

# 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*

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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:** Halkirk, 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, Kinlochberrie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fourth:** Chiedza.

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

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

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

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

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

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No 1

## The Credit Crunch

For several months now the financial world has been in crisis. Banks large and small, particularly in Europe and the USA, have been in dire straits. Many have had to go cap in hand to their respective governments for massive bailouts; these have included the second-largest American bank Citigroup, which has been granted \$306 billion of government guarantees in addition to cash injections of \$45 billion. Ordinary people have also felt the effects of the banking crisis as it has become more difficult to borrow money, in particular for house purchase. And as confidence wanes in the general economy, unemployment levels are rising.

We were told repeatedly that “boom and bust” had been eliminated from the British economy, and it was assumed that economic growth would continue across most of the world for the foreseeable future. On this presumption, enormous risks were taken, not least in the banking sector. But much of the surge in prosperity has come to an end, with a vengeance, and some major economies are in recession. Many people will suffer hardship and many others will have to live rather more frugally than they have been used to.

Many in the Western world, in particular, have enjoyed unprecedented prosperity in recent generations. No longer do such people have to ask: “What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?” These needs have been so easily satisfied that it might be more appropriate for many to ask: How can we spend our money? Accordingly almost endless opportunities have arisen for indulging “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 Jn 2:16).

Thus today, almost universally, everyone wants to find enjoyment *away from God*. They have never heard, and would not appreciate hearing, the words of David: “Delight thyself also *in the Lord*; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart” (Ps 37:4). Quite simply, they are totally incapable of understanding that anyone can find delight in God or in any of His ways; they have never heard of anyone whose deepest desires were satisfied by God. Indeed this generation is supremely ignorant of God and the revelation He has graciously given in the Scriptures. It therefore lacks the knowledge,

clearly provided in that revelation, of the purpose for our existence. Summing up the testimony of Scripture, the Shorter Catechism tells us that “man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever”.

Our enjoyment of what is “seen and temporal” must be subordinate to glorifying God. To reverse the order is sheer idolatry. The worship of gods of gold and silver, and of wood and stone, may not be Britain’s besetting sin in 2009; yet idolatry is prevalent – for we may define idolatry as giving someone or something a higher place in one’s heart than we give to God. Thus everyone is in danger of idolising themselves and those nearest to them, and of idolising their possessions – which does indeed make idolatry a besetting sin today. But if man is to begin to glorify God, he needs a change of nature; he needs the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, which takes place in connection with the Word of God, whether read or heard.

Satan does all in his power to encourage sinners to go on neglecting God and living for this world, deceiving themselves into thinking that there is nothing beyond this life. He does all in his power to prevent them coming to a knowledge of the truth, turning from their sins and living for eternity. In the words of Scripture, “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Cor 4:4). Satan knows perfectly well what are the effects of the gospel, which speaks of salvation through a crucified and risen Redeemer, and he will use all kinds of temptations and distractions to prevent sinners escaping the darkness of his kingdom.

Yet the duty of sinners is clear; it is to be found in the Bible, which is God’s revelation to a lost world. It would be particularly appropriate for those caught up in the consequences of the credit crunch, and other difficulties that people experience in this world, to be asking: “How should we then live?” (Ezek 33:10). And the next verse provides an answer for them and for everyone else, whether particular difficulties have befallen them or not: “Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?” And this call is introduced with particular emphasis: “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live”.

We are all on our way to eternity; we should think of this life as short and uncertain. The answer to the Psalmist’s question: “What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?” (Ps 89:48), is obvious. So we ought to think of this short, uncertain life as an opportunity – to find Christ and salvation through Him. Then, however difficult this life may be, we will have a blessed eternity, where we will be perfectly blessed in enjoying God fully.

If bankers and economists working for governments could have foreseen

the looming downturn, they would have been under an obligation to prepare for it. But they did not see it coming, and so they did not prepare. Nor do the vast majority of people today see ahead of them the inexpressibly more awful disaster of being sent away to a lost eternity.

How should we then live? The Bible is full of instructive answers. But we may listen for a little to some biblical answers Jonathan Edwards gave in 1733, in “The Christian Pilgrim”, a sermon on Hebrews 11:13,14: “And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country”<sup>1</sup>. “In confessing that they were strangers,” he told his congregation, “they plainly declared that this is not their country; that this is not the place where they are at home. . . . We ought not to rest in the world and its enjoyments, but should desire heaven. We should ‘seek first the kingdom of God’ (Matt 6:33). We ought above all things to desire a heavenly happiness, to be with God and dwell with Jesus Christ. Though surrounded with outward enjoyments and settled in families with desirable friends and relations, though we have companions whose society is delightful and children in whom we see many promising qualifications . . . yet we ought not to take a rest in these things as a portion. . . .

“We should travel on in the way of obedience to all God’s commandments, even the difficult as well as the easy, denying all our sinful inclinations and interests. The way to heaven is ascending; we must be content to travel uphill, though it be hard and tiresome and contrary to the natural bias of our flesh. . . . Even if we could go to heaven with the gratification of our lusts, we should prefer a way of holiness and of conformity to the spiritual self-denying rules of the gospel.”

Edwards’ final section is entitled, “An exhortation so to spend the present life that it may only be a journey towards heaven”. He counsels: “Be persuaded to travel in the way that leads to heaven – in holiness, self-denial, mortification, obedience to all the commands of God, following Christ’s example . . . . Let it be your daily work, from morning till night, and hold out in it to the end . . . .” He then gives these motives: “How worthy is heaven that your life should be wholly spent as a journey towards it. . . . This is the way to have death comfortable to us. . . . No more of your life will be pleasant to think of when you come to die than has been spent after this manner. . . . If our lives be not a journey towards heaven, they will be a journey to hell. . . .” And finally some directions: “(1) Labour to get a sense of the vanity of this world. . . . (2) Labour to be much acquainted with heaven. . . . (3) Seek heaven only by Jesus Christ. . . . (4) Let Christians help one another in going this journey.”

<sup>1</sup>The sermon appears in Edwards’ *Works*, vol 2, pp 243-6, Banner of Truth reprint.

# God's Grace Sufficient<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by *Archibald Alexander*

2 Corinthians 12:9. *My grace is sufficient for thee.*

The apostle Paul was not inferior to the other apostles in gifts and inspiration; in labours and success he was more abundant than them all. Nevertheless he was subject to like infirmities, passions and temptations as other men. He had indeed received larger supplies of grace than most others, but this did not render him in any degree independent and self-sufficient, nor did it exempt him at all from those conflicts and temptations which are commonly experienced in the Christian warfare, nor from the need of those means of blessing which a gracious God has appointed for preserving and edifying His people while sojourning upon earth. We therefore find him much given to prayer and often requesting the prayers of others on his behalf; he also observed a rigid discipline, keeping his body under lest, while he preached to others, he himself should be a castaway.

Paul was favoured with very full revelations of gospel truth, without being dependent on the teaching of men. In this respect his preparation for the work of the ministry was unique; the ascended Saviour Himself condescended to become his Teacher. He was also favoured with frequent visions and with the knowledge of the future destinies of the Church. On one occasion he was caught up to paradise, to the third heavens, where he heard things which it was not lawful for a man to utter. By this heavenly rapture, the faith of the Apostle must have been greatly strengthened and his desire for a constant participation in the joys of heaven rendered very intense.

But such is the infirmity of even the holiest men, and such the tendency to self-exaltation, that the enjoyment of any high privilege or the reception of any distinguishing honour is apt to puff up the mind and produce a degree of self-exaltation or, at any rate, of self-complacency. Paul the Apostle was not exempt from the danger of being exalted above measure by his abundant revelations, therefore his divine Master put him, by way of prevention, upon a course of painful discipline. He sent him "a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet him". Whatever might have been the precise nature of the Apostle's affliction, we know that it gave him much uneasiness, for he prayed, not merely once or twice, but thrice that it might be removed. His prayer was answered, yet not in the way which he desired, but in a way which seemed better to infinite wisdom. The thorn was not removed, but God said, "My grace is sufficient for thee". By this answer he was assured

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted, with slight editing, from Alexander's *Practical Sermons*.

that he would be supported under the severe trial which he felt was so grievous. And he might doubtless infer from this answer that he might derive benefit from the affliction laid upon him.

There is not a word in our whole language which has a richer meaning than the word *grace*. It expresses the beginning, the middle and the end of salvation. It was grace – that is, undeserved love or favour – which moved the eternal mind to devise the plan of redemption. It was grace which designated the persons who should be made partakers of salvation. It was grace which induced the Son of God to condescend to become man and to become “obedient unto death” – thus offering Himself an expiatory sacrifice for sin. “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.”

It was through grace that the Church was founded, the means of salvation established, and the gospel preached. It is grace which brings down the Holy Spirit to enlighten the regenerate; to sanctify, comfort and conduct triumphantly to heaven the redeemed heirs of glory. And it is grace which will crown with everlasting happiness all those who have “an abundant entrance administered to them into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”. As the foundation of the spiritual temple of the Lord was laid in grace, or the love of God; so the top stone shall be brought forth with the shouting, “Grace, grace unto it”.

Although the words of our text were primarily addressed to Paul for his support and encouragement, yet they were recorded in Scripture so that God's children today also might derive consolation from them, for they are equally suited to the case of every believer, and those things that “were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope”. It will therefore not be a departure from the spirit of the text to consider these words as containing a promise from God to all believers: that God will never leave them nor forsake them, but that He will grant them grace in sufficient measure, in all difficulties and under all trials, to enable them to perform their duties and to sustain with patience and fortitude the burdens which, in providence, they may be called to bear. Our object in the remainder of this discourse shall therefore be to apply the promise to believers in those circumstances in which they specially need comfort and encouragement.

1. The words may be applied to such as are labouring under conviction of sin and are oppressed with a sense of guilt. Whether they have already believed or not, these words encourage them to embrace the promise. The fountain of grace is so rich that there is no possibility of it being exhausted, and so free that all are invited to come and take of the water of life. To an

awakened conscience, the recollection of past sins, with all their aggravations, is exceedingly painful and terrifying. To them the judgement day presents a scene awfully alarming. And the language of their hearts is, "What must I do to be saved?"

To all who are thus pursued by the demands of the law and the upbraidings of conscience, I would say, You need not despair. There is hope in your case. The gospel brings you glad tidings. The burden of its message is: salvation by grace – "grace abounding to the chief of sinners" – grace reigning "through righteousness unto eternal life"; "Believe on the Lord, Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved". To all who are bowed down under the burden of their sins, I am authorized to preach the sufficiency of divine grace for their complete pardon and perfect justification from all the demands of the law. Sinners who are at ease in Zion and "alive without the law" persuade themselves that it is an easy thing to obtain pardon and reconciliation with God, not from any exalted estimation which they entertain of the grace of the gospel, but from their very low estimate of the evil and ill-desert of their sins and of the spirituality and binding obligation of the law.

But, when the light of conviction breaks in upon their minds and they are made to see that sin is exceeding sinful, that God is infinitely holy, and that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good," it is difficult for the humbled and contrite to believe that an infinitely holy God can, consistently, extend favour to such a guilty creature or forgive such sins as his. They who are thus convinced of the demerit of their sins are precisely in the situation most favourable to the reception of the gospel. They are the sick who need the Physician. All who have ever believed have been placed in similar circumstances. God condescends kindly to reason with such: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool"; "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom (says Paul) I am chief"; "The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth from all sin"; and, "He is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

2. Again, these words are calculated to afford comfort and encouragement to such as are struggling with the inbred corruptions of their own hearts and with the temptations of the wicked one, who feel "another law in their members, warring against the law of their mind," "the flesh lusting against the spirit", so that, when they would do good, evil is present with them. This tends to bring them again into captivity to the law of sin and death, so that their feelings are expressed by groanings which cannot be uttered. And when



they cry, their language is: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!"

Now, although in this conflict between the old and new man, human strength is weakness, yet, when we feel our weakness most, we are strong in the Lord, for His strength is perfected in our weakness. What Christ said to Peter, as He viewed his temptation and fall, may be applied to every humble penitent: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not". Were it not for His intercessory prayers, believers could not hold out in opposition to any powerful temptation. That He does thus intercede for all believers, in all ages, we know from the prayer which He offered for them while on earth: "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil".

3. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will be sufficient to support and comfort believers under the severest trials, the heaviest afflictions and most violent temptations to which they may be subject. Afflictions are the lot of the people of God in this world. It is written: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous"; "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"; "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God". As Christ was all His life a sufferer, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," His disciples should anticipate having the same lot in the world as their Master. Indeed this seems to be made a condition of participating in His glory. "If we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us."

But human strength cannot bear up under these calamities. We need help. We must have an almighty arm on which to lean. Christians have suffered inconceivable agonies in times of persecution; which they endured even unto death. But they were sustained by an unseen hand. Christ never forsakes His followers in the time of their distress, and the Holy Spirit will not leave them comfortless. Their richest joys are sometimes experienced in the midst of the furnace of affliction. When the three men were seen walking unhurt in the midst of the fiery furnace, one like to the Son of man was seen in their company. It was indeed the Son of man Himself, and this was written for our learning so that we might trust to His presence and aid in the hottest fire of persecution. His promise is, "My grace is sufficient for thee". Even in death we need not fear, for "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints". And a royal saint of old sweetly sang, in the view of the termination of human life: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil . . . Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

A lively faith in the realities and glories of the heavenly inheritance will disarm death of all its terrors and cause us to think all our afflictions light

and of momentary duration. Thus the matter appeared to Paul: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal". It is faith that gives the victory over the world, whether it assails the Christian by its blandishments or by its terrors. And it achieves this victory through the grace of Christ, by bringing the unseen world into view.

4. But grace is requisite to enable the Christian to act as well as to suffer. He has arduous duties. He is placed in this world to glorify his Maker and Redeemer, to benefit his fellow-creatures and to secure the salvation of his own soul. The performance of duty often requires strong resolution and much painful self-denial in the disciple of a crucified Redeemer. Some are called by God to the arduous work of the gospel ministry, for which no human wisdom or human power is sufficient. "Who is sufficient for these things?" But Christ has promised to be with His ministers "always, even unto the end of the world". We are commanded indeed to be strong", yet not in our own might, but in the power of the Lord.

Some are called in the providence of God and by His Spirit to forsake father, mother, brothers and sisters, and to bid adieu to their own native land and beloved country to spend their days among the uncivilized heathen, subjected to many privations and exposed to numerous dangers from a savage people and from a dangerous climate. But they need not be dismayed; their Master will accompany them, for He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee".

**Reflections.** 1. How truly blessed are they who have obtained an interest in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; and how solicitous should we all be to have this matter placed on a secure foundation! All His people may confidently say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want".

2. Christians should accustom themselves to confide implicitly, under all circumstances of affliction and in the performance of all arduous duties, on the all-sufficient grace of Christ. It will ever be to them according to their faith. But if they are doubtful of His aid and distrust His promises, the consequences will be unfavourable. What Christ, above all things, demands of His followers is that they trust Him.

3. All who have been made partakers of the grace of God are bound to exercise unceasing gratitude for such unmerited favour. If you have been chosen unto life eternal, it was to magnify His glorious grace. If your sins are pardoned and you are accepted and justified, it is by the grace of God in Christ. If you have been regenerated and made partakers of the divine nature, it is not by works of righteousness which you have done; it is by His grace

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that you are saved. Even the chief of sinners who believe in Christ may exult in the unsearchable riches of His grace. Where sin abounded, grace shall much more abound. Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift of His grace.

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## The Dying Thief (2)<sup>1</sup>

*James Buchanan*

**3.** **The results of the conversion.** The turning point in his conversion was his believing that Jesus was the Christ. This was precisely the point in question, both with the scornful multitude and the subdued malefactor. They doubted; he believed. They required another kind of evidence: “Let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe Him”. He did not come down from the cross but, having died there, He arose from the dead, and their unbelief remained. But the dying thief, satisfied with the evidence already given, saw His glory through the veil of His humiliation. Embracing Him in His true character as the Christ, the chosen of God, he believed to the saving of his soul.

It was by faith in the simple truth that Jesus is the Christ that this man passed from death unto life, but here was great faith indeed. Consider Christ’s circumstances. He was enduring extreme agony on the accursed tree; He was suffering the sentence of death as a public criminal, surrounded by multitudes who ridiculed and reviled Him, forsaken by His chosen disciples, when He had Himself been forsaken of God. Yet in His humiliation, sorrow and shame, the dying malefactor called Him *Lord*, spoke of His kingdom, and addressed Him in prayer! Yes, when Jesus was slowly dying on the cross, with no prospect of life and still less of a kingdom on earth, the poor malefactor showed both the greatness of his faith and a correct apprehension of the nature of Christ’s kingdom. He did so by uttering a prayer which implied the hope of his own immortality and of a spiritual and eternal kingdom in heaven.

Here was a manifestation of faith unparalleled even by the apostles. They called Him Lord after His resurrection, but this man called Him Lord on the cross. They spoke of His kingdom with many gross, earthly ideas: “We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel”; and, “Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” But this man spoke of His kingdom as a future inheritance whose certainty was not affected by His shameful death. Believing in Christ as the Lord’s Anointed, the Messiah who had been promised to the fathers, he embraced Him as his own Saviour.

<sup>1</sup>The remainder, as edited, of this second of Buchanan’s “illustrative cases” of conversion in *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*. Last month’s article dealt with (1) the state of the thief’s mind before conversion and (2) the means which brought about his conversion.

Encouraged, doubtless, by the grace he had witnessed, including that most merciful prayer for his murderers, he felt that he could trust in such a friend. Therefore he addressed Him in believing prayer: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom".

The thief seemed to ask little, yet he asked for everything necessary for his everlasting welfare: "Lord, remember me," was his simple and modest request; but it included much. It cast him on the Saviour's care; it put his soul into the Saviour's hands; it expressed his faith, his dependence, his desire, his hope. It was as if he had said, I am a poor dying sinner; Thou art a king going to Thy kingdom; Thou canst save me. I leave myself in Thy hands; I lean on Thy love. Lord, remember me!

The circumstances of the case did not allow a full exhibition of the fruits of conversion, for he was converted at the eleventh hour; he was no sooner converted than he died and entered glory. We have, however, some precious indications of the great change which was wrought on his mind and heart. He showed a true sense of sin, a thorough conviction of its demerit, a just apprehension of the punishment due to it, a solemn fear of God, a lively trust in the Saviour, a serious thoughtfulness about the future, a disposition to pray, and a zeal for righteousness and truth which prompted him to rebuke his fellow-sufferer in these remarkable words, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds."

Had his life been prolonged, these new principles and feelings would no doubt have demonstrated their power over his whole course of life. It is true that serious thoughts of God and judgement and eternity are often awakened in the souls of the unconverted when death is near, but when health is restored they vanish "as the morning cloud and as the early dew". So, in most conversions late in life, there is a painful feeling of doubt as to the genuineness of the good resolutions awakened by the prospect of death in those who are not spared to verify their profession by a consistent Christian life. But the infallible testimony of Christ Himself sealed this man's conversion and assured him of eternal glory. The great result of the change wrought upon him was declared in these words: "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise". No sooner was the prayer uttered than the promise was given and immediately fulfilled.

The thief's request was, "Lord, remember me!" But the answer far exceeded the petition; it spoke to him of paradise, of Christ's presence there, and of his admission that very day. What a glorious change! A malefactor, condemned to death for his crimes, nailed to a cross, converted on the brink of eternity, translated from Calvary to heaven, from a cross of shame to a throne of glory!

**4. Lessons.** (1.) Here we have a remarkable proof of the Saviour's power. That this malefactor was a great sinner only serves to show the greatness of the Saviour. That he had reached the extreme point of guilt, and the very end of life, only makes clear that Christ "is able to save to the uttermost". The power of Christ to subdue the most hardened sinner, to cancel the most aggravated guilt, to open the gate of heaven and secure our admission there – all this is exhibited with undeniable certainty in the fact that, even in the depths of His humiliation, before His work was finished, He snatched this brand from the burning, rescued him from the power of Satan and carried him as a trophy from the cross when He entered within the veil. If such was Christ's power then, who should now despair that knows Jesus has been exalted a Prince and Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins?

(2.) It exhibits a precious proof of the perfect freeness of Christ's grace. This poor sinner, standing on the verge of the eternal world, was loaded with crime. What could have been of any help to him but grace? He had no righteousness, no good works; there was nothing before him but "a certain fearful looking for of judgement" – unless God had grace and that grace was perfectly free. But when he heard the Saviour pray for His murderers, the idea of free grace to pardon sin seems to have entered his inmost soul, and he ventured to ask the Lord to remember him. Christ required no previous qualifications, demanded no merit, imposed no conditions, made no stipulations of any kind – such was His grace. Christ immediately gave him an irreversible promise of admission to glory – while He was in such agony that we might have expected Him to concentrate all His care on Himself. Even then He had room in His heart for the sorrows of this poor sinner.

(3.) It has been remarked that this is a solitary example in the Bible of a man being converted at the hour of death. There is one such instance, so that no one may despair – and only one, so that none may presume. Presumption and despair are two great rocks on which we are in danger of making shipwreck; and this narrative may well serve to guard us against both. Against despair – for why should anyone despair who reads of the thief who was converted on the cross? And against presumption – for who dare presume when he reads that there was another thief, on another cross, who died there unconverted? The oldest sinner maybe encouraged by the one, but the boldest sinner may be deterred by the other. "The one was taken, and the other left."

(4.) We learn how little of God's truth may serve for conversion, if the hearer makes good use of it and it is savingly applied by the Spirit. The penitent on the cross was saved by means of mere fragments of truth, presented to him in the blasphemies of Christ's accusers and the inscription on His cross. This is a delightful thought when it is viewed in connection with

the poor and ignorant, and others who live under a defective dispensation of truth. But it is unutterably solemn when viewed in connection with ourselves. How shall we escape if we die unconverted, after the light we have received and the many sermons we have heard?

(5.) As soon as he is converted, a sinner acquires all the privileges of a child of God. And, if he dies at once, he will immediately pass into glory. No sooner was this malefactor converted than the Lord Himself assured him that he would be with Him in paradise that very day. Had he lived on in time, he would have been capable of growth and increase in grace; but the new creature, although just a new-born babe, is entire in all his members, and can enter the kingdom, however short his earthly span.

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## Robert Bruce on the Lord's Supper<sup>1</sup>

### 2. The Five Sermons on the Sacrament

*Rev D Campbell*

The most widely-available version of Bruce's sermons today was edited by Professor Thomas Torrance in 1958 and entitled *The Mystery of the Lord's Supper*<sup>2</sup>. Those who wish to get a feel for the original text, however, should use Cunningham's edition<sup>3</sup>. We have reservations in wholeheartedly recommending Torrance's edition because the introduction contains, among other questionable statements, derogatory remarks about the Westminster divines. In spite of this we will quote from it because it has the advantage of using modernised English.

(1) The *first sermon* is intended to be a general discourse on both sacraments but, in fact, concentrates on the Lord's Supper, with only a few references to Baptism. Bruce deals with several questions: What is the meaning of the sign? What is meant by the thing signified? How are the sign and the thing signified coupled together? His answer to the last of these is brief but very full: "It is a relative conjunction, a secret and mystical conjunction, which consists in a mutual relation" (p 55). He warns against confounding the sign and the things signified and emphasises the need to preserve the integrity of both without confusion or mixture.

A fourth question in this sermon is: How are the sign and the thing signified

<sup>1</sup>The first part of this paper dealt with Bruce's life and preaching; it was printed last month.

<sup>2</sup>This version was reprinted with minor improvements in layout by Christian Focus and Rutherford House in 2005.

<sup>3</sup>See *Sermons by the Rev Robert Bruce with Collections for His Life*, edited by William Cunningham, Wodrow Society, 1843.

delivered? The answer is that they are delivered, offered and received differently. The sign is offered by the minister outwardly and is received by the mouth; the thing signified is offered by Christ spiritually to the mouth of the soul, which is faith. This sermon also deals with the words of institution and the importance of the Word being joined to the sacrament. Bruce says that both Word and sacrament are necessary, "that I may have the bounds of my heart enlarged and that He may make the better residence in me" (p 64). The need for the Spirit to concur with the Word and sacrament in making the sacrament a seal is strongly argued.

(2) The *second sermon* comes more directly to the Lord's Supper, discussing the names given to it, the ends for which it was appointed and, more fully, the things contained in the sacrament. Here Bruce distinguishes between Baptism and the Lord's Supper by showing that a whole Christ is signified in both, but in different ways. He also distinguishes between the substance of the thing signified and the virtues or fruits which flow from the substance, insisting that one must have both. The substance is Christ Himself, the fruits are the benefits received from Him. Growth in faith and increase in holiness are the fruits in the Lord's Supper. A brief comment on the importance of the ceremonial aspect of the sacrament is also instructive. Bruce insists that breaking the bread, pouring out the wine and the distribution of both are all essential ceremonies in the sacrament.

He devotes nearly half the second sermon to a further discussion of the sacramental union, a point to which we will return. He insists on the need for light from the Spirit of God to understand the union. He also answers several objections and shows clearly how Christ is ours in the sacrament by virtue of our having a right and title to Him, which, Bruce says, is better than if He were physically present.

(3) The *third sermon*, which is the longest, repeats what has been more systematically argued in the first two sermons. It also contains a most useful definition of the Lord's Supper which Bruce goes on to explain in full: "It is a holy seal annexed to the covenant of grace and mercy in Christ, to be administered publicly, according to Christ's institution, that in its lawful administration the sacramental union between the sign and the thing signified may take place" (p 106). The sermon then deals with five questions relating to the word and the sacrament highlighting the differences between the Protestant doctrine and the Roman position. Here he looks at the words of institution rather than the preached Word. But he does say that these words and the nature of the sacrament ought to be explained in preaching, which was a custom in Scotland from the earliest period. A long digression follows the fourth question, which is: How far does the virtue of the words of

institution extend? In this digression the doctrine of transubstantiation is analysed and refuted. This long section contains quotations from various Fathers, including several from Augustine.

(4) The *fourth sermon* deals with the doctrine of self-examination, stating that this must come before the doctrine of receiving the sacrament just as preparation is necessary to hearing the Word. A most instructive definition of the conscience is given and explained. He describes conscience as “a certain feeling in the heart resembling the judgement of the living God, following upon a deed done by us, flowing from a knowledge in the mind, and accompanied by a certain motion of the heart, fear or joy, trembling or rejoicing” (p 140). He then asks, Why should we examine conscience? and, What are the chief points in examining our conscience? Two matters chiefly are to be examined: Do we have peace with God? and, Do we have love to our neighbour? Both are essential.

The fourth sermon concludes with an extended treatment of the question: How does the Holy Spirit work faith in the heart? In his reply, Bruce gives a succinct and simple view of his theological system, which is distinctly covenantal. He goes on to express the great change in terms which will be familiar to those acquainted with the words of the *Shorter Catechism* answer on effectual calling. Ever practical, he explains how men are to seek this faith by using the means of grace and he laments the fact that many in his day neglected these means.

(5) The *fifth sermon* contains a further discussion of this theme of how faith is wrought in the soul, but its principal subject is how assurance is obtained and preserved in the soul. Bruce gives practical instruction on recovering from a backslidden state, drawing attention to those marks by which it can be known that a spark of spiritual life remains even when covered by the ashes of corruption and sin. The discussion of faith and assurance has a peculiar interest in the history of Scottish theology and we will return to it later.

The sermons address several objections and also contain very profitable and direct words of application throughout. Bruce’s faithful dealing with the conscience is perhaps one of the most striking features of his sermons, and several contain remarks addressed to those about to communicate. These remarks are both pointed, by way of warning, and exceedingly tender, by way of encouragement. It was Robert Bruce who once stood at the head of a communion table and refused to address the communicants until someone present had removed himself who was guilty of a sin of which he had not repented; Bruce stated that he was denied his liberty until this had taken place. The fifth sermon especially excels in simple and tender application to the hearers.



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We hope that this very brief overview of the five sermons will encourage those who have not read them to do so. Much profit may be derived from a careful study of these sermons.

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## Donald Sage<sup>1</sup>

*John Kennedy*

Sage left behind him, in manuscript, an extensive record containing an account of his ancestry and of his own life up to Disruption times, with descriptions of the places where he lived and vivid sketches of many of his contemporaries.<sup>2</sup> As to the design of his work he says in a preface:

“I write these family reminiscences, not to tell the public what I and mine were, but to tell it to myself. There is something especially solemn and edifying – something which betters a man’s spirit – in a true believing consciousness that we ourselves are but pilgrims on earth, even as all our fathers also have been. Their race is run. Their course, involving the everyday duties, occurrences, joys and sorrows – in short, all the lights and all the shadows of an earthly existence – is finished, never again to be begun. They are gone, never again to return. And where am I? Unceasingly following them; like them, now conscious of things earthly; like them, at last, to know *eternity!* To look back on the years they spent on earth, to recount the incidents of their humble but, I trust, in-some-measure-useful lives, to connect these with my own, and to view the whole in the spirit of a pilgrim, are to me sufficiently good reasons why I should write these memoirs.”

Donald Sage, of Resolis, was the third Highland minister in succession of that surname. His grandfather, Aeneas Sage, almost gigantic in stature and strength, with a vigorous intellect, a warm temper and a still warmer heart, early taught to “know the grace of God in truth”, possessed of the average clerical learning of his time, and ardently zealous but also prudent, was the first minister of Lochcarron after the Revolution of 1688. Alexander Sage, of Kildonan, inherited his father’s bone and muscle, and all his hastiness of temper, but had less than his sire of godliness, of intellect, and of kindness of manner. Far less distinguished as a Christian and as a minister, he was yet a pious man, a sound preacher, a careful pastor, a dutiful husband and father, and a faithful and prudent friend.

The third both in name and office, Donald Sage, was born in the manse of Kildonan on 20 October 1789, a day, as he himself remarked, made

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with some editing, for *Disruption Worthies of the Highlands*.

<sup>2</sup>This material was edited by his son and published as *Memorabilia Domestica*.

memorable in the Highland strath by a tragic event, and a year marked in history by the French Revolution. Two young men were drowned in the river quite near to the manse in the very hour of his birth, and on the streets of Paris there were then streams of blood.

His earliest recollection was of his mother's death: "I was then three years old. I recollect, little knowing or even caring whither I was going, entering the room where my mother had but a few hours before breathed her last. A bed stood at the northeast corner of the room, near the chimney, its dark curtains folded up in front. On the bed, with a stillness which both surprised and terrified me, lay one whom I at once knew to be my mother. I was sure it was she, for she lay on my father's bed; but why so still and silent I could not tell. At the opposite corner of the room sat my widowed father. My sudden and heedless entrance seemed to have opened up afresh the floodgates of his grief. I was the favourite child of her who now lay stretched in death before him. It was too much for him. He sobbed aloud, the tears rolled down his cheeks, his whole frame shook, and he clasped me in his large embrace in the agony of a husband's sorrow. That scene, like a framed picture, retains its place in my memory detached from everything else."

His early education was conducted at home, his father being his tutor. To his father, he writes, "I was indebted for any real progress I ever made". From his earliest years he was an enthusiastic student. To the Latin and Greek classics he devoted his attention with great and growing ardour. In his sixteenth year he entered Marischal College in Aberdeen. And when he was writing in 1840, his recollections of his college life seem to have been as vivid as if his college studies had ended but a year before. His theological course, begun in Aberdeen, was concluded in Edinburgh.

In 1815 he was licensed to preach the gospel by the Presbytery of Lochcarron. Of his first attempts to preach he gives the following account: "My first attempt to address a public audience from the pulpit was made at Lochalsh, and in the pulpit of Dr Downie, the parish minister; the next in that of the venerable Lachlan Mackenzie, minister of Lochcarron. My exhibitions in both places before men were almost complete failures; before God they were sinful." His third attempt was still less successful, on the evening of the communion Sabbath at Kildonan.

"I selected for my text," he writes, "the same passage I preached from at Lochcarron. I uttered a few preliminary sentences with considerable boldness and facility. But all at once my memory failed me, and I made a dead pause. My father sat behind me in the tent, and groaned aloud for very anxiety. The congregation too, among whom were a number of my future flock at Achness, all on the very tiptoe of curiosity and attention, as this was my first appear-

ance before them, were agitated like the surface of one of their mountain lochs when suddenly visited by a hurricane. Some held down their heads, others looked any way or every way but towards the unfortunate and suddenly-silenced preacher. After a pause of some minutes, however, during which I felt myself pretty similarly circumstanced as when I was carried away by the River Carron, I pulled out my manuscript, and stammered out the rest of the sermon with much trepidation in the best way I could. I think I was no loser by this severe trial. It read to me a most humiliating lesson respecting myself, and it struck a blow at the root of self-confidence, then my easily besetting sin.”

Immediately after being licensed he was appointed missionary minister of Achness in Sutherland. There, notwithstanding his breakdown at Kildonan, he soon attained, in the consciences of all the people and in the hearts of many among them who feared the Lord, the place of an able minister of the New Testament. After labouring for three years among his attached flock at Achness, he and all his people were summarily removed to clear for sheep the ground they occupied. His account of that eviction is a stirring story of wrong and cruelty on the one side, and of suffering and patience on the other.

He thus describes his last Sabbath service at Achness: “In Strathnaver we assembled together for the last time at Langdale, where I had frequently preached before, on a beautiful green sward, overhung by Robert Gordon’s romantic little cottage on the hillock close beside us. The still waters of the Naver flowed past us a few yards to the east. The Sabbath morning was unusually fine; and mountain, hill and dale, water and woodland, among which we had dwelt so long, appeared to unite their attractions in order to bid us all a long farewell. My preparations for the pulpit had always cost me much anxiety on the previous Saturday, but in view of this sad scene of parting they were almost beyond endurance. I selected a text which had a pointed reference to the peculiarity of our circumstances, but my great difficulty was how to restrain my feelings till I had illustrated and enforced the great truth which it involved with reference to eternity.

“The service began. The very aspect of the congregation was itself a sermon, a most impressive one. Old Achool sat right opposite me, and around him his younger fellow-travellers Zionwards. As my eye alighted on his venerable countenance, bearing the impress of 87 years, I was deeply affected and could scarcely articulate the words of the psalm which I read. I preached and the people listened; but every sentence uttered and heard was in opposition to both the wind and tide of our natural feelings, which set in directly against us and at every step of our progress rose higher and higher. At last all restraints were compelled to give way. The poor preacher ceased

to speak; the poor people ceased to listen. Both lifted up their voices and wept; they mingled their tears together. It was indeed the place and the hour of parting – the greater number never again, either there or anywhere else, to behold each other in the land of the living.”

In 1819 Sage went to Aberdeen and was minister of the Gaelic chapel there for two years and nine months. It was during his residence there his first marriage took place.

In 1822 he was translated to Resolis. His immediate predecessor was Robert Arthur, whose ministry there extended from 1774 to 1821. Of his life, Sage gives a vivid sketch, in which there appears no trait of a true Christian, of an evangelical preacher, or of a faithful pastor.

Arthur was preceded by a minister who, in respect of godliness and usefulness, was a very contrast – the eminent Hector MacPhail. The parish which Arthur found as “a garden of the Lord” lapsed into a waste before the days of his successor. The people were scattered; there was no session, and all had to be organised as if there never had been a minister in the parish before. Sage was then comparatively young, with Ferintosh and its John Macdonald on the one hand and Cromarty with its Alexander Stewart on the other. But in the regard of his people he found his place at the outset as a man of God and a preacher of power, and this he retained to the close of his active ministry.

The great affliction of his life followed immediately after his induction at Resolis – the early death of his first wife. Most affecting is his account of his suffering during the first dark days of loneliness. His soul was bowed to the dust by the burden of his sorrow, and both gladness and hope were pressed out of his heart. He was unable for a time to take part in the services of the sanctuary. But the Lord visited him in the season of his sore distress, and brought to him an enriching blessing; and with a heart cheered and fervent, and “in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ”, he resumed his work. Many of his hearers since that time shared with him the blessing which then reached him from on high. His second marriage took place in 1826. He was spared the pain of a second widowhood.

The Disruption was to him a time of sifting trial. He knew what he ought to do and, knowing this, he did not hesitate to act according to his sense of duty. But while providence sorely tried him, the tempter fiercely assailed him in that crisis. Anxious as to the future of his wife and large young family, he failed to find in all his parish a roof to cover them when he was searching for a home, in view of the Disruption. After repeated refusals, and with the future all dark before him, he was seated in his study, when he saw through the window a neighbouring proprietor walking on one of his many fields.

“See how he prospers though he was unkind to you,” the tempter suggested, “and how it fares with you.” It was with him then as with the psalmist of old when he saw the wicked prosper and the righteous oppressed. But seasonably and with power came the words to his mind: “Wait on the Lord and keep His way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it”. His fears were dispelled, the tempter foiled, and his very first attempt thereafter to procure a house succeeded.

“I may truly say”, he writes near the close of his life, “that in joining the Free Church I exchanged debt and poverty for a competency, not only sufficient for the supply of daily needs, but such as to enable me to pay all my debts and to lay by something in view of old age. I do not know a more remarkable or obvious proof that our Free Church is of God and is countenanced by Him.”

Referring to annoyances to which he was subjected by the reluctance of the heritors to pay his stipend during all the period of his ministry at Resolis, he adds: “I hasten to conclude this detestable part of my reminiscences, by expressing my thankfulness to God for having guided me to shake myself free from all the vile appendages of the Establishment – heritors, lawyers, ministers, patrons – and to join a Church whose profession, even if it should be nothing more, is that she is under the exclusive government of Him whom men crucified, but whom His heavenly Father has made Lord and Christ”.

The waning of his strength was very gradual during the closing years of his life, but the time during which he was quite unable to preach was short. Memory failed, the keen edge of his intellect was blunted, the voice was very feeble and the limbs were bent. But his habit of meditation continued and sparks of the old fire sometimes gleamed in his conversation, reminding one of the brightness of earlier days.

Shortly before Sage’s death, his faithful friend Gustavus Aird had told him a deathbed saying of one of the Ross-shire worthies. Sage answered: “You have cheered me by telling me of these three wonders which he expected to see in heaven. I too expect to see them: my nature in the person of the Son of God, the first indeed, and the greatest; myself among the glorified saints, the second; and some there whom, while on earth, I never expected to be there, the third.” Passing through death as one passes into sleep, he entered on the vision of the wonders which he so much longed to see. He died in March 1869, in the eightieth year of his age.

As a preacher, his manner was extremely quiet and ineffective. His voice was never strong, but it was distinct, up to the measure of its force. It would be difficult to decide whether he excelled more as a lecturer or as a preacher – that is, in expounding a passage or in discoursing from a text. In each, few

excelled him. Always careful to trace from its starting point the train of thought, throughout the preceding paragraph on to his text, he usually gave a most instructive exposition in the introduction of his sermon. When he reached his text, he opened it up with marvellous skill. Entering into it he carried his hearers with him so gradually, and kept so clear a light shining on their path that, without a sense of difficulty, they found themselves in the deep places of the subject, marvelling that they had not seen before what was now so clearly shown to them. He always kept an attentive hearer engrossed with the subject of his sermon. Few preachers have ever laboured more to exalt their theme and to abase themselves. His applications of doctrine to the consciousness and practice of Christians were minute and skilful.

His preaching was unusually fitted to be edifying to the Church of God. In his addresses to the unconverted he never sought to reach their conscience except through their understanding. In calm solemnity he presented to their minds the awful truth, but he never brandished it before their eyes to scare them into blind alarm. Each sermon he delivered left abundant materials for future meditation in the minds of all earnest hearers; and never could they, in course of reading, meet a text on which they heard him preach, but the light of his sermon still hovered over it, and made them wish to linger on it.

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## Truths Scattered in Various Places<sup>1</sup>

*John Flavel*

**Y**ou must not expect to find all that belongs to one head or point of faith or duty laid together systematically in one place in Scripture but scattered in several places – some in the Old Testament and some in the New, at a great distance from one another. Now in our searches after the full and satisfying knowledge of the will of God in such points, it is necessary that the whole Word of God be thoroughly searched and all those parcels brought together.

If a man would see the entire revelation of Christ that was made to the fathers under the Old Testament, he shall not find it laid together in any one prophet, but shall find that one speaks to one part of it, and another to another. Moses gives the first general hint of it: “The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent” (Gen 3:15). But then, if you would know more particularly of whose seed, according to the flesh, He should come, you must turn to Genesis 22:18: “In thy seed [said God to Abraham] shall all nations of the earth be blessed”. And if you yet doubt what seed God

<sup>1</sup>An edited extract from Flavel’s *A Blow at the Root, or, The Causes and Cure of Mental Errors*, in vol 3 of his *Works*.

means there, you must go the Apostle: "To thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal 3:16). If you would further know the place of His nativity, the prophet Micah must inform you of that; it was to be Bethlehem Ephratah (Mic 5:2). If you enquire about His parent, another prophet gives you that: "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and call His name Immanuel" (Is 7:14). If the time of his birth be inquired after, Moses and Daniel must inform you of that (Gen 49:10, Dan 9:24).

So under the New Testament, if a man enquires about the change of the Sabbath, he must not expect to find a formal repeal of the seventh day and an express institution of the first day in its room. But he is to consider: (1) what the Evangelist speaks: that Christ is Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28) and so had power to change it; (2) that on the first day of the week Christ rose from the dead (Matt 28:1,2); and this is that great day which was foretold as the day to be solemnized upon that account (Ps 118:24); (3) that accordingly the first day of the week is emphatically styled the Lord's day (Rev 1:10), where you find His own name written upon it; (4) you shall find this was the day on which the apostles and primitive Christians assembled together for the stated and solemn performance of public worship (John 20:19) and other public church acts and duties (1 Cor 16:1,2). And so by putting together all these particulars and considering them, we draw a just conclusion: it is the will of God that, since the resurrection of Christ, the first day of the week should be observed as the Christian Sabbath.

In like manner, we are not to expect, in express words, a New Testament institution or command that believers' infants under the gospel should be baptized, but God has left us to gather satisfaction about His will and our duty in that point by comparing and considering the several scriptures of the Old and New Testament which relate to that matter. If we be impartial and thoughtful, we may do so by considering that: (1) by God's express command, the infant seed of His people were taken into covenant with their parents, and the then sign of that covenant commanded to be applied to them (Gen 17:9,10); (2) though the sign is altered, the promise and covenant are still the same and run as they did before to believers and their children (Acts 2:38,39); (3) the federal holiness of our children is plainly asserted under the New Testament (1 Cor 7:14, Rom 11:16); (4) baptism succeeds in the room of circumcision, and the completeness of our privileges under the New Testament shows us that they are no way inferior, but rather more extensive, than those of the Jews (Col 2:10-12); (5) when any master or parent was converted, the whole household was baptized.

By putting all these, with some others things, together, we may arrive at the desired satisfaction about the will of God in this matter.

# Creation Showing the Glory of God<sup>1</sup>

*Thomas Manton*

The whole world is but God's workshop, where there are the masterpieces of His wisdom and majesty. These are seen very much in the order of causes and the admirable design of the world.

[1.] The wisdom of God and His counsel are mightily seen. The world is not a work of chance, but of counsel and rare contrivance. All that the Lord did here, He did by skill and according to the inward idea that was in His own mind; therefore the prophet says, "He hath weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance" (Is 40:12). God did, as it were, take a balance into His hands and weigh out all He created; He has disposed all things by number, weight and measure; He has done it in exact proportion. O let us admire the wisdom of God! It is above our search: "No man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end" (Ecc 3:11); we may admire it in the general and say it is all good, but we cannot find it out. Some little glimpses of His wisdom we have, so that we may cry out, He is a great God, wonderful in counsel, mighty in working.

But O the rare and wonderful contrivance! We cannot discern all the beauty and all the order of it. If we would only consider the different tendencies of light and darkness, of heat and cold, of moisture and dryness – the skill that is seen in all things that He has made – we should say, Certainly He that made these things is a wise God and wonderful in counsel. We know the power of God by His making all things out of nothing; but we know the wisdom of God by His making all things in such an exquisite order. Compare it with yourselves: we are soon tired; it is much to us to promote a trivial interest in the world, to spread our small nets and reach out our heart to the cares of our own families. But how wise is that God who had the model of all things within Himself, from the elephant to the ant – that has made and formed them with such apt proportions, that guides the courses of the heavens, and keeps the stars in their paths and order!

[2.] The majesty and greatness of God. Look up to Him who is at the upper end of all these causes that are so suitably subordinate to one another in the world; and He can turn them as He pleases. Job says of the bright cloud: "It is turned round about by His counsels, that they may do whatsoever He commandeth" (37:12). Look up to Him that is the head of angels. We are dazzled at the splendour and magnificence of an earthly king or prince; when we see Him surrounded with dukes, earls and lords, these seem

<sup>1</sup>The first use (point of application) in a series of sermons on Hebrews 11:3, reprinted with some editing from *By Faith*, a Banner of Truth Trust reprint from Manton's *Works*.



great things to us. How should we wonder at the majesty of God, who is encompassed with cherubim and seraphim, principalities, powers, thrones and dominions! How do we wonder at the majesty of kings riding in triumph in their chariots! O how should we wonder at Him that rides upon the wings of the wind!

It was the brag of the king of Assyria: “Are not my princes altogether kings?” (Is 10:8). But God has angels for His courtiers and clouds for His chariots (Ps 18:10,11) and a golden garment of light for His covering (Ps 104:2). His throne is in heaven and His footstool is upon earth; in heaven He sits in great majesty, commanding all things, and has all creatures ready for His service. He need but beckon to them and they engage in His quarrel: “They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera” (Judg 5:20). He has the stars in order, to fight his battles against a wicked man. “He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth: likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of His strength. . . . It is turned round about by His counsels, that they may do whatsoever He commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth” (Job 37:6,12). He can call the winds, and they will make a ready answer to God: “Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here are we?” (Job 38:35). All creatures are upon His errand. Lord, here we are, send us: whether shall I go? says the lightning; Where shall I go? says the thunder; Where shall I go? says the hail. They are ready to be despatched in an errand for the punishment of sinners.

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## The Open Fountain<sup>1</sup>

*W K Tweedie*

Isaiah 1:18. *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*

**I**f the judgments of God are a great deep, not less so are His mercies. The sinner may presume on the one hand, or despair on the other; but here is mercy made sure to the chief of sinners. Here is glory to God, and yet joy to those who have rebelled against Him. Is conscience felt to be polluted? Is it like scarlet and like crimson, and is the sinner ready, like Job, to say, “Though I wash myself with snow water, and make myself never so clean, yet mine own clothes will abhor me”?

<sup>1</sup>Another piece, slightly edited, from *Glad Tidings*, “a series of daily meditations for Christian disciples”.

Even then the Holy One comes with the assurance that He will wash us, so that we shall be whiter than the snow. O my soul, you know none so guilty as yourself, none so polluted and vile, for you know none who have sinned against light, against privilege, against compassions, like yourself. Flee then to the much-needed fountain. There is safety, for there is purity, only there. And rejoice that the way is open, that the invitation is free. It is addressed to those whose sins are “as scarlet” or “red like crimson”, and God is glorified when His mercy is welcomed. Welcome it then and live for evermore.

But do not forget the divine alternative: “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” While all are welcome in the appointed way, yet “no man cometh to the Father but by” the Son, and O how soothing to the soul to walk in that path! It is “the way of peace”. “The very God of peace” is the guide; “the covenant of peace” is the guarantee – a covenant as unchanging as the everlasting hills, while “the Prince of Peace” gladdens and sustains. Such honour have all His saints. My soul, in the sight of the heart-searching eye, is that honour yours?

But as God designed His people to be happy, far more is said of this peace; it is presented to us in the Word in many attractive forms. It is called “great peace”; it is described as “perfect peace”; it is spoken of as Christ’s peace; nay, as the very “peace of God”. Should a loyal subject of the Prince of Peace be still downcast and dejected?

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

***A Handful of Pebbles, Theological Liberalism and the Church***, by Peter Barnes, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 96 pages, £5.50.

Liberalism (also referred to as *modernism*) is, in this context, “a belief system which rejects the orthodox view of the Christian faith as set out in the Bible, and summarised in the historic creeds”. A S Peake, one of its more prominent proponents 100 years ago, claimed: “The Bible is to be studied just like any other book. We can come to it with no prepossessions, but simply with an open mind.” But Dr Barnes points out that, while “the liberal mind claims to be anti-dogmatic and humanitarian”, yet it, “for the most part, is not open to the notion of supernatural and infallible divine revelation”.

A historical sketch of the rise of liberalism includes some of the figures prominent in the background to the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church as a separate body in 1893. Marcus Dods, for instance, who succeeded the

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

noted orthodox theologian George Smeaton in New College, Edinburgh, made the foolish claim: “The past 50 years have done more to promote the understanding of the New Testament than all the other Christian half-centuries put together”. Yet in his later years Dods had to confess: “Very often, I may say commonly, I cannot get further than the conviction that in Christ we see the best that our nature is capable of, and must make that our own”. This was the kind of man who, by the 1880s, was being appointed in the then Free Church to teach theological students.

However, the reference (p 26) to William Robertson Smith is inaccurate in describing him as having been “deposed”. He, in fact, retained his status as a minister when he was dismissed from his Hebrew chair in the Aberdeen Free Church College, after repeatedly publishing his blatantly-unbelieving views on the Old Testament in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

Liberalism has no doubt changed in many ways over the years, but it has in no way lost its influence. Dr Barnes writes: “Michael Ramsay, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, declared in 1961: ‘Heaven is not a place for Christians only . . . . I expect to see some present-day atheists there.’ Later, Billy Graham appeared to express similar sentiments.”

The author uses the confession of the notorious American bishop Jim Pike to illustrate the damage caused by liberalism in theological colleges: “When I turned from being agnostic, I went to Union Theological Seminary, eager for and expecting bread; but when I graduated, all that it left me was a handful of pebbles”. This provides the eloquent title of a useful introduction to the subject, which provides all that most readers will ever need on this matter.

***Memories of Sandfields***, by Bethan Lloyd-Jones, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 112 pages, £5.50.

Here is a second edition of interesting memories, mostly from south Wales – by the wife of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones. They recount events in Aberavon during his first pastorate, before he moved to Westminster Chapel in London.

Not all the church practices will stand up to scrutiny, but there is clear evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit. Included are accounts of some notorious characters who were brought under conviction of sin and then enabled to look to the Saviour. Among them was “Staffordshire Bill”. “Drinking himself into his usual sodden condition” on a Sabbath afternoon, he heard another man tell of having been in church and hearing Dr Lloyd-Jones say that “nobody was hopeless”. This remark was the means of bringing him under the preaching of the gospel, through which he obtained a good hope by God’s grace. May the Most High give us an earnest longing for many such instances of gospel blessing in our time!

## Notes and Comments

### Homosexual Hatred of Christianity

Something of the hatred of homosexuals for Christianity was seen recently in Palm Springs, California. A Christian Institute press release describes an angry crowd parading down a street protesting loudly against a vote in the State of California to prohibit marriage between same-sex couples and to define marriage as between one man and one woman. Some of the demonstrators spotted an elderly lady making a peaceful Christian protest by holding up a cross (a symbol which is not appropriate). In any case, the lady was suddenly surrounded by a group of sodomites who jostled her, yelled violent abuse directly in her face and smashed her cross. The ugly scene, including the fear of the terrified woman, was captured on film and posted on the internet.

This is just one of many such incidents in California, where there has been a spate of disorderly protests by supporters of “gay marriage”. Television cameras showed one protester jumping on top of a police car, and at least 14 protestors had to be arrested in Los Angeles and elsewhere.

These perverted people demand tolerance, and even approval, of their unnatural and destructive lifestyle but they will not tolerate opposition to it, especially from those whom they perceive to be Christians. The godly cannot but grieve because of the increasing and militant promotion of the sin of Sodom and of vicious attacks on Christian norms.

It seems that the attitude of aggressive homosexual activists is similar to those who in the Psalmist’s day asserted, “With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?” The answer to their question is in the next verse: “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord” (see Ps 12:4,5). NMR

### Britain Determined to Return to Religious Bondage

The document, “A Common Word Between Us and You”, signed by a large body of Muslim scholars two years ago, deceived many. They were led to believe that Islam is fundamentally a religion of peace, because the document claimed that Islam and Christianity are on the same foundation of love – love to God and love to our neighbour. Of course, the god of Islam is not the triune God of Christianity, nor does Islam teach Muslims to love their Christian neighbours. Nevertheless the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, was among those who welcomed the document. Worse still (as *Christian Voice* reports) the present Premier Gordon Brown has stated recently his wish for “new facilities for multi-faith scholarship in Britain”, “inter-faith groups” in

“every constituency of the country” and funding for “a European centre of excellence for Islamic studies” in Britain.

Shame on our nation for turning back from our Reformed Christian heritage to the darkness of false religions! When many of the Jews, on returning to Judah from captivity in Babylon, married heathen people and participated in their sins, Ezra the scribe was deeply grieved by their backsliding. His sorrow is seen in his prayer: “O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee. . . . O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Thy commandments” (Ezra 9:6,10). The Jews at that time were brought to repent of their declension (Ezra 10:1). May the Lord likewise cause us nationally to return to Him in penitence! *NMR*

### **“Why Would Anyone Believe in God?”**

This question is taken from the title of a book by Dr Justin Barrett of Oxford University. It has received media attention recently on account of publicity given to his view that children “instinctively believe that almost everything has been designed with a specific purpose”. He asserts that “children’s normally and naturally developing minds make them prone to believe in divine creation and intelligent design. In contrast, evolution is unnatural for human minds, relatively difficult to believe”. He claims that research, including his own, suggests that “children seem to have a predisposition to believe in some kind of god”, though the kind of god they believe in depends on their culture and, through what they are taught, their natural propensity to believe in a god may be overridden. He affirms that “belief in God is an almost inevitable consequence of the kind of minds we have. Most of what we believe comes from mental tools working below our conscious awareness . . . and beliefs in gods match up well with these automatic assumptions; beliefs in an all-knowing, all-powerful God match up even better.”

Our knowledge of Dr Barrett, his published work and his general religious and philosophical position is too limited to know the extent to which he accepts the Biblical account of Creation and of the reasons for man’s knowledge of God, and to what extent he rejects evolution as contributing to making man what he is. A professed Christian and graduate of Calvin College and Cornell University, he is engaged in research at the Centre for Anthropology and Mind and The Institute for Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology at Oxford University. He believes in “an all-knowing, all-powerful, perfectly good God who brought the universe into being”. But he is also described as a “byproduct theorist” who considers “that belief in a god or gods is a byproduct of several cognitive tools our brain uses to help us survive”.

It is important to recognise that there can be no compromise between accepting the Biblical account of creation as the work of God, by which He made “all things of nothing by the word of His power, in the space of six days, and all very good” (*Shorter Catechism*, answer 9), and some form of theistic evolution – or between the Biblical account of God’s creation of man “after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, with dominion over the creatures” (*Shorter Catechism*, answer 10) and the notion that God brought him to his present state by some evolutionary process.

Dr Alan Cairns, in his *Dictionary of Theological Terms*, has a succinct article on *Theistic Evolution*: “The theory that God, having performed the primary creative act, used the process of evolution to develop the universe over a very long period of time. The theory labours under the problems of seeking to force Scripture into the mould of current sceptical thought, of the intrinsic scientific impossibility of evolution, and of denying, or evacuating of their native force, the plain statements of Scripture on the subject of creation”.

According to the Bible, man was created with the knowledge or consciousness of God. That consciousness was part of the constitution with which God made man and it was instructed and informed by the revelation which God made of Himself to man in His works of creation and providence and in His spoken word. Since the Fall, in which mankind lost the knowledge, righteousness and true holiness with which He was created (and which are restored only in and through Christ and the work of regeneration), the human race has been unable to get away from what Charles Hodge, for example, describes as “the conviction that there is a Being on whom they are dependent, and to whom they are responsible” (*Systematic Theology*, vol 1, p 191). The human race is surrounded by facts which should prevent them denying that God exists and keep them from thinking “that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device” (Acts 17:29).

But sin has corrupted the human mind, so that people resist the evidences of “His eternal power and Godhead”, suppress the truth concerning God and turn it into a lie, and they do so because they do not like to retain God in their knowledge. It is this fact – that mankind cannot get away from confrontation with the reality of God – which makes many atheists so violent in their opposition to the idea of God as the Bible and creation reveal Him. In order that sinners come to recognise the truth concerning God and give to God the place which is rightly His, it is necessary that they be confronted with God’s self-revelation in His written Word and in the Word made flesh, that their minds be enlightened about that revelation, and that they be made willing to accept the truth thus revealed.

Given the Biblical facts, it is no wonder that the human brain would be programmed to believe in God. That the belief results in such a diversity of religions and gods which are dumb and non-existent is fully accounted for by the Biblical account of the Fall. That the Biblical account of God fits in with all we know of reality is no wonder, seeing it is self-evidently true. May Dr Barrett's question provoke many to seek the full answer given to it in the Bible!

*HMC*

### **Assisted Suicide**

The pressure to legalise assisted suicide in Britain continues. Sky TV has shown the moment of death of a man with motor neurone disease who was assisted to commit suicide in 2006, while Margo Macdonald, an MSP suffering from Parkinson's disease, is hoping to introduce a bill in the Scottish Parliament legalising suicide for the terminally ill. Meanwhile in a recent case in England, the Director of Public Prosecutions has decided not to prosecute the parents of Daniel James, a rugby player who broke his neck during training in 2007. After several failed attempts at suicide, his parents took him to a clinic in Switzerland where he was helped to kill himself. Mr James was not terminally ill. The Director of Public Prosecutions said that although there was "sufficient evidence" that the parents had broken the 1961 Suicide Act, it would not, on balance, be "in the public interest" to bring charges.

The Word of God condemns suicide, warning us with the examples of Saul and of Judas. By implication it also condemns the assisting of others to kill themselves. Suicide is the ultimate folly, and it is tragic to think of our fellow-countrymen precipitating their own souls, and the souls of their loved ones, unprepared into the eternal world. The Scriptures plainly declare that those who die without trusting in Christ, whether by ordinary death or by suicide, go to a place and state of eternal conscious torment, unspeakably worse than any suffering they may leave behind in this world. They do not, alas, "rest in peace", no matter how their surviving relatives may comfort themselves with vain delusions.

*DWBS*

### **Woolworths Goes Bankrupt**

After a long period of financial difficulty, the British high-street retailer Woolworths has gone into administration. This branch of the company was founded in 1909 by the businessman F W Woolworth. Many readers will remember the leading role played by Woolworths in the successful campaign to introduce Sabbath trading in Britain in the 1980s and early 1990s.

*DWBS*

## Protestant View

### Further Attacks on Our Protestant Constitution

*The Herald* has used the election of the first black president by the USA to call for Britain to jettison completely its Protestant constitution. It wants the UK to treat the occasion “as an impetus to catch up with them and finally confine the Act of Succession 1533, the Bill of Rights and Coronation Oath Acts 1688, the Act of Settlement 1701 and the Accession Declaration Act 1910 to the sectarian dustbin where they belong”. This ignorant call is one which our Prime Minister would agree with. *The Times* reports that he is to “include plans to repeal the Act of Settlement in Labour’s election manifesto to prevent the Scottish National Party from using the issue as a vote-winner in an independence referendum”.

The SNP began to call a decade ago for the Act to be scrapped and, three years ago, its leader Alex Salmond agreed a pact with Cardinal Keith O’Brien to campaign for that objective. O’Brien, among others, has arrogantly described the Act as “offensive” and “the country’s shame”. Clearly, there is increasing and imminent danger to the survival of this very necessary Act, which debars a Roman Catholic from the throne, and also bars from the succession to the throne any member of the royal family who marries a Roman Catholic, unless his or her spouse agrees to renounce the Church of Rome.

Should these new concentrated attacks succeed, the rise of a Roman Catholic monarchy in a generation or two is very possible. This is because – and commentators and politicians are careful not to refer to this point – “the Catholic party” in a mixed marriage is “gravely bound to make a sincere promise to do all in his power to have all the children baptized and brought up in the Catholic Church” (this is laid down in an “Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI on Mixed Marriages” entitled *Matrimonia Mixta*, which came into effect in 1970). If ever we needed to pray that the Most High would preserve the Protestant nature of the British throne, it is now. “Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail” (Ps 9:19). NMR

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## Church Information

### Ordination and Induction of Rev A W MacColl

On Friday, 21 November 2008, the Ness church was filled for the ordination of Rev Allan W MacColl, Probationer, and his induction to the congregation; some 60 others, unable to get in, went to a neighbouring building to which the service was relayed. Among the visitors were Revs John MacLeod, Roderick



MacLeod and Barry Whear, who were associated with the Presbytery.

After Rev Angus Smith, the Moderator of the Outer Isles Presbytery, had constituted the Presbytery, Mr Angus Mackenzie was appointed Officer of Court and made the usual proclamation at the door of the church. When there were no objections to Mr MacColl's life and doctrine, Rev Donald Macdonald went to the pulpit to conduct public worship and preached an appropriate discourse from 1 Timothy 2:1-7. His main points were: (1) What is approved in the sight of God, (2) "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus", (3) The nature of that mediation, and (4) The outcome of that mediation, "whereunto" Paul was "ordained a preacher, and an apostle": that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth".

When public worship was over, the Clerk gave a brief narrative of the proceedings in the Call, and the Moderator addressed to Dr MacColl the Questions appointed to be put to Probationers at their ordination and induction to a pastoral charge. After returning satisfactory answers to these questions, Dr MacColl signed the Formula in the presence of the congregation. He then knelt down, and the Moderator, with solemn prayer to God, ordained Dr MacColl to the holy ministry, and the ministers present joined in the imposition of hands. The Moderator, in the name of the Presbytery and by the authority of the Divine Head of the Church, then admitted Dr MacColl to the pastoral charge of the Ness congregation and, along with the other members of Presbytery, gave him the right hand of fellowship.

Rev Angus Smith suitably addressed the newly-inducted minister, basing his advice on 1 Timothy 4:16: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee". Rev Kenneth D Macleod went on to exhort the congregation, reminding them that the pastor now set over them was an ambassador for Christ (2 Cor 5:20). The Clerk then read a number of messages of good wishes from other ministers.

An excellent tea had been prepared in a nearby hall, and most of those present went along to enjoy it. Although the evening was rather cold, we were thankful that the weather did not cause inconvenience.

This settlement brought to an end the long vacancy which followed the death of Rev William MacLean in 1985. Mr MacLean's ministry was much appreciated, not only in Scotland, but also in Australia and New Zealand, where his preaching was much blessed. The Presbytery are thankful to see the charge filled again and wish Dr MacColl much of the same blessing on his ministry in Ness and wherever else he may be asked to preach.

*(Rev) K D Macleod, Clerk of Presbytery*

### Thanks from Zimbabwe Presbytery

About two months ago and for a variety of reasons it became obvious that our people in Zimbabwe faced two grave problems. One was lack of food and the second was lack of maize seed to plant for another year's harvest.

Provisionally a substantial contribution by Mbumba Zending to Mission funds was increased considerably due to favourable exchange rates, allowing a total of £44 000 to be spent on famine relief. Barley along with seed maize was distributed to all our Mission staff and congregations through Deacons Courts.

The Foreign Mission Committee has received a letter from Rev S Khumalo, Bulawayo, Clerk of the Zimbabwe Presbytery, to express the Presbytery's thanks to all concerned for the help received. He quotes 2 Corinthians 9.12: "For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God".

(Rev) James Tallach, Clerk of the Foreign Mission Committee.

### Halkirk Communion Season

The Kirk Session has decided that an additional communion season will be held each year and that therefore the sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be administered in the congregation on the third Sabbath of March, God willing.

(Rev) N M Ross, Interim Moderator

## Acknowledgement of Donations

**General Treasurer** acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

*College & Library Fund:* Friend, Newcastle, Ps 6, £60.

*Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for Thembisso Home, £200; Mr N Pearce, for work in Zimbabwe, £120.

**Congregational Treasurers** acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

**Assynt:** *Sustentation Fund:* The estate of the late Mrs Dorothy MacLeod, Stoer, £1000.

**Bradacale:** *Congregational Funds:* Mrs L MacKinnon, £100 per Rev JRT.

**Edinburgh:** *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £100, £5. *Congregational Funds:* Relatives of Miss K A Nicolson, £50. *Sustentation Fund:* Relatives of Miss K A Nicolson, £50.

**Gairloch:** *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50; Anon, £30.

**Glasgow:** *Bus Fund:* Anon, £100, £50, £35, £20, £20. *Congregational Funds:* In memory of Mr Frank Minnery from his family, £200; Anon, £500, £60, £50; Anon, £50 per FRD; Mrs EM, £100 per Rev RML. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £1290, £120, £70, £60, £60, £60, £60, £60, £55, £55, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for African relief, £50; Anon, £80, £60. *Santa Fe Congregation:* Anon, for Church & Manse, £1000.

**Greenock:** *College & Library Fund:* Anon, £30. *Dominions & Overseas Fund:* Anon, £30. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £50, £50, £40; Anon, for Zimbabwe Mission, £20, £20.

**Halkirk:** *Where Most Needed:* Anon, £45.

**Portree:** *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £100 per AB. *Outreach Fund:* Anon, £70 per AB.

**South Harris:** *Congregational Funds:* Dingwall Friends, £500; Friend, Geocrab, £160. *Sustentation Fund:* D J Gillies, £20 per Rev KDM.

# 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.
- Breasclete:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 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: nmross@ferintosh.co.uk.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.
- Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. 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, 6 pm (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: 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.
- Kinlochervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB. Tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Sabbath 12 noon. Manse tel: 01571 844484.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl, MA, PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA. Tel: 01851 810228.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, F P Manse, North Tolsta, HS2 0NH. Tel: 01851 890286.
- North Uist:** **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS. Tel: 01876 510233.
- Oban:** Church and Manse. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. 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. Rev L T Smith.

#### 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 III" (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: dmliev@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. 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

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

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