

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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## Joy in Going to God's House

Many a person in Israel must have sung with genuine spiritual feeling: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Ps 122:1). The temple was the place where the presence and glory of God were specially manifested in the Shekinah cloud. It was also the place where sacrifice was offered, where the Israelite might come when conscious of guilt, with a hope of finding pardon from the God who had made the temple His dwelling place on earth.

The Israelite might come bringing a lamb for a sacrifice. He would lay his hand on the lamb's head, acknowledging before God that he was guilty of sin, that he deserved to die, that he was taking this lamb as a substitute to die instead of him – the innocent in the place of the guilty. He would be glad of the opportunity to come to a gracious God and find forgiveness in the way that He had appointed. And while the sacrifice of a lamb could not in itself take away sin, yet the Children of Israel were thus taught many things about the way of salvation: that the wages of sin is death, yet that God is reconcilable, that He accepts a substitute in the place of the sinner. It was all pointing forward to the Messiah, who would come in the fullness of time to offer Himself up as a sacrifice that could really take away sin.

The believing Israelite would appreciate the suggestion to go to God's house because, even if no other sacrifice was being offered there at the time, smoke would be ascending from one or other of the daily sacrifices – either the lamb offered for all Israel in the morning or the lamb offered in the evening – continual sacrifices for people who were sinning continually. The Israelite was included in these sacrifices. What reason he had for rejoicing when he could see evidence that God mercifully forgave sinners! Indeed he had every reason to believe that God grants an abundant pardon for sin, a thought which would be intensified for an Israelite of Isaiah's time when he heard the call, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will *abundantly pardon*" (Is 55:7).

But let us think of the Israelite who has been at the temple of God, has seen

the sacrifice offered, has believed in the divine provision for the forgiveness of sin, has forsaken his own way and his own thoughts, and accordingly has received mercy and an abundant pardon. Let us think of him when it is again said to him: "Let us go into the house of the Lord". How glad we may expect him to be as he looks forward to this renewed opportunity of being where God gives vivid light on the way of salvation through a substitute who suffers unto death. He may well anticipate a renewed experience of believing in the Messiah to come, and a renewed sense of abundant pardon.

For the Pharisee whom the Saviour described, a visit to the temple would have been little more than a new opportunity to say his prayers where he might be "seen of men". On the other hand, the publican who was at the temple at the same time stood "afar off", not wishing to draw attention to himself. He no doubt viewed a visit to the temple as an opportunity to derive benefit from the means of grace that God had appointed for the good of sinners like himself. There he could view the sacrifices being offered – at least he would be able to see from a distance the smoke of the sacrifices ascending to heaven, God's dwelling place. Then he could meditate profitably on what he saw. As he did so, he believingly prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Lk 18:13). And he was heard. He went down to his house justified; he was accepted on the basis of the work of Christ as if he had always kept the law of God perfectly; in particular, he was abundantly pardoned on the basis of the sacrifice to be offered by Christ, which was typified by the sacrifices being offered at the temple.

When, at some future time, it would be said to this man: "Let us go into the house of the Lord", he would surely be glad to go again and, by faith, see something more of the glory of that merciful provision which God had made for undeserving sinners like him. And, having obtained abundant pardon, would he not feel much more free to stand close to, rather than far away from, what was happening the temple – those ordinances which typified the spiritual realities which were now so precious to him?

It was unlikely that Lydia could ever go to the temple in Jerusalem, either from her native Thyatira, or from Philippi, where she sold dyed cloth; certainly she could not go regularly. But by her time in history, it had become unnecessary to do so. The message concerning Christ's finished work was now going forth to the whole world. Paul and Silas had brought that message to Philippi, and Paul expounded the way of salvation to the little group who had gathered for prayer by the river, outside the city. No doubt he spoke about the sacrifices of the temple, which could not actually put away sin, contrasting them with the one sacrifice of Christ Jesus. Perhaps he used the same words as we find in Hebrews 9:26: "Now once in the end of the world hath

He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself". His work was effective; His sacrifice needs no repetition. Whatever Paul's exact words, they were blessed to Lydia; the Holy Spirit applied them powerfully to her soul. The Lord, we are told, opened her heart, so "that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul" (Acts 16:14).

There had been no need for her to go to Jerusalem; a sermon preached there could not have been any more effective than one preached in Philippi. That was perhaps already clear to her. But as she heard about the significance of the rending of the veil of the temple, she would understand better that the temple and its ordinances, the Passover and the other feasts which drew Jews and proselytes year by year to Jerusalem, had all been superseded. She could still learn from the typical significance of such ordinances, but there was no need now for her to observe them.

Suppose, sometime later, after a church had been organised in Philippi, with elders and deacons, someone said to her: "Let us go into the house of the Lord". It would now have been absolutely right for her to take these words as an encouragement to go to hear God's Word wherever it was being declared in that city – whether beside a river, in an open field or in a private home. She would no doubt have been glad of the opportunity to go and hear again the same good news that Paul had brought about Jesus Christ and the one, final sacrifice He had offered – this glorious message of salvation that was now being brought to sinners everywhere. As Matthew Henry says, in his remarks on Lydia's conversion and the events which followed, "Those that know something of Christ cannot but desire to know more, and seek opportunities of increasing their acquaintance with His gospel".

The meeting place for believers in Philippi was, in some respects, equivalent to the house of God in Jerusalem; it was a place for public worship, where God would reveal Himself, through His Word, to those who gathered there. This is true today also, and if people meet God in public worship – if they see something of Christ's glory as the Saviour from sin, if the Lord opens their hearts to receive His Word and enables them to look to Him by faith – then they will wish to hear more of this message; they will be glad when it is said to them: "Let us go into the house of the Lord".

We should pray earnestly that, whenever congregations gather to worship God, the Holy Spirit would be so poured out that the unconverted would have their hearts opened to see Christ Jesus as the Lamb of God, the One whose sacrifice so completely satisfied divine justice. And we should pray that believers would have fresh views of Him as their Prophet, Priest and King. Then we could expect to see genuine spiritual feeling in the singing of the words: "I joyed when to the house of God, Go up, they said to me".

# The Work of the Spirit of Christ (1)<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by *William Nixon*

*Acts 2:16,17. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh . . . .*

**1** Consider **the position of Christ and of His apostles**, when this pouring out of the Spirit took place on the Day of Pentecost. Having died for the redemption of all that were given to Him in the everlasting covenant, He had risen again; and having shown Himself alive by many infallible proofs, He had ascended to heaven. His followers were to see Him no more in this world, in His bodily presence, until He comes at last in glory, to raise the dead and judge mankind. Formally clothed with all power in heaven and earth, He had begun to establish His kingdom among men and had left His disciples behind to take care of its interests and to labour for its advancement.

The disciples themselves were beginning to get rid of their carnal notions that the Messiah would have an outward, temporal reign and to have their eyes opened to the spirituality of the dispensation which Jesus had introduced and would employ them to establish. Left in the world with such a charge and encompassed with difficulties and dangers, they now felt more deeply than before that nothing but special guidance and strength from on high could direct their minds, support their hearts, and establish their work. Yet they were not so comfortless as might have been expected from their former state of mind. They had begun to realise that their Lord had not forsaken them, and to look for such tokens of His presence and power as would prove that He was still with them in a very effectual manner.

Various circumstances were leading them to expect, and to prepare for, a special visitation from their ascended Lord. He had again and again promised that, as the result of His bodily departure, He would send the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, to dwell in them and to abide with them for ever.

They were now waiting with prayerful expectation for the fulfilment of this promise. Further, they were now beginning more adequately to understand the glory of Christ, as Head over all things to the Church, and as still truly with them, though unseen – as still with them in respect of His divine presence and almighty power and of His all-sufficiency and faithfulness, as their Redeemer and Lord. They felt strong in Him and in the power of His might. They also had their minds filled with altogether-new views, both of this world and of the next, of the shadowy nature of things seen and temporal

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing from Nixon's volume, *All and in All: the Relations of Christ as God: Creator and Redeemer*. Nixon (1803-1900) was a minister in Montrose.

and of the greatness of the things that are unseen and eternal, of the vanishing nature of the heaviest earthly trials before them and of the enduring glory to which they now felt destined. They were manifestly filled from above with anticipations of the coming of the Spirit and with a readiness to receive Him.

In fact, the Spirit was already in them – secretly and silently, yet strongly and irresistibly – drawing out their desires, enlarging their expectations and enlivening their hopes of His remarkable descent. Carnal lusts were now repressed. Earthly ambition was gone. Pride and jealousy had vanished. Guilty fear had fled. The spirit of unholy rivalry had left them. They were clothed with deep humility. Holy love to God and to one another filled their hearts and influenced all their conduct. Or ever they were aware, their soul made them “as the chariots of Amminadab”, in the swiftness of their approach to the presence of the divine glory. Living faith and hope carried them near to God, conveyed them within the veil, brought them near to the eternal throne, and bound and held them fast to Christ, as one in Him – indeed, one with Him – and as ready, waiting and expecting to be filled out of His fulness.

This was the state of preparation into which the disciples were brought for the reception of the richest blessings from on high. And these blessings were not withheld. For while they were with one accord in one place, “suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

From that hour, the apostles clearly perceived, and boldly proclaimed, the true glory of Christ and the spiritual nature of His salvation. The views of Christ and of His salvation, however, that henceforth filled their minds were in reality due, as we shall more particularly notice, not to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, but to the inward illuminating power with which He accompanied His gifts. At the same time, so remarkably did the Holy Spirit of Christ then work in their minds, and in the minds of those who crowded to hear them, that multitudes trembled and cried out under convictions of their sin and danger, and as many as 3000 were savingly converted to Christ.

## 2. **The threefold manner in which the Spirit came down that day.**

(1.) In His *miraculous gifts*. He came with a sound that arrested every ear and riveted every heart. He came as a wind, denoting the spiritual life and strength with which He fills the soul. He came suddenly, to mark His sovereignty in working when and where He pleases. He came as a rushing, mighty wind that filled the house, to mark the resistless force with which He acts in

the subjects of His grace. And, more impressively still, He rested on the disciples in the form of cloven tongues of fire.

To punish the pride and impiety of the builders of the tower at Babel, and to put an end to their designs, God confounded their language and so scattered them. Ever since, this difference of language has prevented the nations of the earth from combining as effectually for evil as they might otherwise have done. But now that the gospel was to be spread as the means of reuniting mankind in a holy bond of love to God and to one another, the gift of tongues miraculously came on the disciples, by which they could preach the gospel to all nations.

At the same time, to symbolise the power of the Spirit which was to be put forth through the gospel, to consume the corruptions of sinners and to kindle in their hearts the love of God, the cloven tongues that came down upon the disciples were tongues of fire. Though that miraculous gift was only for that time, the account of it leaves Christ's followers under an obligation to master all the languages of earth and through them to convey His gospel to every creature under heaven. Moreover, this miraculous descent of the Spirit served to strengthen the faith of the disciples in their Redeemer. It further proclaimed to the unbelieving His Deity and Messiahship and His disciples' commission to spread His name throughout the earth. And it served the more immediate purpose of arresting the attention of the multitudes who were then in Jerusalem for the feast, from every nation under heaven, and of bringing them in crowds around the apostles to listen to their words.

But it should be carefully noticed that the miraculous gifts were not sufficient, then or at any other time, to convert those who witnessed them, or even to convert those who possessed them. Balaam, through the Spirit of God upon him, uttered lofty prophecies of Christ and the Church; yet he lived and died a wicked man. Many who have cast out devils, will be disowned by Jesus at the last day and driven from His presence as workers of iniquity. The sight of all the outward glories of heaven and of all the outward horrors of hell are not sufficient to turn any sinner from the love of sin to the love of God.

It was not the outward glory in which Jesus appeared to Paul that changed him from a persecutor into a preacher of the truth. His companions saw that glory too, but seem to have risen up again and to have departed as ungodly as before. It was because the Holy Spirit inwardly illuminated his mind and regenerated his heart that he became at that moment a new creature. Hence he afterwards refers his change, not to the outward glory he saw but to the divine work wrought by the Spirit in his heart, saying, "When it pleased God . . . to reveal His Son in me . . ." (Gal 1:15,16).

No outward displays of the divine power and glory will change the hearts



of sinners. And so when the disciples returned to Jesus, gladdened by the mighty works which they had performed through His name, He said, "In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven". We know from the nature of the case – as well as from Scripture, including the narrative in this chapter – the source of the spiritual effects wrought in those on whom the Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost. These effects were accomplished, not by the miraculous gifts, but by the power over their consciences and hearts that He exercised through the truth proclaimed in their hearing. This will be seen by considering the Spirit's other operations, as recorded in this chapter.

(2.) The Spirit came down that day *in His common operations*. By these are meant those influences under which hearers of the gospel are so far convinced and affected, without being savingly changed. As an example of what is meant, see how Peter preached and how his hearers were affected. After defending his brethren and himself from the charge of intoxication, he told them that, as foretold by God, the Spirit had now come; that for them to resist the Spirit would bring down the heaviest judgements; that all who truly called on the Lord would be saved; that Jesus Christ was the only Mediator and had proved His mission by His works; that though they had wickedly crucified Him, God raised Him from the dead; that His resurrection was foretold by David; that they, His followers, had witnessed, and now proclaimed, that the miraculous descent of the Spirit from Christ that day proved both His resurrection and His exaltation at the right hand of power; that David had predicted this exaltation when he said, "The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Ps 110:1); and that it now remained for them and all the house of Israel to know assuredly that God had made that same Jesus, whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Now Peter's close application of the truth was rendered effective by what we term the common operations of the Spirit, to the extent of greatly awakening many of the Jews. We learn this from verse 37: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said to Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Such a sight of their conduct to the Lord Jesus came upon them as filled them for a time with terror, and under the power of an accusing conscience, they cried out for deliverance from their danger. But – and this ought to be particularly noticed – though they were convinced of sin, they were not, at this point, turned from it; they were not forgiven by God. They were filled with fear, but not humbled. They had not become true penitents, true believers. They were not truly brought nigh to God by Jesus Christ. This is evident from what Peter called on them

to do when he found them in that state: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (v 38).

Up to that point, therefore, they had not yet repented; they had not yet been forgiven and born again. And so, had they gone no further in their ideas and feelings, they would have continued carnally minded and condemned and would have perished in their sins. Yet the alarm which they felt was owing to a work of the Spirit on their minds, through the instrumentality of the Word which Peter preached; for it is the Spirit who, even to that extent, convinces of sin. Similar convictions and alarms are felt by many who sit under a faithfully-preached gospel; in them, after all, these convictions and alarms at length cease without having led them to saving results. In the case of others, such convictions end in their eternal conversion from sin to God through the continued operation of the Spirit of God upon them.

(3.) On the Day of Pentecost, *the Spirit came down in saving power*. To see this, observe how Peter addressed the awakened multitudes, and the final, decisive results of his address in the case of 3000 of them. He said to them: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Then, as we are further told, "with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation". The saving effects of these appeals are next specified: "Then they that gladly received the word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls . . ." (vv 41-47).

Their experience of salvation filled them with inexpressible thankfulness and joy. They clung to the servants of Christ, through whose ministry they found themselves thus brought nigh to God. They felt sweetly bound to one another in the bonds of mutual love, as one in Christ and heirs together of eternal life. They constantly communed together in sanctified conversation and they daily drew near to God in prayer as children of His ransomed family. So clear were their views and so deep their feelings as to the littleness of time, with all its interests, and of the greatness of eternity. And so great was their love to Jesus, and to one another for His sake, that such of them as had any worldly property shared it readily with their poorer brethren, so that "they had all things common".

No discords were found among so loving a company, for they kept together with one accord. All the springs of their happiness were in God, for "they continued daily in the temple". Mutual love prompted mutual fellowship, for they were "breaking bread from house to house". Even their common meals

were sanctified into feasts of Christian love and joy, for they “did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart”. Indeed their entire life was one of continued thanksgiving and of uninterrupted access to God, as well as of remarkable acceptance with all around, for they were daily “praising God, and having favour with all the people”. And their consistent testimony to the truth was wonderfully blessed for the conversion of their neighbours, for “the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved”.

The effects of the Word preached that day show the nature of the Spirit’s saving work. If the 3000 then brought to salvation felt their lost condition and their need of redemption, it was because the Spirit convinced them of sin, righteousness and judgement. If they were truly enlightened, it was because the Spirit guided them into the truth. If they were savingly changed, it was by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. If they were set free from the bondage of sin, Satan and the world, it was because, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. If they became obedient to God, it was because He put His Spirit in them and so caused them to walk in His statutes and to keep His judgements and do them.

They were filled with consolation by walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. They were filled with peace and joy in believing, and made to abound in hope, by the power of the Holy Ghost. The gospel had come to them not in word only, but in power, by coming to them in the Holy Ghost. And it was by being made to live and walk in the Spirit that they brought forth these fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. By this work of the Spirit in their heart and life, the Lord made it manifest that He had effectually called these converts to Himself, and that it was He Himself who in a similar way continued to add to the Church daily such as should be saved.

3. The outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost naturally leads us to notice the history of **the work of the Spirit as a work of saving grace** during the past ages of the patriarchal and Jewish dispensations on the one hand, and throughout the ages of the gospel dispensation on the other.

(1.) The work of the Spirit during *the patriarchal and Jewish dispensations*.

[1.] The Spirit was *given from the beginning*. By the Spirit’s influences on Noah, Christ preached to the wicked before the Flood (1 Pet 3:18-20). When the Spirit ceased to strive with them they perished (Gen 6:3). God gave His good Spirit to His ancient people to instruct them (Neh 9:20), and to cause them to rest (Is 63:14). And all who experienced the joy of God’s salvation were upheld by His free Spirit (Ps 51:12).

[2.] As yet the work of the Spirit had been *very limited*. At first, in patriarchal times, only a few, like Enos, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and

Job are recorded as having received and exemplified the grace of the Spirit in their heart and life. Then, during the Jewish dispensation, the Spirit's work was much confined to one land on earth, and even then exhibited by a comparatively limited number who were Israelites indeed.

[3.] The Spirit's power was not only limited to few, but felt even by them in a *feebler degree*. The person and work of Christ were but imperfectly revealed in types and figures, and the way of salvation was but dimly seen. From the prophets was concealed much that, by the Spirit in them, they foretold of Christ's sufferings and consequent glory (1 Pet 1:10,11). Righteous men were not permitted to see and hear things which we see and hear (Mt 13:17). They could not imagine the things revealed to us by the Spirit of God which are prepared for those that love Him (1 Cor 2:9).

The reason for all this is stated by John: the Spirit was not yet given – that is, in His larger measures – because Jesus was not yet glorified (Jn 7:39). Everything must be in its proper order. The honour due to God's majesty, law and government had to be rendered by Christ's great sacrifice before sinners were filled with His abundant grace. The honour due to the Son of God required that, as His obedience unto death was to procure the Spirit, the Spirit's fuller outpourings should be reserved till Christ had finished His work and ascended to His glory. Moreover, a Saviour who has come and has been revealed in all His fulness, and a redemption completed and presented in all its freeness, are necessary to put sinners in circumstances where they can aright value, and make use of, the fullest measures in which the Spirit can be bestowed.

[4.] While the Church received the Spirit only within a limited sphere, and in a feeble measure before the coming of Christ, prophecy taught that His coming would be attended by *far more extensive and abundant measures of grace*. The promise was that, when a king came to reign in righteousness, the Spirit would be poured out from on high (Is 32:15), or, as it is said here in the words of Joel, "I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh".

Hence John the Baptist announced the near approach of Christ as about to baptize with the Holy Ghost (Mt 3:11). Jesus declared to Nicodemus the necessity of being born of the Spirit (Jn 3:3). He offered the Spirit to the woman of Samaria as the living water (Jn 4:10). He promised His Spirit to be, in every believing soul, a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 7:38). Before His death He told the disciples over and over of the advantages to them of His departure to heaven, to send the Spirit down, to be in and with them and all His followers till the end of time. After His resurrection, He breathed on them saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost". On the eve of His ascension, He told them to wait in prayerful expectation for

the Spirit, whom He and His Father would send from on high (Acts 1:4). And no sooner had He gone up than the promises of the Spirit began to be fulfilled in this effusion of Him on the day of Pentecost.

(2.) The work of the Spirit from the day of Pentecost onward through *all ages of the gospel dispensation*. Now that Christ had come and finished His work and taken His place on the mediatorial throne, there was no longer any hindrance to the copious descent of the Spirit. Justice was satisfied. The law was magnified and made honourable. The way into God's holy presence was clearly revealed. The minds of men were prepared for brighter and more comprehensive views of the love of God, of the work of Christ, and of all spiritual and eternal things. The shadows and the dawning of a long morning had been succeeded by the light of an advancing day. God's paths indeed had in all ages dropped fatness. But the time had now come for showers of blessing.

The day of Pentecost was significantly chosen for the commencement of these blessings. Among the Jews, that day marked the gathering in of their harvest, and they observed it by offering the first-fruits unto God. And now, with the ingathering of thousands of souls under the power of the Spirit on that day, there began that ingathering of sinners to Christ under the power of the same Spirit which shall go on from age to age, till the harvest of sinners saved is completed. Then Christ will present the whole Church of the redeemed to His Father and conduct them into the everlasting kingdom.

The same thing is intimated by the name, "the ministration of the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:8), which is given to the gospel dispensation. The name implies that the Holy Spirit is the great agent on earth in applying the redemption purchased by Christ to the souls of men. Accordingly, when the gospel comes with power, it comes in the Holy Ghost (1 Th 1:5). Gracious affections are fruits of the Spirit found only in those who live and walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16ff). None are saved except by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5). And ordinances are effectual to salvation only in so far as Christ is pleased to accompany them with the grace of His Spirit.

The only hope for this world is that the Lord shall yet pour out His Spirit on all flesh more abundantly. When the Spirit is thus poured out from on high, the wilderness shall be turned into a fruitful field (Is 32:16). Nations shall be born in a day; the Lord shall make bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all ends of the earth shall experience the salvation of our God.

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The preaching of the Word by the chosen servants of the living God is the ordained means of the gathering in of the elect. It is not the Word of God read so much as that which is heard which has the promise attached to it; hence the importance of a devout attendance on the ministry of the gospel.

*C H Spurgeon*

## Do I Have Grace?<sup>1</sup>

*Thomas Brooks*

I think I hear a weak saint saying thus to me: I would wish an end put to this controversy that has been so long in my soul – whether or not I have grace.

[1.] I find a holy restlessness in my soul till, with old Simeon, I have got Christ in my arms, till I have got Christ in my heart (Lk 2:25-33). I go from duty to duty, and from ordinance to ordinance, and yet I cannot rest, because I cannot find Him whom my soul loves (Song 5:10). I am like Noah's dove, that could not rest until he got into the ark. I cannot be quiet till I know that I am housed in Christ. My soul is like a ship in a storm, that is tossed hither and thither. Where shall I find Him? How shall I obtain Him who is the chiefest of ten thousand? What Absalom said in another case, I can say in this: What is all this to me so long as I cannot see the King's face? And truly the language of my soul is this: What is honour and riches and the favour of my fellow creatures to me so long as I go mourning without my Christ, so long as I do not see my interest in my Christ?

[2.] I can truly say that the poorest man, the most distressed and afflicted in the world, is not fuller of desires, nor stronger in his desires, than I am. The poor man desires bread to feed him, and the wounded man desires a plaster to heal him, and the sick man desires medicines to heal him. But these are not fuller of desires after those things that they need than I am of holy and heavenly desires. O that I had more of God! O that I were filled with Christ! O that I had His righteousness to cover me, His grace to pardon me, His power to support me, His wisdom to counsel me, His loving-kindness to refresh me, and His happiness to crown me.

[3.] Though I dare not say that Christ is mine, yet I can truly say that Christ, His love, His works, His grace, His Word are the main objects of my contemplation and meditation. I am always at my best when I am most meditating and contemplating Christ, His love and His grace. "How precious are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! (Ps 139:17).

[4.] I can truly say that the want of Christ's love is a greater grief and a greater burden to my soul than the lack of anything outward in this world. As to temporal things, I lack health and strength and trading, friends and money that "answereth all things", as Solomon speaks (Ecc 10:19). Yet all these needs do not so afflict and trouble me as the lack of Christ, of grace, and of the discoveries of that favour that is better than life (Ps 63:3,4).

[5.] I would not willingly or resolvedly sin against Christ for a world, although it is true that I dare not say I have an interest in Christ. I can say,

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Brooks' *Works*, vol 3.

through grace, that were I to die this moment, my greatest fear is to sin against Christ and my greatest care is to please Him. I know there was a time when my greatest care was to please myself and other people and my greatest fear was to displease myself and others. I can remember, with sorrow and sadness of heart, how often I have displeased Christ to please myself and others. But now it is quite otherwise; my greatest care is to please Christ, and my greatest fear is to offend Him!

[6.] Though I dare not say that Christ is mine and that I have an interest in Him, yet I can truly say, I dearly love the people of Christ, for the image of Christ that I see stamped on them. It is true, I dare not say Christ is mine and heaven is mine; I cannot say with some people, "The Lord is my portion"; yet I can say that I dearly love those that have the Lord for their portion. I can truly say that the poorest, the most neglected and the most despised saint in the world is more precious in my eye and more dear to my soul than the greatest and the richest sinner in the world (Ps 16:3).

[7.] Though I dare not say that I have any interest in Christ, or that I love Christ, yet I dare say that my soul weeps and mourns in secret for the dishonour that is done to Christ, both by myself and others. I can look the Lord in the face, were I now to die, and say, Lord, Thou that knowest all thoughts and hearts, Thou dost know that mine eyes run down with rivers of tears, because men keep not Thy law (Jer 9:1-3, Ps 119:136).

[8.] I prize people and things according to the spirituality and holiness that is in them; and the more spiritual and holy any man or thing is, the more my soul prizes that man and thing. I have often thought of that sweet verse, "Thy word is very pure; therefore Thy servant loveth it (Ps 119:140). Others love it because of the profit they get by it, or for the sake of their reputation, or this or that; but I love it for its purity, holiness and cleanness. I like no preaching or praying or talking or society but that which is most spiritual, most holy. It is not an exercise decorated with wit, learning and eloquence; it is not the hanging of truth's ears with counterfeit pearls that attracts me; but the more plainness, spirituality and holiness I see in an exercise, the more is my heart raised to prize it and love it.

Therefore, because Christ is infinitely holy above all others, I prize Christ above all. Ordinances are sweet, but Christ is more sweet to my soul. Saints are precious, but Christ is far more precious. Heaven is glorious, but Christ is infinitely more glorious. The first thing that I would ask, if I might have it, is Christ. And the next thing that I would ask, if I might have it, is more of Christ. And the last thing that I would ask, if I might have it, is that I might be filled with the fulness of Christ. Let the ambitious man take the honours of the world, but let me have Christ. Let the sensuous man swim in all the

pleasures of the world, but let me have Christ. And let the covetous man tumble up and down in all the gold and silver of the world, but let me have Christ and it shall be enough to my soul.

[9.] I find the same conflict in my soul that Paul found in his, after he was converted for nearly 14 years, after he was taken up into as clear enjoyments of God as any soul that ever I read of: The conflict that is mentioned in Romans 7:19, I find in my soul. The whole frame of my soul – understanding, will and affections – is set against sin. I find that I hate the evil that I do; yet I find that “the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do”. I find a law in my members, rebelling against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin, and this makes me often to cry out with Paul: “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Therefore I sometimes hope that those sins that are now my burden shall never hereafter be my bane.

[10.] I can truly say, when the Lord gives me any strength against sin and any power to serve Him and walk closely with Him in His ways, it is a greater joy and comfort to my soul than all the blessings of this life. Though I do not yet have a clear assurance of His love, though His Spirit has not yet set up such a light in my soul by which I might run and read my right to Himself and heaven, yet when He gives me but a little light through a crevice, when He begins to cause His love to dawn upon me, when He gives me a little strength against sin and a little power to walk close to Himself, this administers more abiding joy, more sweet peace and more solid comfort to my soul than all the riches, honour, friends and favours of this world.

[11.] Though my interest in Christ is not clear to me, yet I can truly say I would not change my condition with the men of this world for a thousand worlds (Ps 101:3, 139:21,22, 130:6). It is true, I cannot say that I have the seal and witness of the Spirit, which many talk about, though I fear only a few enjoy it. Yet I can truly say that I would not change my state with men who are merely moral, nor with the profane men of this world, for ten thousand worlds.

[12.] I find my soul carried forth to a secret resting, relying, leaning, staying and hanging on Christ for life and happiness. Though I do not know how it shall go with me, yet I have thrown myself into His arms; I lean on Him; there I will hang and there I will rest. If I must perish, I will perish there (Job 13:15, 2 Ki 7:3-5, Est 4).

[Brooks responds:] This I shall say, as I must answer for it in the day of my appearing before God, that had I as many souls as I have hairs on my head, or as there are stars in heaven, I could freely adventure the loss of them all, if these things do not undeniably speak out, not only the truth, but



also the strength of grace. Indeed, let me tell you that he that really finds any of these things in his soul, though the Lord has not given him a clear and full manifestation of His love and favour, yet, while breath is in his body, he has great cause to bless God and to walk thankfully and humbly before Him.

## Christianity in New South Wales 1800-30

### 1. Insurmountable Difficulties – in the Absence of Faith<sup>1</sup>

*Calvin MacKenzie*

“Here we have to contend with the depravity and corruption of the human heart, heightened and confirmed in all its vicious habits by long and repeated indulgences of inbred corruption . . . hence iniquity abounds, and those outward gross sins which in Europe would render a person contemptible in the public eye and obnoxious to the civil law are become fashionable and familiar.”<sup>2</sup> This bleak, although sadly accurate, observation of the moral evils of Sydney society on the eve of the period under review, was communicated by the God-fearing Congregational minister, James Fleet Cover, to the Directors of the London Missionary Society on 25 August 1799.

James F Cover had been sent by the Directors of the London Missionary Society to Tahiti as one of a group of 11 Protestant missionaries in 1797. Having fled threatened martyrdom in Tahiti, James Cover and his colleagues arrived in Sydney aboard the *Nautilus* on 14 May 1798, where they were warmly received by Samuel Marsden. During the early, formative years in the colony, these missionaries were a great help to the Church of England chaplains, Johnson and Marsden.

Together with William Henry, a preacher in the Countess of Huntingdon’s Connection, James Cover established an itinerant ministry based around Parramatta, and their congregations, it was said, were greater than those of the official Church of England chaplains. Cover and Henry set up regular preaching stations at Toongabbie and at three places within the then “northern boundary” of the colony. A congregation established at Kissing Point soon developed into St Anne’s, Ryde, the third church building and congregation to be established. Besides their ministerial and pastoral duties, both Cover and Henry engaged in teaching, while Cover also gave regular Sabbath evening lectures at Parramatta. After 21 months of intense labour, James Cover

<sup>1</sup>The first section of a paper given at the Youth Conference in Sydney in 2011. It follows on from the paper printed in this Magazine from September to November 2011.

<sup>2</sup>Cover, Henry and Hassall to Directors, 25 August, 1799, LMS Archives, I,1,A. Quoted in A T Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden the Great Survivor*, Melbourne, 1977, p 75.

returned to England with his wife in February 1800, feeling much discouraged and describing “the fainting of his heart on meeting difficulties which were insurmountable to an arm of flesh, in the absence of a complete faith in divine support”.<sup>3</sup>

In October 1798, after Richard Johnson’s first chapel – on the corner of what is now Bligh and Hunter Streets – was burnt to the ground, the more spiritually-minded Governor, John Hunter, initiated work on what was to become two substantial, stone church buildings. The first was to rise on land at Church Hill in what is now Lang Park, although this building was not to be opened until 1810. The second, St John’s, was to rise in what is now known as Church Street, Parramatta, and was opened in 1803.

By 1800, the population of Sydney had grown to approximately 2500 souls. In October that year, the Colony’s first chaplain, Richard Johnson, returned to England with his family in the *Buffalo*, and Samuel Marsden, who had arrived on 10 March 1794, took over the role of Principal (Church of England) Chaplain.<sup>4</sup> At the time of the Johnsons’ departure for England, Samuel Marsden was to say, “I feel great regret in their leaving the colony. Their kind attention to us will always endear them to me. I hope Mr Johnson will recover his health now he is returned to his native country.”<sup>5</sup> As the name and unremitting labour of love of Richard Johnson are indelibly imprinted upon the pages of the Church history of the colony of New South Wales during the almost 13 years from its inception to October 1800, the name of Samuel Marsden is, among several other most worthy Christian labourers, writ large in the events of the next 30 years.

The three decades under review saw great changes within the Christian Church in NSW. The arrival of ministers and missionaries of other Evangelical denominations, while they did not have the support of the state until 1836, ensured the gospel was preached in the various villages in which they resided – often beyond the ability of the two state-appointed chaplains to visit regularly. While many Roman Catholic convicts arrived in the early years, the first officially-appointed Roman Catholic priests were not to arrive until 1819-20.<sup>6</sup> NSW had the inestimable privilege of a 32-year religious foundation in Evangelical Christianity without the influence of Rome. “Bless the Lord, all His works in all places of His dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul (Ps 103:22).

<sup>3</sup>Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, pp 72-75.

<sup>4</sup>Macintosh, *Richard Johnson, Chaplain to the Colony of New South Wales*, Sydney, 1978, p 92.

<sup>5</sup>MacKanness, George, *Some Private Correspondence of the Reverend Samuel Marsden*. Sydney, 1942, p 20.

<sup>6</sup>[http://www.sydneycatholic.org/about/key\\_dates\\_in\\_our\\_history.shtml](http://www.sydneycatholic.org/about/key_dates_in_our_history.shtml).

On 1 October 1800, prior to being sworn in as the new Governor, Captain Philip Gidley King laid the foundation stone of St Philip's – the original parish church of the City of Sydney, first proposed by Governor John Hunter two years before. This building, completed and opened in 1810, was replaced by the current building in York Street in 1856. The first minister of St Philip's was the Anglican William Cowper, who was recruited by Samuel Marsden in 1808 to serve as Assistant Chaplain of NSW. Cowper arrived in 1809, preached his first sermon on August 20 and settled down to his duties as the rector of St Philips, where he laboured faithfully for 49 years. He was succeeded by his son William Macquarie Cowper as rector and archdeacon.<sup>7</sup>

In July 1802 Governor King divided the colony into two parishes: Sydney town was to be the parish of St Philip's, and the Parramatta area, 22 km west of Sydney, was to be the parish of St John's. In 1803 the impressive St John's Church was opened in Parramatta by Samuel Marsden.<sup>8</sup> The western facade, with its two distinctive towers added in 1818, remains to this day, although the rest of the building was replaced in the 1850s.<sup>9</sup> The Sydney congregation of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland worshipped in the mission hall of St John's from December 1979 until April 1982, before moving to the Tron Kirk hall in Granville in order to have two services each Lord's Day and a mid-week prayer meeting.

Governor Lachlan Macquarie arrived in the colony in 1810 and, on taking office, replaced the much-troubled and, some would say, troublesome William Bligh of "mutiny on the Bounty" fame. Upon arrival, Governor Macquarie observed: "I found the colony barely emerging from an infantile imbecility and suffering from various privations and disabilities, the country impenetrable, agriculture in a yet languishing state, commerce in its early dawn, public buildings in a state of dilapidation and mouldering to decay, the few roads and bridges formerly constructed almost impassable, the population in general depressed by poverty, no public credit, no private confidence, the morals of the great mass of the people in the lowest state of debasement and religious worship almost totally neglected".<sup>10</sup>

The Church of England colonial chaplains had expended much labour for the cause of Christ with, apparently, marginal success in the early years. Along with their ministerial duties, systematic religious and secular education

<sup>7</sup>[http://www.cowper200.com.au/william\\_macquarie\\_cowper.html](http://www.cowper200.com.au/william_macquarie_cowper.html).

<sup>8</sup>"Religion, Church & Missions in Australia", The State Library of NSW, [http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/discover\\_collections/history\\_nation/religion/foundations/index.html](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/discover_collections/history_nation/religion/foundations/index.html).

<sup>9</sup><http://english.stjohnscathedral.org.au/index.php/about-us-/our-heritage>.

<sup>10</sup>Macquarie to Bathurst, 27 July 1822, cited by C M H Clark, *Sources of Australian History*, London, 1971, pp 123-135.

had been instituted despite little encouragement from the state, opposition from the NSW Corps and the convicts, the arson attack against the first church building and the displeasure of the Governors who, in the main, although they supported the establishment of institutions for education, had little or no love for Evangelicalism – preferring a more “High Church” approach, encouraging good works and morality, but nothing more.

The convicts, amongst whom the chaplains laboured, were, for the most part, indolent and irreligious, seeking to ameliorate their isolation by indulging in the “fancied comforts of immorality and drunkenness”. Rum was the currency in these early years; its importation and sale were strictly controlled by the NSW Corps who became known derisively as the “Rum Corps”. The convicts, for the most part, were city dwellers from the poorer social classes who had resorted to theft to ease their poverty. Between crimes, they lazed around and lived off the proceeds of their ill-gotten gains, confirming the truth of the words of Isaac Watts’ religious song for children, well known at the time: “For Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do”.<sup>11</sup>

The revered Charles Simeon was Rector of Trinity Church, Cambridge, for 49 years and was widely acclaimed as the “father of Evangelicalism” in the Church of England during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Simeon mentored many of the young preachers who went out to NSW and other lands under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), which he founded. Commenting on Genesis 39:9 and the temptation of Joseph, he said, “Sin universally prevails. . . . Too many indeed will not submit to any restraints, but will even justify the grossest immoralities. They impose upon their excesses some specious appellation; they call drunkenness, conviviality; and whoredom, youthful indiscretion. Thus they commit sin without fear, persist in it without remorse, and even glory in their shame, when, through age and infirmity, they can no longer follow their former courses.”<sup>12</sup>

Being from the same Evangelical school of thought as Simeon, Samuel Marsden held the conviction – first recorded in 1807 by William Bligh – that his parish in Parramatta was such a “sink of iniquity” and that morality could be preserved only by the most rigorous disciplinary measures. Little wonder Governor Macquarie formed so ill an impression of the state of morality and religious worship in the colony in 1810 despite the best endeavours of the chaplains.

<sup>11</sup>Isaac Watts, “Against Idleness and Mischief”, a poem in *Divine Songs for Children*, London, 1715, known in later editions as *Divine and Moral Songs for Children*.

<sup>12</sup>Charles Simeon, *Expository Outlines on the Whole Bible*, vol 1, Cambridge, 1833, reprinted 1988, p 265.

# The Blessedness of Hearing the Word<sup>1</sup>

*J Julius Wood*

Proverbs 8:34. *Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors.*

**T**he Wisdom who speaks throughout this chapter, and in various other parts of the Book of Proverbs, is generally, and beyond question rightly, understood to be the Messiah. *Wisdom* is one of the Messiah's names, and there is plainly good reason for that name to be given to Him; for the Scriptures tell us that in Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom". He reveals to us the character and the will of God and thus makes us wise unto salvation, and He is expressly called "the Wisdom of God". It is Jesus Christ who speaks to us in all the Scriptures, whatever instrument is employed – whether a priest or a prophet or an evangelist or an apostle.

How then ought we to hear the instruction which Wisdom has revealed in the Word? Let the Messiah Himself answer: "Watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors". The gates of the Messiah and the posts of His doors are any means which He has appointed for obtaining knowledge of His will, but chiefly they are the places of public worship and the ordinances in which people unite to praise the Lord and receive instruction from His Word. And how is attendance to be given there? "Blessed is the man that heareth Me," says Jesus Christ, "watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors."

Can the half-day hearer lay any claim to the blessedness of which the Messiah here speaks? It is quite enough, he says, to go to church once a day. He goes because he thinks it decent to go. He does not go to be made wiser or better, to enter into communion with God, to delight himself in Jesus and His salvation. Is there anything like watching at Wisdom's gates in such attendance on ordinances, anything like waiting at the posts of Wisdom's doors? Verily, of waiting and watching there is none. And consequently there can be none of the blessedness which Wisdom mentions.

But people may go a step farther in hearing and yet come short of the blessing which Messiah connects with hearing. They may attend all the Sabbath services, and there may be neither watching nor waiting. The Sabbath comes round, and as a matter of course they go out to occupy their accustomed pew in the house of God. But with that they rest satisfied. Some popular preacher may sometimes draw them out on a weekday. But to go to receive instruction or to worship God in Spirit and in truth on a

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from *The Christian's Daily Companion*. Wood (1800-1877) was at this time minister of New Greyfriars' church in Edinburgh.

weekday is something for which they have no inclination, and they deem it altogether unnecessary.

Can they claim the Messiah's blessing – the blessing of those who hear Him, watching daily at His gates, waiting at the posts of His doors? Let *them* answer. Watching daily and waiting imply earnest desire and diligent endeavour. Where there is earnest desire, it will not be pent up within the limits of one day. It will embrace every opportunity of watching for its object. And while the believer chiefly honours the Lord's Day, he will seek, as he has opportunity, his daily spiritual bread; he will certainly prefer an hour in the Lord's house to one spent in worldly vanity, and he will redeem from his business a portion for his soul's refreshment. When you look at the thin attendance at most weekday sermons and see the multitudes of idle people who then throng our streets, and the similar multitudes who, though occupied with business, might often redeem an hour for their soul's good, do you think that the Messiah speaks of any of them when he says, "Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of My doors"?

But there are numbers who think that their acquaintance with Bible truth is great, and there remains little further for them to learn. When the things that the Messiah teaches, in the Word, are stated to them fully and plainly, they reply that they know it all. But do you have peace of conscience? Is your soul at rest? Have you found a satisfying portion? If not, there is something in the Scriptures which you have not yet learned. There is a knowledge to be drawn from them to which you have not yet attained. There is an acquaintance with the Bible to which you are yet a stranger.

How much carelessness and indifference there is among the ordinary hearers of the Word; many of them think there is little more for them to learn about divine truth! Yet such an opinion is utterly groundless. Who of the most learned has exhausted human knowledge, or any branch of it? Strange folly then to think of having learned all divine truth! In the Bible there is food for babes and strong meat for strong men. There are truths which those who have just been born of the Spirit can easily comprehend, and there are things into which the angels desire to look. Diligent waiting on ordinances, careful study, prayerful meditation and honest obedience lead to continued progress in divine knowledge, exercising a sanctifying influence on the affections and the life. Hence the blessedness of which the Messiah speaks, which consists in the life, the light, the vigour, the holiness, the happiness of the soul.

What is my character? Am I a half-day hearer and so think that I do very well? Or am I someone who confines my waiting on religious instruction to the Sabbath and have no relish or desire for spiritual refreshment at other times? Or do I think that I already know enough of these matters, and am

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therefore indifferent about further knowledge? If this is my character, let me understand that the Messiah does not speak of me when He says, “Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors.”

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## A Call to the Ministry<sup>1</sup>

*John Newton*

Your letter February 19 came to my hand yesterday. I have read it with attention and very willingly sit down to offer you my thoughts. Your case reminds me of my own: my first desires towards the ministry were attended with great uncertainties and difficulties, and the perplexity of my own mind was heightened by the various and opposite judgements of my friends. The advice I have to offer is the result of painful experience and exercise, and for this reason perhaps may not be unacceptable to you. I pray our gracious Lord to make it useful.

I was long distressed, as you are, about what was or was not a proper call to the ministry: it now seems to me an easy point to solve, but perhaps it will not be so to you till the Lord shall make it clear to yourself in your own case. I have no room to say so much as I could; in brief, I think it principally includes three things:

(1.) A warm and earnest desire to be employed in this service. I believe that the man who is once moved by the Spirit of God to this work will prefer it, if attainable, to thousands of gold and silver. Thus, though he is at times intimidated by a sense of its importance and difficulty, compared with his own great insufficiency (for it is to be presumed a call of this sort, if indeed from God, will be accompanied with humility and self-abasement), yet he cannot give it up. I hold it a good rule to inquire, in this point, whether the desire to preach is most fervent in our most lively and spiritual frames and when we are most laid in the dust before the Lord? If so, it is a good sign. But if, as is sometimes the case, a person is very earnest to be a preacher to others when he finds but little hungering and thirsting after grace in his own soul, it is then to be feared his zeal springs rather from a selfish principle than from the Spirit of God.

(2.) Besides this affectionate desire and readiness to preach, some competent sufficiency as to gifts, knowledge and utterance must appear in due time. Surely, if the Lord sends a man to teach others, He will provide him with the

<sup>1</sup>The first part of a letter written in March 1765 to a man who was considering if he had a call to the ministry. It is taken, with editing, from Newton's *Works*, vol 2.

means. I believe many have meant well in setting up for preachers, who yet went beyond or before their call in so doing. The main difference between a minister and a private Christian seems to consist in these ministerial gifts, which are imparted to him not for his own sake but for the edification of others. But then, I say, these are to appear in due time; they are not to be expected instantaneously, but gradually, in the use of proper means. They are necessary for the discharge of the ministry, but not necessary as prerequisites to warrant our desires after it. In your case, you are young and have time before you; therefore I think you need not as yet perplex yourself with inquiring if you have these gifts already. It is sufficient if your desire is fixed and you are willing, in the way of prayer and diligence, to wait upon the Lord for them; as yet you do not need them.

(3.) That which finally evidences a proper call is a corresponding opening in providence, by a gradual train of circumstances pointing out the means, the time and the place, of actually entering on the work. And till this coincidence arrives, you must not expect to be always clear from hesitation in your own mind. The principal caution on this road is not to be too hasty in catching at first appearances. If it is the Lord's will to bring you into His ministry, He has already appointed your place and service; and though you do not know it at present, you shall at a proper time. If you had the talents of an angel, you could do no good with them till His hour comes and till He leads you to the people whom He has determined to bless by your means.

It is very difficult to restrain ourselves within the bounds of prudence here, when our zeal is warm, a sense of the love of Christ upon our hearts, and a tender compassion for poor sinners is ready to prompt us to break out too soon – but he that believeth shall not make haste. I was about five years under this constraint: sometimes I thought I must preach, though it was in the streets. I listened to everything that seemed plausible, and to many things that were not so. But the Lord graciously and, as it were, insensibly hedged up my way with thorns. Otherwise, if I had been left to my own spirit, I should have put it quite out of my power to have been brought into such a sphere of usefulness as He in his good time has been pleased to lead me to. And I can now see clearly that, at the time I would first have gone out, though my intention was, I hope, good in the main, yet I overrated myself. I did not have that spiritual judgement and experience which are requisite for so great a service.

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If love is in proportion to the difficulties to be overcome, and if redemption could be effected only at the cost of the humiliation and crucifixion of the Son of God, the love which did not allow itself to be deterred by such a sacrifice was infinite.

*George Smeaton*



# Considering God's Testimonies<sup>1</sup>

Charles Bridges

Psalm 119:129. *Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.*

Can the mere professor of religion make this acknowledgment? He knows only the letter – the shell – which excites no interest. Yet hidden from his eye is an unsearchable depth which will make the believer a learner to the end of his life. Even Paul, who “was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter” (2 Cor 12:4), was brought to this adoring contemplation: “O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” (Rom 11:33).

This revelation is in every way worthy of Him whose name is “Wonderful” (Is 9:6). It lays open to the heaven-taught soul what “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man” (1 Cor 2:9). Think of the Creator of the world becoming a curse for man (John 1:1-3,14). Think of man, guilty and condemned, made just with God by a righteousness not his own (Rom 3:19-22).

Think of God bringing out of the ruinous fall more glory to Himself, and more happiness to man, than from his former innocence – in the display of His mercy and the glory of His justice. Think of Him granting to sinners His own righteousness and glory – not, as before, a creature’s righteousness, security and reward. Think how “the way into the holiest of all” is thus “made manifest” (Heb 9:8). Think how abounding grace is the death as well as the pardon of sin (Rom 5:20-6:6), the present as well as the everlasting life of the soul.

These are among the stupendous discoveries of the sacred book, that bow the humble and reflecting mind to the confession: “Thy testimonies are wonderful”. Let us therefore join with the Apostle in bowing our knees to “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” – that we “may be able to comprehend with all saints” (for, blessed be God, the privilege is common to all His people) “what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height: and to know” the unsearchable “love of Christ” (Eph 3:14,18,19), “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3).

And how delightful is the recollection that these testimonies are a “heritage for ever” (v 111), for they are not less wonderful in their practical fulness than in their deep unfathomable mysteries of love. Such is the infinite enlargement of this “heritage” that He who foreknew every thought that would enter

<sup>1</sup>An edited extract from Bridges’ exposition of *Psalm 119*, which has been republished by the Banner of Truth Trust.

into the minds of His people has here secretly laid up timely direction and encouragement for every occasion of need, even the most minute. Here again is wrapped up, in words fitted by wisdom to convey the revelation, all that communication between God and man throughout all ages of the Church, which is treasured up in the vast, unsearchable depository of God's mind and purpose. Can we then forbear repeating the exclamation, "Thy testimonies are wonderful"?

But it is not enough to adore the fulness of Scripture; we must seek to imbibe and exhibit its practical influence. Holy admiration of the testimonies will kindle spiritual devotedness to them: "Therefore doth my soul keep them". The stamp of divine authority upon them, while it deepens the reverence of God's children, commands their steady and cheerful obedience. To keep them is their privilege, no less than their obligation; and in this path they shall delight to persevere to the end.

Yet how moving to think about the mass of people, who look at these wonders with a careless eye, unconscious of their importance! They pass by the door of the treasury, hardly condescending to look inside, or only taking a transient glance which comprehends nothing of its inexhaustible stores. "I have written to them", says the Lord, "the great things of My law: but they are counted as a strange thing" (Hos 8:12). But it is far stranger if God's children, enlightened in answer to prayer with "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation" (Eph 1:17,18), should often be so indifferent to the mysteries of redeeming love here unfolded before them and should experience so little of their practical influence.

Let the recollection of our indolence, and our lack of conformity to them, never cease to humble us. Let us not enter into the testimonies as a dry task or an ordinary study, but let us concentrate our minds, with faith, humility and prayer, on contemplating them more devotedly. Every such exercise will extend our view of those parts with which we thought we were competently acquainted – opening a new field of wonders on every side, far beyond our present limited grasp.

Can any joy be imagined so sublime as the adoring contemplation of this revelation? It reflects even to angels a new and glorious manifestation of their God (Eph 3:10). It engages all their powers with intense admiration and delight (see 1 Pet 1:12). And while they behold and worship with self-abasement, their obedience is lively. "With twain he [the seraph before the throne] covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly" (Is 6:2).

May we thus study the same lessons, and with the same spirit! May our contemplation humble us in the dust and animate us in God's service!

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## Book Reviews<sup>1</sup>

*Westminster Reference Bible*, published by the Trinitarian Bible Society, hardback, 1691 pages, £14.95.

This new edition of the Authorised Version of the Bible is very welcome. First, it is newly reset in a clear, readable typeface. Those with failing eyesight will need larger print than this edition provides, but most people will find it very easy to read. In comparison with many other Bibles, it is neither small nor light; most people would probably use it at home rather than for carrying around.

Second, it contains much useful information to help the reader grasp the message of Scripture. (1) Compared with the traditional reference Bible, the number of marginal references has been greatly increased, many of them coming from John Brown of Haddington's *Self-Interpreting Bible*. The margins also contain the meanings of words that have gone out of use since 1611, when the AV was originally published. (2) The volume contains a concordance, a daily Bible-reading guide, and tables explaining the units of money, weight and other measures used in Scripture. There are also eight pages of attractively-drawn maps of the Middle East, Israel and the eastern Mediterranean, appropriate to the various periods of biblical history.

This edition is published in two different covers: one black, the other coloured. An edition in black calfskin has just been published at £49.95.

*Born of God, Sermons from John, Chapter One*, by D Martyn Lloyd-Jones, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 479 pages, £17.50.

This book contains a series of 32 sermons preached in 1962-63. They do not, as in many of Dr Lloyd-Jones' other books, provide a continuous exposition of the chapter. Instead they focus on two particular verses and two particular topics. One topic includes the abiding relevance of the law of God to all, including believers, and also the relation of the law to grace. He stresses that believers "are put into a position in which now, by the power of grace, [they] are enabled to live and to practice the law of God".

The other main topic is the assurance of faith. The preacher comes at the matter from a number of angles, seeking to encourage believers, on the basis of Scripture, to recognise what the Lord has done for them. Dr Lloyd-Jones does, however, seem to go too far when he encourages someone who has backslidden seriously but is beginning "to feel that this worldly life is wrong". What he describes may in particular cases be the beginning of conviction of sin rather than the beginning of a return from backsliding. It is worth bearing

<sup>1</sup>Everything reviewed here is obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

in mind a remark of Archibald Cook when speaking of assurance: “It is not while asleep that one reaches it”.<sup>2</sup> The backslider must return to the Saviour before he can expect to find assurance of his salvation.

This book contains much useful exposition and practical application of Scripture, and one would not wish discomfort about a particular passage, which is less than a page long, to overshadow the rest of the volume.

*My Beloved*, by Cathie MacRae, published by Andrew and William Murray, booklet, 64 pages, £2.00.

This is a reprint of a booklet written by a woman from Wester Ross who spent most of the last 16 years of her life in hospital suffering from tuberculosis. She died in 1948, aged 41. She writes frankly about her unconverted years and recounts her time of seeking salvation and her deliverance.

She comments on her illness and her spiritual experience, but the emphasis is on her spiritual experience. She refers to a number of other patients and some staff who shared her outlook; she valued their company. At another time she writes, “How I longed for the fellowship of a Christian friend! But what friend can take the place of my beloved Saviour, to whom I can turn at all times and who knows all our weaknesses and infirmities, for ‘in all [our] afflictions He was afflicted’?” The diary-type entries in the second half of 1945 become shorter and then cease completely. Presumably she was not well enough to continue.

This is a welcome example of a piety that was once far commoner in the Scottish Highlands than, sadly, it now is.

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## Protestant View

### Rome Plans a Resurgence

The Church of Rome, at its Twenty-fifth Synod of Bishops in the Vatican last month, discussed the decline in its membership and how to spread its teachings – by what it calls, “The New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith”. One Synodical document shows that millions of lapsed Roman Catholics, especially in the West, have joined other religious groups or become “nonbelievers”. “In Latin America,” says the *CathNews* website, “the Church has sustained massive losses to Pentecostal and evangelical Christianity, estimated at 8000 defections per day during the 1990s.”

What is the cause? In addressing the Episcopal Conference of Colombia in June, the Pope did not say that it was, for example, the priestly abuse

<sup>2</sup>In the forthcoming translation of his Gaelic *Sermons* (Free Presbyterian Publications).

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scandal. Rather, as Leonardo De Chirico points out on the *Reformation21 Blog*, he “explicitly refers to ‘Pentecostal and Evangelical communities’ as very active realities and primary agents for this change”. He adds: “Ratzinger quotes the document drafted by the 2007 Conference of the Latin American Bishops. . . . The relevant section . . . can be summarised in this way: most people in Latin America leave the Roman Catholic Church, not because of what the ‘non-catholic’ groups believe, but because of how they *live*. . . . In other words, the challenge that Pentecostals and Evangelicals represent for the Roman Catholic Church has little to do with their different doctrines of the Bible, authority, sacraments, the Church, salvation, etc, but with the quality of life they seem to live.”

What is Rome to do? The Pope’s answer is simple, says Dr De Chirico. “There is nothing to change as far as the doctrine of the R C Church is concerned. The challenge is to become ‘better’ Catholics: more hospitable, more inclusive, more compassionate.” This is to be achieved by promoting “adherence to the traditions of the Church, the deepening of Marian spirituality, and the practice of a richer devotional life. The cure is not less Roman Catholicism and more Evangelicalism, but instead more Roman Catholicism.” No doubt, Dr De Chirico’s insightful analysis of the Papal self-cure will be confirmed by the outcome of the Synod of Bishops.

More Roman Catholicism will not really stem the decline; nor will it draw lapsed Rome Catholics back from Evangelicalism (however that may be defined). Rather, it will contribute to the predicted demise of the Papacy. “The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands” (Ps 9:16). *NMR*

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## Notes and Comments

### Health Secretary Favours Lowering of Abortion Limit

The Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, has said in an interview that he is in favour of lowering the time limit for abortion in the UK to 12 weeks. Since then, several Cabinet members have also come out in support of lowering the limit, although not by as much as Mr Hunt suggests. Currently, women are able to request an abortion until the twenty-fourth week of their pregnancy.

While there is no prospect at present of the iniquitous Abortion Act of 1967 being repealed, it is good to hear of any step in the direction of lowering the number of abortions in the country – about 190 000 in England and Wales in 2011 (that is, 17 abortions per 1000 women). In Scotland the figure is 12 abortions per 1000 women.

Of course, pro-abortionists have objected strongly to the Health Secretary’s

expressed view – not least Lord Steel, the architect of the 1967 Act. He does not think there is any need for lowering the UK abortion rate because it “is similar to that of other European countries”. In fact, as figures from the World Health Organisation show, while the UK abortion rate is slightly above the European average, it is considerably greater than the average for Western Europe – indeed it is the third highest, nearer the average rate for the formerly-Communist countries of Eastern Europe (about 20 abortions per 1000 women).

We hope that more members of government will speak up in support of Jeremy Hunt’s view and that the debate will really be re-ignited. However much pro-abortionists may vociferate, such legislation as the 1967 Abortion Act will disappear when the gospel will prevail – an objective for which we pray. “Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction” (Prov 31:8). *NMR*

### **Same-Sex “Marriage”**

The “Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill” is one of 15 new bills announced by the Scottish Government in its legislative programme for 2012-13. This bill has been formulated with the express intention of legalising same-sex “marriage” in Scotland. Last year the SNP Government, led by Alex Salmond, consulted with the Scottish people, to “listen” to their views on the subject. Two-thirds of the 77 508 who responded are against any change in the law on marriage. It would seem then that Mr Salmond has gone against the will of those with whom he consulted. Is this democratic?

Solemnly, while we value democracy, it is not the will of the Scottish people that is paramount here. Mr Salmond is going against the will of a holy God who hates everything about this sinful proposal. There never should have been a consultation, far less such an immoral bill. Mr Salmond sees it very differently. He glibly states, “In promoting a fairer Scotland we will legislate for equal rights. Our Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill will enable same-sex couples to get married, and will allow civil partnerships to be registered through a religious ceremony”. He adds, “The new parliamentary session promises to be a pivotal one in the history of this country”, and then makes the promise, “No part of the religious community would be forced to hold same-sex weddings in churches”. But can we believe him?

Other countries provide a sobering picture. The Canadian Government legalised same-sex “marriage” in 2005. Within 5 years, over 200 cases had been brought against individuals, mostly professing Christians, who opposed it in the public domain. A TV presenter was immediately dismissed after posting his support for “the traditional and true meaning of marriage” on a social

network. One Christian organisation in Ontario, working with disabled people, was taken to court after objecting to the same-sex “marriage” of one of its employees. It was ordered to change its employment policy or close down. A minister in Saskatchewan was successfully sued for refusing to “marry” a homosexual couple even though he agreed to put them in contact with a minister prepared to conduct the “marriage”.

A campaign has now begun in Canada to remove tax-free status from churches that refuse to perform those ceremonies and, significantly, a Mormon is taking legal action in support of polygamy. He argues: If marriage can be redefined to allow same-sex “marriage”, why not have multiple spouses? A spokesman for National Review Online says, “Once ‘gay marriage’ becomes law, critics are often silenced by the force of law. The Canadian litany of pain, firings, and social and political polarisation and extremism is extraordinary and lamentable. . . . Learn something from Canada.”

The Westminster Government is no less fixated on changing the law. Prime Minister David Cameron is adamant that he wants to legalise same-sex “marriage” in Britain by 2015, even though the national press indicates that the Conservative Party stands to lose millions of church-goers’ votes if he presses on. Andrea Williams of Christian Concern warns, “If same sex ‘marriage’ became legal in the UK we are likely to witness a similar surge of proceedings brought against Christians . . . who will be penalised for having a biblical sexual ethic”. And she comments, “Religious freedom and freedom of speech will be crushed. Is this what we want for the UK?”

Aiden O’Neill QC, an expert in human rights law, maintains that if the Government changes the law it will have far-reaching consequences for schools, hospitals and foster carers. His opinion is that teachers who refuse to use storybooks about same-sex “marriage” could possibly be dismissed. Stonewall, the homosexual activist group, has already sent out packs to some primary schools providing teachers with pro-homosexual picture books for classroom reading. Parents may be unable to withdraw their children from such classes. NHS chaplains who preach about traditional marriage in church may well be disciplined under the Equality Law and foster carers voicing opposition to homosexual “marriage” could be considered unsuitable candidates by social workers.

We can have little confidence in our political leaders when we hear our Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, calling those who oppose same-sex “marriage” “bigots”. Due to address a party for celebrity supporters of same-sex “marriage” in London, his speech was released to the media beforehand. He swiftly tried to cover his tracks by claiming that his office was to blame and hastily changed the text to “some people”.

We are on a downward moral spiral and God's holy law is ignored. While it is wise to look at the history of countries such as Canada, how much wiser to look at biblical history; we read in Genesis 18:20,21: "And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down". We know what fearful judgements fell on them shortly afterwards. Is our nation any less guilty when, in spite of all the warnings, it seeks to make sodomy appear respectable? We need to cry to the Lord to pour out His Holy Spirit on us and deliver us from this fearful evil. It is heartening to see that Australian politicians have overwhelmingly rejected a bill to legalise same-sex "marriage". May our politicians do the same in Scotland and in the rest of the United Kingdom. *KHM*

### **Y-Chromosomal Adam and Mitochondrial Eve**

One of the discoveries of modern genetics is that the genes of human beings differ less from one another than was expected. Out of three billion "base pairs", two human beings will typically differ from each other at about three million places, or about 1 place in 1000. Evolutionary geneticists concede that this points to a recent common ancestry for man, although "recent" in evolutionary terms is much longer than the time-scale allowed by the Bible.

The names the geneticists give to these common ancestors are "Y-Chromosomal Adam", who is defined to be the most recent ancestor, in the male line, of all living men, and "Mitochondrial Eve" who is defined to be the most recent ancestor, in the female line, of all living women. The reason for these names is that fathers transmit the entire Y-chromosome to their sons while women transmit the entire mitochondrial DNA to their children of both sexes. Thus, in principle, the Y-chromosome could be traced back to "Y-Chromosomal Adam" and the mitochondrial DNA to "Mitochondrial Eve".

In the transmission, however, there are occasional small mutations which accumulate down the generations. It is these mutations which account for the variations in the Y-chromosome among men and in the mitochondrial DNA among people of both sexes. Presumably these mutations are part of the general curse on creation (Gen 3:17). One consequence of them, however, is that a knowledge of genetics can be used in the study of genealogy and ancestry. If two men share a common mutation in their Y-chromosome then they probably have a common ancestor – nearer than Noah – from whom they inherited this mutation. Thus a full understanding and tracing of these mutations might permit something like a mapping of a large part of the human race.

At the moment the mitochondrial DNA of the supposed body of Richard III, found during recent excavations in Leicester, is being tested against the



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mitochondrial DNA of a man living in Canada who is a descendant in the female line of Richard's sister. If the DNA matches at sufficiently many "markers", then the body will almost certainly be that of Richard III.

One cannot help thinking that evolutionary geneticists may be venturing on dangerous ground as far as their theories are concerned. Their researches are likely to throw up more and more problems for evolution and to uncover increasing evidence in favour of the biblical account of the origin and history of mankind. Already we have "Y-Chromosomal Adam" (Noah, in fact) and "Mitochondrial Eve" (possibly Eve herself: Noah's wife had no daughters so "Mitochondrial Eve" is the nearest ancestor in the female line of the three wives of Noah's sons). Furthermore "Mitochondrial Eve" is reckoned to have lived earlier than "Y-Chromosomal Adam", which fits in with the biblical data. Again, "Y-Chromosomal Adam" is supposed to have lived at a "bottleneck" when some natural disaster had severely reduced the human race. The Bible gives an account of a "bottleneck" at the time of Noah, namely the Flood.

Similarly, recent work on the genetic composition of races points to a triangular distribution. The Bible would suggest that the three corners probably represent Shem, Ham and Japheth. If the early chapters of Genesis were mythological then such coincidences would be astonishing. Evolutionary geneticists should allow themselves to be guided by the biblical information, rather than fighting against it.

*DWBS*

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## Church Information

### Retirement of Rev E A Rayner, Grafton

With a profound sense of regret, the Australia and New Zealand Presbytery has accepted the resignation of the Rev E A Rayner from the pastoral charge of the Grafton congregation. Mr Rayner cited his advanced age and ill health as reasons for his retirement and assured the Presbytery that this decision had been taken after consultation and much prayerful thought. Several present at the Presbytery meeting spoke of their thankfulness for his ministry in Grafton and throughout the Presbytery since 1976. His sole previous charge was Aberdeen. In accepting his resignation, the Presbytery wished him and Mrs Rayner the Lord's blessing in his retirement.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps 126:5-6).

*Rev G B Macdonald, Clerk, Australia and New Zealand Presbytery*

### Day of Humiliation and Prayer

The Synod has appointed a Day of Humiliation and Prayer to be held in all the congregations of the Church on Wednesday, December 5, on account of our urgent need that God would mercifully intervene to halt the rapid moral and spiritual decline in Christendom, and graciously fulfil His promise, "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer" (Ps 103:15,17).

### Closure of Sengera Mission Station

Following the resignation of Rev K M Watkins from the Kenya Mission, the Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee decided that the Sengera Mission, Kenya, be closed on the completion of Mr Watkins' contract on 31 October 2012. Mr and Mrs Watkins have left Kenya, but endeavours continue to be made with the Government in Kenya to organise an orderly withdrawal. We very much regret that our mission work in Sengera has come to an end, but this appears to be the will of a sovereign Lord. The desire and prayer of the Committee is that the pure worship of God will continue there. The Committee wish to thank all the supporters of the work in Kenya for their prayers and other help over the years. "My word . . . that goeth forth out of My mouth . . . shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Is 55:11).

(Rev) James R Tallach, Clerk to the Committee

### Outreach Fund

By appointment of Synod, the special collection on behalf of the Outreach Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during November.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

## Acknowledgement of Donations

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

*Dominions & Overseas Fund:* Mr N Pearce, Cymru, £130.

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

**Dingwall/Beaully:** Anon, £10 per Rev NMR. *Sustentation Fund:* Friend, £40; Mrs I MacInnes, £40 per Rev NMR.

**Gairloch:** Anon, for car repairs, £300.

**Inverness:** Anon, £100, £100, £100, £100, £100, £100, £100. *Bus Fund:* Anon, £30, £30, £10, £20, £20.

*Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for Sengera Poor Fund, £100, £500. *TBS:* R MacDonald, £5, £5; Anon, £100, £400, £100.

**North Harris:** Friend, Harris House, in appreciation of KJV, £10 per Rev JBJ. *Communion Expenses:* JFM, £60; Anon, £10, £20 per AJM. *Where Most Needed:* Anon, £100 per JNML.

**North Tolsta:** Anon, for church & manse expenses, £100 per Rev DC; Mrs Campbell, £100; J MacKenzie, £100; D & M Cameron, £1000. *Door Collection:* Campbell, Glen, £20.

**North Uist:** Anon, £40. *Sustentation Fund:* MacDonald Family, Burnside, £50.

**Staffin:** Mr N Pearce, Cymru, £129.

## FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

### Scotland

**Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.

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

**Breasclote:** no services meantime.

**Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, Dingwall, 10 Achany Rd, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nmross2001@yahoo.co.uk.

**Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.

**Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.

**Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 0131 447 1920. Contact Mr I R MacLeod; tel: 0131 334 4057.

**Farr** (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon (other than second and fourth Sabbaths of month), 6 pm. Thursday 7.30 pm. **Tomatin:** second Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** fourth Sabbath 12 noon. Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.

**Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.

**Gairloch** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.

**Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev Roderick MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.

**Greenock:** 40 East Hamilton Street, Sabbath 2.30 pm.

**Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am, 5 pm; Thursday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01847 831758. **Wick:** Church; **Thurso:** Church; **Strathy:** Church; no F P Church services.

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

**Harris (South):** **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Shellebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (except first Sabbath of month). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh, Shellebost, Strond** and **Geocrab** as intimated. Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Leverburgh, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.

**Inverness:** Chapel Street, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA, 11 Auldcastle Road, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.

**Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.

**Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.

**Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.

**Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.

**Lochinvier:** Sabbath 12 noon. Manse tel: 01571 844484.

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

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

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

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

**Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr 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 6 pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.

**Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 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 Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Contact Mr R Middleton, 2 Emerald Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 4ND; tel: 01270 761673. Manse tel: 01282 851782.

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

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

### Northern Ireland

**Larne:** Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 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. Contact Mr Geoff Kidd, PO Box 1585, Grafton, NSW, 2460; tel. 0417 429 728.

**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: sydneyfpchurch@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 Levytysky; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytysky@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.by@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.

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