

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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**Issued by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland  
Reformed in Doctrine, Worship and Practice**

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*“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth” Psalm 60:4*

## Contents

Approaching God .....	289
Immanuel (2)	
A Sermon by George Smeaton .....	292
The Philippian Jailer (1)	
James Buchanan .....	298
The Roman Catholic Mass	
2. The Roman Catholic Church and the Mass	
Rev J R Tallach .....	303
The Imputation of Sin (2) .....	306
Eastern Europe Mission News	
Rev D A Ross .....	309
Book Reviews:	
<i>Letters of Thomas Chalmers</i> .....	312
<i>Let Christ be Magnified</i> , by J H Merle d’ Aubigne .....	314
Notes and Comments .....	315
Protestant View .....	318
Church Information .....	319

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

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

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

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

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

**June: First Sabbath:** Auckland, Farr, Perth; **Second:** Nkayi, Shildaig; **Third:** Lochcarron, Uig; **Fourth:** Gairloch, **Fifth:** Bulawayo, Inverness.

**July: First Sabbath:** Beaully, Raasay; **Second:** Bonar, Staffin, Wellington; **Third:** Applecross; **Fourth:** Struan; Cameron.

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

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

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**November: First Sabbath:** Raasay; **Second:** Glasgow; **Third:** Santa Fe (Texas); **Fourth:** Aberdeen; **Fifth:** Chiedza.

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# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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## Approaching God

“All have sinned”, Paul reminds us (Rom 6:23). Because of our fall in Adam, we are all coming short of the glory of God; there is never a moment in our lives when we meet God’s demands for perfect obedience to His law. While we remain in a state of nature, our sin leaves us condemned to a lost eternity. And if we see the seriousness of our sin before God, we will have to ask, “How should man be just with God?” (Job 9:2).

At the same time we must recognise that we are under the power of sin and are very seriously polluted. If we see the seriousness of the pollution, we will also ask: “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?” (Job 14:4). Our answer must be the same as Job’s: “Not one” – while we consider the matter on the human level. Only God can cleanse away human filthiness. It requires infinite wisdom and infinite power.

But the glorious fact is that God in His infinite wisdom and power has made provision for both the guilt and the power of human sin to be put away effectively. Zechariah prophesied: “There shall be a fountain opened . . . for sin and for uncleanness” (13:1). And with the coming of Christ, that fountain has indeed been opened for the whole world.

He came to die *for* sinners – in other words, in their place, as their substitute. They deserved to die; He died instead. They could not deserve any spiritual blessing; in particular, they could not deserve to get to heaven; but Christ merited heaven and all other spiritual blessings for them. Not least among these other blessings is the gift of the Holy Spirit to cleanse the hearts and lives of sinners.

However, the doctrine of substitution is increasingly opposed today. A recent book on the subject notes that “an increasing number of theologians and church leaders are calling it into question”. The book asserts that “the most disturbing thing is that most of the recent critics of penal substitution regard themselves as Evangelicals, and claim to be committed to the authority of Scripture. Moreover, whereas criticism of penal substitution was once confined largely to academic books and journals, it has now found its way into popular Christian books and magazines, creating confusion and alarm

among Christians.”<sup>1</sup> Yet, whatever commitment to the authority of Scripture these critics may claim, such plain statements as Paul’s, “Christ died for the ungodly”, cannot be understood except as teaching that Christ took the place of the ungodly and died instead of them. If theologians or church leaders, or even ordinary individuals in the pew, toss away the doctrine of substitution, they are ruling out every possibility of having their guilt and pollution washed away. They may claim still to see a fountain which cleanses from sin, but it has no source; no water flows from it; and, solemnly, those who imagine that they come to it still need to be washed from their sins.

No sinner can come to God directly. It is as if there is an unbridgeable abyss, of infinite depth, between us and God. But the Scriptures reveal God’s provision for sinners, so that they may be brought from where they are – on a slippery slope leading down to a lost eternity – into the presence of God. Christ, the sinner’s substitute, is the provision; through Him, as Mediator, sinners may approach God. The sinner is to believe these truths – summed up, for instance, in the words: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). In the light of this revelation, the sinner is to come to God; he is to come looking to Christ – trusting in Him – as the one appointed by God to be the sinner’s substitute.

The sinner thus coming to God will pray. And he has every encouragement to do so. On the basis of what Christ has done as high priest, he is to “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that [he] may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16). And what greater time of need can there be than when a sinner is under conviction of sin? There is further encouragement in the fact that God has time and again shown His willingness to answer the prayer of needy sinners. Look, for instance, at David’s acknowledgement: “Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble [or needy ones]: Thou wilt prepare their heart, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear” (Ps 10:17). And the Lord shows the same gracious willingness to hear prayer today – whatever the particular need the sinner is experiencing.

In what spirit is a sinner to come to God? There is an answer in the Saviour’s parable of the Pharisee and the publican. Matthew Henry comments that, in contrast with the Pharisee, “the publican kept at a distance under a sense of his unworthiness to draw near to God . . . . Hereby he owned that God might justly behold him afar off and send him into a state of eternal distance from Him, and that it was a great favour that God was pleased to admit him thus nigh. . . . He did lift his heart to God in the heavens, in holy

<sup>1</sup>Steve Jeffrey, Mike Ovey, Andrew Sachs, *Pierced for Our Transgressions: Rediscovering the Glory of Penal Substitution*, IVP, pp 22,25.

desires, but through prevailing shame and humiliation, he did not lift up his eyes in holy confidence and courage. His iniquities are gone over his head as a heavy burden, so that he is not able to look up” (Ps 40:12).

“His prayer was short”, Henry continues. “Fear and shame hindered him from saying much; sighs and groans swallowed up his words; but what he said was to the purpose: ‘God be merciful to me a sinner’. And blessed be God that we have this prayer upon record as an answered prayer, and that we are sure that he who prayed it went to his house justified; and so shall we, if we pray it, as he did, through Jesus Christ.” Henry assumes that behind the publican’s prayer lay the thoughts: “The God of infinite mercy be merciful to me, for if He be not, I am for ever undone, for ever miserable. God be merciful to me, for I have been cruel to myself.”

All this took place at the temple, where sacrifice was offered to God day by day. Human sin was thus being acknowledged before God. So was the way He had appointed for sinners to return – through the offering of a substitute. While the Pharisee felt no need of a sacrifice, the publican clearly felt his need. Even if he had offered no sacrifice, he had every right to believe that the morning sacrifice that day had been offered for him in common with every other Israelite; from where he stood he was probably able to see the smoke ascending to heaven from the sacrifice on the altar. Henry remarks: “The Pharisee had insisted upon the merit of his fastings and tithes; but the good publican disclaimed all thought of merit and fled to mercy as his city of refuge”, and he did so on the basis of sacrifice, God’s merciful provision, offered for sinners. So sinners today are to go to God on the basis of the one effective sacrifice, offered by Christ Jesus at Calvary.

J C Ryle wished the reader of his comments on this parable to leave it “with the sense of the great encouragement it affords to all who feel their sins and cry to God for mercy in Christ’s name. Their sins may have been many and great; their prayers may seem weak, faltering, unconnected and poor; but let them remember the publican and take courage. That same Jesus who commended his prayer is sitting at the right hand of God to receive sinners. Then let them hope and pray on.”

But let them pray on in the knowledge that God has provided a substitute in Christ Jesus. Only by looking to Him, who offered up Himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, can sinners approach God. The doctrine of substitution is not merely a matter for theoretical discussion, although it is indeed important to believe what is right. But this doctrine is most certainly of practical importance; it is the one foundation for the salvation of sinners. On the basis of Christ and His perfect sacrifice, sinners are to go to God for salvation. There is no other remedy for the guilt or the pollution of sin.

## Immanuel (2)<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by *George Smeaton*

Isaiah 7:14. *And shall call His name Immanuel.*

Matthew 1:23. *They shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

**2. Christ's divinity as it directly affects ourselves** – how it bears upon the human heart. Every doctrine of the gospel produces, as its fruit, a corresponding frame of mind; and from this truth of Christ's divinity should flow new supplies of holy joy and wonder, strength and peace, faith and love. All the spiritual graces are refreshed by it and cheerfully expand, like the full-blown flower, under the sunshine of its fostering influences. But here we shall trace its effect only on these two – faith and love.

(1.) It is on this truth alone that *faith* steadfastly rests. A dead faith looks but to one of Christ's two natures. Hence the Jew blasphemes, and the superstitious tremble. Unbelievers virtually deny the incarnation, and have respect to one or other of His natures, but not to both. To the spiritual man, the incarnation never ceases to be wonderful; yet it is a faithful saying. It is plainly necessary to look to both Christ's natures, inasmuch as the manhood is not singly all-sufficient, and the absolute Godhead confounds a fallen spirit but gives no rest or hope. Hence the Lord said to the blind man, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" Hence the eunuch said to Philip: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God". Hence Paul preached Christ, that He is the Son of God.

If this great truth is not the ground of our faith, then *ichabod*, the glory is departed. Neither a Socinian's view of Christ or a Unitarian's can ever be a ground for faith. An Arian's view can give no peace. Faith consists only in a reliance on that God who appeared as the babe of Bethlehem, over whom the angels sung. It is not flesh and blood indeed that reveals this doctrine to us; it is the Father in heaven; but this is the truth on which the Church is built. "On this rock", on this confession of His Godhead, the Lord declares: "I will build My Church". And who does not perceive that, according to the neglect or the steady maintenance of this truth, the character of Christianity either declines or flourishes? If, this great truth of God becoming man, an Almighty Brother, a human heart – not more full of pity and kindness than connected with unbounded power – were animated with a vital energy in all the Churches, would it not throw off the embarrassment that age and superstition have

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted, with editing, from *The Scottish Christian Herald* for 1840. The first part of this sermon, printed last month, dealt with Christ's divinity as connected with God's procedure towards us; he discussed, in particular, both the Person and the work of the Mediator.

wreathed around religion? And would it not impart both principles of action and a glow of piety worthy of a better time?

The unfailing issue of other principles is that something different from the distinctive doctrines of the faith constitutes the dark retreat – whether the whispers of a legal spirit or the abatement of the amount of guilt or a full denial of the fall. The sad issue in those who have reasoned out a system of belief, which does not recognise Christ's Godhead, holds true also of all who do not embrace the doctrine with a real faith. They have not – they cannot have – a steady hold of any doctrine. On this truth the Church is built, and 1800 years have already established the truth of the Redeemer's prophecy that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it". "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona," said the Lord when Peter made the confession; and blessed are all they who still make it with Peter's faith.

Having thus established the fact that faith contemplates only a divine Saviour, we shall briefly illustrate this in the actual operations of faith. The degree of trust we may exercise is in direct proportion to the ability and fitness of Him who is its object. Who would lean upon a broken reed? Who would trust his all, or could do so with confidence, to one who had neither a sanctuary or protection under his command? Were a parent cut down in the vigour of manhood by the hand of ruthless violence and left prostrate on the lonely highway, the efforts of his child might be unwearied in his behalf; but could that languid eye expect efficient aid from all the resources of his feeble child, who could only gaze upon a parent's face and relax its efforts in its tears?

Neither will the soul surrender its inherent self-sufficiency, unless to one whose resources amply meet its needs. No, faith cannot be reposed even in an angel. If we did not have an omnipotent Saviour, One who has divine perfections, nothing could give our heavy-laden spirits rest. In point of right, our faith ought to be given to none but God; and, in fact, it can be given to none but Him. Every truth of Scripture that secures a sinner's safety centres in Christ's person. Without Him there is no refuge, no secure footing, no rest for a troubled conscience. A man is only mocked and baffled with visions of relief till he relies on Christ as the Son of God. "God is my salvation", says Isaiah. Faith cannot be strong if our succour is not ample. A faltering confidence follows a precarious aid.

But if Christ is your king, believer, who shall dethrone Him from His eternal glory? You may exclaim to every enemy, Go, you can no more prevail against me than you can supplant my Sovereign from His eternal throne. Yes, earth may roll as an eclipsed and cheerless thing upon infinitude, or may disappear in the solitude from which it sprang, but the believer shall mount up into the presence of his Lord, to see Him as He is. "Who is he",

says John, “that overcometh the world; but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

But faith views Christ’s *willingness* as well as His power. Mere power may destroy as well as save us. There can be no faith without an assurance of the Saviour’s ready will to help us – if the soul does not repose on His love. The carnal mind dreads God’s presence and hides from it, like our guilty forefather, and views all power as hurled against him by an angry Judge. Before Him whose presence is around us, and whose dread visitation is inevitable, the sin-burdened spirit stands appalled and would desire that there were no God. And why? Because it cannot be denied that, with every advance in the career of sin, with every repetition of allowed rebellion, men have only a higher disrelish of God and a hatred of Him too, because He has been injured and offended.

This enormity of crime, in returning malignity for love, in showing hatred because we have done the wrong, may almost appear incredible. But where is the unreconciled offender whose evil conscience, hurrying from a broken law to a formidable Avenger, from the scene of guilt to the lightnings of the judgement seat, does not attest the truth of it? Does he not, as it were, repeat, “Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?” To reduce us into obedience to the faith is what no sanctions, no threats of retribution, can effect. What though Sinai’s thunders and its voice of words and terrible accompaniments were at every step before all one’s senses? What though the earth, at the rise of every sinful purpose, was wrapped in gloom, or heaved beneath our feet, or the menace echoed round us, “Thou shall surely die”? These might overcome the paralysed and nerveless arm, but they could not subdue the stubborn heart, which would still distrust and fear Him as before.

From this downhill career we are rescued by a new attraction. We trust in God only because He manifests His love and grace and mercy. And have we not the amplest warrant for our faith in the incarnation of the Mighty One? May we not be more than conquerors over all our guilty fears and all our weakness of purpose? We see the distance already overcome that sin has interposed between us and God, when we behold our nature united to His own. The assurance that He is willing to be reconciled is confirmed by the most stupendous pledge.

We are afraid by nature and think God altogether such an one as ourselves – as vindictive and implacable – yet how much is this jealousy disarmed when we behold God descend and walk among His creatures! This may go far to reassure our trustless hearts, but how much more if we know that both the bodily and mental fabric we inherit are united indivisibly to the incarnate Son, and shall throughout eternity belong to Him! O it is too great and too

good! Well may God's children admire, as they ever shall, its unfathomable condescension. But who should stagger at the promises through unbelief, or show despair or instability of faith when this is revealed? In an hour of heaviness, the believer may exclaim, I know One who bears my own flesh and blood and yet regulates the movement of the universe, who has vouchsafed to call me friend, and say, "My Father and your Father, My God and your God".

I might dwell upon the human feelings of the Lord Jesus, to show His willingness and furnish a ground for faith, but I shall only touch on them. With tenfold greater tenderness than one man loves another does the Saviour's heart beat for His brethren. Never is there a discordance between the human feelings and divine, and that eye which wept on earth is still full of pity – a pity never separated for a moment from unbounded power. Can we expect love in a human heart, and not be far more certain here? The absolute Godhead terrifies us, but Christ is man as well as God; and while the frail human bosom recoils from an absolute God in dismay, it can lean with unruffled serenity on Him who bears a human bosom amid all the overpowering glories of the throne. Can there be doubt or irresolution in the most desponding, when the Saviour's love and pity beat warmly toward sinful man?

(2.) Let us now trace the influence of this doctrine on the *affections*. God has given an assurance of His love: "We love Him because He first loved us". And in what form is this expression of His love presented? Not in an audible announcement from the skies, not in an inaudible sign from heaven, but by the most stupendous act – by condescending to assume our flesh. Conceive the mighty God united to our nature, the Creator to a portion of His own creation, the everlasting Father become a child born. We may conceive ourselves united to a loathsome worm or toad; and what is that but the connection of one creature with another, of one clod of the valley with its fellow? But this assumption of our nature into a personal subsistence with Deity; this, O Lord God, we can only admire and adore. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him?"

To this there were opposed obstacles all but insurmountable – our obstinate neglect, our haughty independence, our resolute rebellion. But above them all His grace arose and swelled till the tidings, "Lo, I come," proclaimed that sin was now condemned, and yet the sinner saved. That the Son of God should come at all, that He should come over every obstacle and insult, overthrows at once our preconceived ideas of His nature. This is that overpowering condescension in which He will for ever be admired by all them that believe. He came to save a fallen world. He came to save the guiltiest transgressor.

As nothing can check suspicion or disarm hostility but the experience of

affection, what higher proof can be given of love than that the Son should disrobe Himself of His glory, that God should humble Himself so that sinners might be redeemed. This is language which none would be warranted to utter unless it were revealed in Scripture. But, blessed be God, it is true. This is the most transcendent evidence of love: should it not subdue every heart? Unless every generous emotion has been eclipsed, who can admit this as a truth, as unexpected as it is undeserved, without the melting of affection awakened as a fresh and new-born feeling? In the sympathies of human fellowship, there are daily instances in which welcome kindness, when alleviating needs, will overpower the manly bosom and unlock, even in the hardened and depraved, the tears of overflowing emotion. How then, in reference to this, can our hearts continue the monument of rocky ingratitude and not become the wellspring of an everlasting love?

When Simeon stood within the temple of Jerusalem, he bore in his arms the greatest birth of time, the One in whom time and all events and the continuance of the world centred. What a tide of grateful love, what irrepressible emotions of profound abasement, as well as overpowering tenderness, filled him when he reflected that this was He “who rideth . . . in His excellency on the sky, by whose word himself and all creation were upheld in being, and who yet became the Lord his Redeemer! If prophets and righteous men desired to see His day and were not permitted, dare we now, when the desire of all nations has come, receive Him with indifference, as if the charm of novelty were gone? Not to mention that this is to repay love with ingratitude and scorn, not to mention that this is a subject ever new.

Let every bosom be persuaded that if it can succeed in defeating this most powerful argument and motive to the love of God, it will stand for ever impregnable against assault. For if we are drawn to God, not by fear of punishment, but by the experience of love toward us, then its highest evidence is: “God so loved the world”. Nothing else will raise our prostrate affections.

This represents the Deity as nigh and dwelling among us. This unfolds His compassionate and amiable nature; and we can delight ourselves in Him as our portion and defence. The excited fears, as well as the malignant hatred, of the carnal bosom now give place to love. The gloomy prospect of sin and doubt, of dreaded punishment and of a wrathful Judge, are now withdrawn. And, in its place, our spirits are refreshed by God manifest in love alone, assuming on His incarnate Person all the causes of our distance and rebellion, reconciling us to Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses.

When all that made Him formidable is removed and all that fostered our resentment is effaced, then free scope is given for an unruffled meditation on His excellence. Who can realise this love to himself and not be lost in deep

amazement at so unexpected a deliverance from such a hand? And when standing on the margin of the precipice from which he has been rescued, and reflecting that for his deliverance the invisible world opened on his puny insignificance, and the Creator issued from eternity and, by an immediate miracle, stretched out a saving hand in His descent, is not the delight of security mixed with wonder as he sees that he is the monument of such compassion? He is apt to ask, "Can my God have humbled Himself so low? Can His love to me be so unbounded?" He does not do so with the unbelief which pronounces it impossible, but as the expression of overflowing gratitude, on a reflex view of personal unworthiness which wonders as it gazes on its incomprehensible mysteriousness.

It should be our prayer, as it was Paul's, "that we may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," and when understanding falters, still to be absorbed in holy admiration. From this, as from an islet, we may gaze on the profound expanse of divine love, and see mirrored there every relation that connects our well-being in time and in eternity – the marvels of redemption, the condescension shown, the obstacles overcome, the source of every present emotion and future prospect; in a word, our all in all. And blessed be God that, beyond our circumscribed field of vision, there spreads an unsurveyed infinitude of love, a scope for ever-new investigation, where all our doubts and natural fears may for ever be absorbed. If this love were bounded, we should apprehend defect; but it is a "love which passeth knowledge".

One word in conclusion. Can some of you say that you have been brought nigh to God? Has your natural antipathy been removed? Can you bear to be alone with God? Are you composed and delighted in His presence? Can you love Him because He first loved you? Rejoice then in God your Saviour, and let this be the ceaseless theme of wonder. Or again, who among you dare not approach God and call Him your friend, because you are still in an unrenewed state, and yet you see no constraining motive here? And is this to be the gratitude displayed? Is this to be the new obedience given? O the sin of this contempt, the enormity of treading under foot this love, which far outbalances all other guilt! Do you never think, "For every breath I draw, I am in the hands of One who, if He is not my Saviour, is yet the eternal God and will be my Judge whether I consent or not?" And do you never ask, "How shall I find Him a Redeemer whom I cannot elude as a Judge?"

But the day of terror is reserved till the judgement morning. This is still the reign of grace. Why then are you a blot on God's creation when He is not only willing to save sinners, He has come to save them? Take this entreaty:

reflect continually on the man Christ Jesus – on His deeds and on His sufferings. Connect the whole with His Godhead nature; and, while you feel the deepest awe and reverence, learn to lean, as did John, upon a Saviour’s bosom. Behold His flesh, but behold it only as the tabernacle of His Godhead. And never cease your contemplations till your hearts are melted into love to Him.

## The Philippian Jailer (1)<sup>1</sup>

*James Buchanan*

I prefer the cases of conversion found in Scripture to all others because, as recorded by the Spirit of God, they are of standard authority and exhibit the truth without any mixture of error or extravagance. They show us what is essential in every case of conversion and enable us to separate from each case the merely-circumstantial accompaniments. In reviewing these cases, I trust we shall be impressed with a solemn sense of the greatness of conversion when we reflect that God has not deemed it unworthy of His infinite mind to record, in His Word, the commencement and the completion of this change in individual men and women.

The case of the Philippian Jailer affords an instructive example of real conversion to God. In illustrating the words of Acts 16:19-34, in which it is recorded, I shall consider: (1.) What is said of the state of his mind before his conversion, (2.) The circumstances which accompanied this great change and the means which effected it, (3.) Its true nature and the practical results which followed it.

**1. The state of his mind before conversion.** He was successively in two different states of mind: first, a *careless sinner*, and second, a *convinced sinner* – before he became a converted man.

It is evident that, down to the time when the earthquake occurred, he had been a careless, unregenerate, worldly man. This appears, not so much from his having imprisoned the Apostles and made their feet fast in the stocks, for that might have been his duty in his situation as jailer; and the guilt of persecution properly rested on the people who accused them and the magistrates who condemned them. But his conduct, when “suddenly there was a great earthquake . . . And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep . . .

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Buchanan’s valuable *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*, which has been reprinted by the Banner of Truth Trust. This is the first of his “illustrative cases” of conversion. Buchanan (1804-70) was a professor in the Free Church’s New College in Edinburgh. His *Comfort in Affliction* has been republished by Free Presbyterian Publications. Both books are available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled”, shows conclusively that he was a careless sinner

We have here a lively delineation of a worldly, careless, godless man driven to desperation by an unexpected calamity. He supposed his prisoners had escaped, and that he would be called to account by his earthly superiors and condemned to forfeit the situation which he held; and immediately, under the influence of “the sorrow of the world [which] worketh death”, “would have killed himself”. The thought of suicide was an indication of utter practical atheism, for it showed that he had no fear of God. He was more afraid of them that could kill the body than of Him that could cast both soul and body into hell. He had no care for his soul; he was ready to imperil its salvation, merely because he apprehended the loss of his situation on earth. He was utterly reckless about eternity; to escape from the misery of the present hour he was about to rush, unprepared and unsummoned, into the presence of his Judge. The idea of suicide could not have occurred to anyone, however severe the trials he was called to endure, unless he was utterly ignorant of, or careless about, God and his own everlasting prospects.

But a change was wrought on his state of mind before his conversion, which was only preparatory to the still greater change: from being a *careless* sinner he became a *convinced* sinner. This consisted in strong convictions of conscience and lively apprehensions of danger. Although suddenly produced, they were alike sincere and profound, for it is said: “He . . . came trembling, and fell before Paul and Silas . . . and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Here is a great change – from total apathy to real concern, from utter recklessness to sincere and anxious inquiry. There is a moving contrast between his present convictions and his former carelessness, for the same danger existed then as now; his sins were as many and as great. When he did not think at all of these things, God was as just and holy and terrible, and eternity was as vast and awful, as now when in agitation and alarm he could think of nothing else. His convictions did not create his danger; they only impressed his conscience. When before, in the recklessness of unbelief he would have killed himself, his state was as perilous as now, when with a newly-awakened earnestness, he was inquiring what he should do to be saved.

But now he was brought under deep concern about the state and the prospects of his soul. He was convinced of his danger, and of his need of salvation – for his question was answered by the Apostles as referring to his spiritual state and his everlasting prospects. And this conviction, although suddenly awakened, may be accounted for by what he had seen and heard since the Apostles had appeared at Philippi. When Paul preached by the river-side, Lydia was converted and, along with her household, was baptized; and

a miracle was wrought on the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination. And the jailer could hardly fail to have heard a report of what had happened, for the whole city was thrown into an uproar.

Besides, the conduct of the Apostles in prison was fitted to impart much instruction: lacerated with stripes, loaded perhaps with chains, and with their feet fast in the stocks, “at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them”. That song of praise at the dead of night, within the walls of a public prison, bespoke a sustaining power which no persecution could crush, a peace which the world could neither give nor take away. And when the song ceased and the prayer ended, “suddenly there was a great earthquake”. These events, whether witnessed by the jailer or reported to him when he awoke, must have impressed him with the conviction that there was some unearthly greatness in these men – especially, in the midst of that awful scene after the foundations of the prison were shaken, when the jailer, in utter distraction and terror, drew his sword and would have killed himself. Then he heard Paul’s voice, rising calm and clear above the confusion, saying, “Do thyself no harm, for we are all here”.

But while a marked change had been wrought on his views and feelings, he was not yet converted. He was only at the stage of conviction, which precedes conversion but is not always followed by it. He had strong remorse, but remorse is not repentance. He had a deep sense of fear, but fear is not faith. He had an awful apprehension of danger, but danger may be apprehended while the method of deliverance is unknown. While these convictions were useful preparatory means and motives to serious inquiry and earnest attention, they neither amounted to conversion nor afforded any certain ground to expect this great change to follow; for such convictions, however profound, are often resisted and stifled. The careless sinner may be startled for a time from his slumber, but the transient alarm may pass away and he falls back again into the sleep of spiritual death, and the latter end of that man is worse than the beginning.

That the jailer was not yet converted is evident from the question which he put to the Apostles. It implies that he was now concerned for his soul, impressed with the necessity of salvation and willing to inquire after it. But it also implies that he was yet ignorant of the method of salvation and the ground of a sinner’s hope; indeed it seems to imply that he was still disposed to look to something that he himself might do to effect his deliverance. Even under an agonizing sense of guilt and danger, his question to the Apostles was not: How can I be saved? but: What must I do to be saved? And this accords with the disposition of every natural mind. However deep his convictions may be, the first impulse of every convinced sinner, before he is

savingly converted, is to look to efforts of his own as the means of deliverance – to betake himself to a reformation of life or to deeds of charity or self-mortification or some other outward observance – in the vain hope that he may thereby secure the forgiveness and favour of God.

**2. The means by which his conversion was effected.** It is of considerable practical importance to consider what is essential to conversion, apart from the special circumstances of this individual's case. Of the latter, we may mention the earthquake and the opening of the prison-doors, which were used as means of awakening the conscience of this careless sinner; in other cases, God brings about the same change without any such manifestation of miraculous power – sometimes by the ordinary dispensations of His providence, and at other times by the simple operation of His truth. It matters little by what circumstances a sinner is first awakened to inquire, provided he is convinced of his sin and danger and led to inquire in earnest after the salvation of his soul.

But while the circumstances which accompany this change vary widely, the means by which conversion is actually effected are one and the same in all; it is the truth as it is in Jesus, the full and free gospel of the grace of God. The jailer was not converted by the earthquake; on the contrary, its immediate effect was such terror that he “would have killed himself”. But what the earthquake and the other miraculous events of that memorable night could not do was done by the simple proclamation of the gospel message. When he came trembling to the Apostles, saying, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” they immediately replied, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”. And this word was the instrument of his conversion, the means by which the convinced sinner became a converted man.

In this short passage we have only, as it were, the text of the Apostles' discourse; it is evident that they instructed the jailer fully in the truth, since it is added, “They spake unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house”. Yet that precious answer, which is recorded, is a complete directory to every anxious inquirer after the way of peace. The Apostles directed him to look out of himself to Christ, to relinquish all hope of salvation by works, and to seek salvation by faith – to depend not at all on his own righteousness, but on that which God had provided, which Christ had wrought out for sinners.

They exhorted him to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, which implies, first, that he should believe the truth concerning Christ which is involved in the names which are here given to Him. Doubtless, they went on to explain this more fully – that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God and the Saviour of sinners; that He was anointed by the Father with the Holy Ghost, and is

therefore to be received as the Christ of God, the Messiah that had been promised to the fathers. They would further have explained that He was anointed for the discharge of His various offices: as God's Prophet to declare His mind and will, as God's High Priest to make atonement for sin and to intercede for sinners, and as God's King to whom all power was given in heaven and on earth. They would also have explained that, although once humbled, He was now exalted, that every tongue should confess He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This is implied in the names which are here given to Him. He is called *Jesus*, because He should "save His people from their sins", and *Christ*, because He is the Lord's *Anointed*, to whom the Spirit was given without measure, and *Lord*, because He is highly exalted, not only in the original dignity of His nature, but also in the glory which should follow His humiliation. And the jailer was called, in the first instance, to believe these truths concerning Christ, because they are the means by which sinners are savingly converted; there is enough truth in the very name of Jesus to be an adequate object of saving faith, for "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God", and there is "none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," but the name of Jesus.

The apostle's exhortation farther implies that, believing the truth concerning Christ, the jailer should place his personal trust and reliance on Christ alone, that he should come to Him and commit his soul into Christ's hands, as One who is able to save to the uttermost, and receive and embrace Him as his own Saviour, in all the fulness of His offices, as He is freely offered in the gospel. In other words, he should believe the truth concerning Christ, with a special application of it to the case of his *own* soul, not resting in vague generalities, nor contenting himself with speculative inquiries, but closing with Christ as his own Saviour, and resting on Him as all his salvation and all his desire. For the Apostles spoke pointedly to him as an individual: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved".

There are many precious lessons in the Apostles' answer for the direction and encouragement of convinced sinners in all ages. But, confining our attention to the case of the individual before us, I only observe that the general truth which he was called to believe concerning Christ, as the anointed Saviour of sinners, afforded a warrant for him immediately to rely on Christ as his own Saviour. Further, when he was exhorted to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, he had presented to him the sum and substance of the gospel message, which is glad tidings of great joy, even to the chief of sinners.

The gospel thus proposed was alike suitable and sufficient as the means of conversion. It was suitable as it prescribed a remedy which is in all respects

adapted to the evils which he felt or feared; it was sufficient as containing everything that was needed to instruct or encourage or persuade him. The gospel is the only means, and it is adequate; but is a means, and nothing more. It is an instrument whose efficacy depends on being applied by the Spirit. While it is not said of the Philippian Jailer, as of Lydia in the city, that the Lord opened his heart, it is manifest that the Spirit must have concurred with the Word; the mere Word will not do it.

If you doubt this, the same words have often been addressed to you, with a special application to each of your souls: “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved”. Even thus much of God’s truth is sufficient to convert a sinner and to bring about a sudden and complete change, but only when it is applied with power by the Holy Ghost. Your own experience may convince you that the same words which converted the jailer may be repeated often, pressed with earnestness, and fully explained, and yet leave you as unconcerned as before. So the jailer might have been in danger and yet have cherished his former security, or he might have had convictions of conscience and yet have stifled them, or he might have been alarmed without inquiring after salvation, or he might have inquired without discovering the truth, or he might have heard the truth without believing it – had not the Spirit of God convinced him of danger, awakened a spirit of earnest inquiry, made known to him the gospel, and disposed and enabled him to receive and rest upon Christ as all his salvation and all his desire.

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## The Roman Catholic Mass<sup>1</sup>

### 2. The Roman Catholic Church and the Mass

*Rev J R Tallach*

**P**ower in the Roman Church lies in its head, and the head is the Pope. Next to the Pope are the cardinals, then the bishops, and lastly the priests. As Old Testament Israel had a king, so the Roman Church has appointed her Pope. Their catechism states their claim: “The Pope, Bishop of Rome and Peter’s successor, is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful. For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ and as pastor of the entire Church, has full, supreme and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The previous article, sub-titled, “History and the Mass”, appeared last month.

<sup>2</sup>*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, p 205.

Loraine Boettner states: “After the election of a new Pope, the cardinals individually pledge their complete allegiance to him, even to the extent of prostrating themselves on the floor before him and kissing his foot as a symbol of submission”.<sup>3</sup> Bishops are appointed formally by the Pope and remain immediately subject to him. They report regularly to him on the affairs of their diocese. Below each bishop are the priests, whom he chooses, ordains, and supervises in their work. The priest must at all costs remain on good terms with his bishop, otherwise he is helpless. The people in turn are expected to obey the priest and to support him with their services and money. As their *Catechism* states, “The Church . . . is like a sacrament”; it is “a sign and instrument . . . of communion with God”.<sup>4</sup>

There is a professed continuation of the office of prophet in the Roman Church. As Israel had prophets who announced God’s Word, so the Pope and his bishops, together called the Magisterium, make pronouncements which the Roman Church claims are as authoritative as God’s Word. While Rome professes to recognise the Bible as God’s Word, its interpretation lies with the Magisterium, which thus takes precedence over the Bible. Thus the Roman *Catechism* states: “The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome”.<sup>5</sup> Rome purports to perform the mass with all the weight and authority of this complex authoritarian body from the Pope down to the priest.

How very different this idea is from the simplicity of the early Christian Church! Then the Church was made up of those called by the Word and Spirit to a living knowledge of the Redeemer – such as Zaccheus summoned from the tree, the woman of Samaria arrested at the well of Jacob, the Ethiopian eunuch converted, baptized and going on his way rejoicing. “My sheep”, said Christ, “hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me” (John 10:27). Every one of the Lord’s people has been brought to a direct and personal relationship with Him as their Good Shepherd, and thus the Church of Christ was formed in this world.

And how very different the rigid system of Rome is from the freedom and democracy of the early Church, as displayed in Acts 15! Then a council was called in Jerusalem to discuss the liberties to be given to Gentile believers in

<sup>3</sup>Loraine Boettner, *Roman Catholicism*, Banner of Truth, 1962, p 52.

<sup>4</sup>*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, p 179.

<sup>5</sup>P 26.

relation to the Mosaic law. Peter addressed the Church, but his words formed only the beginning of the discussion – no evidence of papal authority and finality there! It was after James spoke that the council came to a conclusion; “then it pleased the apostles and elders with the whole church . . . ” (v 22). The decision was not handed down from above by way of the hierarchical system of the Roman Church, but from below – representatives of the whole Church being involved and making their contribution to the discussion.

But it is not only the structure of the Roman Church which gives an unbiblical setting to the mass. Rome holds a different view of the fallen nature of man from the Reformers. It teaches that, when Adam sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, he brought guilt on himself alone, though he passed on a sinful nature to his descendants. This means that they are not guilty in respect of their fallen natures, but only when that fallen nature acts against God’s law. The Roman Church rejects the teaching of the Shorter Catechism: that we “sinned in [Adam], and fell with him, in his first transgression” (answer 16).

Adam did not represent us, they teach, but, falling into sin for himself, he became spiritually weak and had a tendency to sin: “Adam and Eve committed a personal sin, but this sin affected the human nature that they would transmit in a fallen state”.<sup>6</sup> This weakness and tendency to sin he passed on to all the human race – it is essentially a disorder of the soul.<sup>7</sup> All men receive a sufficiency of grace, so they “can really will to believe, be converted and do good”.<sup>8</sup> At baptism the tendency to sin is removed and, in the mass, grace is given with the bread. How subtly and dangerously different this is from Reformed, Biblical teaching! This speaks of Adam as our representative under the covenant of works, and of Christ as our representative under the covenant of grace; it speaks of our guilt contracted in Adam and of the believer’s righteousness secure in Christ. It speaks also of the dead, carnal nature of our unregenerate hearts, and of our total unwillingness and inability to receive Christ apart from an act of sovereign divine mercy giving life.

The mass also reflects the general teaching of the Roman Church on the merit of the good works of the faithful. Boettner writes, “The Church has a vast treasury of unused merits which has accumulated primarily through the sufferings of Christ but also because of the good works of Mary and the saints who have done works more perfect than God’s law requires for their own salvation. . . . The Church claims to be able to withdraw merits from that

<sup>6</sup>*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, p 91.

<sup>7</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae, a concise translation*, ed Timothy McDermott, Methuen, 1989, p 251.

<sup>8</sup>Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, P & R Publishing, 1997, vol 2, p 511.

store and to apply them to any member of the Church just as if he had suffered what was necessary for the forgiveness of sins.”<sup>9</sup>

This merit is stored up in heaven and is available to the Pope. He then dispenses it by way of indulgences, usually granted through the priests, in return for gifts or services rendered to the Church or as a reward for other good deeds. Indulgences are of particular relevance, it is taught, to those who have died and are “expiating their sins in purgatory”.<sup>10</sup> In this way, it is asserted, the good deeds of the Church on earth benefit those in the Church who have died: “The holiness of one profits others”. But the Word of God says, “When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do” (Luke 17:10). The Word teaches that Christ’s blood alone cleanses from sin, not any supposed merit derived from good works. “Without shedding of blood is no remission” of sin (Heb 9:22). “The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).

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## The Imputation of Sin (2)<sup>1</sup>

**U**nder the heading, “Immediate Imputation”, in his *Systematic Theology*, Charles Hodge<sup>2</sup> writes thus: “By all theologians, Reformed and Lutheran, it is admitted, that in the imputation of Adam’s sin to us – and of our sins to Christ, and of Christ’s righteousness to believers – the nature of imputation is the same, so that the one case illustrates the others. When it is said that our sins were imputed to Christ, or that He bore our sins, it is not meant that He actually committed our sins, or that He was morally criminal on account of them, or that the demerit of them rested upon Him. All that is meant is that He assumed, in the language of the old theologians, ‘our law-place’. He undertook to answer the demands of justice for the sins of men, or, as it is expressed by the apostle, to be made a curse for them.

“In like manner, when it is said that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers, it does not mean that they wrought out that righteousness, that they were the agents of the acts of Christ in obeying the law; nor that the merit of His righteousness is their personal merit; nor that it constitutes their

<sup>9</sup>Boettner, p 337.

<sup>10</sup>*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, p 332.

<sup>1</sup>The second set of extracts on this subject compiled by Peter Best from the writings of eminent Christians. The previous set appeared last month.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Hodge (1797-1878): American Presbyterian minister, professor at Princeton Theological Seminary from 1822 to 1878.

moral character. It simply means that His righteousness, having been wrought out by Christ for the benefit of His people, in their name, by Him as their representative, it is laid to their account, so that God can be just in justifying the ungodly.

“Much of the difficulty on this subject arises from the ambiguity of language. The words *righteous* and *unrighteous* have two distinct meanings. Sometimes they express moral character. A righteous man is an upright or good man. At other times, these words do not express moral character, but simply relation to justice. In this sense a righteous man is one with regard to whom the demands of justice are satisfied. He may be personally unrighteous and legally righteous. If this were not so, no sinner could be saved. There is not a believer on earth who does not feel and acknowledge himself to be personally unrighteous, ill-deserving, meriting the wrath and curse of God. Nevertheless he rejoices in the assurance that the infinitely meritorious righteousness of Christ, His full atonement for all sin, constitutes him legally, not morally, righteous in the sight of divine justice.

“When, therefore, God pronounces the unrighteous to be righteous, He does not declare them to be what they are not. He simply declares that their debt to justice has been paid by another. And when it is said that the sin of Adam is imputed to his posterity, it is not meant that they committed his sin, or were the agents of his act . . . but simply that in virtue of the union between him and his descendants, his sin is the judicial ground of the condemnation of his race, precisely as the righteousness of Christ is the judicial ground of the justification of His people.”

In a sermon on Romans 5:19: “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous”, Thomas Boston<sup>3</sup> said: “Consider the foundation of this imputation, which is a relation between the one [Adam] and the many here implied; for unless there had been some bond of union between the one and the many, the sin of that one could not have been imputed to the many. There was indeed a natural bond between him and us, but this was not the ground of the imputation; for we have such a union with our immediate parents, whose sin is not thus imputed. It behoved then to be a moral bond, by way of a covenant, he being the representative of many in the covenant of works.

“Who were they that sinned and fell in Adam? They were all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation. So Christ is excepted. Adam’s sin was not imputed to the man Christ. This is plain from Hebrews 7:26. He was ‘separate from sinners’ and was not infected with the plague whereof

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Boston (1676-1732): parish minister in the Scottish Borders, author of *Human Nature in its Fourfold State*.

He was to be the cleanser. And so Christ comes not in under Adam as head but, as in the text, is opposed to Adam as another head. Christ was indeed a Son of Adam, as appears from His genealogy (Luke 3). And it was necessary He should be so, that He might be our kinsman, and that the same nature that sinned might suffer. But He came not of [Adam] by ordinary generation; the extraordinariness of His descent lay in that He was born of a virgin. And upon this account He came not in under Adam in the covenant of works, for Christ was not born by virtue of that blessing of marriage given before the Fall (Gen 1:28) but by virtue of a covenant promise made after the Fall (Gen 3:15). So Adam could represent none in that covenant but such as were to spring from him by virtue of that blessing.

“All mankind besides sinned and fell with Adam in that first transgression. His sin of eating the forbidden fruit is imputed to them – that is, it is reckoned theirs, as if they had committed it. But some may be ready to say, we made not choice of Adam for that purpose. Answer: God made the choice, who was as meet to make it for us as we for ourselves. And ‘who art thou that repliest against God?’ (Rom 9:20). All that quarrel with this dispensation must renounce their part in Christ, for we are made righteous by Him, as sinners are made guilty by Adam. If we fall in with the one, why not with the other? We chose Christ for our head in the second covenant no more than we did Adam in the first covenant.”

Writing on the doctrine of imputation, Robert Haldane<sup>4</sup> stated in his *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*: “The difficulty that some persons feel on this subject arises from the supposition that, though the sin of the first man is charged upon his posterity, yet it is not theirs. But the Scriptures hold it forth as ours in as true a sense as it was Adam’s. We may be asked to explain how it can be ours, and here we may find ourselves at a loss for an answer. But we ought to consider that we are not obliged to give an answer on this point either to ourselves or others. . . . We are to receive it on the divine testimony, assured that what God declares must be true, however unable we may be to comprehend it. The defenders of scriptural truth take wrong ground when they rest on anything but the testimony of Scripture. . . . We receive it because God says it, not because we see it as just. We know it to be just because it is part of the ways of the just God. But we may not be able to see how it is just. We receive it like little children who believe the testimony of their father, though they do not understand the grounds or reasons of the thing testified . . . .

“Nothing is more common than to vindicate the equity of our implication

<sup>4</sup>Robert Haldane (1764-1842): Scottish preacher.

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in the ruin of Adam's fall by alleging that, had he stood, we should have reaped the benefit of his standing; is it not therefore just that you should also suffer the loss of his failure? Here the matter is rested, not on God's testimony, but on our sense of justice in the affairs of men. To this it will be replied, that if the transaction is not entered into with our consent, there is no apparent equity in our being punished with the loss. Adam's sin, then, we acknowledge to be ours, not because a similar thing would be just among men, but because God, the just God, testifies it is so; and we know that the righteous God will do righteously. To submit in this way is rational; to submit on the ground of understanding the justice of the thing, is to pretend to understand what is incomprehensible and to rest faith on a fallacy – namely, that the ground of the imputation of Adam's sin is of the same nature with human transactions.

“The method of vindicating divine truth here censured has also the most unhappy tendency of encouraging Christians to think that they must always be able to give a reason for their believing God's testimony, from their ability to comprehend the thing testified. It accustoms them to think that they should believe God, not simply on His testimony, but on seeing with their own eyes that the thing is true independently of His testimony. On the contrary, the Christian ought to be accustomed to submit to God's testimony without question and without reluctance, even in things farthest beyond the reach of the human mind. ‘Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth,’ ought to be the motto of every Christian. . . . The true ground on which to vindicate it is the explicit testimony of God in the Scripture . . . As long as a reason is alleged by the wisdom of man in support of the doctrine, so long will an argument be produced from the same source, on the other side. But when the Word of God is appealed to and all the stress of evidence rested upon it, the Christian must submit.”

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## Eastern Europe Mission News

*Rev D A Ross*

People often ask about the progress of the mission building. In fact, only a small amount of work is needed, internally and externally, before it will be complete. At present we are not able to build the security wall round the perimeter. Unknown to us, the size of the building was governed by the concrete floor sections, which come in one size only. Consequently parts of the building skirted the border of the site, which left us without sufficient land for the service area and security wall. We are informed that this is a common occurrence in Odessa and is readily overcome by renting from the

council a metre of land outside the site to allow space for the security wall and the service area. But it will be a year before this permission is granted. In the meantime, as a temporary security measure, the building has been surrounded with corrugated iron sheeting. We are also in the process of installing an alarm system, which is about 90% complete. It was intended that the Levitskiy family would move into the living area at a later date, but for security and other reasons they moved in a few weeks ago.

While the construction of the building is the responsibility of the contractor, Mr D Levitskiy is responsible for its oversight and administration, as well as having to buy building materials and attend to many other things. Mr Igor Zadoroshniy is also in constant attendance at the building and is at the moment searching out suitable seating for the room where we will have public worship. Rev Neil Ross is working on a suitable plan for positioning the seating and a small pulpit.

Mr Edward Ross and I visited Odessa in June. Apart from preaching duties and meetings in connection with the congregation and the Mission, much of our time was taken up in assisting the work at the building and purchasing materials.

The building has used up much of our funds, and inflation has added greatly to the cost. However, the building is a necessity which is very much part of the whole mission outlook. Hitherto the Lord has graciously provided funds, and we wait on Him to provide for the completion of the building and for other important gospel work in Eastern Europe. We are anxious to make progress with printing literature – something that has fallen behind while the building took first place as a necessary centre for our mission work. The translation of Robert Shaw's *Exposition of the Westminster Confession of Faith* into Russian, along with a new translation of the *Westminster Confession* itself, is now complete, these will be printed once there are sufficient funds.

It is intended, God willing, that Rev Wilfred Weale and Mr Edward Ross will travel to Odessa in November and that a communion will be held then. It is also planned that Mr Maarten Schouten and Mr Allan Boyd, will go to Romania with a truck load of aid. This will include 1000 Hungarian Bibles, 6000 Hungarian *Words of Life* calendars and a further 2000 in Romanian, as well as other literature. We are indebted to the Trinitarian Bible Society for grants of Bibles and calendars and trust that the Lord will graciously bless this work of spreading Scripture materials. The load will also include items of clothing and furniture.

While at present there is not much response from local people in the city of Odessa, we will have more freedom to advertise our presence once the building is open for public worship, and we hope that this will attract people.

We suppose that the local people will be more ready to attend a public building than a private house, where we worship at the moment.

There is however, an encouraging response from congregations and individual people throughout other parts of the Ukraine. Mr Zadoroshniy has a large correspondence with different people scattered throughout that country as well as in Russia. One person living outside Liviv writes, "Please, I am asking you, if possible, to send me a Bible. I am a student, and the Bible would be a great help to me in the halls I live in. Almost all Bibles I see now are by different sects, especially the Jehovah Witnesses. These Bibles are written in the way these sects want; therefore I never take them." Another person from Zhidachev city states, "I want to express my thankfulness for the Bible and *Westminster Confession of Faith* you sent me. It is very pleasant and good to read. This literature is a great and good remedy for soul and body, and it is the Word of God which brings peace into the heart." A Christian lady from Kharkovskaya district says, "We thank you for sending two Bibles to the Liviv prison, to my brother. With great pleasure we read the *Sermons* by Rev Donald Macfarlane. In the past we did not know the doctrines and teaching of the Presbyterian Church, but now with your help we are getting to know this Church."

Mr Zadoroshniy receives many letters of appreciation for Bibles and literature, and he replies with helpful explanations to the many questions asked. Much of his time is taken up with this work and we are looking forward to the day when he can move into the room set aside in the new mission house as his office. We will also be able to store the Bibles and literature in one place, the basement of the building.

Yet what will all this work avail, if the Lord does not bless the gospel to the hearts of the people? Paul, who laboured more abundantly than any other in the work of the gospel, stated, "But God gave the increase" (1 Cor 3:6). So we must plead that God would, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, continue to give the increase. When we listen to people engaging in prayer, it is encouraging to hear them mentioning the work of the gospel in Eastern Europe. The disciples began their great task of spreading the gospel with prayer: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14), and in this way they are an example to us.

Many of our people, and friends outwith the Church, believe that God has ordained tithing as a means for continuing the ongoing work of the gospel. It has always been so in the cause of Christ. As in Old Testament times the people brought their gifts for the building of the temple and the ongoing activity of true religion, so it has also been in New Testament times. And as we look back on the work in which the Free Presbyterian Church has been

engaged in Eastern Europe, we are not to look on it as the work of a few people, but as the work of the Church as a whole – yet especially of those who have given of their money and time. “And of His fullness have all we received” (John 1:16); we therefore ask you to continue to support the work of the gospel in Eastern Europe by your prayers and donations.

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## Book Reviews<sup>1</sup>

***Letters of Thomas Chalmers***, edited by William Hanna, with an introduction by Iain H Murray, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 570 pages, £17.50.

Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847) preached and practised the graceless and Christless morality of the Moderates until his conversion after several years in the ministry. He later became the acknowledged leader of the Evangelical party in the Church of Scotland. As minister, theological professor and ecclesiastic, he was a prominent instrument of God in the increase in the number of theological students, and subsequently of parish ministers, professing Evangelical principles. This had a marked effect upon the Church of Scotland, and was central to preparation for the Disruption of 1843 and the further organisation of the Free Church of Scotland thereafter.

This is not the place to discuss Chalmers’ method in systematic theology or his views on such important matters as the creation, the basis on which the gospel is preached freely to all and the nature of faith. John Macleod thought that his natural bent to the study of the sciences “helped to colour and determine the course of his thinking”. John Duncan found fault with his definition of faith, though, after a discussion on the subject, Duncan said to his wife: “My doctrine about faith was better than his – but he went to prayer, and his faith was better than mine”. This, however, is not to be taken as discounting the importance and influence of proper views of biblical truth.

All but 16 of the 410 letters in this volume are from Chalmers to a variety of correspondents on various subjects, spiritual and practical. Some background information regarding the correspondents would have added to the interest and understanding of some of the letters. Readers with access to the four volumes of Hanna’s *Memoirs* of Chalmers can do some research into those to whom the letters were addressed but those who only have this volume lack that advantage. An index to the main subjects dealt with in the letters would also be useful for those who wish to dip into the volume rather than read it through. However, these disadvantages do not alter the fact that

<sup>1</sup>Both titles reviewed here are obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

there is much here of historical and biographical interest and spiritual value. This typically well-produced *Banner* book contains a biographical table listing the main public events in Chalmers' life and a useful introduction by Rev I H Murray, abridged from his *A Scottish Christian Heritage*.

The letters give an insight into Chalmers' spirituality and personal character which one might not so readily derive from acquaintance with the major facts in his public life or his various theological and other writings. In dealing with the different circumstances and concerns of his correspondents, Chalmers manifests spiritual discernment and common sense. Free from affectation and down to earth in their expressions, these letters indicate the soul of a busy and public man longing after God and desirous to bring the principles of heaven to bear upon every aspect of life below. There are letters to family members, friends, ministerial colleagues old and young, aristocrats and butchers, children, and persons anxious about their souls and their sins. There are comments on domestic situations, personal travels, church matters, social problems, spiritual concerns and the practicalities of Christian living. There are expressions – frank though characterised by fairly typical Scottish reserve – of his own spiritual experiences and aspirations, and helpful responses to those who consulted him on theirs.

Readers will find much of value in these letters. Two partial specimens may conclude this review. To an anxious inquirer he wrote: "You complain that you have not such deep views of sin as experienced Christians speak of; but how did they acquire them? They are the fruits of their experience in Christ, and not of their experience out of Christ. They had them not before their union with the Saviour. It was on more slender conceptions of the evil of sin than they now have that they went to Christ, that they closed with Him, and that they received from His sanctifying hand a more contrite spirit than before – a more tender conscience than before. Do as they did; wait not till you have gotten their deep sensibilities till you go to the Saviour. Go to Him now; go to Him with your present *insensibility*; bring it to Him as part of your disease, and He, the Physician of souls, will minister to this and all other diseases".

Two months before his death he wrote to a lady concerned lest her strong assurance was an illusion. Chalmers first reminded her that "the ultimate and decisive test is Scripture" and referred to Samuel Rutherford's prison experience of "a most remarkable season of spiritual refreshment and illumination" and to Rutherford's certainty that these sensible comforts would not last and that he would then have to "believe in the dark". Chalmers then comments: "It is quite competent to believe even in the duller and darker frames of the mind; for belief does not look inwardly upon the frames, but stays itself by

looking outwardly upon the Word; see Isaiah 50:10. Nevertheless, such manifestations are mightily to be prized and longed after, as the most precious cordials on our future way; and the recollections of those which are past are confirmatory and comforting to the soul". *(Rev) H M Cartwright*

***Let Christ be Magnified, Calvin's Teaching for Today***, by J H Merle d'Aubigne, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 78 pages, £5.50.

A Preface by the Publisher introduces Merle d'Aubigne (1794-1872), the author of an extensive, thorough and eminently-readable history of the Reformation. He was greatly influenced by Robert Haldane in Geneva at a time when the theology of Calvin had been abandoned there and was a correspondent of Thomas Chalmers. This Preface is followed by the Publisher's brief account of the life of John Calvin, who died on 27 May 1564. The blurb on this little book suggests that the best way to commemorate the birth of Calvin, on 10 July 1509, is to remember the gospel he preached. On 27 May 1864 Merle d'Aubigne gave a public address in Geneva on "Calvin's Teaching for the Present Day". This volume reproduces that address.

In his introduction, the author indicates that, while he wishes to acknowledge the Church's indebtedness to Calvin, his aim is not to honour Calvin but is in keeping with Calvin's own motivation: "The glory of God, the glory of Christ; this was his overruling idea, the principle of his activity, the aim of his whole life". The following four chapters seek to highlight the place which Christ's Word, Person, Grace and Life had in both the life and teaching of the Reformer.

Calvin "defended the exclusive and regulating authority of Scripture. He proclaimed it alike in the presence of sceptical reason and of a superstitious Church". "Dwelling habitually as in His presence, he contemplated Jesus, loved, and adored Him. He desired to make Him known, and loudly gave glory before the world to His holy humanity and His perfect divinity." "Guided by the hand of God, he has found the grace of Christ in eternity; he has found it at Calvary. He now goes further, and discovers it acting with power, and alone, in the hearts of the children of God. . . . It is God who gives the will, it is God who gives the power." "But it is not only in the heart that Christ must be glorified; it is (according to Calvin) in the whole life."

This is not a systematic or substantial discussion of Calvin's theology. It takes some points which the author considers key elements in the life and preaching of the Reformer and seeks in a simple way to summon the hearer (and now the reader) to make these central for himself. *(Rev) H M Cartwright*

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Humility is a strange flower; it grows best in winter and under storms of affliction.  
*Samuel Rutherford*

# Notes and Comments

## Scotland Needs Divine Healing

It was said of Israel in Old Testament times: “To any nation never He / such favour did afford” (Ps 147:20, metrical). We believe the same must be said of Scotland in more recent times, for the Reformation was not carried forward to the same extent in any other country. Scotland became renowned as “the land of the gospel”. But today it has declined so far morally that, instead of being outstanding for true religion, it is notorious for sin.

In Scotland some sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are increasing at a faster rate in the over-35s than in young people, according to figures released by the Information Services Division (ISD) of the NHS. The figures mirror research published in the *British Medical Journal* earlier this year which said the number of STIs among over-45s had doubled between 1996 and 2003. Another report based on statistics from the ISD says that hundreds of Scots children under 16 contracted STIs last year.

The Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration has published figures which show that the number of children “beyond the control” of parents or carers has increased by 34% in the last three years, which in turn has fostered more “youth crime and gang culture”. This follows a United Nations report three years ago which labelled Scotland as the most violent country in the developed world, with people three times more likely to be assaulted than in America. Violent crime has doubled in Scotland over the past 20 years and in August it was reported that its prison population had reached an all-time high, with more than 8000 people currently in jail and a further 370 on home release under curfew.

Governments have implemented numerous health-care and crime-prevention schemes in the laudable hope of remedying the situation. But seldom, if ever, do we hear them call for a return to the biblical, divinely-ordained morality which once characterised our nation. Of course, what we require above everything else is that God would return to us in His mercy and heal our land. Thus He promised: “If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chr 7:14). *NMR*

## “Hath God Said?”

Several recent public statements echo this question, which Satan planted in the mind of Eve (Gen 3:1). The *Scotsman Archive*, 28 August 2008, reprints the confession of Richard Holloway, former leader of the Scottish Episcopal Church, that what attracted him to “the priesthood” was “the uncertainty and doubt of religion”. He believed that Christianity had “become too much of a science by giving answers to complex questions”. He bemoaned Christianity’s

churning out of facts and “boring certainties” and said that he now read more Scottish poetry than scripture because it exalted him. He thought that “the Church should scrap the Bible – not totally, but a lot of the time – and listen to the words of these poets”.

The other article which recalled Satan’s question was by Rev Graham Hellier in *Life and Work*, September 2008. Claiming, correctly, that we are to worship God with the mind as well as the heart, Mr Hellier falsely concludes that we are therefore to sit in judgement on the Bible and decide between what is to be believed and what may be doubted. The serpent in Eden, Balaam’s ass and the cursing of the fig tree can be dismissed as “creative symbolism”, he suggests. How can we cope with the destruction of all but Noah’s family? How can we justify the destruction of the Canaanites? The Bible, he affirms, is not God’s Word, is not inerrant, is not infallible, “though it speaks of the good news that is God’s word to us and it witnesses to Jesus, who is proclaimed as the Word of God”. God speaks through “those early thinkers, who were as we are, flawed but at times inspired”. The continuing work of the Spirit means that “fresh insights” compared to those of Scripture and tradition are not to be regarded as “human wisdom rearing itself against God’s wisdom”.

In another article in this edition of *Life and Work* Mary McMahon describes the Progressive Christianity Network as an organisation of Christians who, among other things, “have found our approach to God through the life and teachings of Jesus”, but “recognise the faithfulness of other people who have other names for the gateway to God’s realm, and acknowledge that their ways are true for them as our ways are for us” and “find more grace in the search for understanding than we do in dogmatic certainty, more value in questioning than in absolutes”. Ron Ferguson in his column reasserts his position that “being a Christian does not depend on submission to a so-called infallible text. . . . Doubt is not the opposite of faith. It is perfectly possible both to be sceptical about some stories in the Scriptures and to live a resourceful Christian life.”

We were glad to find, in an article sandwiched between these last-mentioned articles, Rev Ian Watson, secretary of the *Forward Together* movement in the Church of Scotland, claiming that “the real battle-ground” in his Church today “concerns the nature of revelation”. The “big question” is: “Has the True and Living God revealed His mind and will to the human race through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments or has He not? Evangelicals believe that He has, and this is what shapes our response to everything else.” Mr Watson affirms that the Bible is indispensable and that, as God’s Word written, it bears a unique authority. “What the Bible says, God says. I submit myself to my God by submitting to His Word.”

This edition of *Life and Work* has the cover caption: *The Whole Truth? The Bible in focus*. The Editorial claims that “it is one of the strengths of the Church of Scotland that it can contain people at either end of the scriptural spectrum,

while the majority may still form the middle ground” (whatever that is).

We believe that the present moral and spiritual degeneracy can be traced to the theoretical and practical abandonment of the Bible’s view of itself: that “no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet 1:20,21). “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable” (2 Tim 3:16). Rejection of the divine inspiration of all Scripture removes from Scripture its unquestioned authority over our faith and life. It leaves us with a fallible and erring Bible and with a fallible and erring Christ, who is no Christ at all. Either we sit in judgement on the Bible and accept its teachings, not because they are given by the Word of God, but to the extent that they fit in with our own view of things; or we stand before the Word of God and bow to the authority of God who speaks there – our belief and experience and actions being determined by the revelation given by God. *HMC*

### **The Credit Crunch**

After a long period of prosperity, Britain is now facing economic difficulties. The price of food and of fuel is rising rapidly; house prices are falling; some building societies have faced difficulties; housing developers have huge debts and are laying off workers; airlines and tour operators are going bankrupt; and the pound has sunk fast against the dollar. A long period of recession is envisaged.

Financial commentators suggest that the Government did not spend its money wisely during the boom years. Joseph laid up during the “seven years of great plenty”, so as to have something in store for the “seven years of famine” (Gen 41), but it does not appear that our rulers did the same. Perhaps they thought that “tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant” (Is. 56:12). Whatever their imprudence in financial matters, they have certainly been behaving in a grossly immoral way in matters of legislation, which are of more direct concern to us. Recent years have seen a flood of the most vile and abominable laws, and there has been a continual promotion of false religion and atheism, and an erosion of Christianity, and indeed of the very fabric of society. Further evil legislation, such as compulsory instruction in primary schools on homosexuality and immorality, is being planned.

It is possible, however, for Christians to see advantages, from a spiritual point of view, in the credit crunch. Whatever financial hardship it may bring, it may be a means of spiritual blessing. If people have less money and more worries, they may be more ready to think about the eternal world. “Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness” was the ruin of Sodom (Ezek 16:49), and it has been the ruin of many in our nation in recent years. “Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked . . . then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation” (Deut 32:15). When God lays on the rod of affliction, people may be more ready to consider their sins and their need of Christ. The

financial crisis of 1858, which saw the failure of the Western Bank in Glasgow, was a contributory factor to the great revival of religious interest in 1859.

Our great need, however, is that the Holy Spirit would bless these financial troubles. In the absence of His blessing, men will simply grow worse. In a recent case in Shropshire, as far as we can understand, a millionaire who was on the brink of ruin murdered his wife and daughter, shot his horses and dogs, killed himself, and burnt his house down. Truly, the sorrow of the world “worketh death”, but it is the “godly sorrow”, that the Holy Spirit brings to the heart, that “worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of” (2 Cor 7:10). *DWBS*

## Protestant View

### Sydney Anglican on Rome

The sixth World Youth Day, a Roman Catholic event held every two or three years (the very title indicates the papacy’s global pretensions), was held in Sydney last July. The Pope attended amidst much acclaim from the more than 200 000 young Roman Catholics who assembled. The various religious events, watched by millions on television, impressed many nominal Protestants and fostered fraternal feelings. However, as Phillip Jensen, Anglican Dean of Sydney, warned in an interview with *The Sydney Morning Herald*, “that warm and fuzzy brotherly love is delusive”.

By omitting from its programme some events which were likely to offend even nominal Protestants, said Dean Jensen, Rome was trying to present a Protestant face and thus make them think that Rome was now nearer to what Martin Luther wanted it to be. But he added: “Things are actually worse than in Luther’s day because, since Luther’s day, the Roman Catholic Church not only [at the Council of Trent] calcified itself explicitly against justification by faith alone, or the authority of the Scriptures alone, or salvation by grace alone, but since then you’ve had the Vatican I Council in 1870, which clarified the idea that the Pope can speak infallibly. . . . So since the Reformation we’ve had the infallibility of the Pope, the sinlessness of Mary, the bodily assumption of Mary.” He went on to condemn the Pope’s arrogant statement that the Roman Catholic Church is the only true Church and that all other Churches are sects. He also branded as “appalling blasphemy” the Pope’s claim to be the Vicar of Christ.

May the day soon come when such realistic assessments of this false system will mercifully dawn on the minds of those who, on the one hand, are dazzled by Rome’s glitter and, on the other, are befogged by ecumenist mists – whether they be devoted Roman Catholics or deluded Protestants – and when they shall see the “light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”.

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Scripture indicates that it is not reformation but further deformation and eventual destruction that is reserved for this delusive “mystery of iniquity”, the papal Antichrist. “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming” (2 Thess 2:8). NMR

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## Church Information

### Ordination and Induction of the Rev Lyle T Smith

A historic event in the life of our Church took place in August when our first pastorate in the USA was settled. We are pleased to report that Rev Lyle T Smith is now the minister of our congregation in Santa Fe, Texas, having being ordained to the ministry of the gospel, and inducted to that charge on Thursday, August 28. A considerable number gathered in the congregation’s newly-acquired church building for the solemn and happy occasion, some of them coming from Canada and Britain.

On that evening, when the Southern Presbytery met for the special purpose of ordaining and inducting Mr Smith, the Rev John MacLeod, Moderator, constituted the Presbytery, Rev Neil Ross was appointed as Clerk *pro tem* and Mr Alasdair MacPherson as Officer of Court. Messrs Edward Ross, Calum Finlayson and Joseph Smith, ruling elders, were associated with the Presbytery.

After the Officer of Court made the usual proclamation at the door of the church, he reported that no one had appeared to make any objections to Mr Smith’s life and doctrine. The Moderator therefore went on to conduct public worship and preached on Paul’s words: “Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles” (Acts 26:22,23). He lucidly enlarged on three points about the Apostle: 1. His work and witness-bearing, 2. The source of his doctrine and witness, 3. The source of his help.

After public worship, the Clerk *pro tem* gave a brief narrative of the proceedings in the Call to Mr Lyle Smith, probationer and pastor-elect. The Moderator addressed to him the questions appointed to be put to ministers on their ordination to the ministry and their induction to a pastoral charge. After giving satisfactory answers to the questions, Mr Smith signed the Formula in the presence of the congregation. He then knelt down, and the Moderator, with solemn prayer, ordained him to the ministry, the other ministers present joining him in the imposition of hands. The Moderator, in the name of the Presbytery, and by authority of the Divine Head of the Church, admitted Mr

Smith to the pastoral charge of the Santa Fe congregation and, along with the other members of Presbytery, gave him the right hand of fellowship.

Rev Roderick MacLeod addressed the newly-inducted minister in helpful terms from Psalm 126:6: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him". He remarked on the cause both of mourning and of rejoicing on the part of ministers of the gospel. Rev Neil Ross likewise addressed the congregation, using as the basis of his remarks Peter's question to Cornelius, "I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?" (Acts 10:29), and part of the answer of Cornelius, "We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God" (Acts 10:33). He also exhorted the congregation to continue in prayer for the newly-begun ministry. Messages of good wishes were read from the Revs H M Cartwright, D A Ross, B Whear, J B Jardine, and D Macdonald on behalf of himself and the Ness Congregation.

The congregation retired to a local hall where food was generously provided by the ladies of the congregation. There the people had an opportunity to mingle together and to speak with their new pastor, who had returned to Texas, just two days previously, from his four year's stay in Scotland. Mr Joseph Smith, on behalf of the congregation, presented a Bible and gift of money both to Rev Neil Ross, Interim Moderator of Santa Fe Kirk Session for some years, and to Mr Alasdair MacPherson, Clerk of Session.

It is a wonder to people in the congregation that in the providence of God they were brought into contact with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and some of its ministers 11 years ago and were then accepted as a congregation of the Church in 2000. To have a pastor and their own church building was their prayerful hope, but mountains stood in the way. However, God has provided for their material needs through their own endeavours and through friends' donations to their Church and Manse Fund (which is still in much need of support). They also received greatly-valued help from the mother Church in Scotland. They are thankful that the Chief Shepherd has now sent to them a pastor to feed them and to gather in others. May He, who is also Lord of the harvest and who alone can command the blessing, prosper the work of His servant there, and strengthen the newly-forged bond between pastor and people, so that all would redound to the glory of God.

*(Rev) Neil M Ross, Presbytery Clerk pro tem*

### **Meetings of Presbytery (DV)**

**Zimbabwe:** At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, October 14, at 11 am.

**Southern:** At Glasgow, on Tuesday, October 14, at 2 pm.

**Skye:** At Portree, on Tuesday, October 21, at 11 am.

**Western:** At Laide, on Tuesday, October 28, at 2 pm.

**Northern:** At Dingwall, on Tuesday, November 4, at 2 pm.

# FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

## Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ. Tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). Contact Rev J R Tallach, Raasay; tel: 01478 660216.
- Breascleite:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, Dingwall, 10 Achany Rd, IV15 9JB. Tel/Fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nrmoss@ferintosh.co.uk.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). Rev D J MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Evelix, Dornoch, Sutherland, IV25 3RD. Tel: 01862 811138. **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services.
- Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Hugh M Cartwright MA, Napier House, 8 Colinton Road, Edinburgh, EH10 5DS. Tel: 0131 447 1920.
- Farr,** by Daviot: Sabbath 12 noon and 6 pm. Prayer meetings: Thursday 7.30 pm in **Farr**, **Stratherrick** or **Tomatin** as intimated. Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL. Tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS. Tel: 01445 712247.
- Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev Roderick MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD. Tel 0141 954 3759.
- Glendale:** Sabbath 12 noon (fortnightly). **Vatten:** Sabbath 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). **Waternish:** As intimated.
- Greenock:** 40 East Hamilton Street, Sabbath 11 am.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am, 5 pm; Thursday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01847 831758. **Wick:** Church; **Thurso:** Church; **Strathly:** Church; no F P Church services.
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF. Tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South):** **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Sheilebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (except first Sabbath of month). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh**, **Northton**, **Sheilebost**, **Strond** and **Geocrab** as intimated. Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Leverburgh, HS5 3UA. Tel/fax: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA, 11 Auldcastle Road, IV2 3PZ. Tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Tel. 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. **Plockton:** No F P services. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB. Tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Sabbath 12 noon. Manse tel: 01571 844484.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 810228.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, F P Manse, North Tolsta, HS2 0NH. Tel: 01851 890286.
- North Uist:** **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS. Tel: 01876 510233.
- Oban:** Church and Manse. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01738 442992. Contact Mr J N MacKinnon; tel: 01786 451386.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev James R Tallach MB ChB, F P Manse, Raasay, Kyle, IV40 8PB. Tel: 01478 660216, fax: 01478 660358.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744207. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 9JX. Tel: 01470 562243.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Sandwick:** Last Tuesday of month 7.15 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 702755.
- Tain:** Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 672251.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE. Tel: 01854 612449.

## England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Haslington and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Contact Mr R Middleton, 4 Rhodes Close, Haslington, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 5ZF. Tel: 01270 255024. Manse tel: 01282 851782.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peters Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU. Tel: 0208 309 1623.

## Northern Ireland

- Larne:** Station Road, Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm. Manse, 23 Upper Cairncastle Road, Larne BT40 2EF. Tel: 02828 274865. Contact: 02828 273294.

#### Canada

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

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

**Vancouver**, British Columbia: Fifteenth Avenue and Fraser Street. For F P Church services contact Mr John MacLeod, 202-815 4th Avenue, New Westminster, V3M 1S8. Tel: 604-516-8648.

#### USA

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

#### Australia

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

**Sydney**, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Information contact: Mr C MacKenzie, P O Box 5, Riverstone, NSW 2765. Tel: 02 4730 2797. E-mail: cal.01@optusnet.com.au.

#### New Zealand

**Auckland**: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. For further information contact Mr C van Kralingen, 3 Earls Court, Manurewa. Tel: 09 266 7618.

**Gisborne**: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday and Saturday 7.30 pm. Rev J A T van Dorp, 14 Thomson Street, Gisborne. Tel: 06 868 5809.

**Tauranga**: Girl Guide Hall, 17th Avenue, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm. For information contact: Mr Dick Vermeulen, Tel: 075443677.

**Wellington**: 4 Rewa Terrace, Tawa. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. For further information contact Mr N Hicklin, 117 Woodman Drive, Tawa, Wellington. Tel: 04 232 7308.

#### Israel

**Jerusalem**: Rev J L Goldby, P O Box 68001, Arnona, Jerusalem 91680. Tel: 00972 2 6739058. For details of services please contact Mr Goldby.

#### Singapore

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

#### Ukraine

**Odessa**: Contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D Levitskiyy; tel: 00380 482326685; e-mail: dmlev@eurocom.od.ua.

#### Zimbabwe

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

**Ingwenya**: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean; e-mail: amaclean@mweb.co.zw. Postal Address: Ingwenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo. John Tallach School tel: 00263 85343.

**Mbumba**: Church and Hospital: Postal Address: Mbumba Mission Hospital, Private Bag T5406, Bulawayo. Hospital tel: 00263 898291.

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

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

#### Kenya

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

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