

# 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; **Fifth:** Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

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

**May: First Sabbath:** Aberdeen, London; **Second:** Achmore, New Canaan, Donsa, Kinlochbernie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fifth:** Auckland, Chiedza.

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

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

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

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

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## Abraham and the Land of Promise

When God called him out from Ur of the Chaldees, Abraham obeyed. By faith he went out into the unknown future. Later God promised to give him the land to which He led him. The promise was in these terms: “I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession” (Gen 17:8). As yet Abraham had no seed and, as the years went by and he and Sarah advanced in age, it became more and more unlikely that they would ever have a son.

Abraham believed God’s promise. If God had spoken, then what He said must be absolutely true – even when all the evidence pointed in the opposite direction. Here is another example of God-given faith – a living faith resting on God’s bare word. This faith is not extinct today. Yet there is a great difference between faith and the presumption which is so often in evidence; faith is a soul taking *God* at His word and acting accordingly.

Abraham’s descendants, Isaac and Jacob, exercised the same faith. They too lived in the land of promise; they too were convinced that God would, in His own time, give it as a permanent dwelling place to their descendants. Yet they treated it as “a strange country”, a foreign land (Heb 11:9). Canaan was not their home; indeed they could not treat any place in the world as a permanent home. They were on pilgrimage through the world; they could not put down roots anywhere. And, as a sign of their sense of the impermanence of this life, they lived in tents. These tents could be easily taken down, carried somewhere else and put up again without difficulty. And every time they did so, they might remind themselves that their life in this world could not last for long. Yet God’s promise was sure – that the land would belong to their seed. And by faith they kept hold of the promise.

As Abraham and his family wandered from place to place in the promised land – as they remembered the certainty of death and the impermanence of life – they believed that they were on their way to a permanent home beyond this life. Abraham, in particular, “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb 11:10). That city was heaven; it was a promised land of a higher and a better kind. And the promise of heaven

was just as sure to Abraham's faith – and to Isaac's and Jacob's – as the promise of the land.

Matthew Henry goes further: "As the land of Canaan was secured to the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, so heaven is secured *to all his spiritual seed* by a covenant, and for a possession truly everlasting". We should all be conscious of the uncertainty of time; we cannot be sure that our life will be prolonged for another year or even another day; indeed we cannot promise ourselves one more moment. And yet, if we are among Abraham's spiritual seed – if we are spiritually alive and have a living faith in Christ Jesus – we have a sure promise of a permanent home in heaven. The best-built houses in this world are unlikely to last for many centuries, but when our spirits leave our bodies, we will need an eternal home – one whose foundation will never be washed away.

Paul was clearly one of Abraham's seed; not only was he an Israelite; he also had been blessed with the same God-given faith. He was clear that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 3:11). He was stressing the fact that there is no other foundation which can bear the weight of a guilty soul; all other foundations will be swept away – whether of good works or religious ritual, indeed everything apart from the one Saviour whom God has appointed. Paul was conscious that the time he would remain in the body on earth was limited, but he looked beyond death with confidence. This was most certainly not presumption; by grace he had rested his guilty soul, indeed his whole being, on the one safe foundation. And so he could look forward to a place in the "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God". He could say, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor 5:1).

David Dickson points out that even where someone has the "best right on earth [to the good things of this life], he ought to have a pilgrim's mind". This was true of Abraham; he had much of this world's goods, but he did not set his heart on them; they did not make him feel at home here. On the other hand, Dickson reminds us that "when faith hath certainty of a heavenly inheritance, it can be content with a small portion of things earthly". And believers realise that the God who has promised the heavenly inheritance is also in control of all things here below. As they make their way through this world as pilgrims and strangers, they can look to the God of providence to supply all that they really need, in things temporal and especially in things spiritual, "according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus".

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob could readily have built permanent homes – solid, substantial structures which could have lasted for generations. But

they never lost sight of the fact that they were pilgrims and sojourners in this world. However, there was a period in his life when Abraham's nephew Lot looked at his situation from a different perspective. Faith was not in exercise in his soul when he and Abraham had to part. As he looked around him, he focused on the fine pasture of the well-watered plain of Jordan. Soon he "pitched his tent toward Sodom" (Gen 13:12), and before long he was living in the city, in spite of the fact that "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly".

Gone were the tents of Abraham; he now lived in a house. He was no longer so conscious of the brevity of time; the world and the things of the world had much more influence over him than before. Yet, even if faith was no longer as active, he was "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds)" (2 Pet 2:7,8).

The impermanence of life must have been forcefully brought home to Lot when he had to flee from Sodom, when he lost his wife and presumably his possessions also. "Here", he might well have told himself, "we have no continuing city". It was a lesson he had no doubt previously learned; he now had to relearn it painfully. It is a lesson we too must learn again and again, as we study our providence and the Word of God. The latter further teaches us: "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col 3:2). Like Abraham we may use the good things of this world, recognising them as God's gifts to us. But we are not to *abuse* them (see 1 Cor 7:31); we are not to give our hearts to them and make idols of them. Rather we must remain conscious that if we do not lose them to moths or rust or thieves, we must inevitably leave them behind. How necessary to have treasure in heaven, to have a permanent home assured to us in the city which has secure foundations!

But Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Paul are now, together with Lot, in that city of immoveable foundations where there is no sin, where everyone's deeds and words and thoughts are entirely God-glorifying. The Apostle John was granted a vision of it and described it thus: "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. . . . And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there" (Rev 21:23,25).

Yet this life is not irrelevant. It is where sinners find Christ, where they begin to be conformed to the spirit and the ways of heaven, where they live to God's glory in the presence of the world. While there is no necessity for us to live in tents – while we may live in permanent houses – we should do so in the spirit of Abraham, who rested by faith on God's promises and "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God".

## “The Lord Is My Shepherd”<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by *John C Fairbairn*

Psalm 23:1-4. *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.*

The Redeemer's love and relationship to His people are represented under many striking figures. Are you one of Christ's people? There will be no end to your happiness. Consider if you can lack any good thing. With Christ pledged and wedded to your soul, what can you lack? If you are His, and He is yours, you have all that you can ever desire. You are as precious to Him as He is to you. Christ is your prophet, priest and king. He exercises on your behalf the functions of each of these mediatorial offices, and does so unceasingly. With the Lord Jesus Christ to instruct you by His Word and Spirit – to make intercession for you at the mercy seat, to rule over and defend you, to subdue your spiritual enemies under you – your portion is a good one. You may and must complain of the treachery of your own heart, but never of Him who has redeemed your soul. With Christ as your head – and you a member of His mystical body – He will care for you. No man ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it. Christ is more careful of the members of His body than a man is of his own flesh.

Christ is the true vine. If you are a branch of it, you shall have your share of nourishment. See that you are a true, fruit-bearing branch. Such branches the Father purges that they may bring forth more fruit. The barren branches are cut off and cast aside to be burned. There are many such branches always hanging about the true vine but never truly grafted in – dead branches though professing Christians. If you are such, you shall perish; you must be truly grafted in. If you are a living, fruit-bearing branch, you shall be cared for and have a due portion of nourishment from the root and stem on which you grow. Christ is your elder brother. He “sticketh closer than a brother”. He is an elder brother, who has the interests of all His brethren at heart.

He divides the inheritance among them. He purchased it for them with His precious blood. What an inheritance Christ shares amongst His brethren! Each shall have his portion. If you are His, you will have your portion – whatever blessings God has to bestow and your soul is capable of receiving. You cannot get the inheritance in all its fulness yet – a part of it now and the

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted, with editing, from *The Free Church Pulpit*, vol 3. Fairbairn (1811-1873) was Free Church minister of Allanton, a village in the Scottish Borders.

fulness of it when you come to the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus, when He has perfected His own image upon you and infinitely enlarged the spiritual desires and capacities of your soul.

Christ is your advocate with the Father. In the heavenly places He is a prevailing intercessor. His plea cannot be resisted. What He gets for His people he gets, not of grace, but of right. The inheritance is Christ's by right of purchase. He gives it to His people out of mere grace, but He obtained it for them by the bitter travail of His soul. Are you one of His? He pleads for you day and night without ceasing: when you are awake, when you are asleep; when you think of Him, when you do not think of Him. Manifold are the relationships in which Christ stands to His people, all of them full of comfort – wells in the wilderness overflowing with living water. Drink deep; the well cannot be exhausted. Though the whole world would drink, the spring would still overflow with living water.

In this Psalm, *Christ is shown as a shepherd*. Why speak at large on the duties of a shepherd? Most of you know what these are. He must care for the flock. In calm and in tempest, by night and by day, in summer and in winter, he must feed it, protect it, keep it from wandering, keep it from the paw of the wolf and the lion. Even in this country, a shepherd's work is arduous, but much more arduous in many other countries. In no country is it an idle, dreamy, sentimental life.

Christ is the Shepherd of Israel. “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph as a flock, Thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.” He is the good and watchful Shepherd. “He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” “I am the good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine.” He gathers the flock when it has been scarred and scattered. “Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.”

The fact that Christ is the shepherd of Israel, the good and faithful shepherd, continually watching over His people, is not enough for the Psalmist. He gets much nearer to Christ than that. No true comfort, no sure peace with God, is to be had from a distant, vague view of Christ. We must be personally interested in Christ if we would know Him in the power of His salvation. Many have had, and anyone may have, a distant view of Christ and of the glory and excellency of His work, without having a personal interest in Him. They have beheld, wondered and perished. Balaam could see the glory and beauty of “the Star of Jacob”. He could see the glory of Christ and of Christ's work, and the blessed portion of Christ's people. Seeing it, he was

constrained to admire and commend it: “How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel. As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river’s side. He couched, he lay down as a lion, as a great lion; who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.”

The preaching of the gospel, of the excellency of Christ and His salvation, was pleasant to the ears of the stony-ground hearers. They could have sat all day to listen to it. Their ears were ravished and their eyes were dazzled. They heard the Word and rejoiced in it. Nothing was half so pleasant to their hearing as the blessings unfolded in the gospel – nothing so ravishing to their sight as the beauty of Christ. Balaam and the stony-ground hearers rested there. They got a far-off view of Christ but not a personal interest in Him. Even lost souls, if they can get a glimpse of paradise, as the rich man did, must discern its excellence and admire it, but only to the increasing of their torment. Do not rest content with such far-off views of Christ; do not rest content with anything short of a personal interest in Him. The Psalmist invokes the Lord as the shepherd of Israel, also as *his* shepherd – there the comfort lay. “The Lord is *my* shepherd.” You must get as near to Christ, or you can have no comfort, no saving benefit from Him.

The Psalmist concludes that, since the Lord is his shepherd, he will not want. “The Lord is my shepherd, *I shall not want.*” Being sure of Christ, he could come to no other conclusion. A soul thoroughly converted, strong in the faith, assured that God will abide by His word, must be shut up to this comforting conclusion. Is there any good thing that the Lord has not included in His promises? Has He power to do as He has promised? Is He faithful to do as He has promised? If these conditions hold, to what other conclusion can a ransomed soul come?

Surely each of God’s promises contains abundant blessings, far more copious blessings than anyone is aware of till put upon trial. The believer can exhaust none of the promises here. The utmost comfort he gets from any of them is but a small portion compared with its inexhaustible fulness. Each promise contains much; all the promises together contain whatever the regenerated soul can desire of spiritual good. The believer cannot name a blessing which is not to be found in some promise. If anyone thinks that some aspect of his case is not provided for in the promises, let him examine the matter attentively; let him inquire about all his needs. Then let him take the Word of God, examine the promises, and see if his wants are not all anticipated there. Do the promises not bring many blessings you never thought of and quicken many desires that lay quiet within you?

No believer has at any moment of his life a full perception of all he needs.

He sees but a little way. He discovers his needs one by one, as providence shifts his circumstances and places him in positions he never imagined. He will find every need provided for, as it arises, in the abounding fulness of the promises. He will discover that Christ has gone before him – considering all his case and arranging for it. If the specific blessing which you need is not in the promises, your case differs from that of all the other children of God. If you cannot discover the precise blessing you need specifically set down, do not conclude that it is not in the Lord’s mind to bestow it. If you cannot find it at the moment, yet remember it is there. You will discover it at another time. Meanwhile support your soul with this: all things are yours; for you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.

*“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters.”* The Word, ordinances, and providence of God – all by which He graciously reveals Himself to his people – are to be esteemed as green pastures and still waters. All believers have found them such. Through them Christ reveals His loveliness to them and fills their souls with ardent longings after Him. We should be much concerned to watch how we improve in divine ordinances – whether we are growing in grace, getting more of the spirit of holiness and truly enjoying God in His ordinances.

All events in providence are devised and brought about by Christ’s infinite wisdom and in His abounding love, so as to minister to the good of His people. The good often lies hidden from them; it often appears evil to them. Often they cannot see how good can result from particular dispensations; they cannot see one beam of light in them or feel any glow of warmth. Everything, so far as man’s eye can reach and his reason comprehend, is arrayed against them in fierce, uncompromising battle order. “All these things are against me”, is their language, and it comes from the heart. It requires strong faith on the part of God’s people to believe that everything is ordered for their good.

Faith always has to maintain a conflict with sense – “we walk by faith, not by sight”. Were we to walk by sense, to be guided to our conclusions by its dictates, we would abandon faith, which looks to what is above sense and walks accordingly. The world walks by sight, and the things of faith are incomprehensible mysteries to it. Sense concludes against all that cannot be seen, tasted, handled or demonstrated. The life and enjoyment of faith lie in apprehending what is beyond the range of sense. At a death bed, sense sees and hears nothing but the decay of the body, the subsiding of the pulse, the moaning and sighs of departing life. It sees nothing of the soul departing from the body, has no glimpses of the future world; it does not see the dawning of eternity or behold the presence of God or the glories and terrors of His

judgement seat; it feels little difference between the death of a man and the death of a beast. Faith beholds these things. These are its realities.

As faith has to maintain a conflict with sense, so also often with feeling. A believer may be cast down, as the Psalmist often was, into darkness and great depths, having the great billows of terror, anguish and divine judgement tossing round his soul and breaking over it. He requires much faith to believe, against present feeling and experience, that all is well-ordered, all for his good – his real and permanent advantage. Yet it is so. When brought to the point where all the dealings of God with his soul converge, he will admire the beauty and order of them all, see a hundred mysteries unravelled, and be satisfied that he was walking in the sunlight although, at the time, it was all darkness to him.

Faith and experience should walk hand in hand, not crossing and thwarting each other – which makes walking uncomfortable to a child of God. The believer's salvation rests not on his own experience, but on Christ's work and his interest in it. God does not look to the believer's experience. He looks to the believer as he is in Christ Jesus. This should comfort believers in seasons of trial, when doubts and fears arise and prevail for a season. But it should not make them negligent in seeking for more and more of a gracious experience. It should strengthen their confidence in Christ but render them no less jealous of themselves.

A gracious experience of the presence and favour of God is of unspeakable importance. Believers tried by darkness and perplexity have been thrown into great alarm, and have cried out to God that they cannot live without a sense of His presence and must have it. Where Christ is the hope of glory in the soul, there will be tokens of His presence. When Christ dwells by His Spirit within the soul, He cannot but make His presence manifest. It will often happen that this is seen by way of troubling the soul for sin, spiritual sloth, unfaithfulness, and by moving great struggles of conscience on account of these; yet not always so. There will be seasons of deep, inexpressible communings of love between the soul and Christ – outshinings of the glory of Christ upon the soul to its ineffable comfort and joy – the possession of the peace of God which passes understanding. The holier, more tender and more Godward the walk, the more of such gracious experience. In such seasons, the care of Christ will very plainly be seen and deeply felt; the soul will distinctly know that the Shepherd of Israel is leading it in green pastures and beside the still waters.

*“He restoreth my soul.”* The shepherd goes out after the sheep when it has wandered from the fold and pasture into the wilderness. The wandering habits of sheep are well known – a fitting emblem of believers. They often

wander in vain ways, out of the richest pasture the Lord has provided for them into the desert where there is no pasture and no rest for the sole of the foot, into the wilderness of vain thoughts – of wicked, doubting, unbelieving thoughts – still farther astray. The world allures them and they draw after it, making its dross to sparkle as if it were gold and precious gems. They are taken in the snare like foolish insects in a spider’s web.

After the falling rains have bemired it, the whole path will often glisten before the traveller as if spangled with innumerable lustrous gems. The god of this world has used a like art to deck out the world’s vanities. We pursue them, grasp at them, fill our bosom with them, and they are vanity. Still the path glistens before us, and we push on farther to secure a booty – on and on till, awakened to our folly by some warning sent home to us from the Scriptures or by some sharp stroke of providence, we observe how we have despised God’s mercies and gone so far from His presence.

When the prodigal son came to himself, he resolved to return to his father’s house and cast himself on his father’s mercy. It was death to remain where he was; to return could, at the worst, be death. We know what reception he had. It is to teach sinners to return to God, to encourage them to return with the assurance of a gracious reception. God’s love exceeds that of the father in the parable. He sends out into the far country, after the wandering sinner. If He does so to invite unbelieving sinners to come to him, then much more, when any of His people stray from the fold, does Christ hasten out after them to fetch them back. He will chastise them for their sins, but He will not forsake them; they are too precious to Him. He purchased them at too dear a price to part with them. He restoreth their souls.

The provision made by Christ for His people is so complete that, but for their own carelessness, sloth and sin, they need never be in straits. To exhort believers to rejoice in the Lord, and to set before them the grounds of their joy, is useful for many ends, chiefly to stir them up to seek after greater advances in holy walking and communion with God. But to insinuate that believers shall have nothing but joy and comfort here below is vain talk, wide of all Christian experience.

Our Lord exhorts His people to be of good cheer, for He has overcome the world; but at the same time He tells them that in the world they shall have tribulation. There is no record in Scripture of any believer having uninterrupted spiritual comfort here below. Often in great joy – but not in continual, uninterrupted joy. In what confusion and perplexity of spirit do we often find believers! How often was the Psalmist at his wits’ end, through fear and trembling? How often plunged, as it were, to the bottom of the deep, with the terrors of the Almighty passing over him? “O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy

wrath, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure. For Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of Thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.” “Innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me.” And so in many other passages. As with the Psalmist, so with others of God’s servants whose experience Scripture records.

Out of such fearful troubles and depression of soul there was no one to deliver the Psalmist. Man’s help was of no avail. He could no more deliver himself than if he had been lying under the weight of the mountains. Beyond the reach of all other help, the Lord remembers him, stretches down His hand, lifts him up and restores his soul. The Lord’s people are often called to praise Him in the words of Jonah: “The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever, yet hast Thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God!”

Having restored the souls of His people, Christ leads them in the paths of righteousness – in the statutes, ordinances and commandments of God. Except in these, there is no safe walking. All other paths are confused, and lead to confusion. Even godless sinners may know this if they would consult their own experience. They have no true peace in the ways where they walk. They can have none. These are paths of destruction; they lead to death; they take hold of hell.

In *the fourth verse*, the Psalmist comforts himself still more in his Redeemer. The believer, walking in the fear of God and doing his utmost to keep his heart and steps from the ways of temptation, cannot make too great demands upon the grace and favour of God. All that he asks is short of what God has promised. The Psalmist now comforts himself not only by reviewing God’s merciful dealing with him hitherto but looks forward with confidence for the time to come. Whilst he has any being, he expects to be praising the Lord for his mercies. He here anticipates the time when he shall be called on to depart this life. He speaks of the valley of the shadow of death, and of his passing through it.

If we could follow his thoughts whither they have now gone and get a glimpse of our own walking through this valley, we might see our need of having Christ for our guide and comforter there. It is a dark and dismal place; to the mere natural apprehension it is the most terrible place except hell. There is no peace, and can be none, unless Christ is with us. We have come within

the shadow of eternity. We are going, breath by breath, out of this state of things, so familiar to us. The sun has gone down beneath the horizon; the light of this world is fading from our eye. Our senses, which brought us into contact with the things of time, can do nothing here; they bring us no information. The objects of time are left behind. They have become shadows.

Many other things make death terrible. Sin and Satan lurk and work in the shadow of death. The unforgiven sins of men’s lives start up to scare them and intensify their fearful apprehensions. They had forgotten their sins, had supposed they were dead and buried, no more to be seen or heard of. They had only gone before them to judgement, to meet there again in this evil place, to haunt their steps and pursue them to the judgement seat. This sudden onset of sin has driven many to despair in passing through the valley of the shadow of death; and brought even many a redeemed soul, whose sins were all pardoned, into a season of inexpressible anguish of spirit – though before their departure the cloud passed away, and sunshine and calm returned. Satan is busy with his temptations here – nowhere busier, shooting his bolts on every side, wounding the soul, and making it pass through a shower of fire. God often lets loose all His terrors here against the wicked, so that they are utterly confounded. It is all horror and darkness and conflict and struggle. To the awakened but unconverted sinner, death is unspeakably dreadful. And the believer would sink helpless were he left to himself.

The Psalmist could contemplate the terrors of death. All passed before his mind. He left none of them out. He did not look with a careless eye – not with the kind of glance which men will now and then throw sidelong at some evil in their path, which they must one day meet. But because it is yet at some distance, they are glad to look more at its hopeful than at its dark side. He knew what was to be encountered and struggled with in death. In the face of all death’s terrors, he concludes, “I will fear no evil”. His reason is: “For Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me”. Christ goes with His people through the whole journey of life and does not forsake them at death. He draws near them then. Whatever the ungodly trusted in, it leaves them here; whatever the ungodly feared, it meets him here; whatever the believer feared, it leaves him here. Christ takes him by the hand and leads him through, for Christ has conquered the terrors of death and hell. In His hand the believer is safe and shall be brought in peace to his expected end.

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Some fruits of redemption God intends for growth only in another soil; such as freedom from pain, diseases, death and sin. And therefore the last day, when believers shall be gathered together is called, by way of excellency, the day of redemption, as if we had nothing of redemption properly in this life, because we have it not complete.

*Stephen Charnock*

## Law and Gospel (2)<sup>1</sup>

*Rev J R Tallach*

**L**aw, Gospel and Moses. Three sets of law were propounded on Sinai: moral, ceremonial and judicial. It is with the moral law we are taking to do at the moment and we would, first, consider it as a law requiring obedience and, second, as a covenant.

As requiring obedience, the moral law differs in some respects from natural law<sup>2</sup>. The Gentiles retained only natural law; some positive parts of the moral law, such as the Sabbath, were lost to them. This positive law was reaffirmed at Sinai. Again the clarity of the moral law puts a greater obligation on man. Sinners who break the moral law lie under greater condemnation than those who only have natural law. The first table of the moral law requires true worship, which gives it a more spiritual and comprehensive nature than natural law. This law was given to redress the moral damage done to the Israelites in Egypt, where they had learned the ways of the Egyptians. It was also given so that they, and we, might know what sin is and thus be humbled. At the same time it set forth the holy nature of God and, by commanding the nation of Israel to be holy, they were set apart from the other nations by virtue of having such wise laws. Hosea speaks of the law as a great gift given to the Jews and speaks of this gift of God's law as an evidence of His love. "He hath not dealt so with any [other] nation" (Ps 147:20).

As a rule of obedience, the moral law was complete. The prophets and apostles only added explanations of that law. And when Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, laid down several precepts, they were not new additions to the moral law; rather they were given to counter the corrupt interpretations advocated by the Pharisees. At Sinai the law was given in a solemn and majestic manner, calculated to give it authority. Though the ceremonial and judicial laws were given at the same time, and all parts of the law came from God, by Moses, to Israel, yet the moral law exceeds the other two as it is the foundation for them. It is permanent and was written by God Himself on the two tables of stone.

Moses' 40 days on the Mount involved his miraculous preservation and this gave weight to Moses and to the moral law among the Israelites. Augustine says of Moses' action in breaking the first set of stones: "O anger prophetic, a mind not disturbed". He was saying that this was no carnal anger but that Moses realised salvation would never be by the law as a rule of obed-

<sup>1</sup>The first section of this paper appeared last month. After an introduction it discussed "Law, Gospel and Adam".

<sup>2</sup>For *natural* and *positive* law see p 111 of the last issue.

ience. Moses was instructed to prepare a second set of stones, and God again wrote His law upon them. These tables were laid up by themselves *in* the ark of the covenant. Though the Word speaks of Aaron's rod that budded and the golden pot that had manna being with the two tables, Burgess understands the word *wherein* in Hebrews 9:4 to refer to the Holy of Holies, not to the ark itself.

As noted above, the first set of tables of the law were broken, and this demonstrates that there was no salvation for man by the law alone. The second set of stones lay in the ark to demonstrate that the keeping of the law had a central place even under the gospel. Thus the law is to be seen as a law for His covenant people, even now. A high place was thus given to God's moral law by God writing it with His own finger, by its unique place in the ark of the covenant, and by its rule over the consciences of God's covenant people.

Moses was also instrumental in revealing the gospel of God more fully. Christ was typically set before the people in the tabernacle and its furniture. His saving work was anticipated in the offices of prophet, of priest and of king. The covenant relationship, including its strength, was demonstrated in the ceremony by which they became His people. Moses read the book of the law, the people assented to it and agreed to be bound by it. He then took the blood of the sacrifice and sprinkled the altar, the people and the book of the law. Their relationship with their God was a covenant relationship, and it was a sure covenant because it was sealed with blood.

Subsequently they were reminded every day of the substitutionary nature of the gospel and the solemn truth that "without the shedding of blood is no remission". No day began and no day ended without the death of a lamb. Nor did the gospel in the ceremonial law make the moral law void. Quite the reverse. In the wilderness, the ark went before them to seek out a place of rest for them. Within the ark were the two tables of the law by themselves, and covering the ark was the mercy seat, where the blood was sprinkled on the day of atonement. The law was not only preparatory to the gospel but accompanied the gospel in all the progress the Church made in the wilderness in moving away from Egypt towards Canaan. The believer needs the law in the great work of sanctification.

The ark was termed *the ark of the covenant*, and that covenant was reflected in the prologue to the moral law: "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage". Israel were in covenant with Him and He with them; He was theirs and they were His. They were therefore to keep the Ten Commandments. The covenantal nature of the Commandments, as part of the covenant between God and His people, is reflected in this description of the moral law: "He declared unto us His cov-

enant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments” (Deut 4:13). In the scene on Sinai, already recalled, we see all the elements of a covenant: (a) God willing to be their God, (b) the full consent of the people, (c) the agreement written in a book, (d) the outward sign of sprinkled blood. The covenant nature of the transaction is expressly stated: “Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in His ways . . . and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people” (Deut 26:17,18).

But is the covenant which God made with the Israelites a covenant of works or a covenant of grace? It bears the following marks of a covenant of grace: God declares Himself to be their God, and that is grace. The Second Commandment declares God to be a merciful God and this was reiterated at the giving of the second set of tables of the law. Had the law been strictly applied, nothing but judgement could have been expected, as the breaking of the first set of the stones showed. But the giving of the second set clearly showed God’s forbearance and His purpose of grace through a covenant of grace. Again, the visible seal of this covenant was a sacrifice and the sprinkling of blood, which foreshadowed Christ and grace through Him. The law was that found in the covenant made with Israel: “Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgements, and keep, and do them, that the Lord your God shall keep unto thee the covenant and mercy which He sware unto thy fathers” (Deut 7:12).

Those places where law and grace are opposed speak of law in its strict sense – for example, Galatians 3:18: “If the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise”. On the other hand, the two sons of Abraham – Ishmael by Hagar the bond woman, and Isaac by Sarah the freewoman – are contrasted in Galatians 4:22-31. As Ishmael was born of Hagar, a slave, into bondage, so Israel was born of Sinai bound over to fleshly ordinances and carnal commandments. “Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. . . . But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.”

Such was the burden of carnal ordinances laid on Israel at Sinai, and such was the fleshly trust placed in these carnal ordinances by many Israelites, that the whole system could be used as an allegory for the covenant of works and could be contrasted profitably with the covenant of grace into which every child of the promise is born. The same contrast is noted by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews: “Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched . . . but ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God (12:18,22).

**Law, Gospel and Christ.** Calvin comments on Romans 10:4: “The law in all

its parts has references to Christ, and therefore no one will be able to understand it correctly who does not constantly strive to attain this mark". As noted above, the moral law was foundational to the ceremonial law and the civil law. Christ's keeping of the moral law was foundational to all His work in the salvation of His people. He had a positive delight in God's law, "To do Thy will I take delight, O Thou My God that art" (Ps 40:8, metrical). His divinity gave a heavenly lustre to His observance of every holy requirement; and, by His keeping of every jot and tittle of the law, the entire breadth of the law was honoured.

Such adherence to the moral law meant that the Lamb to be offered was without spot or blemish; it was a worthy offering to a holy God. Christ's divinity and His holy delight in the law also ensured that the High Priest offering the sacrifice "became us", for He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners" (Heb 7:26). By that holy offering of Himself, Christ satisfied divine justice in relation to the sins of His people and thus took away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Fairbairn quotes Augustine as saying, "The law is fulfilled when the things are done which are commanded. . . . Christ came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it: not that things might be added to the law which were wanting, but that the things written in it might be done – which His own words confirm; for He does not say, 'One jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law' till the things wanting are added to it, but 'till all be done'."<sup>3</sup>

The civil law was the outworking of the moral law in God's kingdom of Israel. By shadow and type, the ceremonial law demonstrated how a sinner could keep the first table of the law, by worshipping Him aright; and the civil law demonstrated how he might keep the second table of the law, by loving his neighbour as himself. Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfil" (Matt 5:17). He fulfilled the law by exemplifying perfect, perpetual and spiritual adherence to every precept of that law. He also satisfied, in the place of His people, an offended law by paying to God the Father the ransom due for their sins. He thus exalted the moral law and made it honourable.

Christ fulfilled the ceremonial law by giving substance to every jot and tittle, shadow and type of the Old Testament in a manner which eye had not seen nor ear heard nor had entered into the heart of man. Christ interpreted and extended the civil law in laying down the laws of His kingdom for His subjects as their King and Lord. He said to them: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments". He explained the spiritual nature of these commandments,

<sup>3</sup>Patrick Fairbairn, *The Revelation of Law in Scripture*, p 224.

and their exceeding breadth, in the Sermon on the Mount and on numerous other occasions.

As well as conforming to the moral law and fulfilling the civil and ceremonial laws, Christ gave that excellence to the New Testament which Paul describes: “Even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth” (2 Cor 3:10). The ministration of condemnation had a glory of its own, but the ministration of righteousness so far exceeds it that its glory became as nothing before the glory of Christ revealed in the gospel. Reisinger notes that the glory of Christ shone through His words, for no man spoke like Him.<sup>4</sup> It shone forth when He declared Himself to be the Redeemer, to be the resurrection and the life, and to be God. Some saw His glory on these occasions and believed on Him. His power over the elements, and even the dead, displayed His glory. There was a glory about His death which caused the earth to shake and the graves to give up their dead. It caused the sun to become dark and made the centurion say, “Surely this was the Son of God” (Matt 27:54).

When the Lord of glory appeared to Abraham, he saw that glory in the face of Christ – for he saw the day of Christ and was glad. Paul saw the glory of Christ on the Damascus road, above the glory of the midday sun, and he walked, in a greater or lesser measure, in the light of that glory thereafter. This is the “glory that excelleth”, which shines in every regenerate heart: “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor 4:6). Above all, He fulfilled the law and the prophets by coming Himself, glorious in holiness, doing wonders. In Him all the promises of God were yea and Amen. As the two natures of Christ exist in Him without conversion, composition or confusion, so law and gospel coexist in perfect balance in Christ without conversion, composition or confusion.

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## Paul’s Conversion (2)<sup>1</sup>

*James Buchanan*

2. We now consider *the means which brought about his conversion*. We shall find that, while it was brought about in a miraculous way, it was the result of the truth which was made known to him by the vision and the voice of the Saviour, carried home to his heart by demonstration of the Spirit

<sup>4</sup>E C Reisinger, *The Law and the Gospel*, p 154.

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Buchanan’s *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*. The first section, last month, dealt with the state of Paul’s mind before his conversion.

and by power from on high. It is said that, "as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" The miraculous accompaniments of his conversion were the shining light, a "light above the brightness of the sun", the supernatural voice, and the sudden infliction of blindness, which was afterwards miraculously cured, when there "fell from his eyes as it had been scales". But while these and similar circumstances were useful as subordinate means – arresting his attention and impressing his conscience and affording evidence for the truth – it was the truth itself, the simple truth as it is in Jesus, which effected the conversion of Paul; and herein it resembles the case of every other sinner.

That truth was presented to him in three distinct ways: (1.) It was embodied, as it were, and exhibited in the vision of Christ. And that you may understand the suitableness of this manifestation, and what a flood of light it was fitted to pour into his mind, I request you to remember that, as Saul did not till then believe in Jesus, he must have regarded Him as an impostor who had been justly condemned and put to death. Saul's unbelief, which had probably been founded on the extreme humiliation of Christ, when He appeared as a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief", was doubtless confirmed by His death and burial, when His enemies seemed to have triumphed over Him.

What, then, could be better fitted to undeceive him – to convince him of his former error and to unfold to him the glorious truth – than the personal appearance of the same Man of Sorrows, after He had been crucified, in the brightness of His resurrection glory and in the dignity of His exaltation? The mere appearance of the Saviour in such a form contained in it the whole gospel; it proved as well as exhibited the truth: it showed that He had risen from the dead, that He had ascended up on high, that He had been exalted by the right hand of God and, if exalted, then He was what He professed to be, the Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah that had been promised to the fathers. Nay, that He had finished the work which the Father had given Him to do, that His work had been accepted and His reward earned, so that all power was now given to Him in heaven and on earth; and from the cross He had passed to the throne. All this must have flashed at once on the mind of Saul, as soon as he was made acquainted with the person who spoke to him from amidst that shining light.

(2.) While the truth was embodied and exhibited in the vision of Christ, it was further explained by His voice. We find no formal discourse, no full exposition, no systematic statement of the truth, but a few intimations which,

when combined with what he then witnessed, were enough to produce in his mind the faith which is unto salvation. When he said, "Who art Thou, Lord?" the Lord said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

When the voice asked him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" he must have had some indistinct impression that it was Jesus who spoke to him, for he knew in his conscience that he was persecuting His disciples, and the miraculous vision convinced him that he was in God's presence, for he called Him Lord. But when, in answer to his question, "Who art Thou?" he received that express declaration, "I am Jesus" – or as it is in chapter 22, "I am Jesus of Nazareth" – what deep convictions and emotions must at that instant have rushed into his soul! If Jesus was indeed alive; if He had really risen from the dead; if He had ascended into heaven; and if he now stood in His immediate presence, then Saul must have felt, with all the quickness and certainty of intuition, that in opposing the gospel, he was fighting against God. And no wonder that he lay on the earth "trembling and astonished" when he knew that the same Jesus who was crucified in weakness had been raised in power and had now come down – might it not be to judge and destroy? There was, indeed, no word of threatening, but a pointed question, a touching expostulation, demanding the reason of his present conduct, in such a way as must have awakened his conscience to reprove him of sin.

That he felt the reproof, and was alarmed on account of his guilt and danger, appears from his "trembling"; but fear is not faith; remorse is not repentance; nor is there sufficient power in mere terror to effect the conversion of the heart. The heart is turned by the attraction of the Saviour's love. If, on the one hand, the words of Christ impressed Saul's mind with an awful sense of his guilt, seeing they represented his persecution of the Church as equivalent to persecuting Christ Himself, they were also fitted, on the other hand, to convey to his mind a vivid idea of the tenderness of His compassion and the riches of His grace. For when the Saviour said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest", what a discovery was made of His love to His own people!

Saul was not consciously persecuting Christ; he was only pursuing His poor followers; he was in quest of certain men and women at Damascus that he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. But when Jesus met him by the way, He did not say to him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou them? but, Why persecutest thou Me? intimating thereby that He identifies Himself with His people – that in all their affliction He is afflicted, that they are "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones," that if any one member suffers,

the Head sympathises. This was according to His own language in another place: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it unto Me".

But full as it was of love for His people, this language might have only terrified the trembling persecutor and driven him to the verge of despair had there been no manifestation of tenderness and compassion to himself. He might have thought: If, in pursuing these men and women, I have been persecuting Christ, the Lord of Glory, there is no hope for me. But immediately Jesus drops a word of kindness, which was as a cordial to his sinking spirit; His very reproof breathes a spirit of tenderness and shows that the persecutor had a place in the Saviour's heart. Mark the gracious words: "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks": it is hard, not for Me, whom thou persecutest; not for My poor followers, the men and women whom thou art haling to prison; but "it is hard for thee".

The Saviour had sympathy even for this sinner; the Prince of Peace was concerned for this persecutor and spoke of the injury he was doing to himself. And how must this tenderness have touched his heart, at a time when he was self-convicted and self-condemned, especially if by "kicking against the pricks" he understood the Lord to mean his resisting the convictions of his conscience and setting himself in opposition to the truths which he had now been taught. By such means he was at once convinced of his sin and danger, satisfied of the truth of the gospel, and instructed in the relation which Christ bears to His people and the compassion which he felt for himself. And to these means he refers afterwards as having been instrumental in God's hand in bringing him to a knowledge of the truth: "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

(3.) While Saul was first brought to the knowledge and belief of the truth by the vision and voice of the Saviour Himself, God was pleased, even in this remarkable case, to put honour on His own ordinance by employing the ministry of Ananias to instruct and confirm him in the faith: "The Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6).

"And there was a certain disciple, named Ananias, and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints

at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized" (vv 10-18).

The words of Ananias, and his very mission to Saul at such a time, must have enlarged his views and strengthened his belief of the truth, for he had been taught to expect such a visit from one who should tell him what he ought to do. And when Ananias came and spoke to him of Jesus who had appeared to him by the way, miraculously cured his blindness, imparted to him the gift of the Holy Ghost, accosted him as a brother, and exhorted him: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," Saul could not fail to regard these events as at once a striking proof of divine interposition and a manifest fulfilment of Christ's promise.

And, what was much better fitted at once to subdue and comfort him, these were so many precious tokens of the Saviour's care and kindness for himself personally, such as might well awaken the liveliest gratitude and afford a ground of confidence and hope. Mark the minute knowledge, the personal kindness and the pastoral care of the Lord Jesus Christ. He keeps His eye on this spirit-stricken penitent as he enters the crowded city; He marks the street; He singles out the very house in which he takes up his abode; He comes to another disciple, whom He also names and says, "Go . . . for behold he prayeth!"

By these means – by the vision of Christ, by the words He spoke, and by the ministry of Ananias – the truth was presented, along with its appropriate evidence, to the mind of Saul. But it is important to observe – especially with a view to accounting for his being immediately employed in preaching the gospel – that as soon as he was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, all his Old Testament knowledge became at once available. He had now obtained the key which unlocks that storehouse of typical and prophetic instruction; and his previous familiarity with the writings of Moses and the prophets must have qualified him, in no ordinary degree, for understanding and expounding and vindicating the gospel, as soon as he was brought to believe that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy".

But neither the vision nor the voice of Christ, neither the ministry of

Ananias nor Saul's familiar acquaintance with the writings of Moses and the prophets, would have effected his conversion without the grace of the Holy Spirit. We read that he received the Holy Ghost; and if we are to understand this of His supernatural gifts, it is equally certain he must have received His spiritual grace; for he himself testifies, "By the grace of God I am what I am". "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me." "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

3. We now inquire into *the nature of this great change* and its practical results. We find that Saul's whole conversion hinged on one point; it depended on his believing that "Jesus is the Christ". A single thought is often the key to a great discovery, and so a single event may be the occasion of a total revolution in the whole opinions and feelings and habits of a man.

Thus it was with Paul. The single thought that now took possession of his mind, and threw a clear and steady light on the whole scheme of revealed truth, was that Jesus was the Christ of God. And the single event that carried home to his heart a conviction which revolutionised his whole creed and character and conduct was the personal appearance of Jesus, once crucified but now exalted, as he journeyed towards Damascus. He saw Jesus. Jesus was then alive; Saul saw Him shining in light above the brightness of the sun. Jesus was then glorified; and if glorified, His work was accepted, His gospel true, His authority divine, His power almighty. And that one thought was enough to convert the Pharisee into a penitent, the persecutor into a preacher. The change was indeed sudden, but it was also complete, for Christ was above him and the Spirit within him. From that hour he became a "new creature"; old things passed away; all things became new.

It is deeply instructive to mark the contrast, from every point of view, between his former and his future character. His life was now turned, as it were, into a new channel. And if the change was sudden, it was also permanent. He now had new views of himself. "I was alive without the law once," he wrote, "but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Once he was a Pharisee, believing himself to be righteous and despising others; now he is a penitent, confessing himself to be the "chief of sinners" and "less than the least of all saints".

Once he was built up in a fond conceit of his own worth; now he accounts it as filthy rags: "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee . . . . But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and

I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

He had new views of God; he now saw “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”. He had new views of the law; he saw it now in its true character, as a ministration of death, a covenant gendering to bondage, a schoolmaster to bring him to Christ. He had new views of the gospel as God’s truth, of Jesus as God’s Christ, of His Church as God’s people, of the Jews and their fearful guilt, of the Gentiles and their predicted privileges.

His views being thus changed, his affections and aims, his pursuits and pleasures, his habits and hopes were all alike new, so that the bigoted Jew became the universal philanthropist, exclaiming, “Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles?” The fierce persecutor became the fervent preacher, exclaiming, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds”. And he who breathed out “threatenings and slaughter, and was exceedingly mad against the people of God,” devoted his life to their service, taking upon him “the care of all the churches”, making himself all things to all men if possibly he might gain some. He was nothing moved by peril and persecution, nor counting his life dear unto himself, that he might finish his course with joy, and fulfil the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Need I dwell on the moral and spiritual fruits of his conversion? Read his matchless Epistles, study the simple but sublime narrative of his life, and see how brightly and how steadily the fire of divine love, which was first kindled in his breast on his way to Damascus, burned there. See how it continued to brighten and to burn more strongly in the face of all abuse and opposition and danger, till his warfare was ended and his soul was joined to the kindred society of seraphic spirits in the sanctuary above. And let those especially who declaim against conversion as a fanatical dream, and suspect it the more if it is wrought suddenly, behold in the life of Paul the reality and the practical fruits of this great change. The new life which he led flowed from his new birth on the way to Damascus; this was the fountain, that was the pure and fertilizing stream. His conduct had indeed been decent and regular before, and in many respects exemplary; but still his life was changed as well as his heart; it was regulated by new principles, conversant with other objects, and devoted to higher and better ends, so that he could now say,

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“The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me”.

Many practical lessons might be deduced from this case, such as:

(1.) A man may be learned, decent and exemplary in many things, and yet be destitute of spiritual life. Thus he, not less than the irreligious and immoral man, requires to be converted and renewed.

(2.) A form of godliness, where its power is absent, is a grievous snare to the soul.

(3.) A zeal for God may exist which is not according to knowledge, and a man may be sincere in following a course which is leading him down to the chambers of death.

(4.) Ignorance of the gospel, combined with the form of religion and a decent moral life, is often observed to issue in obstinate opposition to Christ and His cause, especially where the conscience is weary and restless because of its unappeased convictions.

(5.) The one truth, that “Jesus is the Christ”, is sufficient, when it is really believed, at once to lay a solid ground of hope for the sinner, and to change him into a new man.

(6.) Faith works by love, so as to constrain the believer no longer to live unto himself, but unto Him that died for him and rose again, and prompts him to make known to others the truth which has brought peace and comfort to his own soul.

(7.) The conversion of Paul is a striking evidence, and the life of Paul is a striking illustration, of the power of truth.

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## Christ's Temptation<sup>1</sup>

### 1. The Identity of the Assault (1)

*Hugh Martin*

**T**he assault is carried on by the enemy because he knows that Christ is here, and it is the same assault prolonged. Against what does the enemy, with such persevering subtlety, specifically direct his attack?

It is our Lord's Sonship. “If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread” (Matt 4:3). “If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself

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<sup>1</sup>This is a further slightly-edited extract, from Martin's *The Abiding Presence*, in which he emphasises for believers the correspondence between their temptations and that of Christ. Crucial to this discussion is Martin's view of Christ's baptism as “a sign and seal of His engraving of the Church unto Himself and communicating to her the benefits of the new covenant and His engagement to be hers”.

down” (v 6). And if the Lord hath said unto Thee: “Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession”; then it looks little like it if Thou hast not even Thy “daily bread”; for how then should “Thy kingdom come”? No; accept the “kingdoms of the world and the glory of them” from me (vv 8,9).

All the three shafts of Satan’s quiver are aimed against the Sonship. But it is not the Sonship absolutely considered that Satan assails; it is the Sonship as testified at Jordan. It is not the Sonship of Christ considered in His own person merely; it is His Sonship in His public character as representative, head and elder brother of all the sons of the adoption. It is the baptized Christ whose Sonship Satan assails, even as it is the baptized Christ to whose Sonship the Father has testified. By His baptism into union with you, the Son has laid His Sonship open as a fountain of adoption to you. And the Father’s approbation has been indicated. “Immediately the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness. And He was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan” (Mark 1:12,13). Is it possible to doubt that the temptation is the counterpart to the baptism, and that in the temptation the Sonship is assaulted in the very relations and in the very light in which it is brought out in the baptism?

It is for your sake that Christ’s Sonship is assailed. It is because He has been baptized into you, sealed by the Spirit and witnessed by the Father as the Son, beloved and well-pleasing notwithstanding His union with you; you thereby are a son, well-pleasing and beloved. For this reason is the Sonship the object of attack. It is assailed because the Son shares it with you. It is the common Sonship which is assailed.

Satan is doubtless shrewd enough and subtle enough to know that the eternal Sonship, absolutely considered – as a relation simply of the eternal Word in the Godhead – is infinitely beyond his reach. His Sonship, as apart from you, he would never think of assaulting. Satan is also shrewd enough and subtle enough to know that any sonship of yours, absolutely considered, such as might be held to be involved in your relation simply as a creature to your Creator, is infinitely beneath his contempt. Such sonship of yours, as apart from Christ, he would never trouble himself to assault.

But sonship in Christ, as laid open to you; and sonship in you, as enjoyed in Christ; that he will assault. For the sonship of sinners is not now apparently so utterly beneath his contempt when grafted on the Sonship of the eternal Son. Nor is the Sonship of the eternal Son now, apparently, so utterly beyond his power, when loaded with the destiny of sinners. It is the baptism, it is the oneness, which induces Satan to assail the Sonship: if the Son is baptized into sinners, and sinners are baptized into the Son, may not the sin so peril

the Sonship that a triumph may be neither, on the one hand, impossible, nor, on the other, worthless? And the battle is absolutely one, whether the Sonship is assailed in Christ or in you.

The enemy never thought of tempting Christ concerning His Sonship till Christ was baptized into you and acknowledged as a Son, well-pleasing, even though united to you. And he never thought of tempting you concerning any sonship of yours till you were baptized into Christ and acknowledged as a son, well-pleasing, because united unto Him. It is the oneness that causes the battle. And surely the battle is one.

Now mark how by reason of the baptism – Christ's into you, yours into Him – the Sonship, alike in Him and in you, presents itself in circumstances that seem to render an assault upon it feasible to the foe. For it comes forward on the field in circumstances most disadvantageous, if not dangerous.

It cannot but be so, when Sonship is in any conjunction with sin. Immediately on such a conjunction, the Sonship is concealed, though not overthrown. Its fulness of grace and truth, its impregnable, inviolable security, its splendours of convincing evidence, its unsearchable riches of privilege, its incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that fadeth not away – all retire out of view and remain concealed. They may all abide most sure and full in the spiritual kingdom that transcends time and sense. But on the platform of temporal interests and things palpable to sense and reason, the evidence of the Sonship has vanished. And not only so; all that on this platform might seem relevant to the question gives an adverse testimony. The Son would appear to be treated as an outcast. Apparently He is disowned.

This is *temptation*. It is the essence – it is the great and all-embracing case – of temptation. To be truly a son of God and yet to have no evidence of it within the sphere of sense and time and reason; but everything in these categories rather contradicting your claim – this is what Satan malignantly uses against you.

Into this very position the Eternal Son was pleased to enter, when He brought His divine Person and eternal Sonship into our service and was baptized into union with us, most sinful aliens. His Sonship remained. The descending Spirit sealed it and testified with His spirit that He was the Son of God. Indeed the Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted. And “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” – a truth holding good pre-eminently of Him who is the first-born among many brethren, the Son in His own eternal right. And the Father bore witness of Him as the Son: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”.

His Sonship remained. And the Spirit sealed it. And the Father witnessed to it. But, in the region of the things that are seen and temporal, all proof

of it vanished. Hence Satan's hope. And hence the style of his assault:

(1) What! The Son of God? And no bread for Thy hungry body? Thy Father, who placed His son Adam amidst plenty and in the garden of delights, gives Thee a stone when Thou needest bread? And yet He can turn these stones into sons – sons to Abraham! Is this dealing with Thee as if Thou art a Son? But Adam was sinless then; and Thou hast cast in Thy lot with the fallen sons of fallen Adam. And Thy Sonship Thou hast perilled for them. Behold then what ruin hath happened to it. Thy Father treats Thee as an outcast now. Not in words, but in strongly-speaking deeds, in systematic dealings. He disowns Thy Sonship now.

(2) What! The Son of God? And yet despised and rejected of men? Above all, rejected by the sacred people? Can the Son of God not compel their astonishment, veneration and acceptance? Cast Thyself down from this pinnacle of the temple into the holy city. Thy Father's angels will charge themselves with Thy safety and rejoice to see Thy glory. Shall they not be a lifeguard, a bodyguard of honour, to the Son of the King of kings? And the people shall impatiently make Thee a king.

(3) What! The Son of God? And no inheritance? No kingdom in the world? No glory? And yet the oracle said, "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee" (Ps 2:7). And it promised Thee an inheritance for the asking: "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession" (v 8). And behold, nowhere to lay Thy head, nor hast Thou any kingdom of any kind here, save what Thou mayest consent to receive from me? Such havoc has Thy baptism of lost aliens into Thyself made of Thy Sonship, and of Thine inheritance as the Son!

*But*, firstly, My Sonship appertains to a world far above that of sense and time, a realm whose verities neither bread nor stones can prove nor disprove. I will seek the evidences of My Sonship in the kingdom to which it belongs; where the evidence, all-sufficient, is My Father's Word. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Nor, secondly, because I claim to live as the Son of God in a realm transcending earth and reason, will I burst all laws and bonds and limits imposed on those who sojourn here below. Dwelling with men, in this lower realm – the Son of God from the higher world – I will dutifully observe all this world's constitution and arrangements, appointed by My Father. I will not cast Myself down. I will not tempt the Lord My God.

And, thirdly, though I look for a kingdom in this very realm of sense and time, it is no such kingdom as the god of this world could give. It can accrue to Me, and be acceptable to Me, only by the powers of the unseen, spiritual, eternal realm – the kingdom of heaven – sanctifying the kingdoms of this

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world and embracing the realm that can be recognised by the senses into the realm of the spiritual and heavenly and holy. “Get thee behind Me, Satan.”

I content Myself with the proof of My Sonship which the heavenly realm affords. I content Myself with the appointed subjection to the laws and limits which My presence in this lower realm imposes. I content Myself with waiting for the time when the higher realm, with its holy powers, shall penetrate and pervade the lower, and when heaven shall sanctify for Me a kingdom on the earth. Meantime My Sonship and My inheritance are safe. “Get thee behind Me, Satan.”

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## Notes and Comments

### The Sanctity of Lawful Oaths

The *Deed of Separation* (1893), which sets out the reasons for the separate existence of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, gives as one of the grievances against the Church to which the original subscribers had belonged the fact that she, “through majorities of her Commissioners in General Assembly met, has, in violation of one of the fundamental principles embodied in the Constitution of the Free Church of Scotland, of late years repeatedly passed resolutions having for their object the separation of Church and State, and the abandonment of the distinctive testimony of the Free Church of Scotland in favour of a national recognition of religion, and that without any declaration in favour of any Scheme for the Reconstruction of a National Church on the basis claimed by the Church of Scotland in 1842”.

Committed as we are to the Establishment Principle we cannot but be concerned by the persistent efforts being made to produce a swell of opinion in favour of the removal of some of the religious requirements of the Act of Settlement and of the commitments fundamental to the Union of 1707. As in so many other issues, the cause of a vocal minority is being presented as if it were demanded by justice and by the will of the nation as a whole and is adopted for presumed political reasons by those in authority who lack any concept of absolute truth or faithfulness to commitments lawfully entered into. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, among other members of the hierarchy, acknowledges that the Act of Settlement is not even a major concern to ordinary Roman Catholics – however much some of the leading personalities get worked up about it.

The long reign of her Majesty the Queen is probably one of the factors preventing this movement from making progress to date. The accession of her eldest son would no doubt facilitate it, given his stated views. We are

unaware of the pressures to which the Queen is subjected by her advisers but consider that she is precluded by her Coronation Oath even from countenancing any movement to alter the basis upon which monarchs ascend the throne of the United Kingdom. She has committed herself to maintain to the utmost of her power “the laws of God, the true profession of the gospel and the Protestant Reformed religion established by law”. She cannot be faithful to that commitment and discuss something which has the potential to undermine “the Protestant Reformed religion established by law”.

The Prime Minister is at pains to publicise his concern to end “discrimination” and his conversations with Buckingham Palace on the subject. But we trust that there is substance in reports that the Queen’s insistence on all the nations of which she is monarch having to decide on the issue is due to her desire to prevent a constitutional crisis and her deep concern about the role of Christianity in Britain and the impact of proposed changes on the Crown and on the Church of England.

Given the readiness of governments and potential governments to dispense with oaths solemnly made before God, we can scarcely wonder at the moral and economic state of the nation. The *Westminster Confession of Faith* (chapter 22) affirms that “a lawful oath is a part of religious worship, wherein, upon just occasion, the person swearing solemnly calleth God to witness what he asserteth or promiseth; and to judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he sweareth. . . . An oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of the words, without equivocation or mental reservation. It cannot oblige to sin; but in anything not sinful, being taken, it binds to performance, although to a man’s own hurt; nor is it to be violated, although made to heretics or infidels.” This applies to monarchs and nations. We should pray that the Queen would be enabled to act consistently with her own personal solemn commitment and her commitment on the part of the nation of which she is constitutional monarch, and that God in His holy and gracious providence would preserve to us what has been such a means of blessing to our people throughout the centuries. HMC

### **Assisted Suicide**

For over 40 years now, there has been huge cause for concern about the millions of children killed in the womb. However, there is now great cause for concern also about the increasing readiness to accept euthanasia. Particular concern has centred recently on the Dignitas clinic in Zurich, where individuals are assisted to commit suicide. Most people would assume that those who commit suicide there have been terminally ill. However, this is not so; it has been shown that over 20% of those who died at Dignitas did not suffer

from a fatal disease. Most recently, it was reported that the clinic planned to help a *healthy* woman to die with her terminally-ill husband.

It should be perfectly clear that no one has any authority to take away their own life and that no one has any authority to help someone else to take away their life. The Bible says: “Thou shalt not kill”, for it is the Lord alone who has the right to say, “Return, ye children of men” (Ps 90:3), and the context speaks of death, when the dust shall “return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it” (Ecc 12:7).

The Bible is clear; and that should be no surprise, for God’s law is the product of His infinite wisdom – both in its explicit statements and the related teachings which support its testimony (such as, for instance, Ps 90:3 and Ecc 12:7) – and it is all given us for our good. By the Sixth Commandment, God in His goodness is protecting human beings from their rashness; He is keeping them from rushing thoughtlessly into a lost eternity. Yet the founder of Dignitas, Ludwig Minelli, describes suicide as “a very good possibility to escape” – from, presumably, the difficulties of life.

His thinking is further illustrated by the preposterous comment: “For 50 attempts you have one suicide . . . with heavy costs” on the NHS. The point is that if those who attempt suicide could have assistance in carrying out this heinous act, the NHS would be spared those “heavy costs”. Yet an officer of the Royal College of Psychiatrists stated, after years of experience: “I have seen more than 5000 people who have attempted suicide and the state of mind is never clear. Hardly any of them after the event still wishes they were dead.” Clearly, what such people need is support – to go on living, not to kill themselves. We may well bear in mind that Satan has an interest in bringing sinners down to the bottomless pit as quickly as possible. He is active in his temptations; his malice is such that he will unscrupulously take advantage of human beings in difficulty – particularly in an age when so many have lost sight of the authority of God over issues of life and death.

Already euthanasia has been legalised in the Netherlands and Belgium, for instance. In Scotland, MSP Margo MacDonald is trying to promote a Bill which would legalise assisted suicide. And Patricia Hewitt, a former Health Secretary, called in March for the law in England and Wales to be changed to allow relatives and friends to help, without risk of prosecution, terminally-ill patients to travel abroad to commit suicide.

It is clear that Britain, in common with other countries, is being pushed further and further in such ungodly directions. The authority of God speaking through Scripture has long been despised. Increasingly we are being left to the consequences of despising God and His law. This need not surprise us; it is according to the Scripture principle: “Even as they did not like to retain

God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind” (Rom 1:28). This generation desperately needs the powerful working of the Holy Spirit to convince sinners of the authority of God speaking through Scripture and, in particular, through His law. Nothing else will preserve us from a further descent into ungodliness which has the approval of human legislation – in defiance of the mind of God expressed in His Word.

### **Sandhurst and the Apostles’ Creed**

In one of the more absurd concessions to political correctness, Rev Jonathan Gough, senior chaplain at the Royal Military Academy of Sandhurst has decided to stop the reciting of the Apostles’ Creed at church services. He fears, so he claims, that it may offend religious minorities – in spite of the fact that the students at the Academy are not compelled to attend services. But surely the witness of any professedly-Christian church *must* include such sentiments as: “I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary . . .”.

It may come as no surprise that Mr Gough was a secretary for ecumenism to the Archbishop of Canterbury. But the ecumenism of the last generation has led on to the inter-faith movement and a scandalous unwillingness to say anything to which adherents of false religions might take exception.

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## **Protestant View**

### **Archbishop of Westminster**

Vincent Nichols, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham, has won the contest to be the next Archbishop of Westminster, in succession to Cormac Murphy-O’Connor. Mr Nichols, aged 63, was born on Merseyside. He is a “very thoughtful and prayerful man”, according to his press secretary, but is also “a keen football supporter”. Other Roman Catholics, possibly jealous rivals, have suggested that he is “calculating” and that “he has been a little too open about wanting the top job”. Judging by the comments on Roman Catholic websites, he is a tough and ambitious man. He has already proved himself an able political representative for the Church of Rome in his present position. He was rather more liberal in the days of Cardinal Basil Hume, with whom he was friendly, but he has shrewdly been moving in a conservative direction under the present Pope.

It is all a far cry from the spirit of Scripture, but it is depicted in Scripture: “And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted

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the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as he that serveth” (Luke 22:2-7). *DWBS*

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## Church Information

### Induction of Rev J R Tallach

A large congregation gathered in the Stornoway church on Friday, 20 March 2009, for the induction of Rev James R Tallach to this congregation. Most of them were from Lewis but some were from farther afield. Among them was Rev W A Weale, who was associated with the Presbytery.

Mr Angus Mackenzie, who had been appointed Officer of Court, made the usual proclamation at the door of the church. When there were no objections to Dr Tallach’s life and doctrine, Rev Allan W MacColl went to the pulpit to conduct public worship and preached an appropriate discourse from 1 Corinthians 14:12 “Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church”. His main points were: (1) the assertion made here: “Ye are zealous of spiritual gifts”; (2) the purpose of spiritual gifts: for the edification of the church; (3) an exhortation: “Excel to the edifying of the church”.

When public worship was over, the Clerk gave a brief narrative of the proceedings in the call, and the Moderator addressed to Dr Tallach the questions appointed to be put to ministers at their induction to a pastoral charge. After returning satisfactory answers, Dr Tallach signed the Formula. After prayer, the Moderator, in the name of the Presbytery and by the authority of the Divine Head of the Church, then admitted Dr Tallach to the pastoral charge of the Stornoway 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 2 Timothy 2:15: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”. Rev David Campbell went on to exhort the congregation as to their responsibilities and laid particular emphasis on the words of 1 Corinthians 16:13,14: “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity”.

The Clerk then read several messages of good wishes from other ministers. An excellent tea was prepared in the Town Hall, and most of those present went along to enjoy it.

This settlement brought to an end the vacancy since Rev John MacLeod was translated to London in June 2004 after a ministry of 34 years in Stornoway. The Presbytery are thankful to see the charge filled again and wish Dr Tallach much of the Lord's blessing on his ministry in this congregation, where his father, Rev James A Tallach, was pastor until his death in 1960.

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

### Meeting of Synod

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland will meet in the Inverness church on Tuesday, 19 May 2009, at 6.30 pm, DV, when the retiring Moderator, Rev W A Weale, will conduct public worship.

(Rev) *John MacLeod*, Clerk of Synod

### Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

**Northern:** At Dingwall, on Wednesday, May 13, at 4 pm.

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

**Western:** At Laide, on Tuesday, June 16, at 2 pm.

**Southern:** At Glasgow, on Wednesday, June 17, at 4pm.

**Outer Isles:** At Stornoway, on Tuesday, June 23 at 11 am.

**Australia & New Zealand:** At Sydney, on Friday, September 4, at 2.30 pm.

### Home Mission Fund

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

*W Campbell*, General Treasurer

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## Acknowledgement of Donations

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

*College & Library Fund:* Friend, Newcastle, 1 Chr 16:7-36, £80.

*Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Abbeymead Evangelical Church, for Kenya Mission, £250 per

EW; Anon, for the work in Zimbabwe, Ps 46:1, £70.

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

**Glasgow:** *Congregational Funds:* EM, £100, £100(for heating etc) per Rev RML; *Bus Fund:* Anon, £200, £20, £20, £20; *TBS:* Anon, £90, £90, £10; *Sustentation Fund:* Friend, Fort William, £100 per Rev RML; *Foreign Mission Fund:* Anon for Zimbabwe, £80, £50, Anon, £40; *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £52, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £50, £40, £40.

**Greenock:** *Congregational Funds:* Anon, where needed, £20, £40; *Foreign Mission Fund:* Anon, £20.

**North Harris:** *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £100; K & M, £40. *Congregational Funds:* DJG, £20 per Rev JBJ; Anon, "In memory of Alistair MacDonald", £200; CML, £50. *Door Collection:* Anon, Stockinish, £100. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, Stockinish, £50.

**North Tolsta:** *Congregational Funds:* Anon, for Church alterations, £30; Anon, "In memory of beloved parents", £20; Friend, North Uist, £40 per Rev DC. *TBS:* Anon, £20.

**Portree:** *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10. *Congregational Funds:* Anon, £40 per Rev WAW.

**Staffin:** Friend of the Cause, per Rev WAW: *Congregational Funds:* £60; *Eastern Europe Fund:* £50, for Odessa congregation.

# 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 W A Weale; tel:01470 562243.

**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 Achary Rd, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nmross2001@yaho.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 2.30 pm.

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

**Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm. **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.

**Harris (South):** **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Sheilebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (except first Sabbath of month). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh**, **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. Manse tel: 01478 660216.

**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 9UX; 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. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.

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

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

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

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

### USA

**Santa Fe**, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev L T Smith. Tel: 409 925 1315; e-mail: lyletsmith@gmail.com.

### 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 services please contact Mr Goldby.

### Singapore

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

### Ukraine

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

### Zimbabwe

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

**Ingwenya**: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean. Postal Address: Ingwenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo. John Tallach School tel: 00263 85343.

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

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

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

### Kenya

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

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