

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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## Communions

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

**February: First Sabbath:** Broadstairs; **Second:** 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:** Leverburgh, New Canaan, Somakantana; **Third:** Laide; **Fourth:** Vatten; **Fifth:** Stornoway, 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, Chiedza.

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

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## The World and Its Creator

Stephen Hawking is one of the ablest thinkers in the area of fundamental physics. He retired last year as Lucasian Professor of Mathematics in the University of Cambridge; his was the chair once held by Isaac Newton. He is the author of the best-selling work, *A Brief History of Time*, published in 1988, in which he seems to admit the possibility that God may have been involved in the creation of the universe, claiming that if scientists could discover the most fundamental laws of nature “it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason – then we should know the mind of God”. But he was speaking figuratively, and in June this year he spoke more explicitly in a series on Channel 4. He acknowledged that he did not believe in the existence of a personal God and explained that he was prepared to call the laws of science “God”, but this could not be a personal God.

Now, with American physicist Leonard Mlodinow as his co-author, Prof Hawking has published *The Grand Design*, which claims to give “new answers to the ultimate questions of life”. The book claims that the Big Bang – currently the most popular explanation for the beginning of the universe – was the result of the inevitable laws of physics; Prof Hawking here blatantly denies any need for God as Creator. “Because there is a law such as gravity,” he claims, “the universe can and will create itself from nothing. Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist.” One finds it difficult to understand how there could be gravity, or even a law of gravity, before there was any created matter for gravity to act upon; scientific laws describe the properties of what is already in existence. And “spontaneous creation” can be rephrased as: It just happened, words without any scientific pretension. But to re-express the idea thus should make clear that the idea of spontaneous creation has no explanatory power whatever.

It is very difficult to avoid the thought that the universe has been designed. Hawking and Mlodinow accept that the tiniest of changes in the constants that control nuclear synthesis in stars would mean a universe with no carbon and no oxygen, a universe where human life would be impossible. They admit

that “the universe and its laws appear to have a design that both is tailor-made to support us and, if we are to exist, leaves little room for alternation. That is not easily explained, and raises the natural question of why it is that way.” For an explanation they rely on M-theory (though it seems no one is sure what *M* stands for). However, in a review of *The Grand Design* in the *Financial Times*, Roger Penrose, Emeritus Rouse Ball Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University, states flatly: “M-theory enjoys no observational support whatever”. No one has been able to test the theory experimentally; indeed it seems that any such experiment would require a particle accelerator as large as a galaxy. Yet it is on a theory so speculative, so entirely unproven, that Professor Hawking places his confidence in discarding the idea of a creator.

The perception of design in the universe is, in fact, entirely valid; it is not to be dismissed as something that merely “appears” to be the case. The designer was, of course, the eternal God, whose infinite wisdom and infinite power brought about a universe that is “tailor-made to support” the human race and every other form of life. What is more, God has revealed Himself as the Creator in Scripture – not only in Genesis 1 but repeatedly. For instance, He declares in Isaiah 45:18: “Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else”. On the basis of His creatorship, He claims sovereignty over *all* His creatures; there is no other god. And if the idea of a *god* means anything, it identifies a being who is to be worshipped. Accordingly, the one true God, who made all things, must be worshipped. Every angel, and every human being – including Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow – is under obligation to offer sincere worship to the sovereign Creator.

In the beginning, both Adam and Eve worshipped God sincerely and consistently, but they fell; they became rebellious. Ever since then it has been natural for fallen human beings to resist the authority of God. The fool has said *in his heart* that there is no God (Ps 14:1), but it requires a further degree of rebelliousness to deny *to others* that God exists. In an age such as this, that denial has become increasingly common. It is an indication that God is very much leaving this generation to itself. Accordingly we see high rates of crime (though recent figures have come down from their peak), flagrant immorality and low rates of religious observance (though there is much more religious observance in the USA than in other Western countries).

Yet we have to acknowledge that society in Great Britain, in particular, has not disintegrated, and we may attribute this, not only to the residue of a Christian heritage, but to the fact that God’s people still function as salt. In the

words of the Saviour: “Ye are the salt of the earth” (Mt 5:13). C H Spurgeon points out that in the character of believers “there is a preserving force to keep the rest of society from utter corruption. If they were not scattered among men, the race would putrefy.” And on the basis of the rest of the verse: “but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men,” Spurgeon insists: “But if they are Christians only in name, and the real power is gone, nothing can save them, and they are of no use whatever to those among whom they mingle”.<sup>1</sup>

Nominal Christians are not real salt; genuine believers are. Their example has, more or less, a restraining effect on others. Most important is their intercession before God, as they come before Him day after day to plead for the good of their communities and their nation, asking Him to restrain sin and work by His Word and Spirit so that sinners would acknowledge His authority, trust in the Saviour and lead holy lives. Had there been even 10 praying people in Sodom, the city would have been spared the destruction that fell on it because of its gross immorality. We may also assume that the example and witness of 10 godly people in the city would have resulted in a significant restraint on its wickedness. Clearly the number of true believers in Britain today, small though it is in relation to the total population, is vastly in excess of 10. God’s longsuffering towards the nation is related to their prayers.

Today the educational system and the media, almost unanimously, promote the idea that the universe and everything in it, including life – from microbes to man – came into existence without even the assistance of a creator. And Satan, without a doubt, uses the widespread acceptance of evolution to blind the eyes of people generally to the fact of the Creator’s existence and of their obligation to obey Him and worship Him. But we must not be intimidated. However able those minds may be which point us away from God, we must ignore speculative and unbelieving conclusions and hold fast to the facts revealed in Scripture. There, and only there, will we find reliable answers to the ultimate questions of life.

God’s revelation is entirely without error. It tells us not only about the origins of the universe and of the human race, but what will follow this life. It tells us about heaven and hell, and it tells us how we may enter the one and escape the other. It tells us, as far as He wills to reveal it, the mind of the personal God, the God who really exists. Because He really exists, it is our duty to worship and serve Him. It is our duty to approach Him in the way that He has appointed: through Jesus Christ, His own Son, who came into the world – the world that He had created – to save sinners.

<sup>1</sup>*Commentary on Matthew*, Banner of Truth reprint, 2010, p 40.

# Communion with God<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by *Alexander Hislop*

James 4:8a *Draw nigh unto God, and He will draw nigh unto you.*

In considering those words, I propose, by the help of God's Spirit, (1.) To open up the meaning of the text. (2.) To show how a sinner ought to draw nigh unto God. (3.) To state some motives to induce him to do so.

**1. The meaning of the text.** In considering a passage such as this, the pride and self-sufficiency of the natural heart of man are prone to convert into a deadly error what, when rightly understood, contains a most glorious truth. Men of legal and Arminian spirits contend that we are hereby taught that, in the great work of conversion, the first effective movement must be man's – that the sinner first returns unto God of his own free will, and that only then does the grace of God take effect on his soul. Now this is in direct opposition to the whole tenor of Scripture. The very nature of man's fallen state renders it impossible for a sinner to return to God by his own will or power. The moment man fell, spiritual life utterly forsook his soul. When therefore we read that men in their natural state are dead in trespasses and sins, we are not to regard the expression as merely a strong figure of speech, but as one which displays the absolute hopelessness and helplessness of our case.

The soul that God has forsaken cannot have one particle of anything truly pleasing in His sight. Lost and ruined man shall return to God by his own moral strength only when the corpse rotting in the grave shall rise from the dust by its own power. But the case is even worse. Not merely has man no power to draw near unto God, he has an incurable aversion to Him and His service. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Until this enmity is subdued by effectual grace from on high, until sinners are made willing in a day of God's power, until He Himself will work in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure, they will not return; they will only revolt more and more and every day depart farther and farther from the living God.

The nature of the case, and the express words of Scripture, combine to prove that no man can come unto Christ (which is the same as to come unto God) "except the Father . . . draw him". Never yet did one of Adam's fallen race truly draw nigh unto God until God, by His efficacious grace, had first drawn nigh to his soul. Does the sinner feel the slightest spark of real desire after God? Then, beyond all question, God has been there.

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from *The Free Church Pulpit*, vol 3. Hislop (1807-65) was a Free Church minister in Arbroath. He is best known today for his book, *The Two Babylons*, which demonstrates the pagan origin of many Roman Catholic beliefs.

How then are we to understand the text? We are to understand it as a gracious promise of conscious communion with the Father of our spirits to everyone who makes a true and acceptable approach unto God; just as truly as the returning sinner feels his heart going up unto God, so shall he feel God in tender mercy coming down into his soul. While the first breathing of a soul after God is the effect of God's presence and power in that soul, it is nevertheless true that real, efficacious grace may have been working upon a sinner's heart for some considerable time before then.

There may be cases in which God has, without any previous exercise on man's part, revealed Himself as a God of love and plenteous redemption, in which that Scripture has been graciously fulfilled: "I am found of them that sought Me not". But, in His ordinary dealing with sinners, He generally communicates first the grace to seek Him and then the grace to find Him. And it is most certain that no man has the slightest warrant to expect that he shall ever experience that loving-kindness of His which is better than life, unless he heartily and perseveringly seeks God's face. It is a most blasphemous delusion, sprung from the bottomless pit, for anyone to soothe himself in a course of sin with the thought that, because he has no power in himself to turn unto God, he need not give himself any concern about the subject. He imagines that, when the day of God's power comes, he shall be willing to obey, but until then it is vain for him to think of it.

Let such a person know that his damnation is just and, without a miracle of grace, it is certain. You have no power of yourselves, dear friends, to turn unto God, but you yourselves must turn unto God; otherwise you will perish. You have no ability of your own to draw nigh unto Him, but He invites you, He commands you now to draw nigh, and He offers you strength to enable you to do so. If you seek Him, you shall find Him. If you draw nigh in prayer to Him, He will draw nigh in mercy and communion to you.

**2. How a sinner ought to draw nigh to God.** (1.) He must draw nigh *by the way God has appointed*, and that way is Christ. The angels who never sinned, appear in their own righteousness before God, and are accepted in His sight. And before his fall, man enjoyed delightful communion with his Maker on the same grounds. But our apostasy from God has barred up that old way, the way of works, completely and for ever. Without a perfect righteousness, answerable to the spotless holiness of God's nature and law, no creature can come before Him with acceptance. "Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with Thee." "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."

But man is altogether defiled with sin. It is impossible that a creature so vile can present anything to his Maker that can secure His favour. He must

therefore have a righteousness other than his own in which to appear before the holy God. But where is he to find such a righteousness? Not in saints, not in angels, nowhere in the whole universe, except in Him who is the incarnate Son of God. As there is but “one God”, so there is but “one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”, who said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me”.

If we will not receive the testimony of God about our lost and ruined state, if we will not submit to the righteousness of God as revealed in the obedience and sacrifice of His Son, we may presumptuously think of drawing nigh to God, but He will not draw nigh to us; He will turn away His face; He will shut His ears to our prayers. But if, with a contrite heart we look by faith to Him who bore the sins of all the redeemed in His own body on the tree, and now, as a priest upon His throne, pleads the merits of His life and death for all that come unto God by Him, then shall our hearts be sprinkled by His blood from an evil conscience, then shall our persons be clothed with a righteousness in which God’s eye shall see no stain of sin.

If you will not first come unto Christ, you cannot draw nigh unto God, and God will not draw nigh unto you. If you were truly alive to your own natural state and the evil of sin, if you had eyes to see the holiness and majesty of the God whose law you have broken, you would not dare to come into His awful presence in the filthy rags of your own righteousness. Let no one think that the God with whom we have to do is less terrible now than when He revealed Himself on Mount Sinai in thunder and lightning and blackness and tempest. And to those who venture to approach Him without respect to the righteousness and atonement of Christ, our God is still a consuming fire.

In times of youth, health, prosperity and carnal security, while your eyes are blinded by the god of this world, you may think it a small matter to approach the most high God in your own name; you may think it no great act of condescension if He should hear the prayers of such honest, virtuous individuals as you may imagine you are. But if God should only lift up a very small corner of the veil which, by nature, is over your hearts and give you a glimpse of His glory, you would look for your righteousness in vain. Instead of feeling confident about approaching Him, you would feel like those who, in the great day of wrath, shall call upon the mountains to cover them from the face of His majesty. Only in Christ is God reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

(2.) A sinner must draw nigh to God *with a sense of his own helplessness*. He must rely on the Holy Ghost for strength. It is only when we are weak that we are really strong. It is only when we truly realise our inability that we shall ask for the strength which is made perfect in weakness. I have already

shown that, unless power is first exerted on us from on high, we shall never take one step back to God. I note now that the power which effectually draws unto Christ is that of the Holy Spirit. He alone can convince us of sin, reveal Christ to us, and persuade and enable us to embrace Him. "The natural man", says Paul, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God [in other words, the gospel]; but they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" – discerned, that is, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

If our faith is only the offspring of our own minds, if it is not produced by the Holy Ghost, it is only an imaginary faith, one that will never give us an interest in the righteousness of Christ, or bring us near to God, or deliver us from the wrath to come. Without the Holy Ghost, we can not breathe one prayer that shall enter with acceptance into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. However regular our attendance on the worship of God and however importunate our prayers, if they do not arise from the Spirit's work on our hearts, they are polluted in His sight. They spring only from our old, sin-defiled nature and do not come up before God perfumed with the incense of Christ's righteousness and atoning death. Nothing except what has come down from God can ever ascend to God. Unless we are baptized with the Holy Ghost, as with fire, our faith is vain, our prayers and worship are utterly vain. If therefore you would draw nigh with acceptance, and feel the love of God shed abroad in your hearts, you must "pray in the Holy Ghost".

(3.) You must draw nigh to God *in all His ordinances*. They all depend on the same gracious blessing for their efficacy. If sinful man will presume to pick and choose which of them he will observe and which he will neglect, he should not be surprised to find them wells without water to his soul. If, for instance, a man attends public worship but does not make conscience of waiting diligently on Him in secret, has he any right to complain that his soul has no eyes to see – yet the glory of that grace is shining around him?

Again the devil may change himself into an angel of light and persuade you that, because the Word of God contains all that is necessary for salvation and because the Holy Ghost is all-sufficient to make that Word effectual, you may warrantably absent yourselves from God's house, or come only when it suits you. Do you then think that you could expect His blessing on the Bible while you are violating the solemn injunction not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is?" If His holy providence should disable you from attending public worship, you might then expect His blessing on the other ordinances of religion. Otherwise do not deceive yourselves: you cannot expect God to draw nigh to you in any of His ordinances, if you do not draw nigh to Him in them all.

(4.) You must draw nigh to God *with clean hands and with a pure heart*. In the clause immediately after the text, it is added: "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded". It is vain for you to look for deliverance from the guilt of sin through the blood of Christ or profess to depend on the grace of the Holy Ghost in approaching God, if you are practising any known iniquity. You may be ever so orthodox in your creed, ever so zealous for the purity of the faith; you may be regular in attending the worship of God; it is even conceivable that, to pacify your consciences, you may pray in secret; but if you permit yourselves just one sinful practice, all your other observances will be unavailing. There is an Achan in the camp and, till the accursed thing is put away, wrath is denounced against you.

It is clear that such a course of conduct on the part of the professed people of God is as absurd as it is wicked; yet it is often seen. Israel was often sternly rebuked for this very thing. "Cry aloud, spare not," says God, by Isaiah, "lift up thy voice like a trumpet, show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinance of their God; they ask of Me the ordinances of justice, they take delight in approaching to God." That is too often still the case.

Such people may flatter themselves with hopes of heaven but, without repentance, their hope is the hope of the hypocrite, and it shall utterly perish. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom: give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah, to what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread My courts? Your new moons, and your appointed feasts, My soul hateth: they are a trouble unto Me, I am weary to bear them. And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear."

But those who would approach God acceptably must also draw near with pure hearts. The God with whom we have to do, will not be put off with bodily service, however faultless. He is a spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. He requires truth in the inward parts. "If I regard iniquity in my heart," says David, "the Lord will not hear me." Not only sinful practice, but unholy desires, will cut off the light of His gracious countenance from us. If we would come to Him with acceptance, we must completely renounce every wicked way and every unrighteous thought, at once and for ever. Not only must we abandon those things which are positively sinful, but everything that comes in competition with God's glory. He

requires the chiefest place in our hearts. He will not dwell in a divided heart, one that wishes to serve Christ and the world.

You may seek Him carefully all your life long, but if you set up the stumbling blocks of your iniquity before your eyes, if you will not give Him that place in your affections which He claims as His due, you shall seek Him in vain. Are there any deluded sinners here who are satisfying themselves with a name to live, trusting to a form of godliness while denying its power? Let them hear God's righteous requirement: "Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with your whole heart". Only the pure in heart have the blessed assurance that they shall see God, that their fellowship shall be with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

3. **Some motives** that ought to induce you to draw nigh to God with all your hearts. (1.) Consider *the graciousness of the invitation*. It is addressed to "adulterers and adulteresses". To those who are puffed up with some idea of their own goodness, this will be no recommendation. But if there is one broken-hearted sinner here, he will feel that this is exactly the invitation he needs. Yes, adulterers and adulteresses – if there are any such here – the invitation of the text is addressed even to you, and to drunkards, the profane, the wicked of every description, the vilest of the vile. You may have added sin to sin; you may, by your wickedness, have made yourselves the off-scourings of the earth, but here is good news for you. The God of heaven and of earth, who has all glory and blessedness in Himself, who does not need the service of men or angels, looks down upon you with the most tender compassion. He invites, He entreats, He beseeches you to draw nigh unto Him that you may have life, holiness and everlasting salvation.

And that He is intensely in earnest in His invitation has been abundantly demonstrated by the fact that He spared not the Son of His love, but freely gave Him up to the accursed death of the cross, so that the very chief of sinners might have pardon, peace and the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. He gave up the Well-beloved of His heart, the Elect in whom His soul delighted, to be baptized with the baptism of wrath, so that sinners such as you might be baptized with the sanctifying and comforting grace of the Holy Ghost. If God's gracious invitation to you all to partake of His love, in giving His Son, will not move you to return to Him, what can possibly influence your hard hearts?

Now, while God offers you His unspeakable gift, how do you treat the offer? Will you not accept it? Then, hear, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth! The High and Holy One comes down to this world of sin and sorrow, bears in His spotless soul the curse of the broken law in the place of fallen man, and now beseeches sinners to be reconciled to God. Yet men, whose

breath is in their nostrils and are every moment in danger of eternal perdition, hesitate to accept a full and free salvation and be delivered from the wrath to come. Whoever heard of infatuation like this? Can you possibly so sin against your own souls as to put away from you so great salvation? Can you resist the mercy of a crucified Saviour? The blessed angels of God are amazed at your blindness. Even the spirits of darkness, that tempt and cheat you, laugh you to scorn for your inconceivable madness.

(2.) Consider *the greatness of the benefit* that will be yours if you draw nigh to God with your whole heart, in the way He has appointed: "God will draw nigh unto you". "If any man love Me," said the Saviour, "he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." You will have communion with the Father of spirits; you will for ever be temples of the Holy Ghost; God will manifest Himself to you as He does not to the world; He will make you, even in this vale of tears, drink of the rivers of pleasure which are at His right hand; He will show you the "glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth". All your interests, both for this life and for the next, will be infallibly safe. All things will be yours, "whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's". Prosperity shall no longer be a snare to you, as they are to the men of the world, and adversity shall only work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your life, and you shall dwell in the house of the Lord for evermore.

Are those blessings not worth seeking, yea, worth striving for? What are all the pleasures, the riches and the honours of this world comparatively but shadows which give no real satisfaction while you possess them, and they must soon fly away for ever. Give not sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids till you find a place in your hearts for the mighty God of Jacob. Even now, Christ Jesus stands at the door of your hearts and knocks; even now He says, If any man will open the door, I will come in unto him and will sup with him, and he with Me. Will you let Him knock in vain?

(3.) It would be very little encouragement to hold up to you the blessings of communion with God, if you were left in any doubt that *these blessings are attainable*. Now this is the glory of the gospel: it lays the most solid ground for your assurance of success. This is indeed the only thing of which you can be absolutely certain: that you shall gain it if you seek it earnestly. Riches may take wings to themselves and fly away from those who most diligently pursue them. Pleasure may elude the grasp of the one most devoted to it. Shame may be the portion of those who most earnestly hunt after fame. But no one ever yet sought the favour of God with his whole heart and missed

his aim, and no one shall ever have to complain that he drew nigh to God in the way He has appointed and his labour was in vain.

Why? Because God has pledged that “everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened”. Will you believe the word of a mortal man and will you not believe the word of Him who cannot deceive? He has not merely pledged His word on the subject, He has given you His oath: “As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?”

If you were convinced of the truthfulness of a fellow creature who offered you a gift, would you doubt your warrant to accept his invitation? And will you show less confidence in God? When Christ Jesus invites you to come to Him for life, will you dare question His willingness to receive you? “Whosoever will,” He says, “let him take of the water of life freely”. “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” If He were to call you expressly by name, He could not invite you more explicitly; and dare you doubt that the merciful Saviour, the faithful and true witness, means what He says? I call heaven and earth to witness that the offer of a full, free and eternal salvation has been made to every one of you this day and that, if you will not come to Him, your blood will be on your own heads, and your own consciences will bear witness against you on the day of the Lord.

(4.) Consider the dreadful consequences which will result *if you continue estranged from God*. “They that are far from Thee shall perish.” You shall perish because you have broken God’s righteous law; you shall doubly perish because you have rejected the offered grace of His gospel. You have had one more opportunity to hear the message of reconciliation. Christ has been pleading with you; the Holy Ghost, I doubt not, has been striving with you; and if you stubbornly continue unrepentant, you will at last be driven away in your wickedness and you shall know the dreadfulness of mercy abused. You shall feel the full weight of the wrath of the Lamb, as recorded for your warning in the Book of Proverbs: “Because I have called, and ye refused; I stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh, when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find me.”

Now, while it is the accepted time, while it is the day of salvation, hear the word of the Lord: “Draw nigh unto God” in the way of His own appointment. And beyond all question, God will draw nigh in mercy unto you.

# Justification<sup>1</sup>

## 3. The Influence of Ecumenical Thinking

We have lingered for some time with the Reformers, as it was in their age that the details of this vital doctrine of justification were hammered out on the basis of Scripture. Let us now move on to notice how the forces of twentieth-century ecumenism have impinged on this doctrine. We may look first at the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, originally established in 1970. What is of interest to us at the moment is the second report of this body, ARCIC II, entitled *Salvation and the Church*, which was published in 1987.

The Commission was intended to further an ecumenical agenda, though Pope John Paul II suspended further talks in the wake of the appointment of an openly-homosexual Anglican bishop in the United States. *Salvation and the Church* claims that “the doctrine of justification . . . can be properly treated only within the wider context of the doctrine of salvation as a whole”. This is intended to allow the doctrine to be treated within the bounds of the Roman Catholic concept of justification, as inclusive of sanctification. Not unexpectedly then, the report merely states: “It is by faith that [salvation] is appropriated”<sup>2</sup>. The report thus lacks the necessary emphasis on faith *alone*, which, on the other hand, is the emphasis of the eleventh of the Thirty-Nine articles of the Church of England: “We are accounted righteous before God, *only* for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our good works or deservings. . .”<sup>3</sup>

The report attempts to minimise the differences between the two sides at the Reformation and describes “the disagreements as largely the result of misunderstandings, suspicions and fears”<sup>4</sup>. In woolly language it affirms: “The righteousness of God our Saviour is not only declared in a judgement made by God in favour of sinners, but is also bestowed as a gift to make them righteous” – where no attempt is made to differentiate between justification and sanctification, which are, in Scripture, two distinct doctrines. Not surprisingly, the report concludes that “this is not an area where any remaining differences of theological interpretation or ecclesiological emphasis, either within or between our Communion, can justify our continuing separation”<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>The previous part of this paper dealt with the Reformation teaching on the subject.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in Hywel R Jones, *Gospel and Church*, Evangelical Press of Wales, 1989, pp 86,88.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted from Mark A Noll, ed, *Confessions and Catechisms of the Reformation*, p 217, emphasis added.

<sup>4</sup>Hywel R Jones, *Gospel and Church*, p 88.

<sup>5</sup>Quoted in *Gospel and Church*, pp 96,88.

The tragedy is, of course, that while the Roman Catholic Church has always blatantly allowed tradition an equal place with Scripture as a source for their doctrines, the Anglican Churches have departed from their historic stance of giving to Scripture fundamental authority over their teachings. If they respected God's authority, the Church of England representatives would never have dared to desert their Reformation heritage so readily.

The words of William Cunningham on the subject of free justification are highly relevant at this point: "This was what Luther called the article of a standing or a falling Church; and the history of the Church, both before and since his time has fully justified the propriety of the description. There has perhaps been no department of divine truth against which the assaults of Satan have been more assiduously directed ever since the origin of the Christian Church than the Scripture doctrine of justification, and there has probably been no doctrine, the profession and preaching of which have more generally indicated with correctness the state of vital religion in the Church in all ages."<sup>6</sup> Obviously the unwillingness of the representatives of the Church of England to hold fast the doctrine of justification indicates clearly the low state of true religion in that body today.

Sadly also, present-day Lutheranism must be similarly described in the light of discussions between the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church. These discussions resulted in a *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* in 1999, which was published on October 31, the day on which, 482 years earlier, Luther had nailed up his theses in Wittenberg. The choice of date was no co-incidence, but the *Joint Declaration* is a betrayal of the work of Luther and the other Reformers. While it acknowledges that real difficulties did exist at the time of the Reformation, it aims "to show that, on the basis of their dialogue, the subscribing Lutheran Churches and the Roman Catholic Church are now able to articulate a common understanding of our justification by God's grace through faith in Christ" – but not by faith *alone*. And it claims to show "that the remaining differences in its explication are no longer the occasion for doctrinal condemnations".<sup>7</sup>

However, the "common understanding" seems to rest on a willingness to allow each party in the discussions to follow their own distinctives. "God's saving work", it is claimed, "can be expressed in the imagery of God as *Historical Theology*, vol 2, p 79.

<sup>7</sup>Quoted in Kenneth J Collins, "The Doctrine of Justification" in *Justification*, Mark Husbans and Daniel J Treier, eds, Apollos / IVP USA, 2004, p 196. (It is rather sad that IVP (Apollos is an imprint of IVP England, the book-publishing division of the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship, an Evangelical organisation) should feel it appropriate to include a Roman Catholic scholar among the contributors to this book, on a subject which forms one of the great dividing lines between Protestantism and Romanism.)

judge who pronounces sinners innocent and righteous . . . and also in a transformist view which emphasises the change wrought in sinners by infused grace.”<sup>8</sup> Now, it is wrong to use the word *imagery* in this context, for God does actually judge sinners. But, more fundamental to our present discussion is the fact that, while true Protestants believe that salvation includes both justification and sanctification, they are also clear that the sinner’s acceptance with God *is* his justification – when the sinner, who has no righteousness of his own, receives the righteousness of Christ *by faith alone*.

## The Early Scottish Reformation<sup>1</sup>

### 11. To Meet with Joy in the Kingdom of Heaven

*J H Merle d’Aubigné*

Everything was proceeding well in Scotland. The Regent, the Earl of Arran, was as much respected as any king could have been. All were promising themselves a quiet life when a sudden gust upset everything. One party was full of wrath at the recent changes. The alliance of Scotland with England, the imprisonment of Cardinal Beaton, the regency of Arran, the freedom to read the Scriptures – all these things filled the friends of the papacy with horror, whether at Rome, in France or in Scotland. The Earl of Lennox had arrived from Paris to give his support to the French party in Scotland. The Pope had also sent Marco Grimani as a legate, with orders to join the Cardinal, Lennox and all Arran’s other adversaries and use every means he could devise to bring down the Regent and elevate the Cardinal.

Two Scottish priests, who had lived for a long time in France and had become imbued with Roman Catholicism of the deepest dye, landed in Scotland soon afterwards, in April 1543. These men were likely to do more than all others to help restore Rome’s full power. They were John Hamilton, Abbot of Paisley and an illegitimate brother of the Regent; and David Panter, afterwards Bishop of Ross. Yet their learning, their lowliness and their religion were much talked of, and people thought their coming would prove a great comfort to the Church of God. “They will soon,” it was said, “go into the pulpit and truly preach Jesus Christ.”

The Abbot of Paisley could visit his brother the Regent at any time and he undertook to break down, bit by bit, Arran’s evangelical views and to sunder his connection with England. First of all, it was necessary to get rid

<sup>8</sup>Quoted in *Gospel and Church*, p 101.

<sup>1</sup>Abridged from *The History of the Reformation in the Time of Calvin*, vol 6. Last month’s chapter described how the Scots were given the freedom to read the Scriptures.

of Williams and Rough, the two evangelical chaplains. The two priests therefore began at once to disparage their preaching. The Abbot of Paisley had always some fault to find. "Their sermons," he told his brother, "are heretical and scandalous." The latter, lacking strength of character, allowed himself to be influenced. Williams was ordered to stop preaching and he set out for England. Rough was sent to preach in Kyle, in Ayrshire, where for some time there had been lovers of the Bible.

This was not enough. The men of sound judgement and genuine piety who were about the Regent, and had contributed to the general prosperity and peace, must also be removed. Some were got rid of by crafty expedients, others by false insinuations. And they were warned that their life was at stake. At the same time the partisans of the clergy, who had till then kept aloof from the court, winged their way there like ravens to the carrion. One day there was a great gathering at Holyrood Palace; the Regent saw around him both faithful attendants who had served their country well and others who were fanatical supporters of the Cardinal; one of the latter cried out in a voice loud enough for Arran and all present to hear: "My Lord Governor and his friends will never be at ease nor quietness till a dozen of these knaves that abuse his grace be hanged". After that, people saw the men whose labours had been so useful to Scotland – Durham, Borthwick, Bothwell, the laird of Grange, Balnaves, Ballanden and Sir David Lyndsay – withdraw from the court, while he who had threatened them with the gallows was rewarded.

The Cardinal was set at liberty, at the request, especially, of the Queen Mother, who had never ceased to intercede for him. Once free, this arrogant man thought only of recovering his own power and of re-establishing the cause of the papacy. He tried all imaginable schemes to win the multitude. When he thought he had at last secured his position, he convoked the clergy at St Andrews and unfolded to them all the dangers then hanging over Scotland. "In order to avert them," he said, "contribute generously from your purses, and urge all your friends to do the same. Tell them that their property and their lives are at stake. Nay, more than that," he exclaimed "our task is to prevent the ruin which is threatening the universal Church of the Pope." The clergy declared that they would place all their resources at his disposal, and determined to set on foot a general subscription.

Some of the lords talked without reserve, among themselves and with the Queen Mother, of deposing the Regent, on the ground of disobedience to their holy mother the Church. This greatly alarmed Arran; and his brother, the abbot of Paisley, told him: "Consider the danger to which you expose yourself by allowing the authority of the Pope to be impaired. It is the author-

ity on which your own rests.” As Arran dreaded the anger of Henry VIII, the Abbot emphasised the power of the King of France and the great advantages of an alliance with him. But above everything else he insisted on the obligation of making peace with the Church, “out of whose pale,” he repeated, “there is no salvation”. The poor Regent, weak and inconstant, and not at all grounded in the faith of the gospel, wavered between the Pope and the gospel, between France and England.

Beaten on all sides by contending waves; conscious that his forces were inferior; hemmed in by the snares of the Cardinal, who chose rather to gain him by terror than to subdue him by arms; abandoned by many of the nobles; no longer in favour with the people, who were offended by his weakness, the unhappy man at last took the fatal leap. On September 3 Arran secretly stole away to Stirling and threw himself into the arms of his cousin the Cardinal.

This was not all. He was resolved also to throw himself into the arms of the Pope; desirous only of doing so without too much ostentation. For this purpose, a chapel in the convent of the Franciscans was chosen. There in the dim light, that weak man – to whom people had been looking for the triumph of the Reformation in Scotland – knelt down before the altar, humbly confessed his errors, trampled under foot the oaths which he had taken to his own country and to England, renounced the evangelical profession of Jesus Christ, submitted to the Pope and received absolution from the Cardinal. The wretched man continued indeed to be regent in name, but from that hour he possessed no real authority, for the Cardinal was his governor. He therefore fell into contempt, for “whosoever will save his life shall lose it”.

The alliance between Scotland and France was renewed and fresh promises made to Francis I. The Cardinal thus brilliantly opened his reign and, by placing the crown on the head of the young Mary, he told himself that at least he had no need to fear that the child would take it into her head to thwart his schemes. Henry VIII was in consternation. He recalled his ambassador and declared war on Scotland, with all its horrors of fire and sword.

One other man stood in the Cardinal’s way, the Earl of Lennox. At the suggestion of the Cardinal, the Queen Mother requested the King of France to recall Lennox on any specious pretext. Seeing that he had lost the favour of France, he offered his services to the King of England, who eagerly accepted them. Lennox was then looked on as the head of Scottish Protestantism. Evangelical religion had not lost much in losing Arran; neither had it gained more by acquiring Lennox. These men were only moved by political interests, and Scottish Protestantism, more than any other, was to reject these shameful combinations of Christ and Baal; it was to have one king alone, Jesus Christ.

The Cardinal, thus victorious, set himself immediately to the work which

he had most at heart – to crush the Reformation. The law which authorised the reading of Holy Scripture had its fruit, and “in sundry parts of Scotland”, says a chronicler, “thereby were opened the eyes of the elect of God to see the truth and abhor the abominations”. This abhorrence might possibly drive them to excess. At Perth some friends of the Reformation, endowed for the most part with genuine piety, held meetings, read the Scriptures together and searched out their meaning. They had also at times simple social meals together. Certain priests of the town, with whom they were connected and whose character they esteemed, without sharing their opinions, were invited to these gatherings. The churchmen ate, drank and talked with them, and thought themselves fortunate to be invited to these honest men’s houses. But these Christian folk of Perth did not tie themselves down to the Roman rules about meat days and fish days, rules from which exemption may be had for a little money, and one Friday a goose happened to appear on their table.

Three of them, Robert Lamb, William Anderson and James Raveleson, daring characters given to ridicule, were among those who were taken up with the negative side of reform. They were disgusted at the abuses of monastic life, and the Franciscans offended them most of all. The sight of one of these mendicant friars in the street, with his brown robe, his girdle of cord and his bare feet, excited in them the keenest aversion. A distinguished priest has admitted that monks “often outdo men of the world in luxurious indulgence”; yet these monks pretend that all that is needed for salvation is to put on the robe of their order at the moment of death. In the judgement of Anderson and his two friends, the founder of that order – who was however a better man than most of his successors – must have been the devil himself. They therefore took an image of Francis of Assisi, nailed rams’ horns on the head and hung a cow’s tail behind, and gave to it the semblance of a demon.

Among these Reformed Christians of Perth there were some manifestations of opinion characterised by simplicity and decision, which occasionally took a strange shape. One of the women who frequented the evangelical meetings, Hellen Stirke, was near her confinement. In her hour of labour, surrounded by female friends and neighbours, all of them fervent worshippers of the Virgin Mary, she called on God alone in the name of Jesus Christ. The women said to her: “You ought to call upon the Virgin. Is not Mary immaculate as Christ is, and even above Him as first source of redemption? Is she not the queen of heaven, the head of the Church?” The Franciscan friars were continually impressing on the minds of these women the notion that no one could obtain a blessing from God “except by the dispensation of His pious mother”.

Hellen revered Mary as a holy and blessed woman, but she held her to be of the same nature as other women and she told her neighbours so. It was of

His mercy, as Mary herself said, that God had looked upon the low estate of His servant. That her friends might better understand her meaning, she boldly added, "If I had lived in the days of the Virgin, God might have looked likewise to my humility and base estate as He did to the Virgin's, and might have made me the mother of Christ". The women about her could not believe their ears, and her words, reported in the town by her neighbours, were counted execrable by the clergy and the multitude.

If Francis was Anderson's nightmare, the Pope was Raveleson's. But the latter gave expression to his sentiments in a less insulting fashion. When he had built a house of four stories, he placed at the top of his staircase, by way of ornament, the triple diadem of the pope, carved in wood. This was not a very criminal act, but he paid dearly for it.

However, others among these Perth Protestants were free from these eccentricities, while displaying no less courage. On one occasion, when a monk named Spence very loudly asserted in the church that "prayer made to saints is so necessary that without it there could be no hope of salvation to man", Robert Lamb rose and accused him before the whole assembly of teaching false doctrines. "In the name of God," he said, "I adjure you to speak the truth." The friar, stricken with fear, promised to do so; but there was so much tumult in the church that the monk could not make himself heard, and Robert barely escaped the violence of the people. The women, above all, screamed and urged the multitude on to the cruelest of actions.

In January 1544 the Cardinal, seeing that his authority was firmly established, thought that the time had come for suppressing the Reformation and glorifying the Pope. Having heard what was going on, he set out for Perth, taking with him the Regent, some of the chief lords, bishops and judges. When he arrived, he ordered Robert Lamb, William Anderson, James Hunter, James Raveleson, James Finlason and his wife Hellen Stirke to be imprisoned the same evening. On the following morning the prisoners appeared before their judge. They were particularly accused of having met together to hear the Scriptures read. A special charge was made against Lamb of having interrupted a friar. "It is the duty of no man", he answered, "who understands and knows the truth to hear the same impugned without contradiction. There are sundry here present in judgement who, while they know what is true, are consenting to what is false; but they will have to bear the burden in God's presence."

The six prisoners were condemned to death and cruelly treated. Many of the inhabitants of Perth appealed to the Regent to save their lives. But when Arran spoke a word to the Cardinal in their behalf, the latter replied, "If you refuse to take part in the execution of this sentence, I will depose you". Arran

trembled and held his peace. The friends of the victims then remembered that certain priests in the town had frequently sat at the tables of the accused and entreated them to intercede with the Cardinal on their behalf. But these poor priests were terrified that the Cardinal might hear of their former relations with the condemned and answered that they would much rather see them dead than alive.

Agitation was increasing in the town. The Cardinal had a great band of armed men ready to conduct the victims to the place of execution. Robert Lamb, standing at the foot of the gallows, said to the people: "Fear God and forsake the Pope". Then he stated that calamity would soon fall on the Cardinal. The five Christians comforted one another with the hope that they would sup together in the kingdom of heaven that night.

Hellen desired earnestly to die with her husband, but this was not permitted her. At the moment of their parting she gave him a kiss and said, "Husband, rejoice, for we have lived together many joyful days; but this day in which we must die ought to be most joyful unto us both, because we must have joy for ever. Therefore I will not bid you good night, for we shall suddenly meet with joy in the kingdom of heaven." She was then taken to a pond to be drowned. She was holding her infant in her arms and giving it suck for the last time. But this pathetic incident did not touch the pitiless hearts of her executioners. She had entreated her neighbours to take care of her children. She took the "sucking bairn" from her breast and gave it to the nurse. She was then flung into the water. The Cardinal was satisfied.

From Perth he passed into Angus, dragging along with him the unhappy Regent. Many inhabitants of that region appeared before him for the hateful crime of reading the New Testament. Among them was a Dominican named John Rogers, a man of piety and learning, who had led many souls into peace by preaching Christ in Angus. He was confined with others in the Castle of St Andrews, and a few days later his dead body was found at the foot of the walls. It was very generally believed that the Cardinal had ordered him to be put to death in his dungeon and to be thrown over the walls. A report was then circulated that the prisoner, in attempting to escape, had fallen on the rocks and been killed. A considerable number of Scots, among them Sir Henry Elder, John Elder, Walter Piper and Lawrence Pullar, were banished, merely on suspicion of having read the Gospel.

The Cardinal now returned to Edinburgh, perfectly satisfied with his campaign and meditating fresh exploits of the same kind, when a fleet appeared on the sea. "It is the English," said most people, "and it is greatly to be feared that they will land." The Cardinal smiled and jested, went to his dinner table and talked with everyone as though no danger threatened. Great crowds assem-

bled to gaze on the vessels. At daybreak, Lord Lisle, who was in command of the fleet, ordered his armed men to be put ashore. By 10 o'clock the operation was completed, and 10 000 armed men had landed. The Cardinal and the Regent, dropping their false show of calmness, appeared very much alarmed and fled in a carriage as fast as their horses could take them. Edinburgh was first pillaged and then burnt. Then the English carried off their plunder to the ships. Henry VIII had entertained vast projects for Scotland, but he contented himself with the chastisement inflicted on the capital.

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## Christ's Wonderful Love<sup>1</sup>

*Rev M Mloyi*

I feel very much being honoured to speak to you here today. When considering your hearty invitation, I thought so deeply about it. Who am I but a worm? Can I speak to such an august gathering? The words I found in Isaiah 41:10 strengthened me while I was afraid: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness".

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland has an extensive mission work in Africa. Its existence in Zimbabwe goes as far back as 1904; it has expanded greatly though it began on a small scale. Its main purpose is to preach the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ. Schools and hospitals were also opened – as handmaids of the gospel. The cry of the Mission for funding was, in God's providence, met by Mbumba Zending. We thank you even today for your generosity to the Mission and your interest in keeping it going. Your effort and goodwill are highly appreciated. The words of the Apostle in Acts 20:35 are fitting: "To remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive". We have to thank you for your wonderful support of the Mission – in particular, financially. There are many constraints that handicap us as we desire to bring more primary schools under the Mission and to finish existing projects. All in all, the gospel unites us in Christ's love.

I will now consider this wonderful love of Christ described in Ephesians 3:17-18. In this portion of God's Word, the Apostle Paul prays for the Ephesians, having a sincere desire for them to increase in knowledge. He prays for them to have an experimental knowledge of Christ's love, because it is not known by nature. By the grace of God, a sinner comes to an understanding of spiritual things revealed to him in the Word of God and applied

<sup>1</sup>An address given on Mbumba Zending's mission day this year in the Netherlands.

by the Spirit of grace. This love is manifested in the gospel: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn 3:16). The mercy of God towards sinners is thus revealed. This then becomes an experimental knowledge if a sinner comes to a saving knowledge of Christ.

1. *The wonder of faith.* Since the Fall, man has been in a state of sin and misery. When a sinner is convinced of his sin and guilt, he bemoans and loathes his condition. By the grace of God he is enabled to confess his sins and he seeks for forgiveness through the blood of Christ. He is given faith to embrace Christ in his soul. It is then that, by this grace of faith, Christ dwells in the heart of the sinner. He is said to dwell in their hearts as He is always present with them by His gracious influences and operations. It is the work of faith in a living soul to open the door and receive Christ, when the sinner submits to Him. By faith we are united to Christ and have an interest in Him. By faith also we are rooted and grounded in the love of Christ.

The true children of God have an earnest love for Christ. It is not like the affection of Ephraim and Judah which is spoken of in Hosea 6:4: "Your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away". God's children are enabled to love Him because He first loved them. And how desirable is it to have a settled sense of the love of God to our souls, so as to be able to say with the Apostle at all times: He "loved me".

2. *The dimensions of redeeming love.* The redeemed of the Lord are filled with saving knowledge and so grow from strength to strength. By the light of the Spirit of grace they experience the redeeming love of Christ at work in their lives. This is how God deals with His people, opening their understanding to receive spiritual things. The Apostle, once a persecutor, became a changed man and experienced the redeeming love of Christ. By enumerating these dimensions of length and breadth and depth and height, the Apostle designed to signify the unsearchable greatness of the love of Christ. By its *breadth* we may understand that it extends to all nations and ranks of men; it has no limits.

By its *length*, we may understand that it continues from everlasting to everlasting. So shall the Church of Christ be in the world. In Genesis 4:26 we are told: "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord". So it shall be till time shall be no more. The love of Christ shall be manifested to all generations. Thus, because the love of Christ shall continue to be manifested, the Church shall continue to exist in all ages.

By the *depth* of the redeeming love of Christ, we may understand that it stoops to the lowest condition, to relieve and save those who have sunk into the depths of sin and misery. The Psalmist thus records his experience: "He

brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings" (Ps 40:2).

By its *height*, we may understand that it entitles believers to heavenly happiness and raises them up to glory. The Lord's people are justified by faith; they are accepted as righteous in the sight of God; they are adopted into God's family as dear children, as heirs of the heavenly inheritance; they are sanctified, dying more and more unto sin and growing in righteousness; and they shall be glorified when they depart from this world, being made perfect in holiness. It is the earnest desire of preachers of the gospel, even in Africa, that the light of the gospel should shine and the darkness be driven away and that sinners should thus see the unsearchable riches of Christ in the gospel.

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## Book Review

*Make His Praise Glorious*, by Roy Mohon, published by Truthzone, paperback, 91 pages, £6.00, obtainable from the F P Bookroom.

This book is intended as "a defence of the Book of Psalms as the God-given manual of praise in response to *The Praises of God in Psalms, Hymns & Spiritual Songs* by Dr Kenneth Dix". Pastor Dix was attempting to justify the use of uninspired hymns in public worship; Mr Mohon rightly disagrees. He emphasises the validity of the Regulative Principle – that nothing should form part of public worship unless it is *commanded* in the Word of God. This principle is brought out in Answer 51 of *The Shorter Catechism*: "The Second Commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or *any other way not appointed in His Word*". As Dr Dix denies the authority of this principle, his arguments are flawed from the start.

Naturally Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, both of which refer to "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs", are important in this discussion. Mr Mohon's conclusion is that "the biblical and historical evidence points decisively to the fact that the understanding of *hymning* and *hymns* at the time that Paul was writing (AD 60-63) was not of uninspired compositions but overwhelmingly they are applied to the Biblical Psalter". God has given the Psalter to the Church to use in His worship; we therefore have no right to go beyond it.

Objectors such as Dr Dix suggest that the Psalms lack the language of redemption, but as Mr Mohon shows at some length, the Book of Psalms takes in a large number of biblical doctrines, including "the Redeemer and His saving work". Mr Mohon takes issue with Dr Dix's Appendix, where he states that "words and phrases not in the AV . . . have been added in the

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Psalter to produce a metrical form". But Mr Mohon points out that the comparison should not be with an English translation but with the original Hebrew. He takes up some of Dr Dix's examples and shows that these verses are indeed appropriate translations of the Hebrew.

Mr Mohon's book, besides being an effective answer to Dr Dix's work, is in its own right a useful addition to the literature on this important subject.

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## Protestant View

### The Papal Offensive Against Protestant Britain

It is an indication of God's righteous displeasure against our nation that in this four-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the Scottish Reformation, the Pope was permitted to set foot on our soil. He came primarily as the Sovereign of the Vatican City State – the only absolute monarch in Europe. His visit is being hailed as a great success for the Papacy and a personal triumph for himself. The Vatican feared their campaign would be jeopardised by negative reporting in the media, but in fact they were tremendously assisted by the press, radio and television. The *Catholic Herald* declared, "The BBC was at its excellent best".

But thousands of people protested in the streets against his visit; and many young Protestants, some from our own Church, used the opportunity to distribute gospel tracts peacefully and speak to Roman Catholics on the streets of Edinburgh and London. The press has dismissed the opposition as irrelevant, but the Lord of the harvest can bless such sowing of the good seed.

In launching his offensive against our Protestant faith and the Protestant constitution of the throne, the Pope chose to use the anniversary of the Reformation as a ripe opportunity to call the people back to "their Catholic roots" (although the primitive Christian Church in our land was not Roman Catholic). He also employed the beatification of J H Newman as a weapon to weaken further the ailing Church of England and induce dissentient Anglican priests to pervert to Rome.

Among the honours accorded him as a head of state was a meeting with the Queen at Holyrood House, addressing parliamentary and other civil leaders at Westminster Hall, and taking part with the Primate of the national Church of England in conducting evening prayer in Westminster Abbey (he was the first pope ever to enter the Abbey). In each of these situations he explicitly and adroitly advanced the cause of Rome.

Addressing the Queen in Edinburgh, he greeted "in a special way First Minister Salmond and the Scottish Government" – not surprising when the

Scottish Government facilitated the visit and Mr Salmond audaciously stated before the visit: "It is fitting to celebrate what the Catholic Church has contributed to Scotland over the centuries. Indeed without the Church, there would have been no Scotland as a country in its own right." The Pope also praised past monarchs, singling out Edward the Confessor and the arch-Romanist, Margaret of Scotland. It has saddened many of the Queen's Protestant subjects that she told the Pope: "I am pleased that your visit will also provide an opportunity to deepen the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the established Church of England and the Church of Scotland".

The Vatican regards Scotland as "the Special Daughter of the Roman Church", who must be brought back into the family. This is a fact that Dundee Free Church minister, Rev David Robertson, seems to ignore. In a BBC phone-in programme about the Pope's visit he stated, to the amazement of the interviewer and the shock of many listeners, "I would like to welcome him to Scotland. I'd like to welcome him as a religious leader; I'd like to welcome him as a fellow Christian. Personally I'd love to meet him and hear him . . . overall I think it's a good thing that he's here." How contrary to his solemn ordination vows, in which he assented and subscribed to the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, which states that the Pope "is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself, in the Church, against Christ and all that is called God" (25:6).

In London, the Pope stated to our civil leaders: "The fundamental questions at stake in Thomas More's trial continue to present themselves in ever-changing terms as new social conditions emerge. . . . By appeal to what authority can moral dilemmas be resolved?" Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England, persisted in putting loyalty to papal supremacy before allegiance to his monarch and nation, and was therefore executed for treason. Rome still requires her followers to give civil allegiance primarily to herself – not to their monarch or their nation.

The day of the Pope's visit to Westminster Abbey, the seat of English Protestantism, was "the day that shook the foundations of Britain's Protestant myth", "a day of unthinkable events" – the triumphant claims of one zealous Roman Catholic journalist, who gloatingly commented that Protestants can only "watch in horror as the Pope of Rome processes into the church where Protestant monarchs are crowned, declares unambiguously that he is the successor of St Peter with responsibility for the unity of Christendom, and then walks out again to hearty applause". But the godly know well that by grace they can do more, even pray and not faint – and shall not God avenge his own elect who cry day and night unto Him though they may wait long for His answer?

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In his last speech, the Pope told his bishops in England, Scotland and Wales: "I asked you to be generous in implementing the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus*". (This is the papal document of last November, in which Rome allows Anglican clergy, and even whole dioceses, to enter into full communion with her while retaining their traditions and liturgical practices.) "This should be seen", continued the Pope, "as a prophetic gesture that can contribute positively to the developing relations between Anglicans and Catholics". One *Daily Telegraph* journalist perceptively comments, "Those who hope that this visit will somehow thaw the frosty relations between Rome and Canterbury should see the Popemobile as proof of their delusion: there's only room for one".

The Pope has come, he has seen, but has he conquered? His Scripture-laced speeches and apparently pious demeanor cannot mask the fact that he continues to promulgate the anti-scriptural and blasphemous errors of the system of which he is head. Apart from divine restraint, he will militantly march on and gain more ground, to the deepening of the spiritual darkness descending on our nation. Our cry to heaven must be: "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old" (Is 51:9). NMR

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## Notes and Comments

### Worship and the Free Church of Scotland

The month of November is highly important for the Free Church of Scotland. A plenary Assembly is due to debate the introduction of hymns and musical instruments into her public worship. Those wishing to make the changes are vociferous but they appear to be a minority and it is unlikely that they will carry the day. The difficulty is for the majority to know what to do with them. They have manifestly broken their ordination vows but they are so numerous that it would not be easy to bring cases of discipline against them. In some cases they make up virtually whole Presbyteries.

Office-bearers and probationers in the Free Church of Scotland promise, in the Formula that they sign, to "assert, maintain, and defend", to the utmost of their power, the worship of the Free Church, and to follow no divisive course from that worship. The purity of worship that they are promising to assert and defend is defined in Act V, 1932, as being "to avoid the use in public worship of uninspired materials of praise as also of instrumental music". Thus they have promised that they will assert, maintain and defend the principle of exclusive, unaccompanied psalmody. It goes without saying

that agitating for hymns and musical instruments is a violation of this promise. One doubts, in the light of such vows, whether the Moderator of Assembly should even receive a motion to discuss the subject, let alone one to repeal the legislation. He too has to assert, maintain and defend the principle to the utmost of the power that Christ has entrusted to him.

If those faithful to this part of their ordination vows do form the majority in the Assembly, they need to re-assert order and discipline in the Church. If they feel unable to address past transgressions, they must at least ensure that future ones will be dealt with and that the agitators will not be allowed to pursue their course of division and trouble-making. In particular, they should ensure that the public organ of the Church, *The Record* (until recently *The Monthly Record*), starts to reflect the Free Church position. A change of editor is urgently required. Those office-bearers and probationers who feel compelled to argue for the use of hymns and musical instruments should follow the example of Alexander Anderson of Old Aberdeen and resign from the Free Church. No one forced them to take their vows, but they got their position by taking them; and now it is grieving to other parts of the Christian world to see them in such manifest violation of common honesty.

If the changes proposed in the Free Church were “of the Lord”, the proponents would proceed in a very different spirit. For one thing, they would be more respectful towards the past. They would feel a duty, for instance, while preserving the good name of the “Fathers” of the Church, to explain why the arguments of the likes of Hugh Martin, John Kennedy and James Begg for exclusive, unaccompanied psalmody were erroneous. They would face these arguments and patiently correct them, instead of ignoring them and deriding the men concerned. A recent article in *The Record* laughs at the elders who walked out of Horatius Bonar’s church when he introduced hymns. One of Bonar’s elders who resigned at that time was no less a figure than George Smeaton.

For another thing, the proponents would patiently await the Lord’s time. There have been several recent instances in which Free Church ministers have held public meetings which they claimed were not “services”, at which they used hymns or musical instruments. Such playing with words, and disregard for order, is unseemly in servants of Christ sent out to proclaim the truth in a world full of lies and rebellion. DWBS

### **Biblical or Contemporary**

A train of thought was stimulated by two rather unconventionally titled (and written) books by Professor T David Gordon: *Why Johnny Can’t Preach: the Media Have Shaped the Messengers* (2009) and *Why Johnny Can’t Sing*

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*Hymns: How Pop Culture Rewrote the Hymnal* (2010) – both issued by P & R Publishing. One would not endorse everything in these popularly-written and quite perceptive books, especially the idea that certain kinds of traditional instruments and traditional uninspired hymns may have a place in God’s worship. The basic thesis of these volumes, however, is sound and needs to be trumpeted around the churches. The author does not claim that what he says is a full explanation of the alleged rarity of good expository and edifying preaching or the prevalence of professed worship which is mere entertainment, even in “the conservative evangelical and conservative Reformed churches” of the USA with which he is acquainted – but that it is a significant contributory factor.

The thesis is that, wittingly or unwittingly, preaching and worship have been changed from the biblical standards of the past by the influence of contemporary methods of communication and popular musical fashions. Contemporary culture has replaced the norms of Scripture in determining the life of the Church. Traditions which have biblical authority have been jettisoned in the interests of supposed contemporaneity. The new, by virtue of being new, is judged to be better and more likely to make contact with contemporary society than the old because it is old. Many give little consideration to the fact that, where the old is biblical and the new is not, the concern for contemporaneity will dishonour God rather than worship Him; it will fail to communicate His mind faithfully and profitably, and it will not have His blessing in making the desired contact with the contemporary generation, but it will most likely confirm them in their own ways.

This is not a book review, or the volumes might be subjected to somewhat more rigorous analysis. The point this note would underline is that we must always be careful that our practice, whether as preachers, worshippers or Christians, endeavouring to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, is determined not by conformity to what is contemporary in the world or Church around us but by the standards of God’s Word.

That much preaching has abandoned the biblical norms of the past must not lead us to crave popular appeal rather than solid communication of God’s mind in His Word. That the modes of worship adopted by much of Christendom have been determined by the wisdom of men rather than regulated by the Word of God must not make us slacken our adherence to the principle that the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself and prescribed in the Holy Scripture (*Westminster Confession of Faith* 21). That the behavioural standards expected of professing Christians may be increasingly accommodated to those of the world around must not close our eyes to the fact that God requires of His people who have experienced His

mercies that they be not conformed to this world, but transformed, even in their outward conduct, by the renewing of their mind, that they may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God (Rom 12:1,2).

We certainly have to speak to our generation in language which they understand and which does not obscure the truth we seek to communicate. It is not, however, contemporaneity that will secure the conversion of sinners, the edification of the Lord's people and the glory of God, but the Lord's blessing on the doctrine, worship and practice originating with Himself, which are as relevant today as in the first century. When Paul for the gospel's sake was made all things to all, that he might by all means save some (1 Cor 9:18-23), he by no means accommodated himself or his doctrine or practice to the fads and fancies of those with whom he dealt, but he adhered to the commission given him by God, "that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor 2:5). "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jer 6:16). HMC

### **The New Labour Leader and Marriage**

The newly-elected leader of the Labour Party, Mr Ed Miliband, is clearly just a little uncomfortable with his present unmarried status; he has a partner, Justine Thornton; they already have one child and are expecting a second in November. He has said they will get married, but political events, he claims, have so far "got in the way"; he lists the Copenhagen climate-change summit, the general election and the election for leadership of his party.

Manifestly, if Mr Miliband really wanted to get married, he could have found time even in the midst of a busy political life. He accepts that marriage is "a very important institution", but argues that it is not a pre-requisite for a stable family. Soon after his election as leader, he was asked several times by reporters about his marital status. He responded: "We will get married, but I think it's important, and I feel this quite strongly, that politicians should be able to make their own decisions about their lives". This is the answer of a man who does not accept the authority of God and of God's revelation in Scripture, it is the answer of a professed atheist. He ignores the counsel God in His wisdom has given, setting out directions for relations between the sexes. This is not the kind of man Britain needs as a political leader, for "he that ruleth over men must be just, *ruling in the fear of God*" (2 Sam 23:3).

Asked whether he felt being married would be important if he were to become prime minister, he answered: "I think people are pretty relaxed about this. I don't think people care one way or the other about what other

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people do in their lives as long as they show responsibility to each other.” There may be a degree of truth in this assessment of public opinion in Britain today, but his anxiety to let it be known that he will soon marry rather suggests that he is less than convinced. May the Lord open the eyes of rulers and people to see that “there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Prov 16:25).

### **Trinitarian Bible Society**

Over recent years the Society has been involved in Bible-translation projects in various languages, including Spanish, Hebrew, French, Mongolian and Ndebele. However, the Society has announced, after a number of years during which much of its work has been supported through legacies, that this source of income is all but exhausted. For 2010 a reduced budget has meant that some activities have been curtailed or suspended, but a significant deficit of £575 000 is still being projected for 2010 in the UK. Major contributing factors are a reduction of nearly 20% in the sales of Bibles and smaller Scripture items compared with the equivalent period in 2009 and a reduction of nearly 50% in donations. Further budgetary reductions, which it is still hoped will be only temporary, are therefore needed in 2011.

The General Committee and Management of the Society are actively considering a variety of proposals which will, with the Lord’s blessing, bring the Society safely through the current financial challenges it faces. Accordingly, the Society is calling for prayer at this difficult time, not only that the Lord would provide for its financial needs, but also that He would grant it much wisdom to know where cutbacks might be made if these prove necessary. All concerned at the Society fervently believe that its vital work must and will continue, but they acknowledge their total dependence upon the gracious Hand of God to supply according to His own promise: “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (2 Cor 9:8).

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## **Church Information**

### **Southern Presbytery Tribute to the Late Rev Donald MacLean**

The Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met in St Jude’s on this 21st day of September 2010, wish to put on record its profound sense of sadness at the passing away of the Rev Donald MacLean on the 13th day of August 2010.

As a presbyter, with much sanctified zeal and indomitable optimism, the Rev Donald MacLean performed a leading role in the government of the

Kingdom of Christ in this Court. He was familiar with the principles of justice as they applied to our juridical procedures. This and his ability to identify the crux of any difficult questions earned him the respect of his fellow presbyters. His opinion carried great weight and he was, in the esteem of many, like the children of Issachar, “which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do” (1 Chr 12:32). His qualities for leadership were such that his retirement from participation in Presbytery and Synod created a vacuum which was going to be difficult to fill.

Mr MacLean was the esteemed minister in our Glasgow Congregation from 1960 till he retired on 29 February 2000. After his retirement he took a great interest in our congregation in Fort William, being appointed interim moderator of the Fort William / Oban Kirk Session on 20 February 2001. Despite the frailties of his age, for the next three years he regularly took the journey from Glasgow to Fort William, by public transport, to preach there. While he was able, this was done once each month. Mr MacLean was a student till very near the end of his life. Yet, despite his erudition, he preached in such a way, that, like his Master, “the common people heard him gladly” (Mk 12:37). His preaching was theological but it was always evangelical in the true sense of that term. He possessed a deep sense of the grave accountability of the work of a minister of the gospel. This is indicated by his opinion that the most solemn part of the service is when the minister says, “We shall begin the public worship of God”. We believe the great day of accounts will show that Mr MacLean’s labours within this Presbytery and beyond were “not in vain in the Lord”.

“Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men” (Ps 12:1).

### **Statement Regarding Legal Cases**

Most readers will be aware of legal actions brought against the Church by a former minister, Mr Allan Macdonald, following his suspension in 2008 and deposition in 2009. Two legal actions were raised by Mr Macdonald – one in the Employment Tribunal and the other in the Court of Session. The Synod appointed a Committee to respond to these actions.

The Church defended the action in the Employment Tribunal by arguing that Mr Macdonald had not been an employee in terms of the relevant legislation, and was therefore not entitled to apply to the Tribunal. A central point in the case was the Church’s argument that there is no intention that the relationship between the Church and its ministers should be regulated by the civil law. We are thankful that the Church was successful in defending the case at the Employment Tribunal in 2009, and also at a subsequent appeal in 2010.

The action in the Court of Session was in the form of a Petition for judicial

review of the Church's disciplinary action against Mr Macdonald. In his Petition Mr Macdonald asked the Court to declare that the disciplinary sentences of the Church were of no effect, and formally to set aside these sentences. The Petition also sought payment of £90 000, and an interdict preventing Mr Macdonald's removal from the manse.

The Church's preliminary legal argument, that there was unreasonable delay in bringing the Petition before the Court of Session, was unsuccessful. After careful consideration of the options, a course of action was agreed upon which we hope will bring the whole matter to a conclusion.

At a brief hearing on 29 September 2010 the Court of Session formally granted the orders sought by Mr Macdonald in relation to the Church's discipline. The effect of these orders is that, in the eyes of the civil court, the disciplinary decisions are set aside. However, this does not result in Mr Macdonald's reinstatement in any sense within the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The Church was careful not to consent to the action of the Court in granting these orders.

The temporal aspects of Mr Macdonald's Petition were dealt with in a legally binding agreement not involving the Court. This will involve Mr Macdonald removing from the manse by a date in July 2011, and payment by the Church of a considerably smaller sum of money.

The Committee has sought throughout to maintain the principle – enshrined in the Church's constitution – that Church discipline is a matter for the Church's own courts, and not for the civil courts. That principle was central to the Committee's efforts to prevent the involvement of the civil courts in Church discipline. We acknowledge the gracious help of the Head of the Church, and trust that our people will continue in prayer for a final conclusion to these difficult matters. *(Rev) K D Macleod, Committee Convener*

### **Day of Humiliation and Prayer**

The Synod has appointed Wednesday, 15 December 2010, "as a Day of Humiliation and Prayer to penitently implore the Lord to revive His cause from its declined condition and deliver this and other nations from their low moral and spiritual state. 'It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law' (Ps 119:126)." *(Rev) J MacLeod, Clerk of Synod*

### **Theological Conference**

This year's Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in the Free Presbyterian Church, Inverness, on Tuesday and Wednesday, December 7 and 8. Rev K D Macleod is to act as chairman. It is expected that the following papers will be read, all of them in public:

***John Knox and the Preaching of the Gospel***

Rev H M Cartwright

Tuesday 2.30 pm

***The Course of the Scottish Reformation***

Rev D Campbell

Tuesday 7.00 pm

***The Scottish Reformers' View of the Papacy***

Rev D W B Somerset

Wednesday 10.00 am

***The Scottish Reformers and Biblical Church Government***

Rev J R Tallach

Wednesday 2.30 pm

***The Benefits to the Nation of the Scottish Reformation***

Mr M Vogan

Wednesday 7.00 pm

*(Rev) J R Tallach, Convener, Training of the Ministry Committee***Meetings of Presbytery (DV)*****Northern:*** At Dingwall, on Tuesday, December 14, at 2 pm.***Southern:*** At Glasgow, on Tuesday, November 23, at 3.00 pm.***Western:*** At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, March 22, at 11 am.***Outer Isles:*** At Tarbert, on Tuesday December 21, at 11 am.***Australia & New Zealand:*** At Auckland, on Friday, January 28, at 1pm.**Administration and Technical Manager at Mbuma Mission Hospital**

Because our current manager has left, there is a vacancy in the management team of Mbuma Mission Hospital. Applications are therefore invited for this position. In addition to having a real interest in the spread of the gospel, the applicant should be able to run the administration of the hospital and should have some expertise in IT. The supervision of local workers might be an extra task, but this can be discussed later. It is a rewarding and interesting post for anyone with a mind for missionary work. Further information about the post, including the period of service, and a job description may be obtained from Rev J R Tallach, Clerk, Jewish & Foreign Missions Committee (jrtallach@btinternet.com, 01851 702501) or Dr Anneke Snoek (snoek.a@gmail.com). Applications should be sent to Rev J R Tallach, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH.

**Outreach Fund**

By appointment of Synod, the special collection for the Outreach Fund is to be taken in congregations during November. *W Campbell, General Treasurer*

## Acknowledgement of Donations

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

*Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* N Pearce, Cymru, for work in Israel, £127.

*College & Library Fund:* M Scott, Llandudno, £100.

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

**Aberdeen:** Anon, North Uist: *Congregational Funds:* £40; *Sustentation Fund:* £20.

**Larne:** *Congregational Funds:* Miss I MacKenzie, £50; Anon, £50.

**Lochbroom:** *Congregational Funds:* Friend, Elgin, £30. *Where Most Needed:* Friend, £40.

**North Uist:** *Communion Expenses:* Glasgow Friend, £50.

**South Harris:** Estate of the late William MacLennan, £12 406.30.

# 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.
- Breascelte:** 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, 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 MA, 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 I/II" (Level 2), 60 Stevens Road, Singapore 257854. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, 4 Chuan Place, Singapore 554822. Tel: (65) 6383 4466, fax: 6383 4477, e-mail: byong1@singnet.com.sg.

#### Ukraine

**Odessa**: 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 Levytskiyy; tel:00 38 048 785 19 24.; e-mail: 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.

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

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

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

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

#### Kenya

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

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