

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

“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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June 2010

Vol 115 • No 6

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

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Published by The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (Scottish Charity Number SC003545). Subscriptions and changes of address to be sent to the General Treasurer, Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283. The subscription year begins in January. Prices are on back cover. One month's notice is required for change of address. Queries about delivery of the magazines should be sent to the General Treasurer, not the printer.

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Deadline for sending material to the Editor: The beginning of the month previous to publication.

The Gaelic Supplement (quarterly): Editor: Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Avenue, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU. Available free on request.

Youth Magazine: *The Young People's Magazine*. Editor: Rev K D Macleod BSc.

Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

July: First Sabbath: Beauty; **Second:** Bonar Bridge, Staffin; **Fourth:** Struan, Cameron.

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

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

October: First Sabbath: Dornoch, Grafton, Lochcarron, North Tolsta; **Second:** Gairloch, Ness; **Third:** London; **Fourth:** Edinburgh, Gisborne, Uig; **Fifth:** Mbuma.

November: First Sabbath: Applecross; **Second:** Glasgow; **Third:** Wellington; **Fourth:** Aberdeen; **Fifth:** Chiedza.

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

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Vol 115

June 2010

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Scotland, the Reformation and Today

In the midst of the gross spiritual darkness in Scotland in the first part of the sixteenth century, some bright lights began to shine. Yet the darkness was still intense; in 1549 a council of the unreformed Church acknowledged two causes of what they deemed heresy in Scotland: “The corruption of morals and profane obscenity of life in churchmen of almost all ranks, together with crass ignorance of literature and all the liberal arts”.¹ This being so, no one could have much hope of being shown the way of salvation in public worship, which largely consisted in the idolatrous formalities of the mass.

Among the bright lights was George Wishart, whose faithful preaching resulted in the conversion of many. One morning not long before his martyrdom, after spending part of the night in earnest prayer, he expressed his hope that Scotland “shall be illuminated with the light of Christ’s gospel as clearly as ever was any realm since the days of the Apostles”.² But he was sure that he did not have long to preach. Soon afterwards he was arrested and sentenced to a barbarous death outside the castle of St Andrews.

After reaching the place of burning, he addressed those who were standing around: “I exhort you that you love the Word of God and suffer patiently and with a comfortable heart, for the Word’s sake, which is your undoubted salvation and everlasting comfort. . . . For the Word’s sake and true evangel [gospel], which was given to me by the grace of God, I suffer this day by men, not sorrowfully, but with a glad heart and mind. . . . I know surely, and my faith is such, that my soul shall sup with my Saviour Jesus Christ this night . . . for whom I suffer this” (p 218). For Wishart, the Word of God had been the basis both of his beliefs and his comfort as, in Dundee, Ayrshire and elsewhere, he proclaimed the good news of salvation from sin, by faith in Jesus Christ alone. And the Word of God – not Roman tradition or papal pronouncements or the decisions of councils – still formed the basis for what he believed and was the source of his comfort as he faced the eternal world.

¹Quoted in J H S Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, OUP, 1960, p 136.

²David Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1842, vol 1, p 191. All other page references in this article are to this volume. Spelling has been modernised.

This was true of all his fellow Reformers, including John Knox, who sailed into Leith from his exile on the Continent on 2 May 1559. The following day he wrote to a friend in England: “I see the battle shall be great, for Satan rages even to the uttermost, and I am come, I praise my God, in the brunt of the battle. For my fellow preachers have a day appointed to answer before the Queen Regent” (p 440). Knox was keen to support them by his presence, and he was even more anxious to proclaim the truths of God’s Word. Soon he was preaching in Perth, with momentous consequences for the Reformation. For Knox, preaching the Word of God was *the* means of fighting against Satan and his forces.

Four months after his arrival in Scotland, Knox was reporting from St Andrews, to his English friend, the recent arrival of French forces to support the Queen Regent in her defence of the Roman Catholic status quo. Although, in human terms, these forces were stronger than any the Protestant movement could field against them, Knox remained hopeful: “We do nothing but go about Jericho, blowing with trumpets, as God gives strength, hoping [for] victory by His power alone” (p 516). It was an apt comparison; Israel’s forces may have looked ridiculous as they made their daily circuit of the walls of Jericho, and just as ridiculous as they made their seventh circuit of the city on the final day. While they could not demolish the walls by blowing trumpets, they acted at God’s command. And God followed their obedience with an act of mighty power; He brought down the walls of Jericho and made the conquest of the city straightforward.

Similarly, in the Reformation movement in Scotland, the preaching of the Word was the key human instrument – rather than battles or political manoeuvring – that brought about the establishment of scriptural religion in 1560. And behind the human instrument we should see divine activity bringing conviction of the truth, as Wishart and Knox and others went about Jericho and blew their trumpets – in other words, as they made known the mind of God about the kind of religion which should be followed.

Of necessity Knox preached against idolatry, particularly the mass, but he sought to proclaim the whole counsel of God. In November 1559 he was in Stirling expounding the words of Psalm 80:4: “O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt Thou be angry against the prayer of Thy people?” He commented on the awfulness of fighting against “the temptation that God turns away His face from our prayers”. He made this application: “The difference between the elect and reprobate [was] that the elect, sustained by the secret power of God’s Spirit, did still call upon God, albeit He appeared to contemn their prayers, which is a sacrifice most acceptable to God and is, in a manner, even to fight with God and to overcome Him, as Jacob did in wrestling with the

Angel. But the reprobate, being denied of their requests at God's hand, do either cease to pray, and altogether contemn God, who strictly commands us to call upon Him in the day of our adversity, or else they seek counsel at the devil for that which they see they cannot obtain from God" (pp 555-6).

Here was preaching which, with God's blessing, could sustain the hearts of His children in a time when the success of the Protestant movement in Scotland was still uncertain. But in 1560, exactly 450 years ago, there was clear evidence that God had indeed heard the prayers of His children and that the preaching of the Word had led to the collapse of the walls of Jericho. The Reformation had been successful; the mass had been abolished; Scotland was now firmly Protestant. The change in the national religion was prominently illustrated by one simple change in church furniture: the pulpit was now in a central position instead of the altar. The idolatrous mass had been removed and the preaching of the pure Word of God was now central to public worship. Preachers were few, but anyone listening to a sermon in a Scottish church could be sure that they were being shown the truth about the way to heaven; Scotland had received "the light of Christ's gospel".

God's Church in Scotland has had many ups and downs since 1560. And it is again in a perilously weak condition. This weakness is exemplified by the proposed visit of the Pope in September, when he is expected to be entertained by the Queen in the Palace of Holyroodhouse. A visit from the Man of sin cannot, to put it mildly, be helpful to true religion at any time, but it is particularly inappropriate at this time, when the organisation of which he is the head is so much associated in the public mind with reports of sexual abuse, particularly of children – and especially when the Pope's own handling of such allegations is being called into serious question.

Circumstances may be very different in Scotland today from what they were in the early sixteenth century; now there is no lack of education, for instance – though immorality is rife in all sections of society. But what does Scotland need today, when the walls of the Jericho of false religion and unbelief are so strong? Again the trumpets need to be blown outside the walls and the children of God to persevere in prayer, however much they may feel that God is turning away His face from their petitions. They need to bear in mind that an answer will result, not from the number or the earnestness of their prayers, though their prayers should be both many and earnest. They will be heard only for the sake of the great Intercessor who sits upon the throne in heaven. He is the Head of the Church and is to reign until all His enemies are made His footstool (Ps 110:1). Although to blow the gospel trumpet seems so foolish to most people today, the power of the Holy Spirit will yet make it effective in destroying the strongholds of Satan. Let us remember 1560.

God's Spiritual Temple (1)¹

A Sermon by *Robert Burns*

Zechariah 6:13. He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory.

It is clear that the temple which was built by Solomon and the temple which was afterwards renewed and placed under the guardianship of Joshua, the son of Josedech, the High Priest, were both designed to be typical of the Church of God under "Messiah the Prince". In the Old Testament Scriptures, Mount Zion was the place on which the magnificent structure was reared, whither the people of God went up from all parts of Palestine to present themselves in the presence of their common Lord and to engage in the appointed services of religion. It is spoken of in terms so magnificent, and so closely connected with spiritual things, as naturally to suggest a nobler dispensation than that of Moses and a "temple" in which the grace of God would be revealed in still more striking manifestations.

"The Lord, hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation". "Here", He says, "will I dwell, for I have desired it." "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He will appear in His glory." This temple of the spiritual Church is placed under the superintendence and guardian care of Him who was to "come to His temple" and was to constitute "the glory" of it, who was "to give peace", from its precincts, to all generations.

That illustrious person described as "the Prince", the glorious Messiah who was to spring from the stem of Jesse, is represented as building and consecrating the spiritual temple. He lays the foundations of it strong and deep amid the ruins of our fallen humanity, and He raises the superstructure to His own glory and the glory of His Father. True believers in every age have been permitted to contemplate the stately edifice, adorned with all the beauties of holiness and shining with the lustre of grace; while the angels behold it reflecting the glorious attributes of its great Architect, "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be [made] known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God."

While the Church at large, considered as a spiritual edifice, may be thus described as God's temple, we may say that every individual member of the Church is the temple of God. Spiritual members of Christ are represented by the Apostle Peter as living stones; and it is the striking characteristic of these living stones that they not only form constituent parts of one great edifice but

¹This sermon was preached in the New Parish Church, Greenock, in March, 1832. It is reprinted with editing from *The Scottish Pulpit*, vol 1. Burns (1789-1869) was then minister of St George's church, Paisley; in 1845 he moved to Toronto.

that they individually exhibit in miniature the complete representation of the prominent features of the great building itself. In each, as in all of them combined, we discover the same grand features of grace and holiness. Therefore it may with strict propriety be said that Christ Jesus is the author and finisher of the spiritual building, inasmuch as each member of His spiritual body is by Him created anew, led in the paths of righteousness and fitted for the kingdom above. This is the view that I intend to take of our text. By selecting the case of an individual believer, we may be able to form a more precise and connected view of the subject than by allowing our thoughts to spread themselves over the wide surface of the Church at large.

The text brings two points before us: (1.) Every true believer is a temple of God. (2.) The glory of building, beautifying and completing the temple belongs exclusively to the gracious Redeemer.

1. Every true believer is a temple of God. (1.) A temple is the residence of Jehovah; and in this view every true believer is a temple. "Ye are the temples of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them." We do not say that there is any real sacredness, any spiritual or moral sanctity, possessed by one building or by one place in this world of ours more than another; but we do say that certain times and certain places and certain vestments are represented in the Word of God as consecrated to the Lord – as taken out of the ordinary range of human objects and invested with a relative sanctity, inasmuch as they are employed for sacred ends, inasmuch as they are detached from the ordinary use that may be made of them at other times and are dedicated to the Lord. It is in this way that the temple of old and the vestments of the priests and the vessels of the sanctuary and the times and seasons of worship are all termed holy, and "holiness to the Lord".

Although the state of things under the Christian economy is greatly changed, still we may affirm of every place sacred to Christian worship that it is the habitation of God's house, and the place where His honour dwells. It is indeed true that, in one sense, God dwells everywhere, and "in Him we live, and move, and have our being"; and we may rejoice in this delightful truth of the omnipresence of Jehovah. Yet there is a special sense in which it is affirmed of every true believer, and of him alone, that "God dwelleth in him, and he in God"; "Christ in you, the hope of glory". Of all true believers under the New Testament economy, it is affirmed that Christ dwells in them, that their bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, that they are sacred to the residence of Jehovah, that they walk with God and in God, that Christ dwells in their hearts by faith – and the highest, noblest petition which apostolic fervour has addressed to the throne of grace on their behalf is "that they may be filled with all the fullness of God".

In this view, every true believer is consecrated to God as a temple – the residence of Jehovah. It is indeed the grand design of the gospel of the grace of God to elevate Him to the throne of the heart, to set aside all usurpers, to bring back man to his sense of allegiance, to expel from the heart the ensigns of enmity to God, and to enthrone Jehovah in the affections, dispositions and habits of men. It is in this view that Jehovah is represented as taking up His abode in every renewed man, selecting his soul, and even his body, as His temple. Satan is compelled to retire from the supremacy; and although he may still remain in some distant corner of the field and may still carry on a kind of predatory warfare, yet he shall never be allowed to regain his hated ascendancy, for “the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day”. The temple is His own residence, chosen by Him as the place of His abode: “Ye are the temple of God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them.”

(2) A temple is consecrated to the service, worship and glory of God. In this sense, every true believer is a spiritual temple of the Lord. No one with ordinary sensitivity can walk over the ruins of a building, which in other times was sacred to the worship of God, without feeling sad. Within these goodly walls our fathers once worshipped. These aisles, now gloomy and desolate, once resounded to the voice of praise; and prayer arose in silent majesty towards heaven. “Our fathers, where are they; and the prophets, do they live for ever?”

With emotions somewhat akin to these, but far more tender, does the Christian observer contemplate the ruins of that stately fabric once consecrated to God, once the residence of the Deity, where the candle of the Lord once beamed with brightest radiance. The soul of man, so vast in its powers, so comprehensive in its range of actions, so lofty even in its moral aspirations, is a temple majestic in ruins. And the grand design of Christianity is to set up that temple anew; while the most interesting view that we can take of the work of Christ in the gospel is to contemplate Him as rebuilding, renewing and reconsecrating that ruined temple, once the residence of God, once consecrated to His glory and employed in His service.

Christian believers are represented in Scripture as renewed in the spirit of their minds, as built up spiritual houses, as consecrated in their every part to the service and glory of God. All the members of their bodies, and all the powers of their minds are spoken of as instruments of righteousness, to the glory of God. The understanding of the believer, irradiated by heavenly light, contemplates God as the God of truth; while the love of God and of truth directs it in its aim. His memory, stored with sacred principles and Scripture sentiments and language, becomes indeed the depository of sacred treasures, to be brought forth for the service of Jehovah. Conscience, enlightened by

a beam from God's throne, acquires a keener sensibility, while it trembles lest the verdict it pronounces may differ from the verdict of God's Word. His affections, disengaged from the service of sin and Satan, are consecrated to God. The desires of his soul are towards Him and towards the remembrance of Him. "His delight is in the law of the Lord", after the inner man.

The powers and faculties of the soul being thus consecrated, through grace, to the service of God, the whole man becomes a temple in which sacrifices are perpetually offered to God. These are not heathen sacrifices, stained by impurity, but sacrifices of holy desires, holy affections and holy deeds – the "sacrifices of righteousness", accepted through Jesus the beloved. These are not the sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensation, types of a nobler sacrifice, but the offerings of prayer and praise and obedience through the merits and mediation of Christ; These are not the meritorious sacrifice of Christ for pardon and acceptance; that sacrifice was once offered up by the great Emmanuel; and now the sacrifice which a Christian believer presents ascribes all to Him, "the Lamb who was slain", who bought him with His blood. Every true believer is a temple consecrated to God, within whose hallowed walls the sacrifices of praise and prayer and obedience are presented to God. Thus every true believer is a spiritual temple, sacred to God.

(3) A temple is where God manifests Himself; in this sense also every true believer is a spiritual temple of the Lord. Shall I speak of the Holy of Holies? Shall I speak of the divine Shechinah covering the mercy seat, overshadowing it as the token of God's presence? Shall I speak of the Urim and Thummim or the tables of the testimony? Shall I speak of those things which were the types and symbols of a spiritual economy, but on which "Ichabod" has been long since inscribed – a glory passed away? No. The Christian temple no longer enjoys these visible manifestations of God's presence, but it enjoys all that these visible manifestations were designed to typify – the tokens, as they were, of God's favour and of His residence among men – the symbols of His gracious designs for His church in after days, and the standard lifted up in favour of true religion amidst the world of the ungodly.

When the inspired writers of the Old Testament speak of manifestations of God, and of the desire of their souls to be favoured with these manifestations, it is not the external objects as presented by the Old Testament economy on which they delight to dwell. They do not occupy themselves with the description of the gold and silver of the tabernacle or the temple, and the outward tokens of God's residence with His people. They pass from these to something infinitely more valuable: those spiritual themes to which these led the way.

They desire to see God, not as manifested externally to the eyes of the

body, but as revealed to the eyes of their minds; and their language expresses spiritual principles and feelings: "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory"; "Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us"; "As the hart panteth for the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God"; "I will go to the altar of God, even to God my exceeding joy"; "When Thou sayest, Seek ye My face, my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek"; "O God, Thou art my God, early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, to see Thy power and Thy glory, as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary"; "One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple".

It is not necessary to multiply examples; but I quote these to show that even then, dark and imperfect as the dispensation was, the views of pious men were carried far beyond external symbols. By a vigorous faith they grasped the things which these symbols were designed to indicate; and thus they set before us a representation of that spiritual temple under Messiah the Prince which is the scene of divine manifestation.

But we speak now more particularly of individual Christians as temples and as the scenes of divine manifestation. Every true believer exhibits in his own person, in his principles, in his habits, in his privileges and in his bright hopes a manifestation of God, a practical exemplification of the Saviour's work, a public and accredited testimony of the truth of the doctrines of Scripture. They are imprinted on his mind and brought to bear with powerful efficacy on his heart, as the grand principles of the spiritual life in the soul of man.

In this view it may be said, in the language of the wise man, that "a good man shall be satisfied from himself". He finds in himself what, like the temple of old, is the manifestation of God's presence. In the affections of mind he has been led to cherish, in the longings of his soul after God, in the experience of comfort, he finds joy and peace in believing. And in the various graces and doings of the Christian life, he finds the manifestation of a power like that which created the world at first, the manifestation of a wisdom like that which planned the heavens and stretched them out as a curtain. It is the manifestation of a love that passes knowledge and of a grace that is infinite.

When any Christian approaches God in the exercise of private or united prayer, or engages in public worship, or sits down at the table which the Redeemer has spread for him and takes into his hand the memorials of the Redeemer's love, and his soul ascends in silent but holy desire after the Redeemer's love, then God is manifested to his soul and these divine manifestations are the glory of the temple. Sometimes, it may be, he draws near

to God under the influence of doubt and fear, and God reveals Himself as the God of consolation and hope. At other times he comes into the divine presence with ardent longings after God, with holy confidence in Him. If he comes in humility, not depending on himself but on God, the Lord does not send him away empty; He reveals Himself to his soul. And thus the candle of the Lord shines with brighter and brighter radiance.

Thus every true believer, considered as manifesting the kindness of the Saviour, in holy communion with Him, becomes a candle of the Lord. And in him, rising progressively from one spiritual attainment to another, we have a spiritual representation of that glorious temple, of which, in its perfect state, it is recorded: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended"; "I heard a voice from heaven say, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God".

In this way, a temple considered as the residence of Jehovah, as sacred to the service and worship and glory of Jehovah, and as the scene of divine manifestation, becomes a very fair and scriptural representation of the true believer, sacred to the residence of Jehovah, consecrated to His service, and enjoying divine manifestation.

James Fraser of Alness¹

2. His *Magnum Opus*

Rev H M Cartwright

The great work for which Fraser is known today was given the following lengthy and explanatory title typical of the eighteenth century: *The Scripture Doctrine of Sanctification; being a critical explanation and paraphrase of the sixth and seventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans and the four first verses of the eighth chapter. Wherein the true scope and sense of that most important and much disputed context is cleared and asserted, against the false interpretations of Grotius, Hammond, Locke, Whitby, Taylor, Alexander, &c. With a Large Appendix wherein the Apostle's Doctrine, Principles, and Reasoning, are applied to the Purposes of Holy Practice, and of Evangelical Preaching.* In more recent editions it has become known as *A Treatise on Sanctification*.²

This work was first published five years after the author's death. He had

¹The first section of this paper, printed last month, dealt with James Fraser, the Man.

²All unidentified references in the paper are to the 1992 Old Paths edition, of this volume.

completed its preparation for the press in July 1769. It was highly commended in a prefatory note by John Erskine of Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh, who was the leading Evangelical minister in the Church of Scotland in the latter part of the eighteenth century and whose strong opposition to John Wesley, especially on account of his doctrine of Christian perfection, is credited with restricting Wesley's influence north of the border. Donald Sage, not inclined to exaggerate his praises, described the work as "one of the profoundest theological treatises ever written on 'Sanctification'".³

Alexander Fraser said of it: "His distinguished abilities as a sacred critic appear in the following treatise, from the strong and masterly manner in which he has examined and refuted some of the most eminent Socinian and Arminian commentators. The judicious reader will easily see that the author's understanding was quick, clear and penetrating, his judgement solid, and his learning very extensive". John Macleod describes it as "one of the classics of our Scottish Theology", "a very thorough discussion", by one "who shows himself a very solid and sensible interpreter and in his statement of doctrine a judicious and masterly divine".⁴ Dr Kennedy thought that Fraser's "work on sanctification gives the most satisfactory explanation of that difficult portion of Scripture expounded in it which has yet been produced. For exact analysis, polemical skill and wise practical application of the truth, there are very few works which excel it."⁵

Robert Haldane, in his own *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, refers in his comments on Romans 7 to Mr Fraser's "excellent exposition of this chapter, in his work *On Sanctification*". In a footnote he writes: "A man of God so deeply acquainted with the human heart, and so advanced in the divine life as this writer evidently was, is a much better judge of the import of this chapter than a mere critic, however distinguished for talents and learning. To eminent godliness, Mr Fraser added profound penetration and remarkable discrimination – qualities in which many critics, who attempt to expound the Scripture, are greatly deficient." John Murray, in his *Commentary on Romans*, asserts that "one of the ablest and most thorough treatments of the question and of the considerations in support of the view that Paul is describing his experience in a state of grace is that by James Fraser". More recently Sinclair Ferguson, who does not follow Fraser fully, has commended it as "a valuable work by a remarkable man" and thinks that in this area he is "both clearer and more satisfactory even than Calvin".

The volume is basically an exposition of Romans 6:1 - 8:4. The author con-

³*Memorabilia Domestica.*

⁴*Scottish Theology.*

⁵*The Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire.*

troverts interpretations of the passage which gave a foundation to the legalism of the Moderate pulpit and he also provides a positive exegesis and application. Some may be put off by references to philosophers and theologians previously unknown, but it would be a mistake to think with John Macleod that, in criticising John Locke's exposition of the Epistle, for example, "he deals with what is now an extinct volcano". Dr Ferguson is nearer the mark when he suggests that "on a second reading, these discussions may prove to be of considerable interest, and those familiar with the various exegetical positions adopted in later commentaries on Romans 6 and 7 will be fascinated to see them appear in an earlier guise!"

"On a second reading" makes the valid point that initially one can skip the controversial passages, which are quite distinguishable, and concentrate on the positive exposition. The controversial sections demonstrate the extensive and careful work and learning which went into Fraser's study of the Scriptures behind the scenes, and the positive exposition demonstrates the character of the teaching given by him in the pulpit.

Hugh Ross, a native of Alness, was brought to a knowledge of the truth when 15 under Fraser's preaching and lived in his old age in Resolis during Donald Sage's early ministry there. Sage read to him some part of this book without telling him what book it was. Ross became quite excited and, when asked, explained: "I do not know what book it is; but this I know that 70 years ago I heard these sentiments on that passage delivered by Mr James Fraser, when lecturing on Romans, and they are as fresh in my memory as when I heard them from his lips".⁶

John Locke, the English philosopher (1632-1704) regarded as the founder of empiricism, the doctrine that all knowledge is derived from experience, also wrote expositions of Bible books. The principle which he professed was that verses should not be taken in isolation as proofs for doctrines but should be read in their contexts. That principle was strongly affirmed and practised by Fraser, but his complaint was that Locke himself did not adhere to it.

In the Introduction to his *Treatise* Fraser writes: "It is of great consequence in interpretation to discover and observe carefully the general scope and purpose of a writer, and of his argument. When this is justly conceived and understood, it serves in a great measure as a key in interpreting particular passages that might otherwise be ambiguous or dark. But when the general scope is mistaken, through the influence of prejudice against the truth, or of an hypothesis and preconceived opinion possessing the mind, this often occasions a forced and unnatural interpretation of particular passages, and giving meanings to particular expressions that are not agreeable to Scripture

⁶*Treatise on Sanctification.*

use, or to the use of speech otherwise, or to the real scope of the writer, and of his argument. I cannot help thinking that this hath, in some degree, happened to the celebrated Mr Locke.”

Locke’s idea was that chapters 5 and 6 described the heathen state from which the Gentile Christians were delivered and chapter 7 the state of bondage to the ceremonial law from which the Jewish Christians were delivered. “This notion of his”, Fraser goes on, “appears to have brought him under great disadvantage in interpretation; and an ill superstructure has been raised upon it. It is therefore needful that I give the reasons why I cannot fall in with it, and show it not to be well founded.” Locke was not interpreting Paul by Paul but subjecting his teaching to reason uninformed by Scripture as a whole.

Fraser sets out to show from the context of the Epistle and from the meaning of the terms used that these chapters apply to Jews and Gentiles. He makes the general assertion “that the Apostle’s subject is sanctification, and the freedom from the reign and dominion of sin that is necessary in sanctification, and in order to the true practice of holiness. As he had asserted and explained a doctrine of justification common to Christians of the Jews and of the Gentiles, we have cause to think, from a general view, that his doctrines and explications concerning sanctification have an equal respect to Christians of both sorts – to all Christians.”

Although some of Locke’s ideas stimulated the thought of orthodox divines, his claim to discard accepted interpretations of Scripture from regard to Scripture as a whole, while actually substituting carnal reason for submission to the mind of the Spirit in Scripture, was used by liberal theologians to found their own attacks on doctrines basic to biblical theology. This was Fraser’s concern, and one of his chief targets in this respect was John Taylor of Norwich (1694-1761), a dissenting divine noted for his attacks on the Reformed doctrines of original sin and the atonement particularly. Taylor denied that the principle of sin, with all its various lusts, possessed and influenced every man’s faculties and powers (p 55). He also “held that Christ did not undergo the punishment of our sins in order to redeem us from punishment for our sins, and so to satisfy the sanction of the law, which denounced punishment and death for transgression” (p 55).

A recent writer⁷ has described Taylor’s teaching as “frank Pelagianism” in which “we are saved by our own efforts with a little help from the Holy Spirit”. It was largely in response to Taylor that Jonathan Edwards wrote his work, *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended*, which was published shortly after his death in 1758. Edwards said of Taylor’s volume that “no one book has done so much towards rooting out of these western

⁷G T Eddy, *Dr Taylor of Norwich: Wesley’s Arch-heretic*.

parts of New England the principles and scheme of religion maintained by our pious and excellent forefathers". The same concerns motivated Fraser in his Highland parish. Fraser refers to an extensive range of authors, but there seems no evidence that he was acquainted with Edwards' book.

It is impossible to summarise this rich volume, but perhaps the main thrust of Fraser's careful exegetical study of these chapters can be highlighted. He goes through every verse with an "explication" which contains the exegetical and doctrinal work, on which he builds a "paraphrase" which expands on the verse in a way which brings out its meaning simply. He is concerned to point out that the Apostle does not defend his doctrine of justification by faith alone by claiming that this faith includes "evangelical obedience and good works". Yet Paul "answers and suggests an argument against the practice of sin, that is of the utmost force" (pp 37,38).

Fraser is controverting the view, common then and now, that the doctrines of grace will discourage holiness and that it is by works, or a faith which includes works, that a person is justified, and holiness, or morality, is safeguarded. He asserts that "preaching Christ and free grace is so far from being opposite to the end of preaching holiness and good works that indeed men cannot preach holiness and good works to good purpose and with good effect without bringing with them all the way the doctrine of Christ and of free grace. It is at the same time true that men's preaching is essentially defective if they preach not Christ in a manner subservient to holiness".

In recapitulating the Apostle's doctrine in these chapters he says that "in the course of his reasoning, he labours carefully to show the different condition of persons under the law and of those under grace with regard to sin and the practice of holiness" (p 397). Sinners naturally were married to the law, which meant that they were subject to it, dependent upon it for support and protection and for their welfare (p 141). But being sinners they were incapable of being either justified or sanctified by the law. "It is by being *dead with Christ* (Rom 6:8), by their fellowship with Christ in His death, and by their interest in his death, and in the fruits thereof, that they are thus delivered from the law, and that an end is put to their relation to the law as their husband; as they are also said to have been *raised together* with Christ" (p 147). This is what secures their justification, but it also secures their sanctification. There is a very profitable section "showing the advantage, with regard to holiness, that ariseth from persons being under grace" (p 401ff):

1. Guilty sinners, under the curse of God's law, are denied "these blessings and favourable influences of heaven, by which their souls, being made good soil, might become fruitful in holiness and good works" But "being justified by faith and under grace" opens up "the treasures of heavenly blessings"

2. Because they depend upon grace and the indwelling Spirit for their comfort they have “a constant and most cogent reason . . . to be watchful against sin and earnestly studious of holiness”.

3. “Divine worship, inward and outward, public and private, makes of itself a considerable branch of holy practice; and when it is followed out with good conscience, sincerity and success, hath much good effect in all the course of holy practice and good works.” The one who “is justified, brought under grace, and hath his conscience purged from guilt and condemnation . . . may approach and worship God with confidence and comfort”.

4. Grace gives efficacy to “every part of the Word of God, and to all divine institutions, as the chief ordinary means of promoting holiness”.

5. Grace uses “all providential dispensations” for “their sanctification and furtherance in holiness”.

6. “The habitual view and impression of the great day of the Lord must give great excitement to watchfulness against sin and temptation, to holiness and fruitfulness in good works.

7. “As the people of God are the purchase of Christ’s blood, so when His blood is actually applied to them, and they are justified and brought under grace, they are from thenceforth His most special charge, committed to Himself to rule and preserve them, and complete their salvation. He is sufficient for the charge, and faithful in the execution of it.”

8. “But, further, this is secured by a sure covenant. The grace they are under is the grace of the new covenant” (Jer 32:40).

He concludes that “faith, in the comprehensive view of it, doth in various ways influence holy practice”.

In the course of his discussion, which throws light on many other passages of Scripture, James Fraser says of “the old man” that it “certainly signifies the corruption of nature . . . the principle of sin, with all its various lusts, which possess and influence a man’s faculties and powers; and that, so far as it remains in the true Christian, who is renewed by grace, and in whom is the new man, by virtue of, and in comparison with which in him, and in him only, the former [that is, the corruption of nature, the principle of sin] is the old man. In persons unregenerate, the evil principle is not the old man, but continues young, in full strength and vigour. It is the old man only in persons regenerate – in true Christians” (pp 55,56). The new man is “the soul so far as renewed by divine grace” (p 295).

He provides a very thorough argument for regarding the person described in Romans 7:14-25 as a regenerate person under grace, showing how consistent with regeneration and inconsistent with the unregenerate state the experiences and sentiments described are. He specifies such things as regard

to the spirituality of the law; consenting to the law that it is good, delighting in the law of God after the inward man, and serving the law of God with the mind; feeling more bitterness over sin the more one's heart is truly sanctified; regret for what has not been attained rather than looking at what has; and the consistency of the beginning of Romans 8 with the view that the apostle has been describing a gracious soul up to that point.

Here, he says, "we have the case of a man under grace, who had, with great sense and experience of the love of God, his heart commonly full of consolation by the assured prospect of eternal happiness and glory; whose heart was greatly raised above things earthly and temporary, in full desire and pursuit of the things that are above; whose soul was animated with the warmest zeal for God, and for holiness; and who had made great advances in holiness, inferior to no mere man we know of. Yet what heavy and sore complaints doth he make of sin dwelling in him? He did by its force what he allowed not; and what he seriously would, he could not perform. Though he delighted in the law of God according to the inward man, yet he found a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and working hard to bring him into captivity to the law of sin; so that he cries out, *O wretched man that I am!*"

He says again: "There is indeed great complaint of the flesh; yet nothing appears in the preceding context that amounts to walking after the flesh. But on the contrary, we have cause to conclude that a heart habitually delighting in the holiness of the law of God, and in ordinary conflict with the inward motions of sin, as is there represented, is as great an evidence of a man's not walking after the flesh as can possibly be imagined to be in the case of any man in whom sin remaineth at all." He believes that this is recorded (1) to teach us "how careful a Christian should be about the inward purity of his heart, and what constant earnest opposition he should make to the very first motions of every unholy passion and inordinate affection or lusting in his heart"; (2) "to support and encourage those who go heavily under the evil of their hearts"; (3) "to observe the sad corruption which human nature hath undergone; how deep the root of sin hath gone in the hearts of men, and how great its force and activity is in the best of men" (pp 345-348).

We have not so much of Christ in our lives as Peter and Paul and John had, but we have as much of Christ's righteousness imputed to us for our justification as any of all the apostles had; and if our faith be right it is like precious with theirs.

A gracious soul knows his sin is pardoned, yet he grieves for it; and he knows that if he shall fall into a sin, the Lord will overrule things so as he shall be the better for it; and yet he strives against his sin as the greatest evil in the world. Here is a mystery!

William Bridge

The Early Scottish Reformation¹

6. More Who Suffered for the Faith

J H Merle d'Aubigné

The bishops of Scotland appeared to triumph. Hamilton was dead, Alesius in exile, and not one evangelical voice was heard in the realm any longer. They now turned their thoughts to the destruction of that proud aristocracy which assumed that the functions of the state belonged to the nobles and not to the priests. The nobles now thought only of delivering Scotland from the yoke of the clergy and decided to invite the aid of Henry VIII – at the very time he was separating from Rome. But it was not so easy to place Scotland under the rule of England as they imagined. The priests supposed that they had surmounted the dangers posed by reform, but they were mistaken in believing that the fire kindled by the Word of God was extinguished. Flames shot up suddenly where they were least of all expected.

Alexander Seaton, a monk of the Dominican order and confessor to the King – a tall man, ready-witted and bold – was held in great esteem at the court. The state of the Church profoundly grieved him and therefore, having been appointed to preach during Lent in 1532 in St Andrews cathedral, he resolved courageously to avow the heavenly doctrine which was making exiles and martyrs. He told a large congregation: “Jesus Christ is the end of the law, and no one is able by his works to satisfy divine justice. A living faith, which lays hold of the mercy of God in Christ, can alone obtain for the sinner the remission of sins. But for how many years has God’s law, instead of being faithfully taught, been darkened by the tradition of men!”

People were astonished at this discourse; some wondered why he did not speak about pilgrimages and other meritorious works. Yet the priests were afraid to lay a complaint against him. “He is confessor to the King,” they said, “and enjoys the favour both of prince and people.” But in the absence of Seaton after Lent, Archbishop Beaton and the clergy took courage, condemned the doctrine he had preached, and appointed another Dominican to refute him. Seaton immediately returned from Dundee, had the cathedral bells rung and went to the pulpit to repeat with more energy and clarity what he had previously said. Then, recalling what a bishop ought to be, according to Paul, he asked where such bishops were to be found in Scotland? The Primate summoned Seaton before him and rebuked him for having asserted that the bishops were only dumb dogs. Seaton called it an unfounded accusation.

“Your answer pleases me well,” exclaimed Beaton. But the witnesses

¹Abridged from *The History of the Reformation in the Time of Calvin*, vol 6. Last month’s chapter gave an account of Alexander Alesius before he was forced into exile.

confirmed their evidence. "These are liars," the King's confessor again told the Archbishop; "consider what ears these asses have, who cannot discern Paul, Isaiah, Zechariah and Malachi and friar Alexander Seaton. In very deed, my lord, I said that Paul says it behoves a bishop to be a teacher. Isaiah said that they that fed not the flock are dumb dogs. And Zechariah says they are idle pastors. I of my own head affirmed nothing but declared what the Spirit of God before had pronounced."

Beaton did not hesitate: this bold preacher was evidently putting to his mouth the trumpet of Hamilton and Alesius. He undertook to obtain authority from the King to proceed against his confessor, and it was an easier task than he imagined. Seaton, like John the Baptist, had no dread of the King's displeasure and had rebuked him for his licentiousness. James had said nothing at the time, thinking the confessor was only doing his duty. But when he saw the Archbishop denouncing Seaton, King James, who was given up to a loose life, said, "I know more than you do of his audacity".

When Seaton perceived what fate awaited him, he quitted the kingdom and took refuge at Berwick. It was about two years after the Lent sermon of 1532. He did not remain idle. He had a last duty to discharge to his master the King. "The bishops of your kingdom", he wrote to him, "oppose our teaching the gospel of Christ. I offer to present myself before your majesty and to convince the priests of error." As the King did not reply, Seaton went to London, where he became chaplain to the Duke of Suffolk, Henry VIII's brother-in-law, and preached eloquently to large audiences.

The King of England liked well enough to receive the friends of the gospel who were banished from Scotland. One priest, more enlightened than the rest, Andrew Charteris, had called his colleagues children of the devil. And he said aloud: "If anyone observes their cunning and their falsehood and accuses them of impurity, they immediately accuse him of heresy. If Christ Himself were in Scotland, our priestly fathers would heap on Him more ignominy than the Jews themselves in old time did." Henry desired to see Charteris, talked with him at great length, and was much pleased with him.

The clergy had now got rid of Hamilton, Seaton and Alesius; but they were uneasy because they knew the Holy Scriptures were in Scotland. Notice was therefore given in every parish that "it is forbidden to sell or to read the New Testament". All copies found in the shops were to be burnt. Alesius, who was in Germany at that time, was greatly afflicted and resolved to speak.

"I hear, sir," he wrote to the king, "that the bishops are driving souls away from the oracles of Christ. Could the Turks do anything worse? Would morality exist in independence of the Holy Scriptures? . . . God ordains that we should hear the Son, not as a scholar who philosophises on the theory of

morals, but as a prophet who reveals holy things unknown to the world. If the bishops promote the infliction of the severest penalties on those who hear His Word, the knowledge of Jesus Christ will become extinct and the people will take up pagan opinions. Most serene king, resist these impious counsels! . . . We are punished, we are put to death We shall speak, for the gospel alone can strengthen souls amidst the infinite perils of the present time.”

Neither King nor priests replied to Alesius' letter, but a famous German, Cochlaeus, an opponent of Luther, undertook to induce James V to pay no attention to it. “Sir,” he wrote to him, “the calamities which the New Testaments disseminated by Luther have brought down upon Germany are so great that the bishops, in turning their sheep away from that deadly pasture, have shown themselves to be faithful shepherds. Incalculable sums have been thrown away on the printing of 100 000 copies of that book. Now what advantage have its readers drawn from it, unless it be an advantage to be cast into prison, to be banished and made to suffer other tribulations? A decree is not enough, sir; it is necessary to act. The Bishop of Treves has had the New Testaments thrown into the Rhine, and with them the booksellers who sold them. This example has frightened others, and happily so, for that book is the gospel of Satan and not of Jesus Christ.”

At the same time the Romish party was endeavouring to embroil Scotland with England, and James was already engaging in several skirmishes. The Scots burnt some English towns; the English invaded Scotland and ravaged its towns and country districts. The King of Scotland, intimidated, applied to the Pope and the King of France for help. Then, to please the priests, the Pope and Francis I, James took the advice of Cochlaeus – except that, in Scotland, fire was substituted for the waters of the Rhine.

A young monk named Henry Forrest, in the Benedictine monastery at Linlithgow, had been touched by Hamilton's words and called him a martyr. This monk was soon convicted of a more serious crime: he was a reader of the New Testament. The Archbishop had him imprisoned at St Andrews. One day a friar came to him to administer, he said, consolation. Offering to hear his confession, he succeeded by crafty questions in leading the young Benedictine to tell him what he thought about Hamilton's doctrines. Forrest was immediately condemned to be delivered over to the secular authorities to be put to death, and a clerical assembly was called together to degrade him from the priesthood.

The young friend of the gospel had hardly passed through the door where the assembly was sitting when he saw the Archbishop and the priests drawn up in a circle and became aware of what awaited him. He cried out in a voice full of contempt: “Fie on falsehood! Fie on false friars, revealers of confess-

ion!” When one of the priests came up to him to degrade him, the Benedictine, weary of so much perfidy, exclaimed, “Take from me not only your own orders but also your own baptism”. He meant by that, says a historian, the superstitious practices which Rome has added to the institution of the Lord. These words provoked the assembly still more. “We must burn him,” said the Primate, “in order to terrify the others.” A simple-minded and candid man beside Beaton told him in a tone of irony: “My lord, if you burn him, take care that it be done in a cave, for the smoke of Hamilton’s pile infected with heresy all who caught the scent of it”.

This advice was not taken. North of St Andrews, in the county of Angus, there were many who loved the New Testament. Forrest’s persecutors decided to burn him where the people of Angus might see the flames and thus learn the danger which threatened them if they became Protestants. The pile was therefore placed to the north of the abbey church of St Andrews, and the fire was visible in those districts of the north. Henry Forrest was Scotland’s second martyr.

Soon afterwards there appeared, in the same neighbourhood, the third to lay down his life for the Reformation in Scotland. On the sea coast near the mouth of the North Esk, lived one of the Straitons of Lauriston. Most members of this family were distinguished for their height, their bodily strength and their energy of character. David, a younger son, was a rough and obstinate man. He displayed great contempt for books, especially for religious books, and found his chief pleasure in launching his boat on the sea, giving the sails to the wind, casting his nets, and struggling with the winds and the waves. He had soon to engage in struggles of another kind.

The Prior of St Andrews, Patrick Hepburn, afterwards Bishop of Moray, a very avaricious man, heard that David had great success in his fishing and demanded a tithe of his fish. “Tell your master”, said the proud gentleman. “that if he wants to have it, he may come and take it on the spot.” From that time, every day as he drew up his nets, he exclaimed to the fishermen: “Pay the Prior of St Andrews his tithe”, and the men would throw every tenth fish into the sea. When Hepburn heard of this strange method of satisfying his claim, he ordered a priest to go for the fish. The priest went; but as soon as Straiton saw him, he threw the fish to him so sharply that some fell into the sea. The Prior then instituted proceedings against Straiton for the crime of heresy. Never had a council applied that name to a man’s method of paying his tithe. No matter, the word heretic at that time inspired such terror that Straiton began to give way; his pride was humbled and, confessing his sins, he felt the need of a forgiving God. He sought out all who could tell him about the gospel or could read it to him, for he himself could not read.

Not far from his abode was Dun castle, whose lord, John Erskine, provost of Montrose, had attended several universities in Scotland and abroad and had been converted to the evangelical faith. "God", says Knox, "had miraculously enlightened him." His castle, where the words of prophets and apostles were heard, was ever open to those who were athirst for truth; thus the evangelical Christians of the neighbourhood had frequent meetings there. Erskine detected the change which was taking place in the soul of his rough neighbour; he went to see him, conversed with him and exhorted him to change his life. Straiton soon became a regular attender at the meetings in the castle, "and he was," says Knox, "transformed as by a miracle".

Straiton's nephew, the young baron of Lauriston, possessed a New Testament. Straiton frequently went to the castle to hear portions of the Gospels read. One day the uncle and his nephew went out together, wandered about in the neighbourhood, and then retired into a lonely place to read the Gospels. The young laird chose Matthew, chapter 10. Straiton listened as attentively as if the Lord had addressed to himself the discourse reported there. When they came to this declaration of Jesus Christ: "Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven," Straiton, affected and startled, fell on his knees, stretched his hands upwards and, without speaking, turned for a long time a humble and earnest gaze towards heaven; he appeared to be in an ecstasy. At last, no longer able to restrain the feelings which crowded on him, he exclaimed: "I have been sinful, O Lord, and Thou wouldst be only just if Thou wert to withhold Thy grace from me. Nevertheless, for the sake of Thy mercy, suffer not the dread of pain or of death to lead me ever to deny Thee or Thy truth."

From then on he set himself to serve zealously the Master whose mighty love he had felt. The world appeared to him like a vast sea, full of movement, on which men are roughly tossed until they have entered into the haven of the gospel. The fisherman became a fisher of men. He exhorted his friends and acquaintances to seek God, and he replied to the priests with firmness. On one occasion, when they urged him to do some pious works which deliver from purgatory, he answered, "I know of no other purgatory than Christ's passion and the tribulations of this life". Straiton was carried off to Edinburgh and cast into prison.

Another Scot, Norman Gourlay, travelled on the Continent after taking holy orders, and was enlightened by the gospel. Convinced that "marriage is honourable in all", Gourlay married on his return to Scotland. When a priest reminded him of the prohibition by Rome, he replied, "The Pope is no bishop, but an Antichrist, and he has no jurisdiction in Scotland".

On 26 August 1534, these two servants of God were led into a hall in

Holyrood Abbey. The judges were already seated; with them was the King, clothed in red from head to foot. James V pressed them to recant, but Straiton and Gourlay chose rather to be burnt themselves. The King was affected and was inclined to pardon them, but the priests declared that he had no authority to do so since these people had been condemned by the Church. In the afternoon of August 27 a huge pile was lit on the summit of Calton Hill in order that the flames might be visible at a great distance, and the fire devoured these two noble Christians. If the Reform was afterwards so strong in Scotland it was because the seed was holy.

All these heresies, it was thought, proceeded from Patrick Hamilton; his family must therefore be extirpated. But Sir James Hamilton, a good-natured man, an upright magistrate and a lover of the gospel, was not prepared to let himself be burned like his brother. Having received an order to appear before the tribunal, he addressed himself immediately to the King, who sent him a message not to appear. Sir James therefore quitted the kingdom; he was then condemned, excommunicated, banished and deprived of his estates, and he lived for nearly 10 years in London in great distress.

His sister Catherine would not flee but appeared at Holyrood before the ecclesiastical tribunal and the King himself. "By what means," they asked her, "do you expect to be saved?" "By faith in the Saviour," she replied, "and not by works." Then one of the canon lawyers, John Spence, proceeded at great length to distinguish between various kinds of works. Wearied with this theological babbling, Catherine excitedly exclaimed: "Works here, works there. . . . What signify all the works? . . . There is one thing alone which I know with certainty . . . that no work can save me except the work of Christ my Saviour." Spence sat amazed and made no answer, while the King strove in vain to hide a fit of laughter. He was anxious to save Catherine, and made a sign for her to come to him; he then entreated her to declare to the tribunal that she respected the Church. Catherine, who had never thought of setting herself in rebellion against the higher powers, allowed the King to say what he wished and withdrew first to England, then to France.

But these punishments and banishments did not put an end to the storm. Several other evangelical Christians were also obliged to leave Scotland. Among them was Gawin Logie, a canon of St Andrews and principal regent of St Leonard's College, where Patrick Hamilton had exercised so powerful an influence. Logie diffused scriptural principles among the students to such an extent that people used to say, when referring to an evangelical Christian, "He has drunk at the well of St Leonard's". He left Scotland in 1534.

The devil, if he cannot hinder us *from* duty, will hinder us *in* duty.

The chair of the scornful stands at the mouth of hell.

Thomas Watson

Cornelius (2)¹

James Buchanan

2 • **The circumstances which accompanied the change in the centurion's views and profession and the means which brought them about** – when he became a Christian convert rather than a Jewish proselyte. In the accompanying circumstances, many of them miraculous, we have a beautiful example of means concurring towards one end in God's providence.

One day, a vision appeared to Cornelius at Caesarea, about 75 miles from Jerusalem, instructing him to send messengers to Joppa to call for one Simon, whose surname was Peter. Next day, while the messengers were on their way, Peter went up to the housetop to pray about the sixth hour, and he had a vision of a great sheet descending from heaven, containing all manner of beasts. He was commanded: "Arise, Peter, kill and eat". When he objected: "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten any thing common or unclean," the voice answered, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common". This was done three times, and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

While Peter doubted in himself what this vision should mean, the messengers arrived and unconsciously furnished a key for its explanation. Their words seem to have suggested immediately the true meaning of the vision, as appears from his language to Cornelius and his friends: "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean". And when, after he declared the gospel, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word", so that they began to "speak with tongues and magnify God", the whole purpose of God in these visions was made clear. It was to show that the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, should be admitted to the privileges and hopes of the Christian Church.

The distinction between clean and unclean animals had been purposely adopted as a mark of separation between the Jews and the Gentiles, as we learn from the law of Moses: "I am the Lord your God, who have separated you from all other people. Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine."

¹This is the final part of a chapter, reprinted with editing, from the "Illustrative Cases of Conversion" in *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*. It is based on Acts 10. The first part, last month, dealt with the state and character of Cornelius before Peter came to him.

So long as this distinction existed, a wall of partition separated the Gentile from the Jew. When Peter was told: "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common", he was thereby informed, not merely that the distinction of meats should now cease, but that the Old Testament dispensation was passing away and that the separation between Jew and Gentile, which that distinction marked, was now to be completely abolished. This great lesson was taught by a series of successive, yet independent, events, concurring marvellously to accomplish the same end – so that Peter's mind must have been as much impressed by the leadings of God's providence as by the express declaration of His will in coming to believe the great truth that the Christian Church was to include both Jew and Gentile, and that they were all "one in Christ".

While these circumstances accompanied the change which was wrought on the views of Cornelius, the means by which it was properly effected was the truth, declared by the Apostle and applied by the Holy Spirit. The message which Peter delivered was, in all respects, suitable to his case. It contained (1) an unequivocal recognition that *Cornelius and other believing Gentiles belonged to the Church of God and were accepted of Him*. "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him."

In these words the Apostle clearly intimates the delightful truth that the Church of God is catholic – it comprehends all believers, of whatever country, colour or climate. This is a truth which the Jews and the Apostles themselves were slow to accept and which probably were first carried home to Peter's mind by the memorable incidents recorded in this chapter. Peter was an agent in effecting a great change in the constitution of the Church by admitting Gentiles to the privilege of Baptism. It is clear that Peter now understood and declared the great truth, that the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles had been removed, and that, "in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him".

These words have, however, been grievously perverted, and several false inferences have been drawn from them. Some, on the basis that Cornelius was a Gentile and was accepted by God, have inferred that mere natural religion is sufficient and that all the various creeds are unimportant, provided those who profess them are sincere. This monstrous heresy, which prevails so extensively in the world – and has sometimes been presented to the public mind with the fascination of poetry: "For forms of faith let senseless bigots fight, / His faith cannot be wrong, whose life is in the right," – is utterly repudiated by every Christian mind which really believes the truth and appreciates the value of the gospel.

The Articles of the Church of England do not hesitate to say that “they are to be held accursed who presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he profeseth, so that [that is, if] he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature”. Most assuredly the sentiment which is here so pointedly denounced derives no support from the case of Cornelius. His religion was not derived solely, or even chiefly, from the volume of nature; it was drawn from the revelation of God’s truth in the Old Testament Scriptures, which had already converted him to the Jewish faith.

So far from representing the knowledge and belief of the truth as a matter of indifference, the narrative shows the care with which God provided further instruction for Cornelius, when he gave a series of supernatural visions, used the ministry of Peter, and granted the gift of the Holy Ghost, in order that the Jewish proselyte might become a Christian convert – a baptized professor of the gospel. When therefore Peter says, “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him,” he did not mean that the privileges of salvation were extended indiscriminately to all, as if they might be safe under a form of natural religion while ignorant of the gospel. He simply meant that these privileges, and the knowledge and faith with which they are inseparably connected, were not confined to the Jews but extended to true converts from every nation under heaven.

Still less does the narrative afford any countenance to another erroneous opinion which it has sometimes been used to support – that a moral life will render a man acceptable to God, independently of religion; and that it matters little whether he is religious or not, provided only his conduct is decent. Whatever virtues are here ascribed to Cornelius – his justice, his charity and his social respectability – were the fruits of religious principle and inseparably combined with the fear of God, the faith of divine truth, and the habit of prayer. Thus those men of mere morality who, from taste or education or the influence of worldly prudence or the example of others, maintain a decent exterior, while they are utterly irreligious, living without prayer and without God in the world, have no right to found any hope of acceptance on the case of Cornelius, of whom it is said that he was a devout, or godly, man, “and one that feared God with all his house, and gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway”.

Nor does this narrative afford any support for the self-righteous doctrine that the virtues of a man’s character are the ground of his acceptance with God. It is true that the angel refers to the devotion, alms and prayers of Cornelius and declares that they had “come up for a memorial before God” – just as we learn that, at the last day, the Judge will refer to the conduct of

His believing people in feeding the hungry and clothing the naked as the proper evidence of their faith and love. But the sole ground of their acceptance is the redemption of Christ. And surely no one can imagine that the good qualities here ascribed to Cornelius merited his salvation, for Peter was sent to tell him, as a sinner, that, “through Christ’s name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins”. The prayers and alms of Cornelius are not referred to as the grounds of his pardon, for that rested solely on the redemption of Christ, but as the evidences of his faith in the promise of a Saviour, a faith which God graciously rewarded by making known to him the fulfilment of that promise in Christ.

Peter’s message, while containing an unequivocal recognition that Cornelius and other Gentile believers belonged to the Church of God, presented also (2) a summary of gospel truth, accompanied with appropriate evidence, to convince him that *what God had promised to the fathers He had fulfilled in the Person of Christ*. The gospel properly consists in the doctrine of Christ, in His Person, offices, work and reward; and all these points of gospel truth are presented in the Apostle’s short but comprehensive statement.

He intimates the personal dignity of Christ: “He is Lord of all”; His humiliation, as “Jesus of Nazareth”; His divine mission, for God sent the Word “unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ”; His divine unction with the Holy Ghost, whereby He became the Christ, the Lord’s Anointed, for “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power”; His holy life and ministry of kindness, “who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him”; His miraculous power: “we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem”; His ignominious and painful death, “whom they slew, and hanged on a tree”; His resurrection from the dead and manifestation to His disciples: “Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God; even to us”; His commission to the Apostles: “He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead”; and finally the sum and substance of the gospel: “To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins”.

Even this brief analysis may suffice to show how full it is of gospel truth and how admirably suited to the case of Cornelius. He was a devout man, a proselyte to the Jewish faith, one that waited for the consolation of Israel. He had even heard – for the Apostle speaks of him as *knowing* – the Word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ. But probably he had not had an opportunity of satisfying himself as to the

truth of the gospel and was waiting, in a prayerful spirit, for clearer light. And while he waited and prayed, God sent those visions and this message, which afford such a touching proof of God's care for every humble inquirer. And the message was in every respect suited to his case, for it made known to him the substance of the gospel in two brief but comprehensive summaries. It is described (1) as God's proclamation of peace through Jesus Christ and (2) as a message which declares "that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sin".

The message also made known to him the evidence by which the truth as it is in Jesus is certified as of divine and infallible authority. Peter appeals to God's testimony, who anointed Him "with the Holy Ghost" and who was with Him in His mighty works. He appeals to the testimony of the Apostles, who were eye-witnesses of His miracles and conversed with Him after His resurrection. And he appeals to the witness of ancient prophecy, for "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy". And, when this reference to the evidence which arises from all this testimony was immediately followed up by the descent of the Holy Ghost – so that "they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost; for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" – need we wonder that Cornelius at once embraced the gospel and, by baptism, entered the Christian Church?

The Holy Spirit was the agent by whom Cornelius was convinced and established. This was partly by His miraculous gifts, which are no doubt intended in the narrative, and which afforded evidence on which the faith of Cornelius might securely rest; but partly also by the power of the Spirit accompanying the preaching of the Word, by which Cornelius was enabled to believe to the saving of his soul.

3. The nature of the change wrought on the mind of Cornelius, and its practical results in his life. As a believer in Old Testament prophecy, he had long expected the Messiah. The change properly consisted in Cornelius being enabled to believe that the Messiah had actually come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. The whole of Peter's message was directed to establishing this great truth, that "Jesus is the Christ"; and the cordial reception of that truth, in its full gospel meaning, constituted the change in the mind of the devout centurion.

In the case of one who had previously been so conscientious, and whose whole character was consistent with his profession as a Jewish proselyte, there was no room for such a striking manifestation of the change which is wrought by conversion as in the case of the Philippian gaoler or even of Saul of Tarsus. But it was doubtless attended with a very great change. Not only

is it said that “he was baptized”, in token alike of his faith in Christ and his submission to Christ’s command, but he and his household “glorified God”.

We have here a beautiful example of the way in which the providence of God works in different places, for the same object. The concurrence of events at Joppa and at Caesarea demonstrated the activity of Him “who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working”. We have also an interesting example of personal and family religion, under the less perfect dispensation of the Old Testament, one which may well put to shame many who enjoy far higher privileges among ourselves. Cornelius was a godly man, caring for the souls of those who were committed to his care: “he feared God with all his house”; “he prayed in his house”; he had “a devout soldier” as his servant; and he collected his whole household to listen to the Apostle, saying, “Now, therefore, are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God”.

Again, the case of Cornelius affords a memorable proof of the efficacy of prayer, and how much prayer is involved in the advancement of believers, as well as in the conversion of sinners. Cornelius was praying when “the man in bright clothing stood before him”; Peter was praying when the sheet descended from heaven; and the centurion’s kinsfolk and friends were assembled for the same purpose when Peter arrived. The instruction of Cornelius and his family, important as it was, was not the chief object of God in this wonderful interposition. It was designed to remove the prejudice which the Jews, and even the Apostles themselves, still entertained against the Gentiles, and to open the door for their admission into the Christian Church.

Book Review

Facing Grief, by John Flavel, published by the Banner of Truth Trust in their Puritan Paperbacks series, 136 pages, £5.00, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

In a sinful world, there must be death. And where there is death, there must be grief. In 1672 Flavel’s second wife, Elizabeth, died. Two years later he published this little work, originally entitled, *A Token for Mourners*. It is based on the advice he had given to a woman who had lost her only child. His thoughts are founded on the words: “And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not” (Luke 7:13) – the woman in question being the widow in the village of Nain whose son was being carried out for burial.

In the face of death, Flavel points out, grief is appropriate, but it should not

be “immoderate” and therefore sinful, as when “it causes us to . . . despise all our other mercies and enjoyments as small things in comparison with what we have lost”.

There is a chapter of counsel to unconverted mourners, in the hope, Flavel tells them, that “the Lord would . . . take off your heart for ever from the vain world, which you now see has nothing in it; and cause you to choose Christ, the only abiding good, for your portion”. But the emphasis is on comforting “godly mourners”. Flavel directs them to submit to the Lord as the One who has ordered their sad providence. He reminds them that “the hope of the resurrection should powerfully restrain all excesses of sorrow”.

Excessive sorrow may arise from bereaved people thinking about how much they prayed for the one who has died. In reply, Flavel makes the point that “there are four ways of God’s answering prayers: by giving the thing prayed for presently; or by suspending the answer for a time and giving it afterwards; or by withholding from you that mercy which you ask and giving you a much better mercy in the room of it; or, lastly, by giving you patience to bear the loss or want of it”.

Finally, we may notice one of Flavel’s “rules to restrain excessive sorrow”: “If you would not be overwhelmed with trouble for the loss of dear relations, turn to God under your trouble and pour out your sorrows by prayer into His bosom”. And he adds: “This will ease and allay your troubles. Blessed be God for the ordinance of prayer!”

Here is the fruit of godly wisdom and personal experience. The book is solidly scriptural. It is “lightly edited”; this does not seem to have gone further than modernising the older verb forms, but it does interfere with the Scripture quotations which otherwise are, thankfully, retained as in the Authorised Version.

Protestant View

The Pope and Rome’s Scandal

The present Pope has made several references to the shocking sexual abuse of children by priests of Rome in many countries. In 2005 (while he was a cardinal) he spoke of the “filth there is in the church”, and more recently he stated, the BBC reports, that there needs to be profound purification and penance within the church because he sees, “in a truly terrifying way”, that the greatest threat to the church comes from “sin within the church”. His feeling of terror is due in some measure, no doubt, to his being implicated in a systematic cover-up of the scandal.

It appears that, in the past, Joseph Ratzinger has hindered attempts by some Roman Catholic bishops to deal with the perpetrators of child abuse. When he was Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the department of the Vatican which he headed for 24 years until 2005 and which deals with erring priests, he allegedly allowed certain predatory priests to evade criminal prosecution.

In 1985 he wrote to the Dioceses of Oakland in California, reports *The Times*, asking it to put “the good of the universal church” above other considerations in dealing with a priest, Stephen Kiesle, who had been molesting children. In the case of Lawrence Murphy, another abusing priest in the United States, Ratzinger’s department took control in 1997 of efforts to bring him to justice, ordering that a church trial could only go ahead in conditions of strictest secrecy and then quashing the trial a year later.

Time magazine reported that, in a 2001 letter written in strict confidence to bishops worldwide, Ratzinger insisted that “cases of this kind are subject to the pontifical secret”. This was interpreted to mean that they were to be investigated in utmost secrecy, that publicity was to be avoided at all costs, and that abusing priests should not be handed over to the secular authorities.

In 2005 he sent to all dioceses an updated version of the notorious Vatican document, *Crimen Sollicitationis*, which gave explicit instructions about keeping such abuse cases secret. Indeed the document itself was so secret that it had to be kept under lock and key by the bishops who received it. He reinforced this systematic concealment by pronouncing that the Vatican was to have what he termed exclusive competence – that is, it was to deal directly with child-abuse allegations.

The Vatican, through its Cardinal Sodano, has dismissed claims of abuse by priests as “petty gossip” and accused the media of trying to besmirch the Pope and destroy the church. The Pope’s defenders have also claimed that he has been pro-active in dealing with abuse, and that he has called for “absolute transparency” in processing such cases. His record over many years in handling the problem seems to show far otherwise.

Yet this is the man who has been invited to make a state visit to our country and who is to be accorded the honour due to a head of state. Even if there was no paedophile scandal, his visit as head of the Vatican State would be a base insult to the Protestant constitution of the realm. But his visit will be doubly disgraceful as he comes with sullied hands. Our national honouring of the papacy, “that Wicked” of Scripture (2 Th 2:8), will most certainly be gravely dishonouring to the Divine Head of the Church. It cannot be otherwise when “they that work wickedness are set up” (Mal 3.15), and we thus “praise the wicked” (Prov 28:4). NMR

Notes and Comments

Euthanasia in the Scottish Parliament

The End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill is currently making its way through the Scottish Parliament. The proposal is that those who are terminally ill (within six months of death), or are permanently physically incapacitated and unable to live alone, and who “find life intolerable” should be able to make application to a doctor for euthanasia or “assisted dying”. Provided that two witnesses had signed their forms, that a psychiatrist was satisfied with their mental state, and that they had put in two applications separated by a fortnight but within a month of each other, then they and the doctor would be free to draw up a written agreement about how they should be killed. After a further two days, they could then be killed, either by themselves, or by the doctor, or by a third party, provided it was in accordance with the agreement. Various safeguards are supposed to ensure that only those who wanted to die would be killed in this way.

The proposal is manifestly wrong and unscriptural, and too horrible for words. There is nothing in the Bill to prevent an organisation like Dignitas setting up a clinic in Edinburgh, with witnesses, psychiatrist and doctor provided, and killing most people foolish enough to pay. The “six-months rule” and the “permanent physical incapacity” would, in the hands of doctors, procurators fiscal, and judges who favoured euthanasia, be sufficiently flexible to cover most cases; and, in any case, it would be nobody’s business to investigate whether the terms of the Bill had been scrupulously observed. Satan was “a murderer from the beginning” (Jn 8:44) and this is his latest scheme for getting our fellow-countrymen to shed one another’s blood and precipitate each other’s souls to hell. *DWBS*

Christianity and the Law

Gary McFarlane, a “relationship counsellor”, was sacked by his employer, the charity Relate, for refusing to give “sex therapy lessons” to a “gay” couple because this conflicted with his Christian principles. His request for right to appeal against an employment tribunal ruling upholding Relate’s action was rejected by Lord Justice Laws of the Court of Appeal. In the course of his ruling the judge made statements which strike at the fundamental Christian constitution of the United Kingdom, contrary to his avowed position that sovereignty belongs to the constitution rather than to Parliament and that the courts are to protect the constitution against abuses by Government.

Lord Justice Laws declared that “in the eye of everyone save the believer, religious faith is necessarily subjective, being incommunicable by any kind

of proof or evidence. It may, of course, be true; but the ascertainment of such a truth lies beyond the means by which laws are made in a reasonable society. Therefore it lies only in the heart of the believer, who is alone bound by it. No one else is or can be so bound, unless by his own free choice he accepts its claims. The promulgation of law for the protection of a position held purely on religious grounds cannot therefore be justified. It is irrational, as preferring the subjective over the objective. But it is also divisive, capricious and arbitrary.” He claimed that, in a society in which all do not share the same religious beliefs, “the precepts of any one religion – or belief system – cannot, by force of their religious origins, sound any louder in the general law than the precepts of any other. If they did, those out in the cold would be less than citizens, and our constitution would be on the way to a theocracy, which is of necessity autocratic.”

There are several fallacies in these statements, which can only be mentioned. It is wrong to assert in this unqualified way that “religious faith is necessarily subjective”; that it is “incommunicable by *any kind* of proof or evidence”; that ascertaining it “lies beyond the means by which laws are made in a reasonable society”; that it lies “only in the heart of the believer”, with the consequences alleged by the judge; that “the promulgation of law for the protection of a position held purely on religious grounds cannot therefore be justified”; and that no special place should be given in law to the Christian religion. Lord Justice Laws ignores the fact that the faith which he dismisses in such terms has its objective basis in the Holy Bible, the religion of which has been endorsed and established as the religion of the United Kingdom, and therefore of its law-making and law-enforcing authorities in their official capacities.

It is alarming that a senior judge should assert that the promulgation of law to protect a position held purely on the basis of the religion of the Bible, recognised as it is by the state, is irrational, divisive, capricious and arbitrary. What deserves the opprobrium conveyed by these terms is the ruling of the judge. It, together with similar rulings, has the effect of making those who practise Christian principles on a biblical basis almost the only persons who can be discriminated against in the workplace, even to the extent of being compelled to jettison their convictions or be deprived of their livelihood, though they are conscientiously practising what they legitimately regard as the moral imperatives of the Christian religion.

Bishop Nazir-Ali spoke well when he said that this ruling “has driven a coach and horses through the ancient association of the Christian faith with the constitutional and legal basis of British society. Everything from the Coronation Oath onward suggests that there is an inextricable link between

the Judaeo-Christian tradition of the Bible and the institutions, the values and the virtues of British society. If this judgement is allowed to stand, the aggressive secularists will have had their way.” The president of the National Secular Society, hailing the judgement as “a defeat for fundamentalism”, asserted that “the right to follow a religious belief is a qualified right and it must not be used to legitimise discrimination against gay people, who are legally entitled to protection against bigotry and persecution”. Judgements such as these are turning reality on its head and learned judges and bigoted opponents of Christianity seem unable to see that, by such judgements, discrimination and persecution are increasingly directed against those who believe and practise the teachings of the Christian faith.

Britain is broken indeed when the dictates of divine revelation and enlightened conscience can be dismissed as Lord Justice Laws dismisses them and regarded as unworthy of being held as even equal with the feelings of “gays” and the practitioners of non-Christian religions. The twenty-first century has seen a flood of legislation which has denied the morality of the Bible and has done so in terms which make it increasingly difficult for convinced Christians to function in a variety of work situations. The outlook is bleak for liberty to practise the law of God when human lawmakers and law enforcers combine “against the Lord and His anointed, saying, Let us break Their bands asunder and cast away Their cords from us” (Ps 2:2,3). *HMC*

A New Government

The general election in the United Kingdom has produced the result most generally expected: a House of Commons in which no party has a majority. The outcome is a coalition government made up of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties. Comment has been passed in recent issues of this Magazine on the views of the leaders of these parties. And the unscriptural moral attitudes of the previous Labour government were clearly reflected in some of the legislation which they passed during their 13 years in office.

We should acknowledge that it is God’s providence which has placed us in this potentially-unstable situation. As a nation, we have sinned; we have rejected God’s laws; we seek to live without Him. We clearly do not deserve the blessing of strong, stable government, which is so necessary in the present dire economic situation. Yet we should remember the inspired exhortation of the Apostle Paul: “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men”, and, in particular, “for kings, and *for all that are in authority*; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Tim 2:1,2). The Lord is able to change the hearts of our rulers and of the nation at large.

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale: Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Breascele:** no services meantime.
- 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@yahoo.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.
- 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; **Strathlyon:** 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.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. 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; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6 pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744207. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 9JX; tel: 01470 562243.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **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.
- Vatten:** Sabbath 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). **Glendale, Waternish:** As intimated. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.

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, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's 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. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765. Tel. 02 9627 3408; e-mail: sydneyfpchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

Auckland: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. 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; Thursday 7 pm. Contact: Mr Dick Vermeulen. Tel: 075443677.

Wellington: 4 Rewa Terrace, Tawa. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; 3rd Wednesday of the month (not secondary school holidays) 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Hank Optland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743. Tel: 02 7432 5625

Israel

Jerusalem / Tel Aviv: Rev J L Goldby, P O Box 10578, Jerusalem 91105. Tel: 00972 2 6738181. Sabbath: 11 am in Jerusalem YMCA, 7 pm in Tel Aviv; for further details contact Mr Goldby.

Singapore

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

Ukraine

Odessa: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D Levytskiy; tel:00 38 048 785 19 24.; e-mail: dlevytsky@gmail.com.

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.

Ingenya: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean. Postal Address: Ingenya 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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