

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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

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

May: First Sabbath: Aberdeen, Grafton, London; **Second:** Achmore, Donsa, Kinlochbervie, New Canaan; **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: Beaulay; **Second:** Bonar Bridge, Staffin; **Third:** Applecross; **Fourth:** Struan; **Fifth:** Cameron.

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

September: First Sabbath: Chesley, Larne, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Mnaka, Portree; **Third:** Aberdeen, 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: Second Sabbath: Glasgow; **Third:** Wellington; **Fourth:** Chiedza.

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

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God's Blessing?

Today more than a million public-sector workers in the United Kingdom are on strike. Yesterday the Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered his autumn statement, which made clear the limited prospects for growth in the British economy this year and next, a situation which led analysts to predict that living standards in 2015 will be no higher than they were in 2001. It seems easy then to answer the question, Does Britain have God's blessing? with the answer, No. And if we ask the corresponding question about the Eurozone, which at the moment appears to exist in a permanent crisis of disarray and indecision, it seems even easier to give the same answer.

But it cannot be right to estimate God's blessing solely on the basis of economic growth and material prosperity. If prosperity was to be the only criterion, we would have to conclude that countries like China and India, with growth rates in excess of 10% in 2010, must be enjoying God's blessing to a remarkable degree.

But if we recall Asaph's dilemma, which he recorded in Psalm 73, it is clear that other factors must be given much greater emphasis. He confessed: "I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment" (vv 3-6). They appeared to have much of God's blessing, but they were characterised by pride and violence. How, Asaph seemed to ask, could God be just when He allowed this to happen? But when he went to the house of God, he understood otherwise; his mind was impressed with the fact that death was not the end of God's dealings with these men; he saw the awfulness of the lost eternity that follows an ungodly life. Clearly such people do not have God's blessing.

Who then do have God's blessing? How did David answer the question? "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity" (Ps 32:1,2). At one time those now described as *blessed* were themselves among the wicked, to

one extent or another. Not only were they “children of disobedience” but also “children of wrath” (Eph 2: 2,3); that is, not only did they disobey God’s law but they deserved His wrath – to be punished by Him eternally. They most certainly did not deserve God’s blessing. Yet, when they believed on Christ, their transgressions were forgiven – for He, the true sacrifice, bore their sin away.

This forgiveness is also described as the covering of their sin. The idea is that, when the blood of the sacrifice at the temple was sprinkled, sin was covered over, so that it was now out of God’s sight. Thus, when the sinner believes, the merits of Christ’s sacrifice are applied to him; it is as if God can no longer see his sins. In other words, because Christ has satisfied divine justice, God no longer sees the sinner to be deserving of punishment.

Finally, forgiveness is described as the not-imputing of iniquity, or guilt. If guilt is imputed to us, we must ourselves suffer the punishment due to our sin. If our guilt is not imputed to us, it must have been imputed to another, to a substitute, and that substitute must be Jesus Christ, who suffered instead of sinners. On the ground therefore of what Christ has done in suffering the full punishment due to the sins of those for whom He was a substitute, they must, in strict justice, go free; their sin cannot be imputed to them.

We ought then to be clear that those who have God’s blessing have been forgiven; they have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls. Such an individual has, as Matthew Henry writes, “all manner of blessings, sufficient to make him completely blessed. That is taken away which incurred the curse and obstructed the blessing; and then God will pour out blessings till there be no room to receive them. The forgiveness of sin is . . . the reason and ground of all the rest.” Whatever outward good things, such as food and drink, they may receive, no one can be described as having God’s blessing unless they trust in Christ and their sins have been forgiven for His sake. And corresponding to the words of Psalm 32 is the statement: “Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him” (Ps 2:12; see also Ps 84:12).

Forgiveness, however, is what no one can recognise directly, except God Himself. But there are many other descriptions in the Bible of those who enjoy God’s blessing. David also tells us: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night” (Ps 1:1,2). The main influence on this man’s thinking, as he makes his way through life, is not the counsel of the ungodly; it is the Word of God. And he considers that Word, or portions from it, at various times throughout the day. Under the influence of the Word, he does not linger with the ungodly unless duty – his ordinary employment,

for example – detains him; he does not sit down to enjoy the company of those who mock God and His Word, but he delights to sit down with the Scriptures and to hear these Scriptures expounded. As he does so he pleads with God to apply His truth with power to his soul and reveal Christ to him.

With his confidence in God restored when he was enabled to understand better God's dealings with the wicked, Asaph saw the real blessedness of his own situation and praised the Lord in these terms: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Ps 73:24). No one could be more blessed than to have the assurance of God's care in this life and a place in heaven at last.

When we consider how few trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and so have their sins forgiven, we can understand how little we can expect God's blessing on the United Kingdom or on any other country today. The near-universal disregard for God's law makes this statement unarguable. This disregard is most obvious in the absence of Sabbath observance; in Britain, the Lord's Day is increasingly treated as just another day, and church attendance accordingly dwindles. What need there is of a spiritual revival!

This feeling that God's blessing is denied is strengthened by the manifest godlessness of successive governments. Clearly God is not in their thoughts, nor is His law. Otherwise we would not be faced with proposals from both Westminster and Holyrood for so-called same-sex marriages. And these are just the latest in a long line of God-dishonouring measures.

Yet it is clear that there is a remnant according to the election of grace, like the 7000 of Israel who did not bow their knee to the image of Baal. So today there are those who, drawn by divine grace, have looked to Christ for salvation, have been forgiven all their transgressions, value God's Word and have begun to walk in the way of holiness. They do not, in spite of all the contemporary pressures to do so, bow the knee to the image of secularism, or of false religion, or of some version of Christianity that has been evacuated of most of its spiritual content.

What is more, they pray. And who knows how much God's wrath against Britain, or China, or other countries is restrained in answer to their prayers? We are told that Elijah "was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit" (Jas 5:17,18) – a sign of God's blessing having returned. What James emphasises is not Elijah's greatness but that he was a man like ourselves – and God heard him. If we long to see spiritual prosperity in our country and beyond, we must pray earnestly for God's blessing. "Let the whole earth be filled with His glory" (Ps 72:19).

Christ's Condescension¹

A Sermon by Rev H M Cartwright

Hebrews 2:9. *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*

The Apostle has been referring to the fact that man was originally made a little lower than the angels, but he was made in the image of God. He was made to reflect the glory of God and to control the environment in which he was created; everything was put under him. But we know the havoc sin has wrought, when mankind fell from that state in which they were created by sinning against God. We just have to look within and look around, and we discover that human beings, instead of controlling all things for the glory of God, are in bondage to sin, and the very environment is cursed for their sakes.

The restoration of the fallen race is brought about in Jesus Christ. When we look at human beings we do not see humanity as humanity was made. But we see Jesus Christ crowned with glory and honour, and through Him His people are restored, not only to the state from which they fell, but to a much more glorious state. We know that through the offence – through the fall, through sin – we lost the glory we had as we came from the hand of the Creator, but in Jesus Christ we may obtain a glory immeasurably greater. All this is bound up with Christ and the relationship between Him and His people. That relationship accounted for Christ being brought down to where we are and it accounts for His people being brought up where He is. It was through condescension – through suffering, through death and resurrection – that Jesus Christ secured this for His people.

We would look first at the condescension of Jesus; it says here: “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death”. Then at the grace that is manifest in this condescension: “that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man”. Finally the glory secured through that condescension: we see Him “crowned with glory and honour”.

1. The condescension of Jesus. This is the first time that the name *Jesus* is mentioned in the Epistle, but not the first time He has been mentioned. He is described in the first chapter as “the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person”. He is the One by whom everything was created, the One whom God addresses as His Son. The sonship does not imply inferiority; it does not refer to someone who came after another; it refers to the same

¹This sermon was preached on 7 August 2011, on the Sabbath morning of the communion season in Dingwall. Mr Cartwright was only able to preach on one more Sabbath before his final illness made further pulpit work impossible.

nature. The Son of God is God the Son, and it is good to think of it like that – as the Spirit of God is God the Holy Spirit. Although there are distinctions between these divine Persons, they are each equally God; all divine power and glory belongs to each Person of the Godhead.

It is this Person, who is the eternal Son of God and was worshipped by the angels, who was made a little lower than them. It does not mean that He ceased to be the glorious Son of God; even when He was on earth He was the Son in the bosom of the Father. He did not lose any aspect of His Godhood but He took on something He did not have before; He took on the nature of creatures who were made lower than the angels. The One who is eternal God took into His person a human nature like yours and mine except – and what a wonderful exception – it was without sin. It was perfect human nature – holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He did not become a human person but a divine Person with a human nature. He who is and was and ever will be equal with the Father in His divine nature, came to share the creaturehood and the lowliness that characterises human beings.

He is God and man, a divine Person, in two distinct natures for ever. Supposing you and I never read anything more than *The Shorter Catechism*, we would get good theology there to keep us from the aberrations that abound on all hands. There was no mixture of the divine and the human, but there is a union, so that the same Person, who is God over all and blessed for ever, has a humanity which puts Him, in that nature, on the same level as ourselves. Who can measure the condescension of the eternal Son of God coming down to our level, while remaining the God that He was?

There was tremendous condescension in the reason why He took human nature: for the suffering of death. He who could not die took a nature in which He could die; so here is a Person who is God and who has died. God could never obey, but here is a divine Person who has learned obedience. God could never suffer, but here is a divine Person who has suffered. God could never die, but here is a divine Person who has experienced death in our nature. Alexander Stewart, who was in Cromarty, speaks at great length about the wonder of God in our nature, referring to it in such terms as the Infinite becoming an infant of days and the Eternal becoming a babe of a span long.

These are the “things the angels desire to look into” (1 Pet 1:12). The word used there includes the idea of stretching your neck to see something: they are really eager to enquire into the mystery of the divine Person they worshipped from the moment of their creation, but now in human nature suffering death. And the death He suffered was such that no one but Himself could suffer. He suffered physical death and sometimes people say, “Others were crucified as He was crucified”. But no other was like Him who was crucified,

when you think of the holiness of His Person, the perfection of His humanity, and the sensitivity of His human nature. Even Christ's physical sufferings were of a nature that no sinful human being could ever know.

Of course, He experienced much more than the physical death. We were singing, in Psalm 22, the words which gave expression to His experience on the cross of Calvary: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me". That is the very essence of death and of the curse on sinners: to be forsaken by God, yet not separated from His presence. We will never get away from His presence: "Ascend I heaven, lo, Thou art there; there, if in hell I lie" (Ps 139:8). Whether this refers to the grave or a lost eternity, there is no getting away from God's presence. It would be a terrible thing to be confronted eternally with God's presence, the reality of God, God's claims, and yet be forsaken by the God who is merciful and gracious and slow to wrath.

The God who has revealed Himself in Christ as a God of infinite goodness is a God of infinite severity. The Lord Jesus Christ was confronted on the cross by God in all the severity of His justice: "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts". This was not just negative; it was not just the withdrawing of God's comforting presence, but the imposition of His wrath, which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteous of men, upon the head of Christ on the cross. The comforts of God's presence were completely withdrawn. Christ was not under any misapprehension when He said, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" When the Christian says, "Why hast Thou forsaken me?" he is making a mistake; God does not forsake His people; they just feel He has forsaken them. God says He can never forsake them; their names – they themselves – are graven on the palms of His hands. You cannot go far without seeing what is on your palms; this just emphasises how close His people are to God and how much under His observation.

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" – that is, If you think I have forsaken you, you are mistaken. Christ made no mistakes. When Christ was forsaken, it was not just a feeling He had. God withdrew all His comforts. This encouraged Him in the dark days of His ministry: They are all forsaking Me but My Father is with Me. He could not say that on the cross of Calvary. His father was not with Him; His comforts were taken away and He was left to face the awfulness of the wrath of God against the sins of His people.

That is brought before us here. The suffering of death was not on account of anything in Himself but because He was acting for others. As it says here: "He . . . should taste death for every man". It was death in the place of others, for the benefit of others; it was a vicarious death, a substitutionary atonement. Isaiah saw that long ago when He saw His glory and wrote of Him:

“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all” (Is 53:5,6). We were singing these remarkable words: “Lord, Thou My folly knowest; My sins not hidden are from Thee” (Ps 69:5).

Christ is speaking in this way because of the real imputation of the sins of His people to Himself. Their sins became His sins, not in the sense that He became a sinner, but He became accountable to God for their sins. That is why they can say, The Lord is my righteousness. We are not the Lord, we are not the righteousness, but His people may say, “It is my righteousness; He is my righteousness” – because the righteousness of Christ is imputed to His people. There is a reality in the counter-imputation of their sins to Christ and Christ’s righteousness to them. We have to endeavour by faith to lay hold of that truth: “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Is 53:6).

Why did Christ die at Calvary? Because He was the sin-bearer. This means that if we are His people, if we have been brought to trust in Him as our Saviour, then our sins were what brought the wrath of God upon Him. This is the condescension of Jesus, the Son of God, not just in taking our nature, but in taking our nature so that He could experience death. It speaks here about the suffering of death and about tasting death.

When I was in the Black Isle, I knew an old minister very well who was looking forward to heaven but was very much afraid of the experience of dying. Some of the Lord’s people may be like that. Most of us may be more concerned about whether or not we will get to heaven but at that time he was sure he was on the way to heaven. Yet he said, “I don’t know how I can experience death, the actual dying”. He went to bed one night and wakened up in heaven. He did not even know he was dying. You can die without, in that sense, suffering death. The Lord Jesus was not like that; He tasted death. Again we might make the mistake of thinking that *tasting* is just a little of it, but it signifies really entering into the experience of death. He really did go through everything involved in dying – particularly the kind of death He died, forsaken by God under the curse due to His people.

2. The grace that is manifest in this condescension. The construction of the sentence is very difficult: “He by the grace of God should taste death for every man”. Why did Christ come to die for sinners? When we look at the death of Christ we see justice being meted out to Him because He was the sinner’s representative. He did not experience one iota of suffering more than was deserved because the Lord had “laid on Him the iniquity of us all”. The justice of God insists that sin will be punished to the full but it will not be

punished beyond (if we can think of a *beyond*) what sin deserves. "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd." That was the sword of justice: not the sword of one army against another but of the Judge, the sword of the law.

We mentioned already, perhaps, since we came, the woman who was asked what was the basis of her hope for eternity; she said it was the justice of God. Then she explained: "That He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom 3:26). Justice was meted out to Christ on Calvary, and justice demands that those for whom He died shall be saved. That is a great basis for our confidence. God would not be just if He again required the punishment of His people that Christ has already endured in their place. "Payment God will not twice demand, first at my bleeding Surety's hand, and then again at mine."

How did Christ come to bear the penalty of sin? How did He become subject to God's justice in the place of His people? We have no claim upon God's mercy. The angels that sinned were cast down to hell; no grace was given to them, no opportunity of repentance, no mediator. If God had done the same with the human race, no voice could be raised against Him, for our sins deserve God's wrath and curse in this life and that which is to come. We have to trace salvation back to God's sovereign good pleasure; the ultimate reason is that God was willing to save a people from their sins. If you want to see the basis of the Calvinistic doctrine of the sovereignty of God in salvation, read through Ephesians 1 and you will see how everything is traced back to the counsel of His own will. He did it because it was His will to do it.

His will was characterised by grace, by undeserved favour towards the guilty. He saved them because He saved them; their salvation is attributable, not to works of righteousness which they have done, but to His mercy – the grace of God the Father in providing salvation for human sinners when there was no salvation for angelic sinners like the devil and his demons. It is awful to think that they were once in heaven. That creature who is the bane of our lives was once before the throne of God among those who were praising God. There is great mystery here that no one can solve: how sin got into Satan. But it is a fact, and no mercy was shown to him.

But God, in His sovereign, free grace, provided salvation for human beings who fell in Adam and were conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, so that they would spend eternity in heaven. Grace accounted for the provision of salvation through a Mediator – one to represent the many. It was not left to everyone to work out his own salvation. Just as Adam represented the whole human race and all fell in him, so Christ was appointed to represent the elect of God. That is wonderful grace: a person was appointed Head of the Church, the representative of the whole body.

You also see the grace of God in the person provided to occupy that office. Where could God find a person who could take on himself “the iniquity of us all”? Where could God find a person who had the capacity to render an obedience, in place of the disobedience of millions of His people, that would satisfy God? Where could He find a person whose death could atone for sin and save millions of people from dying eternally? Although God would ransack the whole of creation He would not find such a person. But He appointed His own Son, and He took on that appointment. Is that not grace?

There is not only the grace of God the Father in giving His Son, but the grace of God the Son in becoming the Messiah and taking on Himself this tremendous work. He says, “I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father” (Jn 10:18). And His receiving the commandment was just as divinely sovereign as the Father’s giving of that commandment. So it is the grace of God that accounts for the condescension of Christ.

3. The glory secured through the condescension of Jesus. You notice a semi-colon before the words: “that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man”. Perhaps that is partly because these words explain everything that has gone before. That is why He was made a little lower than the angels, experienced the suffering of death, and is crowned with glory and honour – so that His death on Calvary would secure the salvation of “every man”.

There is a real sense in which Christ was crowned with glory and honour when He was appointed the Saviour of sinners, because to save sinners manifests God’s glory more than anything else He has ever done or could do. The Father was putting great honour on the Son when He appointed Him to be the Saviour, although He was also putting on Him a tremendous burden. You see in His intercession (in John 17) how the Lord Jesus regarded it as a great honour to be entrusted with the salvation of His people and to glorify God in that salvation. That should be a wonderful thought to us, when we think of Christ’s condescension. Your salvation and mine, if we are His people, is what manifests the glory of the Son of God as nothing else can.

Glory and honour were also conferred on Him when He finished the work which the Father gave Him to do. The Epistle to the Philippians speaks of how He humbled Himself, took upon Himself the form of a servant and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things of heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:9-11).

What glory has been put upon Christ – not just after His death but because

of His death! His death made inevitable His resurrection, His ascension, His session at God's right hand, and His coming in glory at the end. He is not glorified in spite of having died, He is glorified *because* He died – a death which was the death of death for the people of God. God has highly exalted Him. Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess, however willingly or unwillingly. You and I will all be glorifying God at the end of time. Whether we will do so gnashing our teeth or with hearts full of devotion to God is another matter, but every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. He secured that glory and honour by His death.

It is good that we are remembering the Lord's death on the Lord's Day, which, every week, commemorates the resurrection of the Saviour. We should get back to the way, in the early Church, they greeted each other on the Sabbath morning: "The Lord is risen; the Lord is risen indeed". Do we think of that on Sabbath mornings when we are getting up or coming to church? Christ is not in the grave. He rose triumphant over death. He "was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification". If there were no resurrection, there would be no justification, no salvation. His death would have been in vain. As the Word tells us, the grave could not hold Him; He could not be kept in that prison because He paid the debt to the full.

The wonderful thing is that, when He is crowned with glory and honour, His people share in that glory and honour – not that they share the glory that belongs to Him but the fact that He is in glory means that they will enter into the full enjoying of God to all eternity. Even these bodies that we drag to the house of God, bodies that at times make spiritual exercises so difficult, will be transformed into the likeness of His glorified body. A glorified soul, mind and body! Whatever a spiritual body will be, it will be in perfect harmony with the spiritual exercises of heaven. There are times when, if you are very tired at the end of the day, yet want to listen and benefit, you can hardly keep from falling asleep in God's house. That certainly will not happen in heaven because the body will be perfectly suited to heaven, glorified like unto His glorious body. Everybody in heaven will be like Christ in their souls and bodies. There will be an infinite distance between them and Christ as to His Godhead, but their humanity will be fashioned according to His humanity and they will be raised up in glory. "The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory."

We should remember that, although we mourn when Christians die, they do not; they do not give another thought to the sorrows they left behind; they have been made perfect in holiness. What a change! Wrestling on towards heaven, struggling with corruptions, with one burden after another – in some cases, a mind losing its powers, a body getting weaker and a soul becoming

wearily – and they wake up the next moment in glory. The body, still united to Christ, rests in the grave until the resurrection, when it is raised up in glory. Yes, He tasted death in order that He would be crowned with glory and honour, and He did so “for every man”, for the benefit of all His people.

Our text does not teach that Christ died for everyone, or that every person is going to be saved. Some people like to think about a universal atonement and a universal salvation and jump into this verse and say that He tasted death for everyone. The Bible makes it very clear in other places that Christ died for the Church; He gave Himself for His people, He was wounded for their transgressions; He did not pray for the world but for those who were given Him out of the world. The intercession of Christ has the same extent as the death of Christ. Christ did not die for anyone for whom He does not pray, and He does not pray for anyone for whom He did not die.

Words like *every* and *all* have to be taken in their context. When you look at the immediate context of these words – for example: “bringing many sons unto glory” (v 10), “He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified” (v 12), “I will declare Thy name unto my brethren” (v 11), “the children are partakers of flesh and blood” (v 14). The *every man* is every man who comes into that category: His brethren, the children that God has given Him, those whom God has chosen, those whom God in His sovereignty brings to Himself. He tasted death for every one of them. And every one of them will benefit from the fact that He is crowned with glory and honour.

It is wonderful to think that, when Christ died, He died for specific people: those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life, who were graven upon the palms of His hands. The atonement is not a general thing. What use would it be to you or me to trust in Christ for salvation if multitudes for whom He died will yet be lost? What an affront to Christ to suggest that there is a sinner in hell for whom He died! It cannot be; God's justice will not allow it.

Everyone for whom He died will come to Him. “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (Jn 6:37). There is a connection: “Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified” (Rom 8:29,30). He justified everyone for whom He died; they were in His plan of redemption from eternity and they will be in His glory to all eternity. That is what we have to commemorate today. The broken bread and the poured-out wine remind us that the Son of God took on Himself our nature and that in that nature He died in the place of His people so that they could benefit eternally, and through Him enter into the full enjoyment of God.

“We see Jesus.” We have to ask ourselves if we see Him as the eternal God in our nature wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities? “We beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Nowhere do we behold His glory more than when we see His face marred more than that of any man. Have we seen Jesus? Have we come today saying “Sir, we would see Jesus” (Jn 12:21). We have not come to listen to somebody speaking, we have not come just to go through certain procedures. We ought to have come with a desire to see Jesus, to get a hold of Him and to see Him in His glory. “Behold the Lamb of God.” Look at Him. Trust in Him. “Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”

There is a day when we will see Him in His glory and that is the very essence of heaven. Samuel Rutherford’s words are very familiar: “I shall not gaze on glory, but on my Bridegroom’s face”. He speaks of how Christ, the Lamb in the midst of the Throne, will be the object of constant interest and attention by His people. And this will be their blessedness.

Let us also remember that every eye shall see Him, and those also who pierced Him. There will be terrible wailing on that day among those who saw Him in His world – and Paul spoke to the Galatians of “Christ evidently set forth, crucified among you” (Gal 3:1). You have Christ crucified proclaimed in the everlasting gospel and, although you never looked at Him, never thought anything about Him, yet every eye shall see Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. What a mercy if you can say today: We see Jesus; our hearts go out to Him and we trust in Him and, as we heard the other day, “this is all my salvation, and all my desire” (2 Sam 23:5).

The Reformers on Church Government¹

3. The Presbyterian System formed in the Scottish Church (2)

Rev J R Tallach

In 1567 the Church Act was passed by Parliament. This Act defined the Church of Scotland in terms of its known teaching and *The Scots Confession* and declared it “to be the only true and holy Kirk of Jesus Christ within this realm”. The Church Jurisdiction Act of the same year stated that “there is to be no other face of Kirk nor other face of religion than is presently by the favour of God established within this Realm”. The third such Act of that year was the Coronation Oath Act, which required all future monarchs to swear to protect the true Church as established and to root out all those opposed to

¹Last month’s article provided a survey of the initial stages in giving the Scottish Church a Presbyterian structure, at the time of the Reformation.

its teaching. These Acts represent the establishment of the Protestant Church in Scotland. As Professor Lyall points out, they left unresolved the question whether these acts were an acknowledgement of a right possessed by the Church or if this was a grant from the state to the Church.² If it was something given by the state, then the state could take it away or modify its terms. This unresolved question was to reappear; it was to be the source of much debate in the Ten Years' Conflict leading up to the Disruption of 1843.

Furthermore, the Scottish Church was, as indicated above, heavily in debt to Calvin for its polity as well as its doctrine. Thus the French Church formed under Calvin's influence had a great influence on the form adopted here. G D Henderson states that the General Assembly was "borrowed from France where, as in Scotland, an independent Church required central boards of control. Without the Assembly, the Church would have fallen permanently under the dominion of the civil authorities as happened in England. The Assembly remains peculiarly symbolic of spiritual independence."³

Though the Scottish Reformers drew on the example of the French "colloquies" and the Swiss "classes", membership of presbyteries differed from both these bodies. The Scottish bodies were made up of neighbouring ministers, each accompanied by one elder. These meetings would take place four times a year and the purpose would be "not only for the end that ministers in their respective turns may handle a common place in divinity from the Scriptures but that by mutual common counsel they may compose those emergent difficulties which trouble their churches".⁴ The "exercise",⁵ held weekly in the first instance, was set up in the Scottish Church along the lines of the French model in the mid-1570s and had a similar constitution and aims. In 1579 it was established by the General Assembly that, "the exercise may be judged a presbytery".⁶

Over the succeeding years, the Crown sought to weaken and control the Church through Episcopacy, while the nobles impoverished it by diverting funds away to serve their own ends and fill their own pockets. This was the parlous state in which Andrew Melville found the Church when he returned to Scotland from Geneva in 1574. Melville was a brilliant scholar and had been a professor of humanity at Geneva. He was subsequently appointed Principal of Glasgow University, and later still of St Andrews University. Above all he was a godly man of fearless character.

²Francis Lyall, *Of Presbyters and Kings*, Aberdeen University Press, 1980, p 16.

³Quoted in James Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, T & T Clark, 1989, p 86.

⁴James Moffat, *The Presbyterian Churches*, Methuen, 1928, p 51.

⁵For the *exercise*, see p 365 in the last issue.

⁶*Stirling Presbyterian Records 1581-1587*, Scottish History Society, 1981, p xii.

The Church was indebted to Melville for the large part he played in drawing up the *Second Book of Discipline*, which, after much careful discussion, was adopted by the General Assembly of 1578. In this volume, the government of the Church is defined more carefully than it was in the *First Book*. The offices in the Church were reduced to four – minister, elder, doctor or teacher, and deacon – while the positions of superintendent and reader were dropped. The book claimed the right of Church courts, as courts of Christ, to convene and settle business independently of the civil power. Indeed, with the claim made by Melville that the Church had the right to tell the civil authority how to exercise its own civil authority in accordance with the Word of God, there was a move from the freer order under Knox to something closer to a theocracy.⁷ The courts established were sessions, presbyteries, synods and general assemblies. Significantly the parity of pastors was laid down, with no office superior to the teaching elder.

Ministers must not be intruded into a congregation; there must be “the assent of the people over whom the person was to be placed, as the practice of the apostolical and primitive kirk and good order craves”.⁸ This was a particular expression of Knox’s view of the dignity of the common man. Knox said, “Before God all men are equal. In matters of religion God requireth no less of the subject, be he ever so poor, than of the prince and the rich man.”⁹ His reply to Mary, the young queen, is to the same effect. “What have ye to do,” said she, “with my marriage? Or what are ye within this Commonwealth?” “A subject born within the same, Madam,” said he. “And albeit I neither be earl, lord, nor baron within it, yet has God made me (how abject that ever I be in your eyes) a profitable member within the same.” This estimate of the biblical standing of the ordinary man before God is best expressed by the Presbyterian form of Church government.

Over the following years King James I & VI (reigned 1567-1625), who was at heart Episcopalian, sought by kingcraft to subvert this Presbyterian order and at times he succeeded in weakening Presbyterian Church polity in Scotland. However, by 1590 the Presbyterians were in the ascendant, and in 1592 the General Assembly Act was passed, which is seen as “the statutory foundation of the Presbyterian character of the Church of Scotland”.¹⁰ The Act incorporates statements from the *Second Book of Discipline* and thus laid the foundation for the Church to be established in civil law. This law

⁷Lyall, *Of Presbyters and Kings*, p 17; R H Story (ed), *The Church of Scotland*, London, 1890, vol 2, p 471,

⁸Quoted in Thomas M’Crie, *The Story of the Scottish Church*, Free Presbyterian Publications 1988 reprint, p 68.

⁹Quoted in J J Murray, *The Reformation 1560*, p 50.

¹⁰Lyall, *Of Presbyters and Kings*, p 18.

was subsequently grafted into the constitution of the country at the Union of Scotland and England. Despite this, James managed by subtlety to retain some control. By preserving patronage he left a mechanism of control in the hands of the civil authorities. He also retained in his own hands the power to call assemblies. Presbyterianism was strongest in Edinburgh and, by convening Assemblies at a variety of other venues, James was able to exercise some control over assembly business and decisions.

In the following century, in 1647, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland adopted the *Westminster Confession of Faith* as the confession of the Church, while expressing their understanding of a few points. In 1649 the Scots Parliament approved and ratified the *Westminster Confession* and Catechisms. Although this Act was struck down by an Act of 1661, it was ratified after the Revolution settlement of William and Mary in 1689 by an Act of 1690, “Ratifying the Confession of Faith and settling Presbyterian Church Government”.¹¹

In 1592 the authority of presbyteries was acknowledged in statute law, but as early as 1581 these courts were recognised to have the following functions: “The examination, ordination, admission (and, indeed, deposition) of ministers, the supervision and visitation of the parishes, the formulation of enactments and the execution of ordinances made in the higher courts, the licensing of marriage contracts, the correction of manners and the ultimate sanction of excommunication”.¹²

As with the “exercises” noted above, the minister and an elder from each adjacent congregation attended the presbytery. At the initial admission of a man to the ministry of the Word, a high standard was set, with the candidate being publicly examined by ministers and elders for their ability to teach and defend the gospel. Evidence was also taken of the candidate’s integrity and orderly walk, and public notice was to be “given in the homes of his childhood and youth that those who know anything to his discredit must give information thereof”.¹³ The *First Book of Discipline* demanded only the “public approbation of the people and declaration of the chief minister that the person there presented is appointed to serve the kirk”. The *Second Book* required that after sermon the presiding minister call on the ordinand to stand and to “describe his call” and to engage with him about its gravity and weightiness and to call on the ordinand to vow solemnly, by holding up his hand before God and His Kirk, to discharge his office faithfully and, if he violated any part of these vows, both God and Kirk would be witness to his condemnation.

¹¹Lyll, *Of Presbyters and Kings*, p 20.

¹²Stirling Presbytery Records, p xviii.

¹³A R MacEwen, *A History of the Church in Scotland*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1918, vol 2, p 163.

The imposition of hands at ordination was not prescribed by the *First Book* as it was considered that the office of apostle was past and that it might encourage superstition. The imposition of hands was, however, formally restored by the *Second Book of Discipline* for “the separation and sanctifying of the person appointed of God and His Kirk”. This was preceded by “fasting and earnest prayer”.¹⁴ Ministers were settled in a congregation by election of the people. The ministers so ordained “must do their work steadily and without reproach, preaching on [Sabbath] and on one weekday at least, catechising children, superintending and examining schools, showing special care for the poor, and studiously avoiding respect of persons. Should a minister fail to edify the Church by neglecting wholesome doctrine, by moral carelessness or even by sloth, he must be admonished by his elders, and should he prove stubborn they may appeal to the ministers of two adjacent churches, who shall be entitled to suspend him from office until he repent.”¹⁵

Elders were associated with pastors “for establishing of good order and execution of discipline”. The *First Book of Discipline* had appointed elders to be elected annually but the *Second Book* made the office a lifelong appointment and a “function spiritual, as is the ministry”. Elders took public oaths with hands uplifted to perform their duties diligently and, like ministers, to adhere to the highest standards of Christian life and conversation.¹⁶ Once lawfully called to this spiritual office they might not leave it, although where there were many elders they might serve in rotation. One of their number was elected annually to the higher courts. The elders were associated with the work of the ministry of the Word and sacrament, in upholding the hands of the minister and exercising oversight of the congregation, yet their responsibilities were clearly separate from those of the minister. Readers were appointed to read the common prayers and Scripture. But the office of reader was abolished some 20 years later as it was always seen as an interim measure; yet readers continued to operate in rural areas for many years thereafter.

There was a hierarchy of Church courts from congregational to national level, and each court met at a time of its own choosing. Their purpose was to keep religion and doctrine pure, to make rules for the good of the people and to discipline transgressors. Because there was a hierarchy, the acts of the lower court could be reviewed by the higher. Presbyteries were not specifically defined by the *First Book of Discipline*, but it would appear that the “district eldership” was not then confined to one congregation as now and

¹⁴Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland*, Yale University Press, 2002, p 387.

¹⁵MacEwen, *A History of the Church in Scotland*, vol 2, p 163.

¹⁶Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland*, p 371.

that, having been given powers of ordination and visitation, the “exercise” became the equivalent of a modern presbytery.¹⁷ The *Second Book of Discipline* abolished the office of reader and agreed to divide the land under 50 presbyteries, 13 of which were set up immediately.¹⁸ As the Lord had prepared the leaders and the people, scriptural Church government was set up in Scotland in a comparatively short time and recognised in civil law.

Benefits of the Reformation to Scotland¹

1. Introduction

Matthew Vogan

In Jeremiah 18 the prophet is taken to the house of the potter by the Lord in order to behold the way in which a vessel was being formed from the clay. “And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter”, Jeremiah records. “So he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O house of Israel. . . . And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not My voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them” (vv 1-10).

There is a vital lesson in this, that God “doeth according to His will . . . among the inhabitants of the earth” (Dan 4:35); He “putteth down one, and setteth up another” (Ps 75:7). It is He that builds and plants a nation. It is He that benefits them. This is particularly true concerning covenanted nations: “It shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!” (Num 23:23). The Most High formed and built up Scotland and gave her rich benefits along with the reformation of religion.

Thus, when we speak of true benefits to any nation, we must be careful to trace these back to their source in the bountiful providence of “the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits” (Ps 68:19). This was what John Knox himself acknowledged when he looked back upon the Reformation from the year 1566: “What was our force? What was our number? Yea, what wisdom

¹⁷Gordon Donaldson, *Scottish Historical Documents*, Neil Wilson Publishing, 1997, p 146.

¹⁸J H S Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, Oxford University Press, 1960, p 201.

¹The first part of a paper delivered at the 2010 Theological Conference. The main part of the paper consists of the following sections: (1.) A Revolutionised Nation, (2.) A Reformed Nation, (3.) A Liberated Nation, (4.) A Covenanted Nation, (5.) An Educated Nation, (6.) A Disciplined Nation, (7.) A Provided Nation.

or worldly policy was in us to have brought to any good end so great an enterprise? And yet in how great purity God did establish among us His true religion, as well in doctrine as in ceremonies! To what confusion and fear were idolaters, adulterers and all public transgressors of God's commandments within a short time brought!

“The public order of the Church, yet by the mercy of God preserved, and the punishment executed against malefactors, can testify unto the world. For as touching the doctrine taught by our ministers, and as touching the administration of sacraments used in our churches, we are bold to affirm that there is no realm this day upon the face of the earth that hath them in greater purity; yea, we must speak the truth, whomsoever we offend – there is none, no realm we mean, that hath them in the like purity. All praise to God alone, we have nothing within our churches that ever flowed from that ‘Man of sin’. And this we acknowledge to be the strength given to us by God, because we esteemed not ourselves wise in our own eyes, but, understanding our whole wisdom to be but mere foolishness before our God, we laid it aside, and followed only that which we found approved by Himself. Our first petition was, ‘That the reverent face of the primitive and apostolic Church should be reduced again to the eyes and knowledge of men’. And in that point we say that God has strengthened us till the work was finished, as the world may see.”

The famous statue of John Knox in the courtyard of New College, Edinburgh, bears the following inscription: “Erected by Scotsmen who are mindful of the benefits conferred by John Knox on their native land”. We would prefer to see acknowledgment of the One in whose hands Knox was a mere instrument, but we might also ask whether such sentiments are widely felt and expressed to this degree in our nation today? On 15 April 2010, at the end of the day's business, a handful of members of the Scottish Parliament remained to debate a rather vague motion noting “the 450th anniversary of the Reformation in Scotland” and drawing attention to its impact upon improved literacy and education and that, arguably, the Reformation paved the way for the Scottish Enlightenment thus contributing to “laying the foundations of modern Scottish society”. Only 8 MSPs were interested in speaking to it over the next 45 minutes, adding little clarity to the motion.

This event accurately reflects the way in which the Reformation is generally regarded in Scotland today. At the present time, the general assessment of the Reformation's benefits to the nation is either non-existent or particularly weak, in focusing solely on the area of education. This focus is altogether narrow, however. It is no exaggeration to say that the Reformation created Scotland as a modern nation and that it effected such a revolution within society that one might consider its impact in every area. This was the central

and most important event in Scottish history. The failure properly to assess the Reformation in Scotland arises from a failure to discern its vital roots in God and His Word. The historian W Stanford Reid observed that “one can never understand the Scottish Reformation unless and until one recognises that the ultimate authority of the Bible lay at its very foundation”.

It is noteworthy that the *Scots Confession* makes reference to the reformations under Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah, since these events taken together help us to understand better the nature of the reformation endeavoured in Scotland. The reformations under Hezekiah and Josiah were marked by a return to biblical worship and zeal against idolatry. Covenanting with God was an additional feature of Josiah’s reformation. It is particularly in relation to Jehoshaphat, however, that the benefits of reformation are described in 2 Chronicles 17 and 19. Idolatry was removed, and the civil courts of justice and the church courts were reorganised, with graded courts of appeal, in conformity to God’s requirements given through Moses. Levites were also sent throughout the land to teach the law of God. It was a reformation that was not only interested in punishing sin, but in preventing it as far as possible, through clear instruction in the truth of God. The entire nation experienced prosperity and peace as a consequence. Taking a composite picture of the Reformations of Judah, we can describe their benefits as the removal of false religion, covenanting with God, instruction in the truth, church discipline, government and justice in accordance with God’s requirements.

We wish to focus in general on such benefits in considering the nature of the Scottish Reformation. Ironically, the Roman Catholic historian Tom Devine is one of the few in public life who are not inclined to play down the significance of the Reformation. He speaks of the way in which “all aspects of life” in Scotland, “welfare, moral discipline, education” were directed by the Reformation. He believes that we owe to the Reformers “our schools, universities, democratic institutions and legal framework”. Scotland was in effect, reconstituted or formed anew as a nation at the Reformation, and we would like to consider various aspects of this and the benefits that it brought to the nation.

The world is not ruled by fate, nor by one indifferent to the moral actions of men, but by the living, personal God, who regards all things in relation to Himself and His moral government, and who has a holy displeasure at moral evil. Without ought of the turbulent emotion found in us, and which betrays human weakness, the supreme Lawgiver, from the perfection of His nature, is angry at sin, because it is a violation of His authority, and a wrong to His inviolable majesty. Though He cannot be injured, as men commonly understand the term *injury*, He may be wronged by the creature’s refusal to acknowledge His divine authority.

George Smeaton

Job and His Trial¹

William H Green

At the beginning of this book, things are disclosed to the readers that are concealed from the human beings involved in it. The veil that hides the unseen world is partially drawn aside to give us a glimpse of a spiritual agent who is to give a new turn to events. The arch-enemy of man has had his eye upon Job. True to the instincts of his vile nature, he has no faith in the reality of goodness. He sees in the piety of Job nothing but a refined form of selfishness. Job serves God because it is in his interest to do so. God protects and blesses him, and as a matter of course he inclines to the quarter from which the favours come; but if these favours were to cease, the tempter urges, Job's piety would vanish with them. His goodness has its spring in the rewards that follow it: withhold the latter, and Job will soon leave God and His service, which no longer yields him any advantage.

Satan is allowed to bring to an issue the question which he has raised. He may put Job's piety to the test, and in him he may test the question whether there is such a thing as real piety in the earth, a piety that is not merely self-seeking and actuated by a hope of gain, but one which heartily loves what is right and cleaves to it, and chooses the service of God though no hope of profit can attach to so doing. Job is on trial, though he does not know it; and unfriendly eyes are eagerly watching for his halting. He is on trial not merely for himself; in him is represented the cause of religion, the cause of God on earth. Yet Job is also unconscious of the dignity of his position and of the sacredness of the interest which he is set to sustain, and of the fact that the eyes of the Lord of all are turned upon him with approval and with a lively concern for the favourable issue of the struggle in which he is engaged.

Of the spiritual significance of this transaction, Job is profoundly ignorant. He feels the terrible pressure of his heavy sorrows, but he is not aware that they have been sent upon him as a test of character. He knows nothing of Satan's malicious designs, who seeks to prove that his piety is a pretence. He knows nothing of the sovereign purpose of God, who means to establish the reality and power of his piety to the confusion of the tempter.

It is with trembling apprehension that we see such power granted to this unseen adversary, with liberty to use it against the unsuspecting patriarch: "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power"; "Behold, he is in thine hand". The contest seems fearfully unequal between this arch-fiend and mortal man – however firm his integrity, whatever the sincerity and strength of his piety.

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Argument of the Book of Job Unfolded*. Green (1825-1900) was a Professor of Old Testament in Princeton Theological Seminary.

But we are somewhat reassured when we observe that the tempter is, after all, limited and restrained by Job's almighty Guardian and Friend.

The fiend cannot frame and carry out his malevolent designs unchecked. He acts only by sufferance. He must have leave from the Most High before he can touch Job at all to harm him or lay his hand on anything that he has. And, when permission is given, it is within fixed limits which he may not overstep. When Job's property was put at Satan's disposal, it was with the accompanying restriction: "Only upon himself put not forth thine hand". When Job's own person was further subjected to his power, it was with the added requirement, "But save his life". With all the limitations, however, a tremendous range was conceded to this enemy of all righteousness, and the assault which he makes is a frightful one. Can Job endure the shock?

In order properly to appreciate Job's conduct in his affliction, we must take a further consideration into account: Job went into his trial destitute of many of those firm grounds of consolation which are now so plentifully supplied to suffering saints. Those revelations had not yet been made upon which the believer now so firmly rests his hope in times of deep distress. Truths which, in the gracious disclosures of the gospel, are as familiar to us as household words, had never yet been clearly revealed. Perhaps it may be said that the faintest conceptions of them had scarcely dawned on any human consciousness.

The king's broad highway through the wilderness of earthly sorrow, along which suffering pilgrims can now pass in comparative safety and comfort, had not then been constructed. Its route had not even been surveyed, nor a pathway broken. Job was one of the hardy pioneers to whom this primary task was committed. He had to make his own way, without guide or chart or knowledge of the ground, through the tangled, trackless, howling waste, with no light to relieve the darkness of the night that enveloped him, but the lone pole star of his unshaken trust in God – and this, alas, often obscured by the black, threatening clouds which swept across his sky, though ever and anon peering forth afresh; unsheltered too from the tempest, which broke over him without mercy. Precipices yawned at his feet, swollen streams ran across his route, and there were treacherous bogs in which he might be hopelessly mired.

Is it strange if his stout heart quailed at the terrors which surrounded him? Is it strange if groans of distress were extorted from him? Yet, in spite of all, he pushed his way through, and the path which he opened has defined the route for many travellers since. There is not a weary sufferer in Christendom who is not indebted to the patriarch of Uz, who has not been helped by his example of fortitude and constancy, and has reason to be grateful for the lessons of comfort and hope transmitted to us from him. He grappled with

the mystery of affliction in all its unexplained darkness and difficulty, until his soul found rest. Those cheering views of truth to which he fought his way, or which were graciously vouchsafed to him in his trial, have been the heritage of God's people ever since.

Think for a moment what it would be to encounter crushing sorrows, not only without Calvary and Gethsemane and the sympathy of the incarnate Son of God – who is Himself touched with the feeling of our infirmities, for He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Think what it would be to go into trials that offer no bright spot on this side the grave, with no clear views of that eternal blessedness, in comparison with which all earthly sorrows, however grievous in themselves and long continued, are nevertheless light and momentary – without the assurance that present griefs and sufferings shall be outweighed by that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. What would it be to encounter frowning providences without the distinct understanding that these are nevertheless consistent with the abiding, unchanging love of a heavenly Father?

They are not tokens of His displeasure; they are not evidences that He has withdrawn His love or has shut up His tender mercies. On the contrary, whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. There is a paternal discipline in affliction. It has a gracious design, and will have a salutary result. The rod is in a loving Father's hand; its strokes are not capriciously nor unkindly given; they are administered solely for His children's good.

Deprive the sufferer of the consolation afforded by his knowledge of these precious truths, hide from him the benefit to be derived from affliction, take away his consciousness of the divine love in the midst of it all, and remove from him the assurance of the everlasting reward which, infinitely, shall more than compensate all that he now endures, and how defenceless would he appear in the presence of heavy griefs! These wellsprings of consolation had not yet been opened. These comforting truths had never been expressed in human speech. Simple and obvious as they now appear to us from frequent repetition, they had never been distinctly formulated and no clear conception of them had ever been reached.

Job must fight the battle without the aids which his experience, as well as later revelations, have furnished us. His sorrows came upon him, not for his own sake merely, but for ours. A new lesson was to be given to the world; and Job was to be the medium of instruction. The stream of adversity swells around him, until he is in danger of sinking and is compelled to struggle with all his might to get upon the sure foundation. Where he finds firm footing, other children of sorrow may safely tread.

The spectacle before us is that of this eminent man of God, chosen to be

the leader of the band of sufferers in their mortal conflict with evil and the evil one. He goes into the strife unpractised and unawares. The onset of the foe is fierce and furious. Will even Job be able to stand in the evil day?

The conflict unfolds itself in three successive stages of growing violence, and the demeanor of this holy man is depicted to us in each. In the first, we behold him in one evil day suddenly and irretrievably despoiled of all his possessions. In the morning his sky was without a cloud. He was in the midst of the prosperous abundance which he had long enjoyed and he seemed to have every reason to expect it to continue. It was in fact a day of special festivity and family reunion; so far from leading him to anticipate evil, it was an occasion of more than ordinary joy. Happy in his children and his possessions, and in the respect universally accorded to him, his cup of blessing overflowed. And there was nothing to suggest the likelihood of a coming reverse. And yet, before that day was ended, everything was gone. To such destitution was he reduced that his condition is aptly likened to that of a newborn child. He came naked into the world; and, now that he had been stripped of all, he shall leave it as naked as he came.

Suddenly and without a moment's warning, the storm of calamity burst over the head of the doomed patriarch. One messenger of evil chased another with tidings of disaster. One had not ended his tale of loss before another came with a tale more doleful still. His oxen and his asses were driven off by the wild tribe of the Sabeans; his sheep were consumed by fire from heaven; his camels were carried away by plundering bands of Chaldeans; and his servants were put to the sword. And, to complete the dismal tidings of woe, the house in which his children were enjoying themselves was overturned by a tornado and fell upon them all, crushing them to death. In one moment of terrible reverse, the stricken patriarch is bereaved of his children and loses his property. All is taken from him in an instant; and, of all that he had prized of earthly good, he has nothing left.

If the calamity had been less sweeping and universal, it would not have been so overwhelming. If something had been spared him, if only part of his property had been taken, the loss might still have been considerable; it might have involved the greater part of his fortune. Still, if he had not lost all, it would have been easier to bear it with equanimity. Or, even if all his property had been taken, if his beloved children had been spared, it would have been easier to bear the loss. It would have been hard to part with one of that cherished circle that he prized so much and loved so fondly, but to lose all of them, and all at once, this was desolation indeed.

If the blows had not fallen so suddenly and in such quick succession; if he could have had some time in which to steady himself for the shock; if there

had been some intervals of relief in which he could have summoned all his strength to meet the coming blows, it would not have been so crushing as when the whole dire weight came down upon him at a stroke. By this accumulation of sorrows so suddenly sprung upon Job, the violence of the attack was increased to the utmost, and thus his steadfastness was put to the severest test. Can the tempter drive him thus to give up his integrity and abandon his trust in God?

Under the pressure of sore affliction men are in danger of falling into one or other of two opposite extremes, both of which are inconsistent with fidelity to the Lord's service. The first is repining and murmuring at what God orders; the other is bearing it in a spirit of stoical indifference. The wise man warns us against both: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him".

Job avoided both these dangers in that subdued but noble demeanor which has been in all ages since then the model of submissive resignation. The stricken patriarch, bowed with grief, adopts the tokens of the most profound humiliation and sorrow: he rent his mantle, shaved his head and fell down on the ground. He did not sit in sullen silence and brood despondently over the terrible losses which he had sustained; he did not complain of the providence of God, which had dealt so hardly with him; no, he prostrated himself in reverent worship; he bowed with meek submission to Him who had smitten him; his only language was that of grateful adoration to the Source of all blessings, who in removing all had but taken away what He Himself had given. Job fell down upon the ground and worshipped and said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Can humble, trustful piety reach a more sublime utterance than this? He has been cast down from the height of his prosperity; he has suffered the total wreck of his fortune and the loss of all his family; he is weighed to the earth with his crushing sorrows; yet, with bleeding heart and prostrate form, this venerable man utters not one word of complaint. So far is he from giving up his confidence in the goodness of the Lord that he strengthens himself in this confidence by the very greatness of the calamity that he has suffered, and draws his argument of praise for the multitude of God's mercies from the very bitterness of the cup that is now pressed to his lips.

The submission of Job is not merely that he yields to what is inevitable; that, seeing the stroke of fate has fallen and its blow cannot be turned aside and the past cannot be undone, he resigns himself to what is beyond the possibility of repair. Nor does he merely succumb to Omnipotence, convinced that it is futile to resist what the almighty God has appointed, that none can

stay His hand or prevent the execution of His sovereign will. Nor is it merely the rectitude of the infinite Ruler before which he falls prostrate, who has a right to do as He will with His own and who can dispose of His creatures according to His sovereign pleasure.

Job meekly bows, not before the stroke of inevitable fate, not simply before the resistless energy of almighty power or the righteous control of the sovereign Ruler, but before the goodness of the Lord, a sense of which now fills his heart in proportion to the magnitude of the reverse which he has sustained. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The bitterness of his loss is made the measure of the preciousness of the blessings God had given. The severity of his trial consists in parting with what God has bestowed. Every pang that now rends his heart is a fresh proof of how gracious God has been. The magnitude of the loss determines the value of the gift, and the depth of his anguish enhances his grateful sense of the goodness of the Giver. The more deeply he mourns the treasures which have been taken away from him, the higher is his appreciation of the gracious kindness of Him who bestowed them. Thus the more profoundly he grieves, the more fervently he still blesses the name of the Lord.

Not that he saw the goodness of God in afflicting him. This was a lesson Job had not yet learned. The benefits and uses of affliction, and the gracious design with which it is sent of God, had not yet been revealed. It was through these trials of Job himself, and the disclosure of His purposes thus given, and the providential issue of His dealings with His servant, that the first rays of light were shed on this dark and mysterious subject. It was partly in order to afford an occasion for giving these lessons to the world, which might lighten the sorrows and ease the burdens and mitigate the trials of subsequent sufferers that these distresses were sent on Job. Thus did he in a measure suffer for our sakes, and by his stripes we are healed – as a forerunner and a type of the great Prince of sufferers, of whom this was true in its strictest and highest sense.

Book Reviews

Works of William Tyndale, 2 vols, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 608, 684 pages, £33.00, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

This collection of Tyndale's writings was originally brought together by the Parker Society and is a reprint of their 1848-1850 edition. It is now excellently bound in two volumes which have attractive dust jackets. Numerous historical notes have been supplied which are based on careful research. These notes

will be of interest to historians of the early Reformation period but can easily be passed over by the ordinary reader. A fairly full biography of Tyndale will be of great use in placing each of the works of Tyndale in its historical context. A few observations on each volume might encourage readers to give time to them.

The first volume contains four major treatises as well as the biography. There follow a number of shorter pieces: prologues for the different books of the Bible translated by Tyndale. These latter works serve to illustrate the devout wish of the great translator of Scripture that the minds of men would be enlightened by truth. They will repay the careful reader. The treatises are interesting but perhaps more difficult to digest due to their length. The first, which is also the earliest of Tyndale's writings, is called *A Pathway into the Holy Scriptures* and was designed to introduce men to the evangelical doctrine as taught by the Reformers and as contained in the Scriptures. As can be said of most of Tyndale's works, while there are some expressions which may be injudicious, particularly relating to the sacraments, the zeal of the writer for the enlightenment of his fellow countrymen and the exposure of Rome as the fountain of deceit and error cannot be hidden.

The same purpose is evident in the second longer treatise, entitled *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*. This is very loosely based on the words, "make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness" (Lk 16: 1-12). The explication of the text does not come until well into the work and even then is not easily understood. This aspect of the work aside, the treatise is on the doctrine of justification by faith and the intention of the author is to draw a clear line between law and grace, faith and works. This was, of course, the doctrine on which the whole Reformation turned in the sixteenth century and the work should be read in that light.

The next treatise, *The Obedience of the Christian Man*, was intended for Christian rulers. An interesting note is given regarding Anne Boleyn's copy of this book, which came eventually to be read by her husband, Henry VIII. His comments on it show the influence that Tyndale's writings had on those in high places, as well as among the lower classes. Of particular interest in this work is the description of Antichrist. The fourth treatise in volume 1 is *A Brief Declaration of the Sacraments*, which treats of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Tyndale identifies the covenant signified in baptism with that in circumcision as given to Abraham; only the signs are different. He lays emphasis on the need for faith if either sacrament is to be blessed to the recipient. Not all that Tyndale says on the sacraments can be approved, but he was certainly a strong voice in opposition to the errors of Romanism on the sacraments.

The second volume contains an *Exposition of Matthew Chapters 5, 6 and*

7, and another of the First Epistle of John, together with marginal notes for the whole of Matthew. These expositions vary in length, some verses being briefly touched, while others, like 1 John 2:2, are given extended treatment (18 pages). Much of the later Authorised Version can be found in these translations of Tyndale on which he comments. Also in volume 2 is found a polemical work, *The Practice of the Prelates*, which the Parker Society, an Anglican body, wishes to assure us was intended against the prelacy of Rome rather than prelacy itself. However, in answer to the point, "What officers the apostle ordained in Christ's Church; and what their offices were to do", Tyndale is plain and simple: "The apostles, following and obeying the rule, doctrine and commandment of our Saviour Jesus Christ, their master, ordained in His kingdom and congregation two officers". These he describes as bishop or elder, and deacon. Readers may judge for themselves how sympathetic Tyndale was with "Protestant Prelacy".

Half of volume 2 is taken up with *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue*, and what was in part a response to that writer, *The Lord's Supper*, which reviews John 6 and 1 Corinthians 11. These extended polemics cover many other fields and assert Reformation principles in, more or less, plain Scripture terms. The volume concludes with very full and useful indexes to both volumes.

However inclined we may be to differ from Tyndale on various points and on some expressions, we should be ready to sit at his feet and to learn from him. This faithful, godly man was most eminently useful to the Church of God as the great Bible translator. He was also martyred in 1536 for the testimony which he held and thus belongs to that "cloud of witnesses" whose faith we are to follow, "considering the end of their conversation".

(Rev) D Campbell

The Achreny Mission, An Account of Godly Missionaries in the Parish of Halkirk, Caithness, by Douglas Somerset, published by William Murray, booklet, 43 pages, £2.00, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

The material in this booklet was first published in this Magazine during 2003, but has now been "considerably revised". Reading *Ministers and Men of the Far North* (republished by Free Presbyterian Publications) leaves one with a strong impression of real spiritual prosperity in the Halkirk area during the nineteenth century. That impression is reinforced by this interesting booklet.

The missionaries referred to in the subtitle were actually ministers; the point was that their congregations did not have the full status of a sanctioned charge. Among these missionaries were John Macdonald, later of Ferintosh, and Finlay Cook, latterly of Reay, well known for their godliness and spiritual

power. We also come across many other godly men and women who quietly lived out their lives to the glory of God in the north of Scotland. To read of these days is to be reminded of what God has done; it makes us realise what God can do even in our time; and it should lead us to pray for days of great gospel blessing again. To read the kind of material we have in this booklet should therefore be a profitable exercise.

Protestant View

Free Church Minister in Further Ecumenical Service

Rev James Maciver, Free Church minister of Knock, has followed his role in the ecumenical Mod service, in which the Roman priest Calum MacLellan participated, by taking part in a second service with a Roman priest. This was to be broadcast on the evening of December 24 in connection with the pagan festival of Christmas. According to the announcement, prayers and readings at this service were to be contributed by Rev Angus Morrison and a Roman Catholic priest, Father Roddy Johnston. Mr Morrison, formerly a Free Presbyterian minister, was recently inducted as Church of Scotland minister in Kinross (Orwell and Portmoak), the service being conducted by a woman. Mr Morrison has a number of women on his new Kirk Session.

At any time between the Scottish Reformation of 1560 and the Second World War, Protestant ministers in Scotland who participated in joint services with Roman priests would have been deposed, and rightly so. Much of Scottish Protestantism was grossly liberal in the first part of the twentieth century, but it was at least Protestant. Now that is lost, however, and one is struck by the lack of religious conviction shown by all three men. The two Protestant ministers believe, according to their official Church teaching, that the Roman priest is deceiving men with his false doctrine and that, if he continues in his present views, he will go to hell. The Roman priest officially believes the same regarding the Protestant ministers. But all three of them were found conducting a service together! Who would bother listening to such confused people on religious matters? They need first of all to work out their own doctrine before they attempt to instruct others. "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Ki 18:21).

What makes things worse is that Mr Maciver's Presbytery has considered his conduct and endorsed it, thereby making themselves a party to his folly and unfaithfulness. Such defections, by Protestant ministers who used to appear more conservative, are a warning to the professed people of God to consider whether they are holding their views from true spiritual conviction

or merely from custom and convenience. “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor 10:12). *DWBS*

Notes and Comments

Prospect of Lesser Punishment for Murderers

The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Judge, recently aired the prospect of bringing to an end mandatory life imprisonment for *every* murderer in England and Wales. He did not publicly support the call for a system of first and second degree murder (which would allow for discretionary rather than mandatory life sentences, albeit life sentences are usually less than life), but said the idea was “interesting”. He also hinted that such a move would end the campaign against any mandatory life sentence. At about the same time, the Homicide Review Advisory Group said that “a so-called mercy killing attracts the same mandatory life penalty as serial killings” and that a system of first and second degree murder would allow certain offenders, such as mercy killers, to be charged with the lesser degree of murder and enable courts to impose a discretionary sentence.

Lord Judge also said that it was important that the law keep in step with public opinion. It is, of course, the principles of divine justice which must be the foundation of just legislation, not public opinion. In any case, public opinion, according to the shadow Justice Secretary, still holds “that if you take someone’s life you should face a life sentence”. However, a report of the Homicide Review Advisory Group claims that “with appropriate education” the public could develop “in the general direction long-favoured by legal experts and the judiciary” – to make life imprisonment the maximum sentence rather than mandatory.

The public really needs to be educated in what the supreme Lawgiver has laid down for our national good. It was a most retrograde step when the death penalty for murder was replaced by the mandatory life sentence in 1965. Not only did it contravene God’s abiding law: “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man” (Gen 9:6), but also resulted in an increase in the incidence of murder and crimes of violence.

It is passing strange that there should seem to be more compassion for the perpetrator than for the victim – but such is the inverted sense of morality which has infected our nation for decades. As Rev James MacLeod said in the Synod in 1958, “To show mercy to the murderer, without regard to God’s law and justice, is not really mercy but a travesty of law and justice”. *NMR*

More Calls for Assisted Suicide Legislation

When Geraldine McClelland, London, who, sadly, was suffering from terminal cancer, finally decided to take her own life in a Swiss suicide clinic, she asked the UK pro-euthanasia organisation, Dignity in Dying, to publicise her decision. In a letter released by the organisation after her death in December, she stated that she was angry because of the cowardice of our politicians in not legalising assisted suicide, thus preventing her from taking her life in her own country and with her family around her.

The fact is, as another press article says, that “Parliament has stood up bravely to fierce lobbying from activists intent on introducing euthanasia to our legislature. It has been debated four times in recent years and on the two occasions it has come to a vote it has been defeated. That’s not cowardice. It’s democracy”. Also, the standard of palliative care in this country is second to none and she could have had both the specialised care she needed so much and the company of her loved ones to the end.

Her case is being used by euthanasia campaigners to further their agenda, but if our country opts for euthanasia it will descend into worse barbarism. In Holland, for instance, not only have assisted suicides almost doubled since euthanasia was legalised in 2002, but the Dutch Minister of Health, Edith Schippers, recently stated that people who want to end their lives can be referred by their doctors to special mobile euthanasia teams if necessary. She would prefer, she added, if people are helped to die by their own doctors, but that, “if the patient thinks it desirable, the doctor can refer him or her to a mobile team or clinic”.

Modern society has lost sight of the fact that self-murder, whether or not it has the help of others, is a most heinous sin in God’s eyes. Some who have taken their own lives have insisted on their right to do so, but they could not be more wrong. It is the prerogative only of our Creator to determine when we shall leave this world. To die well (the literal meaning of the term *euthanasia*) is not to have the imaginary dignity of murdering oneself, but to have the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. “Say ye to the righteous, It shall be well with him” (Is 3:10). NMR

Health and Safety

A Sheriff conducting a fatal accident inquiry blamed the senior officers of the Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service for their failure to attempt the rescue of a woman who had fallen down a mineshaft near her home. The woman was left for six hours partly submerged in water. She was eventually brought to the surface, apparently without difficulty, but subsequently died because of the long exposure. Numerous firemen had volunteered to go down to

rescue her but were not allowed to do so by their superiors “for health and safety reasons”.

The present mania for health and safety regulations is a perversion of God’s commandment: “Thou shalt not kill” (Ex 20:13). *The Shorter Catechism* expands this commandment as requiring “all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life, and the lives of others”. Aside from prohibiting murder, such a commandment is very necessary because of the human tendency towards recklessness and callousness.

Many non-Christian cultures have shown a great disregard for human life, and not a few employees in Britain have been injured or killed through the carelessness and greed of their employers. The “health and safety” mania, however, under the influence of Satan, has taken matters to the opposite extreme and recently there have been numerous examples of foolish, even absurd, decisions taken in the name of health and safety. In the present case, it appears from the Sheriff’s description of the circumstances that the firemen had a clear call in providence to attempt the woman’s rescue, and what they should have done was to have committed the matter to God through Jesus Christ and lowered one of their number down the mineshaft. Instead their superiors consulted health and safety regulations which were quite inappropriate to the situation, and did nothing.

Human regulations have two great defects: they are frequently unwise and they are frequently applied to situations not envisaged by those who composed them. God’s laws have neither of these defects. “I have seen an end of all perfection: but Thy commandment is exceeding broad” (Ps 119:96). *DWBS*

Ninth Presbyterian Denomination for Scotland?

Rev Peter Dickson, formerly minister of High Hilton, Aberdeen, has resigned from the Church of Scotland over the issue of ordaining openly-homosexual men and women to the ministry. Mr Dickson has taken most of his congregation with him, and the first service of the new congregation, known as Trinity Church, was held on Sabbath, December 4. It was attended, we are told, by over 170 people. Initially it was hoped that the new congregation would meet in schools until a building could be purchased, and agreement had been obtained from two headteachers for holding morning and evening services, but the Aberdeen Council refused to ratify these arrangements. A prominent homosexual on the Council may have been a factor in this decision.

The intention is that Trinity Church should join the International Presbyterian Church, a denomination which has four English-speaking and six Korean-speaking congregations in England. If this goes ahead, there will be at least nine Presbyterian denominations in Scotland. Of these, we think that the

Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland is the one whose present constitution dates back the longest (1893). The position of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland is that of the Disruption Free Church of 1843 and it is a matter of regret that so few Presbyterians since 1893 have adhered to this position and have been willing to join the Free Presbyterian Church. *DWBS*

Church Information

Theological Conference 2011

The Theology Conference this year was held in Glasgow on November 1-2. Rev H M Cartwright had been scheduled to deliver a paper on the Authorised Version but became unwell and then passed away in September. Mr Cartwright was a consistent and valued supporter of the Conference, both in presenting papers and in adding quality to the discussion arising from the papers presented by others. In this, as in so many other areas of church life, Mr Cartwright will be greatly missed.

The committee was very grateful to Mr Matthew Vogan for stepping in at short notice with a paper focusing on one of the translators of the Authorised Version, John Bois, and providing helpful insights into the continuing and unique value of the Authorised Version. This paper was followed by Rev N M Ross on Amyraldianism, a heresy which has slain its thousands over the years, draws sinners towards Rome, and is still with us. Rev A W MacColl gave us an overview of James Durham's *Treatise on Scandal*, a difficult book which, dealing as it does in a masterly manner with the beauty of a united church and with the sin of schism, could not be more topical. Rev K D Macleod's paper was on Thomas Cartwright, a very gifted sixteenth-century English Presbyterian. An interesting discussion ensued as to why Presbyterianism received and continues to receive such a cold welcome in England. The last paper was by Rev R MacLeod on Providence. Difficult aspects of this profound subject were presented in a clear and interesting manner.

Though numbers were low (16-20) the quality of the papers was high; there was no lack of interested and valuable discussion and the atmosphere was fraternal. It is a matter of regret that more were not present to benefit from the work put into the papers but we trust the Lord will bless the insights gained by those who did attend. *JRT*

Mrs Jenny McPherson

Mrs McPherson was the widow of Rev Alexander McPherson and passed away to her eternal rest on 7 December 2011. We express our sympathy to her son and family.

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 Achany 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. Manse tel: 0131 447 1920. Contact Mr I R MacLeod; tel: 0131 334 4057.
- Farr** (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon (other than second and fourth Sabbaths of month), 6 pm. Thursday 7.30 pm. **Tomatin:** second Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** fourth Sabbath 12 noon. 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; **Strathly:** Church; no F P Church services.
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm. **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South):** **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Sheilebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (except first Sabbath of month). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh, 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. 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 744411. 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 Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Contact Mr R Middleton, 2 Emerald Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 4ND. Tel: 01270 761673. 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. Rev J L Goldby MA, 23 Upper Cairncastle Road, Larne BT40 2EF. Tel: 02828 274865.

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. Contact Mr Joseph Smith, 13732 West 6th Street, Santa Fe, 77517. Tel: 409 927 1564. Manse tel: 409 925 1315.

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: sydneyfpcchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

Auckland: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J D Smith. Tel: 09 282 4195.

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm.

Tauranga: Girl Guide Hall, 17th Avenue, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm; Thursday 7.30 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.

Singapore

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

Ukraine

Odessa: 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 Levytsky; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytsky@gmail.com.

Zimbabwe

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

Ingenya: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean. Postal Address: Ingenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo.

Mbumba: Church and Hospital: Postal Address: Mbumba Mission Hospital, Private Bag T5406, Bulawayo.

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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