

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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

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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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The Lord Is in Control

Judas Iscariot seems a most unlikely choice to be one of the disciples. He turned out to be a thief, the betrayer of the Lord Jesus, and a graceless man. But Jesus made no mistake; He did not act in ignorance; indeed we are told that He “needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man” (Jn 2:25). So He knew what was in *this* man; He knew that Judas would turn out a thief; He knew that Judas would betray Him; He knew that Judas had never been born again. As J C Ryle comments on the passage in Luke 6 which records the appointment of the disciples, “we cannot for a moment doubt that, in choosing Judas Iscariot, our Lord Jesus knew well what He was doing. He who could read hearts, certainly knew from the beginning that, notwithstanding his profession of piety, Judas was a graceless man and would one day betray Him. . . . Like everything which our Lord did, it was done advisedly, deliberately and with deep wisdom.”

Among the lessons which Ryle draws from the calling of Judas is this: It “was meant to teach ministers humility. They are not to suppose that ordination necessarily conveys grace, or that once ordained they cannot err. On the contrary, they are to remember that one ordained by Christ Himself was a wretched hypocrite. Let the minister who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” And, in one of his remarks on the corresponding passage in Matthew 10, David Brown exclaims, “How terrible is the warning which the case of Judas holds forth, to the ministers of Christ, not to trust in any gifts, any offices, any services, any success, as sure evidence of divine acceptance, apart from that ‘holiness without which no man shall see the Lord’!”

We probably think it more strange that the 12 disciples, whom Christ chose personally and sent out to call sinners to repentance, should include an unconverted man than that there should be unconverted preachers in pulpits today. Yet Christ is still the head of His Church; He is still ruling over everything that happens, and God has “foreordained whatsoever comes to pass” (*Shorter Catechism*, ans 7).

These words were written by the Westminster Divines on the basis of such scriptures as Ephesians 1:11, which declares that God “worketh all things after

the counsel of His own will". These men fully recognised the depths of the mystery involved in this doctrine, for they quote Romans 11:33, where Paul makes clear that God's "ways [are] past finding out"; finite human minds cannot expect to be able to plumb the depths of God's infinite purposes as they are put into effect in the course of His providence. They further quote from Romans 9:14, "Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid", to show that God is clear from human sin in the fulfilment of His purposes. So, while "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" was involved, not only in the crucifixion of Christ, but also in all the events that led up to it – including the choice of Judas as a disciple, and his betrayal of his Master – yet, throughout these events, the sin was entirely human.

It should be clear to us that Christ Himself was in control of all these events. No matter how vicious or devilish the opposition He encountered during His time in this world, never did events begin to spiral out of control. And however difficult it may be for us to recognise the fact, everything happened for the glory of God. Supremely we see God glorified in the provision of redemption for sinful human beings in a way that perfectly satisfied divine justice.

When Matthew Henry comments on the passage already referred to in the first Gospel, he draws a rather different lesson: "Christ took [Judas] among the apostles that it might not be a surprise and discouragement to His Church if, at any time, the vilest scandals should break out in the best societies". It would be natural for the early Christians to have expected the initial success of the gospel to continue and that the preachers of the Word would always be as diligent and faithful as were, for instance, Peter, Paul and Timothy. We too might wonder why the early Church did not continue to expand at the initial rate of progress, when on one day there were 3000 converts. Even if that day's spiritual harvest was exceptional, the Lord continued to add "to the Church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).

There is little we can say in answer to that question except to point to the certainty that the subsequent declension in the Church was according to God's eternal purpose and that His glory will at last be seen in connection with the whole history of the Church when it is all taken together. Further, we can be certain that there never was, and never will be, a moment when the King of Kings is not in control of all events. Had it been the divine will to have ordered a period of uninterrupted expansion in the Church of God from the beginning until our time, that is exactly what would have happened.

But it was not so, and Paul was inspired to put in writing a warning to the believers in Thessalonica about particular events to take place in the history of the world before Christ's second coming. "That day shall not come," he

told them, “except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2 Th 2:3,4). Matthew Poole is unusually full in expounding this passage. He notes that the “apostasy” described here is “gradual”, and from within the Church of God. “And this man of sin is not a single person, but a company, order and succession of men.” In common with other Reformed expositors of the time, he is rightly convinced that Paul is referring to the Antichrist, “the bishop of Rome” – the Papacy.

This tremendous declension gathered increasing power over the centuries as the Roman Church departed further and further from the truth. That the Lord should have allowed it – and indeed foreordained it – seems, at first glance, most unlikely. But it is worth quoting Ryle: “Like everything which our Lord did, it was done advisedly, deliberately and with deep wisdom”. Clearly it provided the context for a display of God’s power and grace at the time of the Reformation, and we can see – however limited our understanding of God’s providence – that God was indeed glorified in that time of spiritual revival and reform.

Our age follows a long period of tremendous spiritual declension in Britain and many other countries. The level to which the authority of the Bible is rejected in many Protestant denominations is truly startling. The men (and women – and *they* necessarily reject the Bible’s command, “Let your women keep silence in the churches”) who fill many of the pulpits preach a message very different from that revealed in Scripture – to the extent that the sermon still plays a significant part in what passes for the worship of God. We may ask, Why has He allowed such a dire situation to develop? Why have false religions expanded as much as they have? Why has secularism virtually become the national religion in the UK?

We ought to be clear that the situation is not out of control as far as God is concerned. He is still ruling; He is still working out His eternal purposes for His own glory, as surely as when the Saviour was personally in this world. As the waters of the flood carried Noah’s Ark hither and thither, it might have seemed that everything was out of control. But Noah and his family were safe; God was in complete control of the waters. It is still true today that “the Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever” (Ps 29:10) – whether we consider the flood of worldliness or heresy or false religion. And God’s children have every reason to trust Him to act wisely as He rules over everything in the Church and in the wider world. Let them say with Isaiah, as they view the current moral and spiritual situation: “I will trust, and not be afraid” (Is 12:2). God’s promises cannot fail.

The King's Mowings¹

A Sermon by C H Spurgeon

Amos 7:1. *Thus hath the Lord God showed unto me; and, behold, He formed grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, it was the latter growth after the king's mowings.*

Certain lands belonged to the king to the extent that he always took the first cut of grass for himself and left the rest to those who worked on the land. Now, our great King has His mowings too. His Church is the field which He has enclosed and blessed. At set seasons, the king takes His mowings. Lately, beyond any other time that I remember, the King has been taking His mowings in the church of which He has made me overseer. I have spent many hours at the bedsides of the dying and trying to console the bereaved. Our loss as a church was extremely heavy at the opening of this year. The King has cut down here one and there another.

I propose to speak a little on this subject in a threefold way: (1) by way of consolation; (2) by way of admonition; (3) by way of anticipation.

1. First, by way of **consolation**. It is sad when our beloved brethren are taken from us. We would be less than men if we did not sorrow. Jesus wept, and by that act He sanctified our tears. It is not wrong, it is not unmanly, much less is it sinful, to drop a tear of sorrow over the departed. Yet let us help to wipe away those tears with a handkerchief of sacred consolation.

First, seeing "all flesh is grass, and all the comeliness thereof as the flower of the grass," do you lament that the King has been mowing? Then let this thought rebuke you: the King Himself has done it. Death is not an abstract thing, an unloosed monster devouring the saints at will, "drinking the blood of men, and grinding their bones between his iron tooth". This is a poet's raving. No destroying angel is sent forth to slay the Israel of God. There is a destroying angel, it is true; but he does not come near those who bear the mark of the blood.

It is not in the power of disease or accident to kill the children of God except as instruments in God's hand. No saint dies except by an act of God. It is always according to the King's will; it is His doing. Every ripe ear in His field is gathered by His own hand, cut down by His own golden sickle and by none other. Every flower of grace is taken away by Him, not smitten with blight or cut down by the tempest or devoured by some evil beast. The Lord has done it in every case and, knowing this, we must not even think of com-

¹Taken, with editing, from a collection of Spurgeon's discourses: *Sermons Preached on Unusual Occasions*; it also appears in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol 55. It is particularly relevant after a year when three of our ministers have been removed by death.

plaining. What the King does His servants delight in; for He is such a King that, let Him do what seems Him good, we will still bless Him. We agree with him who said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him".

Again, those who have been mown down and taken away are with the King. They are the King's mowings; they are gathered into His stores. They are not in purgatory; much less are they in hell. They are not wandering in dreary pathways amidst the stars to find a lodging place. "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which thou hast given Me, for thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world"; this prayer has fixed their abode. Where Jesus is, there His people are – not some of them sitting outside or in lower rooms, but they are all where He is. That will certainly content me, and if there be any degrees in glory, you who want the high ones may have them. The lowest degree of glory that I can perceive in Scripture is: "that they . . . be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory". And that lowest degree is as high as my most vivid imagination can carry me. Here is enough to fill our souls even to the brim.

Now do you sorrow? Do you not almost condemn your tears when you learn that your loved ones are promoted to such bliss? Why, mother, did you ever wish a higher place for your child than to be where Jesus is? Husband, by the love you bore to your wife, you cannot grudge her the glory into which she has entered. Wife, by the deep devotion of your heart to him who has been taken from you, you could not wish to have detained him for a moment from the joy in which his soul now triumphs with his Lord. If he had gone to some unknown land, if you could stand on life's brink and hear the roaring billows of a dread, mysterious ocean and say, My dear one has gone, I know not where, to be tossed on yonder tempestuous sea – then you might mix your own tears with the brine of that ocean. But you know where they are, you know with whom they are, and you can, by the joy of Christ's presence here on earth, form some idea of what their bliss must be above.

It is a sweet reflection too that, though our dear friends have been cut down like flowers by the scythe, yet their lot is better than ours, though we are standing and blooming today. Life seems better than death, and the living dog is better than the dead lion; but take into account the everlasting state, and who will dare say that the state of the blessed is worse than ours? Will not all assert that it is infinitely superior? We are suffering here, but they shall smart no more. We are weak and tottering here, but they have regained the dew of their youth. We know what need means, and wipe the sweat of toil from our face, but they rest in abundance for ever.

Worst of all, we still sin and have to wrestle hard with doubts and fears;

Satan still besets us, the world is around us and corruptions within us. But they are where no wave of trouble can ever break the serenity of their spirit, beyond the arrows of hell's quiver, though there are archers who would shoot their darts into heaven itself if they could. The ingathered ones are supremely blessed; they are far beyond what we are in joy, knowledge and holiness; therefore, if we love them, how can we mourn that they have gone from worse to better, and from the lower to the higher room?

Moreover, although some of you sorrow very bitterly, because God has taken away the desire of your eyes with a stroke, let me remind you that your sorrow for them might have been worse than this. The mother that has to mourn over a grown-up son who has become a profligate has a pang a thousand times more bitter than she who sees her infant carried to the grave. The father who knows that his sons or daughters have dishonoured his name may well wish that he had long ago seen them laid in the silent tomb, and I have known men in the Church whom I would sooner have buried a thousand times over than have lived to see what I have afterwards seen in them. For years they maintained an honourable profession, but they lived to dishonour the Church, to blaspheme their Lord, to go back into perdition, and prove that the root of the matter was never in them.

You need not weep for those in heaven; weep not for the dead, neither bewail them; but weep for the spiritually dead; weep for the apostate and backslider; weep for the hypocrite, the "wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever". If you have tears, go and shed them there; but for those who have fought the fight and won the victory, for those who have stemmed the stream and safely landed on the other side, let us have no tears. Rather let the trumpet ring out jubilantly the note of victory. It is to them the day of jubilee; why should it be the hour of sorrow for us? They put on the crown and carry the palm branch; why should we don these funeral clothes? There is infinitely more to rejoice in than there is to sorrow for; therefore let our hearts be glad. The Lord has said to them, "Well done", and rewarded them according to His grace, and this is infinitely better than if they had lived to slip and slide.

"But this is poor comfort," you will say, and therefore let me come back to the text, and say that the King has taken His mowings. Sorrowful as they may be, it is not the worst sorrow. Yet we must not grudge the King. All the friends we have are lent to us. The old proverb says, "A loan should go laughing home", that is, we should never be unwilling to return a loan but cheerfully give it back. Our dear ones were lent to us, and what a blessing they have been to us. The Master says, I want them back again. And do we clutch at them and say, No, Master, Thou shalt not have them? It must not

be so. Our dear ones were never half as much ours as they were Christ's. We did not make them, but *He* did; we never bought them with our blood, but *He* did; we never sweat a bloody sweat for them, nor had our hands and feet pierced for them, but *He* did. They were lent us, but they belonged to *Him*.

Your prayer was, Father, let them be with me where I am, but Christ's prayer was, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with me where I am". Your prayer pulled one way and Christ's another. Do not be envious that Christ won the case, for if I ever enter the Lord's court of chancery and find that Christ is on the other side, I will not plead. He will have His will, for He and I are one; and if it is His will that all I love be with Him, so be it, for I shall be with Him too before long, and I would not quarrel with His wish. The King has let out this church like a pasture to us, and He says, I must take my mowings sometimes. Well, He has so watered us and given us the smell of a field that the Lord God has blessed that, when He comes and takes His rent, we may not stand at the gate and forbid Him. We must say, Good Master, come, for the field is all Thine own. Thou hast dearly purchased it and Thou hast tilled it with much diligence. Take what Thou wilt, for it is Thine.

Let us add, to increase our comfort, that the King took His mowings at the right time. Out of those whom He has taken away from us, I think we must all confess that the Lord took them when they should have been taken. In one case, a venerable sister who, if she had lasted longer, would have been the prey of weakness and of pain – it was well that she fell asleep. In another case, a dear young friend was pining under that deadly disease, consumption. Her throat was scarcely able to receive nourishment. I think those who loved her best must have felt relieved when at last she fell asleep.

Two brethren rise before my mind's eye; the one struggled through life and wondered often that he survived as long as he did, for he was like a ship unfit for sea, which every wave threatens to engulf. He served his Lord up to the last and, when all was over, it was well. Another, whom I saw with an afflicting disease, that had brought him very low, had led so gracious a life that he did not need to utter any dying testimony. Beloved brethren also who were once with us in the College have fallen asleep, having finished their course and kept the faith.

I may add that, not only did the King take his mowings at the right time, but in every case I have now before my mind He took them in the easiest way. He took them gently. Some have a hard fight at the last, but in these cases, though there were pains, yet at the end their souls were kissed away by the dear lips of Him who named them by their names and said they were His. They fell asleep, some of them, so sweetly that those who looked on

scarcely knew whether it was the sleep of life or the deeper sleep of eternity. They went at once to their Lord and their God. Putting all these things together, reflecting that the King has done it, that those He has taken away He has taken to be with Himself, that their present lot is infinitely better than anything beneath the moon, we will no longer repine but bless the Lord – for we consider too that we must never grudge the King the heritage which He has so dearly bought, and that He took His mowings at the right time, and took them in the happiest manner.

2. Let me now for a few minutes use the subject by way of **admonition**. I hardly know if under this head I have succeeded in grouping together thoughts that are truly admonitory. The first one to me is very joyous: as we belong to the King, our hope is that we shall be mown too. We are sitting on the banks of Jordan, especially some of riper years, waiting for a summons to the court of the eternal King. It grows a wonder sometimes with aged Christians why they stay so long. John Newton used to marvel at his own age, and Rowland Hill used to say he half imagined they had forgotten him and hoped they would soon remember him and send for him. Well, we who are younger have not quite got that length, but still we entertain the hope that, some fair evening calm and bright, the angel-reaper will come with the scythe. Then, having fulfilled, like the hireling, our day, we shall lay down our tools of labour and take our rest. Then shall we put down our sword and take off our breastplate and unloose the shoes of iron and brass, for we shall fight no more, but take the palm and claim the victory before the throne.

Never let us look forward to this with dread. It is strange that we should, and we could not if our faith were stronger. When faith vividly grasps the rest that remains for the people of God, we are tempted to long to be up and away. Then why should we wish to linger here? What is there in this old musty, worn-out world – worm-eaten and full of holes, with its very gold and silver cankered – that can satisfy an immortal spirit? Let us away to the hills of spices and to the mountains of frankincense, where the King in His beauty stands and all the hosts that serve Him day and night behold His face and evermore adore Him. Let us anticipate cheerfully the time when the King's mowings shall include us also.

Brethren, the admonition that rises out of all this is: Let us be ready. Should every Christian man not live every day as if he was to die that day? Should we not always live as if we knew that our last hour was at the door? If a man in his right state were suddenly informed, You will die tonight, he ought not to have to alter his mode of life in the slightest; he should be so living that he may just continue his course. It is said of Bengel, the great scholar, that he did not wish to die with spiritual parade, but in the ordinary way, like someone

called out to the front door from his business – so much so that he was occupied with the correction of his proof sheets at the time of his death as at other times. To me it seems to be the very highest kind of death to die in harness, concluding life without suspending service.

Alas, many are unready and would be sadly put about if the midnight cry were suddenly heard. Let us see that everything is in order both for this world and the next. Nothing should be left to be hurried over in the last few hours. Christian man, are your business affairs all straight? They ought to be; everything ought to be as near to perfect order as you can make it, so that you are ready to go at any minute. George Whitefield used so to live in anticipation of death that he said, "I never go to sleep at night with even a pair of gloves out of place". O that we could be habitually ready, especially in higher matters, walking before the Lord and preparing to meet Him!

While this departure of many friends admonishes us that we must go, at the same time it teaches us to do twice as much while we are here, seeing our numbers are being thinned. If a brave soldier in the day of battle hears that a regiment has been exterminated by the enemy's shot and shell, he says, Those of us that survive must fight like tigers. There is no room to play at fighting. If they have slain so many, we must be more desperately valiant.

So today, if one here and there is gone – a useful worker from the Sabbath schools, for instance – then it is time our broken ranks were repaired. Young men, fill up the gap; and you young women who love the Saviour and are already teaching, if a Sabbath-school teacher is gone, teach better, or if you are not teaching, come and fill the place. I pray for recruits; I stand like a commander in the midst of my little army and see some of the best smitten down. What can I do but lead you on and say, Brethren and sisters, fill the gaps in the ranks. Do not let death gain on us, but as one goes into the golden city, let another cry, Here I am; I will fill up the place and seek to do the work until the Master shall call me also to my reward.

As for us who are at work, we must labour more zealously; we must pray more fervently than ever. In my young days, when a certain great man suddenly died in the ministry, I remember an old preacher saying, "I must preach better than ever I did now that Mr So-and-so is gone". And you, Christian, whenever a saint is removed, say, I must live the better to make up to the church the loss which it has sustained.

One other thought, by way of admonition. If the King has been taking His mowings, the King's eye is upon His Jacob. He has not forgotten His field, for He has been mowing it. We have been praying lately that He would visit us. He has come, He has come! Not quite as we expected Him, but He has come! And as He has walked these aisles, and looked on this congregation,

He has taken one and then another. He has not taken me, for I was not ready; and He has not taken you, for you are not quite ripe; but He has taken away some that were ripe and ready, and they have gone in with Him. Well, then, He has not forgotten us, and this ought to stimulate us in prayer. He will hear us, His eye is upon us; this ought to stimulate us to self-examination. Let us purge out everything that will grieve Him. He is evidently watching us. Let us seek to live as in His presence that nothing may vex His Spirit and cause Him to withdraw from us. These are the words of admonition.

3. Now a few more words by way of **anticipation**. I hardly know what head to place them under. What anticipations come out of the mowing? Why, these. There is to be an aftergrowth. After the King's mowings, there came another upspringing of fresh grass, which belonged to the King's tenants. So we expect, now that the King has been mowing, that we shall have a fresh crop of grass. Is there not a promise, "They shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the watercourses"? Fresh converts will come; who will they be? Well, I look around, and I will not say with Samuel, as I look at some young man in the gallery, "Surely the Lord hath chosen him"; neither will I look down here and say, "Surely the Lord hath chosen him". But I will bless God that I know He has chosen some, and that He means to make this fresh grass spring up to fill up the loss caused by the King's mowings.

Do you know who I should like to come if I might have my preference? Well, where the daughter died, how glad I should be if the father came, or the brother came; and where the father died, how would I be rejoiced if the son should come; and where a good woman has been taken away, how glad would I be if her husband filled the place. It seems to me as if it were natural to wish that those who loved them best should occupy their position and discharge their work for them.

But if that cannot be, I stand here tonight as a recruiting sergeant. My King in His wars has lost His men, and the regiment needs to be made up. Who will come? I will not stand here and tempt you with lies about the ease of the service, for it is hard service. Yet I assure you that we have a blessed Leader, a glorious conflict and a grand reward. Who will come to fill up the gaps in the ranks, to take up the torch which others have dropped, to stand in their place of Christian service? I will put the question all round the church, and I hope that many a heart will say, O that God the Lord would blot out my sins and receive me! He delights in contrite hearts; "He saveth such as be of a contrite spirit". He will have whom He will have, but the way to be enlisted is plain.

You ask, What must I do to be Christ's soldier? To be the Queen's soldier you do not give anything; you receive a shilling. To be a soldier of the Queen

you take, and so to be Christ's soldier you must take Christ to be your all in all, holding out your empty hand to receive from His blood and righteousness, to be your hope and your salvation. O that His good Spirit would sweetly incline your wills, so that one after another would be made willing in the day of His power. May He do thus, and our hearts will greatly rejoice.

As I read the passage in Amos from which we have taken our text, I noticed something about caterpillars. It is said that after the King's mowings there came caterpillars to eat up the aftergrowth. O those caterpillars! When the poor eastern husbandman sees the caterpillars, his heart is ready to break, for he knows they will eat up every green thing. And I can see the caterpillars here tonight. There is the great green caterpillar that eats up all before him; I wish I could crush him. He is called the caterpillar of procrastination. There are many, many other worms and locusts which eat up much, but this worm of procrastination is the worst, for just as the green blade is beginning to spring up, this caterpillar begins to eat. I can hear him gnawing, "Wait, wait, wait; tomorrow, tomorrow; a little more sleep, a little more sleep". And so this caterpillar devours our hopes. Lord, destroy the caterpillar, and grant that instead of the fathers may be the children. Instead of the King's mowings may there come up the aftergrowth which shall be a rich reward to the husbandman and bring glory to the owner of the soil.

We have reason to pray that the Lord would send the dew and the rain to bring forth the aftergrowth. "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass." Now this congregation is like mown grass. God has mown it – a rich mowing the King has taken from us. Now we have the promise; let us plead it before the throne. All the preaching in the world cannot save a soul, nor can all the efforts of men; but God's Spirit can do everything, and O that He would come down like rain upon the mown grass now. Then shall we see the handful of corn upon the top of the mountain multiply till its fruit shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. The Lord send it; the Lord send it now.

If any would be saved, here is the way of salvation: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved". To believe is to trust. What you have to trust in is this: that Jesus is God, that He became man, that He suffered in the sinner's place, and that whosoever believes in Him shall be forgiven because God has punished Christ instead of those who will believe. Christ bore God's wrath instead of every sinner that ever did or ever shall believe in Him. If you believe in Him, you were redeemed from among men; His substitution was for you and it will save you. But if you do not believe, you have no part or lot in this matter. O that you were brought to put your trust in Jesus! This would be the pledge of sure salvation for you, tonight and for evermore.

Benefiting from the Lord's Supper¹

4. What We Are to Do Afterwards

Thomas Manton

Examine what exercise and increase of faith there has been. Have I acted faith in this duty? How shall I know? If you have, in the acting of faith, been waiting on God for the blessings of the ordinance, the effects will demonstrate it. These are the effects:

1. It will stir up joy and thankfulness; you will find it will increase both. So it is said of the eunuch after his baptism: "He went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:39). Men are pleased when a good bargain is sealed to them that yields them great benefit; so the people of God are stirred up to praise the Lord when have renewed pledges of God's love and a real sense of their interest, through Christ, in such inestimable benefits as the pardon of their sins, the gift of the Spirit and hopes of glory. They are ready to cry with David: "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps 103:1-3). When something urges the soul to bless God, it is a sign that we have acted faith and have been encouraged to wait for such special benefits that we are to receive by Christ.

2. It will produce a longing to meet with God another time that we may be thus kindly refreshed, to have another good meal from God and be feasted in His house: "To see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen it in the sanctuary" (Ps 63:2). As one circle begets another in the water, and a little water cast into the pump when the springs are low brings up more, so our experience kindles affection and makes us long for more: "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pet 2:3). When you find benefit from one duty, it will be an encouragement to come again. You have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and you therefore come for new quickening and refreshing.

3. There will be a resolution to serve the Lord more faithfully, and walk with Him in all the ways of holiness. You have been with God and you go aside and say, "What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people" (Ps 116:12-14), and, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints; but let them not turn again

¹The final part of the application of a sermon on Hebrews 11:28: "Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them". It comes, with editing, from *By Faith*, Manton's sermons on Hebrews 11.

to folly” (Ps 85:8). When there is more care of holy walking with God, then there has certainly been some acting of faith and grace in this duty and we have met with Jesus in it.

4. For the present, the heart should be more warm and serious. Also all those things should be omitted, for a time at least, which rather savour of the flesh than of the spirit – which, though they do not directly belong to the flesh, yet they border on it. And those things should be omitted which do not agree well with the fervour of godliness, which should be stirred up in us in so important an action. To leap at once into a vain, worldly frame and to turn to worldly conversation shows that we have not been serious in it, that we have not had such a lively sense of sin, and that we have not been so deeply affected with the wonders of God’s redeeming grace as we should have been.

However it may be with us at other times, and whatever liberty we take, yet after the participation of the Lord’s Supper, we certainly ought to study much purity and heavenliness of mind, and raisedness of heart towards God. And I rather press it because, after a solemn duty, the devil loves to tempt the worshippers of the Lord Jesus Christ to some unbecoming behaviour. The devil entered into Judas after the sop: “And supper being ended, the devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him . . .” (Jn 13:2). Satan never gets greater advantage on wicked men than after a careless use of such precious ordinances. But a savour will abide on the hearts of the people of God for a good while afterward.

Thomas Cartwright¹

4. “Very Great in the Work of the Ministry”

The threat of arrest hung over Cartwright for five months of 1590 before he was at last committed to the Fleet prison, probably in late October. On October 4 he had written to Lord Burghley in the hope that he might “relieve me against the troubles that are coming upon me: especially against her Majesty’s heavy displeasure” (p 452).² In another letter he tells Burghley how anxious he was that the Queen should reject the slanderous reports she had received from his accusers and regard him as one of her loyal subjects. Even though his income as Master of Warwick Hospital was the chief means

¹This is the final section of a paper delivered by the Editor at the 2011 Theological Conference. Last month’s article described some of Cartwright’s writing in defence of Protestant principles. On his return from the Continent to England he became Master of the Leicester Hospital, in Warwick.

²All references in brackets are to A F Scott Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism 1535 to 1603*, Cambridge, 1925.

of support for his wife and his five small children, he was willing to give up the position, he told Burghley, to please the Queen, who objected to him being Master.

Burghley clearly was not able to keep Cartwright out of prison but he did write to Archbishop Whitgift advising him not to take his place among the Ecclesiastical Commissioners examining Cartwright, in case he should seem to be taking revenge on an old opponent. Cartwright was falsely charged with having been re-ordained at Antwerp (the implication was that this was done according to a Presbyterian form). He was further charged with being instrumental in establishing a Presbyterian church among the English merchants in Antwerp and Middelburg, exercising ecclesiastical discipline without authority and using Presbyterian forms of worship. Other charges related to his ministry in Warwick: that he had preached without a licence; that he had criticised the Church, condemning bishops and the *Book of Common Prayer*; that he had not knelt at communion and had persuaded others to follow his example. The seven final charges related to his involvement in the Conference movement of the 1580s; in particular, he was accused of having written part or most of the *Book of Discipline*.

When brought before the Commissioners, Cartwright was expected to take the *ex officio* oath, by which the person being examined swore to answer truthfully all questions that might be put to him. His response was, as he told Burghley, “I esteemed it contrary both to the laws of God and of the land to require such an oath, especially of a minister” (p 317). In particular, he wanted to avoid incriminating any of his fellow Puritans. Yet he was willing to answer particular questions on oath, provided he had the opportunity to consider them beforehand. He was particularly anxious to clear himself from such accusations as being re-ordained, but that opportunity was denied him; and as a result of refusing to take the oath, he was sent back to the Fleet.

Bancroft tried to engage him in controversy over the existence of Presbyterian structures in early Christianity. Cartwright declined for the time being; clearly a sixteenth-century prison was not the best place for historical research – he would have needed to consult various books, for instance. Besides, his health was not good; he was suffering from gout and stone (in his kidney, possibly) and feeling the effects of increasing age (although he was only about 50, in his time that was considered relatively old). Yet, he told Bancroft, he had clearly shown in his published writings that, in Augustine’s time, there were elders who were not ministers. In a petition to the authorities, probably in 1591, the Puritan prisoners denied that they were schismatics or rebels; they expressed their belief that the Church of England was a true visible Church, but in need of further reformation; they believed, however, that it was unlaw-

ful to seek such reformation in any rebellious way; they declared that they met in Conferences because they thought it was lawful to do so – for the purposes of mutual edification, erecting a bulwark against Romanists and schismatics, and preparing a uniform programme of further reformation. They denied having exercised jurisdiction in these meetings – by appointing ministers, for example, or by the exercise of church discipline – and they pointed out that the *Book of Common Prayer* itself speaks of godly discipline.

As no progress was being made, because the Puritans were refusing to take the oath, the Commissioners decided to try to persuade Cartwright, as the most prominent Puritan, to submit to the oath. They were unsuccessful and handed him over to the Court of the Star Chamber, where he appeared in June 1591. There he denied some of the charges against him and emphasised that the *Book of Discipline* had never been put in operation; it merely stated what he and others wished to be put in practice. The subscribers to the *Book of Discipline* were declaring that they believed its contents to be agreeable to Scripture, to the judgement of learned divines past and present, and to the practice of many churches. And when they had undertaken to put portions of the *Book of Discipline* into practice, this was dependent on such a course of action having legal sanction.

Such treatment of the Puritans was bound to attract sympathy in Scotland and the General Assembly, meeting in March 1590, resolved “that the brethren recommend to God, in their public and private supplications, the afflicted brethren, in England, for the confession of the purity of the religion” (p 343). Elizabeth was irritated and, three months later, she protested to the Scottish King by letter. “There is risen,” she wrote, both in your realm and mine, a set of perilous consequence, such as would have no kings but a presbytery. . . . I pray you stop the mouths, or make shorter the tongues, of such ministers as dare presume to make prayer in the pulpit for the persecuted in England” (p 343). James replied to “his dearest sister and cousin”: having heard of the apprehension of Cartwright and others, he was “requesting you most earnestly that . . . it may please you to let them be relieved of their present strait” (pp 463-4).

Cartwright was being treated more harshly in prison than other ministers; their friends were permitted to visit them, but no one was allowed to visit Cartwright except his family and those who had necessary business to transact with him. Cartwright was reluctant to complain too much in case the bishops would restrict the other ministers’ visitors in the same way. After spending more than a year in prison, Cartwright and eight other ministers contacted Burghley in the hope that he would help secure their release. Burghley contacted the Attorney General, and there were further discussions which

included the Lord Chief Justice. Although it was becoming clear that no actual seditious conduct had been proved, the ministers were kept in prison.

However, their situation was attracting wider sympathy. Sir Francis Knollys, the treasurer of the royal household and a Puritan supporter, expressed to Burghley his amazement that the Puritans were thought to be as dangerous as Roman Catholics. Knollys was not asking for mercy for the ministers, but for justice; their alleged guilt had not been proven. It became clear that the best hope of release was for the ministers to look to Archbishop Whitgift. Cartwright was obviously reluctant to do so, in view of the previous controversy between them. He explained this to Burghley, while adding that he had already prepared a petition to Whitgift. Burghley advised Cartwright to send the petition and evidently persuaded Whitgift to receive it favourably; at least the Archbishop did not reject it outright when the ministers' wives presented it to him.

It was probably the Attorney General who drew up a form of submission which the ministers were required to sign before they could be released. Among other demands, it required them to acknowledge the full ecclesiastical supremacy of the Queen, that it was seditious and unlawful for any body to attempt to alter existing church usages without the consent of her Majesty, that the existing church government was allowed by the Word of God, and that the Presbyterian system of government was both unlawful and dangerous.

The ministers refused to accept these demands, even at the cost of continued imprisonment. But some time around the second half of May 1592 all the ministers were released; it is likely that their increasing ill-health was a significant factor in the decision to set them free. The outlook for the Puritan movement did not look bright at this stage, particularly as the Queen had squashed every effort by MPs with Puritan sympathies to promote a bill for the further reform of the Church of England. No wonder William Fuller, a Puritan layman who had known the Queen when she was a girl, complained: "Your Majesty hath so insufficiently heard, believed and taken to heart what God hath commanded you, and so meekly and coldly obeyed . . . that but halfly by your Majesty has God been honoured, His Church reformed and established, His people taught and comforted".³

Little is known about Cartwright during the three years following his release from the Fleet, except that he seems to have returned to Warwick and resumed his position in the Hospital. But in 1595 he left Warwick for Guernsey in the Channel Isles and spent six years there as chaplain at Castle Cornet. He would have found this a much more congenial situation, as presby-

³Quoted in Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, Clarendon Press 1991 reprint, p 29.

teries existed in both Guernsey and Jersey and he was able to put into practice the principles to which he adhered and which had caused him so much suffering. This Presbyterian system was to continue until the Restoration of 1660. Cartwright helped to bring about, in 1596, a reconciliation between the Presbyteries of the two islands, after 13 years of disruption in their relations. In that year representatives, both ministers and elders, from both Presbyteries met as a Synod. Cartwright's congregation consisted of the Governor, his family and others in the Castle, including the soldiers of the garrison, and it is said that Cartwright performed "some efficacious and gracious work" among the soldiers (p 386).

Cartwright returned to Warwick in 1601, but spent the following two years, until he died in 1603, as an invalid. "Yet", we are told, "would he not intermit his labours, but continued preaching when many times he could scarce creep up into the pulpit" (p 387). Cartwright was nominated as one of the ministers who were to represent the Puritan side at the Hampton Court Conference but, before it met, he had gone where, in Samuel Rutherford's words, "few kings and great folks come". Bancroft described the Puritan representatives as "Cartwright's scholars", a remark which was presumably not intended as a compliment, but it does indicate Cartwright's influence over the movement which was to become very much stronger in the new century.

On 25 December 1603 Cartwright preached his last sermon, on the verse, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecc 12:7). Just two days later this worthy man's spirit returned to God to receive his reward. He was 67. That morning he had spent two hours on his knees in prayer and he afterwards told his wife that "he found wonderful and unutterable joy and comfort, God giving him a glimpse of heaven before he came to it" (p 392). Samuel Clarke, an early biographer, notes that "he was frequent in prayer every day and, in his younger years, hath risen many times in the night to seek out private places to pray in. And as his labours were very great in the work of the ministry, so it pleased the Lord to make them very successful for the conversion and confirmation of many, and for terror and restraint unto others" (pp 395-6).

We may quote Cartwright's definition of prayer in his *A Treatise of Christian Religion*, published after his death: "a calling upon God alone, in the name of Christ, by the titles wherewith (in the Scripture) He is set forth unto us, as well thereby to do service and homage unto the Lord, as to obtain all necessary graces". He also speaks of prayer has a key to open "the storehouses of all God's treasure and (as it were) the only hook whereby we reach all the blessings of God, which otherwise would be out of our reach" (p 403).

We may sum up in the words of Dr John R de Witt: "Doubtless the most

representative early Presbyterian Puritan was Thomas Cartwright, who . . . with a burning passion quite careless of the consequences asserted the sole lordship of Christ in His Church. Granting that the authority of Queen Elizabeth was ‘the greatest in the earth’, yet he affirmed that it was limited by the Word of God. . . . What Cartwright demands is not the dominance of the Church over the state, but the independence of the Church in its own realm and its divinely-given right to exercise the functions peculiar to it, particularly in the matter of discipline. . . .

“This very same ground was occupied by the Westminster Assembly. The *Confession of Faith* itself makes it sufficiently clear that the majority of the divines stood in the tradition of Cartwright and the sixteenth-century Presbyterian Puritans: ‘There is no other head of the Church, but the Lord Jesus Christ’ . . . The Assembly refused to accept any limitation upon what it conceived to be the right of the Church by divine institution. It was for the divines of Westminster, as for . . . Thomas Cartwright, a question of the kingly office of Jesus Christ, in which the civil magistrate had no right whatever to intrude.”⁴

The Trespass Offering¹

Henry Law

Leviticus 5:15,16. *If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the Lord; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the Lord a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering: and he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him.*

Sin is a monster which has many forms. Each form has many hands. Each hand deals wounds. Each wound is death. It touches to destroy. But for each wound help is prepared. Jesus appears, omnipotent to heal.

This is the truth which Eden heard, which types displayed, which prophets told, which cheered the saints of old, which martyrs sealed with blood, which faithful pastors still proclaim. This is the truth which Satan hates, which in-

⁴John R de Witt, *Ius Divinum, The Westminster Assembly and the Divine Right of Church Government*, J H Kok, 1969, pp 174-6. This useful historical volume has been reprinted by Naphtali Press.

¹Taken, with editing, from Law’s, *The Gospel in Leviticus*.

fidelity derides, which worldlings tread beneath contemptuous feet. But it lives throughout the Bible page, and ever will live – the joy of heaven and the rage of hell. This is the prospect to which the trespass offering calls. It shows a pillar with a twofold front. One indeed sternly asks for penalty, but the other brightens with atonement made.

The verses which here meet your eye state the first case of trespass offering. It will suffice to ponder this. The other instances in name may vary, but in principle are one. A soul commits a trespass, and sins through ignorance in holy things. God's law is thus infringed, His will transgressed. The dues of heaven are withheld. Such are the features of offence.

Can this be a trifle? Shall no wrath arise? Shall deeds unholy cause no holy frown? This cannot be. Iniquity is hated by our God. Can he be clean who loathes not filth? Can he be pure who shrinks not from impurity? Would God's throne not be tarnished if sin is not condemned?

Let this ordinance be heard. The trespass offering first unveils God's wrath. Offence is dealt with terribly. The trespasser must seek the altar with a ram. The victim must lay down his life. The blood must flow. The costliest parts must be the food of flames. Where trespass has been, death must flow. So speaks this witness with no faltering voice.

Is the question asked, Why is the life thus taken? What means a service terrible in death and gore? The answer loudly thunders, Trespass brings death. No soul can sin and live. Such is the language of this solemn rite. Let all who hear take heed. Ignorance of this is the dark veil which blinds our race. It is the downward path which slopes to hell. Alas, how few believe that all the streams of trespass flow to ruin's gulf!

Survey the giddy crowds who throng earth's path. The mirth, the levity, the godless words, the silly unconcern, all prove that they little know the peril of their state. The current of their thoughts, the bias of their being, the channel of their words and works, widely transgress the law's strict rule. And still they sport, as moths around a flame. They fall to sleep, as Sisera in Jael's tent (Jdg 4:21). They take the dainties from a treacherous hand, but see neither the hammer nor the nails. Like Amasa, they seek a friend's embrace but heed not the sword which Joab holds (2 Sam 20:10). Thus multitudes unconsciously are slain.

But this rite specially condemns transgression in God's holy things. Alas, this is frequent. Many sacrilegiously invent a religion of their own conceit. God plainly speaks from His high throne. He states His will. He shows the only path to heaven. But man's indifference refuses to be taught. He pursues the light which erring reason kindles. He chooses the rags of nature rather than the gospel robe. But none reach heaven by such Babel-steps. This

trespass, cloaked in a fair guise, allures a Cain-like crowd. But it is trespass, and it slays the soul.

Some would buy heaven by the price of forms. They bring the offering of rites duly kept. They diligently tread the ceremonial round. They never doubt that ritual strictness will secure the crown.

Take heed of error here. Truth is a narrow line. Men easily diverge. On either side there is a foul descent. In Satan's creed there are opposing falsehoods. One lowers forms to dust. The other raises them to saving worth. He cares not which delusion is embraced. But each delusion is soul peril. Forms are not nothing. They are ordained of God. They feed the soul. They fan the flame of faith. Their due observance proves the inward life. This is their Scripture place.

But means will never cleanse one sin. They have no strength to hold back vengeance. Woe then is theirs who use them as their only plea, and clasp them as their only hope. Would that each eye discerned this snare! Would that each pulpit gave a warning note! This trespass only lives in dens of ignorance. It cannot breathe when dragged to light. But it is trespass. Therefore it is death. The gospel slighted leaves no hope.

But when heaven's rays in mercy dissipate these mists – when trespass is seen as a murderer – then the deep sigh is heard: Is there no remedy, no refuge, no escape? Must everlasting vengeance seize me as its prey? Now view the trespass offering again. While faith beholds, a saving gleam breaks forth. A dying victim comes. A substituted life is taken. Another suffers in the offender's place. Pardon is granted through a proxy's blood.

Believer, here is the picture in which faith delights. A trespass offering is prepared in Christ. He is made all your sin. He drinks your every drop of woe. Amazing grace! Astounding love! This is God's way to save. This is the song of all the saved, the joy of all who really joy, the hope of all who have true hope. This is the fact which conquers death and tramples on the grave and gives enduring peace and furnishes resistless pleas and satisfies each attribute of God and crowns Jehovah with His brightest crown. Look clearly at this ordinance. The trespass offering bleeds, and trespass is forgiven. So Jesus dies, and His whole family is saved. It is a heaven-taught challenge: "Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" It is a heaven-brought answer: "It is God that justifieth". The Spirit prompts the question, "Who is he that condemneth?" The same voice sounds the triumph-note, "It is Christ that died". Each trespass offering shouts aloud this truth.

This cup of grace is not exhausted yet. The sinner's need is a vast, varied field. No single picture can depict its breadth. But Jesus' work completely covers all. His life is laid down as trespass expiation. But death alone crowns

not salvation's pyramid. More is required. More is performed by Christ. More is prefigured here. The value of the trespass must be reckoned. Scales must be brought. The offender must pay down the estimated cost according to the sanctuary's weight. Further addition of a fifth part must be made. Equivalent will not suffice. Excess is superadded (Lev 5:16). This rule sets trespass in a clearer light. Death is entailed – that is the misery. Debt is incurred – that is the penalty and shame.

We thus are taught that trespass defrauds God. Creation's law makes us His sole possession. No faculty of mind, no power of intellect or thought, no talent or influence or time, no opportunity or gift or grace, is our own property. All then should serve the cause of the one sovereign Lord. Reason should plan, and eyes should see, and hands should work, and feet should run, to do Him honour and augment His praise. Our every energy should fly abroad with morning light to gather fruits of glory for His name. Each night should prove that faith and love have laboured to advance His kingdom upon earth.

But is it so? What is the witness of each hour? Alas, self mounts the great Creator's throne. We rise, we enter on the day, we journey on, as if self-seeking were legitimate. Whether we rest or toil, it is unto ourselves. Is not this trespass? Such is its lightest name. It robs our God. It wastes His dues. This is a solemn thought. It fixes on our souls the blackest dye of wrong. It brands us as purloining from a Father's and a Benefactor's store.

Some perhaps may ask, Can no amends be made? Can no devotedness repay? That is a vain conceit. If no thought of any moment ever swerved from a pure effort for the Lord, it would but be that moment's due. Surplus of merit is the Roman Catholic's dream. But best acts only increase our debt. Hence all our works make bankruptcy more deep. When justice calls to the white throne, the fairest reckoning is one huge debt. Who then can stay arrest?

Here the true trespass offering again presents relief. Jesus is salvation to the full. Death for sin is not the whole of His grand work. This decks us with no merit. It fills no hands with fruits of righteousness. He pays a whole life's homage to the law. He gives compliance to its largest rule. It asked for one undeviating course of love. Jesus was love without one straying step.

If you are Christ's, this pure fulfilment is for you. For you Christ wrought it. To your account He puts it. Ponder its wondrous worth. Since Christ is God, Deity embodies all His acts. When He obeys, it is divine obedience. Unsullied righteousness is sought from man. The righteousness cast over him is the righteousness of God. The trespass-offerer added a surplus. But who can weigh the surplus which Christ brings? He piles the scales, till God can give and God can take no more.

Such is the gospel which pervades this rite. It is clear and full and rich,

and precious, and divine. Reader, it comes to you this day. It deals most lovingly, most closely with you. It tells you in emphatic terms that trespass stains your heart, your soul, your mind, your life – your every day, your every hour. It warns that every trespass strengthens Satan’s claims, and fans the flames of hell. It strips off every self-framed hope. It places a vast barrier between you and God. But next it sweetly shows a full recovery. Christ’s cross and life are pictured in the brightest hues. You see Him dying to pay the trespass penalty. You see His righteousness supplying trespass wrongs.

He tenderly persuades: Only believe, and take My overflowing cup of merit. Come, cling by faith to Me, and all your trespasses are buried in My wounds; by My robe you are entirely covered. Come and by faith be one with Me; here is full pardon; no charge against you can be found. Here is full beauty; no speck of filth remains. Here is My cross, your all-sufficient expiation. Here is my surplus payment as your wealth.

What answer do you give? Can you reject the only trespass offering?

A Free Salvation¹

W K Tweedie

Isaiah 55:1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price.*

Why come? Because the invitation is addressed to sinners, and I am surely one. Am not I so athirst as to be weary and faint in my mind? Is not my soul like one that dwells in a dry, parched land? Have I not felt that all this world can offer cannot satisfy my soul? I have fled to object after object and listened to counsellor after counsellor. When one thing disappointed, I have tried another, and another; but all have failed. Rest seems to flee as I pursue it; and I can now only mourn in my complaint, and make a noise.

If I say, Surely a change of scene or friends or pursuits will bring relief, then vanity and vexation are stamped upon them, till I am compelled to say, “Miserable comforters are ye all”. The delight of my eyes taken away with a stroke; my own familiar friend become my enemy; the object of my affection turned into bitterness; or, to crown all, my sins pressing upon me like a load too heavy for me to bear; conscience accusing; the soul dis-tempered and dismayed – surely these all urge me to flee to the fountain so full and so free!

But may I flee? One so guilty, one so perverse, or so far gone in sin – may

¹Taken, with slight editing, from Tweedie’s volume, *Glad Tidings*.

I flee? To doubt it is to add sin to sin, to make God a liar, and therefore to render ruin sure. His language is, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come". Away, then, unbelief; away all faltering and delay. When God invites, I will, through grace, comply. When God promises, I will, through grace, believe. When the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, I will go; and if I perish, I will perish in the arms of mercy, at the foot of the cross.

But I should not be always laying the foundation of repentance from dead works. No, I should go on to perfection and become strong in the Lord. For these purposes, I should live beside the throne of grace, for I am safe only when under its shadow, or linked to it by the golden chain of love. Come then, O Breath, and breathe upon this soul, that it may open to the Saviour like the little flower to the sunshine and the dew.

God Chastising His People¹

George Craig

Hebrews 12:5. *My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him.*

We are cautioned against two extremes into which afflicted people are prone to fall: to disregard God's chastisements, and to despond under them. In order to incur the guilt of despising the chastening of the Lord, it is not necessary for us to cherish conscious contempt either of God or of His dealings with us. Many are guilty of this sin who would shrink with horror from the idea of mocking God's providence. Indeed, this sin assumes so many forms that we may easily commit it without being aware that we are guilty.

In some, it takes the form of studied indifference to trouble. Though such indifference may be sanctioned by worldly fashion, it plainly implies contempt of Him who has endowed us with an emotional nature and requires us to feel our sorrows, so that we may be made better by them. In others, it appears in a habitual tendency to separate God from their trials. The chastening may not itself be despised; but the divine Chastener is as little recognised as though He had long ago exchanged activity for repose and left His world to work on by its own energies. A third class of people ignore the purpose of their afflictions; they acknowledge perhaps the providence of God in them but turn a deaf ear to the design of the rod and the duty to make good use of it. And a fourth group show the same unsoftened and unbelieving temper by restraining prayer in the time of adversity; they thus show that they lack any

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Christian's Daily Companion*. Craig (1805-1866) was minister of Sprouston, near Kelso.

true sense of dependence, any conscious need of heavenly help, any sincere desire for the blessed relief that the sorrowful obtain by pouring out their hearts before their God.

But the sin of despising the chastening of the Lord, whatever form it assumes, is grievously unbecoming in Christians. To be indifferent to the rod is daring impiety, even if God chastens only as an offended Sovereign, or as a righteous Judge. But is it in either of these capacities that He afflicts His people? Far from it! Hear the Apostle's argument: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord . . . for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth". So it is as a Father that God afflicts – a kind and considerate Father who loves His children and, just because He loves them, does not spare the rod. And is it no presumption, no impiety, to despise a Father and a Father's love?

Consider the case! The great God comes forth from His place to set in order a series of afflictive events for our benefit; He condescends to occupy His infinite mind in adapting them to our various circumstances. Yet, instead of seconding His design and showing gratitude for His condescension, we make as light of His corrections as if they were the result of chance, or as if all we had to do with them was to get rid of them! What blindness! What unthankfulness! What heartlessness! How marvellous is God's mercy in still continuing to address to such hardened offenders the fatherly entreaty, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord".

The case of those who run to the opposite extreme, of fainting under God's rebuke, is perhaps worthier of sympathy but it is not less sinful. Depression usually appears in connection with heavy and protracted afflictions – unless its victims have a morbid temperament, and then they require the help of a doctor. And who needs to be told that it is difficult for flesh and blood to bear accumulated woe?

It is trying to be stretched prostrate on a sickbed, when the support of one's family or the success of some favourite scheme imperiously calls for immediate and vigorous exertion. It is mysteriously trying to be laid aside from active duty and to have only the work of patience assigned to us, when our prospects of usefulness are bright and our desire to throw ourselves into them is ardent. No one who has not had his fondest hopes suddenly blasted, or the object of his warmest regard unexpectedly removed from his grasp, or the result of years of anxiety and labour consumed in a moment before his eyes, can form an adequate conception of the strong temptations which God's people sometimes have to faint under their burdens, to weary of life, and to abandon themselves to despair!

Yet the sin of the despondent is not less grievous than that of those who

despise God's chastisements. Does it also not imply disbelief of the providence of God? Does it not, equally with the other, involve disregard of the end of affliction? Above all, is it not accompanied with the same aggravation: contempt of a Father's love? It is remarkable that the Apostle employs the same argument against both sins. He calls the children of God to avoid both, from the same consideration: that the Chastener is a Father, and the chastening is the result of paternal love.

He therefore virtually teaches that both are extremes arising from the same principles and involving similar guilt. Indeed what conceivable proof of the folly and guilt of immoderate grief can be so decisive as the fact that the believer's heaviest trials, no less than his lightest, originate in the love of God and are administered with a special regard and adaptation to his needs and well-being? What could anyone wish for more, in his trials, than to have them measured out and superintended by an infinitely wise and gracious Being – One who knows what is best for him and who will not, like a foolish father, ruin him by ill-timed indulgence or weary him by unnecessary correction?

The true course for the people of God is to pursue the middle path between apathy and dejection. We are not forbidden to mourn, nor are we precluded from seeking the removal of our sorrows. But our grief must not be allowed to unfit us for duty, nor must we labour so much for their removal as for the sanctification of our trials. Let us ever strive then to make our sorrows tributary to our piety! While the trial lasts, let us possess our souls in patience.

And whenever we are tempted to faint or to murmur, let us thus commune with our own hearts and with God: Why should I repine? Am I not a sinner who deserves far more than I suffer? Am I not in the hands of a gracious Father who corrects in love, and will not inflict one pang more than is necessary? O my Father, let me ever trust Thy wisdom, and confide in Thy goodness! Let me ever, by the eye of faith, pierce the clouds and contemplate the bright heavens stretching away behind them! And let my hard and foolish thoughts of Thy providence give place to meek resignation and filial confidence and living hope – so that I may desire and have no will but Thine!

Protestant View

Roman Catholic Church Finances in the United States

The finances of the Roman Catholic Church tend to be well concealed. But a spate of bankruptcy cases in the US (8 out of 196 dioceses, with Honolulu teetering on the brink) has enabled *The Economist* to examine the situation in that country in more detail than is usually possible.

There are 74 million people in the US who describe themselves as Roman Catholic, and the expenditure of the Church is estimated as \$170 billion in 2010. Of this, 57% was spent on health-care networks, 28% on colleges and universities, 6% on dioceses, parishes and schools, and 2.7% on charitable activities. Over 1 million people were employed (by comparison, the Walmart supermarket chain employed 2 million people). Less than a tenth of the income comes from church offerings; much of the rest comes from investments, property, wealthy businessmen, and local and federal government support for the hospitals, universities and schools. The Church in the US probably has about 60% of the total wealth of the Roman Catholic Church worldwide.

The Church has paid out \$3.3 billion in settlements for child abuse over the last 15 years and this figure is expected to rise considerably. The dioceses are financially independent and the settlements are made by individual dioceses, which is why a number of them have gone bankrupt as a consequence of these settlements. Ten states are considering relaxing the time limitation on investigating child abuse, which could lead to the bankruptcy of several more dioceses. It is estimated that the Church is spending somewhere between \$100 000 and \$1 million a year in opposing the relaxation of this time limit. The child abuse scandal has led to a considerable reduction in donations to the Church and, at the same time, the shortage of priests and nuns has reduced the amount of the cheap labour available to the Church and has increased the running costs.

The rest of the report is somewhat technical but the following points emerge. Several dioceses have responded to their financial difficulties by raiding the priests' pension funds. Between 1886 and 2002 the Diocese of Boston collected about \$70-90 million in Easter and Christmas offerings, none of which was paid into the clergy retirement fund although many parishioners thought that this was where the money was going.

Some dioceses have presented their funds as consisting of numerous different accounts for parishes, schools, hospitals, etc, when in fact there is just a single account. The parishes, schools and hospitals have then lost all their investments when the diocese has gone bankrupt.

Other dioceses, threatened with bankruptcy, have tried to shield their money by moving it out of diocesan accounts. In the ongoing Milwaukee bankruptcy case, the Archbishop of Milwaukee authorized a transfer of \$55.6 million from the diocesan account into a cemetery fund. One Californian lawyer who has been involved in several of the bankruptcy cases says, "We have seen a consistent tactic of Catholic bishops to shrink the size of their assets, which is not only wrong morally but in violation of state and federal laws". A whole city block in downtown San Diego was valued in the diocesan

accounts at \$40 000, the price that had been paid for it in the 1940s. The judge in the case was so irritated by the various “shenanigans” that she ordered a special investigation into the diocesan finances.

The *Economist* report exposes considerable financial corruption in Roman Catholic dioceses in America but, as so often when dealing with the Church of Rome, there is a reluctance to draw conclusions. Somehow the idea is preserved that the Church of Rome is doing a lot of good in America. One would hope that, from her financial corruption, people would readily deduce her spiritual corruption, but they are remarkably slow to do so. *DWBS*

Notes and Comments

Marriage, Divorce and Alzheimer’s Disease

The God-given institution of marriage has increasingly been attacked in recent years. As secular values invade our society, divorce rates have reached an alarming level. However, God makes it clear in His Word that “from the beginning it was not so” (Mt 19:8). In the Garden of Eden He revealed to Adam that a man shall “leave his father and his mother . . . and they shall be one flesh” (Gen 2:24). This was for life, and what “God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Mt 19:6). The Saviour also tells us that the only valid reasons for divorce are fornication and adultery (Mt 5:32). The inspired apostle Paul further expands on the relationship between a believing and an unbelieving spouse. If the unbeliever chooses to depart, the believer is “not under bondage in such cases, but God hath called us to peace” (1 Cor 7:15). While provision is made for the party who is deserted, the whole context is about not departing.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* deals with the matter comprehensively: “Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments, unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joined together in marriage; yet nothing but adultery, or such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied by the Church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage: wherein a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed, and the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills and discretion in their own case” (24:6).

And of course, solemnly, there is death, which severs the marriage bond. Paul applies this fact to the precious doctrine of a soul being no longer married to the law but married to Christ (Rom 7:2). Even for believers, their earthly marriage ceases at death, though we believe that for them there will be stronger bonds in the world to come. There they are the “children of the

resurrection” and “neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven” (Mt 22:30). How we should all fervently seek to be among that blessed number who will form the bride of Christ to all eternity and who will be called into the marriage supper of the Lamb!

This is the position which Christians have held over the centuries. The world, of course, has its own sinful practices, which sadly are entering the professing Church more and more. This is clear as we listen, for example, to the current debate on same-sex “marriages”, but conservative Christians have generally held to the *Westminster Confession’s* standard.

It was with alarm therefore that we heard recently of another justification for divorce mooted by the 82-year-old television evangelist Pat Robertson, who aligns himself politically with the “Christian right” in the USA. He was heavily involved in American politics and therefore has considerable influence over a significant sector of the religious world there. On one of his TV shows, he was asked to give an opinion about a man wanting to leave his wife, an Alzheimer’s sufferer. Robertson’s response was breathtaking: “I know it sounds cruel but, if he is going to do something, he should divorce her and start all over again. . . . She has gone; it’s like a walking death.” He added that he would not put a “guilt trip” on anyone in that situation.

Alzheimer’s is a fearfully-debilitating disease in which sufferers gradually lose their memory and rational functions. They can become totally incapable of doing anything for themselves and often do not appear to recognise their nearest and dearest. The trial is great both for the person and for those close to them. Yet, at a point in their lives where they need the greatest care and love, Robertson seems to advocate abandonment. This patient is to be considered dead to her spouse and he should “move on”; he should not feel any guilt about doing so. What cruelty! How different to the true Christian viewpoint, where we are called to self-denial and sacrificial love to others, even when it cannot be reciprocated.

In New Zealand we visited a 92-year-old Christian whose wife suffers from severe Alzheimer’s. They live in separate parts of a retirement complex. She cannot open her eyes nor show any sign of recognition, yet each day she is wheeled into his apartment for several hours, where he lovingly reads the Bible to her, speaks to her and feeds her. It was our privilege to watch him patiently put a little food to her mouth, which she slowly began to chew even though her face showed no emotion. When we had worship with them she tried to “mouth” the words of the Psalm we were singing. It was a very poignant experience for us. Would this man abandon his wife whom he cared for and loved over a long married life? No. It was his pleasure to do anything he possibly could for her. Here was a Christian witness to those

who watched. We know too of those in our own circles who just as lovingly and tenderly care for their spouses in difficult circumstances.

The August edition of *Evangelical Times* carried an article on the same theme. A man was asked why he remained faithful to his marriage vows as there was no possibility that his wife would recover. At the time, she was able to walk and talk, but her sentences were incoherent; later she regressed to sitting motionless in a chair with her hands clenched. His answer was: “She’s still my wife. Years ago, when I pledged to be faithful to her, I didn’t know she would have Alzheimer’s disease. But she made the same promise to me. It could have happened to me instead of her. As a Christian, I simply have no choice but to be faithful, no matter what happens.” Later on in life, this man was to learn that his example, in keeping his marriage vows, had made a profound impression on others.

Whether married or single, we may be called in providence to go through severe trials. Only the Lord knows what illnesses or other events may overtake us and how active Satan may then be in causing division. But God promises to give grace and strength to those who trust in Him. Pat Robertson’s is not the way of the cross and self denial; it is the easy path of self-gratification. How different to the Saviour’s way: “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Mt 16:24). How beautiful is Paul’s statement: “So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself” (Eph 5:28).

KHM

Departures From Marriage

Alex Salmond, the First Minister, has announced the Scottish Government’s new legislative programme. Sadly, as expected, it includes a bill permitting same-sex marriage. There is no need to repeat here the comment in last month’s Magazine on the anti-biblical nature of this proposal.

A further concern, however, arises when society moves away from the God-ordained ordinance of marriage between one man and one woman, and that is the fear that there will be further departures. We have already seen this, for instance, when the grounds which permit divorce, in the legislation of Britain and other countries, have become increasingly flexible, and unscriptural, as the years have passed.

News of a striking illustration of the danger of escalating departures from God’s standard for marriage come into the public domain in late August. Three months previously, a public notary in the Brazilian state of Sao Paulo accepted a civil union between three people. In defence of her action, she has asserted that the man and the two women concerned should be entitled to “family rights”. She also claims that there is nothing in Brazilian law to

prevent such an arrangement. Another lawyer was correct to describe it as absurd; she was also presumably correct to describe it as totally illegal.

The public notary defended her action by claiming that it reflects the fact that the idea of a “family” had changed. What matters, however, is God’s idea of what constitutes marriage. In His goodness to humanity, He has established marriage between one man and one woman, and He has made that ordinance part of His revelation in the Bible. To depart from that ordinance is sinful and, apart from a mighty work of grace among the nations, one can only fear that such departures will cause further damage to society as a whole. God said of Israel long ago: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hos 4:6).

Clearly the world desperately needs the gospel. It also needs a sense of the absolute authority of God and of His law. Apart from this, people will adopt all kinds of immoral lifestyles that are not only spiritually dangerous, but also potentially harmful to mind and body.

Church Information

Synod Resolutions

Scottish Independence: The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met at Glasgow on the 23rd day of May, 2012, desires to place on record its deep concern at the proposed intention of the present Scottish Government to abrogate the Treaty of Union of 1707. The Synod is of the view that the Treaty of Union is inviolable and cannot be lawfully overturned in all time coming and is a fundamental guarantee of the civil and religious liberties of the people of Scotland which cannot be tampered with except at great peril to our spiritual and temporal welfare.

- The Treaty of Union expressly provides for the security of the Protestant religion and Presbyterian Church government;
- The current proposed constitutional arrangements envisaged by the Scottish Government would lead to a secularisation of the nation’s constitution by neglecting to give the Christian Church its rightful place as the established and only religion of the realm;
- The desire to change from a Protestant constitution to a secular one represents a great provocation of the God of glory, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the king of nations;
- The influence of the Roman Catholic Church in particular and false religion in general is likely to be excessive in an independent Scotland where Protestantism is marginalised;

- The breach of the Union would be a national manifestation of the sin of unthankfulness for the multitudes of blessings the people of the United Kingdom have known from the hand of the Lord in both spiritual and temporal matters since 1707;
- The breaking of the Union would represent the sin of covenant-breaking before the Lord, in violation of the moral and spiritual obligations of the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643, in which the mutual welfare of all the parts of these islands became a sacred bond of trust between the three kingdoms down to the end of time.

The Synod warns the people of the Church, the Scottish Government, the British Government and the people of the United Kingdom, of the great dangers threatened in abrogating the Treaty of Union and solemnly remind them that the Lord will deal with the sins of unthankfulness, covenant breaking and weakening the cause of Christ in the nation in His own time and way, "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set" (Prov 22:28).

The Internet: The Synod which met at Glasgow on Tuesday, 22nd May 2012, advises the people of the Church not to use the internet on the Sabbath, except for the purposes of necessity and mercy.

Theological Conference

This year's Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in the Inverness Free Presbyterian Church on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 30 and 31. It is expected that the following papers will be read; the first paper of each day will be in private, the others in public:

Louis Berkhof

Mr Roy Middleton

Tuesday 2.30 pm

Jonah

Rev J B Jardine

Tuesday 7.00 pm

Antinomianism

Rev J R Tallach

Wednesday 10.00 am

The Great Ejection of 1662

Rev K D Macleod

Wednesday 2.30 pm

The Fall

Rev Donald Macdonald

Wednesday 7.00 pm

Rev D Campbell is to act as chairman.

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

Committee Meetings

These Synod committees will meet, DV, in Inverness Free Presbyterian Church as follows on Tuesday, October 9:

9.30 - 10.30 Church Interests Committee

- 10.30 - 12.00 Training of the Ministry Committee
- 12.00 - 1.00 Sabbath Observance Committee
- 2.00 - 5.00 Finance Committee
- 2.00 - 3.00 Outreach Committee
- 3.00 - 4.00 Religion and Morals Committee
- 6.00 - 7.30 Publications and Bookroom Committee
- 7.30 - 8.30 Welfare of Youth Committee
- 8.30 - 9.30 Dominions and Overseas Committee

(Rev) *John MacLeod*, Clerk of Synod

Post of General Treasurer

The post of General Treasurer is likely to become vacant shortly. The Finance Committee accordingly invite applications from suitable candidates. It would be helpful if expressions of interest were made before October 20. Please contact Rev K D Macleod, Free Presbyterian Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA (kdmacleod@gmail.com), who will be pleased to provide further information, including the duties involved; salary will be dependent on experience.

(Rev) *Kenneth D Macleod*, Convener, Finance Committee

Bible Translation Manager

The Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee would be pleased to hear from any suitably-qualified person who could assist the Committee as a Bible Translation Manager. The revision / translation of the Shona Bible in Zimbabwe is presently under way and it is particularly with this work in view that this appointment is sought. In the first instance, please contact Rev J R Tallach, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH (jrtallach@btinternet.com), Clerk to the Committee, who will be pleased to provide further information.

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

College & Library Fund: Mr M Cameron, £50; Rev B Garrard, £50; £50.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: P Hoskins, for Zimbabwe Mission, £50; Covenant Presbyterian Church of Sydney, for Zimbabwe Mission, £132.04.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Duirinish: Glendale Friends, £40; £40 per RAC.

Fort William: Anon, £25; Mrs Buchanan, £45 per AW.

Lochbroom: Friend, Elgin, £25 per MC; Friend, Elgin, £20.

North Harris: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £40; KMC, £300; JFM, £10. *Where Most Needed:* CML, £60.

Shieldaig: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £60; £140; £100.

Stornoway: Mrs CM, £32; £23; £20. *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £20; CBA, £120. *Harvest Thanksgiving:* Anon, £500. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Mrs CM, for Zimbabwe Mission, £45; £50; £50; £30. *Sabbath School:* Anon, £20; £20; Doig, £20.

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 4BO; tel: 01224 645250.

Bracadale: **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; **Strathly:** Church; no F P Church services.

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

Harris (South): **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **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.

Lochinver: Sabbath 12 noon. Manse tel: 01571 844484.

Ness: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.

North Tolsta: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, F P Manse, North Tolsta, HS2 0NH; tel: 01851 890286.

North Uist: **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS; tel: 01876 510233.

Oban: Church and Manse. No F P services at present.

Perth: Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr A MacPherson; tel: 01569 760370.

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 6pm. 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 9HY; 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 Galley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Contact Mr R Middleton, 2 Emerald Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 4ND. Tel: 01270 761673. Manse tel: 01282 851782.

Broadstairs: Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.

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

Northern Ireland

Larne: Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 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.

Australia

Grafton, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 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:sydneyfchurch@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 Opland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743. Tel: 02 7432 5625.

Singapore

Singapore: Sabbath: 9.30am and 5.30 pm; Beacons International College campus, 1A Short Street, Level 2, Room L2--A, Singapore 188210; Wednesday: 7.45 pm, #03-04A, SCN Industrial Building, 11 Sims Drive, Singapore 387385. 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 Levysky: tel:00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevysky@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, e-mail: skhumalo.byo@gmail.com.

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: watkinskenya@gmail.com. Tel: 00254 733 731002.

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