸ Ten of his surviving letters date from this period of his life, his final one from Reisgill being dated 9 February 1824.

Shortly afterwards in 1824, he moved south to Blackburn (or Altnadhu) near Dunbeath, still in the parish of Latheron, where he remained until his death. In 1823 Archie Cook had been appointed joint-missionary of Berriedale and Bruan, both in the parish of Latheron, and he soon started holding meetings for the Gaelic-speaking herring fishermen who came to Wick in the summer months. Sandy Gair assisted him in the work, and his tombstone states that he laboured at it for nearly 30 years. Archie Cook moved to Inverness in 1837 and from then until the Disruption the main burden fell upon Sandy.¹⁹

In 1834 the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge (SSPCK) sent its Secretary to Helmsdale to investigate the conduct of the teacher, Gordon Ross, who had become a follower of Sandy Gair's. The Secretary's report describes Sandy Gair as "a religious enthusiast, well-known in that district. . . . I need scarcely say that this individual is a separatist from the Established Church and goes about the country preaching and expounding from house to house, inculcating his doctrines and endeavouring to do what he can to draw people away from the parish church and from the standards of the national Establishment."²⁰ In 1837, however, John Macdonald (1800-1854) became the missionary in Helmsdale, and he and Sandy Gair were on excellent terms. John Macdonald records in his diary that he spent a night at

¹⁷*Memorabilia Domestica*, p 276.

¹⁸*Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 18, p 297.

¹⁹*Memoir and Letters of Finlay Cook and Archibald Cook*, Inverness, 1896, p 123; *By-Paths*, p 118; *Ministers and Men*, p 124.

²⁰A S Cowper, *Gordon Ross 1791-1868: SSPCK schoolmaster and disciple of Alexander Gair*, Edinburgh, 1981, p 5.

Sandy Gair's in April 1839 while returning from Wick.²¹ He was ordained Free Church minister of Helmsdale after the Disruption, and there is an anecdote of Sandy Gair going to great lengths to dissuade him from accepting a call elsewhere.²²

We mentioned the hostility of the Separatists to the Free Church in the first article in this series. Certainly Sandy Gair was unsparing in his criticism. He likened her ministers, coming out at the Disruption, to the Philistine milch kine forced to drag the ark of the testimony behind them, but lowing for their glebes and stipends as they came.²³ Joseph Mackay states in a letter of March 1845, regarding the "Free Secession", that Sandy Gair had "never signed their papers"; and his parting word to Joseph at a recent visit had been, "Cry against Jeroboam's altar, for it shall soon rend".²⁴ On one occasion the Lewis fishermen in Wick forced Sandy Gair to "take the side of the Free Church", but anecdotes show that he did not welcome the assistance of Free Church ministers at his meetings there. He did, however, eventually accept an appointment as a Free Church catechist.²⁵

In November 1845 Joseph Mackay writes of a visit he had just paid to the parish of Latheron, where he had seen "a few dear friends, whom I found living under the dew of brotherly love". Chief among them was Sandy Gair. The following year Joseph Mackay became embroiled in a dispute with Archie and Finlay Cook over the doctrine of Traducianism.²⁶ Archie Cook wrote to Sandy Gair in November trying to enlist his support, but Sandy took Joseph's side, and in his reply to Archie Cook he quoted Isaiah 57:16, "I will not contend for ever . . . for the spirit should fail before Me, and the souls which I have made".²⁷

In 1850 Gilbert Macmillan became Established Church minister of Berriedale. Almost all of his parishioners belonged to the Free Church but he visited them nonetheless, and in the course of his visitation he called on Sandy Gair. Rather surprisingly, they got on well, perhaps because they had a similar attitude towards the Free Church. Macmillan has left a full account of his first visit, from which we give some extracts:

"The door was open. I knocked, and Sandy and his wife appeared. . . . [The house] had one door which opened into the kitchen, wherein were a table and

²¹John Mackay, *Memoir of Rev John Macdonald, Helmsdale*, Edinburgh, 1856, p 57.

²²*By-Paths*, p 122.

²³*Ministers and Men*, p 124.

²⁴*Letters by...John Grant* . . . , p 51.

²⁵*John O'Groat Journal*, Oct-Nov 1933; *By-Paths*, p 118-9; Donald Maclean, *Duthil Past and Present*, Inverness, 1910, pp 30-32.

²⁶See the fourth article in this series.

²⁷*Letters by...John Grant* . . . , pp 57,60,66-7.

some chairs. The fire was in the middle of the floor, with a crook hanging over it, on which were suspended the pots and kettles when in use. . . . On the right hand side . . . was the place for the cattle, which all entered by the same door. . . . From the kitchen we entered and passed through the intermediate apartment, called the sleeping room. In it were three or four box beds, which were so arranged as to give it a somewhat comfortable appearance. . . . We then entered a third compartment . . . a chamber of good size, with a good window, and a fireplace and chimney in the wall . . . furnished with a table, some chairs, a bed, a cupboard in each corner at the right and left side of the fireplace, and three or four large strong trunks.

“We sat down and a girl came in and covered the table with a cloth of remarkable whiteness. . . . Sandy requested me to ask a blessing. . . . I complied and in doing so I prayed for a blessing also on Sandy himself in his advancing years, on his work, and on his family and neighbours. He was well pleased, and said, “We can all say Amen to that”. . . . He was not a big man, but under, if anything, the middle size, with a light figure and a slight stoop. . . . His features were small and regular, his eye bright, his countenance intelligent, and his appearance striking and pleasing. His dress was somewhat remarkable, and is deserving of notice. He wore shoes with silver buckles, black silk stockings, trews or knee-breeches of black cloth, fastened over the stockings below the knee with four buttons; an open-breasted vest with a folded-down collar . . . a white shirt with frills . . . a black dress coat, and a white handkerchief bound round the head. . . . On enquiry I found that this was the dress worn by the clergy, especially in the North, and by the gentry a hundred years ago. It is much the same as that of the Moderator of the General Assembly.” The white handkerchief round his head was, apparently, the badge of the Men.²⁸

In June 1851 John Mackay, Lybster, assisted at the Helmsdale communion, and he has an interesting account of Sandy Gair speaking at the Friday Fellowship meeting. The question was 2 Timothy 3:12, “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution,” given out by John Grant of Breckachy.²⁹ John Macdonald, Helmsdale, opened the question in characteristic fashion by referring, probably by name, to some local sheep-farmers who had persecuted their Free Church servants at the Disruption. He then called on Sandy Gair to speak.

Here is Mackay’s summary of what he said: “He stated, as indicating the different ‘spirits’, that David was more grieved for tearing Saul’s skirt than

²⁸*Reminiscences of the North*, pp 49-52.

²⁹John Grant of Breckachy (c1770-1855) was, according to his tombstone at Kinbrace, “a faithful and upright man who feared God and eschewed evil”, see *Records of Grace*, pp 171-4.

Saul for slaying 80 witnesses. He spoke of the season of trial as showing the difference between the seed of Jacob and the seed of Esau who would then ask, 'What profit shall this birthright do to me?' He deduced a lesson of warning to believers from the fact that Abraham was more ready to sacrifice Isaac than to put Ishmael out of the house. He remarked, too, that Paul was all the better of the learning which he gathered at the feet of Gamaliel, but that he needed, and all young ministers would need, the law as a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, else they should only resemble Satan, who did not lose his light, though he lost his holiness."³⁰

Sandy's last public appearance was at the Fellowship meeting at the Latheron communion in June 1853. His wife died the following January, and he himself a few months later on 18 July 1854. His granddaughter wrote in a letter: "My dearly beloved grandfather entered into the joy of his Lord at half-past ten o'clock last Tuesday morning. He possessed his mental faculties and was able to speak to us to the last minutes. His remains were conveyed to his resting-place in Latheron Churchyard on Friday last, the funeral being attended by many hundreds."³¹ Indeed it was "one of the most numerously attended [funerals] that took place there during a quarter of a century." His last words were Psalm 4:8:

"I will both lay me down in peace, and quiet sleep will take;
Because Thou only me to dwell in safety, Lord, dost make."³²

A fine table-stone was erected over his grave, with the following inscription: "Here lie the bodies of Alexander Gair, late farmer of Altnadhu, Lucy Gordon his wife who died in January 1854 aged 74 years, and of Christina, their eldest daughter, who died in 1833 in the 33rd year of her age. Alexander Gair was born in Morangie near Tain in 1772. He removed to Sutherland in 1796, married in 1799, came to Caithness in 1817, and departed this life 18th July 1854. Blessed with a commanding aspect, great mental force and ardour, richness of imagination, insight into character, and readiness of speech in the Gaelic tongue and having had from his youth much Christian experience, he dedicated his endowments to Christ, and was instant in season and out of season in teaching, reproof, rebuking, and exhorting in the service of his Saviour. For nearly thirty years he laboured among the Highlanders at Wick at the Herring Fishing, to whom he was several seasons appointed as Catechist by the Free Church of Scotland, and by the Divine blessing gathered them out and formed them into the largest and most important Gaelic congregation in the world. Salvation by the free grace of God in Christ Jesus

³⁰*Memoir of Rev John Macdonald*, p 141.

³¹*John O'Groat Journal*, 25 March 1927.

³²*Ministers and Men*, p 128; *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 20, pp 28,400.

and experience of soul through the working of the Holy Spirit formed the subject of his teaching. ‘Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, etc.’ Erected by his neighbours.”

His daughter Mary, who died in 1898, aged 78, lies in the adjoining grave. He had a numerous family, but only one or two of his children outlived him. The ruins of his house at Blackburn remained until 1927, when the stones were re-used.³³ In his account of the Men, John Kennedy said that he regretted that he had heard Sandy Gair only twice and described him as “decidedly a man of genius. No one able to appreciate talent could listen to one of his addresses without admiring the originality of his views and the clear terseness of his diction. In apt illustration and in scathing satire few could excel him.”³⁴ Eight months after Sandy’s death, John Sutherland, Badbea, was still mourning for him: “O the desolation in every quarter through the calling home of His own! O the blank that Alexander Gair’s death caused in the Highlands of Scotland!”³⁵

“A Rest to the People of God”¹

The removal of those we love, and especially of the Lord’s people, is a sad blow. The Cause is low in our day, and the removal of His people leaves the Lord’s Cause even weaker. It was said of David: “The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended”. So it is with each of the Lord’s people when they are taken away from this world of sin and sorrow.

Your Aunt gave evidence over her professing life of her attachment to the Saviour and to His Cause in the world, and particularly to the witness of

³³*John O’ Groat Journal*, 1 April 1927.

³⁴John Kennedy, *The Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire*, Inverness, 1897, p 84.

³⁵*Letters of John Sutherland, Badbea*, 15 March 1855. These letters were printed in the *John O’Groat Journal* between 18 February and 1 April 1927. Twelve of Sandy Gair’s letters were included in *Letters by the Eminently Pious John Grant, Joseph M’Kay, and Alexander Gair*, which we have spoken of in a previous article. These were republished by Cameron Mackay in 1891, and were subsequently reprinted in the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 18. Two further letters were included in the first edition of *Ministers and Men in the Far North*. One of these reappeared in the second edition of *Ministers and Men* and then in vol 8 of the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*. The other, which was that written after the drowning of his son, was omitted in the second edition of *Ministers and Men*, but a very similar letter, written at the same time but to a different person, was printed in the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 6, and again in vol 36. Very brief extracts from four further letters, dated 1853 and 1854, were given in the *John O’Groat Journal* of 25 March 1927, together with two written by his granddaughter at the time of his death.

¹From a letter of sympathy written by Rev D B Macleod just a year before his own death.

the Free Presbyterian Church. May others be raised up to take her place! The Lord has His appointed time for bringing His people home to glory. Though the Church below mourns her loss, yet she is now among the redeemed on Mount Zion above, singing the praises of redeeming love, and will be throughout eternity. She had her own trials and afflictions in this life, but she has now had fulfilled to her the promise in God's Word: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God".

It is another voice to us all to be ready for that solemn change. It would be good to be found followers of those who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises.

Book Review

***The Banner of Truth Magazine*, Issues 1-16**, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 540 pages, £16.00, available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Having received and read *The Banner of Truth Magazine* since it began in 1955 and possessing an earlier edition of this collection of the first 16 issues, we are pleased to see this volume in print again in the handsome format typical of the Trust's productions. The early magazines and the literature which they commended were no doubt influential in helping many to a clear and Calvinistic view of truth and to some realisation of the need for something other than the superficiality and Arminianism prevalent in the Church of the day. The book-publishing work which developed from the Magazine has been beneficial to the Church in many parts of the world.

Repudiating the idea that truth and error are matters of small consequence, and claiming that "Arminianism strikes at the very foundation of the gospel", the first editorial states: "Never was there a day when plain, certain, decided statements of Scriptural truth were more needed to guide the Lord's children. We are aware that there is much apparently Evangelical literature in circulation, yet the majority of it is so mixed with error as to denote the absence of the work of the Spirit of truth; the root of God's controversy is not laid bare; true causes and true remedies are for the most part passed over, and statements are made in such a mild and moderate fashion that we are led to doubt how much such writers are aware of the mind of God towards the present age. More serious still is the false confidence that is spreading amongst professing Evangelicals. This has arisen out of certain recent events and evangelistic campaigns" (p 4).

In the words of Rev Iain Murray's introduction to the 1961 edition of this volume, "our problem lies not in empty churches nor in indifferent multitudes

but in our own disobedience to the Word of God. We have diluted the gospel by turning it into a man-centred message and we have ceased to make the Scriptures the rule of all our practice". The Magazine set out "to create an awareness of need, to help Christians to discern error, to bring the light of Scripture and church history to bear upon the religious superficiality of our times". The understanding was that "little can be done in the positive reconstruction of the visible Church until there is first created a body of Christians who are alive to the needs" (p xx).

These 16 issues contain a wide variety of interesting and profitable articles – Biblical, theological, historical, biographical – with the object "not so much to set out every truth in its Scriptural proportion as to declare those truths particularly relevant to our own times. That which is being most attacked needs to be the most defended" (p 78). Two issues concentrate on specific subjects – one on "the right instruction of children in the gospel" and the other on the Christian ministry. Another issue is largely taken up with John Kennedy's *Hyper-Evangelism* and extracts from Thomas Shepard's *The False Convert Detected*. Generally, however, each issue is more varied in content.

In his 1961 Introduction Mr Murray noted that what he saw as "the present theological awakening to the doctrines of grace" was "as yet largely confined to students and ministers" and wondered if this might be "the starting point of revival and reformation" or be for the strengthening of a remnant who will have to stand fast "through a flood of apostasy, sin and judgement" (pp xx, xxi). He concludes his Introduction to the 2005 edition: "An abundance of good literature now exists, and yet this in itself is not enough. Revival and reformation are even more sorely needed today than they were 50 years ago, and our desire is that these reprinted pages may serve further to that end" (p xv). Our concurrence with this estimate and desire makes us conclude that the emphases of these early issues need to be prominent still and that it must be our prayerful concern that the doctrines of grace would be wrought into the souls of the Lord's people today, promoting gracious experience and godly living and church practice conformed to the Word of God.

(Rev) H M Cartwright

Protestant View

Taking the Confessional Seriously

Picking up the February 2006 issue of Church of Scotland magazine *Life and Work* recently in a waiting room, we read an article on the healing of the paralytic (Mark 2:1-12) in which the writer made the following remarks: "It

is my conviction that if the Protestant Church seriously believes that it has a healing and liberating ministry to perform, then it has to take the confessional seriously. (If you think that the confessional is totally foreign to the Reformed tradition then I advise you to consult John Calvin's *Institutes*.) When all is said and done, there is immense therapeutic value in unburdening oneself in the presence of someone with whom one can be totally and transparently open – be that someone a minister or a confidential soul mate.” There is an obvious confusion here between “the confessional” – which is an unbiblical Roman invention – and any form of confession which has biblical authority. When opportunity afforded we took up the *Institutes* to refresh our memory on what Calvin has to say on the matter.

In Book 3, chapter 4, of his *Institutes* Calvin, at some length, repudiates the claim that “the confessional” has divine authority and describes it as “a politic discipline introduced by bishops, not a law enacted by Christ or the Apostles”. He writes of how “in all well-ordered churches, in observance of a useful custom, the minister, each Lord’s day, frames a formula of confession in his own name and that of the people, in which he makes a common confession of iniquity, and supplicates pardon from the Lord. In short, by this key a door of prayer is opened privately for each, and publicly for all.” He interprets James 5:16 as meaning that, in cases where a person freely feels the need of such help, “by disclosing our infirmities to each other we are to obtain the aid of mutual counsel and consolation”. He indicates that pastors should be particularly helpful to those who seek assistance in this way. He interprets Matthew 5:23,24 as showing that, when we cause offence to another by our fault, we should be prepared to confess it – publicly if the fault was public. Loraine Boettner, in his *Roman Catholicism*, understands James 5:16 also as referring to wrongs done to others.

Calvin goes on to controvert the Roman position which makes confession to a priest mandatory and ties up with it the priestly power of absolution. He condemns “that auricular confession, as a thing pestilent in its nature, and in many ways injurious to the Church”. In addition to emphasising the lack of biblical authority for the Roman confessional, the falsehood of priestly claims with regard to absolution, and the moral evils which the confessional has promoted, Calvin lays stress on the fact that no one can confess his sins exhaustively so as to have them thus forgiven. David did not sit down to make a catalogue of his sins, which he could not understand and which had gone over his head, for “he knew how deep was the abyss of our sins, how numerous the forms of wickedness”. The sinner is to confess his sins to God as particularly as he can and yet “seriously and sincerely reflect that a greater number of sins still remains,

and that their recesses are too deep for him thoroughly to penetrate”.

The biblical teaching regarding the place and value of confession must never be identified in any way with “the confessional”, which William Cunningham, in his notes on *Stillingfleet on Popery*, describes as “a nefarious imposture, contrived for the express purpose of gaining a knowledge of all men’s actions, and thus exercising a ruinous tyranny over their consciences and their conduct”. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn 1:9). *HMC*

Notes and Comments

Lord Mackay and *Life and Work*

Lord Mackay of Clashfern has been appointed Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for the second year in succession. In recognition of this, *Life and Work* has published an article which summarises his life and achievements. Such an article could hardly pass over the events which led to his coming under the discipline of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and his subsequent departure from it. Since 1989 it has often been necessary to point out that the Synod did *not* discipline Lord Mackay for attending “a Roman Catholic funeral”, and we have now to set the record straight again. It was his attendance at mass that was the ground of censure. Being present at idolatrous, blasphemous and superstitious worship was something that the Free Presbyterian Church, following the lead of the Reformers, had condemned throughout its history and no exception was to be made in the case of this elder even if he was the Lord Chancellor.

He has this to say of the Church’s action: “What it did was open my eyes to a narrow denominationalism; so I found myself really willing to go anywhere where the gospel was preached or the sacraments administered according to what I believed to be the scriptural way. And so we tended to go in London to the Anglican Church. I was the Lord Chancellor at this time and I felt it important to support the Temple church which was the lawyers’ church and then in the evening I would go somewhere else in the city.”

The fact is that we have been very sparing in our criticism of Lord Mackay over the years although his backsliding and departure from the standards which he previously adhered to as a member and elder of this Church had become all too painfully obvious. Now that he has described his disciplining as opening his eyes and freeing him from what he describes as the “narrow denominationalism” of the Church in which he was nurtured, it will not, we hope, be taken amiss by him or anyone else if we defend ourselves from

such a charge. Painful as it is, especially in view of past friendships, we feel that it is a matter of duty.

For years, James Peter Mackay, as we knew him, acted as Assistant Clerk of our Synod and was much respected among us. He was ever in the vanguard of those ready to rise up, when necessary, to defend our claim to be the true Reformation Church of Scotland. It was he who, in framing the decision of a case before the Synod, asserted most emphatically that Rev Donald Macfarlane by his 1893 separation “conserved to us inviolate the constitution of the Reformed Church of Scotland”. That is the position we still hold and which Lord Mackay now, sadly, repudiates. It is indeed difficult to determine where his ecclesiastical allegiance now lies. In embracing broad denominationalism, it would seem that he sees no inconsistency in hovering between the form of Presbyterianism practised by the APCs and the Episcopalianism of the Church of England, the imposition of which in Scotland our forefathers resisted even unto death.

From the throne gallery, the Lord High Commissioner will view an Assembly that has mutilated the Westminster Confession of Faith, its own subordinate standard – in more recent times removing altogether the section which asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ is the sole Head of the Church and declares that the Pope is “in no sense the head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself, in the Church, against Christ and all that is called God”. Lord Mackay himself once subscribed without reservation to the whole doctrine of that Confession, but presumably he would now tell us that it was the narrow denominationalism of the Free Presbyterian Church that constrained him to do so.

Will he remember how, in 1969, the Inter-Church Relations Committee of the Church of Scotland suggested that there should be a meeting of representatives from the General Assembly and our Synod in order ‘to explore possibilities and to ask questions regarding our Churches’? The Synod’s reply made it crystal clear that it refused to consider a meeting with a view to possible union with any Church which did not hold the absolute infallibility of the Scriptures and the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith both in profession and practice. It pointed out that the Free Presbyterian Church had taken up a separate position because of the passing of the Declaratory Act of 1892 by the General Assembly of the then Free Church of Scotland, and concludes: “When the present Church of Scotland repeals such of its present legislation as qualified its adherence to the Scriptures and Confession in the way done by that Act and similar enactments, and in practice manifests an adherence to the Scriptures and Confession, the Synod will welcome a meeting with your Church’s

representatives”. Will he recall that it was he himself who drafted that reply?

Or will he remember that the Secretary of the Multilateral Church Conversations in Scotland wrote that same year inviting the Free Presbyterian Church “to take part in the work and fellowship of this Committee”. The Synod’s reply, drafted by Mr Mackay, was courteous but decisive:

“Our view is that the object of the Multilateral Church Conversations in Scotland, as described in your letter, namely, the achievement of visible organic unity amongst the Churches in Scotland, must, if it is to be God honouring, flow from, and not be a substitute for, true spiritual unity that is founded on union with the Lord Jesus Christ and union with one another in Him.

“We consider that it is fundamental to the Christian faith and all true Christian fellowship and witness that the Holy Scriptures are accepted as the inspired and infallible Word of God. We fear that the differences that obtain at the present time in Scotland between the Churches are due to the fact that the Holy Scriptures are not generally accepted in this way and for this cause the differences are fundamental.

“We notice that, in the document enclosed with your letter entitled *Controlling Principles for a Basis of Union Amongst Scottish Churches*, it is stated that your Committee believes ‘the differences in teaching amongst our Churches are an insufficient reason for remaining separate’, or, in other words, you are setting out to put a visible organic unity before the essential foundation of such unity, namely, unity in teaching. We strongly believe that a visible organic unity, unless there be unity in teaching, will only act as a disguise for basic differences and will lead to the situation in which the united Church will be united in name only and will have no united answer to such questions as: What man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man.

“A Church which embraces all kinds of different teaching on such questions cannot stand convincingly for anything. We believe that the present situation of the Church in Scotland is not due principally to the lack of visible organic unity but to the fact that the Church cannot, by reason of the very different elements already contained within her own borders, give a united answer and guidance to the people on these fundamental questions of faith and practice.” Is this a reasoned, logical reply or the product of “narrow denominationalism”?

Presumably our adherence to the Authorised Version will be regarded as further evidence of “narrow denominationalism”. “The modern church,” Lord Mackay is quoted as saying, “needs to take every opportunity it can to spread the gospel in ways people can understand.” We take it that this means that, as President of the Scottish Bible Society, he sees nothing wrong with

printing and distributing versions of the Bible that are patently not faithful translations of the original Hebrew Masoretic text and the Greek Textus Receptus? Would the illustrious Hugh Martin – whom Lord Mackay so highly regarded, and rightly so – approve of, say, dynamic equivalence? We think not, and we think it unworthy of Lord Mackay to use a not-quite-accurate quotation from Martin’s *Inspiration of Scripture*, out of context, to give the impression that he would regard, for instance, *The Good News Bible*, as acceptable on the basis that people would find it easy to understand.

Hugh Martin was defending the position of the Westminster Divines: “Because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have a right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship Him in an acceptable manner; and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope”. The principle for which he so earnestly contended was that “the *translated* Word of God is still the *Word of God* when translated.”

Martin explained: “Holy men of God, as they were moved and guarded by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, wrote, each of them respectively, what God decreed they should write as their contributions to a volume which He intended to be His own – His own written Word and published works – His wondrous gift to the sons of men. The good Spirit of God is too abounding in His goodness to have written on His volume, churlishly, the formula, ‘Rights of translation reserved’.” The scholarship, faithfulness, ability and honesty of translators were taken for granted, as in the case of those who were instrumental in giving us the incomparable Authorised Version.

When, in 1961, the New English Bible appeared, our Synod condemned it as being “the product of men who were the descendants of the destructive critics of the past”, and thus untrustworthy. Mr Mackay clearly stated the Church’s duty in relation to this new translation: “It is not without significance that this new translation of the New Testament was brought out to coincide with the 350th anniversary of the Authorised Version. And, for my part, I have no doubt the reason is that the persons who are responsible for seeking to undermine the basic doctrines of Holy Scripture are very conscious of the hold the Authorised Version has on the Bible-loving section of the British people, and indeed of the English-speaking people throughout the world. . . .

“There is another aspect of it which is deserving of attention. It is very common for certain sections of the professing Christian Church in our day to talk of Christian unity and to say that the lack of unity in the Christian Church is entirely due to the diehard and completely unrealistic profession

of certain sections of the Church. It seems to me the attempt to bring out a version of the Scriptures so completely different from that which has for 350 years received worldwide acceptance amongst the English-speaking people is just a demonstration of how unnecessary the desire for Church unity is. That attempt, at this juncture in the history of the Church, underlines the importance of maintaining the standard of our theological education and particularly that part of our theological course which has to do with the canon of Scripture. I am sure that this particular juncture is one which demands of the ministry of the Church that they should be prepared to defend the principles which we hold against such attacks.”

And that is what, by the grace of God, we will continue to do. JM

Creationism in Schools

From various quarters concern is being expressed at any indication, however slight, that Creationism is being taught in English schools. Some of this may well be related to the issue of “city academies”, promoted by the Government, but the politics of the matter need not concern us here.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has made his own unhelpful contribution to the debate. Asked by *The Guardian* if he was comfortable with the teaching of Creationism in schools, he replied: “Ah, not very”. Mr Paul Rowlands, General Secretary of the Trinitarian Bible Society and a Free Presbyterian elder, commented on BBC radio news: “Anyone who professes to be a minister of Christ should be a minister of the Word of God, accepting the Bible as the only revelation that God has given of Himself. For the Archbishop to say that he does not believe creation should be taught in schools is denying the very body he is said to be upholding. If that is what Dr Williams believes, he is unfit to lead the Church.”

In the present climate, it is somewhat surprising that OCR, one of the three main exam boards in England, recently announced that “creationist theories” were to be debated in GCSE science lessons in secondary schools in England, although, according to a spokesman for the board, “Creationism and intelligent design are not regarded by OCR as scientific theories. They are beliefs that do not lie within scientific understanding.” Clearly, non-evolutionist ideas will not be treated very seriously, but even a small move in the right direction is welcome.

More recently, *The Independent* has come out with a furious attack on Creationism in schools. “For too long”, thundered the newspaper in an editorial, “have the mainstream Christian churches chosen to maintain an embarrassed silence about this pernicious and retrograde belief which is gaining such ground in the US and is now being introduced in Britain at the

academies set up by the millionaire car dealer Sir Peter Vardy. . . . It is a belief with no relationship to facts or proof through empirical inquiry. . . . If you wish to believe that the earth and all its creatures were literally created in six days, as the Bible has it, that is a matter for you. If you choose to consider human development as too complex and intelligent for gradual evolution to explain, that also is your right. What you should not be permitted to do is to teach this belief as a self-evident explanation of human evolution in the biology class. It is the antithesis of science.”

Obviously *The Independent*, like other opinion-formers in the UK will allow us to believe in six-day creation if we are stupid enough to do so. But, equally clearly, no one should be allowed to propagate in schools such a belief, or anything having the remotest connection with it. Certainly, science has been defined in some circles so as to exclude from its domain anything related to belief in God or in the revelation He has given in the Bible. And the last sentence of the *Independent* leader takes advantage of that. The general consensus on toleration in the Western world, while it will put up with private religion, seems increasingly intolerant of its public expression.

Yet God has spoken in the Bible, and both individuals and society are the poorer for rejecting Him. A whole generation is being educated in the largely-secular religion of most of contemporary Britain, which has possibly just one article in its creed. That one article is: It does not matter what people believe unless they take their religion too seriously. There can scarcely be a more effective way of ruining tomorrow’s Britain, morally and spiritually, than by promoting this religion.

Church Information

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Australia & New Zealand: At Auckland, on Friday, June 2, at 2.30 pm.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, June 13, at 1 pm.

Western: At Laide, on Tuesday, June 13, at 6 pm.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Wednesday, June 14, at 3 pm.

Skye: At Portree, on Tuesday, June 20, at 11 am.

Northern: At Dingwall, on Tuesday, June 27, at 2 pm.

North Uist Communion

Due to renovations to both church and manse over the spring and summer of this year, the Kirk Session have moved the Communion date from the fourth Sabbath of July to the fourth Sabbath of September for this year only.

(Rev) Donald Macdonald, Moderator

Home Mission Fund

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

R A Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

College & Library Fund: A Friend, Newcastle, 2 Pet 3:18, £40; Anon, USA, \$300.

Eastern Europe Fund: Anon, CAF Charity Voucher, £500 per Rev DAR; Anon, for Odessa Church building, Ps 127:1, £50.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: Anon, for Jewish mission work in Israel, £250; Anon, for use in Zimbabwe, £200; Anon, in memory of our beloved sister, Helen C MacAskill, £200.

Legacy Reserve Fund: The estate of the late Miss C Matheson (additional payment), £347.97.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Barnoldswick: *Congregational Funds:* Dutch Friends, "for the furtherance of the F P cause in the UK", £20; Anon, £1000 per RAC.

Dingwall: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £40; Mrs KAM, North Kessock, £20 per Rev NMR. *Congregational Funds:* Mrs McK, "In memory of our father", £100; Mrs KAM, North Kessock, £30 per Rev NMR.

Edinburgh: *Congregational Funds:* Anon, "Where most needed", £500; CAF, £50; Anon, for Mission meeting expenses, £20.

Fort William: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50 per RAC.

Gairloch: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50 per RAC. *Congregational Funds:* A Friend, Mellon Charles, £5 per Rev AEWM.

Glasgow: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £20, £30, £20, £20, £20. *Congregational Funds:* Friends, North Tolsta, for the cause of Christ, £20; Anon, where most needed, £20 per Rev RML; Anon, £50. *Fabric Fund:* Mr & Mrs DWN; £100. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £35, £25, £30, £40, £50, £40, £40. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for Israel Mission, £40, £40, £20. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £50, £100. *TBS:* Anon, £200.

Greenock: *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £20. *TBS:* Anon, £40, £40, £20.

Kyle: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50.

Lochbroom: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50 per RAC.

North Harris: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50; Anon, Stk, £20; Anon, £20 per JFM. *Congregational Funds:* DJG, £40, £20; Mrs B, £10; Mrs JMA, £20; Anon, Leacklea, £40 per Rev JBJ. *Door Collection:* JAMK, £5; Anon, £20 per JFM. *Where Most Needed:* DMK, £40 per Rev JBJ.

North Uist: *Communion Expenses:* Friend, Glasgow, £50; Anon, Glasgow, £50 per RAC. *Congregational Funds:* Friend, Kyle, £20 per Rev DMD. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £20 per Rev DMD.

Portree: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £200. *Communion Expenses:* KML, £140; Anon, £50, £20; JM, £10 per SYM. *Congregational Funds:* Tunbridge Wells Friend, £40 per FM. *Where Most Needed:* Anon, "in memory of loving parents", £20.

Raasay: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50 per RAC. *Congregational Funds:* RML, £200 per RMB; Anon, North Uist, £25; Anon, in loving memory, £200 per Rev JRT.

Shieldaig: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50 per RAC. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, "in grateful memory of a loving husband and father", £100. *Where Most Needed:* Anon, £20 per DMC.

Staffin: *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Friend, for the work in Israel, £200 per CAF; CM, £10 per SMK. *Sustentation Fund:* CM, £50 per SMK; Friend, £100 per CAF.

Stornoway: *Communion Expenses:* SM, £20; KMS, £120. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for Kenya Mission Poor Relief Fund, £40.

Stratherrick: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50 per RAC.