

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*

Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Love to Righteousness..... | 129 |
| Sin Found Out | |
| A Sermon by David Black..... | 133 |
| Scottish Reformers’ View of Romanism | |
| 2. Historical Survey of the Pre-Reformation Period | |
| Rev D W B Somerset | 141 |
| Lydia’s Conversion | |
| James Buchanan | 147 |
| Our Gospel Work in Africa and Israel | |
| Rev N M Ross | 153 |
| Notes and Comments | 156 |
| Protestant View | 159 |
| Church Information | 160 |

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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, Gisborne, Laide; *Fourth:* Glasgow; *Fifth:* Mbuma.

May: *First Sabbath:* Aberdeen, Grafton, London; *Second:* Achmore, Donsa, Fort William, New Canaan, Scourie; *Third:* Edinburgh; *Fourth:* Chiedza.

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

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November: *Second Sabbath:* Glasgow; *Third:* Wellington; *Fourth:* Chiedza.

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

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Love to Righteousness

In Psalm 45, the Psalmist addresses the divine, eternal King, who rules righteously: “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre” (v 6). But in the next verse, the Psalmist goes on to speak of this divine King’s God: “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows”. One verse seems to contradict the other, but the clearer light of the New Testament makes obvious what was more dimly revealed in the Old: while there is one, and only one, God, this true God exists in three Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. But what puts the matter completely beyond doubt is the fact that the verses from Psalm 45 are quoted in Hebrews 1:8-9, where we are told that these words are spoken “unto the Son” – to the Son of God in human nature.

There could be no doubt that, before the incarnation, the Son of God eternally loved righteousness, and hated wickedness; but would that be consistently true of Him when He came into a fallen world? The angels had begun their existence with a love to righteousness and a hatred of wickedness, both perfect – though, when there was yet no sin, it might have been impossible for finite creatures to imagine something so repulsive to their holy natures. Yet some of the angels did fall into a state of sin. We may not be able to understand how beings who were perfectly holy could possibly have fallen from that condition, but Scripture makes clear that this was indeed what happened, and its testimony ought to satisfy us even when we cannot fully understand. Now the fallen angels love wickedness and hate righteousness, and under Satan their head they do all in their power to promote wickedness and oppose righteousness.

Adam and Eve also were created perfectly holy, living in holy fellowship with each other and with God. But the devil appeared in the Garden of Eden in the hope of leading the human race away from God. In this wicked purpose he was entirely successful, and fallen human beings love wickedness, while they have no love for righteousness – though God restrains them from going further in sin than they actually do.

It seemed such a small point on which Satan tempted Eve, to take just one piece of fruit, but “whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (Jas 2:10). When Eve transgressed God’s command at this one point, she was a law-breaker, and this one point was what she and Adam had been particularly warned about; the all-wise God had appointed it as a test of whether their love of righteousness would endure.

Satan and his followers do all in their power to prevent sinners from forsaking wickedness and returning to God; “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Cor 4:4). Correspondingly sinners have no desire to lay hold of Christ’s righteousness, however warmly it is set before them and however earnestly they are warned against the sin of unbelief. Even apart from the evil activity of the devil, sinners will go on in sin rather than walk in the way of holiness – unless and until the Holy Spirit will work savingly in their hearts.

Jesus grew up in a sinful environment. His was a godly family, yet neither Joseph or Mary were free from sin. Further, we are told that “neither did His brethren believe in Him” (Jn 7:5); they were still in their sins, and we can assume that this was the condition also of almost everyone around Him as He grew up in Nazareth. Certainly the reaction of the local people to Jesus’ address in their synagogue was the reverse of what we would expect from a godly community (and behind this ungodly reaction, we can readily recognise the evil influence of the tempter: his hatred of righteousness and love of wickedness). Yet in His childhood “Jesus increased . . . in favour with God” (Lk 2:52); it was evident that He loved righteousness, and hated wickedness. And the all-seeing eye of His Father observed this.

Satan had been successful in tempting holy Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and he could not resist tempting the holy God-man. There was the particular confrontation immediately after the baptism of Christ, at His entrance to His public ministry – when the Saviour showed His love of what is right by insisting to John: “Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness” (Mt 3:15). Yet we should note that the Saviour went out deliberately to confront Satan – “led by the Spirit” – for to “resist the devil” was an element of the work that had been entrusted to Him for the redemption of His people.

His love to righteousness and hatred of wickedness was manifest as Christ forcefully rejected Satan’s temptation, even when that enemy of all righteousness quoted from the Scriptures. Even after being twice repulsed with “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (Eph 6:17), Satan returned a third time to tempt the Saviour. Having shown Him “all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them”, Satan made the offer: “All these things

will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me". Commenting on this passage, David Brown points out that Satan "has ceased now to present his temptations under the mask of piety and stands out unblushingly as the rival of God Himself in His claims on the homage of men. Despairing of success as an angel of light, he throws off all disguise and, with a splendid bribe, solicits divine honour."

Besides, Satan was offering what was not his to give; he was speaking to One who loved righteousness and hated wickedness from the core of His being, even of His humanity. Accordingly Christ would not move in the slightest degree from the principle He enunciated in His reply, again using the words of Scripture, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Mt 4:8-10). It was the first and most fundamental of all the Ten Commandments that was being attacked, but Christ could say, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart" (Ps 40:8). No doubt Adam and Eve could have said so before their fall into sin, but, in contrast with them, the second Adam could not be deflected from His entire love to righteousness and hatred of wickedness; they could not be erased from His heart. Anything short of a perfect delight in God's will was sin, and He could not sin. His resistance to temptation was complete. Not even Satan himself, with all his powers and all his subtlety, could tempt the Lord Jesus Christ away from perfect holiness in thought, word or deed.

But why was the Son of God in the world? Why did He condescend to confront the evil one in this fallen world and in our nature? It was so that He might, in a way that was consistent with the divine love to righteousness, redeem sinners from their sin and from the consequences, not only of their own sins, but also of Adam's original transgression. So, in particular, He must confront the devil at the very point where Adam had failed; He must stand where Adam fell, and do so as the sinner's substitute. He had come under the law; He had taken on Himself a responsibility to keep the law. Yes, He must take upon Himself the guilt of His people and bear it away, in His suffering unto death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek 18:4), and when the Son of God becomes man to save His people from the death which is the result of their guilt, He must die instead.

Yet He must do more. The law not only demands freedom from guilt; it demands entire obedience to the law, from any sinner who is to be accepted by God as righteous and at last be admitted to heaven. It must be said of everyone who is received to glory: He has loved righteousness and hated wickedness; yet that cannot be said of any mere human being in the full sense of the expression. Paul himself, whose holy, earnest desire was "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts

24:16), had to complain of the power of sin in his heart. Only after entering glory could it be said that he was perfectly holy. So he needed a substitute to whom it could be said without qualification: "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness", One who could do so continuously.

But the Father said – and the words were heard on earth more than once – "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased", and there was never a moment when the Father could not have spoken of Him in these terms. There was never a moment when Christ's obedience fell short of absolute perfection. In His reactions to the insincere legality of the Pharisees, the sceptical attitudes of the Sadducees, the unbelief of the Jews generally and the disciples' lack of understanding, Christ reacted appropriately, in perfect obedience to all the precepts of the law of God. In all circumstances, He loved His Father with all His heart and soul and strength and mind. And His perfect obedience was on behalf of Paul and on behalf of every other sinner for whom He was a substitute.

So when sinners look to Christ by faith, they are justified. Not only are their sins forgiven on account of the substitutionary sufferings of Christ, they are treated as if they had kept the law perfectly – as if they themselves had, without a moment's interruption, loved righteousness and hated wickedness. And when the time comes for them to leave this world, "with gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought . . . into the King's palace" (Ps 45:15) – because of what the King did for them when He veiled His glory – when, to quote Paul's inspired words, He "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil 2:7,8).

But He has His reward; Paul continues: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name". He who perfectly loved righteousness and hated wickedness is further addressed: "God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows". His brethren, who in this world began, however imperfectly, to love righteousness and to hate wickedness, are welcomed to glory with such words as these: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Mt 25:21). That joy is unspeakably great, but the joy of the God-man, who finished the awful work given Him to perform in this world for the salvation of a multitude that no man can number, will be far greater. Not least is the joy of bringing all these many sons to glory.

What should be our response to His work, to His perfect delight in the Father's will? It is to believe on Him and to worship wholeheartedly.

Sin Found Out¹

A Sermon by *David Black*

Numbers 32:23. *Be sure your sin will find you out.*

The children of Israel had arrived at the borders of the land of Canaan and were about to pass over the River Jordan, to take possession of the country that they had been promised for an inheritance. The Reubenites and Gadites, two of the 12 tribes, saw the lands of Jazer and Gilead. They judged them to be specially suited to their manner of life and proposed to remain on that side of the river. Moses was displeased with this proposal, chiefly because it might deprive the other tribes of their assistance in warring against those nations of Canaan which had yet to be subdued. But when the Reubenites and Gadites undertook to continue with their brethren till the land was conquered, Moses consented, but warned them not to deal deceitfully in this matter, for God was witness to the whole transaction.

The words of the text contain a general truth of great importance; a truth which cannot be too often or too seriously considered. Most people are anxious to hide their sin, to extenuate its guilt and flatter themselves with a hope of peace, though they walk after the imagination of their own corrupt hearts. In order to avoid the stings of conscience, some have recourse to infidel principles, or if that appears too big a step, to false ideas about religion which steel the mind against conviction and make it feel more at ease in sin. Others banish as much as possible all reflection on these subjects. They plunge into company, business, or amusement, for the express purpose of driving away care; they think they are well off if they succeed.

A third class, not so hardened as the first two, cannot rid themselves entirely of fears of a hereafter and stifle their convictions by futile purposes of future amendment. In these and many other ways, sinners deceive themselves, to their everlasting ruin. If they can only succeed in concealing their guilt from themselves or from public view and maintain a respectable character in the sight of their fellow-creatures, they are satisfied. But they never consider what light they appear in before Him who “seeth not as man seeth”, to whom the secrets of all hearts are always visible.

But “verily [there] is a God that judgeth in the earth”, and “though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished”. Sin is not that harmless, trivial thing which multitudes flatter themselves it is. As certainly as there is a God who governs the world; as certainly as power, wisdom, faithfulness,

¹This Sermon seems to have been preached on a day of humiliation before the Lord's Supper. It is taken, with editing, from Black's *Sermons on Important Subjects*. Some extracts from Black's diary appeared in the December 2011 issue of this Magazine.

justice and holiness belong to His character, so certainly will sin find the sinner out. If the Word of God is true, it must do so sooner or later. "Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue, though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth; yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him." Every sin which we commit has in it the seeds of inconceivable misery, and will produce either bitter repentance in the present life, or endless, unavailing remorse in the world to come.

Such is the doctrine of the text, and of every part of Scripture; and to this solemn, awakening truth, I propose to call your attention. O that it may reach the conscience of everyone present – that all of us may, under the effectual teaching of the Holy Spirit, be brought to confess our guilt, humble ourselves before God, and apply without delay to the blessed remedy provided in the gospel! I shall try to bring the subject home at once to your consciences by mentioning some of those *times when sin will find the sinner out*. I shall begin with those which are more particular and then proceed to those which are more universal.

1. *Under the powerful, searching ministry of the gospel.* "The Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." When skilfully opened and faithfully applied, it seldom fails to make some impression on the minds of the hearers. Though these impressions often prove transient and ineffective, yet in many instances the gospel becomes the power of God unto salvation.

Conviction of sin is often produced under the *preaching* of the Word. The preacher draws his bow at a venture; he does not know the particular character of many of those he addresses, but the Spirit of God directs the arrow to the heart of some hearer, just as He pleases. "Thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face he will worship God," and acknowledge that God is among us of a truth. Perhaps some particular sin is brought to his memory, a sin long ago committed and long ago forgotten. Or the history of his past life in general may be brought under review and the guilt of numerous transgressions, with all their aggravations, may stare him in the face. Probably he wonders how the preacher knows so much about the workings of his heart or life. Every word seems particularly addressed to himself, as if no one else was present, and he almost suspects that the speaker has been informed of circumstances which no one else knew about. So powerful is the operation of the Word of God on the conscience.

Even the most hardened are sometimes made to feel it. Thus, when Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgement to come, Felix trembled.

And such was the effect of John the Baptist's faithful preaching on Herod's mind that he feared John and did many things and heard him gladly. The effects in these two cases, as in many others, were temporary. The love of sin proved too powerful and triumphed over their feeble resolutions to amend.

But how blessed it is when arrows of conviction take such firm hold of the conscience that only the peace-speaking blood of Christ can heal the wound! May this be the case with every unconverted sinner who hears me today! May the Lord open your hearts as He opened Lydia's, to attend to what is spoken! And if your sin has never found you out before, may it now be shown to you, in all its evil, so that you may see your danger and, like the manslayer pursued by the avenger of blood, speedily flee to the city of refuge. But the prophet's complaint may be made: "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" The preacher's words are to many like "a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument, for they hear [his] words, but they do them not".

2. *Sickness.* This is often a time of serious reflection. Separated from the busy crowd and incapable of attending to his ordinary activities, someone who is sick has time to consider his ways. Sin then looks quite different from what it did during thoughtless entertainment. In some cases, disease is the natural result of particular sins; in every case it is the fruit of our original apostasy from God. God has often been pleased to awaken in the sinner's conscience a sense of sin by means of some serious illness.

Then he has to exclaim, "There is no soundness in my flesh because of Thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Ps 38:3,4). Yes, I remember my faults this day; they gave me little uneasiness when I committed them, for my foolish, depraved heart was hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. But I now see the guilt and folly of my past conduct. I heard many faithful and kind warnings in sermons long ago, to which I paid little attention at the time, but they are now fresh in my memory. "How have I hated instruction and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!" "Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth."

These are not imaginary scenes. Many are awfully hardened under God's afflicting hand and respond as little as ever to the evil and guilt of sin, even while their bones are chastened with pain. It provides a striking proof of the total inefficacy of means, apart from the influence of divine grace. On the other hand, there are those who have resisted every means of conviction, but are savingly awakened in time of weakness. It is, however, to be feared that,

in many instances, people who have been considerably softened in time of trouble relapse into their former carelessness when health returns. But be sure that, sooner or later, your sin will find you out. It may be in the time of sickness, in the hour of calm reflection; and it will be good if you find out your sin while there is time for repentance, before the door of mercy is shut and the awful sentence is passed: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still".

3. *Various adverse changes in circumstances.* We are born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards. Besides bodily sickness, the differing conditions in which we are placed in the world result, in providence, in suffering. In situations of this kind, iniquity may be remembered and impressed on the sinner's conscience. We have a striking instance of this in the history of Joseph's brethren. Long after they had sold their brother into Egypt, a seemingly adverse providence brought their unkindness to Joseph into their full view. "And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." And again: "What shall we say unto my Lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants."

The history of David provides another striking instance of the same instructive truth. After his lamentable fall, David continued for a long time in a state of awful hardness. While his outward circumstances prospered, he seems to have had no idea of the greatness of his sin; he went on frowardly in the way of his heart and perhaps secretly congratulated himself on having escaped detection. But when the prophet Nathan was sent to rouse his conscience to a sense of guilt, he assured David that the Lord had put away his sin – that is, cancelled its guilt, granted him forgiveness. At the same time he foretold several grievous calamities which should befall him as tokens of God's displeasure, every one of which would doubtless contribute to bringing his sin to remembrance.

First of all, the child begotten in adultery was smitten with sickness and cut off by death, an affliction in which David did perceive the hand of a justly-offended God. Next, Tamar his daughter was defiled by her brother Amnon, in revenge for which Amnon was treacherously slain by Absalom. To fill up the measure of his sufferings, his beloved son Absalom rose in rebellion against his too-indulgent father and died in his rebellion. David clearly saw in these accumulated distresses the punishment of his iniquity, as we see in his language when Absalom's rebellion forced him to flee from Jerusalem across the brook Kedron. "Carry back the ark of God into the city," he told Zadok the priest; "if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring

me again, and show me both it and His habitation. But if He thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him” (2 Sam 15:25, 26).

Have we not witnessed very similar cases? Have we not known people of reputed piety who, in a time of outward prosperity, have been sinfully conformed to the world and their general conduct has been stained with many blemishes, which have grieved the godly and brought reproach on the good ways of the Lord? Have we not seen them backsliding in spite of faithful warnings, promising themselves peace when there was no peace till, by means of some severe affliction, their sin has found them out. Then with tears of penitential sorrow they have confessed their guilt and blessed the kind hand of God, which has recovered them from their sinful wanderings.

May not this have been the case with some who hear me now? Or, at least, are there not some of you who, by means of affliction, have been brought back to God from less obvious deviations from duty? You secretly cherished some idol in your hearts, which interrupted your communion with God. You were guilty of giving to some other object that place in your affections which belongs to God only. Perhaps you were not aware of it at the time till, by the removal of the idol, God detected your sin and, with shame and self-condemnation, you were constrained to acknowledge that your sin had found you out.

Thus far I have mentioned some situations when sin finds the sinner out, when the discovery, however painful, may by God’s blessing, prove beneficial to the soul. But I go on to speak of two other times, more certain and universal, when the effects are not generally so profitable.

4. *The near approach of death.* At this solemn time, those refuges of lies are swept away which used to keep alive a presumptuous hope. And the sinner finds himself on the brink of eternity without any well-grounded confidence in God; instead there is a fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation. In very many cases, sinners die as they have lived: in a state of thoughtless, hardened impenitence. Some are cut off suddenly without any opportunity for serious reflection. They pass at once from a state of worldly prosperity into a state of endless, inconceivable misery. “There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm.” Others, dying of lingering diseases, flatter themselves to the last with a hope of recovery and, through the cruel kindness of friends, are never allowed to think of death or eternity. And others die under the horrors of an awakened conscience, alarmed but not converted, convinced but not changed.

However easy it may be to view death at a distance, its approach will almost certainly excite fear in those who are not brutishly ignorant, or dreadfully

hardened. How solemn is the certain prospect of soon passing into eternity and appearing before the great, omniscient God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity and from whose impartial decision there lies no appeal or any possibility of escape! How overwhelming the thought when the person retains possession of his faculties! Sin must then appear in a very different light to the unpardoned sinner. Innumerable instances of sinful habits, of neglected duties, of squandered privileges recur to his memory and, amidst the agonies of death, harrow his soul.

Should it be suggested that God is merciful, this suggestion – which previously kept alive a delusive hope, making him feel secure in sin – now greatly aggravates his distress. If able to express his feelings in words, he might say, “God is merciful, but I have abused His mercy. And He is just to punish the workers of iniquity. How can I escape the vengeance I deserve when, all my life, I have neglected His great salvation?” Of all the delusions by which the god of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, trusting to a death-bed repentance is surely one of the greatest. How dreadfully precarious it is! No one who has any regard for the authority of God’s Word can deny that it is possible, but how rare are the instances! How unlikely that those who sin under this presumption will ever be saved!

Even Christians who are pardoned and accepted by God may suffer awful rebukes on their deathbed on account of the prevalence of some particular sin or the general untenderness of their walk. Their sin may find them out at a time when they stand most in need of God’s support and consolation. They may be left to mourn under the hiding of God’s face, in painful uncertainty about their state, when, had they walked more closely with God, they might have been edifying their fellow Christians. Little do we think when we succumb to temptation, when we indulge a worldly spirit, or neglect opportunities of doing good, that we may be hiding our evidences for heaven at a time when ten thousand worlds will appear as nothing in comparison with one smile of God’s reconciled countenance.

5. *The great day of judgement.* God “hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness”. This is the uniform doctrine of Scripture, but the power of conscience demonstrates that there is a witness above whose eyes are on the ways of men and sees all their goings – to whom the greatest as well as the lowest of mankind are accountable. Do not think, poor sinner, that you can escape God’s judgement. His threatenings may not alarm your hard heart, nor His promises allure it. You may despise the most striking dispensations of providence. Death itself may approach without creating any great alarm and, supported by some mistaken view of God’s character, you may go down to the grave with a lie in your right hand.

But be sure your sin will find you out. If not before, it will do so at the judgement seat of Christ – when God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of every heart. How dreadful to think of not being undeceived till death has sealed your everlasting doom, of not seeing your true state and character till placed beyond the reach of recovery in a world of endless misery – when He that made you will not have mercy on you, and He that formed you will show you no favour.

There is something very solemn in the account of the discovery of Achan's sin. He had stolen a golden wedge and other articles which he hid in the earth, under his tent, hoping to escape detection. Though no human eye witnessed Achan's sin, God saw it and, by His express command, the offender was called forth to suffer deserved punishment. This is an emblem of what we shall all witness when the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, when He shall sit upon His throne and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. Then shall every man be judged according to his works. Sin, however carefully concealed, will then find the sinner out. The guilty person shall be called to judgement and his most secret sins exposed before assembled worlds.

No apologies for sin will then be admitted, for the Judge is omniscient; He knows the secrets of all hearts. No attempt to escape the punishment of iniquity will be possible, for the Judge is omnipotent; He can easily fulfil His severest threatenings. In vain will impenitent transgressors cry to the rocks and to the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. The day has come when He will render to every man according to his deeds; and all shall know that it is He who searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men.

If it is so absolutely certain that, sooner or later, sin will find the sinner out, how dreadful is the infatuation of multitudes who go on confidently from day to day, under the guilt of innumerable transgressions! The practical language of many is: The Lord does not see, neither does the God of Jacob regard it. But how vain and groundless is such an expectation! There is nothing secret that shall not be made manifest, neither anything hid that shall not be known. He who searches Jerusalem as with lighted candles can easily pierce through the thickest disguise.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” If a man should sow cockle in his field instead of barley and expect to reap the same kind of crop as his neighbour who sowed good seed, we

should suppose he was out of his senses. It matters little whether anyone saw him while he sowed his field, the harvest will soon make clear the absurdity of his conduct. Far worse is the folly of the man who expects to find peace in the ways of sin, who sows to the flesh and yet hopes to reap life everlasting. The present life is our seedtime. We are sowing for eternity. The harvest is approaching, when we shall reap according to the nature of the seed that we have sown, whether to the flesh or to the Spirit.

This subject is important for us all. Our sins are many and serious; they expose us to certain destruction. Let us not wait till our sin finds us out. It will do so, but it may be too late. Let us therefore all endeavour, without delay, to find our sins out, so that in true repentance, and faith in the blood of Christ, we may apply to God for pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace.

Let none of us flatter ourselves with the hope that our sins are pardoned, merely because we confess that we are poor sinners and have learned to say, God have mercy on us. Many do so who evidently are strangers to God's forgiveness. Many are encouraged to go on in sin from confused, mistaken ideas about gospel grace. But the genuine gospel does not give the least encouragement to sin. If we refuse to let our transgressions go, or if, while pretending to be sorry for our sins, we secretly indulge them in our hearts and do not try to avoid the temptations which lead to them, it is plain evidence that our hearts are not right with God, that our guilt is still unpardoned, and that we are still in our sins.

True godly sorrow is known by its fruits. It produces sincere hatred of sin, habitual watchfulness against it, a holy fear of offending God, and a uniform desire and endeavour to please Him. If we have obtained redemption through the blood of Christ – the forgiveness of all our sins, according to the riches of His grace – sin shall no longer have dominion over us. We may mourn over its prevalence, but we shall daily watch and pray and strive against it. Is it thus with you? Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves. The heart is deceitful. Let this make you distrust yourselves and lead you to pray as the Psalmist did: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting".

We again have an opportunity of approaching the Lord's table. Let no one who is living in open or in secret sin venture to approach it. Let no one imagine that partaking of the bread and wine will make atonement for their sins or settle accounts with God. Fatal mistake! Dreadful perversion of the ordinance! But let every humble, penitent, believing sinner renew his application to the blood of sprinkling and come to receive the pledges of the Redeemer's love.

Scottish Reformers' View of Romanism¹

2. Historical Survey of the Pre-Reformation Period

Rev D W B Somerset

(1.) *The Lollards of Kyle.* Kyle is a district of Ayrshire, and the Lollards of Kyle were flourishing in 1494, 30 years before Patrick Hamilton. The name *Lollard* shows that they derived, ultimately, from John Wycliffe, who had died in 1384. Thirty of them, including Adam Reid of Barskimming, were summoned before James IV at the instigation of Robert Blackadar, Archbishop of Glasgow; and 34 articles of accusation were brought against them. These articles are listed in John Knox's *History* (Archbishop Spottiswoode's *History* gives a shorter list). Being articles of accusation, they must be treated with caution because there is always a likelihood of misrepresentation and exaggeration. Assuming, however, that the articles reasonably reflect their views, they were very much followers of Wycliffe's doctrine.

The articles make interesting reading: "(1) They said that it was wrong to have or to worship images. (2) It was wrong to worship relics of saints. (7) That after the consecration in the mass there remains bread, and there is not the natural body of Christ. (12) That the Pope is not the successor of Peter except where Christ said, 'Go behind Me, Satan'. (13) The Pope deceives people by his bulls and indulgences. (14) That the mass profiteth not the souls that are in purgatory. (17) That the Pope exalts himself against God and above God. (19) That the blessings of bishops [of dumb dogs, they should have been stiled, says Knox] are of no value. (22) That priests might have wives, according to the constitution of the law. (32) That the Pope is the head of the kirk of Antichrist. (28) That we should not pray to the glorious Virgin Mary but to God only. (31) That such as worships the sacrament of the kirk [that is, the bread and wine] commits idolatry. (33) That the Pope and his ministers are murderers."

The articles are against images, the mass, the worship of the Virgin Mary, and especially the Pope. They rejected images, presumably because of the Ten Commandments. They almost certainly did not have the Old Testament in English – though they probably had it in Latin – but they might well have had the Ten Commandments in English. They rejected prayer to the Virgin Mary because they found in the New Testament that God is the only object of worship and that Christ is the only Mediator. Their rejection of the mass was fairly comprehensive: they rejected transubstantiation, the sacrifice for the dead in purgatory (though they seem to have accepted purgatory itself), and the worship of the elements, but they did not see the mass as essentially

¹The previous article provided an introduction to the subject.

blasphemous. It does not appear that they separated from the Church although they were withholding their tithes.

Perhaps the most surprising thing is the strength of their opposition to the Pope. They regarded him as an imposter and a wicked man, and it is remarkable that people in their position should have had such views. The Pope was a long way away and one wonders why they were even thinking about him. Probably this indicates a legacy from the writings and teachings of Wycliffe 120 years earlier. Wycliffe moved in high political circles in which the Pope was a major figure. The point here is that people's view of the Church and of Romanism will depend not only on having the Bible but also on the teaching that they have received. These people had received good teaching through Wycliffe but there were other early Protestants who did not have such advantages.

One other thing to notice is that there is nothing in the articles about the doctrine of justification by faith. Possibly this is because the articles were drawn up by an ignorant enemy who was trying to blacken them. If they had drawn up their own articles there might have been a very different emphasis.

Before moving on to Patrick Hamilton, we mention in passing that Lutheran books were coming into Scotland by July 1525. These were in Latin, but they were being read in monasteries and universities; and, after 1526, copies of Tyndale's New Testament were coming into Scotland. This was in English, so the Word of God was becoming generally available so long as there was someone around who could read English.

(2.) *Patrick Hamilton and his successors.* Patrick Hamilton (1504-1528) was possibly born at Stonehouse, near Glasgow. He studied at Paris and St Andrews and was converted, probably through the imported Lutheran books that we have mentioned. He became an open Protestant in 1526. In 1527 Archbishop James Beaton cited him to answer for his heretical beliefs, and Hamilton escaped from this by fleeing to Germany. After six months he deliberately returned to Scotland knowing what the cost was likely to be. He was apprehended and tried by Archbishop Beaton and others, and put to death on 29 February 1528. The two main sources for his theological beliefs are the articles that were alleged against him at his trial and his short book usually known as *Patrick's Places*. This was a Latin composition translated into English by John Frith, and published in London about 1532 with the title, *Divers Fruitful Gatherings of Scripture*. It is mainly an exposition of the doctrine of justification by faith.

As far as his view of Rome is concerned, we get more from the articles alleged against him at his trial. Here are some of them, as given in Spottiswoode's *History*: "(1) That the corruption of sin remains in children after

their baptism. (3) That no man is without sin as long as he lives. (4) That good works make not a good man, but that a good man doeth good works, and that an ill man doeth ill works; yet the same ill works truly repented of make not an ill man. (5) That a man is not justified by works but by faith only. (9) That it is a devilish doctrine to teach that, by any actual penance, remission of sins is purchased. (10) That auricular confession is not essential to salvation. (11) That there is no purgatory. (13) That the Pope is Antichrist, and that every priest hath as much power as the Pope.”

These articles are more doctrinal, and more closely related to the way of salvation, than those against the Lollards of Kyle. To these articles, Hamilton replied that “he held the first seven to be undoubtedly true; the rest were disputable points, but such as he could not condemn, unless he saw better reasons than yet he had heard.” This reply is puzzling. One would have expected him to accept articles 9-11 above as undoubtedly true. Article 9 relates to the atonement, and whether human works add anything to it. Article 10 touches on the place of the Church in salvation (perhaps a statement like, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mk 16:16), was confusing him).

But there is some uncertainty over the articles – John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments* gives a rather different list and significantly alters article 9 (“It is a devilish doctrine to enjoin any sinner actual penance, for sin”) – so we cannot make too much of this point. Foxe’s list contains several articles on the Pope’s spiritual and temporal authority which Spottiswoode omitted. Like the Lollards before him, Hamilton was strongly inclined to identify the Papacy with the Antichrist: at the very least he regarded the Pope as exceedingly wicked. It is interesting to note his essentially Presbyterian doctrine in article 13: that all priests (ministers) are equal. In Foxe’s list, it was also charged against Hamilton that he maintained that “Master Patrick Hamilton was a bishop” – one can see why the Episcopalian Spottiswoode might have omitted this article.

One other source of information about Hamilton is Archbishop Beaton’s “Citation” against him in 1527. This mentions some of the usual Romish beliefs and practices which Hamilton rejected – worshipping of images, salvation through good works, prayers for the dead – and also charges him with teaching that “the sacraments of the Church were not to be believed” and “that those who trusted in them had died in an evil and wicked belief and been buried in hell”. This was a repudiation of the sacrifice of the mass, and possibly also of transubstantiation, which was not otherwise mentioned. He was also allegedly teaching that “churches are not to be frequented”. If this charge was correct, then already the idea of separation from the Church of Rome was receiving prominence.

One of Hamilton's followers was John Gau (died c1553), who studied at St Andrews and lived as an exile in Copenhagen in the 1530s. Little is known about his life. In 1533 he published *The Right Way to the Kingdom of Heaven*, which was printed at Malmo in Sweden on October 16. The book is about 100 pages long, and gives an exposition of the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. It is largely a translation of a Danish work by Christian Pedersen, which itself was a translation of a work by the German reformer Urbanus Rhegius (1489-1541).

Gau follows the Roman (and Lutheran) practice of combining the First and Second Commandments and breaking the Tenth into two, with the result that the Second Commandment is effectively buried (by contrast, Patrick Hamilton in *Patrick's Places* gives the usual division of the Ten Commandments, and the Lollards of Kyle were evidently familiar with the Second Commandment). Gau has a Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper: "We trow that the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is contained verily in the sacrament of the altar under the form of bread and wine". But he speaks of communion in both kinds: "We which eats of one bread and drinks of one cup". He also goes through the Ave Maria ("Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women" (Lk 1:28)), which he expounds briefly in a Protestant sense.

According to Professor James Kirk, Gau's book "stressed the supremacy of Scripture as the rule of faith and the right of the laity to read the vernacular Bible . . . justification by faith alone. Headship of the Church belonged to no mortal: Christ gave the keys of the kingdom to all Christians and not to Peter alone . . . ministers of the Word should be chosen by Christian congregations . . . instead of intercessory prayer to Mary and the saints, Christ alone should be worshipped."

Another of Hamilton's followers was John Johnson, presumably a student at St Andrews, who had been an eye-witness of Hamilton's martyrdom. Going abroad, Johnson published *Ane comfortable exhortation of our most holy Christian faith and her fruits*, probably in Antwerp, in 1536. This is mainly on practical aspects of Christianity and says little directly against Romanism.

Two other followers of Hamilton, who showed somewhat different attitudes towards Rome, were John Macdowell and Alexander Alesius. Macdowell was the Dominican prior of Wigton but was converted and fled to England in 1534. He came under the protection of Thomas Cromwell and became chaplain to Nicholas Shaxton, the Bishop of Salisbury. In 1537 he gained fame as the first preacher in Salisbury Cathedral to assail the supremacy of the Pope, for which he was violently handled by partisans of the Pope. He subsequently fled to the Continent during the Marian persecution.

Alesius, on the other hand, was converted through the instrumentality of Patrick Hamilton, shortly before the latter's martyrdom, when Alesius tried to reason him out of his "heresy". Alesius shows less wisdom than Macdowell. He too fled to the Continent about 1531, and in 1540 (perhaps reluctantly) he participated in a conference at Worms seeking to reconcile Romanists and Lutherans. It was even proposed that he might attend the Council of Trent for that purpose. He seems to have been more of the spirit of Melancthon, and was slow to realise the impossibility of reforming the Church of Rome. The fact that the Roman Church is beyond reformation is closely connected with the doctrine that the Papacy is the Antichrist.

Another early Scottish Reformer whose doctrinal views are recorded is John Borthwick (died in 1569), a soldier and a member of the nobility, who fled to England in 1540. He was condemned in his absence on 13 charges: he rejected indulgences; he believed that priests might marry; he believed that the "heresies" of England and the new liturgy were commendable; that the orders of friars and monks should be abolished as they had been in England; and that the Pope was guilty of simony in selling spiritual things; he read the New Testament in English and heretical books by Melancthon, Erasmus and others, and passed these on to other people; and, above all, he refused to acknowledge the authority of the Roman See or be subject to it.

Before moving on to George Wishart, we should notice the six months of Protestantism in 1543 while the Earl of Arran was Governor. In particular, an Act was forced through Parliament, against the will of the Bishops, giving permission for the reading of the Bible in English. Up to this point, there had been private meetings of Protestants, and also public preaching. This was especially so for the six months under Arran, but there was no permanent, separate Protestant Church in Scotland.

(3.) *George Wishart*. George Wishart (1513-1546), from near Montrose, studied at the University of Louvain (which sent a congratulatory letter to Archbishop Beaton for the burning of Hamilton) in 1532, and then taught New Testament Greek in Montrose. He had to flee the country in 1538. He returned to Scotland in 1543 during the "blink" of Protestantism.

He had a "Calvinistic" background rather than a Lutheran one, and an indication of his theological position is given by his translation of the *First Helvetic Confession* of 1536 into English. This was compiled by Henry Bullinger and others and is a brief but standard Protestant Confession. Wishart's translation was published in London in 1548, after his death, and was in fact the first published edition of the Confession. It is mainly positive, affirming points rather than rejecting them. In affirming that Christ is the Head of the Church, however, it does explicitly reject the authority of

the Pope; and in affirming marriage it rejects priestly celibacy and vows of monasticism.

With regard to the sacraments it is possibly somewhat Zwinglian – the sacraments are signs and tokens but there is no mention of their being seals – although there is perhaps a hint of something more: “And this holy meat do we use oft for this cause, for when through the monition and remembrance of it, we behold with the eye of our faith the death and blood of Him that was crucified, and remember our salvation and health, not without a taste of heavenly life, and very true feeling of eternal life: when we do this we are wonderfully refreshed through this spiritual, living and eternal food”. Transubstantiation is certainly rejected; but Wishart went beyond that and maintained that “the ministry of the mass is the mystery of iniquity”. Here is a rejection not only of transubstantiation and trusting in the mass (as with Hamilton) but the mass itself is now seen as idolatrous, with the implication that one should not even be present. So this undoubtedly requires a separation from the Church of Rome.

Wishart’s views of the true Church are (presumably) those set out in the Confession. The main mark is the faithful preaching of the Word, to which is added the power of the keys in Church discipline. The sacraments are “badges and tokens of this society”. So in Wishart we find a clearer view of the Church, and of what was being aimed at, than we have had before. Furthermore, he put his ideas into practice in that he was the first of the Scottish Reformers to administer the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. He did this, in both kinds, at the House of Dun in 1544 and again on the day of his execution in 1546. It is not recorded that he baptized anybody, but one of his followers, Adam Wallace, who was martyred 1550, was charged with having baptized his own child, which he had done because he rejected the baptism of the Church of Rome.

Little family conventicles must have been held since Lollard times, but with the exception of Patrick Hamilton’s brief ministry, and the parish ministry of Thomas Forret, vicar of Dollar, who was martyred in 1539, there does not seem to have been public preaching until the 1540s. The six months of Protestantism led to public preaching in several places (including Aberdeen), so people were accustomed to this idea by the time of Wishart. Wishart advanced beyond this, as we have said, in that he not only preached publicly to mixed or Protestant congregations but he also administered the Lord’s Supper. Wishart’s prayer at his death was that God would “conserve, defend and help Thy Congregation, which Thou hast chosen before the beginning of the world”, and this idea of “the Congregation” marks an important transition.

One other early Protestant at this time was Henry Balnaves, who was be-

sieged with John Knox in the Castle at St Andrews. His *Confession of Faith or Treatise on Justification by Faith* was composed in Rouen and revised by Knox in the galleys. It was not published until 1584. It is an account of "how the troubled man should seek refuge at his God", and after expounding the doctrine of justification he goes on to practical considerations. Knox provided some chapter descriptions and one of these is: "The devilish doctrine of pestilent Papistical priests". In one chapter there is a fairly full denunciation of Romanism, including "the superstitious worshipping of saints; going on pilgrimage; purging in purgatory; hallowing of water or other elements; foundation of masses to public or private idolatry . . . forbidding of marriage in the Church of God; and abominable abuses of the whole Christian religion by the shaven, oincted or smeared priests, bishops, monks and friars, having only their vocation of man and by man". Again, it was evidently separation rather than reform from within that was in mind. The whole Roman system was seen to be rotten.

Lydia's Conversion¹

James Buchanan

Common to all the cases of conversion in Scripture is this important point: the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the mind of every true convert to the Christian faith – by way of applying the truth. This point deserves our most serious consideration. Christ Himself specially referred to the agency of the Spirit in one of His last addresses to His disciples before He died. By comparing His words with other passages of Scripture, we learn that there were two very different ways in which the Spirit would act to carry into effect His great plan.

The one is external, and affects the senses; the other is internal, and spiritual. We read of "the manifestation of the Spirit which is given to every man to profit withal"; and we read of the indwelling of the Spirit in the hearts of true believers. In other words, the dispensation of the gospel is called the "ministration of the Spirit", for two distinct reasons: first, on account of the miraculous gifts which were granted to the apostles and first converts; second, on account of the enlightening, converting and sanctifying grace which rendered the gospel effectual for their salvation.

There is a wide difference between the two. They differ in their nature, their use and their effects. The one is an appropriate evidence, a divine

¹Reprinted with editing, from the "Illustrative Cases of Conversion" in *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*. It is based on Acts 16:13-15.

attestation, of the truth; the other is a direct operation on the soul by which it is renewed and quickened, and turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. Not only are they widely different, we have reason to believe that they may be separated from each other. Such is the difference between the miraculous gifts and the inward graces of the Spirit, and it is a delightful truth that the latter, the more valuable of the two, is the permanent inheritance of the Christian Church. His miraculous gifts were to cease when, by establishing the truth, they had fulfilled their end; but His office did not cease. Nor was His work completed when, by His descent on the day of Pentecost – and later, at Caesarea, on the Gentiles – the promise of the Father was fulfilled and the truth of the gospel established.

Considered as an evidence, the gift of the Spirit was decisive; but evidence is not enough, nor is an inspired Bible, nor a faithful ministry. In every human heart there is a spirit of unbelief and enmity, and many a lofty imagination which exalts itself against the knowledge of God. These cannot be overcome by any amount of evidence, or by the mere force of truth; they can only be subdued by the inward grace of the Spirit. Hence we learn that it belongs to His office, and always forms a part of His blessed work, to shine into the hearts of sinners, to renew them in the spirit of their mind, to quicken them into spiritual life, “to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God”.

The direct personal operation of the Spirit on the soul of every convert is beautifully illustrated by the case of Lydia. It is said of her that, while she listened to the preaching of the Word, the Lord opened her heart so “that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul”.

1. Her state and character before her conversion. Although the narrative is extremely short, it throws light on her case and on that of a large class in our own time who resemble her in the chief points of their character. Like Cornelius and the Ethiopian treasurer, she was a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and a believer in the one living and true God. By birth a Gentile, a native of Thyatira, she had come to Philippi as a seller of purple. Although a stranger, living amidst the idolatries which prevailed in her adopted city, she continued to worship God. It is also, I think, clear that she was devout; not only did she pray and observe the Sabbath according to the law of Moses, but – when there was probably no other opportunity of observing public worship in a city where both the magistrates and the multitude seem to have been easily excited against any innovation in their public customs – she went out of the city, beside a river, “where prayer was wont to be made”.

It is worth noting that, at the time of her conversion, this devout woman was attending a prayer meeting in the open air, by the water side, along with

a few other women who were, it would seem, in the habit of assembling for this purpose. We should also notice that Paul and his companions did not reckon it beneath them to join that humble meeting, but leaving the noise and tumult of the city, they sought out the little band of praying women, sat down beside them and spoke to them the Word of life.

While they were thus engaged, the Lord opened the heart of Lydia – a striking proof of the immediate efficacy of prayer. Without prayer, we have no reason to look for a blessing. God may sometimes surprise a prayerless sinner; He is sometimes found of them that sought Him not, as in the case of the jailor in this same city. Then the first effect of this change will be what the Lord marked in the case of Paul: “Behold, he prayeth”. This may happen, to display God’s sovereignty and the riches of His undeserved mercy, but there is no promise in the Bible except to the person who prays. And that promise is both unlimited and sure: “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened”. “If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.”

It is implied, however, in the narrative, that while Lydia was a proselyte to the Jewish faith, a worshipper of the true God, her heart was still closed against the truth as it is in Jesus. It is said that the Lord opened her heart, which clearly implies that, devout as she was, her heart was such that it would, apart from the gracious operation of the Spirit, have excluded the gospel message. Such is the natural state of every heart – and by *the heart* I mean, as is generally meant in Scripture, the whole moral nature of man, including his understanding, his conscience, his will and his affections. In this comprehensive sense, the heart is closed against the reception of the truth, and every faculty presents an obstacle which only divine grace can remove.

It is expressly said of unregenerate men that their understandings are shut against the light of the gospel. So Paul says of the Jews, who had the Old Testament in their hands: “But their minds were blinded”; “The veil was upon their hearts”; “If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”; “The natural man”, universally, “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”. And so the conscience is seared as with a hot iron”; the “very mind and conscience is defiled; and the “heart is hardened”.

Thus there are many obstacles to the entrance of the truth. There is the

obstacle of *ignorance*: many hear the Word, but do not understand it; “then cometh the wicked one, and taketh away that which was sown”. There is the obstacle of *unbelief*, which rejects the testimony of God. There is the obstacle of *enmity*, for “the carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be”. There is the obstacle of *presumption or pride*: “The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts”. There is the obstacle of *discouragement and despair*: “Thou saidst, There is no hope; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go”. There is the obstacle of *unwillingness*: “Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life”. There is the obstacle of *worldly-mindedness*: “The cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful”. There is the obstacle of *sloth*: “A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep”. There is the obstacle of *vicious passion and depraved habits*, one bosom sin being enough to exclude the saving power of the truth: “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil”.

Under the influence of such hindrances, the heart is closed against the truth – closed as really as are the eyes of the blind, or the ears of the deaf. Our Lord Himself says, “In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them”. In the same light He represents the state of our own hearts, when He says to each of us: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him”.

But, it may be asked, if Lydia was a devout worshipper of the true God, is it reasonable to suppose that her heart was thus shut against God’s truth? We have a remarkable example of this in the devout and honourable women and the chief men of the city, whom the Jews stirred up, who raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them out of their coasts, so that the apostles “shook off the dust of their feet against them”. More remarkable still was the case of Paul, who was a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee, living according to the strictest sect of the law, yet his heart was barred, by invincible prejudice, against the truth until this prejudice was removed on his way to Damascus.

Lydia too was devout, but her heart was closed until the Lord opened it. And many professing Christians in modern times resemble her in this – they

are conscientious and devout according to their light, but ignorant or unbelieving, or imbued with strong prejudice against the gospel, just as Nathaniel, of whom the Lord said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile". He was so influenced by prejudice as to say, in answer to what he first heard of the Messiah, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" If divine agency is necessary in such cases to open the heart to receive the truth, how much more in the vast majority, who are utterly irreligious and unconcerned!

2. The means by which her conversion was effected. We shall find that there was no miraculous accompaniment of any kind, but it is an example of what takes place in the experience of every genuine convert. It is simply said: "A certain woman heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul".

But this statement brings before us two things which are usually essential to a sinner's conversion. The first is the agency of the Spirit; the second is the instrumentality of the Word. The Spirit worked directly on the heart of Lydia; He removed those obstacles which might otherwise have obstructed the entrance of the truth. It was not Paul who effected this. Paul preached, but though inspired with supernatural wisdom and endowed with miraculous powers, and especially with the gift of tongues, he says, "Paul may plant, and Apollos water; but God giveth the increase. Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, according as the Lord gave to every man?" God alone can open the heart.

That change consisted in opening the understanding to discern the light of God's truth, the conscience to feel its convincing power, and the heart to receive its sanctifying influence. Heart-work belongs to the office of the Holy Ghost; it has two parts: the opening of the Scriptures and of the mind – as we learn from the case of the disciples after Christ's resurrection. They exclaimed, "Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" It is also said: "Then opened He their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures".

But while only the Lord can open the heart, He employs the truth as the instrument of conversion to the careless, and of edification to the devout inquirer. The Spirit's agency does not supersede the use of the Word; on the contrary, the truth read or heard is still the wisdom of God, and the power of God, unto salvation. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, but He did so in order that she might attend "unto the things which were spoken of Paul". This great change is wrought through the truth contained in the Word – the instrument which the Spirit of God renders effectual.

Hence, while we are said to be "born of the Spirit", we are also said to be "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of

God, which liveth and abideth for ever". Again, while the Spirit is revealed as the Sanctifier, the Lord Jesus Himself prayed in these memorable words: "Sanctify them by Thy truth; Thy Word is truth". And both are combined – both the agency of the Spirit and the instrumentality of the Word – in that comprehensive statement of the Apostle: "God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth". Various similitudes are employed to represent the same thing: the Word is compared to a fire or a furnace, in which His people are melted and tried, but the Lord sits as a refiner over it; and to a hammer, a powerful instrument, inert in itself and effectual only when applied by a powerful arm; and to a sword, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" – a sharp two-edged sword, but utterly powerless unless it is applied by the Spirit. So David's prayer combines a reference to both: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law".

3. The nature of the change, and its practical results. These are briefly alluded to, but enough is said to show that Lydia had that "faith which worketh by love", in which the new creation properly consists. We read that she was baptized, thereby professing her faith in Christ and her submission to His authority – in a city where those who professed the gospel were exposed to reproach and persecution. We also read that, as soon as she was baptized, she besought the apostles, saying, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there". Her faith was working by love to Christ and to His ministering servants, and producing zeal for His cause and service, such as prompted her to make sacrifices for His name's sake. As these principles of faith and love were really planted in her heart, they would unquestionably produce, in her later life, all the "peaceable fruits of righteousness".

The case of Lydia suggests various practical lessons. It is an example of the care with which God provided for the instruction of sincere inquirers in the Jewish Church. It shows, in a very striking light, the efficacy of prayer as a means of spiritual advancement. It illustrates the necessity of a great spiritual change, even in the case of those who regularly attend God's ordinances, and are conscientious according to their light. It provides a beautiful example of the relative functions of the Word and Spirit in the work of conversion and enforces the duty of combining diligence, in the use of means, with dependence on God's blessing. And it shows how different are the feelings, towards faithful ministers, of one whose heart the Lord has opened and those of the ungodly multitude. She constrained the apostles to reside in her house; the ungodly multitude rose against the apostles and committed them to prison, making their feet fast in the stocks.

Our Gospel Work in Africa and Israel

Rev Neil M Ross

Zimbabwe. The missionary work of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in Zimbabwe has grown enormously since its small beginning under Rev John Boyana Radasi at Ingwenya more than 100 years ago. So that the people would derive more benefit from the Word of God, as he taught and preached it in the community, he established a small school there. This has grown to be a secondary school which has just been upgraded to include Fifth and Sixth Forms and has recently featured in the Zimbabwe national press as one of the top six schools in the country.

Our mission growth in other areas over the years – the founding at Zenka of a church and school; at Mbuma of a church, teacher training centre and hospital; at Bulawayo of a congregation, children’s home, office, bookroom and translation department; in New Canaan of a number of congregations; and in many other places of outstations and schools – is the result of the Lord’s blessing, not only on the labours of ministers, teachers, doctors, nurses and others but also in providing resources through our Church people and, since 1964, mainly through our Dutch friends in Mbuma Zending and their many generous supporters.

But there is a limit to what our Church can do, especially during times of economic and political instability, albeit with much help from Holland. This is the reason why our Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee is presently engaged in an overall appraisal of those departments which are “handmaids to the gospel” – especially Ingwenya Secondary School, Mbuma Hospital, Thembisio Children’s Home and the administration office in Bulawayo – to ascertain where savings might be made and how these departments might operate even more efficiently. In carrying out this complex review, the Committee has the invaluable help of Mr Hugh Mackenzie, our Zimbabwe Mission Co-ordinator.

The last review was done in 1965, following the decision of the 1964 Synod to send the Clerk of its Foreign Missions Committee, Rev Donald MacLean, Glasgow, “to make a fresh reappraisal of the religious, educational and financial structure of the [Southern Rhodesian] Mission [as it was then] in view of the changing political and educational situation”. Mr MacLean, after almost two months of preaching throughout the Mission and interviewing many people, produced an exhaustive report with many recommendations. Today, as the present review goes on, each department continues with its tasks.

At Ingwenya Mission, the completion of the extension block for Forms

5 and 6 has enabled the John Tallach Secondary School to enrol its first group of Fifth Form pupils. It is a heartening prospect that pupils will now be under the gospel for two extra years. In practical terms this means that all pupils must attend worship at morning assembly each school day, all church services on Sabbath and weekday, Sabbath School, and examinable religious instruction classes in their timetable. The boarding pupils must also be present at morning and evening worship in their dormitories every day. As Miss MacLean, the Deputy Head, underlines, there is an ongoing need for more people on the staff who have the ability to impart Bible knowledge, and it helps greatly when visiting teachers from abroad assist in this work.

At Mbuma Mission, the objectives of our hospital staff in their constant round of duties are the saving of lives, healing of the sick, and prevention of disease, but behind these aims "is the desire", says Dr Anneke Snoek, "to reach more of our patients with the gospel". They were therefore pleased that their request for an extra Catechist has been granted. When he is appointed in the near future, God willing, he will work with Mr G Nkwane and Mr N Mpfu in "looking after the spiritual needs of staff and patients in the hospital" and in the "wider area around the hospital".

A new Sabbath School session has begun at Mbuma, with the classes meeting between services. The more than 100 children also meet on Saturdays when, under their teachers, they work through such children's books as *Peep of Day*, *Line upon Line*, and *Truths of God's Word*.

The hope of having Mr Leendart Boon resident at Mbuma, as the new Administrative and Technical Manager, is not yet realised because he is still being refused a work permit by the Immigration Department. However, he is able to do much of his work for Mbuma from his home in Holland.

In the New Canaan area, the pastor, Rev Zororai Mazvabo is much encouraged by the completion of the fine new church at Maware, well built by the people themselves, and by a pleasant communion season there, the local chief being present at most of the services. Mr Mazvabo looks forward to the completion of the new church building for his Ebenezer Congregation at Zvishavane (where his manse is located) and for reaching out with the gospel to the surrounding homes of the employees at the Mimosa platinum mine.

The Translation Committee reports that the new translation of the Ndebele Bible is now in the hands of the Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS). The TBS has informed us that the new translation is now typeset and that they expect it will be launched in Bulawayo in the autumn at a public ceremony, at which our Church will be represented, God willing.

Thembiso Children's Home operates smoothly under its new system of five family units. Mr Mapala, the Superintendent, expresses his appreciation

of the recent visit of Miss Margaret Macaskill and Miss Petra Beukers to the Home for six weeks to give further training to the housemothers.

Kenya. From Sengera, Rev Keith Watkins reports that the work continues despite the difficulties caused in the area by the activities of a new Church led by sodomites from North America. The improprieties, some of a pagan nature, occurring at funerals, and against which our Church there has witnessed for years, have increased. This has necessitated our Church withdrawing from a situation in which God-honouring worship cannot be conducted. Our people would wish it to be otherwise and alternatives are being explored, but it is almost impossible to prevent their extended families imposing their wills on the proceedings.

However, work among the youth is more encouraging. Another well-attended Youth Conference was successfully held at Sengera in December. The Mission has also begun a new scheme, of giving help on Saturdays with school homework for secondary and upper primary pupils, which is being used by some 30 pupils. Although they need more than education, it is hoped that they will do better in their examinations as a result and that, by the Lord's blessing, they will be made a blessing to the Church.

Israel. Although Rev John Goldby has withdrawn from Israel, he is still involved in the publication of the new *Westminster Confession of Faith* in Hebrew and the revision of the Hebrew New Testament (of which the Gospel of John has been finished) but it has been decided that, "with the completion of the present translation projects, the [Jewish and Foreign Missions] Committee expect our work in Israel to cease meantime". Mr Goldby hopes that the Gospel of John will be published soon, and we pray that the distribution of it and the *Westminster Confession* will bear much spiritual fruit. After Mr Goldby returned to Britain, church services continued in Jerusalem under Mr Al Hembd (a communicant in our Texas congregation and employee of the TBS, who is studying at the Hebrew University) but, as there is no longer a core of people attending regularly, these have been discontinued for the present.

In conclusion, it is encouraging to those who are engaged in mission work that "the Word of God is not bound" (2 Tim 2:9). Their labour is not in vain in the Lord, whether sowing the good seed of the gospel or maintaining the institutions which are handmaids to it. God says about His Word: "It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Is 55:11) – surely a great motive for plying the throne of grace to plead for His blessing on its proclamation.

Strive above all things to obtain full assurance of future bliss. To this end take heed of neglecting your communion with God in holy duties. Take heed of bitterness, wrath, anger; by all these the Spirit is grieved.

Thomas Case

Notes and Comments

Islam and Evolutionism

An article in the *Spectator* comments on the danger of writing about the early history of Islam. Scholars, it says, “who have raised questions about the Prophet, or who have suggested that the Quran has changed over time, or who have even discussed the sources in detail have found themselves driven into exile, defenestrated [thrown out of windows], or subjected to death threats”. A visit to Wikipedia shows that several of the articles on Islam are declared to have problems with “neutrality”, and all the articles have to tread with extreme delicacy if they venture any criticism of Islam. Violence towards its opponents and critics is one of the strengths of Islam, and few to whom this would be a danger are prepared to stick their necks out. At the same time, the fact that Islam does not allow criticism probably means that many of its adherents are far from convinced of its principles and would be happy to cast off its shackles if the opportunity arose.

Another area where Wikipedia struggles with “neutrality” is in the articles on Evolution and Creation. Unlike the articles on Islam, these do not admit that there is any problem with their neutrality, but the problem is evident even to the casual reader. They are permeated with the flavour of propaganda and they seldom miss an opportunity of denigrating Creationism and Creationists. Not content with assaulting them on Wikipedia, some fanatical Evolutionists pursue their Creationist opponents in the scientific literature and in university departments and, unable to defenestrate them, they try at least to evict them from both these spheres. Like the Al-Qaeda of Evolutionism, they so “terrorise” their academic colleagues that they dare not even consider the possibility of Evolutionism being false. Thus it may be true, as claimed on Wikipedia, that “the mainstream scientific community” rejects Creationism and characterises it as pseudoscience, but to what extent this is from informed conviction is unknown.

The fact that both Islam and Evolutionism feel the need to bolster themselves in this way suggests they are aware of their vulnerability. Islam knows that its historical roots do not bear investigation and Evolutionism knows that in a fair intellectual fight with Creationism it would struggle to hold its own in the eyes of the general public. Both movements are powerful forces at present, and both have Satan behind them, but both have this weakness, and they may suddenly be brought down by Christ. “The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Rev 12:12).

DWBS

Selective-Sex Abortion – “Like Infanticide”

Selective-sex abortion, or aborting a foetus on the basis of its sex, is “fairly widespread” in British abortion clinics, according to Dr Vincent Argent, a consultant obstetrician. There is “an awful lot of covert abortions for sex selection going on”, he added. Selective-sex abortions are part of what one doctor referred to as “this peculiar new notion of family balancing”.

Daily Telegraph reporters found that when the expectant mother of a baby girl asked a doctor at an abortion clinic to terminate her pregnancy because she did not want a girl, the doctor responded, “That’s not fair. It’s like female infanticide, isn’t it?” Nevertheless, he agreed to the abortion and falsely recorded a different reason for it. At another clinic, a doctor was covertly filmed telling a pregnant woman who asked to have her female foetus aborted: “I don’t ask questions. If you want a termination, you want a termination.”

The legalising of social abortion has opened the door to this further evil of illegal “selective-sex abortion”. Is there a link between selective-sex abortion and infanticide? In countries where infanticide, especially of newborn girls, is practised (India and China notably), there is a turning to what they deem a more sophisticated method – sex-selective abortion. Both methods result in societal gender imbalance. In China there are thousands of what are known as “bare branches” – young men for whom no wives are available because of the widespread killing of newborn infant girls in the past.

It is not at all fanciful to posit a link between sex-selective abortion and infanticide. In the influential *Journal of Medical Ethics*, a recent article, “After-birth abortion: Why should the baby live?”, argues that newborn infants are just “potential persons” rather than “actual persons” and do not have a “moral right to life”. The authors state, “What we call ‘after-birth abortion’ (killing a newborn) should be permissible in all the cases where abortion is, including cases where the newborn is not disabled”.

And so our once-Christian society descends steadily to more lethal barbarity. Will the culture of death manifested by such wicked practices as abortion and euthanasia ever be supplanted by the glorious culture of life through Christ, proclaimed by the gospel? Certainly! Scripture says so.

Let us then continue to pray and work for the promised return to truly Christian ethics, when people will acknowledge that “children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is His reward” (Ps 127:3); that God is the one who sets “the solitary in families” (Ps 68:6) which are balanced according to His just balancing; and that humanistic social engineering is rebellion against His right to rule over all and determine how we should live a life that is for our good and His glory.

Russian Orthodox Chants in Dundee

The Dundee Free Church of Scotland is following its jazz evening, “Heaven in a Nightclub”, with a choral ensemble from St Petersburg which is to sing Russian folk songs and chants of the Russian Orthodox Church. Tickets cost £5. The jazz evening at least claimed to be evangelistic – although we do not believe that it was a scriptural or legitimate way to evangelise – but the Russian ensemble is just worldly entertainment; the previous evening they are due to perform at Brodie Castle. “Though the members of the [ensemble] represent different musical professions: choir conductors, opera singers, instrumentalists, music teachers – they are all united by love for choir and ensemble singing”, says the blurb.

Historically the Russian Orthodox Church is noted for its false doctrine, similar to Romanism; and in more recent years, it has been courting the governments in Russia and other former Soviet Union countries and has been active in opposing Protestantism, for example by obstructing the purchase of land for church buildings and by representing Protestants as dangerous extremists. Why the Free Church in Dundee should find possibly-heretical doctrine, sung in a foreign language by enemies of the gospel, a congenial way of spending an evening, we leave our readers to conclude for themselves. “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom 12:2). *DWBS*

Objections to UK Government Proposals to Redefine Marriage

Many welcomed the Prime Minister’s call in December to the Church of England to defend the “values and moral code” of the Bible, but they still take issue with the Government for proposing legislation to redefine marriage and permit the evil of same-sex marriage. Are the Prime Minister and his colleagues ignorant of the Bible’s condemnation of the unmentionable sins which brought the wrath of God on the “cities of the plain” (Gen 19:29) (we doubt it) or are they ignoring it (it seems so)?

We are bound to make known to the Government our objections to its proposals. Many of our Scottish readers have communicated to the Scottish Government their objections to its proposals to redefine marriage, but it is necessary also to object in one way or another to the UK Government about its separate proposals – by, for example, signing the online petition at <http://c4m.org.uk> as soon as possible.

As the Prime Minister himself said in his December speech: “Bad choices have too often been defended as just different lifestyles. To be confident in saying something is wrong is not a sign of weakness, it’s a strength!” Let us

not be slow to say that we are strongly opposed to a lifestyle that will further destroy what is left of Biblical morality in our nation. As surely as “righteousness exalteth a nation” (Prov 14:34), so sin shall be its undoing. *NMR*

Prime Minister Speaks in Favour of Christianity

In what is described as his “Easter message”, the Prime Minister spoke of “the life, sacrifice and living legacy of Christ,” and added, “The New Testament tells us so much about the character of Jesus; a man of incomparable compassion, generosity, grace, humility and love. . . . In the Book of Luke, we are told that Jesus said, ‘Do to others as you would have them do to you’ – advice that, when followed, makes for a happier and better society for everyone.” Also, as a news report of a speech in December states, he told “Church of England clergy gathered in Oxford that a return to Christian values could counter the country’s ‘moral collapse’ and blamed a ‘passive tolerance’ of immoral behaviour for this summer’s riots, Islamic extremism, City excess and Westminster scandals”.

It is true that his full statements have defects, yet we cannot but welcome them and hope that this will not be the last occasion when he will call attention to our Christian heritage. More importantly, we pray that he would be a “doer of the Word”, not only by promoting policies in harmony with Christianity but also by ceasing to promote those that oppose it. *NMR*

Protestant View

The Archbishop of Canterbury and his Leaning to Rome

When the erudite Dr Rowan Williams was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of the Church of England in 2002, the Church Society stated, “On some important issues facing the Church, Dr Williams holds views which are unscriptural and divisive”. There was further foreboding when it emerged that, shortly before his appointment, he had been inducted as an honorary white Druid. True Protestants were also dismayed by his decided Anglo-Catholic sympathies – as shown by, for example, his pilgrimages to the shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham, Norfolk.

Now that he has announced his retirement from the Primacy, many remember his liberal pronouncements on homosexuals in the Church, women priests, creationism, and Sharia law in Britain. They also recall his weak leadership on the issues of homosexual bishops and women bishops, which paved the way for the Pope’s overtures to disaffected traditionalists in his Church to join the Church of Rome.

But Dr Williams himself has been leading the way to Rome. He attended the funeral of the last Pope – the first Archbishop of Canterbury to attend a papal funeral since the Reformation. He also attended the inauguration of the present Pope. In 2010, when the Pope visited this country, the Archbishop warmly welcomed him and even had him take part in a service in Westminster Abbey – the first pope to enter the Abbey.

Recently, Dr Williams took part with the Pope at a service in Rome and spoke of his “vision of the restoration of full sacramental communion” between his Church and the Roman Catholic Church. No Archbishop of Canterbury has visited the Pope as often as he has. It is ominous that a spokesman for the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe says, “These meetings keep showing that things are different now and we will not go back to the bad old days”.

The past days of the Reformation and a prospering Protestantism are indeed “the bad old days” to Roman Catholics and their sympathisers, but it will be a good day when the national Churches in Britain will again embrace the Reformed faith. To that end may God return to us in the power of His Spirit to revive His cause in our nation. “Arise, O God, plead Thine own cause: remember how the foolish man reproacheth Thee daily” (Ps 74:22). *NMR*

Church Information

Meeting of Synod

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland will meet in St Jude’s Church, Glasgow, on Tuesday, 22 May 2012, at 6.30 pm, DV, when the retiring Moderator, Rev K D Macleod, will conduct public worship.

(Rev) John MacLeod, Clerk of Synod

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Western: At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, June 12, at 12 noon.

Northern: At Dingwall, on Tuesday, June 19, at 2 pm.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, June 26, at 11 am.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Tuesday, June 26, at 3 pm.

Theological Conference

This year’s Conference will be held in Inverness on October 30-31, DV.

(Rev) J R Tallach, Convener, Training of Ministry Committee

Home Mission Fund

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

W Campbell, General Treasurer

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.

Braacadale: **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.

Breasclote: 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; **Strathy:** 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. **Shellebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (except first Sabbath of month). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh, Shellebost, 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.

Lochinvier: 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 Peters Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.

London: Zoar Chapel, Varden St. E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU. Tel: 0208 309 1623.

Northern Ireland

Larne: Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 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; Wednesday 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, 9 Pedlar Place, Conifer Grove, Auckland. Tel: 09 282 4195.

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact: Dr G Cramp. Tel: 02 7454 2722.

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

Ukraine

Odessa: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D 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.

Ingwenya: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean. Postal Address: Ingwenya 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: walkinskenya@gmail.com. Tel: 00254 733 731002.

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