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Coming Short of God's Glory

“You’re going to sin. If you didn’t yesterday, you will today or tomorrow.” Thus one of America’s best-known Evangelical magazines promoted an article. But is it justifiable to suggest that there is anyone, no matter how godly, who did not sin yesterday? Rather the quotation points to the lack of a sense of sin so common among Evangelicals today.

But what is sin? Let the *Shorter Catechism* answer: “Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God”. We are God’s creatures, and He has every right to direct us how we should live. He is holy, and therefore the standard which He has set for us is absolutely righteous; indeed it is a perfect reflection of His holy nature. And it is the standard against which God constantly monitors our behaviour. Jeremiah understood the solemn significance of this: “Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (32:19).

But our sins are not limited to our outward deeds, which other human beings could see if they were present. And one of the flaws in the quotation at the start of this article is that it seems to limit the idea of sin to what is outward. Yet, for instance, not only is a blatant lie sinful, the decision to tell a lie is also sinful – even if, in the event, the lie is never told. God sees the sinful thought hidden deep in the mind just as clearly as He discerns the spoken falsehood. But, in the words of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, “they who, in their obedience, attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life . . . fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do” (16:4). Accordingly David Dickson points out that “the regenerate are not able to fulfil the first command, namely, to love God with all their heart, with all their soul (Matt 22:37-38). For we know here in part, and therefore we love but in part (1 Cor 13:9). Neither are the saints free of all those inordinate motions of concupiscence, forbidden in the Tenth Command, as is evident from Galatians 5:17 and from the experience of Paul, and of all the other saints”.¹

Indeed if someone had to pick out the most eminent of all God’s saints,

¹*Truth’s Victory Over Error*, Banner of Truth reprint, p 59.

it is likely that he would choose Paul. There is scarcely a hint of outward sin against him, and this is particularly significant when we consider the fact that the shortcomings of believers are not passed over in Scripture. Yet Paul could not restrain himself from expressing his anguish because of his inward sin: “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom 7:24). Why the wretchedness? It arose from his sense of the high standard of God’s law and his inability to meet it. “The good that I would I do not:” he confessed, “but the evil which I would not, that I do.”

Our sense of sin will reflect our sense of the glory of God. If we have low views of God and His glory, we will have low views of the seriousness of sin; and we will fail to notice much that should be recognised as coming short of the glory of God – and which therefore is sin. “Give unto the Lord”, we are instructed, “the glory *due* unto His name” (Ps 96:8). No doubt these words specifically point to the duty of praising God, but He is also glorified in the obedience which His creatures render to Him. He is glorified in the perfect obedience of the unfallen angels; He is glorified in the perfect obedience of His children who have been brought to heaven. Each of them, to the fullest possible extent, gives to God the glory which is due to Him.

But what of Paul, that remarkably holy man? He was incapable, while still in this world, of fulfilling his duty to glorify God perfectly; he was incapable of fully treating Him as the absolutely glorious One. And to whatever degree Paul came short of perfection in thought, word or deed, he sinned. It is, of course, otherwise now; in heaven he has the glory of God consistently in view in all his activities. In him now there is no sin, no imperfection, and God is thus glorified in him.

It is not to belittle Paul and his godliness that his imperfection is referred to here; it is rather because of his remarkable piety. So, for instance, while his humility was indeed of a high order, it was imperfect. And if others did not notice the defects, God’s penetrating eye did. Yet God was glorified in Paul’s obedience to His law. But it was because of the new life imparted by the Holy Spirit that Paul was in any degree able, from the heart, to do the will of God, who was well pleased with every evidence of the Spirit’s work in the Apostle.

All sin is serious; it is committed against an infinite Being. Even what we might call the most trivial of shortcomings is sinful; it is a failure to give to God the glory which is due to Him. And therefore it deserves “God’s wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come”² – even in such a holy man as the Apostle Paul. But where did Paul’s sense of sin drive him? To Christ, his one hope for salvation. He could go with David’s petition: “Wash

²*Shorter Catechism*, answer 84.

me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (Ps 51:2). Never a day would pass but Paul would feel his need of forgiveness; indeed he would be conscious of a *continuous* need of cleansing, for his sin was continuous. Never for one moment was he keeping God's law perfectly; never for one moment was he giving to God the full measure of the glory that was due to Him. But well did Paul know that the blood of Jesus Christ goes on cleansing from all sin. It was this man, who was so concerned about the corruption of his heart – about how far short of the glory of God he came – who exclaimed with such vehemence in praise of his Saviour: "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Cor 9:15).

Yet a consciousness of sin would bring Paul to plead that the Holy Spirit would continue His sanctifying work in him. And that consciousness would increase in his mind a feeling of insufficiency, which in turn would make him all the more dependent on his Saviour. Having a deep knowledge of the corruption of his heart, and a continual sense of his need to look to King Jesus to keep him from sin, he would be much less in danger of going through life in the careless spirit of most professing Christians today. Many of them would despise as legalism the extent to which many Christians of previous generations went to keep themselves unspotted from the world. Yet, if only they had a keener sense of sin, professing Christians today would shun many leisure activities that are now widely accepted – though the reason for carelessness about such things must often be a complete absence of that new nature which loves holiness. The standard which applies to today's believers is no different from that which applied to those in Cappadocia and other districts now part of Turkey, to whom Peter repeated the claim of the Most High: "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet 1:16).

It was an exceptionally godly man – John Love, then a minister in Greenock and still only in his twenties – who wrote to his parents: "There is none on earth who comprehends the full extent of that divine testimony, 'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked', for there is none who comprehends that infinite fullness of excellency in the blessed Godhead, which is misrepresented by the mysterious deceitfulness of the heart. This is the substance of all the sin in the world: to look upon the infinite holy beauty of God as hateful and unworthy of a superlative love, and therefore we know not the plague of our heart till the glory of God is revealed to us. When we consider our manifold opposition to it in heart and actions, we will cry out with David: 'Who can understand his errors?' And then we are in the way 'to comprehend with all saints what is the length and breadth and depth and height' of the love of Christ."³

³*Letters of the Late John Love*, 1838, p 43.

The Great Invitation¹

A Sermon by John Macdonald

Luke 14:17. *Come, for all things are now ready.*

We are an assembly of perishing men and women. We have sinned; we have provoked the Almighty to anger against us; we have destroyed ourselves, and lie helplessly exposed to eternal misery, on account of our sin.

The matter of *salvation* is consequently the most important that can occupy our attention; and it ought ever to appear most relevant to us when we meet together in the house of God. Let us never cease to preach, to hear, to read, to pray and to inquire about what concerns our eternal peace so much.

Do we all need to be saved? Yes, for “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”. Here then is a subject for the whole world, and for every church, and for each individual.

Must all men be saved in the *same* way? Yes, for there is but one name given under heaven by which we can be saved. Sin is one, and salvation is also one.

Whence does salvation come, from man or from God? From God only. Against Him is sin committed. His anger is the evil resting on us; He only can save us.

On what *principle* does God save? Of justice or of grace? Both – of justice to Himself and of grace to us – in such a way that man is blessed by mercy, and God glorified by righteousness.

Through what *medium* does salvation come? Through that which is both human and divine, through a Mediator who is true man and true God – the Lord Jesus Christ. He has magnified the justice of God by suffering the penalty of death and fulfilling the claims of the law, and He manifests the mercy of God by now saving men on that ground from sin and hell.

How does man *receive* this Saviour unto salvation? By believing with the heart on Him, by accepting of Him, by relying on Him, and applying to Him for salvation – that is, by faith.

What is the *ground* or *warrant* of such faith on the part of a sinner? The divine testimony of truth, seen in all its divine evidence when it is addressed in the gospel to sinners as such – this is the ground on which a sinner stands, and stands unshaken, when he believes in Christ for salvation.

But what is this *gospel*, or testimony of God for salvation, which is sent unto all men so that it may be believed? We might occupy this discourse with

¹The substance of a discourse, taken with slight editing from *A Pastor's Memorial*. Macdonald (1807-47) was a Church of Scotland minister in London before he left for the mission field in Calcutta. He was a son of the “Apostle of the North”.

quotations to show what the gospel is, or with illustrations to exhibit its meaning: but what words can we find more appropriate than the words of our text, or what ideas more suitable for illustration than those of the context in which it stands? “Come, for all things are now ready.” And come to what? To a supper or “feast”, a feast of mercy, given by God to man, in His Son’s name.

We need not now dwell on the parable; neither shall we confine ourselves to it in our illustration of the text. Suffice it to say that it is evidently descriptive of the gospel dispensation as applied to several classes: to sinners, believers, unbelievers and hypocrites, and it shows the consequences of hearing, rejecting or receiving the gospel of salvation – or of professing to receive it, whilst yet rejecting it.

Let us consider: 1. The gospel, as an *invitation*. 2. The *grounds* assigned, in this gospel invitation, for its acceptance.

1. The invitation. The gospel is not a message of barter and exchange, in which a man is asked to a feast for which he is expected to pay a price or to give another feast in return; neither is it the advertisement of an exhibition, at which men may look but of which they may appropriate nothing. A mere exhibitory preaching of the gospel profits little; although, alas, this seems to be its most prevalent form in our pulpits. But the gospel is an invitation in all its characteristics. It is:

(1.) *Free*. It claims no return in the way of recompense; it simply asks for acceptance. It provides for man’s inability and unworthiness and offers him the grace of salvation. As the sun, as the light, as water, as the manna, as the brazen serpent, as a feast given by a rich man to the poor – so is Jesus Christ, with His salvation, freely given in the gospel. “Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” Faith is the unconditional acceptance of a free invitation.

(2.) *Personal*. It is sent to individuals, to “every creature”, that whosoever believes may be saved. Any man, every man, who hears the invitation has it for himself, and it is intended that he should accept it. Faith is thus the personal acceptance of a special invitation, for every man is alike present to that Lord, who invites the whole world to His feast.

(3.) *Simple*. Its terms are intelligible to all. The *gospel* is framed on a level with the lowest capacity, yet it is sublime to the highest capacity. Look, hear, believe, trust, eat, drink, receive, come – these are the terms employed to express the invitation of the gospel. “*Hear*, and your soul shall live.” “*Come* unto Me, and I will give you rest.” What child is shut out? What savage need misunderstand? Faith is the equally simple acceptance of this simple invitation. “Lord, I come,” is the word of faith.

(4.) *Complete*. It omits nothing necessary; all the provision, the whole

feast, is included. The circumstances of the party invited are all included. The sinner, in all his sinfulness, is invited to the whole salvation in Jesus Christ. He can make no discoveries concerning his own guilt which the Divine Inviter did not know and did not include in the invitation; neither can he mention any portion in the divine feast that is not free to him by the word of the Lord. The work of faith is, in all our wretchedness, to accept the invitation to all this happiness.

(5.) *Attested*. There is no room for doubt. Christ, who has proved Himself to be the Son of God, has given the invitation; and the Holy Spirit of God has so sealed it by many other words and works, divine in their character, so that no one who knows God can dispute its origin. It carries the impress of God's image, the style of His mind and the special glory of His procedure, so that all who desire to know God may find Him in the sublimity of the invitation and in the grandeur of its contents. Faith receives this testimony, and has the witness of the invitation in itself, saying: I know, O Lord, that this is from *Thee*. Here the Spirit of God works, imparting the nature of God in the heart, so that His glory may be discerned in His Word, so that faith becomes simply the power of God in man's soul, causing him to lay hold of the truth of God in the gospel. How mighty is such faith!

(6.) *Authoritative*. It admits of no trifling. God, our superior – yea, the supreme Being – invites us to a feast of reconciliation. Acceptance, in this case, is a test of allegiance; to come is to submit; to eat is to be reconciled; to refuse is to decline authority and to reject mercy; to excuse is to justify rebellion and to commend a lie; to be indifferent is to be sullen against the Almighty. The claims of the gospel are the claims of God; therefore “he that believeth . . . shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned”. To this, faith responds, saying: “What! Shall a man refuse his Sovereign's invitation? Shall a sinner reject the love of his Judge?”

(7.) *Affectionate*. The message is one of pure and generous love. It is not a form; neither is it in the usual course of events. It is without precedent or example; it is the very substance of love. The gift of Christ, and the death of Christ, attest the love of God, in all its sincerity and extent; and the vast resources of blessing which He has prepared prove how unlimited is the affection of God towards man, for he is invited to bliss which is endless as the very existence of God. “God so *loved* the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” He who believes that the invitation is the message of divine affection towards the miserable and unworthy will yield at once, saying: “Authority is enough, but affection is more. Who can resist the Son of God when He dies to love and lives to bless?”

(8.) *Instant*. This invitation brooks no delay. There can be no sufficient reason for not immediately being reconciled to God; every moment of delay is a moment of sin and guilt. Believe *now*; repent *now*; be converted *now*. Time is the Lord's; not to make good use of time is an evil against Him. Instant compliance leads to instant salvation; for the feast is now ready; the provision is now waiting.

2. The special ground of the invitation contained in the text: "all things are now ready". *Present readiness* is here the leading idea and constitutes a present or immediate claim. This is one grand characteristic of the Christian dispensation, rising above the Jewish: then it was known, on the authority of God, that all things would be ready; but now it is known that they *are* ready, for it is so declared. Christ Himself has made that fact the basis of this weighty parable.

The revelation of God's will concerning man's salvation is now complete. Nothing may be added, nothing altered, under the threat of a fearful curse. There will be no more written provision, no more divine warrant. The promises, invitations, precepts are all sealed until the end of the world. Let no one delay; for there will be no more revelation of the will of God. The gospel is complete; the Bible is finished. Therefore "come".

The manifestation of God's love is complete. God has already given His Son; and His Son has appeared in the world. This work of love is finished; it will never be renewed. What more do we wait for? Can there be more love than this? Wherein can more be shown?

The Mediator has returned to heaven. He has finished His whole work of redemption; and He has ascended to the Father, to return no more until the end of the world. He is not again to sojourn with men, but is now perfected in heaven as the Saviour. Will you not then come to Him who has finished His work, returned to His rest and now waits to save?

The sacrifice of atonement has been offered up. After being long pre-figured – by thousands of slain lambs, from the days of Abel – the "Lamb of God" has been sacrificed for sin. His blood has been shed; His body has been broken for sin. He said, "It is finished", and yielded up the ghost. He that was dead has risen again, in token that His sacrifice was complete, sufficient and accepted. And He is now in the midst of the throne of God as a "Lamb that *was* slain". What more do you need than this to induce you to come and be saved, by faith in His name?

The intercession of the High Priest has begun. He appears for sinners in the heavens, with His own blood and invested with His own righteousness, interceding or acting for transgressors. The great Advocate has begun His plea – He has opened the brief of His merits – and waits for His miserable,

perishing clients to present their cases to Him. Sinners, have you such an Intercessor now engaged in the very work and will you not come and plead?

Reconciliation is now being administered to the enemies of God. They have been coming in from their rebellion, and are now coming in, on the basis of the gospel scheme. God is now “in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them”. If so, then come and share in this reconciliation, for what is done to others will be done to you. Press in for your pardon; all is ready; the record is now filling up with the names of the reconciled. Set down yours, now.

Blessedness is now stored up, waiting for receivers. Blessedness, for sinners; life, for the dead; sight, for the blind; joy, for the miserable; peace, for the condemned; hope, for the helpless; liberty, for the captive; honour, for the degraded; and eternal bliss, for the slaves of sin and the heirs of hell. All this blessedness is in the invitation; it waits to be received by you – yea, it goes forth and cries, saying, “Come, for all things are now ready”.

Eternal glory, even heaven itself, is now ready. The gate is open; multitudes have gone in and entered upon the joy of their Lord. Every day heaven is being filled; men, women, and even children, are passing into it, as they one by one die in the Lord. Come then and join them, for this glory is given to you if you will but receive it.

Once more, the *ministration of the Holy Spirit* is in full operation. He has come forth from the Father and the Son to convince men of sin, righteousness and judgement; and He is now applying the gospel to the hearts and minds of them who hear. The Spirit dwells in the Church and accompanies the preaching of the gospel, so as to save men by it. There is no limit to His influence; He is gracious as Christ is gracious, merciful as God is merciful. The abundance of His grace is open, free to prayer, without reserve. What more do you then need? Here you have an internal power, corresponding with the external message – so that, in opening your heart to the one, you are immediately embraced by the other! “The Spirit and the bride say, Come.” Everything is for you; omnipotence is with you; weak, lame, blind, diseased, there is a power to carry you. The Spirit has begun to minister, and now does minister abundantly, in working both to will and to do of God’s pleasure in the hearts of them who are invited to the supper of the Lamb.

Blessed are the people who know this joyful sound: “Come, for all things are now ready”. We beseech you to hear it this day, and accept it. Consider your sins, how many, how aggravated they are – yet you are asked. Do not refuse, for this will but seal up your sin into sure wrath. But now admire the grace that invites the sinner to his Sovereign’s communion. Unfitness and unworthiness are reasons for accepting this invitation, not for refusing it;

because it is of grace – grace based on God's perfect foreknowledge of all that makes you unfit and unworthy. Hear, O Pharisees and Sadducees, publicans and sinners, drunkards and harlots, transgressors of every sort and of every rank. Hear this invitation and come to the Lord Jesus for mercy, and He will introduce and reconcile you to the eternal Father! You will find everything you need at this moment, perfectly provided, for your complete salvation.

Hear also, O *backsliders*; hear this word of the Lord. We cannot leave you behind, for our commission is to "every creature". We must urge you also, for the Lord says, "I will heal your backslidings; I will love you freely". Remember your first love and repent and come, for all things are now ready.

And you *believers*, rejoicing in your Master's love, remember the old and first invitation of grace – accept it again and come. There is a daily feast for you and a perpetual invitation. "The Lord will give grace and glory" and will withhold "no good thing" from you. Let us all arise and come unto the Lord our God, *now*. And may the love of God and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with us all. Amen and Amen.

Christ's Will for His Church¹

2. Does the Bible Tell Us How the Church Is to Be Governed?

Rev H M Cartwright

The Bible is supreme in every matter with which it deals. "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men".² The first and most obvious reason for the Church's existence is the glory and worship of God, and it is the Bible which teaches "what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man".³ The other functions of the Church – the nurture and edification of believers and the proclamation of the gospel in the world – also require us to seek guidance from the Word of God. If we find instructions on any subject in the Bible we must follow them.

One fundamental principle of Church Government which is clearly taught in the Bible is the Headship of Christ over the Church. As the eternal Son of

¹The first section of this paper, which appeared last month, was an answer to the question: *What is the Church?*

²*Westminster Confession*, 1:6.

³*Shorter Catechism*, answer 3.

God, our Lord has dominion over all that has been created, equal in every respect to that of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, with whom He is the same in substance and equal in power and glory. But as the possessor of our nature and the Mediator between us and God, Christ has been given dominion over all things – dominion which He could not exercise if He were not God, but dominion which He exercises as Mediator because He has successfully accomplished the work of salvation which the Father gave Him to do.

The connection between His work and His exaltation is brought out in Scripture, for example: Daniel 7:13,14: “I saw in the night visions and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed”; Ephesians 1:20-23: “He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all”; Philippians 2:5-11: “Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”; Matthew 28:18-20: “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, 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”.

He rules over all things in the interests of His Church, but is in a very special way the King and Head of the Church itself. Psalm 2:6: “Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion”; Ephesians 4:15,16: “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself

in love”; Ephesians 5:22-24: “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church: and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.”

Sometimes the Headship of Christ signifies the spiritual relationship which exists between Him and the body of elect, redeemed, regenerate sinners. Through their union with Him He is to them the source of all life, grace and unity. But we are concerned with the idea of Christ as the Head of the Church in its earthly form and expression.

James Bannerman sums up what is meant by saying that Christ is the Head of the Church: “The Church, as a society, owes its origin to Christ; it derives from Him its government and office-bearers; it receives from Him its laws and constitution; it draws from Him its spiritual influence and grace; it accepts at His hand its ordinances and institutions; it acts in His name, and is guided in its proceedings by His authority. . . . He is both its founder and its administrator – being the ever-present source of life and influence, of ordinance and blessing, of law and authority, of word and doctrine, within the community. Through His Spirit and His Word and His ordinances, alike of government and grace, Christ both originates and administers His Church upon earth. . . . Christ is the Head of the Church as the source of life . . . the Head of doctrine to His Church . . . the Head of the Church as to ordinances, having appointed them by His authority at first, and made them the channel of spiritual blessings to His people ever since . . . the Head of His Church as to grace . . . the head of His Church as to authority and government. . . . All is derived from Him; and all emanates from Him as its source.”⁴

Bannerman expands on what he has to say of Christ as Founder and Administrator of His Church: “Christ is the Founder of the Christian Church, in the sense that He gave it its origin at first, that He impressed upon it its character and arrangement, that He laid down the framework of its government and order, that He appointed to it its laws and office-bearers and ordinances – that He invested it, in short, with the peculiar form and the peculiar constitution that distinguish it as a society. . . . He is also the Ruler and Administrator of it in such a way that He keeps in His own hand all the power and authority and grace that belong to the society, and is ever present, directly and with His own hand, to exercise that power, to administer that authority, and to dispense that grace. . . . The Church has no store of life apart from Christ being in it; the ordinances of the Church have no deposit of grace apart from Christ being present with them; the office-bearers of the Church have no gift of

⁴*The Church of Christ*, vol 1, pp 194-5.

power or authority or action apart from Christ ruling and acting by them.”⁵

It is evident that every form of Church government is unbiblical which does not recognise the Church’s submission and accountability to Christ or which undermines the unique authority of Christ as the sole Head of His Church. That rules out Erastianism, where the civil magistrate claims the right to interfere with the Church’s doctrine, worship or government. It rules out the Papacy, with its claim that the pope is the head of the Church on earth and the centre of its authority and unity. It rules out any system which gives the Church or her office-bearers discretion in matters over which Christ has asserted His authority. It rules out any system which gives to men the authority which belongs to Christ. As Christ is the Head of His Church, every form of Church government, and those engaged in it, must simply put His will into effect. Government exercised by men is not prejudicial to the Headship and authority of Christ when conducted in accordance with His institution and will.

From the Headship of Christ over His Church we derive the principle that recognition of Christ’s Headship of His Church means subjection to His will revealed in His Word. William Cunningham says that “the only inference directly and immediately deducible from the doctrine of Christ’s sole headship is that every intimation which He has given of His will as to the constitution and government of His Church, and the manner in which the administration of its affairs should be conducted, ought to be implicitly obeyed”.⁶ “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him” (Matt 17:5). “Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (John 15:14). “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matt 28:20). For our knowledge of His will for the ordering of the affairs of His Church here on earth we are dependent on His Word. His will is not to be discovered by immediate inspiration. It is not found in the pronouncements of ecclesiastical bodies which presume to go beyond what is written. It is found in the Bible.

But has Christ given us many intimations of His will regarding the government of His Church? Searching the Scriptures in the light of the principle that subjection to the government of Christ over His Church means subjection to His will revealed in His Word, we find that more is taught concerning the means by which Christ governs His Church than we might at first have realised. The presumption is against the Church being left to determine its government by the laws of nature or expediency, in that it is not a merely-

⁵Pp 198-9.

⁶*Discussions of Church Principles*, pp 283-4. Compare *Westminster Confession*, 1:6,10; 10:12; 22:1; 31:3.

human organisation but an institution of God in a unique way. This presumption is reinforced by the fact that sin has increased man's incompetence to determine such spiritual and sacred and important matters. There is no separate directory for Church government in the Bible, just as there is no separate directory for public worship and no systematic summary of theology. But just as the Bible provides the materials from which we can derive a systematic theology and a directory for public worship, so it provides the materials from which we can derive the form of government which is Christ's will for the Church.

To quote James Bannerman again: "First, there are many particular regulations laid down expressly in the Word of God in regard to the nature of Church government, and the exercise and administration of Church power in matters ecclesiastical. Second, there are many express examples given us under the authority and direction of inspiration, equally binding upon us as express precepts, in regard to the use and administration of Church power. . . . Third, when there are neither particular rules nor particular examples applicable in their general features to the cases that may occur in ecclesiastical matters, there are general principles, either expressly laid down in Scripture, or fairly and necessarily to be inferred from Scripture, bearing upon ecclesiastical power and administration, sufficient to constitute a rule for the Church in the use and application of the power which she has warrant to exercise."⁷

Cunningham points out that, at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), "the apostles acted . . . as the ordinary office-bearers of the Church, using the ordinary means of ascertaining the divine will, and enjoying only the ordinary guidance and influences of His Spirit". He states further that this is "fitted to remind us of the great scriptural principle, that the sole standard by which the affairs of the Church ought to be regulated is the revealed will of God. . . . It is very certain that if men were really willing to submit to the authority of Christ as the supreme and only lawgiver, if they were really anxious to know His will that they might do it, and if they would diligently and prayerfully search His Word, they would find materials there for regulating their opinions and conduct in all circumstances much more fully and completely than they might anticipate. . . . Much more is to be learnt from the written Word than what can be found on the surface of it, much which cannot be discovered and brought out without a large amount of study and meditation."⁸

Amongst the facts which justify the claim that the Bible provides us with principles as to how the Church should be governed are the following:

(a) There were elders in the Old Testament Church who had a governmental

⁷*The Church of Christ*, vol 1, pp 214-5.

⁸*Historical Theology*, vol 1, pp 45-50.

role, and this fact, as reflected in the synagogue in the time of our Lord, would influence the New Testament concept of the eldership.

(b) The New Testament provides for the appointment and ordination of office-bearers. It gives them authority; it instructs them as to how this authority should be exercised; and it instructs members of the Church as to how they should receive this authority.

(c) The New Testament provides for a plurality of office-bearers in each congregation.

(d) The New Testament, in its account of the Council of Jerusalem, for example, provides a pattern of consultation and adjudication within and between different churches, which is one of the ways in which the unity of the Church is evidenced and maintained.

If all that is given in the New Testament regarding office-bearers and their functions in the Church, and the duty of the Church towards them, is brought together, it provides us with the fundamental principles and features of a system of Church government. If the Lord has left directions as to how we should behave ourselves in the house of God (1 Tim 3:15) the Church must have His authority for what it does in the way of doctrine, worship, government, discipline. The Church, and its office-bearers, have to apply rules of Scripture and of common sense to the way in which they arrange the externals or practicalities of government, worship, finance, etc, to ensure that all things are done “decently and in order” (1 Cor 14:40). But as far as the things which enter into the essence of the Church’s doctrine, worship, government and discipline are concerned, they are allowed no discretion. They must simply discover and apply the principles of the Word of God. This doctrine alone is honouring to the Church’s Head and preserves the Church from innovations which would destroy her purity, liberty or peace.

The Dunnottar Covenanters of 1685¹

6. The Aftermath

Rev D W B Somerset

The ship on which the Dunnottar prisoners had been sailing finally reached Sandy Hook in Lower New York Bay on Sabbath, 13 December 1685, after three months at sea. The prisoners were landed the following Wednesday.

“Before the prisoners came ashore, it was once intended by Mr Johnstone, to whom Pitlochrie had made them over, to stop their getting out of the ship,

¹In the previous article, we followed the prisoners in their disastrous voyage to America. In this final article we give an account of what happened when they arrived.

till they should all of them, under their hand, sign a voluntary declaration, as it was called, that they offered four years service at that place. But this they would not yield unto; yea, a considerable number of them joined in a protestation against their banishment, with a large narrative of the hardships they endured during their voyage, and formerly, for conscience sake. When the prisoners came ashore, the people who lived on the coast-side, and had not the gospel settled among them, were harsh enough to them and showed them no kindness. A little way up the country there was a town where there was a minister settled, and the inhabitants there were very kind to them.² When they had information of the prisoners' circumstances, they invited all who were able to travel, to come and live with them, and sent horses for such as were not, and entertained them that winter freely, and with much kindness."³

At this point there is something of a divergence between Wodrow's account and the surviving records in New Jersey. First we give Wodrow's version:

"In the following spring, Mr Johnston, upon his father-in-law's gift of the prisoners, pursued them, and got them all cited before the court of that province. After hearing both sides, the Governor⁴ called a jury to sit and cognosce upon the affair. They found that the pannels [defendants] had not of their own accord come to that ship, nor bargained with Pitlochrie for money or service, and therefore, according to the laws of the country, they were assoiled [discharged]; upon which most of the prisoners retired to New England, where they were very kindly entertained, and employed according to their different stations and capacities. Pitlochrie proposed to be enriched by the prisoners, and yet he and his lady died at sea in the voyage. He sold what remained of the estate to pay the freight, and much of the money remaining was spent upon the law-suit in New Jersey. Thus it appears to be but a hazardous venture to make merchandise of the suffering people of God. A good many of the passengers and prisoners died in the plantations; the rest returned to their country at the happy revolution."⁵

There are various respects in which Wodrow's account needs to be modified. The records of the Court of Common Right have survived, and they make no mention of any lawsuits involving John Johnstone prior to October 1687; they do, however, record a number of suits brought by Richard Hutton,

²Presumably Woodbridge, where John Allen from England had been settled as minister in 1680 (see below).

³Robert Wodrow, *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland*, R Burns, ed, Glasgow, 1830, vol 4, p 333.

⁴Strictly, the Deputy Governor. Gawen Lawrie was Deputy Governor of East Jersey from February 1684 to October 1686. He was from London and, like several of the other settlers, was a Quaker and had suffered persecution in England.

⁵Wodrow, vol 4, pp 333-4.

the master of the *Henry and Francis*. Perhaps the cases were simply conducted in his name rather than Johnstone's. The first suit was tried at Elizabethtown on 25 February 1686 before Deputy Governor Lawrie. Captain Hutton was the plaintiff and George Muir the defendant. It was an action of debt for five pounds sterling, being the price of the passage in the *Henry and Francis*. Witnesses were examined on both sides, and the Deputy Governor summed up the evidence and charged the jury. The jury, contrary to Wodrow's statement, found for the plaintiff and George Muir was instructed to pay the five pounds and the cost of the suit. Similar suits against Christopher Strang, William Niven, Thomas Corbett and Robert Young were also successful.⁶

On May 13 the Court gave a further judgement favourable to Captain Hutton, that "a non-resident, arresting any person in this province not being a settled inhabitant, is not liable to give security to pay the defendant's costs". Evidently this case had arisen because the inhabitants had been arresting the prisoners from the *Henry and Francis*. At the same time, a date was fixed in June "for the trial of all such actions as are depending in this court at the suit of Captain Richard Hutton, and that a jury be summoned from the town of Amboy Perth to try the same". On June 9, however, when the first case (Adam Hood's) was called, Richard Hutton failed to appear, and the defendant was discharged on the payment of fees. A similar order was issued in the cases of "all the other defendants that were arrested to this Court of Common Right at the suit of the said Captain Hutton". Why Captain Hutton failed to appear is left unexplained – perhaps Deputy Governor Lawrie had intervened in some way – but in any event the prisoners at long last secured their liberty.

One other respect in which Wodrow is not accurate is in the subsequent history of John Johnstone. It seems likely that Johnstone was of Covenanting sympathies. His brother James had arrived in East Jersey about December 1684 and Whitehead thinks that he was the "James Johnstone, son of John Johnstone of Ochiltree," who was denounced on the list of Covenanting fugitives in May 1684.⁷ Three times over in his letters from East Jersey to his brother John he bemoans the lack of ministers and wishes that John could be "instrumental" to send some over.⁸ John Johnstone's connection with Pitlochrie suggests a Covenanting link, and so too does his part in the scheme to transport Covenanters to America. As long as the Covenanters were will-

⁶Christopher Strang was probably the son of the Covenanter Christopher Strang who was executed in Edinburgh on 7 December 1666. They were both from the parish of East Kilbride. William Niven had been tortured in Dunnottar Castle after a failed attempt to escape; see Article 1 in this series.

⁷William A Whitehead, *Early History of Perth Amboy*, New York, 1856, p 68; Wodrow, vol 4, p 18.

⁸A Whitehead, *East Jersey under the Proprietary Governments*, Newark, NJ, 1875, pp 435, 444.

ing, this scheme was an act of kindness; it was only when things started to go wrong and they sought to take unwilling Covenanters that it became evil. Such is the deceitfulness of the heart, however, that doubtless they could persuade themselves that their motives were still good. It appears from Johnstone's subsequent career that generally he was a humane man.

He had been a "druggist" in Edinburgh, and on arrival in East Jersey he began practising medicine and was always referred to as Dr Johnstone. He was married to Pitlochrie's daughter Eupham Scot on 18 April 1686,⁹ and on 30 October 1686 he was appointed one of the guardians of her brother James, who was a minor.¹⁰ In January 1687 Johnstone was put in possession of the 500 acres of land in Monmouth County which had been granted to Pitlochrie prior to his departure from Scotland. He moved to New York for a while, but in 1701 he was granted a further 30 511 acres of land "in consideration of the great loss they did suffer by importing the said people upon the proprietors' encouragement, and which has contributed very much to the good of this province". In 1709-10 he sat on the Provincial Assembly for New Jersey and in 1720 on the Council for New York. He also held a number of other prominent offices. He died in 1732, "very much lamented by all who knew him, and to the inexpressible loss of the poor, who were always his particular care". A few stones from his house could still be seen about 1850, and he had a "great number of descendants" alive in 1922.¹¹

Of the Dunnottar prisoners who settled in America, the one who had the most interesting career was Adam Hood (or Hude as it was spelt in America), who was mentioned above. In 1695 he was living on Staten Island (just opposite Perth Amboy) but that year he bought land in Woodbridge, where he built a farmhouse which was still standing in 1850. At first he worked as a weaver, but by 1709 he was "High Sheriff of the counties of Middlesex and Somerset",¹² and in 1718 he was appointed one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas for Middlesex County. How he acquired his legal knowledge is not clear, but he must have been a man of considerable ability. He was soon appointed the Presiding Judge, and was acting in that capacity as late as 1733. His wife Marion Renwick, whom he married in 1684, shortly before his imprisonment in Dunnottar, was banished along with the other Dunnottar prisoners on 18 August 1685.¹³ She died in November 1732 aged

⁹Not before they embarked for America, as Wodrow says.

¹⁰Edith H Mather, "George Scot of Pitlochry", *Proceedings of New Jersey Historical Society*, vol 7 (1922), p 277.

¹¹*Perth Amboy*, pp 68-72.

¹²William A Whitehead, ed, *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New Jersey, 1703-1709*, Newark, New Jersey, 1880-1886, vol 3, p 457.

¹³*The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland 1685-6*, third series, vol 11, Edinburgh, 1929, p 154.

70, and her tombstone, still surviving, records that “she lived a pattern of piety, patience, meekness and affability”. He lived until June 1746, and was aged 84 at his death. He was, therefore, aged 23 during the terrible year of 1685, when he endured two and half months in Dunnottar and then a further three months on board the *Henry and Francis*. In the providence of God, however, he had over 60 years of life remaining. He was survived by at least three children and he too had descendants alive in 1922, and presumably to this day.¹⁴

Many of the other prisoners returned to Scotland as soon as they could. John Corbet of Tinwald in Dumfries-shire had been captured by Claverhouse in 1684, imprisoned in Dunnottar, and taken out on the *Henry and Francis*. He returned home in 1687, presumably following the Declaration of Indulgence. He died on 17 March 1706, aged 63. His tombstone, which survives, concludes with the following rhyme: “Let this stone speak when speech is from me gone / How God me led when I was far from home / Banisht I was for Covenanted cause / And Non-Compliance with their wicked laws / God, whom I served, made me firm to stand / Brought back again unto my native land / My sober walk in each place of abode / Made me beloved of all that loved God / Gainst all assaults from first unto the last / Assisted me; I got not a wrong cast / His precious truth, fragrant thou wast to me / From first to last, as I lived so I die / Once more I’ll live and never die again / And sing His praise in a triumphant strain.”¹⁵

Another prisoner, who has several times been referred to, was John Fraser. He was born about 1658 and graduated MA at Kings College, Aberdeen in 1678. Soon afterwards he went to London, and in 1685 he was arrested with several others at a service conducted by Alexander Shields and shipped with them back to Edinburgh. From there he was sent to Dunnottar Castle. He was imprisoned in the small vault underneath the Whigs’ vault and developed a cough which remained the rest of his life. Refusing to take the oaths, he was banished with the other prisoners to America. Once he had secured his liberty, he was licensed to preach and given the oversight of a congregation in Waterbury, Connecticut. It appears from a notebook he kept that a dozen people traced their conversion to his preaching at that time. While at Waterbury he was married to Jean Moffat who had also been imprisoned in Dunnottar.¹⁶ In 1689 they returned to Scotland, and in December 1691 he

¹⁴*Perth Amboy*, pp 373-4.

¹⁵J H Thomson, *Martyr Graves of Scotland*, Edinburgh, nd, pp 476-7.

¹⁶James Fraser, *The Scripture Doctrine of Sanctification*, Edinburgh, 1834, p viii. The first edition of this book came out in 1774 prefaced by “A Short Account of the Author” from “a gentleman well acquainted with the family” and “furnished with authentic papers by a surviving branch of it”. One of these papers was the interesting notebook referred to. Jean

was ordained minister of Glencorse in the Presbytery of Dalkeith. In 1696 he became minister of Alness where he died in November 1711. He was the proprietor of the estate of Pitcalzean in the parish of Nigg. One of their sons, James Fraser, became minister of Alness in 1726 and was the author of the well-known book on *Sanctification*.

Archibald Riddell¹⁷ was another minister whom we have mentioned as sailing on the *Henry and Francis*. He had voluntarily agreed to travel with Scot of Pitlochrie and there seems to have been an understanding that on his arrival he would become pastor of Woodbridge. At that time Woodbridge was a small town with a population of about 600, and with a meeting-house, a courthouse, and a prison.¹⁸ John Allen from England had moved there in September 1680 and been settled as minister in January 1681 but he was not a young man and probably his health was poor. He had been born in Suffolk in 1623 and had graduated BA at Harvard in 1643, his father having emigrated to America to avoid persecution. John Allen had then returned to England, where he became vicar of Rye in Sussex in 1653. He was ejected in 1662 and from 1668-80 he had practised medicine, before returning to America. He was still living in Woodbridge in 1686, but was clearly ready to hand over the work.¹⁹

Archibald Riddell was settled as the new pastor in January 1686, within a month of his arrival. He was allotted 200 acres of land, and he purchased further lands which he retained until 1700. His wife had died on the *Henry and Francis*, but his daughter Janet was married on 26 January 1686 to James Dundas, the son of Sir James Dundas of Armeston, who was presumably a fellow-passenger on the ship and who died in 1698.²⁰ In April 1688 Riddell received a letter from the Presbyterian Church in Jamaica, Long Island inviting him “to come among us to dispense the Word of God”, and urging him “to give the town a visit in order to settling among us”. On 3 August 1688 a committee was appointed to pursue the matter, but Riddell evidently declined.²¹ In June 1689 he set sail to return to England. His companion on this voyage was another of the Dunnottar sufferers, Robert M'Lellan, the laird of Barmagechan, of whom Wodrow gives the following account:

“Robert M'Lellan of Barmagechan, in the parish of Borg, and Stewartry Moffat's father James was another Dunnottar prisoner, see Duncan Stewart, *Covenanters of Teviotdale*, Galashiels, 1908. pp 198-211.

¹⁷See Article 4 in this series.

¹⁸*East Jersey*, p 404; *Perth Amboy*, pp 355-400.

¹⁹A G Matthews, *Calamy Revised*, Oxford, 1934, pp 5-6.

²⁰*Perth Amboy*, pp 367-372.

²¹James Macdonald, *Two Centuries in the History of the Presbyterian Church, Jamaica, LI*, New York, 1862, pp 71,74.

of Kirkcudbright, was born of parents who were Presbyterian and carefully educated in the principles of the Church of Scotland. In his younger years he profited much under the ministry of that excellent person Mr Adam Kay minister at Borg.²² After he was forcibly removed from them, and a curate obtruded, Mr M'Lellan, with the godly and religious people in that parish, found it their duty to disown the Episcopal minister, as neither called of God to the place, nor invited by them. Great was the oppression of all that country, as hath been noticed, for their faithful adherence to Presbyterian ministers, and Barmagechan had his own share.”

After relating some of M'Lellan's earlier sufferings, Wodrow continues: “He joined again, with others in his circumstances, at Bothwell rising, after which he retired a second time into England, and was a second time forfeited, as we have heard. The violences done to his family and friends about this time, were many and inexpressible. Claverhouse came with a party to his house, and after he had seized the corns and cattle, he was going to take away all his moveables, but a composition was made, and a hundred pounds paid him. The lady Nithsdale, a bigotted papist, got a gift of his forfeiture, as likewise of many others in that country, and miserably oppressed his tenants, drove their cattle, and exacted much more than their rent.

“His family was thus scattered, and he upon his hiding in England, where, towards the end of the year 1684, Squire Dacres seized him, with several other Scotsmen lurking thereabout, and sent them prisoners to Dumfries. Mr M'Lellan never disowned the king's authority, as several about this time did, yet was as harshly dealt by as any of them. He was close confined in the castle of Dumfries, and laid in the irons for several days. From thence he was carried to Leith with the rest of the prisoners, and in a little time brought up to Edinburgh, and put in close prison, with fetters on his arms. Thus he continued from November till May this year, when he was sent to Dunnottar, and had his share of the severities of that place. When they came back to Leith, he was banished to America, and three of his children went with him in Pitlochrie's ship. His wife, with three other children, were left in Scotland upon the care of providence.

“It pleased the Lord to preserve him and his three children in the voyage. He himself was extremely weakened by sickness, and behoved to be carried in men's arms out of the ship, when they landed. However, in a little time

²²Kay became minister of Borgue in 1649 and died in 1665. John Livingstone lists him among the “faithful and able ministers of Jesus Christ”, “Memorable Characteristics”, in W.K. Tweedie, ed, *Select Biographies*, Edinburgh 1845-7, vol 1, p 336. His widow, Grizel Cairns, became the wife of the Dunnottar prisoner William M'Millan of Balmaclellan; see Article 1 in this series.

after he was ashore, his health returned, and he with his family set up in a plantation at Woodbridge in New Jersey, which he purchased. In this place he had the advantage, which he very much valued, of having the gospel preached to him and his family by Mr Archibald Riddell, who stayed with him at Newbridge, having a call from the congregation there, as likewise from Long Island, where he might have had a far greater encouragement; but Mr Riddell chose Woodbridge, and it was well he did so, otherwise probably he had scarce returned to Britain, where all his losses were made up, and he and his four children were in better circumstances than [if] he had conformed to prelacy. There Barmagechan continued from December this year till June 1689, when they had accounts of the comfortable turn of affairs in Britain; upon which he resolved to return to his native country.

“Accordingly, June 1689, they sailed for England, and were favoured with excellent weather, so that they found themselves on the coast of England the second of August; but there they were taken by a French man-of-war and carried prisoners to Nantz. From thence they were carried to Rochford, a common gaol, where there were near two hundred prisoners, English and Dutch, who were almost all sent to Toulon. They were chained two and two by the arm and, at first, each ten pair were tied with a rope; but that was found such a hindrance in the journey, that after the second day’s journey the ropes were no more used. Mr Riddel was chained to his son, a boy of ten years of age, for whom they were at the pains to make three different chains, before they got one small enough for his wrist. In this long and wearisome journey several of the company died. When Mr M’Lellan, through weariness and age, was unable to travel, he made application to the captain of their guard that he might be allowed the benefit of one of their carts, to help him forward some part of the way. He was answered by many lashes on the face with his whip, by which he lost the sight of one of his eyes.

“After six weeks’ travel, they came to Toulon, where they were not allowed a land prison, but were put into a large old ship lying upon the sea. There he continued nineteen months, and came through much sickness, and had none to look after him but his son, a boy scarce twelve years of age, who was now and then permitted to come ashore. Barmagechan and his son, with a few others, being sick, continued there, but all the rest, after a month’s rest, returned the same way they came, to Rochford, and thence to Denain near St Malo, where Mr Riddel continued more than a year, in a vault of an old castle, with some hundreds of other prisoners. They lay on straw, never changed save once a month, and were oppressed with nastiness and vermin.

“After two and twenty months’ imprisonment, Mr Riddel and his son were exchanged for two popish priests, whom the council of Scotland gave for

them.²³ At length there came an exchange of prisoners, and those at Toulon were liberated; but the French king would not allow them to come back through France, but gave them a pass and put them in a ship going to Genoa. This occasioned a new scene of difficulties to them. At Genoa, Barmagechan got into a Hamburg vessel, bound for Cadiz in Spain, whence he came in a fleet bound for Amsterdam; but meeting with a storm on the back of Ireland, the ship he was in was forced into Bantry Bay in Ireland. There the Irish seized upon their company, stripped Mr M'Lellan of his clothes, and he continued eleven days among their hands under terrible hardships. When notice was given to the government, the ship was looked after, and the Irish obliged to bring back the prisoners, and they with the ship sailed up to Dublin. Through the inhumanities he met with among the wild Irish, his nakedness and want of necessaries, Mr M'Lellan fell very ill for some weeks at Dublin, but it pleased the Lord to recover him; and as soon as he was able, he came down to the north of Ireland and got home safe to his own house at Barmagechan, the last day of October 1691."²⁴

Chastisement (1)¹

CH Spurgeon² preached on this subject, taking as his text the words of Hebrews 12:5: "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him".

He began the sermon with the following remarks: "God's people can never by any possibility be punished for their sins. God has punished them already in the person of Christ; Christ, their substitute, has endured the full penalty for all their guilt, and neither the justice nor the love of God can ever exact again that which Christ has paid. Punishment can never happen to a child of God in the judicial sense; he can never be brought before God as his judge, as charged with guilt, because that guilt was long ago transferred to the shoulders of Christ, and the punishment was exacted at the hands of his surety. But yet, while the sin cannot be punished, while the Christian cannot be condemned, he can be chastised; while he shall never be arraigned before God's bar as a criminal, and punished for his guilt, yet he now stands in a new relationship – that of a child to his parent; and as a son he may be

²³A letter from William III authorizing this exchange is given in Thomas M'Crie, *Memoirs of William Veitch and George Brysson*, Edinburgh, 1825, pp 523-4.

²⁴Wodrow, vol 4, pp 334-6.

¹Compiled by Peter Best from the writings of eminent Christians.

²Spurgeon (1834-1892) was Baptist pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London.

chastised on account of sin. Folly is bound up in the heart of all God's children, and the rod of the Father must bring that folly out of them. It is essential to observe the distinction between punishment and chastisement."

Later in the sermon he commented on the question in Hebrews 12:7, "For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" as follows: "Ye ministers of God who preach the gospel, is there amongst your ranks one son whom his Father chasteneth not? Unanimously they reply, 'We all have been chastened'. Ye holy prophets who testified God's word with the Holy Ghost from heaven, is there one amongst your number whom God chastened not? Abraham, Daniel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Malachi answer; and they unanimously cry, 'There is not one among us whom the Father chasteneth not'.

"Ye kings, ye chosen ones, ye Davids and ye Solomons, is there one in your high and lofty ranks who has escaped chastisement? Answer, David, wast not thou obliged to cross the brook Kedron in the darkness? Answer, Jehoshaphat, hadst not thou thy cross when thy ships were broken that were sent to Tarshish for gold? O ye starry host above, translated out of the reach of the trials of this world, is there one amongst you whom the father chastened not? Not one; there is not one in heaven whose back was unscarred by the chastening rod, if he attained to the age when he needed it. The infant alone escapes, flying at once from his mother's breast to heaven. There is one whom I will ask, the Son of God, the Son par excellence, the chief of all the family. Thou Son of God incarnate, didst Thou escape the rod? Son without sin, wast Thou a Son without punishment? Wast Thou chastised? Hark! The hosts of heaven and earth reply, the Church militant and triumphant answers: The chastisement of our peace was even upon Him: He suffered; He bore the cross; He endured the curse as well as any of us; yea, more, He endured ten-thousand-fold more chastisement than any of us can by any possibility endure."

In his commentary on the Book of Proverbs Charles Bridges³ makes these remarks on the words of chapter 3:11,12: "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction; for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth":

"Nowhere, indeed, are our corruptions so manifest, or our graces so shining, as under the rod. We need it as much as our daily bread. Children of God are still children of Adam, with Adam's will, pride, independence and waywardness. . . . For indeed chastisement is the declared test of our legitimacy (Heb 12:7,8, Rev 3:19). He corrects whom He loves, the son in whom He delighteth. His discipline is that of the family, not of the school, much less of the prison. He corrects His children, not as criminals, but as those He beholds

³Bridges (1794-1869) was an Evangelical preacher in the Church of England.

without spot, made ‘accepted in the Beloved’ (Eph 1:6). . . . He knows what is our need, and how to apply the discipline. He chooses the fittest time (Is 30:18, 1 Pet 5:6), the surest yet gentlest means, the most considerate measure (Is 27:7,8, Jer 30:11, Lam 3:31-33), the most effective instruments. And, comparing our affliction with our sin, is not the marvel that it is so light? (Ezra 9:13, Ps 103:10, Lam 3:39.) Have we not more than deserved it all? . . .

“Every rod is thy Father’s messenger; and He will not bear to have His messenger despised. Be anxious to ‘hear the rod, and who hath appointed it’ (Mic 6:9); well knowing that ‘the Lord hath not done without cause all that He hath done’ (Ezek 14:23). . . . No communion is so close, so endearing, so fruitful, as with a chastening God. Never is Christ more precious to us, His love more sweet, than in the midst – yea, in the very form – of chastening. Never have we so full a manifestation of the divine character (Ps 119:75) and perfections. What we have before learnt in theory we here learn experimentally; and what we have before imperfectly understood is here more fully revealed.”

On Hebrews 12:9-11, “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own profit; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby”, John Brown⁴ made these comments:

“There is a very striking contrast between our human and divine fathers. ‘We have had fathers of our flesh’ – that is, we have had natural parents. They chastened us – they had a right to do so from their relation, and they did so. They restrained us – they ‘corrected us’; and we did not rebel against them; ‘we gave them reverence’. Now, if it was reasonable and right in us to submit to their chastisement, must it not be much more obviously reasonable and right to submit to the chastisement of the Father of our spirits? . . .

“To be in subjection to our spiritual Father is a phrase of extensive import. It denotes, as John Owen⁵ says, ‘an acquiescence in His sovereign right to do what He will with us as His own; a renunciation of self-will; an acknowledgement of His righteousness and wisdom in all His dealings with us; a sense of His care and love, with a due apprehension of the end of His chastisements; a diligent application of ourselves unto His mind and will, or to what

⁴Brown (1784-1858) was a Presbyterian minister in Edinburgh.

⁵Owen (1616-1683) was a Puritan theologian, who became Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

He calls us to in an especial manner at that season; a keeping of our souls by persevering faith from weariness and despondency; a full resignation of ourselves to His will, as to the matter, manner, times and continuance of our afflictions'

"A further argument for submission to the chastisements of our spiritual Father is derived from His object in these chastisements, as contrasted with the object which our natural fathers had in their chastisements. 'For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit that we might be made partakers of His holiness.' . . . There are many parents who, in inflicting chastisement, are guided just by the impulse of the moment, and have no direct reference to the ultimate welfare of the child . . . but our heavenly Father never chastises His children except for their 'profit'. His object is uniformly their real advantage; and the form, the degree, the duration of the affliction, is all ordered by infinite wisdom so as best to gain this objective. . . .

"The concluding words are commonly considered as stating in what the profit of God's children, which is His object in their afflictions, consists. It consists in their becoming 'partakers of His holiness' . . . till we have no mind different from the mind of God, no will different from the will of God – till, according to our measure, we be holy as He is holy, and perfect as He is perfect. And then, the end of chastisement being gained, it will cease for ever; and as the mature, the fully-grown, the thoroughly-educated children of God, we shall live for ever in our Father's house above, in the eternal enjoyment of that happiness which He has secured for us by the obedience to the death of His own Son, and for which He has prepared us by the influence of His Spirit and the discipline of His providence. . . .

"The consequences of these afflictions, when dutifully sustained, are so advantageous, that they more than compensate the pain which they occasion during their continuance. This is plainly stated in the eleventh verse: 'Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby' The apostle admits that it is of the very nature of affliction to produce pain and sorrow. . . . They produce painful not pleasurable emotions; they are intended to do so; they cannot serve the purpose for which they are sent without doing so. . . . But while the apostle admits that the afflictions of Christians are, during their continuance, 'not joyous but grievous', he at the same time teaches that 'afterwards they yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby'

"Chastisement produces fruit, and that fruit is righteousness. Righteousness is here, I apprehend, to be understood as just equivalent to a frame of mind

and a course of conduct corresponding to what is right; it is the same thing as becoming 'partakers of God's holiness' . . .

"Affliction rightly considered, is calculated to impress on the mind the evil of sin generally, our own sinfulness, the vanity of the world, the importance of an interest in the divine favour, the value of a good conscience, the blessedness of a well-grounded hope of eternal life. In the time of ease and prosperity, the mind is naturally thoughtless and inconsiderate; the realities of the spiritual and eternal state are in some measure forgotten; the enjoyments of life supply, as it were, the place of the happiness which arises from a good conscience and peace with God. But sanctified affliction makes us see things as they really are, leads to serious self-inquiry, prevents us from saying, 'Peace, peace, when there is no peace', fixes the mind on the things which concern our everlasting interests, and excites an anxiety to remove everything which interferes with or endangers them."

Book Review

Gleanings from Paul, The Prayers of the Apostle, by A W Pink, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 496 pages, £16.00, obtainable from F P Bookroom.

Pink takes an unusual approach to the exposition of Paul's Epistles; he focuses exclusively on the Apostle's prayers. There is much excellent material here, and Pink does not neglect to apply his material to believers. For instance, commenting on Ephesians 3:14-16 he directs them to "make practical use of every doctrinal statement of the Epistles, turning each into a supplicatory plea". And he notes how, through gazing upward to God's "ineffable purity and felicity", Paul was moved "to seek for no ordinary favours but for blessings which were according to, and commensurate with, the infinite riches of His glory".

However, there are various occasional comments which jar. But what brought this reviewer up with a severe jolt was the following attempt to emphasise the unchangeableness of God's love: "As Adam did not cast off his wife when she yielded to the serpent's wiles, neither did God revoke His benign purpose when the Church became dead in trespasses and sins through the Fall. No, it seems clear from the Word that 'Adam was not deceived' (1 Tim 2:14), that out of love to Eve he voluntarily and deliberately joined her in her fallen condition, thereby foreshadowing the abounding love of Christ for His Church in being willing not only to assume our nature and in all things 'to be made like unto His brethren' (Heb 2:17) . . ." (p 431). But it is extremely questionable that Adam took the fruit out of love to Eve; what

is perfectly clear from Scripture, however, is that Adam's action was his "first *transgression*" – against the holy God who had created him. This therefore was a quite inappropriate illustration of Christ's love to His Church, which, in contrast, was carried through in perfect loyalty to His Father.

Clearly, though this book is almost entirely useful and edifying, a degree of caution is needed in reading it.

Protestant View

Where Is the Church Founded by Christ?

The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) was widely regarded as heralding a changed attitude on the part of Roman Catholicism towards Protestants and their churches and towards those belonging to other religions. "The Roman Catholic Church has surrendered its claim to a sacramental monopoly on salvation. Vatican II describes the blessings of new life in Christ, then adds: 'All this holds true not for Christians only but also for all men of good will in whose hearts grace is active invisibly. For since Christ died for all, and since all men are in fact called to one and the same destiny, which is divine, we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery'" (*The Church*, E P Clowney, 1995, pp 14,15). Dr Clowney goes on to quote an author who judged "that Vatican II accomplished a Copernican revolution of sorts by abandoning the traditional church-centred view of Christianity" (pp 20,21).

The "Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith" found it necessary to issue a document in July 2007 responding to questions regarding the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Church raised by Vatican II statements. According to this document, Vatican II "contributed in a decisive way to the renewal of Catholic ecclesiology". This resulted in an abundance of theological writing on the doctrine of the Church. There was need for "clarification by way of precise definition and correction" but some contributions to the discussion were referred to the attention of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as erroneous and giving rise to confusion and doubt. This document proposed to clarify "some ecclesiastical expressions used by the magisterium which are open to misunderstanding in the theological debate".

(The magisterium is the infallible teaching authority, of which the one essential element is the pope. Vatican II affirmed that "the college or body of bishops has no authority unless it is simultaneously conceived of in terms of its head, the Roman Pontiff, Peter's successor, and without any lessening of his power of primacy over all pastors as well as general faithful. For in virtue of

his office, that is, as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme and universal power over the Church.”) The particular teaching of Vatican II seen to require clarification is that the Church founded by Christ “subsists in the Catholic Church”.

The document claims that Vatican II neither changed, nor was intended to change, the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Church. John XXIII claimed that the Council was “to transmit Catholic doctrine, whole and entire, without alteration or deviation” but in a way which would make “this certain and immutable doctrine, to which is owed the obedience of faith,” more widely and profoundly understood in our times. Paul VI claimed that they still taught what was taught through the centuries, but “that which was assumed is now explicit, that which was uncertain is now clarified”.

The argument of the document is that the Church which Christ established as “a visible and spiritual community”, which has existed throughout the centuries with all the elements essential to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, “subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and the Bishops in communion with him”. The Church of Christ is present and operative in bodies “not yet fully in communion with the Catholic Church, on account of the elements of sanctification and truth that are present in them”, which “as gifts properly belonging to the Church of Christ, impel towards Catholic Unity”. *Subsists in* is intended to indicate “the full identity of the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church”. That these separated bodies may have been used “as instruments of salvation” is accounted for by “that fulness of grace and truth which has been entrusted to the Catholic Church”.

The “oriental Churches” (that is, the Eastern Orthodox Churches) have the name of *Church* granted to them because, although separated, they remain linked by the very close bonds of true sacraments, apostolic succession, the priesthood and the Eucharist. Since communion with the Church which has the Bishop of Rome as its visible head is one of the “internal constitutive principles” of particular churches, even these churches “lack something in their condition as particular churches”.

“Christian communities born out of the Reformation of the sixteenth century” are not accorded the title of *Church* by Vatican II or subsequent statements of the Magisterium, since “they do not enjoy apostolic succession in the sacrament of Orders and are, therefore, deprived of a constitutive element of the Church”. They cannot be called Churches “in the proper sense” because, not having the “sacramental priesthood” they “have not preserved the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery”.

When the verbiage is stripped away it is clear that, while accommodating itself for its own ends to the ecumenical and universalistic multi-faith spirit

of the age, Roman Catholicism still regards itself as the one body on earth to which the title *Church* may be ascribed without any qualification. However inexplicable it may be, any blessing enjoyed by anyone anywhere must be traced ultimately to the reservoirs of grace deposited in the Roman Catholic Church. In the light of this document we can understand the implication of statements such as that made by the joint chairmen of the Second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission in 1987: “The purpose of our dialogue is the restoration of full ecclesial communion between us. Our work has recalled for us still-wider perspectives – not only the unity of all Christian people but the fulfilment of all things in Christ”.

Having deemed it important that readers have the facts before them as fully and accurately as possible, this note has extended beyond its limits, a note in next month’s Magazine may, DV, endeavour to throw some positive biblical light on the claims made by the document under consideration. *HMC*

Notes and Comments

Religion and Politics

To us in the United Kingdom it seems strange how high a profile religion has in the political life of the United States. Three of those competing to become the Republican candidate in the next presidential election were happy, at a recent primary debate, to state that they did not believe in Darwinian evolution. On the Democratic side, prominent would-be candidates for the presidency have a full-time member of staff targeting religious voters. The contrast with the United Kingdom is dramatic, as was illustrated when, a few years ago, a top Government adviser bluntly ruled out discussion of religion.

In fact, it seems, only a few months ago did a member of the American Congress admit, for the first time, to being an atheist. He is Democrat Pete Stark, of California, who is quoted on the BBC News website as stating, “Who can say more rosaries than the next person in a certain given amount of time hardly seems to me to be a qualification [for office]. I’d like to hear much more specifics about how they plan to get us universal health care.” Certainly false religion, and Romanism in particular, is no recommendation for a politician; but neither is the profession to have no religion. Yet what is unusual for British eyes is a situation where an explicit profession of religion is seen as an advantage in politics.

Data published by the University of Michigan in 1997 showed that 53% of Americans said that religion is very important in their lives, compared with only 16% in Britain. Yet the quality of American Protestantism is, sadly,

highly doubtful. For instance, a 1980s survey indicated that more than half of the students at Evangelical colleges and seminaries believed that “the Bible is the inspired Word of God, not mistaken in its teachings, but is not always to be taken literally in its statements concerning matters of science, historical reporting, etc” (quoted in Michael Horton, *Made in America, the shaping of modern American Evangelicalism*, p 151). It is playing with words to call students *Evangelical* who have no more confidence than this in the accuracy of the Bible. They have no right to the expression, though one must acknowledge that the word is very often used in a very weak sense. And, sadly, one can have no reason for any confidence that the situation has improved in the last two decades.

The one UK region where religion is prominent in politics is Northern Ireland. Uniquely, it now has a strongly-Protestant First Minister at the head of its government. Following many years of extremely forceful opposition to Roman Catholic involvement in the government of the province, Rev Ian Paisley is now in partnership with Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, who belongs to the organisation Mr Paisley so often derided as Sinn Fein-IRA. One has to ask if Mr Paisley’s opposition could survive the opportunity to get his hands on the levers of power.

It is particularly galling to many who were once his strongest supporters that his Stormont department will in the current year be distributing £180 000 to homosexual groups. The system which makes the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister responsible for equality issues in Ulster was set up by the Westminster government, but the fact remains that this Office is working closely with the Coalition on Sexual Orientation, which represents a number of homosexual groups, and its “sexual orientation strategy and action plan” was due to be published this summer.

Clearly no one claiming to have been called to preach the gospel should be involved in politics; yet Mr Paisley has been heavily involved in party politics for many years. He could never have been considered Reformed in his doctrine, but he did appear to have sound Protestant principles. These principles seem quite inconsistent with his present position.

Consultant Cleared of Euthanasia

A consultant neonatologist at the Aberdeen Maternity Hospital was cleared of misconduct in July by the General Medical Council (GMC). Dr Munro had on two occasions administered 23 times the standard dose of a muscle relaxant called Pancuronium to dying babies. During the hearing, the GMC lawyer described his action as “tantamount to euthanasia”. Doubts were raised about the treatment after the second incident, and Dr Munro told the resulting

inquiry that he had never administered Pancuronium in similar circumstances before. The inquiry discovered, however, that he had administered the drug to the first baby in very similar circumstances six months earlier. The GMC panel ruled that it “was not satisfied so as to be sure that [Dr Munro’s] conduct was inappropriate”, because “there was a lack of clear, specific professional guidance”. His denial that he had administered the drug before was found to be “misleading” but the allegation that it was dishonest was “not proven”.

In both cases the babies had had their treatment withdrawn prior to death. In the second case, one of Dr Munro’s colleagues stated in written testimony that Dr Munro was wrong to stop the baby’s care. “If withdrawal of care is being discussed, it merited discussion with a senior colleague. I wouldn’t have agreed with withdrawal of care at the time. It’s possible the baby could have survived.” The readiness to hasten death, and to excuse the hastening of death, is one of our national sins at present. “Shall not I visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this” (Jer 9:9). *DWBS*

Church Information

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Skye: At Portree, on Tuesday, September 25, at 11 am.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, September 25, at 11 am.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Tuesday, September 25, at 2 pm.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, October 9, at 11 am.

Australia & New Zealand: At Gisborne on October 19, at 2.30 pm.

Western: At Laide, on Tuesday, October 30, at 4 pm.

Committee Meetings

Synod committees will meet, DV, in Inverness Free Presbyterian Church as follows:

Tuesday, October 2:

9.30 - 11.00 Training of the Ministry Committee

11.00 - 12.00 Magazines Committee

12.00 - 1.00 Sabbath Observance Committee

2.00 - 5.00 Finance Committee

2.00 - 3.00 Outreach Committee

6.00 - 7.30 Publications and Bookroom Committee

7.30 - 8.30 Welfare of Youth Committee

8.30 - 9.30 Dominions and Overseas Committee

Wednesday, October 3:

9.30 - 11.30 Religion and Morals Committee

(Rev) *John MacLeod*, Clerk of Synod**Dominions and Overseas Fund**

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

R A Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

College & Library Fund: Friend, Newcastle, Ps 25, £40; Anon, London, where most needed, £100.

Eastern Europe Fund: Anon, NI, for work in Ukraine, £500; Anon, £350.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: Anon, NI, for work in Israel, £500; Anon, £40; Anon, London, £40; Anon, for Thembiso Children's Home, £200; Anon, for Zimbabwe famine relief, £555; Anon, for Kenya Poor Fund, £445; Anon, London, for the believers in Zimbabwe, £500.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Assynt: *Congregational Funds:* The estate of the late Miss A Graham, for the upkeep of Lochinver Church and Manse, £78 000.

Bonar Bridge: *Congregational Funds:* Anon, £40.

Bracadale: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, "In memory of beloved parents", £200 per DJM.

Dingwall: *Congregational Funds:* Anon, £100, £100; Friend, £25 per KML. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £50. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £50. *Where Most Needed:* KAM, £300 per Rev NMR.

Fort William: *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £100. *Where Most Needed:* Anon, £20.

Gairloch: *Church Improvements/Painting:* Anon, £100; Anon, £50. *Communion Expenses:* Gairloch Friend, £20 per Rev AEW; Gairloch Friend, £25. *Congregational Funds:* Friend, £20.

Inverness: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £20. *Congregational Funds:* Anon, £25, £25, £30, £25. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* M Dunbar, £15. *Kinlochbervie Church Building Fund:* Anon, £100.

North Harris: *Congregational Funds:* "In memory of Marion MacAskill", £50 per MM, Dumbarton; Mr & Mrs MacK, for Sabbath School Funds, £40.

North Tolsta: *Communion Expenses:* SMK, £160. *Congregational Funds:* Anon, "In memory of beloved parents", £20; Anon, £30, £50; Munro, 57 New St, £100; Anon, "In memory of a beloved Aunt, Catherine Smith, £250; Anon, £10; C MacDonald, Stornoway, "For the Lord's Cause", £40, £50 per Rev DC.

Portree: *Congregational Funds:* CM, Lewis, £130 per SYM.

Raasay: *Congregational Funds:* Anon, £25 per Rev JRT. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for Zimbabwe Mission, £80 per Rev JRT.

Santa Fe: *Church & Manse:* Scottish Friend, \$110; Anon (Various), \$510. *Dominions & Overseas Fund:* Anon, \$75.

Shieldaig: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £100, £60, £40; CM, Staffin, £100. *Congregational Funds:* Anon, £20, £30. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, "In grateful memory of a dear husband and father", £100.

Staffin: *College & Library Fund:* CM, Staffin House, £10. *Communion Expenses:* CM, Staffin, £100. *Door Collection:* CM, Staffin House, £50. *Sustentation Fund:* CM, Staffin House, £50.

Stornoway: *Door Collection:* Mr Fogg, £70; C MacDonald, £40; C MacDonald, £50 per Rev DC. *Sabbath School:* Anon, £20.

Uig: *Communion Expenses:* Friend of the Cause, Stornoway, £40; Anon, £30, £20. *Congregational Funds:* D A Morrison, £100.